

Gina Dahl, *Libraries and Enlightenment. Eighteenth-century Norway and the Outer World* (Aarhus: Aarhus University Press, 2014). 228 pp.

*Libraries and Enlightenment* is a wide-ranging title, which is however narrowed in the subtitle: *Eighteenth-Century Norway and the Outer World*. The aim of Gina Dahl's book is to inquire what knowledge of the outer world – the world beyond Europe – existed in the learned communities in eighteenth century Norway, as documented by the catalogues of private libraries. The book is divided into two parts. The first part of the book deals with the way in which the various parts of the world were present in libraries and the second part studies the content of the most frequently encountered works on Africa, Asia, Russia and America. Books dealing with the outer world were part of the broader category of *historia*, which leads the author to a discussion of the concept of history (chapter 1) and of the principles of classification (chapter 2). In chapter 3, Gina Dahl turns to an analysis of 63 book auction catalogues in relation to the category of *historia*.

Among the approx. 9000 volumes which (in the case of catalogues with clear subject divisions) are included or (in the case of catalogues without subject headings) could be said to be included in the category of *historia*, 4826 books which “display the world in a more di-

rect manner” (p. 69) are chosen for further statistical analysis in chapter 4. The vast majority of these books deal with Scandinavia, whereupon follows the European countries and unspecified works and lexicons (cf. Table 9, p. 65). 116 books deal with Russia, 371 with Asia, 177 with America and 80 with Africa. Among these Gina Dahl chooses the books with the highest number of occurrences in the library catalogues, and these books are dealt with in the second part of the book which turns from the quantitative analysis to a qualitative analysis: Johannes Rask and Georg Høst on Africa (chapter 5), Carsten Niebuhr and Paul Lucas on Asia (chapter 6), Adam Olearius and Peter von Haven on Russia (chapter 7) and Jens Kraft and Antonio de Solís on America (chapter 8).

Gina Dahl is an experienced author of English language monographs. With Brill she has published the *Book Collections of Clerics in Norway, 1650–1750* (Leiden – Boston, 2010) and *Books in Early Modern Norway* (Leiden – Boston, 2011). According to the preface, it was when she was writing her book on *Books in Early Modern Norway*, that Gina Dahl became aware of the “high number of books portraying non-European peoples and cultures included in Norwegian eighteenth-century book collections” (p. 7), and the book was written thanks to a post-doctoral scholarship from the Research Council of Norway,

during which Gina Dahl was attached to the University of Bergen.

Gina Dahl's book is part of a recent resurgence of interest in auction catalogues as a source to Scandinavian book history. The Danish book historian Harald Ilsøe has published an overview of book auction catalogues, *Biblioteker til salg, om danske bogauktioner og kataloger 1661-1811* (Copenhagen 2007) and Lis Byberg has published her doctoral dissertation on book auctions in the Norwegian literary public sphere *Brukte Bøker Til Bymann Og Bonde, Bokauksjonen i Den Norske Litterære Offentlighet 1750-1815* (Oslo, 2007).

In his unpublished manuscript on Danish private libraries (The Royal Library, Copenhagen, NKS 3680 quarto), which Lis Byberg used as an epigraph to her book, Christian Bruun stated that much profit can be gathered from reading book auction catalogues but that such a reading requires both certain preconditions and a purpose. Gina Dahl has these preconditions and the clearly stated purpose. Her book is a welcome examination of what learned people in Norway might have known about the outer world in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the fact that the book is written in English makes it a welcome contribution to the discussion of the difficult penetration of enlightenment culture in Scandinavia. Since it is a book that also invites discussion, I would now like to question in turn the corpus, the concepts, the periodization and the methodology of the book.

The amount of source material used for the book is impressive. Gina Dahl has chosen 63 book auction catalogues published in the period 1751-1809 (all listed in appendix 3, pp. 214-219) – “about half of the catalogues that survive from that period” (p. 24). For the same period (1751-1809), *Bibliotheca Norvegica* lists 87 catalogues of private book collections – plus catalogues of common libraries and reading societies and catalogues of various books (with no owner's name).

