



The Biblical Metaphor of “Governing as Shepherding” and Catholic Biopolitics in Medieval Icelandic Contexts

Grzegorz Bartusik*

This paper studies the Old Icelandic use of the Biblical conceptual metaphor of “governing as shepherding”, based on projecting patterns of the practices of shepherding on the notion of governing. It examines the transfer of this conceptual metaphor to Old Icelandic literature through the reception of Christian literature, the frequency and chronology of occurrences of the linguistic realizations of this conceptual metaphor in different textual genres and periods of Old Icelandic literature, and the possible lineages of texts’ transmission that might have enabled the cultural transfer of this conceptual metaphor from Latin to Old Icelandic. On the theoretical basis of Michel Foucault’s governmentality theory, the emergence of the discourse of pastoral power over human life in Old Icelandic literature is correlated with the development of specific biopolitical practices of governance regarding the protection of human life applied by the Catholic Church in medieval Iceland.

1 Introduction

In this article, I analyse the Old Icelandic use of the Biblical conceptual metaphor of governing as shepherding, based on a projection of patterns of the practices of shepherding a flock of animals on the notion of governing humans.

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I study this psycholinguistic phenomenon in the wider context of the biopolitics practiced in medieval Iceland by the Catholic Church. The dissemination of the Biblical Latin metaphor of “governing as shepherding” in Old Norse-Icelandic literature, forms a pastoral discourse of power over human life. The frequency of this discourse, circulated by the Catholic Church, in medieval Icelandic literature can be correlated with the development of Catholic biopolitical practices of governance in medieval Iceland.

Following Michel Foucault in his governmentality theory, I understand Catholic biopolitics as a social policy conducted by the Catholic Church concerning the protection of life, including: marital morality, procreative ethics, penalisation of homicide and infanticide, and development of social welfare, what Michel Foucault called biopolitics, “a pastoral technology of governing people – power to foster life or disallow it to the point of death” (Foucault 1978: 138).

I believe that the pastoral discourse was intertwined with the biopolitical practice, and that there is a link between the dissemination of the pastoral metaphors in Icelandic literature, a kind of pastoral discourse of power, and the social policy of the Catholic Church in Iceland regarding the protection of life.

To analyse the existence of a correlation between the pastoral discourse and practice of governing, I examine the transfer of the conceptual metaphor of “governing as shepherding” to Old Icelandic literature through the reception of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical literature in medieval Iceland in the form of original Latin texts and their vernacular translations. Further, I analyse its usage and diffusion, the frequency and chronology of occurrences of the linguistic realisations of this conceptual metaphor in different textual genres and periods of Old Icelandic literature. I trace possible lineages of text transmission that might have enabled the cultural transfer of this metaphor from Latin to Old Icelandic. Finally, I correlate it with the introduction and development of specific biopolitical practices by the Catholic Church in Iceland in the Middle Ages, thus linking the pastoral discourse of power over human life with the biopolitical mode of governing the living. Together, the related discourse and practice constitute the governmentality of a unique proto-welfare-state regime.

2 Biopolitics and the Pastoral Technology of Governing People

According to the governmentality theory of Michel Foucault formulated in his lectures at the Collège de France (1977–1979), biopolitics was one of the key elements of governmental rationality (*gouvernementalité*) in European national states in the modern age. Foucault understood it as the mode of government in which the centres of power exert their control apparatus over the physical and spiritual bodies of a governed society, the bodies and souls of individuals, regulating populations through the application of moral, judicial, and police power on all aspects of human life, including personal and family life, as a kind of moral regime exercised on them through state policy interventions, for the purpose of ensuring the safety and welfare of the population (Foucault 2004: 119–193).

In lectures given in February 1978 at the Collège de France, Foucault presented the genealogy of biopolitics and identified its prototypes in the ancient Middle Eastern idea of ruling over a population, and in the Christian ministry, the confessional and pastoral apparatuses of the Church, as the oldest ancestors in the genealogical development of the systems of thought that preceded modern biopolitics. These phenomena, in which the ruler and his mode of governing were exercised and conceptualized as a shepherd’s care over his flock, he called “l’idée et l’organisation d’un pouvoir pastoral”, “the idea and organization of a pastoral type of power” (Foucault 2004: 127–128; Ojakangas 2010: 92–110; 2012: 1–14; 2016: 129–140).

The concept of governing people instead of a territory or state (as in the case of Greece and Rome) was commonly realized in discourse and practice for the first time in the ancient Middle East states, especially in Egypt, Babylon, Assyria, and Israel (at least from the time of the Twelfth Dynasty of ancient Egypt, ca. 1938–1756 BCE, and Hammurabi, King of Babylon, ca. 1792–1750 BCE), as the protective power of a proto-welfare state of pastoral type, intended to ensure the successful survival and welfare of the governed population. The idea and organization of a power structure of that kind were conceptualized through the metaphor of a god or king as a shepherd watching over the flock of his subjects. (Foucault 2004: 127–133). See the examples in Section 3 of this article.

The Christian ministry, as spiritual leadership, is a developed form of the Semitic technology of exerting power over people, expressed in the institutions of the Catholic Church. It became crystallized during the

institutionalization of Christian religion (2nd – 3rd century AD), a process which resulted in the religion becoming formalized into a hierarchical Church administration: Christian communes, religious convents, parishes, bishoprics with the office of bishop. Subjection and the duty of obedience of every member within the Church in each organizational unit to another of a higher institutional status enforced the hierarchical structure, which was additionally consolidated by the obligation of care over the community as a whole, as well as every individual member of it, imposed on superiors. The institution of the Christian Church took upon itself the responsibility of ensuring the wellbeing of the community in both ethical and material aspects, assigning the execution of this task to the individual governors on various rungs of the pastoral hierarchy. They, in turn, as priests, were ordered to guide the society by their spiritual leadership to eternal life. According to Foucault, this type of power “is not exercised over a fixed territory so much as over a multitude moving towards an objective; its role is to provide the flock with its subsistence, to watch over it every day, and to ensure its salvation”, “le pouvoir du berger s’exerce moins sur un territoire fixe que sur une multitude en déplacement vers un but; il a pour rôle de fournir au troupeau sa subsistance, de veiller quotidiennement sur lui et d’assurer son salut”. (Foucault 2004: 373).

As spiritual overseers of respective Christian communities, clergymen executed this power by continuously overseeing the lifestyle of the community and its individual members and modulating their lifestyle patterns by intervening in their daily life, like the shepherd who leads the flock to the pasture, watches over it, and takes care of the sheep. The foremost responsibility of the head of a religious community was teaching appropriate modes of behaviour in everyday life, conducted through daily inspection of the individuals’ ways. Techniques leading to the control of the faithful’s conscience were used, including sermons and the confession of sins, which strengthened the condition of moral dependence of the faithful on the priest. Interventions in the daily life of the community – the flock – and the individual – each sheep – were also executed by means of the judicial power of the Church (ecclesiastical courts), through the introduction of regulations shaping the everyday aspects of individual’s lives, i.e. ecclesiastical law, the influence of the Church on state legislation (confessionalization of the state law), and by the imposition of religious penalties (eg. penance) on disobedient indi-

viduals in order to correct their actions. Members deemed morally harmful to the community’s wellbeing were excluded, like sheep that due to illness or temper could bring harm to the entire flock, through excommunication, imprisonment, or execution. The Church exerted influence on the most intimate aspects of an individual’s everyday life, such as sexual relations and procreation (birth control). Strict control over these spheres of life is the most pronounced example of the Church’s biopolitical method of administering and protecting life: who can engage in reproductive practices, under what circumstances, and with whom, and who is forbidden to do so. The act of reproduction became restricted, with religious prohibitions pertaining to extramarital sexual relations, intimate relations not aimed at procreation, infanticide, child abandonment, contraception, and abortion. The policy of life protection was applied to the adult population by the penalization of murder, and by a welfare policy to take care of the needy, poor, elderly, and disabled (Foucault 2004: 167–188).

The Christian ministry, thus established, was conceptualized by the metaphor of god–, king–, bishop–, priest – shepherd, governing the flock of the faithful of the Church, which constituted one of the key components of the medieval Catholic discourse of power. See the examples in Section 3 of this article.

2.1 Catholic Biopolitics in Medieval Iceland

Naturally, in pre-Christian Scandinavia, as in many other non-Christian societies of that period, mechanisms of regulating the population were also utilised. In Scandinavia, for example, newborn children were commonly abandoned when families lacked the means to provide for them. However, the arbitrary power was bottom-up, confined to the household, and embodied by the father of the family and the owner of the homestead, who could decide whether the excess child should be abandoned. This practice can be interpreted as a kind of self-regulation of the household population. The ethical system which allowed for such practices had to be shaped by environmental and climate pressure, to which the law was subject, enabling social solutions that contributed to the survival of a community in the given environment. During the Christian period, the Church took over the authority that previously belonged to the father of the family and adjusted it to the Christian system of ethics, which implied different regulatory mechanisms.

