in totally different parts of the country could only have been accomplished by a dominant central power—the king. The camps should be regarded as barracks; they could probably accommodate 6,000 men in all. Well protected against sea attack because of their withdrawn position by narrow, navigable channels, they were of no use in defending Danish coastal waters: their position was for self-defence alone.

On the other hand, it is striking that they are all situated near important overland routes. If the camps had a strategic significance, apart from their function as barracks, this was not directed against foreign invaders but against the people in Denmark itself. The Danish king and the *Landsthings* could compel the male population to take up arms when the country was invaded, and to a limited extent for offensive measures, but this army could not be forced to serve in barracks on its native soil. Consequently, it seems likely that the four camps were occupied by professional soldiers.

In times of peace, the resources of the Danish king were not large enough to enable him to maintain a permanent army of several thousand. Therefore, the fortresses must be associated with a period of prolonged and profitable warfare which could supply the funds for this. Suitable conditions were provided during the reign of Svend Forkbeard (*c.* 985–1014). Virtually every year from 994 until 1013, the king carried out raids on England which was at that time in a state of political disorganization, and unable to offer any effective resistance. Attempts were made to buy peace instead in the form of repeated payments of tribute to the Viking army. This in turn renewed its strength and inspired fresh attacks, until the Vikings finally were in a position to conquer England, who paid for her own conquest in this way. Svend Forkbeard was proclaimed king of England in 1013.

This easy and profitable method of warfare must have produced a large force of professional warriors: men who did not just go on a few lucrative raids before settling as farmers in their native country, but men to whom war was a permanent occupation. The soldiers came from all over Scandinavia, and we can assume that the camps were built as winter barracks and training centres for these men, serving to control the country strategically at the same time.

The short duration of their occupation demonstrates how closely the camps were associated with the Viking raids on England. The Danish king had neither reason nor resources to maintain them when the raids ended, and the large fortresses fell into decay so rapidly that they were obliterated from living memory by the late twelfth century when the history of the Danes was recorded by Saxo Grammaticus and Svend Aggesen.

17

THE YORK VIKING KINGDOM; RELATIONS BETWEEN OLD ENGLISH AND OLD NORSE CULTURE

ALAN BINNS

'På Richelieus tid var en fallgrop som noll, och en dolk liksom en leksak, ser Frida, och musketörens kappa bar blodbestänkt fåll, som fladdrade kring glimmande slida.'

ANYONE with a background mainly linguistic and literary must be uneasily aware of the dangers gently mocked by Sjöberg in this quotation; not least because historians and archaeologists so often assume (or at any rate behave as if they assumed) that the evidence of literary works can only be of this hectic, over-dramatized and essentially inaccurate kind. And when one looks at the way in which an earlier generation of literary scholars resolutely defended the direct verbal inspiration (not to speak of the infallibility) of some quite indefensibly fictitious sagas, it is difficult to blame very severely the, as I think, now somewhat exaggerated mistrust of literary sources. Once bitten twice shy, and however much we may protest that we will not be tempted into supposing that a work is true just because it is great literature, the historian will see looming behind us Finnur Jonsson's heroic asseveration; that in the case of a clash (about the dating of a battle in England) between contemporary English written annals and an orally transmitted Icelandic saga of two and a half centuries later, the saga is right.

This mistrust may have other reasons than 'once bitten twice shy'. Sometimes it seems a methodological puritanism, implying that such literary works of art should be examined and evaluated exclusively as works of art, and not perversely used as evidence of matters of which the only true evidence is the rigidly Marxist material resources of actual objects in actual sites. It may be implied that as the art-historian can take this view of the development of styles seen on different brooches, caskets, etc., the same process is the only intellectually respectable one to apply to the literature. The answer to this must come from a more recent school of linguists than Finnur Jonsson's. I do not think that ornamental styles are particularly expressions of the social structure in which they are found (in spite of such obvious instances as the gripping beast style of the Viking age). But language is a social product, a society is unmistakably defined in its vocabulary, and the characters of literature are subject to a greater compulsion to credibility than are the animals in most Viking carvings—

or at any rate they are in the literature of the Viking age. There may very well have been a rich imaginative literature of escape, of course, but it is rather striking that if there was it has vanished without trace; that even stories of gods and heroes were, as far as we can judge, told in an empiric rational way in which motives and consequences are subject to the ordinary human standards of judgment. This is a very old and standard view—at least as old as W. P. Ker; but it suggests that the literature is evidence of something; though this may not be what it has often (and here I agree with the archaeologists) been mis-used for.

