



Theodoricus: *De antiquitate regum Norwagiensium* / *On the Old Norwegian Kings*. Edited with translation and commentary by Egil Kraggerud. Instituttet for sammenlignende kulturforskning / The Institute for Comparative Research in Human Culture in Oslo, Serie B: Skrifter, 169. Oslo: Novus Forlag, 2018. xcvi + 396 pp.

Reviewed by FRANCESCO D'ANGELO

In this book, Egil Kraggerud undertakes the not easy task of giving a new standard edition of Theodoricus' *De antiquitate regum Norwagiensium*, a late twelfth-century chronicle and one of the most important monument of the Norwegian Middle Ages. The first edition of the text, in 1880 included by Gustav Storm in his *Monumenta historica Norvegiae*, was in fact based on an incomplete manuscript tradition and became outdated, at least on a textual basis, after the discovery, at the beginning of the twentieth century, of two other copies unknown to Storm. Except for an English translation, published in 1998 with introduction and commentary by David and Ian MacDougall for the Viking Society, the Latin text of Theodoricus still awaited a publication on its own and Kraggerud's edition, featuring an English translation by Peter Fisher and a Norwegian translation by Kraggerud as appendix, aims exactly to fill such a gap.

As stated in the *Preface* (p. XI) by Kraggerud himself, the first aim of this new edition has been to present, discuss and evaluates textual issues and matters, including in his thorough review also decisions and conjectures taken by the previous editors. To that end, Kraggerud provided the text with a rich and mainly philological commentary which, in his intentions, has to elucidate the language used by Theodoricus as well as complete and supplement others, in particular the historical commentary of David and Ian MacDougall.

In the introduction, the editor takes a stand on the identity and the name of the chronicler. On the one hand, he convincingly identifies him with Thorir Gudmundsson, who later became archbishop of Nidaros (1206–1214), highlighting the idea of a relationship between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* emphatically expressed in the work. On the other hand, Kraggerud supposes that the form 'Theodoricus' is the most appropriate of the three that are attested by the manuscript tradition (the other two being Theodricus and Theodericus). Further, Kraggerud discards the traditionally

accompanying title of *monachus*, which was attributed to the chronicler since the seventeenth century despite the fact that he was undoubtedly an Augustinian or Victorine canon. Less convincing is the reconstruction of the author's career, which, in spite of the evidence pointed out by many other scholars, Kraggerud detached from the Trondheim *milieu* and placed instead in Oslo in the years in which he composed his chronicle (1177/1188), thus making Theodoricus' work a private project rather than expression of an institutional effort undertaken at the archdiocese.

As for Kraggerud's editorial work, his starting point seems not to have been a recension of the manuscripts but rather the Latin text established by Storm in 1880, with the other extant testimonies used as sources from where pick up single variants or readings from time to time. Proceeding in this way, the text edited by Kraggerud differs inevitably from Storm's in a number of places which are accurately listed on pp. XCIV–XCVI. Among the many modifications, is worth noting a number of variants selected from copies M and L, which were unknown to Storm. Even if not all Kraggerud's choices appears to be well grounded and justified, he makes some significant amendments to the edition of Storm like the one in Chapter 32, where the word *suum*, printed in Storm's edition and referred to Sigurd, son of King Magnus Barefoot, is corrected in *secum* on the basis of variant readings.

The result of Kraggerud's difficult task is a useful critical edition, along with an erudite philological commentary, which substantially meets the modern principles and criteria, although not being without flaws. In the end, Kraggerud's book represent a significant contribution to the scholarship on Theodoricus and, even if it may not on its own completely replace the previous editions, it will surely enhance our knowledge of this author, one of the most important of the Nordic Middle Ages.

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