The sagas of Icelanders provide instances of abandoning newborns, shedding light on the motivations of parents – the protagonists of the saga, usually fathers. See the following cases of infanticide: exposure of the child justified by a premonition dream of a family conflict caused by the child (*The Saga of Gunnlaug the Worm-Tongue*, chapter 2–3); the exposure of a child justified by family conflict regarding marrying out one's children without parent's consent (*The Saga of Finnbogi the Mighty*, chapter 2); newborn exposed as a child out of wedlock, whose birth caused a family conflict (*The Tale of Thorstein Bull's-Leg*, chapter 3–5); a father had his newly born child exposed after its mother's death in puerperium (*The Saga of Hord and the People of Holm*, chapter 8); an illegitimate child exposed by his father on the order of his wife (*The Saga of the People of Vatnsdal*, chapter 37); abandoning of a child born of incest (*The Saga of the Jomsvikings*, chapter 1).

Family feuds caused by the nascent child, and the subsistence crisis that follows, are common factors in all these stories. The sagas point out that infant exposure was a custom of the poor who had no means to rear the child. The quasi-moral justification of exposure in the sagas, however, is supernatural. The protagonist experiences a foreboding dream of future misery caused by the child, thus transferring the blame for abandoning the newborn. This, it seems, could have been a quasi-ethical justification for abandoning children in the pagan period.

The exposure of newborns may be interpreted as a form of human sacrifice ritual that was practiced in the Old Norse pagan religion, making it a social custom, developed originally for religious rather than pragmatic reasons. In primitive religions, the practice of human sacrifice intensified during crises, such as famines. Children were one of the most preferred offerings. According to René Girard, victims of sacrifice were demonized and often assigned negative traits of character or appearance, such as incestuous origin (Girard 1979: 254; 1989: 18–19). This kind of motivation behind newborn exposure is also present in the discussed fragments of the sagas of Icelanders.

Pragmatic reasons behind medieval infanticide may derive from the annual farm practice of slaughtering livestock before winter so that farm animals could survive despite limited fodder supply. Such an experimental basis of the farmer could allow him to notice the resemblance in regulating both types of farm population, humans and livestock. In this case, infanticide would indeed be a biopolitical action, albeit on a micro-scale.

Unfortunately, the very succinct descriptions of infanticide preserved in the sagas do not allow for confirming these hypotheses.

After the acceptance of Christianity in Iceland in the 11th century, the Catholic Church strove to extend its moral regime over Icelandic society through the appliance of the pastoral technique of governing people. This was done initially only by moral education (preaching) and control of conscience (the Sacrament of Penance). However, it was later effected also by the Church exerting an influence on the law, and eventually by taking hold of the judicial power over the society through penalization of infanticide, male-honour homicide, blood feuds, human sacrifice, extramarital sex, and homosexual practices (Þórdís Edda Jóhannesdóttir 2020: 300). This culminated in the late 13th century with the introduction of new law codes, *Járnsiða* and *Jónsbók*, according to which only the Church together with the state, the Kingdom of Norway at that time, had the monopoly on the legitimate use of violence in Iceland, “to foster life or disallow it to the point of death” (Foucault 1978: 138).

Elements of the social policy typical of the welfare state practiced by the Church in medieval Iceland, especially in the priority field of this institution, the protection of life, are preserved in the oldest Icelandic legal documents, the provisions of which the Church had tried actively to influence during the period of Christianization. *Grágás* is a collection of state laws (written down ca. 1118–1120, earlier transmitted only orally) and Church laws (*Kristinna laga þáttir*, written down ca. 1122–1133). The oldest *Grágás* manuscript, *Kónungsbók* (GKS 1157 fol.), is dated to ca. 1240–1260. *Grágás* thus expresses the legal state prevailing in Iceland in the 12th–13th centuries; however, its laws date back even to the 10th–11th centuries. The laws were in force in Iceland until 1271. New legal codes were introduced in Iceland by Magnús *lagabætir*, King of Norway, after Icelanders became subjects of the Norwegian crown: *Járnsiða* in 1271, followed by *Jónsbók* in 1280 (contemporary manuscripts of both legal codes have been preserved: *Staðarhólsbók* – AM 334 fol., dated to ca. 1260–1281, and AM 134 4^o, ca. 1281–1294). Biopolitical interventions by the Catholic Church in Iceland are also documented by the acts of ecclesiastical law: penitentiary (Þorlákr Þórhallsson, 1178, *Skriftaboð*; Árni Þorláksson, 1269, *Skriftaboð*; Jón Halldórsson, 1326, *Skriftaboð*), Christian law (Árni Þorláksson, 1275, *Kristinréttir*), letter on excommunication (Jón Halldórsson, 1326, *Bannsakabréf*). Along with the new legal codes,

they provide an accurate image of the legal order of Iceland in the 12th–14th centuries.

Elements of social policy were introduced into Icelandic legal codes as a result of the reception of Christianity. After the Christianization of Iceland (1000), the state rights for which the Church lobbied, and the rights of the Church itself, were from the very beginning directed especially against the practices of promiscuity, incest, infanticide, and bloody vengeance, commonly, and in some cases even lawfully, practiced by Icelanders in the pre-Christian period. On the basis of the sources that have been preserved, it is difficult to estimate how frequent were these aberrant behaviours in the period under discussion. However, they must have been frequent enough to create the need to introduce and reiterate their penalization and to keep issuing screeds against them even in the 14th century. See *Skriřtabođ* of Bishop Þorlákur Þórhallsson from 1178, the 1269 *Skriřtabođ* and *Kristinréttr* of 1275 issued by Bishop Árni Þorláksson, *Bannsakabréf* and *Skriřtabođ* issued by Bishop Jón Halldórs-son of Skálholt from 1326.

The issue of ensuring that every human life was conceived in a moral manner, lived in the same way and ended with death in accordance with Christian morality, was treated with special attention. Therefore, the regulations promoted by the Church encompassed, in particular, the protection of the life and well-being of children, the criminalization of infanticide, the introduction of a duty of care for children, caring for the elderly, sick, needy and homeless, combating vagrancy, penalizing extra-marital affairs, and banning honour duels and killings.

The protection of children's lives included the criminalization of infanticide, a prohibition on killing and abandoning children (*expositio*) even if the family did not have the means to support them: not even the poverty of a family or famine, which had previously justified infanticide, was considered an excuse (Boswell 1988: 285–295; Clover 1988: 150–155; Pentikäinen 1990: 76–80; Callow 2006: 59–63; Lawing 2013: 135–137, 140–142). Criminalization of infanticide was passed by Alþingi ca. 1018–1020, approximately two decades after the adoption of Christianity in Iceland (ca. 999/1000). Combating infanticide was accompanied by the enactment of laws specifying an obligation to care for children in order to implement the protection of children's lives in a systemic manner.

The legal system introduced for the protection of children’s lives, aimed at realistically increasing their chances of survival, primarily imposed on parents the obligation to care for children until they came of age, for male offspring: 12 years to become an independent farmer, 16 years to establish his own household; for female offspring: 20 years (Boswell 1988: 33; Jón Viðar Sigurðsson 2008: 230–231). Parental care involved providing the child with food and accommodation. If the parents did not have the means to maintain the child, they were obliged to enter the service of their closest relative or neighbour who had the means to support the child or to put their child into servitude.

If a married couple was incapable of maintaining their children, the marriage was subject to forcible divorce. In the event of divorce, the parental obligation to look after the child did not cease. The parent who was not in charge of taking direct care of the child was obliged to pay child support, and if they could not afford it, this obligation was transferred to their immediate family. In the case of widowhood, the deceased parent’s custody obligation fell to their family (Pedersen 1999: 89–111). In Iceland, unlike in continental Europe, especially in convents under the rule of St. Benedict, giving a child up to be raised in a church institution with the obligation to enter the clergy (*oblatio puerorum*) was not commonly practiced, as Icelandic monasteries lacked requisite material conditions (Boswell 1984: 10–33).

In terms of sexual and reproductive ethics, the Church adhered to the principle that sexual acts can only take place in a monogamous marriage and with the intention of being reproductive. Bigamy was banned and punishable under the penalty of divorce and banishment. Informal polygyny and cohabitation, often practiced by men in Scandinavia in the Viking period, especially with slaves captured during Viking raids, were subject to Church and state penalties (Karras 1990: 141–143). As a consequence of the principle of limiting sexual acts to marital relations, the Church legally criminalized extra-marital affairs, the committing of which carried the threat of banishment for the man holding residence, and subjected a vagrant to castration (Agnes Siggerður Arnórsdóttir 2010: 195–212; Adams 2013: 199). Even a kiss, if it did not take place within marriage, was punished with a fine when it occurred with the consent of the woman, and without her consent, with banishment. If a woman became pregnant outside of marriage and refused to indicate who the father was, her legal guardian had the right to subject her to torture

in order to establish the father's identity, so as to impose the duty of custody and child support of the child on those who were legally responsible. The marriage contract itself was only possible if the parties owned property that would support the household, especially future children. In addition, under the prohibition on incest, marriage in the seventh and closer degree of kinship was forbidden (after the Council of Lateran IV in 1215, the permitted degree of kinship was reduced to the fourth) and was punished with divorce, excommunication and the outlawry of the male party (Jochens 1999: 377–392; Agnes Siggerður Arnórsdóttir 2010: 179–195).

