

dessa indicier kan förstås avfärdas som ytterst osäkra om man ser dem isolerade. Men när Ahmad Ibn Fadlans redogörelse stämmer med brandgravarna i Svealand, Kvinnebyamulettens och andra runformlers åkallan efter Tor i sjukdomsnöd stämmer överens med Adam av Bremen, Adam av Bremens framställning av Gamla Uppsala har stora likheter med Snorri Sturlusons framställning av Asgård: då är det mer än tillfälligheter.

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MATHS BERTELL

Jón Viðar Sigurðsson & Thomas Småberg (red.), *Friendship and Social Networks in Scandinavia, c. 1000–1800* (Turnhout: Brepols 2013). 310 s.

For Scandinavian scholars, particularly medievalists, this volume may invoke a sense of *déjà vu* as many of the results published here, especially on medieval friendship (esp. Jón Viðar Sigurðsson, Lars Hermanson, Nanna Damsholt), have already been circulated in recent years in the form of books, dissertations (Ola Teige, Bård Frydelund) or articles in Scandinavian languages. From an international perspective, however, there is great value in bringing this research, together with a number of original articles, to the attention of a broader audience. What remains problematic is the way this research is presented and related to the international scholarly debate (see below).

A short editorial introduction places this volume in the medievalist research tradition of legal anthropology, now dominant in Scandinavia, which stresses the crucial importance of mutual, both horizontal and vertical, societal ties in stateless societies. In his opening essay Hermanson convincingly argues that in the early and high Middle Ages, both in the West and in Scandinavia, ties of friendship were *un fait social*, which did not distinguish between symbolic, religious, political, transactional, or purely pragmatic aspects. This type of bonds constituted a tightly intertwined social fact which was confirmed and reproduced by oaths and rituals and upheld through public recognition.

The next three articles explore the role of friendship in Iceland and the Norwegian realm from 900–1300. Sigurðsson masterfully recapitulates his research on the crucial societal role of friendship (both horizontal and vertical) in Iceland from its early settlement until the Norwegian takeover between the 1260s to 1280s which saw the growth of the importance of formal relations emanating from above (chieftainship replaced by king's officials) at the expense of informal ties coming from the bottom. Randi

Bjørshol Wærdahl, however, argues convincingly that even after the inclusion of Iceland in the Norwegian realm, personal connections and mediators, rather than formal ways, were crucial for one's case to enter the king's attention (even though the author should have perused Gerd Althoff's classical: "Verwandschaft, Freundschaft, Klientel: Der schwierige Weg zum Ohr des Herrschers" from his *Spielregeln* (1997)). Joanna Skórzewska presents the friendships of and with an Icelandic saint and bishop, Guðmundr Arason (1161–1237) and their implications for how clerical masculinities were constructed in vernacular hagiography.

Hans Jacob Orning offers a superb Jamesonian reading of the socio-political unconscious of two Old Norse (Norwegian & Icelandic) renditions of the Tristan and Isolde romance (*Tristrams saga*). He is able to show what type of politics and social hierarchies these texts imply as well as what alternative senses kingship could acquire in different versions of courtly culture. Similarly, Småberg reads *The Chronicle of Duke Erik* both as a reflection of the masculine friendship-oriented values of Swedish courtly society and as the vehicle of change for these values. However, the author sometimes appears to confuse friendliness with friendship (demeanor with social relationship), which leads him to overstate the significance of friendships in the chronicle. His conclusions about Queen Eufemia's position, at the same time as being radically transgressive and the very embodiment of the homosocial discourse's expectations of femininity, also seem flat out self-contradictory (pp. 224–226). Mia Münster-Swendsen's *Educating the Danes* places the Danish intellectuals in the English education networks and friendships before the rise of universities in the 12th century. The article is also an erudite expression of the frustration surrounding the profound difficulties in tracing this type of connections in the sources. Damsholt reads Saxo's *Gesta* and Abbot Vilhelm of Æbelholt's letters as two different discourses in the role of masculine friendships in the Danish polity *vis-à-vis* monastic community in the early 13th century. Although generally interesting and illuminative, towards the end of the article several rather unsupported interpretations of clerical purity are proposed along with supposedly well hidden suggestions of homosexuality or fear of masturbation. One wonders if the conclusions have not gone too far.

The last, modern section of the book contains a methodically inspiring article by Gunner Lind about the way, and with whom, the Danish kings were able to befriend in the early 17th and early 18th centuries. There are also two articles by Teige and Frydenlund on the wealthy merchants' informal connections rigging (and thereby corrupting) the Danish-Norwegian administration in the 18th and early 19th centuries (see also below). A summary essay by Helgi Þorláksson closes the volume.

