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Sigbjørn Olsen Sønnesyn (eds.), Historical and
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Scandinavian Connection (Durham Medieval and
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être amené à trancher prématurément entre les diverses solutions possibles. Car les «biais» de la méthode des fautes communes sont multiples dans la pratique: leçons clairement erronées rares (ce qui fragilise le raisonnement), rédactions multiples par l'auteur (on peut se demander par ailleurs si ce cas, évident dans la diversité des témoins au minimum dès l'époque carolingienne, c'est-à-dire dès le moment où on a des témoins de l'époque de l'auteur, n'a pas existé dès l'époque classique...), contamination des différentes «familles», archétype corrompu, copistes se faisant éditeurs. Bref, on pénètre dans l'histoire du texte, avec une autre image que celle d'un premier état du texte allant se dégradant sans cesse au fur et à mesure qu'on s'éloigne de sa date de rédaction. Au contraire, apparaît un texte originel avec ses rugosités éventuelles. *Mutandis mutandis*, les éditeurs ont fait un peu le même chemin en ce qui concerne la Bible: par exemple, dans sa remarquable édition des œuvres de Lactance pour le C.S.E.L., Samuel Brandt avait eu tendance à s'aligner sur le texte de la Vulgate. Or, au contraire, il est probable que les copistes ont eu tendance à retenir le texte qu'ils lisaient, chantaient, méditaient à leur époque, les variantes ont bien plus de chances de remonter au début du IV^e siècle que le texte «canonique» de la Vulgate. Et il est donc précieux de garder ces variantes.

Par cette *praegustatio*, j'espère avoir donné envie au lecteur de se plonger dans ces mille pages, où il retrouvera la riche diversité du monde médiéval, et des études chères à la récipiendaire qui est ici honorée. Il y retrouvera également un grand nombre de savants parmi les plus renommés. Et ajoutons encore un mot pour dire la qualité proprement matérielle de l'édition, tout à l'honneur des deux maîtres d'ouvrage et des éditions Brepols.

Michel Jean-Louis Perrin

Historical and Intellectual Culture in the Long Twelfth Century: The Scandinavian Connection (Durham Medieval and Renaissance Monographs and Essays 5), ed. by Mia Münster-Swendsen, Thomas K. Heebøll-Holm and Sigbjørn Olsen Sønnesyn, Toronto 2016 (Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies), XIV + 322 pp.

The aim of this collective volume, dedicated to the memory of the distinguished scholar Karsten Friis-Jensen (1947–2012), is to «illuminate the emergence of a written historical culture in Denmark from the early twelfth century onwards by situating this historical culture in a wider geographical, chronological, and cultural context» (1). Ultimately, what this book attempts to show is, as the introduction (1–12) clarifies, «that the writing of history in Scandinavia was firmly and in numerous ways embedded in the greater cultural currents of the Latin West as a whole» (12). The anthology brings together 15 essays organised around four themes.

1. The Writing of History: European Context and Points of Comparison: Elisabeth van Houts (13–30) explores how marriage inspired historical writing (the anonymous «Imperial Chronicle», Hugh of Fleury's «Liber modernorum regum Francorum», Gallus Anonymus, and Cosmas of Prague) from five different angles: «Chronicles Written for Brides or Recently Married Women», «The Role of Married Women in

the Composition of Chronicles», «The Role of Historiography in the Preparation for Marital Alliances», «The Remembrance of Past Marriage», and «Exogamous Marriage of Historians' Parents». Together, these different perspectives enable an understanding of strategies used by historiographers to promote or prevent a marriage etc., and in some cases also revealing the manipulating hands of the commissioning monarch.

Nora Berend's examination of a composite (juridical, hagiographical and historiographical) range of texts (31–50) evinces a complex and differentiated picture of how the Christianisation of Hungary was depicted in medieval sources. Her study thus provides not only an analysis of the relevant medieval ideas found in these texts, but also some useful suggestions to guide the modern historian in the critical use of such conflicting materials stretching from the early eleventh-century mirror of princes «*Libellus de institutione morum*» to the «*Chronici Hungarici compositio saeculi XIV*».