The Church in Iceland also administered punishments for extra-marital affairs. For adultery, the penitentiary of Bishop Þorlák Þórhallsson (1178) recommends the imposition of a long penance of 8 years for a married man, and 7 years for an unmarried man. For incest the recommended penance amounted from 5 to 9 years, depending on the degree of kinship (*Diplomatarium Islandicum*: I, 237–244). Similar punishments were later provided by the penitentiary of Bishop Jón Halldórsson of Skálholt in 1326 (Agnes Siggerður Arnórsdóttir 2010: 197).

Contra naturam sins of a sexual nature, non-heteronormative, including zoophilia, onanism, and homosexuality, were also fought by the Church in Iceland. Penalties for homosexual practices in Iceland were imposed by the Church within its jurisdiction over sexual offenses (Gade 1986: 116–117). For homosexual practices, the penitentiary of Bishop Þorlák Þórhallsson of 1178 recommends the imposition of a long penance for a period of 9 to 10 years, equal to that for zoophilic and incestuous acts (*Diplomatarium Islandicum*: I, 237–244).

In terms of imposing penalties for sexual offenses, the Church performed a judicial function to some extent, in some cases taking the role of prosecutor. Particularly in matrimonial law, the highest judicial power during the Later Middle Ages in Iceland was held by the Church and exercised by the bishop (in the case of divorce). Pastoral control of sexuality and the fertility of the population is evident in these cases – the organized strategy of morally distinguishing which sheep are allowed to reproduce and which are not allowed, and of making efforts to oversee it.

Medieval Icelanders also introduced laws against homelessness, determined to reduce the rate of criminal acts committed by vagrants (especially sexual crimes) and to stimulate the productivity of the population (Miller 2004: 125–126). Begging and vagrancy by choice were punishable by outlawry (full exile). If an individual was able to work, they were ob-

ligated to enter the service of the landowner in order to obtain the *grið*, or legal residence and protection. Personal property owned by homeless vagrants (who were not cared for by their family or the local community) was not legally protected (anyone who was not a vagrant could lawfully confiscate or destroy it). Furthermore, beggars and vagrants did not enjoy the inviolability of life and limb. Castration of a homeless person was allowed, especially if they committed a sexual act with a woman who was a legal resident. In the case of homeless women, if a man with a denoted legal residence entered into sexual relations (consensual or not) with a vagrant woman and fathered a child, he was legally obligated to take care of the child until adulthood, and to provide for the mother during pregnancy and childbirth (for a period of one year up to three years, according to varying regulations), but afterwards did not have any care obligations towards her.

There also existed a law obliging the family and local community to provide care for the elderly, sick, and needy, including the provision of means of living, food, and accommodation. The obligation to take care of a given individual was first imposed on members of the nuclear family, then on the extended family, especially those who inherited property from them or were freed by them. If an individual did not have relatives or heirs who could afford to care for them, this obligation fell on the affluent members of the local community – *hreppr*, which referred to local landowners, who held judicial powers, performed charitable tasks, and cared for the poor and needy, including the distribution of the paupers’ quarter of the tithe introduced in 1096 (Pedersen 1999: 89–111; Orri Vésteinsson 2000: 83). *Hreppr* looked after the less fortunate people who lived in a given *hreppr* or were assigned to it when they became homeless. The members of the larger administrative unit, *þinglag*, had the duty of providing assistance to the families of outlaws in need. The Church also created another structure for old-age care of at least a small group of wealthy Icelanders – monasteries in medieval Iceland doubled as nursing homes for the elderly, to which the rich members of the society could retire in their old age, after making a sufficient donation to the monastery (Jón Viðar Sigurðsson 2008: 237–240).

The Church, which had the King of Norway as the sovereign of Iceland as an ally from the mid-thirteenth century, also attempted to limit the number of honour killings. The ban on dueling (*hólmganga*) was introduced in Iceland already in the first or second decade of the 11th century

(Jones 1933: 221–224; Ciklamini 1963: 190–192). The ban on exacting bloody revenge – murder for reasons of honour – was implemented in Iceland in 1271 by the King of Norway, Magnús *lagabætir*, on the occasion of the announcement of the new legal code of *Járnsíða* (the next legal codex – the *Jónsbók* of 1280 – upheld the ban). From then on, court proceedings for this type of crime were to be supervised by a local royal official (*sýslumaðr* = sheriff). The murderer was subject to outlawry. The king collected a fine, and the murdered person’s family was entitled to compensation, both to be paid by the murderer. The killer was obligated to go to Norway to see the king so that he could decide whether the outlawry should be lifted or maintained. The exaction of bloody revenge was legally justified only in cases where the victim’s family did not accept compensation and the royal official failed to ensure that justice was done for the harm suffered in terms of punishment and compensation. In this way the state – from the mid-thirteenth century the Kingdom of Norway – and the Church monopolized the use of legal physical violence in order to reduce the death rate due to arbitrary acts of violence (Helgi Þorláksson 1997: 249–261; Sayaka Matsumoto 2014: 23–31).

3 Pastoral discourse in the Ancient Middle East and Christianity

As far back as we are able to trace it in the conceptual systems of the classical languages, the metaphor “the ruler is the shepherd of people” originates from ancient Mesopotamian languages, Akkadian and Old Babylonian, in which a spiritual or political leader was conceptualized as a shepherd (Haubold 2015: 245–54). See the following example: “For the people, Ishbi-Erra, you are their king and shepherd” (*A tigi to Nanaya for Išbi-Erra*: 243).

Accordingly, people ruled by a political leader were conceptualized as a flock, as in the following example on the Hammurabi Stele: “I am the shepherd of the people who causes the truth to appear, guiding my flock rightly. I am the pious prince, deep in prayer to the great deities.” (Hammurabi’s Laws: 31). This conceptualization of power relations has a foundation in Mesopotamian religion. The legend of the first Sumerian king, Alulim of Eridu, tells of how he assumed power over prehistoric humans as *a shepherd*, as established by gods over *a flock* of people. Moreover, in related myths the first humans, as yet in the state of nature, are described

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as *eating grass like sheep* (*The Disputation Between Ewe and Wheat*: 575–578). See the following examples. In the beginning of the world “The people of those distant days / Knew not bread to eat, / They knew not cloth to wear; / They went about in the Land with naked limbs / Eating grass with their mouths like sheep, / And drinking water from the ditches.” (*The Disputation Between Ewe and Wheat*: 575). The gods decided to establish a political order among humans, and accordingly “[They set up] a king to be shepherd of the land. They gave the people [to him] as shepherd.” (*The Babylonian Royal Chronicle*: 128–129). For other examples, see also: *The Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic* (542–543, verses 87–89), *The Lamentation over the Destruction of Sumer and Ur* (39, 41) and *Hammurabi’s Laws* (39, 121).

In the Hebrew Bible the shepherd imagery, undoubtedly inherited from Mesopotamia, is used to describe the relation of power between Yahveh and His chosen people, as well as between the people and their kings in a wider sense (O’Kennedy 2009: 404–421). See the following example:

“Woe to the shepherds who destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture!” declares the LORD. Therefore thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, concerning the shepherds who care for my people: “You have scattered my flock, and have driven them away, and you have not attended to them. Behold, I will attend to you for your evil deeds, declares the LORD. Then I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all the countries where I have driven them, and I will bring them back to their fold; and they shall be fruitful and multiply. I will set shepherds over them, who will care for them; and they shall fear no more, nor be dismayed, neither shall any be missing, declares the LORD. (Jeremia: 23:1–4. English translation comes from ESV version)

More examples of the pastoral metaphor are to be found in the following books of the Tanakh: *Genesis* 49:10; 49:24; *Psalms* 23:1; 28:8–9; 78:70–72; 79:13; 80:1; 95:7; 100:3; *Samuel II* 5:2, 7:7–8; *Regum I* 22:17; *Chronica I* 11:2, 17:6; *Chronica II* 18:16; *Jeremia* 2:8; 3:15; 10:21; 17:16; 22:22; 23:1–4; 25:34–36; *Jesaia* 40:11; 44:28; *Ezechiel* 34:23–24; *Nahum* 3:18; *Sacharia* 9:16; 10:2; 13:7; *Hosea* 4:16; *Micha* 7:14.