Among those private libraries which have been excluded from Gina Dahl's study we find all the surnames starting with C, such as Chezaulx (1801), Clitau (1754), Cold (1761), Collin (1802), Collin (1756), Cramer (1804).

We are told by Dahl that the 63 catalogues were selected because they were “available for consultation in the National Library (Oslo) and the Gunnerus Library (Trondheim)” (p. 24, n. 63). But this does not explain why catalogues from the period which are also available for consultation in those libraries, have not been used.

Why have the important libraries held by Johan Ernst Gunnerus and Carl Deichmann – as documented in catalogues from 1774 and 1790 – been excluded? The reason is not stated.

If the interest was in “how the world was presented to educated Norwegians”, the catalogues of common libraries and reading societies could also have been examined. For instance: *Catalogus over de Bøger, som for nærværende Tiid findes paa det hæderlige Bergenske Studenter-Societets Bibliothecque, efter Societets Brødrenes fælles Samtykke og til fælles Nytte* (Bergen, 1758). And if the interest was in the book trade, some of the catalogues of books for sale which do not necessarily stem from named owners (Grouped under the heading “Forskjellige falbudte bøger” in *Bibliotheca Norvegica*) might have been examined.

This kind of research requires clearly defined concepts. Gina Dahl uses the term “bestseller” and “bestselling” (cf. table 8, p. 61) for the books with the highest number of occurrences in the private libraries. A part from the fact that a “bestseller” denotes a 20<sup>th</sup> century phenomenon, a high number of occurrences in library catalogues is not necessarily equivalent to bestseller status, and if one were looking for bestsellers one would definitely have to look elsewhere as well. The term “bestseller” normally implies numerous editions of the same

book, but the translation of Antonio de Solís by Birgitte Lange was only published once, in 1747. Moreover, books sold at auctions normally reemerged in other private libraries, from which they would later be sold off at auctions. For instance, Gabriel Naudé's *Jugement de tout ce qui a esté imprimé contre le cardinal Mazarin depuis le 6 janvier jusqu'à la déclaration du 1er avril 1649* also known as *Mascurat* appears in many Danish 18th century library catalogues without having ever been a bestseller. "Collector's favorite", or "revenant" might be a more appropriate term than bestseller.

The book seems to equate enlightenment and books dealing with the world outside Europe. Even though enlightenment authors were indeed interested in exploring the world, the link between the enlightenment and books on the outer world is not a necessary one. The underlying problem is highlighted by the following paragraph:

"Following Gutenberg's invention of movable type, texts about other peoples and their cultures were printed and distributed in large number. The Norwegian context mirrors this phenomenon: books on other worlds constitute the most rapidly growing category of writings in the Norwegian Enlightenment Library" (p. 10).

What about the 300 years separating Gutenberg's invention and the Norwegian Enlightenment Library? The renaissance was the age of overseas discovery and expansion. In his book, *The Book in the Renaissance*, Andrew Pettegree devoted the chapter "Science and Exploration" to the profound impact which the voyages of discovery and exploration made on the book: "Through the course of the [16<sup>th</sup>] century, as the books of description multiplied, [a]n explicit affirmation of the superiority of knowledge derived by observation became a commonplace among writers who aimed, by their description, to encompass the world." (Andrew Pettegree: *The Book in the Renaissance*. Yale UP, 2010, p. 285). The first Dan-

ish book auction catalogue dates from 1661, but there were private libraries before the book auction system was introduced – and for instance Christian Barnekow's late 16<sup>th</sup> century library, which has been investigated by Federico Zuliani shows a keen interest in political history and in the world beyond Europe.

It could be argued that the ethnographic book started in the 16<sup>th</sup> century and not in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. As a case in point, I would like to cite an example, which is also cited by Pettegree: An early 16<sup>th</sup> century attempt at a description of the parts of the world was originally published in Latin in 1520: *Librorum trium iobannis Boemi de omnium gentium*, and it was often reprinted and translated into several vernacular languages. A true bestseller! In the preface Joannes Boemus explained that he had written the book so that the great number of people who could not go out and discover the world themselves could learn about the rest of the world.

