

Reviews

Book review editor: Lars-Erik Edlund, Dept. of Language Studies,
Umeå university, SE-901 87 Umeå, Sweden
Tel. +46-(0)90-786 7887
E-mail: lars-erik.edlund@umu.se

Dansk editionshistorie, editor-in-chief: Johnny Kondrup. *Volume 1, Udgivelse af græsk og latinsk litteratur*, edited by Christian Troelsgård with participation of David Bloch, 851 pp.; *Volume 2, Udgivelse af norrøn og gammeldansk litteratur*, edited by Britta Olrik Frederiksen, 896 pp.; *Volume 3, Udgivelse af dansk litteratur*, edited by Johnny Kondrup, 767 pp.; *Volume 4, Litteraturlister og registre*, 421 pp.—Volume 1–4: Charlottenlund: Museum Tusulanums Forlag 2021, ISBN 9788763546843.

This four-volume work comprising nearly 3,000 printed pages is the outcome of a cross-disciplinary project aimed at producing a survey of academic editions published in Denmark or by Danish researchers from the introduction of the art of printing around 1500 until today. “Danish” in the title refers to the institutional setting of the editions, i.e., the publishing houses and societies involved in the publishing work, but the publishers may also be of other nationalities, or Danes who have published editions in other countries. The project, which was financed by the Velux Foundations and involved a total of 26 researchers, was conducted between 2011 and 2016 and concluded in 2021 with the publication of the four volumes reported here. History of editing (Dan. *editionshistorie*) is a relatively new research field aimed at describing publishing activities *per se*, as well as their specific aims, methods, results and institutions. To my knowledge, this is the first time a work of such a wide scope has been presented in the field of history of editing, which makes it a pioneering effort. As the publishing principles chosen by a publisher set the parameters for the work of literature researchers, it is important to look in more detail at the principles the publishers chose to use, and to analyse them. *Dansk editionshistorie* provides ample opportunities to view editions from different times from this perspective.

Johnny Kondrup, professor of Nordic literature at the University of Copenhagen and co-editor and co-publisher of *Søren Kirkegaards Skrifter* and *Grundtvigs Værker*, is editor-in-chief of the work, and he deserves praise for having led this major project and brought it to a successful conclusion. By his side were the multi-faceted Nordic scholar Britta Olrik Frederiksen of Det Arnemagnæanske Institut/Arnemagnæanske Samling, Latinist and Doctor of Byzantine music research Christian Troelsgård, and David Bloch, professor of Greek and Latin, both of the University of Copenhagen.

This review will be mainly focused on the second volume, which treats of West Nordic and Danish medieval literature, but the other volumes will of course also be addressed. In Volume 1, editions from around 1500 to the 2010s are treated of. The

reader is presented with an account of Greek and Latin literature which includes classical texts, but also works in Latin from the Middle Ages onwards. The editor of this volume is Christian Troelsgård, assisted by David Bloch. After a general introduction to the entire work—which includes preparatory work, theoretical starting points and delimitations, and which should be read in order to get an understanding of the project’s starting points—follows a chapter by Troelsgård and Bloch containing sections on, among other things, Latin and Danish in the book culture, manuscripts and manuscript culture, typographic book culture and publishing practises, what publishing work can look like in practice, and available aids and tools. This is followed by an in-depth account of five centuries of publishing activities, compiled by several researchers in addition to Troelsgård and Bloch, namely Klaus Alpers, Ivan Boserup, Adam Bülow-Jacobsen, Sten Ebbesen, Markus Hedemann, Anders Leegaard Knudsen, Fritz Saaby Pedersen, and Karen Skovgaard-Petersen, all of whom have excellent qualifications in the classical field.

The main impression one gets from the Danish editions of Greek and Latin literature is that Danish publishers have always been strongly influenced by experts from other countries. There are, however, also important Danish contributions. First and foremost, these include the efforts of Johan Nicolai Madvig and his disciples involving textual criticism, theoretical as well as practical. These can be read about in several contributions by, among others, Ivan Boserup (on Madvig and classical-philosophical text publication), the author duo David Bloch and Sten Ebbesen (on Madvig and Cicero’s *Om afgrænsning af goder og onder*) and Christian Troelsgård (on Johan Ludvig Heiberg’s editions on Greek natural science).