There is an old joke that the one thing you cannot do with a bayonet is hew coal with it. And one of the many things you cannot do with a brooch is sense attitudes with it, beyond the broad christian/pagan antitheses and so on. The important thing seems to be that saga-readers should realize that their realm is that of attitudes (and that their views on dates and armour are likely to be naive in the extreme) and that archaeologists should acknowledge that there are such things as attitudes, and that in any age a funeral ceremony has involved more than the choice of silver handles or brass.

The Viking age is a particularly awkward age from this point of view, and the Viking kingdom of York is a particularly good example. For much of the literary material which we have about the Viking age is, it must be said, of somewhat dubious quality as historical evidence of attitudes or anything else. Much of it is the romantic recollections of highly interested parties, whether one thinks of Professor Sigurður Nordal's brilliant attribution of some of the unreliabilities of *Egils Saga* to Egil's own tendency in old age to improve some of the exploits of his youth, or of a more generally diffused romantic tendency in saga writers to make a heroic age even more heroic in retrospect after three centuries, or of the moving but not very specific lamentations of continental clerics on the receiving end of Viking raids. As far as I know the Viking kingdom of York is the only society of the Viking age for which we have the advantage of contemporary written description by highly trained historical observers who were writing as it were from the inside. So that in the literary and linguistic study of this material we are not driven to the point of saying that though not evidence about the attitudes of the Viking age, the material is evidence of *something*, as one might say that the Kensington stone for example, whilst valueless as evidence of the Viking age, is valuable as evidence of the attitude of Swedish settlers in Minnesota in the nineteenth century, and the comparatively advanced state of their runological studies.

This material does of course provide some things which seem to me to have objective status such as the *poisson de Sudreie* of the inquest into the possessions of Archbishop Thomas the first in 1080 in the Liber Albus (*Yorkshire Archaeological Journal*, xviii 412 ff.).[1] This may be a Norman French form of Sudareyjar, and it scarcely matters whether it had become

[1] Brought to my attention by Professor A. G. Dickens.

a generic term for sundried *klippfisk* of any origin, or still really meant fish from the Hebrides or Man, for in those days fish from those sources must, to be acceptable in York, have been *harðfiskur*.

The unique value of the material however is of a somewhat different kind. It can give us an otherwise unobtainable sense of the contemporary attitude to aspects of Viking culture which we take easily for granted—the supreme excellence of the Viking's ships, the cataclysmic force of their inroads upon Europe, the clash of pagan and Christian. And this contemporary attitude in English documents, though it has been written down for more than a millenium may still seem surprising enough to be worth re-stating.

The ships are excellent, an unrivalled technological achievement and, as we can see from Oseberg and Gokstad, also great artistic achievements. Their praises have been sung in every book about the Viking age. How odd that King Alfred's attitude towards them should have been one of placid patronizing confidence; yet it is not so odd if one considers the detail he gives. In the Parker Chronicle annal for 897 the Vikings are placed on the level of (but slightly below) cattle pest and epidemics as an affliction. The Vikings settled in East Anglia and Northumbria were raiding the channel coast, mainly with the ships that they had built a long time ago. Alfred's ships were twice as long, faster, steadier, and with a higher freeboard, and pulling sixty or more oars. Views about the classification of Viking ships differ, but Alfred's were evidently *thritugsessa* of thirty benches, or *twice* the size of the acceptable (though minimum) *leiðangr* ship of the Norse laws four centuries later in 1312. A more striking comparison may be that this is almost the size of Olaf's unparalleled Long Serpent of thirty-four benches. Alfred's ships were built as he says neither according to the Viking model (by which I suppose he meant the warship *þur sang*) nor the Frisian (probably he meant the cargo carrier) but as he himself thought they would be most useful. No doubt waiting at sea for a Viking fleet, perhaps for weeks before battle, involved patrolling in all weathers, and required a compromise between *langskip* and *hafskip*. They must have been magnificent ships and it is a great pity that our shortage of blue clay and more advanced burial customs have made it impossible to compare them with Oseberg and Gokstad. They might have turned out, I suspect, less elegant and artistic. But the Norwegian ships are very lightly built, and the life of a substantial wooden trading vessel has always been reckoned at about thirty years. Our admiration for Viking seamanship must be increased, not diminished, by the thought of facing Alfred's huge seaworthy cruisers in a lightly-built longship with at least twenty hard seasons behind it. It is true that the sagas say interestingly enough that all the Vinland voyages from Greenland were made in the same hafskip (Bjarni's), but it is clear from the Chronicle I think that the Viking longships drawn over English soil must have been very lightly built.