Gina Dahl also seems to imply (p. 43) that a new classification system including history emerged with Leibniz' classification system around 1700. But even though history which had existed as a discipline at Copenhagen University since 1635 was not turned into an examination subject (cf. p. 71) before 1732, history was present in library cataloguing long before. History was thus a distinct category in Konrad Gesner's, Francis Bacon's and Gabriel Naudé's classification systems (Ib Magnussen: "De humanistiske fag" in S. Dahl (ed.): *Nordisk Håndbog i Bibliotekskundskab*, bind 1, København, 1957, s. 49-51). In 1660 *Libri Historici* was a subject category in the catalogue of the newly established Royal Library in Copenhagen (cf. The Royal Library's Archive E3).

Where as the methodology in the first part of the book is clear, the methodology in the second part of the book is regrettably impressionistic. The content of the books are described in lengthy summaries with a focus

on the evaluations of the other and with no mentioning of secondary literature. I would have preferred shorter summaries of the texts themselves and more discussion with the existing secondary literature.

The modern edition of the *Voyage du sieur Paul Lucas dans le Levant*, which was published in 1999 with an introduction and notes by Henri Duranton, should at least have been integrated and included in the analyses. Instead, in the list of primary sources, Gina Dahl refers to a POD–print of the Parisian edition from 1714 of Paul Lucas printed by Kessinger Publications, which is one of the disputable publishers printing PDF-files derived from Google Books.

Birgitte Lange's translation of Antonio de Solís y Rivadeneira: *Historia De La Conquista De Mexico*, (1684), which was published in Copenhagen in 1747, appears fifteen times in Dahl's source collections (p. 165) and is therefore one of the two books analyzed in the chapter concerning America. Strangely enough, Gina Dahl treats the book as Birgitte Lange's work, so she gives a brief introduction to her life but none to Antonio de Solís y Rivadeneira's life. Linguistically, Gina Dahl is constantly on the verge of turning Lange into the author of the book: "The narrative form of the work written, or rather translated, by Birgitte Lange is complete contrast to that of Jens Kraft." (p. 178); "Through her purely historical account Lange (de Solís) wrote to show how the conquest of Mexico was allegedly accomplished" (p. 192); "From her sickbed Birgitte Lange engaged with a world distant in time and space and produced a book that would be a bestseller in Enlightenment Norway" (p. 200). When she does not refer to Lange as the originator of the book, she refers to the author with the compound "De Solís/Lange". We are told that Lange "is not just translator but also editor, for she omits passages that she characterizes as 'unreasonable fables'" (p. 178) – but this is a characteristic of many 18<sup>th</sup> century translators and not sufficient reason to turn her into the author.

In one of the entries in the catalogue of Carl Deichman (p. 259, nr. 2203), Birgitte Lange appears correctly as the translator and not as the author, and I would assume that the same holds true for some of the other auction catalogues: "Historien om Conqueten af Mexico af D. Ant. de Solis, oversat af Birgitte Lange. 2. Tom: I Vol: 1747".

Often, the translator's share in the importance of a work is not properly recognized, but in Lange's case Dahl is guilty of the opposite error: The translator is treated as an author and put on an equal footing with the author. Even though the Norwegian woman Birgitte Lange is an interesting figure whom I did not know before reading Gina Dahl's book, and her contribution to the history of translation is indeed an interesting one, focusing on Lange solely distracts the author's attention from other interesting questions which could have been raised.

The lack of discussion with fellow travellers distinguishes the second part of the book from the first part but is not limited to the second part. Lis Byberg's doctoral dissertation on book auctions in the Norwegian literary public sphere, *Brukte Bøker Til Bymann Og Bonde, Bokauksjonen I Den Norske Litterære Offentligheden 1750-1815*, figures in the bibliography but is only mentioned once in the book, in a note without substance, note 46 on p. 20. A further discussion with Lis Byberg's book could have been desirable. The single index with subjects and names of persons includes names of historical persons but excludes names of persons named in the secondary literature. This makes it more difficult for the academic reader to find the discussion with fellow travellers.