Already in Archaic Greece, the metaphor of the ruler as a shepherd of people was found among Greek epic *formulae* – ποιμὴν λαῶν (poimēn laōn) in Homeric and Hesiodic epic poetry (Haubold 2000: 17–20; Ojakangas 2016). It was used by Homer in his *Iliad* (1:263; 2:243, 4:296;

5:144; 6:214; 9:81; 10:3; 10:73; 10:406; 11:92; 11:187; 11:202; 11:506; 11:577; 11:597; 11:650; 11:841; 13:411; 14:22; 14:422; 14:515; 17:348; 19:386; 22:277; 23:389) and *Odyssey* (3:469; 4:532; 10:82; 17:109), and by Hesiod in *The Shield of Heracles* (39) and *Theogony* (1000); and in this form was cited by later Greek authors of the Hellenic and Hellenistic periods: by Aeschylus in *The Persians* (241–244); Euripides in *The Suppliant Women* (187–193); and it was elaborated in the political and philosophical writings of Xenophon, *Memorabilia* (1.2.32, 3.2.1), Plato, *Republic* (4.440d), *Laws* (5.735b), Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (1161a, 12–15), and Arrian, *Discourses of Epictetus* (III, XXII, 35). See the following example: “He planted his spear in the bounteous earth, and with gentle words spake to the shepherd of the people” (Homer, *Iliad*: 6:214).

The pastoral metaphor of governing was alien to the Latin language of the Golden and Silver Ages, as corroborated by the corpus data. I managed to locate only one instance of its use – by Quintilian, in *Institutio Oratoria*, who is discouraging poets from using this metaphor in Latin composition:

Illo vero plurimum erroris, quod ea, quae poetis, qui et omnia ad voluptatem referunt et plurima vertere etiam ipsa metri necessitate coguntur, permissa sunt, convenire quidam etiam prosae putant. at ego id agendo nec pastorem populi auctore Homero dixerim, nec volucres per aera nare, licet hoc Vergilius id apibus ac Daedalo speciosissime sit usus. metaphora enim aut vacantem occupare locum debet aut, si id alienum venit, plus valere eo quod expellet.

The worst errors of all, however, originate in the fact that some authors regard it as permissible to use even in prose any metaphors that are allowed to poets, in spite of the fact that the latter aim solely at pleasing their readers and are compelled in many cases to employ metaphor by sheer metrical necessity. For my own part I should not regard a phrase like “the shepherd of the people” as admissible in pleading, although it has the authority of Homer, nor would I venture to say that winged creatures “swim through the air,” despite the fact that this metaphor has been most effectively employed by Virgil to describe the flight of bees and of Daedalus. For metaphor should always either occupy a place already vacant, or if it fills the room of something else, should be more impressive than that which it displaces. (Quintilianus, *Institutio Oratoria*: VIII, VI, 18)

It is worth noting that the shepherd metaphor is not present in pre-Christian Roman literature. Metaphors stem from the language user’s experiential basis. After the Archaic period of Roman literature, the experimental base of the average literary user of Latin did not extend to the pastoral economy. The agricultural and pastoral work in ancient Rome was carried out mainly by slaves whose influence on the Latin language, apart from colloquial speech, was limited. However, pastoral motifs appear in bucolic poetry, influenced by the Greek idyll, although they relate the rather leisurely experience of rural life by the average user of the literary Latin language. The preserved Latin inscriptions also do not indicate that this metaphor had a place in everyday language. Instead, the political discourse was dominated by the metaphor of the father and family, as well as the political body, as testified by *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae*, headwords: *familia*, *pater*, *corpus*, *pastor*. See examples in the above entries. I discuss the question of the father and family metaphors in: *Paternal Metaphor and Sense of Belonging in Medieval Nordic Contexts* (forthcoming).

It was through the Latin Bible, the Vulgate, that this metaphor infiltrated the Latin language, as the Roman Empire was increasingly subjected to Christianization. In the Bible, the writings of the Church Fathers and the Church Doctors, Jesus, the Apostles, bishops and priests, and their relations with Christians are described by the metaphors of the shepherd (*pastor bonus* and *pastor populi Dei*), and the flock (*oves Dei* and *grex Dei*). See the following examples: “Videns autem turbas misertus est eis quia erant vexati et iacentes sicut oves non habentes pastorem”, “When he saw the crowds, he had compassion for them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd” (*Mattheus* 9:36. English translation comes from ESV version); “Ego sum pastor bonus. pastor animam suam dat pro ovibus”, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (*Iohannes* 10:11. English translation comes from ESV version). The pastoral discourse of the Bible was not only concerned with power but also the responsibility that comes with it. The shepherd-sheep relationship denoted the role of the clergy and laity in terms of the shepherd’s care and protection of sheep and the sheep’s trust for the shepherd. It introduced new emotion scripts and new social norms of behaviour into society during the Christianization process: caregiving, empathy, parental and filial responsibility, familial duty, social solidarity (as demonstrated in Section 2.1, about

Catholic biopolitics in medieval Iceland). Moreover, the community conceived as a shepherd's flock offers the possibility of rejoining the community, even if one abandoned it by committing evil deeds. The role of community leaders as shepherds is to facilitate the inclusivity of the marginalised people, "to seek for the lost sheep". The inclusive potential of this concept is best demonstrated by the conceptual blend "the lost sheep is humanity" in the context of human redemption (Gomola 2018: 172–173).

More examples of this metaphor are present in the Vulgate: *Genesis* 28:15; 49:24; *Numeri* 27:16–17; *II Samuhel* 5:2; 7:8; *III Regum* 22:17; *Marcus* 6:34; 14:26–31; *Mattheus* 2:6; 9:36; 18:10–14; 25:32; 26:31; *Lucas* 15:3–6; *Iohannes* 10:11–16; 21:15–17; *Apocalypsis* 7:16–17, 10:1; *Ad Hebraeos* 13:20; *Petri I* 2:25; 5:1; 5:4; *Ad Ephesios* 4:11; *Acts* 20:28–31. In the writings of the Church Fathers and the Church Doctors, the shepherd – flock motif of the Bible forms a discourse and is widely disseminated. Hermas in *Pastor* describes Jesus Christ as a figure of a shepherd. Venantius Fortunatus in *Vita sancti Germani* refers to the bishop Germanus as *pater et pastor populi*. See other examples in: Cyprianus Carthaginensis, *Epistolae*, VIII; XVII; Gregorius I Magnus, *Regula pastoralis liber*, I, I–II; I, V; II, I; II, III; II, IV; II, VI; II, VII; Benedictus Nursinus, *Regula monasteriorum*, 2, 7–9; 27, 5; 28); Thomas Aquinas, *De Regno* (1, 2, 9); Gregorius I Magnus, *Regula pastoralis* (Davis 1979; Köstenberger 2002: 67–96; Lewis 2008: 143–144, 151–153; Resane 2014: 1–6).

In the Germanic languages, this metaphor also seems alien – it had to be transferred to their conceptual system during the cultural transfer that occurred with Christianization. For example, in Old English literature, probably under the influence of Christianity on the vernacular languages of Western Europe in the Middle Ages, this metaphor took a linguistic realization as a heroic formula for kings in the form of a kenning *folces hyrde* = "shepherd of the folk" (Greenfield 1972: 97–102). See the following example: "Then the disperser of rings, gray-haired and vigorous in battle, was content; the sovereign of the Bright-Danes trusted in assistance; the people's caretaker [= shepherd of the folk – G.B.] had heard a resolute intent in Beowulf." (*Beowulf*: 607–610). See also other Old English examples in: *Beowulf*, 1830–32, 1845–49, 2642–44, 2980–81; *Finnsburh Fragment*, 46 B; *The Meters of Boethius*, 10: 48–51. Watkins (1995: 45) believes this kenning to be a relict of Proto-Indo-European but discusses instances of its use only in Archaic Greek and Vedic lan-

guage, as well as in Old English and Old Irish, both of which provide examples solely from Christian literature. This kenning also does not appear in Old Norse poetry of the pre-Christian skalds, which weakens Watkins’ interpretation of the Proto-Indo-European origin of this metaphor.

3.1 Pastoral discourse in Iceland after the Christianization

The language of the literature produced in Iceland after Christianization can be an indicator that its users, the ecclesiastical institutions and their personnel, were accumulating and consolidating some form of power within Icelandic society. The conceptualization of these power relations within society in terms of shepherd and flock was used by the Catholic Church as a mode of legitimation of exercising power in the local social structures. This power was exercised in the vertical dimension, as the hierarchical relation of power within the respective society (shepherd over flock). The societal outreach of its power distribution took the form of biopolitical control over this society, even in the most intimate spheres of human life such as sexual relations and the rearing of children (as demonstrated in part 2.1 of the article).

