

Preface

On the evening of Wednesday 15th September the Danish participants in the symposium and a handful of Scottish participants who had arrived early in Copenhagen were assembled in the Royal Danish Academy anxiously awaiting news of the much-delayed plane that was to bring most of the Scottish participants to Copenhagen. The first news was that the plane should arrive in time for the planned reception to start one hour late and the time passed pleasantly enough in conversation and exchange of news. When the latest bulletin from the airport announced that the plane could not arrive at Kastrup before 11 p.m. at the earliest, the bonds of etiquette finally snapped and the Danish hosts and their few Scottish guests cast themselves avidly upon the prepared delicacies. The secretary of the Royal Society of Edinburgh, Dr William Duncan, then set off on his third trip to the airport to meet his flock and shepherd them to their hotel, while the Danish organisers returned home to an uneasy night's sleep, wondering how to hold a symposium without half the participants.

This unpropitious beginning, however, turned out to be the only unfortunate event of an otherwise successful symposium that augurs well for future cooperation. It is good to be able to report that a formal agreement on such cooperation was concluded between the two academies in Edinburgh earlier this month. The background for the holding of this first joint symposium is described by Henning Sørensen in his Prelude to this book. We are pleased that almost all the speakers wished to publish their contribution in the volume of proceedings and hope that this will be read with interest both in Scotland and in Denmark.

The organisers of the symposium would like to take this opportunity to extend their thanks to the following sponsors for their generous financial support: The Binks Trust, The British Council, Denmark, The Carlsberg Foundation, Copenhagen, The Gordon Cook Foundation, The Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters and The Royal Society of Edinburgh.

We are also indebted to the Dean of Roskilde Cathedral, Jens Arendt, for conducting us around the Cathedral, explaining its history to us, and pointing out the sarcophagus of King Christian VIII, who had been a very active president of the Royal Danish Academy. A similar debt of gratitude is owed to the Viking Ship Museum in Roskilde. Its director,

Tinna Damgaard-Sørensen, gave us free access to the museum, the catering staff provided us with an excellent lunch and Ole Crumlin-Pedersen looked after us well from the moment we arrived until we left again for Copenhagen. We should also like to thank the Carlsberg Academy for allowing us to hold our closing reception in Pompeji and Svend Rasmussen and his staff for making our evening in these splendid surroundings such an enjoyable one for us all. It was particularly pleasant that the Danish Cultural Institute in Copenhagen generously arranged for Mette Bligaard of the Danish Cultural Institute in Edinburgh to fly over specially to hold an inspiring pre-prandial talk on cultural exchanges between Denmark and Scotland. The organisers are above all, however, indebted to the staff of the Royal Danish Academy for ensuring that everything ran smoothly while the symposium lasted.

The present volume has been published with the aid of a generous grant from the Carlsberg Foundation.

22nd May 2000

Gillian Fellows-Jensen