The contemporary literary material can also provide a salutary corrective to any tendency to import twentieth-century nationalism or

twentieth-century Christianity into the picture. It is not until the very end of the tenth century that we find the idea of an English leader defending his native soil against the foreign Viking attacks expressed in so many words. The frequent recourse to Viking arms of pretenders to the throne, and the variegated career of men like Eadric Streona suggest that no very strong animosity of a national kind was felt.

Was the difference of religion more deeply felt? How deep was it? The question may seem naive, but we should compare not present-day (or medieval) Christianity with the paganism of the more antiquarian Icelandic sagas, but the Anglo-Saxon Christianity of the ninth century with the very little we know of Viking pagan religion as actually practised, for which, ironically enough, the Christian York monastic chroniclers are among our most reliable sources. This involves a Christianity before the tenderness of medieval meditation on the Passion, before the poor Friars and the cult of the Virgin. Its Christ is a grim triumphant warrior, Satan a disloyal thane, and the Christian's aim is to win fame in subsequent generations by glorious deeds before he dies. The parables, the sermon on the mount, all the New Testament apart from the gloomy terror of the Crucifixion, are completely neglected. I do not think this could be called an unfair account of the Seafarer, Wanderer and Dream of the Rood. It cannot be regarded as a creed quite apart from the world of Germanic paganism. The pessimism of Ragnarök was fully matched by the belief that the world was to end in A.D. 1000.

It may be that our modern views on nationalism and religion incline us to posit a dichotomy which is not plausible for the tenth century, to see two opposing sides, Anglo-Saxon and Viking, and to attribute to each side a homogeneity which it did not possess, where contemporaries saw only a continuum from an enthusiastically pagan Norwegian staying a month on his way home from Dublin, through anglicized (but not Christianized) Danes to the Anglo-Saxon Archbishop himself (and he would on occasion accompany a raid!). It is important to recognize that the artistic and linguistic material we have from the York Viking kingdom fits this view of a readiness to lend and borrow, to experiment with new ideas and display a tolerance of a wide range of variation, at least as well as any other. The mobility which was such a marked characteristic of the Vikings was here social as well as geographic. It is quite true that Wulfstan in *Sermo Lupi ad Anglos* uses *wicinge* as the opposite of *cristendome*, but his real complaint seems to be not about apostasy, but about the social mobility which the Vikings have brought, under which by joining them a serf may become entitled to a wergild of 1,200 shillings, even as against his former master. It is interesting that Wulfstan uses in this sentence the unique Old English *þegengylde*, a calque on Old Norse þegngildi. There are many similar instances of very close linguistic contact, most recently surveyed by Dietrich Hoffman in *Nordische-Englische Lehn beziehung der Wikingerzeit* in the Arnemagnæan series. The one which has always impressed me most as a demonstration of the ready acceptance of a

complete interpenetration of the languages is the existence in modern English dialect of the complete series *skrike*, *shriek*, *screech* (to cry out) and *shreech* (name of a type of owl), reflecting Old Norse *skrika* and Old English *scrican*. Readiness to experiment in other ways can be seen equally in the stone carvings and the verse which we have from the York Viking kingdom. We must here be careful not to confuse their artistic merits as performance (often lower than that of their compatriots in Scandinavia) with their promise for the future of the combined culture; they were too occupied in devouring material to have fully digested it. This I think may be why the poems we know to have been composed for their taste sometimes seem to have an almost nouveau-riche vulgarity in excess of ornament, and why their memorial stones in their anxiety to incorporate every detail of ornamental interlacing do not have the basic rhythm and grace of continental examples of the style. The point is not really affected by the continuing debate about the origin of these styles, for to whichever side of the North Sea one allots the primacy in their development there can be no doubt that it is thanks to the interplay of the two cultures in Viking York that we have a series of carvings in stone earlier and more numerous (though not greater) than the material from Scandinavia itself.