In her book, Gina Dahl tries to combine the two approaches; in the first part she studies book diffusion and book collecting and in the second part she studies the contents of books and their authors' contribution to the history of thought. Combining literary history

and history of books is a commendable enterprise but Gina Dahl does not entirely succeed. Whereas the first part is convincing, the second part is much less so.

In a certain sense Gina Dahl tries to approach the history of reading and the history of mentalities by determining which books were present and what ideas these books contained. The fact that these books were present in the libraries does not prove that they were actually read. One would have to look for signs of reading elsewhere: manuscript notes, citation, inspiration and imitation.

Academic publishing in the humanities faces on the one hand the “publish or perish”-tendency and on the other side an enormous amount of information available online. This situation should be encountered by new means of research publication. This is an inspiring and audacious book. Allow me therefore the audacity to state that parts of the results that the present book comprehends could instead – in another world – have been distributed as a combination of articles and as a set of open data (the content of the library catalogues or the bibliographical data concerning the 9000 volumes analyzed), which could have been evaluated and reused by other scholars.

Anders Toftgaard

Knut Dørum, *Frå undersått til medborgar. Styreform og politisk kultur i Noreg 1660 til 1884* (Oslo: Samlaget, 2016). 221 pp.

Freden i Kiel 1814 innebar slutet på Napoleonkrigen i Norden och ett av de viktigaste resultaten var att Danmark tvingades överlämna Norge till Sverige. Tillspetsat kan sägas att en flerhundraårig maktkamp mellan Danmark och Sverige här fick sin upplösning, med Sverige som segrare. Norge hade sedan slutet av 1300-talet varit i union med det danska riket och beslutet

i Kiel 1814 startade en norsk självständighetskamp som resulterade i grundlagen i Eidsvoll den 17 maj och valet av kronprins Kristian Fredrik till norsk kung. Svenskarna ingrep då militärt och efter ett kort krig etablerades den personalunion som förenade Norge och Sverige intill unionsupplösningen 1905.

Med händelserna 1814 i centrum har historikern Knut Dørum skrivit boken *Frå undersått til medborgar. Styreform og politisk kultur i Noreg 1660 til 1884*. Boken är en syntes av den norska politiska historien mellan åren 1660 och 1884. Den är tänkt att användas som lärobok för undervisning på universitetsnivå. Boken innehåller sammanlagt sex kapitel. Efter en kort inledning presenteras i kapitel två ideologin bakom den enväldiga staten Danmark-Norge mellan 1660 och 1814. Kapitlet tar avstamp i införandet av det danska enväldet 1660 och diskuterar det i förhållande till nordisk och internationell forskning om statsbildning under tidigmodern tid. Kapitel tre handlar om den politiska kulturen 1660–1814, preciserar som hur politiken fungerade i praktiken. Här står människorna i centrum och deras handlingsutrymme och möjligheter att påverka politiken diskuteras och presenteras.

I kapitel fyra ges bakgrunden till händelserna 1814. Framför allt diskuteras i vilken omfattning 1814 ska ses som ett brott med de enväldiga styrelseformerna, eller om också den nya författningen kan sägas vara präglad av kontinuitet från tidigare århundraden. Kapitel fem berör den politiska praktiken under perioden efter 1814 och diskuterar utvecklingen av offentlighet och demokrati under perioden fram till 1884. I kapitel sex summeras den forskning och de diskussioner som presenterats i boken. Framställningen avslutas med en litteraturförteckning och ett register.

Ett uttalat syfte med boken är att beskriva processen från envælde till folkstyre, genom att följa hur styrelseformerna och den politiska kulturen i Norge förändrades under perioden. Centralt för Dørum är de två olika