The English in the articles is generally well-edited with some truly enjoyable pieces of scholarly prose (e.g. Münster-Swendsen, Orning, Bjørshol Wærdahl). Unfortunately, two essays drag down the overall impression of the book and the publisher should have provided better proofreading: Skórzewska's prose suffers from chronic syntax problems or slips up in the use of crucial concepts (p. 81: "sex" instead of "gender") and Damsholt's English (in translation) does not always follow English idioms and collocations.

What this book really suffers from, however, is the indifference that the contributions show to each other. For instance, the articles by Teige and Frydenlund study the way wealthy, top-level merchants from Christiania used their social connections and brokerage as leverage in business at home and in the Oldenburg capital, Copenhagen, in two consecutive periods – the early and late 18th century. Despite that, it seems as though the authors did not read each other's articles. Similarly, one would expect a discussion about courtly and clerical masculinities between Damsholt and Småberg, or what courtly literature can say about vertical and horizontal friendships limiting royal power in the Swedish and Norwegian political culture between Småberg and Orning. Skórzewska and Bjørshol Wærdahl do refer to Sigurðsson's essential research on Icelandic friendships but not to his essay in this very book. The volume is not divided into any sections (suggested above), there are no interconnections between the articles and, apart from Þorláksson's essay, no attempt is made to aggregate these often interesting findings. As a result, this book appears to be more like a thematically consistent collection of articles or conference proceedings than a volume with the ambition of establishing an argument in its entirety which would contribute to the international research.

The question of the readership remains somewhat problematic too. Firstly, except from Hermanson, Münster-Swendsen, and Orning, the authors and the editors did not put much effort into integrating their examples into the context of the continental Middle Ages. Without such a background it is difficult to determine how typical, representative, or exceptional the Scandinavian types of friendships and uses of social networks were with regard to what happened in Europe. Secondly, almost all the authors operate within a very Scandinavian ("Introduction", Sigurðsson, Damsholt, Þorláksson etc.), sometimes myopically national, research context (p. 201). It seems as if scholarship on *amicitiae* and social networks had not been at the core of the international medievalist agenda for decades (the lack of references to research on *Personenverbandstaat* and *Gruppenbildung* (except for the three widely quoted texts by Althoff), is conspicuous). Thirdly, a few of the referenced editions and translations of the sources are far from the accepted international standards and consist of translations into the given author's

own tongue (e.g. *Nestorkrönikan*) or English translations not provided with references to Latin originals (e.g. *Vita Karoli Magni*).

All in all, inadvertently but nonetheless quite effectively, this volume creates an impression of medieval Scandinavia as *une exception célèbre*. A prominent example of how to avoid such pitfalls and fruitfully integrate Scandinavian medieval studies into continental research could be the recent volume by Kim Esmark, Hermanson, Orning and Helle Vogt: *Disputing Strategies in Medieval Scandinavia* (Turnhout 2013). These deficiencies notwithstanding, *Friendship and Social Networks in Scandinavia, c. 1000–1800* is a thematically consistent collection offering a couple of great pieces of scholarship, worthwhile for both international and Nordic medievalists as well as scholars interested in a modern understanding of patron-client relationships.

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Elisabet Regner, *Det medeltida Stockholm: en arkeologisk guidebok* (Lund: Historiska media 2013). 250 s.

På 1800-talet tillkom en rad stadsplaneförslag för Gamla stan, som gick ut på att den gamla bebyggelsen skulle rivas och ersättas med stora hyreskaserner i fyrkantiga kvarter vid raka gator. Visserligen var stadsdelen vid det laget rätt förslummad, men tack och lov blev dessa visioner aldrig förverkligade. När upprustningen av bebyggelsen på Stadsholmen senare kom igång visade det sig vid byggnadsarkeologiska undersökningar och utgrävningar att minst 70 % av fastigheterna, åtminstone innanför de båda långgatorna, har medeltida murverk i flera våningar. Dessa hus hade efter medeltiden byggts om och fått nya fasader. Vidare framkom att medeltida källare är bevarade under både hus och gator på många ställen. Även gatorna och gränderna är fortfarande i stort sett desamma som under medeltiden.

Arkeologiska rapporter kan vara svåråtkomliga och svåra att tolka. Det är därför tacknämligt att både äldre och nyare resultat nu redovisas i några översiktliga framställningar. Trots att dessa är landskapsvis ordnade, får arkeologen Elisabet Regners Stockholmsvolym här representera hela serien. Hon har kombinerat sina arkeologiska kunskaper med uppgifter ur goda historiska arbeten, vilket gjort den fint illustrerade boken till mer än en arkeologisk guidebok, till en behändig historik över det medeltida Stockholm att ha med sig vid strövtåg i Gamla stan.

Gamla stan är kanske inte det första man tänker på när det gäller Stock-