

tømmerproduktion. Som Chief Labour Officer blev han fortrolig med tømmerbranchens mangfoldighed og glad for træer. Skønt allerede i 1945 fast besluttet på at bruge sin nye viden på antikhistorien kunne forf. først to år inde i sit otium, i 1972, begynde arbejdet med det foreliggende værk, der, emnets vigtighed til trods, er det første i sin art. Tidsmæssigt er bogen (bortset fra kap. 13) klart afgrænset til perioden fra bronzealderen til romerrigets undergang, rumligt mere vagt til grækernes, romernes og fønikernes verden, Spanien og Gallien undtaget, da disse to områder synes at have været selvforsynende med træ og ikke at have spillet nogen større rolle som leverandører til andre områder. Det er nemlig udbud-efterspørgsel-aspektet, der har været styrende for bogens opbygning (s. 3), hvad der lyder modernistisk, men fungerer fornuftigt. Kapiteloverskrifterne kan give en idé om værkets langt fra selvfølgelige disposition: 1. Kildematerialets natur. 2. Mediterrane skove. 3. Libanons cedertræer. 4. Bronzealderpladser og Homer. 5. Skove og flåder. 6. Træ til landhære. 7. Attisk træforsyning. 8. Byen Roms forsyning med træ. 9. Gårde, parker og haver. 10. Møbeltræ. 11. Træ til skulptur. 12. Tømmerbranchen. 13. Skovens forsvinden (Deforestation). Hvert kapitel skal danne en helhed, hvad der koster nogle gentagelser og er det værd. Efter en veloplagt og oplysende præsentation af kildematerialet gennemgås de vigtigste træsorters egenart og fordeling ud fra den opfattelse, at der ikke er sket voldsomme klimatiske ændringer i området fra bronzealderen til i dag. Historien om Libanons høje cedertræer med deres insektafvisende, velduftende ved afspejler i forfatterens levende fremstilling århundreders politiske historie i det østlige Middelhav. Bogens måske bedste afsnit er Skove og flåder, inspireret af R. G. Albions bog fra 1926 om sammenhængen mellem briternes udenrigspolitik og deres adgang til godt skibstømmer. Så vigtigt træet var for flåden, var landhærene dog forholdsvis mere træforbrugende, som det vises på især materiale fra romersk England. Det er træ som gavntømmer der har forf.s interesse, så landbrug behandles kun kort. Det afsluttende kapitel overbeviser ikke mindst ved uddrag af Norman Douglas' gruopvækkende beretninger fra vandringer i Syditalien i dette århundredes begyndelse om, at jernbanen må lette antikken og geden for en del af ansvaret for skovenes kranke skæbne. Forf. bereder selv læseren på et skuffende kap. 12 og inviterer i samme åndedrag til nye studier i et vigtigt, og, øjensynligt ikke blot når det gælder den antikke middelhavsverden, forsømt område. Det er heldigt for efterfølgerne, at Meiggs blev den første. Årtiers arbejde med bl.a. hovedværkerne *Roman Ostia* og *The Athenian Empire* (anm. af Skydsgaard, HT 75, 13. række 2, s. 208-9) gør, at han bevæger sig sikkert her, hvor han i hvert fald i starten nød »not having to wade through a thick undergrowth of controvercy« (s. 9).

*Signe Isager*

NIELS SKYUM-NIELSEN & NIELS LUND (eds.): *Danish Medieval History: New Currents*. Copenhagen, Museum Tusulanum Press, 1981. 258 pp.

KARSTEN FRIIS-JENSEN (ed.): *Saxo Grammaticus: A Medieval Author between Norse and Latin Culture*. Copenhagen, Museum Tusulanum Press, 1981. 173 pp.

These two volumes on *Danish Medieval History* and *Saxo Grammaticus* present the papers delivered at a symposium held in honour of the 500th anniversary of the University of Copenhagen. We are told in the acknowledgements that the

subjects to be chosen for such symposia were those in which »the university could claim to maintain significant scholarly traditions«. The *Medieval History* volume contains sections on Social History, the History of Women, Constitutional History, the History of Towns and Trade, the History of Castles and Fortifications, and the Agricultural Crisis of the Later Middle Ages. The sections vary in length and pattern, containing two or more papers, and also a »response« to one or more papers. The *Saxo Grammaticus* volume straightforwardly presents a series of ten papers.

Many of the contributors to the symposium were Scandinavians but the organisers have sought an international flavour by inviting a number of other Europeans to contribute. Four of the six sections in *Medieval History* open with a paper on »international background«. One understands why the decision was made, but it was not in all cases a felicitous one. In the section on the History of Women, for example, it is clear that Georges Duby was invited to give the »international background« lecture. He explains ingeniously in his opening paragraph that »international« will in his paper be restricted to northern France in the twelfth century, and to the aristocracy only.