The diffusion of the linguistic realizations of the pastoral metaphor in medieval Icelandic literature formed a discourse of pastoral power over human life which may be considered an adoption of the political concept of governing as shepherding into the psycho-linguistic system of the Old Icelandic language and its users. The discourse can be correlated with the development of specific biopolitical practices of governance by the Catholic Church in medieval Iceland. The identified correlations link the discourse of pastoral power over human life with the biopolitical mode of governing regarding the protection of life. This thesis is based on the identified correlations between biopolitical practice and pastoral discourse. These correlations were identified in the following dimensions: the dating of the texts containing the pastoral discourse and the biopolitical laws implemented in Iceland; the location of these texts’ manuscripts and of the documents implementing the biopolitical laws connected to ecclesiastical centers; the use of the pastoral metaphor within normative statements about pastoral authority over the followers of religion.

Based on the corpus of Old Icelandic prosaic and poetic texts, and the system of skaldic *kenningar* (kennings for lay and clerical rulers), I am inclined to believe that this metaphor does not commonly occur in pre-

Christian Eddic and skaldic poetry. Moreover, in the Old Icelandic texts, as can be seen in the instances of the use of pastoral metaphor discussed here, this metaphor is used predominantly to signify the moral and spiritual power of the Catholic Church embodied in the figures of God or Christ, apostles, saints, bishops, abbots, and priests. Therefore, this metaphor must have been transferred to Iceland with Christianity and integrated into the existent Old Norse-Icelandic system of metaphorical thinking by means of translation which transmits metaphors from source-text, once translated, to target-text, and thus plays a critical role in their dissemination (see the appendix: pastoral metaphors in translated Old Norse-Icelandic literature).

There are, however, exceptions, like the conceptualization of social outcasts as wolves (ON *úlfr* and *vargr*) preying on society, which stems, undoubtedly, from a pre-Christian concept of the outlaw, most likely of Germanic or even Proto-Indo-European provenance (Breen 1999). In a *lausavísa* attributed to Hildir Hrólfsdóttir nefju (138-139), dating to ca. 900, we read that King Haraldr *hárfagri* banished an outlaw, who is described in the poem by the term “wolf,” because he slaughtered the king’s herd (which, in the context of the saga, should be understood literally as animals, not people).

Hafnið Nefju nafna;
 nú rekið gand ór landi
 horskan hǫlða barma;
 hví bellið því, stillir?
 Illts við ulf at ylfask
 Yggs valbríkar slíkan;
 muna við hilmis hjarðir
 hægr, ef renn til skógar.

‘You renounce Nefja’s namesake [= Hrólf]; now you banish the wolf, the wise brother of freeholders, from the land; why do you risk that, lord? It is dangerous to threaten such a wolvisish enemy of the Yggr <= Óðinn> of the slain-plank [SHIELD > WARRIOR (= Haraldr)]; he will not be gentle with the ruler’s herds if he runs to the forest.’ (Trans. by Kari Ellen Gade. *Ibid.*).

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In *Óláfs saga helga* by Snorri Sturluson (chapter 76, p. 108), governing people was compared to farming and breeding of cattle in a conversation between King Óláfr *helgi* and his young half-brothers:

Þá spurði hann Guthorm: “Hvat vildir þú flest eiga, frændi?” “Akra,” segir hann. Konungr mælti: “Hversu víða akra mundir þú eiga vilja?” Hann svarar: “Þat vilda ek, at nesit væri þetta alt sáit hvert sumar, er út gengr í vatnit.” En þar stóðu tíu bæir. Konungrinn svarar: “Mikit korn mætti þar á standa”. Þá spurði hann Hálfðan, hvat hann vildi flest eiga. “Kýr,” segir hann. Konungr spurði: “Hversu margar vildir þú kýr eiga?” Hálfðan sagði: “Þá er þær géngi til vatns, skyldu þær standa sem þykst umhverfis vatnit.” Konungrinn svarar: “Bú stór vilit þit eiga. Þat er líkt feðr ykkrum.” Þá spyrr konungr Harald: “Hvat vildir þú flest eiga?” Hann svarar: “Húskarla,” segir hann. Konungr mælti: “Hve marga viltu þá eiga?” “Þat vilda ek, at þeir æti at einu máli kýr Hálfðanar, hróður míns.” Konungr hló at ok mælti til Ástu: “Hér muntu konung upp fœða, móðir.”

‘What would you like to have most, kinsman?’ ‘Cornfields,’ he says. The king said: ‘How wide would you like to have your cornfields?’ He replies: ‘I would like that headland that goes out into the sea to be all sown every summer.’ Ten farms stood there. The king replies: ‘There could be a lot of corn standing there.’ Then he asked Hálfðan what he would most like to have. ‘Cows,’ he says. The king asked: ‘How many cows would you like to have?’ Hálfðan says: ‘When they go down to the water, they must stand there all crowded as close as can be round the water.’ The king replies: ‘It is large establishments you both want to have. That is just like your father.’ Then the king asks Harald: ‘What do you most want to have?’ He replies: ‘Housecarls,’ he says. The king says: ‘How many would you like to have?’ ‘What I would like, is that they should eat up at one meal my brother Hálfðan’s cows.’ The king laughed at this and said to Ásta: ‘Here it must be a king you are bringing up, mother.’ (Trans. by Alison Finlay 2014, vol. II, p. 69).

Notwithstanding the isolated examples above, the pastoral metaphor was dominant in the discourse of the Catholic Church, in which it was used extensively, as demonstrated by its frequency (see headwords *hirðir* and *sauðr* in the *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*).¹ Sources testify that it was

1. The linguistic material used in the article comes from Old Norse-Icelandic literature, which I surveyed myself, and from the Old Norse-Icelandic dictionaries: primarily the electronic version of the *Dictionary of Old Norse Prose*. This dictionary is also the main reference for the dating of Scandinavian manuscripts I use throughout this article.

used mainly to signify the spiritual power of the Catholic Church. There are numerous instances of this metaphor being used in original vernacular Old Icelandic texts, such as skaldic poetry and sagas, as well as letters and diplomas, all of them postdating the Christianization of Scandinavia.

The structure of the pastoral metaphor realized in Old Icelandic texts represents a *ruler* (God, Christ, apostle, saint, bishop, abbot, priest) as *the shepherd of people* and *the ruled people* as *sheep*. The shepherd protects the sheep, gathers them together, cares for them, cares for their bodies, guides and leads them to God and paradise (pasture), leads them away from the devil (wolf) and his snares (jaws), holds them in his hands, gives his life for them. See the following example from *Árna saga byskups* (the text itself was written ca. 1304–1320, it is preserved in MS AM 122b fol., *Reykjarfjarðarbók*, dated to 1375–1399):

Sa hlutur fiell enn a landed j maklegu hamingiu leyse ad þeir sem hyrdmenn hūfdu utlæga giurfa mistu langann tima hyrdersins sums kostar fyrer tilfelle, enn sums kostar fyrer vandræktt og sialfvilia, þviad Narfe Bio<r>gynar bis-kop, er fyrst var til erchebiskops kosenn, syndest ei madur til ad setiast j so haleytt sæte.

This lot yet fell on the land in deserved lucklessness that they who had made the king's men outlaws were for a long time without a shepherd in a way by accident, and yet in a way because of lack of care and free-will, because Narfi the bishop of Bergen, who at first was chosen for archbishop, seemed not to be the man to be placed on such sublime a seat. (Ibid.: 115)

The faithful of the Church, as well as sinners, are put in the role of the sheep, as demonstrated by *Guðmundar saga byskups* (the text itself written after 1343 by the Benedictine monk Arngrímur Brandsson and preserved in the MS Holm. Perg. no. 5 fol. dated to ca. 1350–1365):

Svá gekk á lopt mildi ok manndýrð sira Guðmundar, at sauðir guðs af ym-issum héruðum fóru ok fluttust hann at finna, ok at gera skriptamál fyrir honum sem hinum mjúkasta feðr.

So went up into the sky the kindness and virtue of sir Gudmund, that the sheep of God from various districts travelled and hastened to find him and to make confession before him, as the mildest father. (Ibid.: II, 21)

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The pastoral metaphor is present among *kenningar* of the skaldic poetry, signifying GOD or CHRIST, and APOSTLE. GOD or CHRIST are described as: *virðr góður hirðir* = “the completely revered good pastor”, *framr hirðir fróns* = “the outstanding shepherd of the earth”, *hirðir himnagarðs* = “the shepherd of the heavens’ stronghold”, *hirðir dýrðar himna* = “the shepherd of the glory of the heavens”, *hirðir bryggju mána* = “herdsman of the pier of the moon”, *hjarðar stýrir* = “the leader of the flock”; an APOSTLE, as: *hjarðreki dróttins*; — ‘the shepherd of the Lord.’ See the following anonymous stanza from the Fourth Grammatical Treatise (the text itself dating to ca. 1320–1340, preserved in Codex Wormianus, AM 242 fol., dated to ca. 1350):

Hverr deyr? Hjarðar stýrir. Hví? Fyr sauða lífi. Hvessu? Hiekk á krossi.
Hvar? Þar er Lassarus jarðaz. Hvienær? Helzt að nóni. Hverir knúðu að?
Júðar. Hverr nýtr? Heiðni bötnuð. Hvað gieldr? Djöfuls veldi.