In particular, one chapter in Volume 1 leaves one wanting more, namely that containing a special study of five centuries of publication of Saxo’s Danish History (vol. 1, pp. 797–848). The study is compiled by Troelsgård, and through concrete examples, it provides enlightening insights into various practical and theoretical considerations made in Danish history of editing over time. A great deal more could be said about Volume 1, but the above “teasers” will have to do.

The second volume is devoted to editions of West Nordic and Danish medieval literature; I shall return to it below.

The third volume is edited by the editor-in-chief, Johnny Kondrup, and treats of editions of Danish literature during a five-hundred-year period from about 1500 onwards. Initially, various philological issues are taken up by the editor, who writes about new philology, the establishment of stemmas, text errors, paper, inks, writing tools, electronic editions, and many other things. Next follow comprehensive chapters on the publication of Danish literature during three different periods, authored by Flemming Lundgreen-Nielsen (1495–1800), Per Dahl (1800–1900) and Johnny Kondrup (1900–2018). Initially, there were relatively few works to write about, but over time the number of publications increased, and a selection was then made by the authors. In the section dealing with the period after 1900, there are well-informed and detailed accounts of editions of H.C. Andersen’s, Ludvig Holberg’s, Søren Kirkegaard’s and N.F.S. Grundtvig’s writings, and in some cases also of their letters and diaries. Moreover, a thorough presentation is given of *Samfundet til den danske Litteratur Fremme*, *Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund* and *Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab*, the societies which have been the mainstay of the publication activities.

In Volume 3, there are also three special studies on the publication of *folkeviser* [‘folk songs’], hymn books and historical sources. An overview of Danish *folkeviser* and their publication tradition during the period 1591–2018 is presented by Vibeke A. Pedersen, where, for example, the magnum opus *Danmarks gamle Folkeviser*, published by Svend Grundtvig et al. (1853–1976) is brought to the fore, together with *Føroya Kvæði. Corpus Carminum Færoensium*, published by N. Djurhuus, Chr. Matras, Michael Chesnutt et al. (1944–2003). Although the publication of hymn books primarily serves a practical purpose, it also involves interesting issues concerning canonisation. The special study on hymn books was compiled by Peter Balslev-Clausen. The third special study in Volume 3, authored by Sebastian Olden-Jørgensen, deals with the publication of Danish historical sources. In this contribution, we find publications from the Renaissance and onwards, and learn a great deal about the development of the professionalisation and organisation of the publishing work during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through the efforts of *Det Kongelige Nordiske Oldskrift-Selskab*, *Den danske historiske Forening*, *Selskabet for Udgivelse af Kilder til Dansk Historie/Kildeskriftselskabet* and *Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab*.

The fourth and last volume contains bibliographies and indexes relating to the previous three volumes. The bibliographies are linked to the different chapters in Volumes 1–3, and here, too, we find extensive amounts of text: more than 400 tightly printed, two-column pages containing sections on sources, editions and secondary literature; in a few cases, there is also a section on translations. In addition, the volume includes comprehensive indexes of persons and a subject index. The latter index is a mine of information. It contains references to the various places in the volumes where there are accounts of inks, diaries, dialects, colophons, lacunae, OCR-scanning, seals, XML, and a plethora of other things. Some index entries, for example *tekstfejl*, also list related phenomena such as *hørefejl*, *læsefejl*, *novationer*, *skrivefejl* and *trykfejl*.

I will now turn my attention to Volume 2, which, as was mentioned above, is the focus of this review. It is the most extensive volume in this suite with its nearly 900 pages. The editor is Britta Olrik Frederiksen, and in addition to her, another seven authors have contributed to the volume, which treats of Old Icelandic, Old Norse, Old Danish and Old Scanian texts from the introduction of the art of printing up until around 2015. Translations of Old Icelandic texts into Scandinavian languages are included only if a translation is contained in an edition together with the original text.

The very informative introductory text, authored by Matthew Driscoll and Britta Olrik Frederiksen, gives the reader an overview of the current manuscript collection and provides a general framing for the volume’s content. The starting point is set to 800, as Denmark’s runic inscriptions have been included. Then follow texts from the Old Danish period up until 1515, Old Norwegian ones up to around 1370, and texts from Old Icelandic literature up until around 1550 (vol. 2, pp. 17–19).