The Anglo-Scandinavian contact and mutual influence seen in this linguistic and artistic material is close and direct. Such a contact is described by the contemporary sources and is implied by what one might call the narrative content of the artistic material; pagan burials and pagan myth depicted on Christian stone crosses or on coins!

Against this background the paucity of examples of any comparable contact between the literatures must seem striking. Much has of course been written about what one might call 'the literature of the shared events' from *Beowulf's* Swedish-Geatish wars to Vinheiði in *Egils saga*, and the *Saga book of the Viking Society* has many articles on these topics (for instance F. S. Scott's on Valþjófr). But one must notice that the discussion is almost invariably of the kind concerned with two different reflexes of the same event which lack any point of contact above concern with the same event. They are as it were envisaged as two very distant cousins whose ultimate common ancestor is many hundreds of years away and whose present lives and appearances are widely different. Resemblances if any are thus seen as of essentially genetic interest. One obvious justification of this approach is the comparatively late date of much of the Norse literature involved; but one should not forget that many sagas were composed no further in time from the tenth-century events figuring in them than was our Old English *Beowulf* from its Scandinavian historical events, or the Old English *Chronicle* from the fifth-century settlement. We have some Scandinavian events described in English after three centuries and in Scandinavia after six and some Old English events described in English contemporaneously and in Iceland after three centuries.

The implication is clear that it will normally seem more reasonable to seek the sources of Old Norse accounts in English than of English

accounts in Old Norse. It is perhaps because the function of Old Norse literature has so often been thought of (in England) as to illustrate Old English literature that the reverse has more usually been attempted. The insignificance of my examples in an attempt to do the obvious, and use some Old English literature to annotate Old Norse, looking at direct contacts (or to be fair, *possible* direct contacts) in the literature, may be excused by its comparative novelty.

It has often been suggested (most persuasively by P. Hunter Blair in *Archaeologia Æliana XVI*, 1939) that a contemporary chronicle of Viking York, kept by the ordinary Anglo-Saxon monastic chroniclers there, has been preserved in passages of Symeon of Durham and other later monastic writers of the north of England, and I have used some of this material already (in *Bergens Årbok 1956*) to illustrate the value of this for the understanding of the art of the York Viking kingdom. One example is typical of the directness of the contact. The name Skjǫldung occurs in *Beowulf* in the form Scylding, the historically regular corresponding development in Old English, and it is clear that we have to do with a shared common inheritance from the past. In Symeon (writing in Latin) the form is Scaldingi which looks to me like a recent direct borrowing from Norse after fracture but before the u-mutation to the literary Skjǫldung (which had happened by Symeon's day, so that the contact is firmly dated as of his source).[1] The Old English Chronicle does not mention York between 867 (the Viking entry on 21st March) and 923 (when only the Northern MSS. D and E tell of Ragnald's capture of the town). But Symeon is evidence that though cut off from their compatriots in southern England the monks of York continued their Chronicle, if with a slightly different point of view. We must again be careful that modern ideas of national patriotism do not make us misjudge this changed viewpoint. It was not necessarily mere time-serving expediency, though a description of a Scottish attack on Lindisfarne (Symeon I, p. 241) as 'nullorum presumtione antea temeratum' in 885, overlooking the Danish attack of 875, does seem dishonest. But phrases such as that in the Gesta Regum applied to the population in 901 'Northanhimbros, qui cum Danis jam in unam gentem coaluerant' seem sincere enough. Symeon, to whom we owe the

[1] This form was discussed by Bjorkman in *Saga-book*, vol. vii; he interpreted Scaldingi 'people from the Scheldt' and considered any connection with *Skjoldungar* impossible on linguistic grounds. 'We should expect Sceldingi or an anglicized Scyldingi not Scaldingi.' As the assertion has been repeated, it may be worth outlining the development of literary Norse *skjoldr* from primitive Norse *skeldur*. It was either by u-fracture followed by u-mutation (Noreen) or by dissimilation of a diphthong resulting from a palatal glide, followed by u-mutation (Svensson). For both views see A. R. Taylor's edition of E. V. Gordon, *Introduction to Old Norse*, para. 45. Both views assume an intermediate stage *skjaldur* and Noreen elsewhere dates this in the ninth century by forms like *fiaru* from Rök.