Who dies? The leader of the flock. Why? For the life of the sheep. How? He hung on a cross. Where? Where Lazarus is buried. When? About the ninth hour. Who instigated it? The Jews. Who gets the benefit? Heathendom is reformed. What suffers? The devil’s power. (Trans. by Margaret Clunies Ross. Ibid. 48–49, stanza 62).

See other examples in skaldic poetry: anonymous *Heilags anda drápa* (467, stanza 18), the text itself written in the 13th or 14th century, preserved in AM 757 a 4^o, dated ca. 1390–1410; anonymous *Pétrsdrápa* (834–5, stanza 43, 840–841, stanza 50), the text itself written in the early 14th century, preserved in AM 621 4^o, dated c. 1450–1500; anonymous *lausavísa* from the Fourth Grammatical Treatise (6–7, stanza 10), preserved in the Codex Wormianus, AM 242 fol., dated to ca. 1350; *Kátrínardrápa* written by Kálfr Hallsson (953–4, stanza 36) in the 14th century, preserved in AM 713 4^o from the first half of the 16th century; anonymous *Drápa af Máriugrát* (791, stanza 46), composed probably in the late 14th or early 15th century, preserved in AM 713 4^o from the early 16th century.

In the Icelandic sagas the pastoral metaphor is applied to clergymen, mainly bishops, as in the following passage from *Jóns saga Hólabiskups ens helga* (the text itself dating to ca. 1200, MS Holm. Perg. 5 fol., dating to ca. 1350–1365):

Ok þegar er Ion byskup var buin fra skipe ferR hann heim til stols sins. til Hóla. at vitia guðs hiarðar. sem goðr hirðir. tok hann þegar <at> styrkia ok styra fagrliga guðs kristni.

And when bishop John was ready to get from ship he went home to his bishop's see to Hólar to visit God's herd. As a good shepherd he began then to strengthen and govern fairly God's Christendom. (Ibid.: 81).

Customarily, Icelandic bishops and abbots were addressed in letters and documents as *shepherds*, as in the following example, a priestly oath of allegiance taken by Sigurðr Jónsson for the bishop of Skálholt Jón Vilhjálmsson Craxton, dated to 1430 (*Diplomatarium Islandicum*: IV, 414):

Ek lofuadæ minom virduligum faudr oc herra herra Jonæ viliallmssyni med gudz nadh hyrdingia oc biscup a holum trvskap lydnae oc hoI(l)r æuerdliga staudugliga halda oc gæyma [vtan alla] afsakan oc forþrott oc nokora fanyta forsættningh oc motblastr oc motægangh.

I praise my worthy father and master, master Jón Vilhjálmsson, with God's grace the shepherd and bishop at Hólar, [for] faithfulness for the common people and everlastingly and steadfastly loyal hold and watch from all excuse and exhaustion and any disposition of little use and opposition and adversity.

The texts including the pastoral metaphor contained normative statements on pastoral authority. Among them, there are descriptions of pastoral power implying specific practices of exercising biopolitical power. In the field of sexuality control, it pertained especially to the prohibition of sexual contacts beyond those prescribed by Christian ethics. See the following example from *Árna saga byskups* (written ca. 1304–1320, the earliest text is preserved in MS AM 122b fol., *Reykjarfjarðar-bók*, dated to 1375–1399):

Enn hirdirenn sa sem ei var vejkur helldur stadlegur stolpe sannleiksens villde helldur sitia fyrer reyde þeirra og hardendum, enn þeigia yfer sannendum, enn þeir samneyttu þeim er hann bansette vanvirdande valld h(ei-lagar) kyrkiu og liklana Petri.

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And the shepherd that was never weak but rather a steadfast pillar of truth wanted rather to be exposed to their rage and hardness, than keep silent about the truth, but they had intercourse with them, whom he placed under the ban, disregarding the authority of the Holy Church and the Keys of St. Peter. (Ibid.: 86)

Protection of people’s lives is described as the foremost duty of an ecclesiastical leader, for example in the following passage of *Postola mál* (a sermon about the Apostles in the Icelandic Homily Book – Holm. Perg. 15 4°, folio 7r, lines 25–33, the manuscript dating to ca. 1200, a translation of a *homiliarium* by Paulus Diaconus):

En allra reokelegast scolom ver gæfga hotíþer postola goþs. er hofþingiarró allrar cristne. oc foryssto savþer goþs hiarþar. Aller helger men ero cristz sauþer sem sálma skaldet mælte. Ver lýþer goþs erom sauþer haga hans. En postolar ero hirþar þessa sauþa. þuiat þeir fyldo þat es dominus mælte of sí-álfan sik. góþr hirþer lætr ænd sína fyr sáuþom sínom. Postolar kallasc rétt-lega hirþar. þuiat þeir somnoþo saman goþs hiorþo of allan héim. oc varþvéitto meþ sva mikilli elsko lýþ þan es þeir léiddo goþe til handa ýr ulfs mune. þat er diofols veide. til þess at þeir seldo sik til dauþa. heldr en þeir léte af hende sauþe crisz.

But most earnest of all we should honour the Feasts of the Apostles of God, chieftains of all Christendom and protectors of sheep of God’s herd. All holy men are Christ’s sheep, as the poet of Psalms said. We the God’s people are the sheep of his pasture and the apostles are shepherds of these sheep, because they fulfill this which the Lord said about himself, “The good shepherd forfeits his life for his sheep”. The apostles are rightly called shepherds, because they gather together God’s herds from all over the world and take care with such great love of this people, which they lead to god away from wolf’s mouth, that is devils’s power, so much so that they give themselves up to death, rather than let go the sheep of Christ. (Ibid.)

An ecclesiastical leader exerted control on people’s behavior in the sphere of ethics, as demonstrated by the fragment *De sancto Thorlaco episcopo et aliis episcopis nostris* (the text itself dated to ca. 1200, MS AM 386 4° to 1190–1210):

Sed qualiter beatus Thorlacus ad summi sacerdotii gradum promotus sit, sufficienter in superiore huius operis libro expressimus. His igitur presulibus et eximiis plebis sibi commisse rectoribus Scalotensis ecclesia uiguit, et usque

ad sancti Thorlaci tempora sicut modo comprobatur magis ac magis in suo statu amplificata et dignanter confirmata conualuit. Isti sunt precipui gregis dominici pastores et uerissimi patres patrie qui sue et suorum subditorum utilitati bene prouidentes, suos sequaces crebris ammonitionibus et bonorum operum ex[emplis exhortantes].

We told enough in the previous book of this work of how St. Thorlacr was promoted to the highest ecclesiastical rank. Thus the Church of Skalholt flourished under these bishops and excellent leaders of the people committed to their charge, and up to St. Thorlacr's time, as is now shown, it grew more strong, extended in its state and worthily reinforced. These are the distinguished shepherds of the Lord's flock and the wholly true fathers of their native land, who, well providing for their own and their people's need [exhorted] their followers with repeated admonitions and the ex[ample] of good works. (II, 324; trans. by Kirsten Wolf 1989: 264).

The objective of control on people's behavior by an ecclesiastical leader was moral guiding of people towards God and salvation, and away from the devil, to prevent them from taking the path to damnation, as in *Jóns saga Hólabiskups ens helga* (the text itself dating to ca. 1200, MS AM 234 fol., dating to ca. 1330–1350):

Enn er hinn helgi J(on) byskvp sa sanna iðran með honvm. þa varð hann sva feginn at hann felldi tár. at hann skylldi mega sem goðr hirðir koma þessvm savð aptr til drottinlig<r>ar hiarðar.

But when the holy bishop John saw true repentance within him, then he became so joyful that he shed tears, that he shall to be able, as a good shepherd, to make this sheep to come back to the Lord's herd. (Ibid.: 23).

The managing of the life of the community was based on the principle of superiors' care for subordinate people and the obedience of subordinate people to superiors, as described by *Guðmundar saga byskups* (the text itself written after 1343 by the Benedictine monk Arngrímr Brandsson and preserved in MS Holm. Perg. no. 5 fol. dated to ca. 1350–1365):

Grætr mær ok móðir almennilig kristni, ok vér með móður várri af þeirri grimd ok ágang, er þér gerit henni ok hennar formönnum með berri úhlyðni við æzta hirði, er svá talaði til postulanna ok þeirra lögligra leytismanna: hverr er yðr heyrir, heyrir mik, ok hverr yðr hafnar, hafnar mik.