Alheydis Plassmann's contribution (51–70) offers some reflections on the third book of Adam of Bremen's «*Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum*», namely the portrait of Archbishop Adalbert and the description of his moral deterioration. Whereas previous research focused on (classical or biblical) role models for the description of persons, Plassmann concentrates on role models of circumstances and events (esp. the relations to the royal court) as they appear in earlier or contemporary *gesta* and *vitae episcoporum*, and compares them to Adam's description of bishops in order to better understand his idea of the ideal bishop. In short, Adam appears to agree with the *gesta* and *vitae* that after his consecration a bishop should limit his royal service and dedicate himself entirely to his flock. The comparison also allows Plassmann to explain the cause of Adalbert's fall: ambition, the description of which serves as an admonition to Adam's dedicatee, Archbishop Liemar.

Lasse C. A. Sonne (71–90), taking Assmann's cultural memory theory as a point of departure, investigates Old Norse descriptions of pre-Christian Scandinavian religion from the early twelfth century into the first half of the fourteenth century. Sonne's survey shows that whereas the few twelfth-century descriptions construct paganism as idolatry and worship of demons (reflecting the ideological integration of Norway and Iceland into the medieval West), the thirteenth- and fourteenth-century descriptions indicate the opposite tendency of seeing the pagan past as something unique, an expression of Scandinavia's own culture as distinguished from the medieval culture of the West: hence, the notion of Northification whose process can be explained, among other reasons, as a reaction against negative historiographical portrayals of the North (cf. the first chapter of «*Passio et miracula beati Olavi*» and «*Gesta Swenomagni regis et filiorum eius et passio gloriosissimi Canuti regis et martyris*» and similar passages going back to Jer 1:13–14; Isa 14:13 etc.).

2. The English Connection: Rodney M. Thomson (91–103) examines William of Malmesbury's treatment of the Scandinavians. William's conceptions of the ethnic and geographical origins rely on Jordanes and Isidore whose characterisation of the Scandinavians as barbarians the English historiographer also adopts. This is developed further in the descriptions of the arrival and settlement of the Norsemen in England, an account which clearly stresses the destruction of holy people and places and the subsequent barbarisation of the English. Particularly interesting is Thom-

son's discussion of five passages of which four reappear in similar versions in Snorri Sturlason's *Heimskringla*. However, Snorri did not depend upon William. Apparently, both authors had access to oral sources of their own.

In his article on the production of the *Roskilde Chronicle* (ca. 1134–38) Michael H. Gelting (104–118) argues, in short, that its description of the exploits of the Lothbrok-sons in England draws upon certain passages of the fifth book of Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*. Considering the fact that Henry's *Historia* began to circulate in 1133, Gelting's findings seem to imply that excellent connections existed between the Roskilde chapter and England. Although the exact nature of these connections remains to be determined, an immediate use of the *Historia Anglorum* at Roskilde confers a *European outlook* on the intellectual milieu that produced the first chronicle in Denmark.

The first known historiographer in Denmark, however, is Ælnoth, the monk from Canterbury who during his exile in Odense (following the Norman conquest of England) composed the prosimetric *Gesta Swenomagni regis et filiorum eius et passio gloriosissimi Canuti regis et martyris* (ca. 1110–1120). Analysing Ælnoth's style (including comments on the verse, structure, word order, classical and biblical elements etc.) Michael Winterbottom (119–130) offers a more precise literary understanding of Denmark's earliest historiography.