Use of the term suggests the boasts of leaders who were of the royal house. It would be too much to suggest that it implies literary celebration of their exploits, though it is more appropriate to skaldic poetry than to the later Anglo-Danish peasantry. Preference for this term rather than English or Latin alternatives is particularly striking in an ecclesiastical writer.

description of the crowning of a York Viking king by the placing on his arm of the sacred temple ring whilst he sat on the mound, an interesting blend of Christian and pagan assumptions (though it cannot in this case have been the burial-mound of the king's ancestors) gives a constitutional detail which also carries conviction. Declarations (of policy and judgment) are to be made 'episcopo et omne exercitui Anglorum atque Danorum'. The 'Army' was the term used in the republic of the Five Boroughs for the governing assembly, and it is used here in this way, not of a field army (cf. *wapentake*). The original author then was a man familiar with the nomenclature of government in a Viking society as well as its procedures, and familiar too with the idea of such a society as the consensus of archbishop, Viking, and Anglo-Saxon. And he abounds in such phrases as 'tam barbari quam indigenae'. It might be possible to explain them by saying that he was a monomaniac concerned to gloss over differences between the York Vikings and the natives. But what possible interests could a churchman of Canute's day (to put the case at its most plausible) have had in the retrospective whitewashing of century old Vikings in *Latin*? And how was he so successful in spreading his whitewash that no unwhitewashed annals of this period (of which there must have been a good supply to provide him with the information he had) escaped? Unless we are to assume that the common source from which these Latin chroniclers are drawing was a propaganda fiction spun from nothing in Canute's reign, we must assume that a Chronicle (of which these are the fragments) *was* kept in the Viking kingdom of York, and that though kept by clerics it was very markedly not anti-Viking. Indeed the northern MS. of the Old English Chronicle, E, suggests very well the approximation to Scandinavia taste (very broadly, the difference between Old Norse saga and Old English chronicle) which these chroniclers achieved.

In the treatment of Edmund's capture from the Vikings of the Five Boroughs we can see a nice gradation of attitudes. MS. A of the Old English Chronicle has the triumphant poem celebrating it. MS. D has this, but tells under the subsequent year of 943 of what appears to be a retaliatory raid on Tamworth by Olaf accompanied by Archbishop Wulfstan of York(!) and their escape by night from Leicester when Edmund beseiged them there. MS. A tells us nothing of this. Roger of Wendover does not at this point refer to the capture of the Five Boroughs at all (though he does elsewhere)and says that when Edmund knew of Olaf's invasion he came against him at Leicester where there was a damaging battle for a day. The two archbishops, Odo of Canterbury and Wulfstan of York, seeing the danger of the extermination of the kingdom in such strife composed a peace. It was agreed that Olaf should have England north of Watling Street and Edmund all that south of it, and that the one who lived longest should inherit the whole. Olaf then married Aldyth, daughter of Orm *comes* (a translation of *jarl*?) 'whose counsel and help led to the aforesaid victory'. This forms a striking contrast in tone to the Old English Chronicle's view of these events, and it is supported by Symeon of Durham's view (though

he credits the archbishops with bringing the kings to agreement before much damage had been done). The source used by Roger and Symeon was obviously not the Old English Chronicle, and seems most likely to have been a Latin chronicle kept in York, where such a point of view would have been most at home.

The northern MS. of the Chronicle E shares with Symeon the story that Sihtric, king in York, killed his brother Njal in Ireland. The Chronicle dates this to 921, correctly; Symeon's dates are consistently, as here (914) too early. The story seems mistaken. He did kill in the same year his own brother Sigfrid and Njal Glundubh the Irish king; the significance of the mistake is, I think, a literary one in that it seems to suggest the attitude of the author. He was interested in the family of the Viking king of York, and he tended to construe events with the characteristic saga interest in family feud.