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The virgin and mother of all the Christian people weeps and we together with our mother because of this grimness and aggression, which you committed against her and her chiefs with open disobedience against the most outstanding shepherd, who so said to the Apostles and their lawful disciples: whoever listens to you, listens to me, and whoever rejects you rejects me. (Ibid.: II, 90–91).

The identified texts that were the carriers of pastoral discourse were created in the centers of power as a propaganda tool for pastoral power and the morality they implied. For this type of power, the moral dimension was constitutive: obedience, or accepting the relationship of power, and service, or exercising power, became moral principles, as in the following instance from Alcuinus’ *Liber de virtutibus et vitiis* (translated into Old Norse in Norway by the end of the 12th century, the earliest MS – AM 619 4^o – dated to ca. 1200–1225):

Kennimannz sysla er, á at minna lyðen i friði, hvat hann scal gera, en lyðren scal lyða með litillæte því er aminna kennimenn. hvatke er æigi er lofat. ok er hirðisens at banna. at æigi verði þat. en lyðsens er at hýyra at æigi gere hann þat.

It is for the priests to admonish the people in peace what they ought to do: it is for the people to hear in humility what the priest admonishes. Whatever is not allowed, it is for the pastor to prohibit it being done: it is for the people to hear, so that they do not do. (Ibid.: 59).

See other examples in Old Norse prose texts: *Saga Óláfs Tryggvasonar* by Oddr Snorrason munk (155; trans. by Andersson 2003: 102), a 12th-century Benedictine monk at the Þingeyrar monastery (preserved in MS AM 310 4^o dated to 1250–1275); *Varnaðar ræða* (6; trans. by Sephton 1899: 246), *A Speech Against the Norwegian Clergy*, text dated to ca. 1200, preserved in MS AM 114a 4^o, dated to 1300–1350; *Þorláks saga* (202, trans. by Ármann Jakobsson and David Clark 2013: 11), written at the beginning of the 13th century, and preserved in MSS AM 383 1 4^o (mid-13th century), Stock. Perg. fol. no. 5 (mid-14th century); and AM 382 4^o (first half of the 14th century); an appointment letter for the abbot at Viðey for priest Helgi Jónsson from the bishop of Skálholt, Ögmundur Pálsson, dated to 1522 (*Diplomatarium Islandicum*: IX, 118); The Church

Ordinance of Christian III, dated to 1537 (*Diplomatarium Islandicum*, X, 159–160, 166).

There is a clear location correlation between the place of production of texts (manuscripts) and the issuance of legal documents containing biopolitical provisions – both originate from the centers of ecclesiastical power (Hólar, Skálholt, and local cloisters subordinated to the episcopal sees). A distinct chronological correlation can be established between the texts of pastoral discourse and the law stemming from the practice of pastoral authority. Perhaps these texts were created during the “campaign” to introduce a specific biopolitical law and disseminated through the preaching and liturgy, especially the liturgy of saint bishops. The cited texts and their manuscripts are dated to the period between the end of the 12th and the beginning of the 14th century, when biopolitical interventions conducted by the Catholic Church in Iceland intensified. They are visible in legal codes issued in 1271 (*Járnsíða*) in 1280 (*Jónsbók*), heavily influenced by the Catholic Church, and in the acts of ecclesiastical law issued by Icelandic bishops: penitentiaries (Þorlákur Þórhallsson, 1178, Skriftaboð; Árni Þorláksson, 1269, Skriftaboð; Jón Halldórsson, 1326, Skriftaboð), Christian laws (Árni Þorláksson, 1275, Kristinréttir), letters of excommunication (Jón Halldórsson, 1326, Bannsakabréf).

Homilies, lives of saints, liturgical and didactic texts were instruments of preaching and liturgy, especially the liturgies of bishop saints. As such, their influence was enhanced by the oral mode of communication (liturgy, preaching) and thus was able to reach wider audiences, including laymen. According to Stefka G. Eriksen (2019: 226), their objective was to transform the cognition and behaviour of the followers of religion. In her own words, “Christian liturgy and religious rituals were the main tools for the transformation of the self after the introduction of Christianity. [...] The liturgical rituals were the ultimate arena and outer manifestation of the cognitive and behavioral changes required by individuals and which were inspired in them by the Church.”

Moreover, the status of speech increased in the context of the mass by entwining the discourse with the sacred, causing the priest’s message to be reinforced in the communication act by religious rituals with their performative acts and language. This way, the pastoral power of the Church was created, maintained, and exercised through language – by the linguistic symbolization of ecclesiastical power as the shepherd’s care of the sheep. The pastoral metaphor was used by the Catholic Church

as, what could be described by John Searle’s term, a “status function declaration” (2010: 105–114). According to Searle, the institutional reality, a state with its apparatus of power, is in the human social world created linguistically by “status function declarations”. “Status function declarations” are a type of speech acts that creates extralinguistic facts and entities in the human social world. Performing “extralinguistic declarations”, humans are bringing about changes in the world in the field of politics, state, offices, marital status, property status. Through utterances, humans are creating and maintaining social institutions with the power relations inherent in them. These institutional facts require a linguistic symbolization – it has to be declared that someone is in a power relation for it to be established and maintained. In Searle’s own words, “because political powers are matters of status functions, they are, in large part, linguistically constituted” (Searle 2010: 169–170).

Appendix. Pastoral metaphors in translated Old Norse-Icelandic literature

The following passages, taken from texts translated from Latin to Old Icelandic, illustrate the transfer of the pastoral metaphor between these languages through the reception of Latin literature. The following examples, with Latin source texts and Old Icelandic target texts juxtaposed, depict the possible lineages of texts’ transmission that might have enabled the cultural transfer.

Below are given the title, short summary and genre, source text of the translation, dating of the oldest preserved manuscript, and, where possible, the dating of the text itself.

The Old Testament of the Bible

Stjórn, a translation of selected historical books of the Old Testament, text dated to the 13th century, the oldest preserved manuscripts dated to the mid-fourteenth century (AM 225 fol. i AM 226 fol.).

Ek man þinn hirdir ok geymari uera hueria leid sem þu uill farit hafa. ok til þessa sama landz þik aprt senda. ok eigi fyrri þik upp gefa enn ek hefir alla þa luti fyllt ok framm latit koma sem ek hefir talat.

Ok enn sagdi Jacob. Þadan steig ok ut gekk Jsraels steinn ok hirdir. edr sua sem ebreskir men segia. at þadan gekk ut hirdaligr steinn.

Drottinn gud andi allz blods. sia firir nockurn mann. þann er styre þessum mannfiolda ok megi fara firir lydnum vt ok inn. at eigi se lydrinn suo sem saudir þeir er eigi hafa hirde.

Enn þa fyrrvm er Saul konvngv var a lifi. vart þv settr höfðingi ok hertogi oc þi heitið af gvði at þv skylldir feða lyð drottins. nv vilivm ver allir þer þiona þi at þv ert ælskvligr faðir öllvm þinvm monnvm.

Ek tok þik or hogvm fra hiarðargezlo oc seṭti ek þik hertoga yfir lyð minn.

Þa mællti Micheas. Þat segi ek satt. at ek sa allan Jsraels lyð dræifaz vm fioll sem savði hirðisslavsa. oc sva mællti drottinn. Þessir hafa engan herligan höfðingia. fyrir þvi snvi hverr til sins heima i friði.

Et ero custos tuus quocumque perrexeris et reducam te in terram hanc nec dimittam nisi conplevero universa quae dixi. (*Stjórn*: 170; *Genesis* 28:15)

Sedit in forti arcus eius, et dissoluta sunt vincula brachiorum et manuum illius per manus potentis Jacob inde pastor egressus est lapis Israhel. (*Stjórn*: 235; *Genesis* 49:24).

Provideat Dominus Deus spirituum omnis carnis hominem qui sit super multitudinem hanc et possit exire et intrare ante eos et educere illos vel introducere ne sit populus Domini sicut oves absque pastore. (*Stjórn*: 339; *Numeri* 27:16–17)

Sed et heri et nudius tertius cum esset Saul rex super nos tu eras educens et reducens Israhel dixit autem Dominus ad te tu pasces populum meum Israhel et tu eris dux super Israhel. (*Stjórn*: 502; *II Samuhel* 5:2)

Et nunc haec dices servo meo David haec dicit Dominus exercituum ego tuli te de pascuis sequentem greges ut esses dux super populum meum Israhel. (*Stjórn*: 506; *II Samuhel* 7:8)

Et ille ait vidi cunctum Israhel dispersum in montibus quasi oves non habentes pastorem et ait Dominus non habent dominum isti revertatur unusquisque in domum suam in pace. (*Stjórn*: 603; *III Regum* 22:17)

The New Testament of the Bible

The sagas of the apostles, compilations drawing from the canonical gospels, the *Actus Apostolorum*, and other sources (Peter Comestor’s *Historia scholastica*, Vincent of Beauvais’ *Speculum historiale*), the earliest texts dated to the 12th–13th centuries and the preserved manuscripts dated to the 13th–14th centuries (AM 656 I 4^o, dated to ca. 1300–1325, AM 649 a 4^o, ca. 1350–1400).