This introduction is followed by a chapter by Gottskálk Jensson on editions from Old Danish times up until 1772, the year when *Den Arnamagnæanske Kommission* was established. An account is given of Árni Magnússon’s extensive activities as a collector of Icelandic manuscripts and his great interest in the source value of the manuscripts. However, it is noted that he did not publish a great deal himself (vol. 2, pp. 88–96, et passim); interestingly, Árni Magnússon was greatly inspired by the

source critical trend in the French school of history of the time. The setting up of *Den Arnamagnæanske Kommission* resulted in a strong institutional framework for the publication activities.

The period from 1772 up to 1879, the year when *Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur* was founded, is dealt with by Ragnheiður Mósesdóttir and Gottskálf Jensson. In her part of the chapter, Ragnheiður Mósesdóttir gives an account of various publishers, publication societies and editions, while Gottskálf Jensson describes the publishing activities from a broader history of learning perspective (vol. 2, pp. 160–213). It is interesting to note the conflicts that exist between editions seeking to reconstruct an original text on the basis of several different manuscript sources, and editions which present the same text exactly as it appears in one particular manuscript. Some publishers advocate texts rendered in normalised and readable editions, while others prefer literal editions, which of course are less easily accessible for people outside the circle of experts (vol. 2, pp. 215–216).

The next chapter is authored by Matthew Driscoll and deals with the period from 1879 to 1936. This half-century is an extraordinarily prolific period in terms of the number of scholarly editions—some one hundred Norse text editions were published during this period (vol. 2, pp. 215–216). Among many other things, we find in this chapter two of the key persons in the publishing activities at the time, Finnur Jónsson (vol. 2, pp. 216–221, et passim) and Kristian Kålund (vol. 2, pp. 221–223). Finnur Jónsson was very productive and published a large number of Old Norse texts during his career. However, it is mentioned that he worked very fast and that his publishing practices could be described as being a bit wayward; it is stated several times in the volume that his editions contain obvious flaws. Kålund's two-volume catalogue of the arnamagnæan manuscripts (1889–1894) is an important work.

In the next chapter, Odd Einar Haugen and Jonna Louis-Jensen treat of publishing activities during the period from 1936 to 2015. Here we find, not least, Jón Helgason's important work (vol. 2, pp. 320–326, 331–335, 343–362, 366–373, et passim). During this period, the foundations were laid for the book series *Bibliotheca Arnamagnæana* and *Editiones Arnamagnæanæ*, and a great amount of work was devoted to facsimile editions in the series *Corpus codicum Islandicorum medii aevi*, *Manuscripta Islandica*, *Early Icelandic Manuscripts in Facsimile* and *Manuscripta Nordica*. The latter editions contain thorough introductions which in many cases also include descriptions of the manuscripts. This is the multi-faceted content of the first main part of the second volume.

The second main part in volume 2 treats of editions of Old Danish literature. The first chapter is authored by Marita Akhøj Nielsen and deals with the publishing activities up until 1825, while the second one, by Britta Olrik Frederiksen, treats of the period 1825–2015. Among many other things in Akhøj Nielsen's chapter, one notes what is written about Ole Worm's achievements in connection with the publication of texts from *Codex Runicus* (1642) (vol. 2, pp. 499–503), and the section on Peder Kofod Ancher's editions of Danish medieval laws (1769–1783), which are carefully crafted for the time, and which also contain several text critical comments (vol. 2, pp. 517–525).

The following chapter, authored by Olrik Frederiksen, is extensive, running to no less than 270 pages! Initially, we meet here the pioneer Christian Molbech and his

work (vol. 2, pp. 541–555) and are given an account of editing projects by *Det nordiske Literatur-Samfund* (vol. 2, pp. 555 ff.) and the above-mentioned *Samfund til udgivelse af gammel nordisk litteratur* (vol. 2, pp. 586 ff.). In 1879, *Universitets-Jubilæets danske Samfund* was founded at the University of Copenhagen. With these publishers in place, an extensive publishing activity was secured. Moreover, *Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab* was established in 1911, which ensured high-quality publications through scholars such as Lis Jacobsen and others. A publication of *Danmarks gamle Landskabslove* is on the agenda of the latter society (vol. 2, pp. 636–665). This project was very challenging in view of the very large number of law manuscripts and the complex interrelationships between them, which were very difficult to get to grips with. This has resulted in all but impenetrable set of notes. Having read the section describing the arduous work on the provincial laws, which runs to no less than 30 pages, one cannot help feeling sympathy for the editors involved in this difficult work. Other publishing projects undertaken by *Det Danske Sprog- og Litteraturselskab* are *Danmarks gamle Ordsprog*, *Danske Folkebøger* and *Middelalderens danske Bønnebøger*. At the end of the chapter is an account of the current state of Danish edition philology.

