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researchers did not form a coherent conception of the iconographic conditions encountered here. There is now such a coherent view in Oehrl. He certainly says that several important issues must be kept open, but in spite of this “so scheint der erste große Schritt getan zu sein” (p. 293) in the exploration of this material. This is no doubt the case. It may be added that the monograph constitutes “die überarbeitete und erweiterte Fassung” of a thesis that was presented in 2008 at Georg-August-Universität Göttingen.

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Judy Quinn & Emily Lethbridge (eds.), *Creating the Medieval Saga. Versions, Variability and Editorial Interpretations of Old Norse Saga Literature* (The Viking Collection. Studies in Northern Civilization. General editors: Margaret Clunies Ross, Matthew Driscoll & Mats Malm. Vol. 18), Odense: University Press of Southern Denmark 2010, ISBN 9788776745325; ISSN 01088408, 337 pp.

In this volume a number of articles have been gathered that deal with important themes in the area of saga philology with special focus on editorial methodologies. The reader is given a good entry into the different themes of the work in Judy Quinn’s comprehensive introduction. The three introductory essays present different methodological perspectives in a more general way. In the article “Stitching the Text Together. Documentary and Eclectic Editions in Old Norse Philology” Odd Einar Haugen describes, among other things, editions based on several sources and with a uniformity of structure and

orthography, where “the eclectic text is helpful for an understanding of the literary work preserved in the manuscripts.” The construction of a kind of intertextual “open corpus edition”—possible to handle by means of computer technology—is sketched out by Karl G. Johansson, who also discusses the establishment of what he calls *topical units* and *semantic units* in a text. M. J. Driscoll takes a wide approach to the philological work, and also characterises different (often implicit) methods that are used in editions of Konráð Gíslason, Finnur Jónsson and Jón Helgason, among others. The following six essays in the volume deal with individual texts, which are thoroughly elucidated from different aspects. They are concretely about *Gísla saga Súrssonar* (Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson, Emily Lethbridge), *Orkneyinga saga* (Judith Jesch), *Sturlunga saga* (Guðrún Nordal), *Egils saga Skallagrímssonar* (Margaret Clunies Ross) and *Grettisfærsla* and *Grettis saga* (Kate Heslop). Many details might be commented on in these works, but only a few samples can be presented here. Þórður Ingi Guðjónsson illustrates how one can compile an edition of a saga based on several versions, an edition that is suitable for literary analysis but also is aimed at both a scholarly and non-scholarly audience. Judith Jesch shows how *Orkneyinga saga* has probably developed from having been a historical work to a narrative work, a saga—it has been, in the words of the subheading, “A Work in Progress.” The interpretation of some dream sequences in *Sturlunga saga* is thoroughly analysed by Guðrún Nordal, who places the saga in an adequate interpretative framework. *Grettisfærsla*, a poem found in *Grettis saga*, chapter 52, can, according to Kate Heslop, “make few claims to greatness.” Hes-

lop tries to describe the late medieval context where this poem was created. In the last two essays in the volume Russell Poole deals with *pulir*, thereby leading us far back in time, while Andrew Wawn focuses on *Úlfs saga Ugasonar*, which was probably written around 1500. The book is concluded with a very valuable coherent bibliography and an index of names and manuscripts. As Judy Quinn points out in her introduction there is still no cohesive work on the history of editing Old Norse texts, but when such a work is published, it will be “a history full of philological debate, changing literary fashions and developing theories of textual criticism, as well as nationalist and institutional politics” (p. 36). Quinn also states that hopefully the present volume “will stimulate interest in the intellectual history of the editing and interpretation of medieval sagas, as well as in editorial praxis” (pp. 36 f.). It can be said that the volume reaches these goals in an excellent way, both through the theoretical and methodological awareness of the individual contributions and through the concrete text exemplification and the discussion of individual texts.

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Gro-Renée Rambø, *Historiske og sosiale betingelser for språkkontakt mellom nedertysk og skandinavisk i seinmiddelalderen – et bidrag til historisk språksosiologi*, Oslo: Novus Forlag 2010, ISBN 9788270996216, 421 pp.

The present voluminous monograph constitutes the slightly revised version of Gro-Renée Rambø’s “doctor artium”-thesis, defended at the University of Agder in 2009. It is by

no means a new subject that is dealt with, on the contrary there is extensive literature on the contacts between Low German tradesmen and the late medieval Scandinavian population. One of the background chapters of the book gives the reader an overview of previous research on the contacts, in which works by for example Lena Moberg, Vibeke Winge, Kurt Braumüller (and his co-workers) and Agnete Nesse are presented. On the other hand, individual studies of loanwords are outside the author’s focus of interest. A broad view is taken of the field of research, and historical sociolinguistics, modern language contact research and interactional sociolinguistics with accommodation theory and Acts of Identity are mentioned as theoretical foundations. The theoretical and methodological background is described in the third chapter, an account with emphasis on aspects concerning societal and linguistic conditions as mutual variables. Chapters 4–8 are gathered under a third section and account for empirical conditions concerning “Language contact between Low German and Scandinavian in the Late Middle Ages,” at first more generally and then in separate sections specifically about conditions on Gotland (Visby) and in Denmark (Copenhagen, Ribe), Sweden (Kalmar, Stockholm) and Norway (Bergen, Oslo/Tønsberg). The general chapter (Ch. 4) deals with the Hanseatics and Scandinavia, where the importance of trade is emphasised as well as the role of Latin as a *lingua franca* in the Late Middle Ages. For each individual town dealt with in Chapters 5–8 there is an account of what is known about the historical frameworks with for example the role of the Hanseatic League, demographic composition and settlement structure—how did