The romantic story of Olaf in disguise reconnoitring in the English camp before the battle of Brunanburh is surely false. But William of Malmesbury who tells it, says that he was recognized by a Viking on the English side (evidently Egill and his brother were not alone in that army!) who was afterwards asked why he had not betrayed Olaf. He answered that as he had sworn the same oath to Olaf as he had to Athelstan, the latter might reasonably have had cause to doubt him if he had broken it to the former. The point is not whether the story is an invention (I assume it is) but of what sort of society it is the invention. It does not seem at all as characteristic of William of Malmesbury's own world as of the Viking kingdom of York, and it may well be another of the scattered fragments of its traditions which survive in these later chroniclers.

Such instances as these (and others it is perhaps not necessary to adduce) have the unity of a fairly consistent point of view. Can one claim for them the greater unity of a tenth-century source in a written chronicle kept at York, as I believe? It might be argued that the existence of such a chronicle is an illusion produced by attributing to it as source all the otherwise unexplained material in later chroniclers, and that it is in fact the boiled-down oral tradition of the York Viking kingdom. Even if this were so it would be interesting to observe the recognizable literary point of view which emerges, and I do not think that this explanation is adequate. The regularity with which Symeon, Roger, Florence, William of Malmesbury and others share this source without copying it from one another seems to imply that if it was an oral tradition it must early have become of a very systematized kind. The case for its existence would obviously be stronger if there were any direct reference to its existence (as there is not in the chroniclers already mentioned). There is at any rate something that *may* be a reference to it in Adam of Bremen.

According to *Egils saga* there was a jarl Hringr on the Norse side at the battle of Brunanburh. His companion Aðils has often been written off as fictitious, and it is true that the name Hringr is of an archaic type which would be surprising in Scandinavia at this period, but it is clear that the

Scandinavian settlers in England did have a very conservative taste in names, and Adam of Bremen also knows of a jarl Hyring in Viking York, though he is the only other text that does. This makes the view that Hringr is an invention much less plausible if one must assume that he was twice invented, for there cannot I believe be any question of *Egils saga* or Adam of Bremen getting him from one another. Adam says that his source is a *Gesta Anglorum*; no text of this title now survives, but it was presumably in Latin, and a chronicle of the period after 900 well-informed about otherwise unknown figures of the York Viking kingdom. It might very well have been the Latin chronicle I postulate.

The identification of the battle of Brunanburh with the Vinheiði of *Egils saga* does not rest on identity of situation and participants alone, and without entering into the complex historical arguments involved, it may be appropriate to mention one verbal point. Symeon alone of the English sources has the name Weondune which corresponds exactly to Vinheiði, and it is suggestive that his source, presumably Latin, used the Norse name for the battle and not the English. The saga dating of Vinheiði to 925, the beginning of Æthelstan's reign, was presumably a consequence of its author's acceptance of the chronology of Ari and Saemund with its dating of Hafrsfjorður in 872. The dating of Vinheiði in 925 involved a difficult choice for any saga critic; either Vinheiði could not be identical with Brunanburh, or the dating of the English events in *Egils saga* was hopelessly unreliable. Sigurdur Nordal in his introduction to *Egils saga* gives a lucid exposition of the difficulties to which the first choice gives rise; the concept of two major battles closely similar in incident, twelve years apart, one completely forgotten by one side and the other by the other is the least of them. The second choice could lead only to Finnur Jonsson's attack on the English chronology or a serious undervaluing of the material. For with the revised chronology that has followed Halvdan Koht's work, the saga date of Vinheiði becomes 937 and fits Brunanburh perfectly. The interesting point here for our purpose is that the 'awkward' 'mistakenly dated' English episodes of *Egils saga* should have proved to be precisely those parts of it which had a secure chronological foundation, strong enough to resist the pressure to bring them into accord with the time-scheme almost universally accepted in the sagas. One must wonder what this foundation was, and in what form it was available to the author of *Egils saga*, whether he was Snorri Sturluson or another.