Allir munu þer við mik styggvaz a þessi nott, þviat þat er ritit, Drepinn mun hirðirinn oc munu dreifaz sauðir-nir.

Et ait eis Jesus omnes scandalizabimini in me in nocte ista Quia scriptum est percutiam pastorem et dispergentur oves. Tunc dicit illis Jesus omnes vos scandalum patiemini in me in ista nocte Scriptum est enim percutiam pastorem et dispergentur oves gregis. (*Tveggja postula saga Pétrs ok Páls*: 285; *Marcus* 14:27; *Matthaeus* 26:31)

Jesus mællti við hann: Fæð þu sauði mina.

Dicit ei pasce agnos meos. (*Tveggja postula saga Pétrs ok Páls*: 287; *Ioannes* 21:16)

Sonnu sannara segi ek yðr, at sa er eigi gengr inn um dyrr i sauðahus, helldr stigr hann annan annan veg upp, hann er þiofr ok illvirki, en sa er inn gengr um dyrr, er hirðir sauðanna.

Amen amen dico vobis qui non intrat per ostium in ovile ovium sed ascendit aliunde ille fur est et latro qui autem intrat per ostium pastor est ovium. (*Tveggja postula saga Philipppus ok Jacobs I*: 738; *Ioannes* 10:1–2)

Vær Marcellinus pafi, sagdi hann, er nu her kominn, engi fágari bannsettra skurðgoða, helldr faðir ok forstiori guðs hiarðar, þo at umakligr. (*Jóns saga postola*: 468)

The phrase *forstiori guðs hiarðar* was interpolated into the translated passage from *Vita Marcellini papae* (in *Legenda aurea*) in *Jons saga postola* (ex. 28) from other sources, possibly from: *Dialogus* by Guillelmus Occam: *Ex quibus verbis colligitur quod Petrus postquam perdidit fidem pastor gregis dominici fuit effectus, sed non nisi tunc vel tunc postissime quando dixit sibi Christus, “Pasce oves meas”* (Guillelmus Occam, *Dialogus*, 3, 1, 4, IV); or from *Homiliae in Ezechielem* by Gregorius Magnus: *Hinc Petrus gregis dominici pastor dicit: Iustum Lot oppressum a nefandorum iniuria conversatione eripuit* (Gregorius Magnus, *Homiliae in Ezechielem*, 1, 9, 22).

Homilies

Translation of a homily of St. Gregory the Great (*Homiliae in Evangelia*) in Icelandic homily book AM 677 4^o dated to ca. 1200–1225.

Heim for hann es hann faN salþiN þvi at hirþir vaR ste up til himins es hann hafþi leiþrettan maNiN. (*Homiliur Gregors páfa, Omeliae XL in Evangelia*: 58)

Inventa ove ad domum redit, quia Pastor noster, reparato homine, ad regnum coeleste rediit. (Gregorius Magnus, *Homiliae in Evangelia*, 2, 34, 3)

Sialfr hirþer Criftninar var sva ostvrer oc hreðr við orþ einar ambattar at hann þorþi eigi at iata Gvþi. oc netti Petruf þa Crifti. en þiofrinn iati hanom a croffi. (*Homiliur Gregors páfa, Omeliae XL in Evangelia*: 34)

Certe iste ipse pastor Ecclesiae, ad cuius sacratissimum corpus sedemus, quantae debilitatis, quantaque formidinis ante adventum Spiritus fuerit, ancilla ostiaria requisita dicat. Una enim mulieris voce percussus, dum mori timuit, vitam negavit. Et tunc Petrus negavit in terra, cum latro confiteretur in cruce. (Gregorius Magnus, *Homiliae in Evangelia*, 2, 30, 8)

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Translation of a homily by Bede the Venerable (Beda Venerabilis: *Homiliae*, 1, 9, 1) in the Norwegian homily book AM 619 4° (52) dated to ca. 1200–1225.

Sia hinn fame criftni er sa sauðr er goðr hirðr læitaðe á iorðu. at eptir-latnum niutigum ok niu sauðum engla liðs á himni. ok lagðe hann á axler fer fauðen er hann gann hann. ok bar bann aprt til himins.

Rachel namque, quae ovis aut videns Deum dicitur, Ecclesiam figurate demonstrat, cuius tota intentio ut videre Deum mereatur, invigilat. Et ipsa est ovis centesima, quam pastor bonus relictis in coelo nonaginta novem ovibus angelicarum virtutum, abiit quaerere in terra, inventamque suis humeris imposuit, et sic reportavit ad gregem.

Theological Treatises

Dialogi de vita et miraculis patrum Italicorum of St. Gregory the Great (3, 8, 4) in Old Icelandic translation (*Díalógar Gregors páfa*: 93) produced by the end of the 12th century, the earliest MS – AM 677 4° – dated to ca. 1200–1225.

Fvldisc sva et saNa atqępi gvęs es hann sagęi at sa lvęr mondi eigi hiręi hafa eptir anđlat tveGia bisco pa þeirra es honom voro nęstir.

Sic itaque completa est viri Dei sententia, quatenus post decessum duorum se sequentium eius Ecclesia pastorem minime haberet.

Alcuinus' *Liber de virtutibus et vitiis* (59) translated into Old Norse in Norway by the end of the 12th century, the earliest MS – AM 619 4° dated to ca. 1200–1225.

Kennimannz sysla er, á at minna lyðen i friði, hvat hann scal gera, en lyðren scal lyða með litillæte því er aminna kennimenn. hvatke er ægi er lofat. ok er hirðisens at banna. at ægi verði þat. en lyðsens er at hýyra at ægi gere hann þat.

Sacerdotis est in pace populum dei admonere quid debeat agere: populi est in humilitate audire quae monet sacerdos. Quicquid non licet, pastoris est prohibere ne fiat: plebis est audire ne faciat.

Lives of the Saints

Antóníuss saga (I, 111), the translation of *Vita B. Antonii abbatis* by Athanasius Alexandrinus Evagrius Antiochensis (163). Its manuscript AM 234 fol. is dated to ca. 1340.

Blóð savða Kristz, þat er gvðs þio-
nostvmanna, var vt helltt i sialfv hans
mvsteri, ok með því dreifð ok roðin
virðvlig altari.

Sanguis ovium Christi in Christi
templo effusus veneranda respersit
altaria.

Barlaams saga ok Jósafats (26), the translation of *Vita beatorum Barlaam et Iosaphat* (48), text dated to the 13th century, the oldest manuscripts written at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries (the earliest – Holm. perg. 6 fol, dated to ca. 1275).

Þa er mannz sunr sitr i sinu sæte oc i
valldde oc aller helgir englar hans með
honom. þa sammnast fyrir hann or
ollum ættom. allar þioðer. oc þa skilr
hann þa oc sundr skipttir. sva sem vitr
hirðir. skiptir smala sinum oc skipar
sauðum sinum. oc lambum. til hægge
hanndar ser. en hofrum oc kiðium.
visar hann a vinstri hond.

Cum uenerit Filius hominis in
maiestate sua et omnes angeli cum
eo, tunc sedebit super maiestatis sue
et congregabuntur ante eum omnes
gentes et separabit eos ab inuicem,
sicut pastor segregat oues ab hedis, et
statuet oues quidem a dextris suis,
hedos autem a sinistris.

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GRZEGORZ BARTUSIK

Pórdís Edda Jóhannesdóttir. 2020. A Normal Relationship? Jarl Hákon and Þorgerðr Hólgabrúðr in Icelandic Literary Context. In: *Paranormal Encounters in Iceland 1150–1400*, eds. Ármann Jakobsson & M. Mayburd, 295–310. Kalamazoo: Medieval Institute Publications.

I den här artikeln analyseras användningen av den bibliska konceptuella metaforen för ”regerande som pastoralism”, som utgörs av en projicering av en herdes arbete som modell att styra över ett folk. Författaren diskuterar överföringen av denna begreppsmetafor till fornisländsk litteratur som ett resultat av mottagandet av kristen litteratur, frekvensen och kronologin för språkliga användningsfall av begreppsmetaforen i enskilda genrer och perioder, samt anammandet av texter som möjliggjorde en kulturell överföring av metaforen från latin till fornisländskan. Med Michel Foucaults teori om *gouvernementalité* som utgångspunkt, presenteras en korrelation mellan en framväxt av diskursen om herdamakten över människolivet i det isländska språket och en utveckling av biopolitiska metoder för regerandet över människor på Island, som användes av den katolska kyrkan för att skydda människoliv.

Grzegorz Bartusik
University of Silesia in Katowice
Institute of History
ul. Bankowa 11
PL 40-007 Katowice
grzegorz.bartusik@us.edu.pl