3. Liturgy and History: Also stemming from the Odense monastic milieu are the *Tabula Othiniensis* (ca. 1095) and the *Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martyris* (ca. 1095–1110) which form the earliest preserved hagiographical texts from Scandinavia. Sigbjørn Olsen Sønnesyn (131–147) explores the immediate liturgical context of the two earliest texts, relates them to Ælnoth's *Gesta* and places the entire Odense material in a broader religious and intellectual context. Where previous research has focused mainly on the political aspects of these texts, Sønnesyn's panorama of the contemporary monastic culture firmly locates the Odense material within the framework of monastic ideals and practices.

Under the four headings *«Virtues and Character of the Saint during his Lifetime»*, *«The Deeds and Accomplishments of the Saint during His Lifetime»*, *«The Posthumous Efficacy of the Saint»*, and *«The Present Relationship between the Saint and the Celebrating Community»*, Roman Hankeln (148–165) examines the performative context of the chants of the offices of the saints Cnut, Olav and Cnut Lavard and how they participated in the articulation of history. Hankeln's analysis of the relationship between text and music and of the function of music as an interpretative tool thus provides a richer understanding of the historical depiction of these sainted rulers.

Nils Holger Petersen (166–188) widens the perspective further by painting the big picture of how saints' lives and miracles, seen by Augustine as continuations of divine history and thus as participating in salvation history, were integrated into the liturgy of the Latin West. Petersen's account of the liturgical appropriation of saints' narratives gives several illuminating examples of the interaction involved between written culture and ritual aspects. In particular, he shows how the office of Saint Cnut Lavard must be seen as part of such a liturgical construction, which, as Petersen points out, constitutes *«a particular kind of writing of history»* (188).

4. *New Perspectives on Danish Historical Writing*: Mia Münster-Swendsen (189–210) offers a refreshing approach to addressing the question of the possible source of Ralph Niger's inclusion of reports of certain twelfth-century Danish affairs in his chronicle. In the attempt to explain how the English chronicler, who lived in France ca. 1160–1190, was so surprisingly well-informed on near-contemporary Danish events, scholars have tended to hypothesise a lost textual source. Instead, Münster-Swendsen, taking as a point of departure the intellectual circle of Archbishop William of the White Hands, explores the Franco-Danish networks in Reims and Paris, suggesting the retired Archbishop of Lund Eskil, Eskil's nephew, the chronicler Sven Aggesen, and the bishop-elect Valdemar of Schleswig, as possible informants to Ralph. Indeed, Münster-Swendsen article is a helpful corrective against myopic readings of the medieval historiographer.

In 1165, Bishop Absalon of Roskilde, later the archbishop of Lund, invited the French regular canon William of the Parisian abbey of Sainte-Geneviève to come to Denmark to reform the abbey of Saint Thomas on Eskilsø, which, some ten years later, under William's abbacy, was renamed Saint Thomas of the Paraclete and transferred to Æbelholt, where William ended his earthly life in 1203. Subsequently, Absalon's nephews Andrew and Peter Sunesen, the former Absalon's successor as Archbishop of Lund, the latter Bishop of Roskilde, prepared, and obtained, in 1224, William of Æbelholt's canonisation. Through a close reading of the *Sancti Wilhelmi abbatis vita et miracula* and William's letter collection *Thomas K. Heebøll-Holm* (211–234) explores the political and ecclesiastical interests underlying the canonisation process.

C. Stephen Jaeger's comparative study of the *Gesta Normannorum* (also known as *Historia Normannorum* or *De moribus et actis primorum Normanniae ducum*) and the *Gesta Danorum* (235–251) illustrates how Dudo of St Quentin and Saxo Grammaticus represent respectively the peak and decline of the *charismatic culture* (cf. Jaeger's 1994-book *The Envy of Angels*). The core of Jaeger's analysis concerns the role of poetry. As is known, both works are written in prosimetric form, but, as Jaeger observes, differ significantly in poetic functions. In short, the poems appear to support two different messages: Dudo celebrates the present (greatness towards which his story progresses), whereas Saxo, a nostalgic *laudator temporis acti*, looks longingly back to the past (greatness which fades as his story progresses).