It is interesting that Snorri in Heimskringla assumes that Erik Bloodaxe on his arrival in England was baptized and set to guard the land against other invaders. This was notably not true of Erik, but it would have been true, at some stage of their careers, of almost any one of his predecessors from Guðormr in the 870s through Guðred, Sihtric, Olaf and Ragnald. The assumption is less natural than this may make it seem, for in the sagas as they stand there is no knowledge of these precedents at all, and one must wonder whether Snorri did not have some account of them to make the assumption more likely. If the account he had was derived from Erik's

kingdom it might of course have claimed for Erik's rule a legitimacy which it did not have, but one does not need to press speculation so far.[1]

According to *Heimskringla* there fell with Erik when he was killed Hárekr and Rognvald. Only the two northern MSS. of the Old English Chronicle mention Erik Bloodaxe, D and E, and they say of his eventual departure from the scene only that he was expelled by the Northumbrians. It is only Roger of Wendover and Symeon of Durham (representing of course as I believe the York Chronicle) who know that he was not merely expelled but killed 'in quadam solitudine Stainmoor'. Wendover adds that there were killed with him his son Henricus and his brother Reginaldus. It seems very unlikely that any companion of Erik would be called Henricus, but it is a plausible error for Hárekr, and one MS. actually has Hæricus. Wendover says that Erik was deceitfully killed by Maccus through the treachery of Osulf, and Symeon adds that Maccus (an Irish Viking name) was the son of Olaf. This instance seems to me quite decisive. It is clear that the Latin source involved saw Erik's death not as God's vengeance on a pagan oppressor but as assassination brought about by treachery, and the coincidence of the names Hæricus and Hárekr and Reginaldus—Rognvald demonstrate clearly the ultimate dependence of Snorri's account on some such source. Heimskringla might derive the names through Ari, for Snorri says in his preface that Ari used English kings' lives, and Herman Pálson in *Skirnir* 1957 pointed to the connection between Ari and the *Vita Edmundi* and to the probable contacts between Ari's tutor Teitur and the bishop Kol who was probably from Britain.

When we link this coincidence of names with jarl Hringr and Adam's reference to the *Gesta Anglorum* we are I think entitled to postulate an extremely fruitful contact between Anglo-Saxon culture in the Viking kingdom of York in the shape of its monastic chronicle, and the formative period of Old Norse literature. Whether this contact took place when Beornheard the book-learned and other missionaries took with them a good

[1] It has often been assumed that the material about Erik Bloodaxe which is found in *Orkneyinga Saga*, *Hakonarsaga goða* and *Olafs saga Tryggvasonar*, and has, as Alistair Campbell observes (*English Historical Review*, Vol. 57, p. 92, note 4), a somewhat extraneous appearance in all of them, was drawn from a lost (and necessarily very early) Saga of Erik Bloodaxe. In spite of Campbell's warning against 'choosing to use Norse sources boldly' and Collingwood's assumption that Wendover is quoting a Norse saga, it is striking that it is the English part of the Erik Bloodaxe material which is its most consistent core, and one should notice the consequences which this might have for the source-criticism of the Norse works involved.

A. B. Taylor assumes, as an alternative to a hypothetical Erik's Saga, that the material about him was embedded in an early *Hakonar saga goða*, and was taken by *Orkneyinga Saga* and *Olafs saga* from that. This *Hakonarsaga* is taken by Bjarni Aðoalbjarnarson and Indrebϕ to be the common source of *Agrip*, *Fagrskinna*, *Egils saga* & *Heimskringla*. Their arguments might perhaps extend to cover *Historiæ Norwegiæ* as well. How widely these varied texts differ in their use of every part of *Hakonarsaga* but that concerned with Erik and England, which was evidently unusually fixed and stable! This might be added to the Vinheiði discussion of Per Wieselgren (*Forfattarskapet til Eigla*) as suggesting the presence at the earliest stages of Norse literary tradition of some sort of York chronicle.

library of ecclesiastical historiography including a chronicle of Viking York as a good precedent for clerics dealing with godless Scandinavians; or whether one might say that the decisive contact took place earlier, when the clerics of York enshrined in their own tradition chronicles and thus made ecclesiastically respectable the deeds of pagan Vikings; these do not affect the value of this material, as evidence (less concrete but more significant than the art of the stone monuments) of a contact in which the Viking kingdom of York contributed an element of great importance to Old Norse culture.