The difficulties of Professor Duby's dual role remain unresolved. Such ringing generalisations as »Woman is always subjected to the power of a man« represent not an international situation, but the author's conclusions from a study of some written evidence from a limited period, place and class. So long as the context is borne in mind they may well have some degree of validity, but it seems a pity that so misleading a word as »international« was retained in the title. I do not know whether the Joycian effects of certain spellings are to be credited to author, translator or printer. The evocative orthography *primordeal* occurs twice, with particularly deceptive overtones in »an even primordeal importance is attached to the sexual act« (p. 65); reality is masked behind a »veal of ideology« (p. 58) and the same page has the sadly unfeminist usage »in he beginning«. Nanna Damsholt's response to this paper is a startling and superb example of the feminine modesty convention at its most grateful, but in her own paper on *Women in Medieval Denmark: A study in Rape* she hovers somewhat uneasily between scholarship and ideology. Such unease recurs elsewhere in the volume. Professor Hilton's opening paper attempts definition of the social historian's role. I do not disagree with his statement that »as much arid historical writing has resulted from the imposition of theoretical schemes as from the indiscriminate heaping up of factual data«, (p. 12) except perhaps to wonder whether either of these approaches merits the definition »historical«. Niels Lund however, in spite of the title of his paper *Viking Age Society in Denmark – Evidence and Theories*, is less troubled by doubts concerning the historian's role than by the writing of books by non-historians: »Unfortunately most surveys of the Vikings are written by other scholars« (p. 31). These unhappy beings, he explains, do not understand what kinds of evidence it is proper to use or proper to discard, though such understanding is »in the spinal cord of most historians«. Such arrogance has its own romantic charm, but until any Viking historian demonstrates proper control of philological methodology, we may perhaps be forgiven for gently pointing out certain weaknesses in their spinal cords, as for example in the semantic naivety of Dr Lund's discussion of *bryti* and *hlaford* (pp. 30-31).

The volume on *Saxo Grammaticus* ranges through manuscript problems, sources, style and morality. Discussion of sources inevitably invites comparison with the Icelandic sagas, and a number of papers develop such themes. Birgit Strand's paper on *Women in Gesta Danorum* demonstrates clearly and fully shifts of attitude between Snorri and Saxo, and this demonstration gives conviction to her evaluation of Saxo's presentation of Thyre Danebod. Other papers discuss Saxo's dependence on Latin models, and Karsten Friis-Jensen's paper on *The Lay of Ingellus and its Classical Models* is a particularly interesting corrective to the stress on Saxo's northern sources. Another dimension is provided by Kurt Johanneson's paper on *Order in Gesta Danorum and Order in the Creation* which discusses the parallels in Saxo's concepts of order and presentation with those of the learned schools of the twelfth century.

Peter Fisher gives us some pleasant insights into Saxo's witty use of language in his paper *On Translating Saxo into English*, whereas Hilda Ellis Davidson whose paper is called *Wit and Eloquence in the courts of Saxo's Early Kings* is rather more concerned with folk-lore parallels than with wit. Her footnotes, unsupported by adequate bibliographical details, would make us critical of the absence of editorial control, if we were not already so grateful that this volume is much less marred by misprints than *Danish Medieval History* where the most outrageous errors disfigure page after page.

It may not be easy to turn the papers of a symposium into a coherent volume of articles, but *Saxo Grammaticus* has achieved the more satisfactory result. In *Danish Medieval History* the chattiness of the spoken paper should have been tautened into a more scholarly presentation of the evidence, and the »responses« omitted altogether. If the proof-reading had then been handled with even minimal competence, we would welcome both these volumes as warmly as we welcome the University of Copenhagen's celebration of its 500th birthday.

Christine E. Fell

HEDDA GUNNENG & BIRGIT STRAND (red.): Kvinnans ekonomiska ställning under nordisk medeltid. Uppsatser framlagda vid ett kvinnohistoriskt symposium i Kungälv 8-12 oktober 1979. Lindome, 1981. 119 s.

Det lille hæfte med foredrag fra det kvinnehistoriske symposium i Kungälv 1979 præsenterer sig som en håndfuld gode punktundersøgelser om kvinders erhvervs- og retsstilling i middelalder og tidlig nutid.

Der er ikke mindre end fem vestnordiske bidrag, tre norske og to islandske, hvoraf det mest perspektivrige, fordi det behandler den sværest tilgængelige erhvervsgruppe, nok er Helgi Þorlákssons studie »Arbeidskvinnens, særlig vever-skens, økonomiske stilling på Island i middelalderen«. Men den norske kvinde, både i agrarsamfundet – særligt i hendes egenskab af enke og således familieforsørger (Ragnhild Aarsæther: Kvinner som familieforsørgere og sjølforsørgende belyst ved nordnorske skattelister på 1500-tallet og 1600-tallet) og som aktiv i tekstilerhvervet i Bergen (Ingvild Øye Sølvberg: Tekstilarbeidet – et kvinnearbeid i Bergen i Middelalderen?) kan også fange læseren, og hertil slutter sig de to studier om kvindens retsstilling i Norge hhv. på Island (Randi Andersen: Kvinns økonomiske retsstode i norsk mellemalder og Anna Sigurdardóttir: Islandske kvinders økonomiske retslige stilling i middelalderen).

Overfor de nævnte fem står de svenske bidrag af Eva Österberg om ikke-