Another comparative study involving the *Gesta Danorum* is undertaken by Thomas Foerster (252–271) who explores Saxo's and Godfrey of Viterbo's notions of empire. As has been shown by earlier research, most notably by the dedicatee of the book under review, Saxo shapes a conception of Denmark as a northern Rome. Inevitably, he would have to relate this idea to that of *translatio imperii*, that is, for the last parts of the *Gesta*, to harmonise the deeds of the Danes with the ups and downs of the Hohenstaufen dynasty. Consequently, scholars have looked for points of contact with Otto of Freising. However, as Foerster argues, it may be just as, if not more relevant and fruitful to look for parallels in the work of Godfrey. Even if Saxo's knowledge of Godfrey cannot be demonstrated, it is certainly useful to juxtapose their historical narratives in order to better understand how both reflect contemporary imperial discourse.

Saxo is the subject of yet another comparative study: Jenny Benham (272–294), concluding part four, looks at how Saxo and Roger of Howden retell 1180s events of war and peacemaking in order to illustrate the challenges involved in establishing the veracity of the narrated events. The difficulty with Saxo is known: the *«Gesta Danorum»* is shaped by Saxo's extensive use and imitation of classical authors. Add to that his use of rhetorical embellishments. Hence the utility of the comparison with Roger of Howden who avoids both rhetoric and classical borrowings and has consequently been regarded as a reliable source. However, Benham's many examples of rewriting (deliberate omissions, changes and additions) in Roger's *«Chronica»* and *«Gesta regis Henrici secundi»* should prompt scholars to read seemingly objective historians more critically.

When Friis-Jensen died in the summer of 2012, he had embarked on a new edition of the writings of Sven Aggesen (the *«Lex castrensis»*, the *«Brevis historia regum Dacie»*, and the *«Genealogia regum Dacie»*). In the final article (295–317), Winterbottom presents Friis-Jensen's preliminary findings including an account of the transmission (no medieval manuscript survives) and an evaluation of the earlier editions (Stephanius 1642 and Gertz 1916), remarks on the utility of prose rhythm as a philological tool, and a list of Friis-Jensen's and Winterbottom's own suggestions for the improvement of the text. It is indeed to be hoped that Winterbottom's presentation and comments will inspire scholars to pick up the thread of Friis-Jensen's work.

All the contributions offer compelling readings of historical sources related to the *«long twelfth century»*, and it goes without saying that this review cannot do justice to the volume's richness and complexity. I certainly would have liked to go into more detail on each article, but due to considerations of space, I shall limit myself to some final remarks.

On the whole, the volume successfully *«illuminates the emergence of a written historical culture in Denmark (...) from c. 1050 to 1225»* (i). Admittedly, the first part (*«The Writing of History: European Context and Points of Comparison»*) is the least integrated part of the volume. Neither of the two first essays discuss Scandinavian twelfth-century culture, and the third focuses on Adam of Bremen's book III (on the archbishop Adalbert) while one would expect, given the *«Scandinavian Connection»*, a discussion of book IV (the so-called *«Descriptio insularum aquilonis»*).

A final critical remark: why the subtitle *«The Scandinavian Connection»* instead of simply *«The Danish Connection»*? With a very few exceptions, discussions on Scandinavian sources other than Danish are conspicuously absent. Just to take one example: both Münster-Swendsen and Heebøll-Holm discuss the Franco-Danish network of the later twelfth-century. Why not supplement these discussions with an article on the Nidaros (Trondheim) milieu and the French connections of Archbishop Eystein Erlendsson and the historian Theodoricus Monachus?

I noticed some typos throughout the book, mostly in the Latin quotations. In sum, the volume is a valuable contextualisation of the written historical culture of twelfth-century Denmark and a worthy homage to the memory of Karsten Friis-Jensen.

Marek Thue Kretschmer