Volume 2 is concluded with two special studies. Gottskålk Jensson writes about the very interesting publishing work carried on at the printing works of the episcopal see in Skálholt in 1688–1690, where Old Icelandic texts were published in editions apparently intended for Icelanders. His study is certainly well-worth reading, but I cannot help feeling that it does not really have a self-evident place in a work on Danish history of editing. In the second special study, Anna Mette Hansen deals with the publication of *Middelalderens danske Bønnebøger*. The study provides the reader with intimate insights into the actual publishing process.

Summing up my impressions of the four volumes, I can say that that *Dansk Editionshistorie* is undoubtedly an impressive work, filled to the brim with factual information on just about every aspect of the field, not least in the comprehensive notes. The researchers behind these volumes describe the field by systematically mapping editions and the work of publishers over time. Inevitably, a particular theme treated of in one volume sometimes reappears in another volume. Most of the time, this does not get in the way of the reading experience, but very occasionally, such as in the case of the older editions of Danish literature, which are treated of in both Volume 2 and 3, there are some overlaps which could perhaps have been avoided. There are also certain digressions which are presented more *en passant*. This has a certain charm and undeniably enhances the value of the presentations, but sometimes it makes an already extensive presentation even longer—even unnecessarily long, to be frank. Perhaps a stricter editorial principle could have shortened such presentations. The sections that deal with the individual publishing companies and societies are often based on extensive primary material that the authors have analysed in detail, which is an admirable effort, and the illustrations taken from various editions enhance the value of the presentations. The various special studies provide important in-depth information which concretises and problematises the field of history of editing. This lifts the work beyond the level of a handbook—the special study in Volume 1 treating of Saxo's Danish History is a gem in this respect.

The publication of this four-volume work on Danish history of editing is a very important and most welcome event. As I said above, it is a pioneering work. Research-

ers have been presented with a valuable reference work which can be used for all kinds of future study involving older Nordic texts.

Lars-Erik Edlund
 Dept. of Language Studies
 Umeå University
 Sweden
lars-erik.edlund@umu.se

Peter R. Dawes, *Expedition Relics from High Arctic Greenland. Eight Decades of Exploration History Told through 102 Objects*, [Chicago]: Museum Tusulanum Press/University of Chicago Press, [2022], ISBN 9788763546867, 509 pp.

When I agreed to review this book, I had not read the publication details very closely and expected a book that makes an accessible and “light” read for a general audience on the exploration history of Greenland, along the lines of other “history through objects” books that have become quite popular lately. The book that I received was something quite different and having read it, I am not entirely sure what to make of it.

The history of Greenland and its western explorations is certainly a fascinating topic. This book focuses specifically on the very northernmost part of Greenland, a strip of land from northern Baffin Bay to Peary Land. A plethora of photographs and other illustrations throughout the book are nothing short of marvelous and highly evocative of a far northern land with icy landscapes, explorers venturing into remote lands and the local indigenous people. The book is divided into four chapters: 1) “Introduction, geopolitics and scope,” 2) “Prehistoric and historic sites, and their artefacts,” 3) “Nineteen expeditions and the artefact collects,” and 4) “A tribute to the Inuit and their dog sledges.”

The author is an emeritus geology researcher with a keen interest in Greenland’s exploration history who has worked in Greenland for decades. In Chapter 1, he provides an extensive account of how and why he embarked on the present project. At the heart of *Expedition Relics* is a collection of 102 objects associated with nineteen expeditions operating in northernmost Greenland between 1853 and 1934. These objects were randomly and casually collected between 1965 and 2001 by scientists working in northernmost Greenland. In effect, Dawes sets out to document, contextualize and provide a background to this collection ahead of its planned deposition in the Greenland National Museum and Archives.

The book is large-sized and heavy in weight, and it is also heavy in content, but not necessarily in a good sense. I genuinely appreciate the effort and passion that the author has put into this project, and I can see that the book is a useful resource for some purposes and that there are readers who will undoubtedly take delight in its rich content. However, I was struggling with *Expedition Relics* for several reasons. My main problem was that while there is a *lot* of text in this book, I did not find the text very engaging at all. It is certainly informative as far as the histories of Greenland expeditions and the sites associated with them go, and, indeed, the descriptions of