19.08.10 Parker, Dragon Lords

The Scandinavian settlement of England has been the subject of extensive linguistic and archaeological studies, which have made headway in determining how extensive it was and how close the interactions between Anglo-Saxons and Scandinavians were. Unlike these studies, *Dragon Lords* is not about the reality of life in the Danelaw. Instead, Eleanor Parker uses literary sources—primarily narratives of the Viking Age written after the Norman Conquest—to see how this period was understood a few centuries later. Although the main focus is on sources from England, Parker also makes use of Scandinavian texts, which sometimes provide a sharp contrast. These stories, writes Parker, "reflect a continuing interest in the relationship between England and Scandinavia; at times they also seem to be drawing on English oral or written sources about this period of history, providing details or perspectives which no longer survive from England" (14). The book contains an introduction, five main chapters, and an epilogue.

Chapter one provides a broad overview of Parker's sources and the events of the eleventh century. It starts with *The Battle of Maldon* and the description of the St. Brice's Day massacre in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* before forging connections to stories of St. Edmund and Ragnar Loðbrok and his sons. It then moves on to Cnut's reign and a description of the literary sources that describe his court as a bridge between the Anglo-Saxon and Scandinavian cultures. The *Encomium Emmae Reginae* emerges as an important text. Parker uses it to introduce the raven banner legend: the Danes had a white silk banner that would show a raven during war (37). This banner forms a theme that runs throughout the book; in chapter 2, the *Annals of St. Neots* credits Ragnar Loðbrok's three daughters with weaving it (65-66), and later chapters mention similar banners. The following chapters delve deeply into individual legends.

Chapters two and three focus on the motives of certain individuals for coming to England, as expressed in the literature. Chapter two is about Ragnar Loðbrok and his sons as they are represented in stories from an English, as opposed to Scandinavian, context. Ragnar Loðbrok's sons Ivar, Ubbe, and Beorn invade England to avenge their father's death at the hands of King Ælla (in Scandinavian sources) or St. Edmund's huntsman (according to Roger of Wendover) (74-75). Chapter three is based on the *Gesta antecessorum comitis Waldevi*, which tells the story of St. Waltheof and his father, Siward, a Danish man of ursine ancestry. The chapter begins with a discussion of Siward's real-life antecedent in the eleventh century. Parker returns to Siward's ancestry several times to show how this theme has become an essential part of "an origin-myth for an aristocratic dynasty" (138). Throughout the chapter, Parker notes parallels between Siward's story and Old Norse texts as well as features unique to the English sources. In a repetition of the raven banner motif, Siward receives a banner from a "mysterious old man"; its name is *Ravenlandeye*, "raven, terror of the land" (113).

Chapters four and five are shorter and mainly concerned with the right of the Danes to rule England. Chapter four focuses on Guy of Warwick, a knight who is best known for defeating a Danish champion and eventually becoming a hermit. Parker examines this story through the lens of English politics under Danish rule to show how "even Viking invaders could be
construed as potentially legitimate conquerors" (157). This thread is taken up in chapter five, which focuses on Havelok the Dane and his wife, Goldburh, who ruled "England and Denmark together in one harmonious union" in stories written down in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (159-160).

The epilogue discusses the role of the Danes as a group in folklore rather than focusing on specific individuals. One example of the topics covered is the story, told by more than one English church, that at one time, a Dane tried, unsuccessfully, to rob the church. His skin was hung on the door to discourage other would-be robbers (193). Parker considers this story unlikely (194), but interesting for what it may say about the Danish presence near such churches.

Parker concludes that two main functions of the stories discussed throughout the book are to explain unusual features (in terms of both landscape and custom) of England (202) and to explain why the Danes settled in England on a personal level (186). In support of the latter function, the stories give the Scandinavian settlers names and motivations, making them more than violent marauders. Many describe family relationships, bringing the Danes into English bloodlines and thereby creating a national origin story (203).

The book is well written and extensively researched. Parker has brought together an impressive range of materials and assembled them into a clear picture of what people in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries thought of the Scandinavians who had settled their homeland centuries earlier. The text is very readable and suitable for a broad audience. Overall, the book is a unique and substantial contribution. Anyone who enjoys reading about the Vikings will find this book fascinating. Scholars of Middle English literature and those interested in the Scandinavian settlement of England should definitely not miss it.
there—this is for you." (Blog post, Elle Thinks, May 2018 2018-07-25). "Parker, lecturer in medieval English literature at Oxford University, examines the reasons beyond simple violence and plunder that prompted Vikings to travel to England in this scholarly look at early medieval tales of Danes in England. [...] The translations help to make this work accessible..." (Publishers 67 results for return of the dragon lords. Save return of the dragon lords to get e-mail alerts and updates on your eBay Feed. Unfollow return of the dragon lords to stop getting updates on your eBay Feed. Yu-Gi-Oh Japanese RC03-JP038 Return of the Dragon Lords Collectors Rare. C $8.25. +C $44.19 shipping. From United States. Customs services and international tracking provided.