

# Royal Blood

## The Passion of St Cnut, King and Martyr

Translation and perspectives



Edited by Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard,  
Kirstine Haase, and Steffen Hope

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# **Royal Blood: The passion of St Cnut, King and Martyr**

## ***Translation and perspectives***

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Museum Odense  
Overgade 48  
5000 Odense C  
museum@odense.dk  
www.museumodense.dk  
www.museum.odense.dk/forskning/forskningscentret-centrum

Syddansk universitetsforlag  
Campusvej 55  
5230 Odense M  
press@forlag.sdu.dk  
www.universitypress.dk

## **Contributors**

### **Francis Young**

PhD  
University of Portsmouth  
drfrancisyoung@outlook.com

### **Steffen Hope**

PhD  
Independent researcher  
st.a.b.hope@gmail.com

### **Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard**

MA in historical archaeology  
Museum Odense  
mimb@odense.dk

### **Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen**

PhD  
Museum Østjylland  
tgp@museumoj.dk



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# Introduction

This publication presents the first translation into English of the medieval manuscript *Passio Sancti Kanuti Regis et Martiris*, which deals with the life and martyrdom of Danish King Cnut IV, who was killed in a violent uprising in 1086 and subsequently canonised. To prevent confusing the present passion with a 12th-century hagiographical account by the same name, this text is sometimes referred to as *The Younger Passion* in academic works (Kristensen 1968-1969: 432; Danmarks Kirker IX:3: 1730). In the articles in this volume, the manuscript will be referred to as *Passio II*.

*Passio II* was brought to the attention of scholars in 1911 by German historian Bernhard Schmeidler, who discovered the manuscript (Cod. Novi Monasterii Vindobonensis, XII D 21) in the library of Stift Neukloster in Wiener Neustadt, Vienna (Schmeidler 1912). In 1911, Schmeidler sent his unpublished dissertation and transcript to the Danish philologist Martin Clarentius Gertz. At that time, Gertz was completing his comprehensive work on medieval sources on Danish saints (Gertz 1908-1912). Gertz thus included a transcription of *Passio II* as an appendix in his book with an introduction in Danish and philological annotations. Gertz based his transcription on the original manuscript, temporarily on loan to the National Library in Copenhagen during April-May 1912. However, Gertz chose to omit certain sections (mainly in chapters IX-XI) that he deemed identical to those found in the early twelfth-century manuscript *Gesta Swenomagni Regis et Filiorum Eius et Passio Gloriosissimi Canuti Regis et Martyris*<sup>3</sup> written by an English cleric in Odense, Denmark. Ailnoth, the author of the latter manuscript, had resided in Denmark for nearly 24 years at the time of writing. It is evident that the unknown author or, perhaps more correctly, compiler of *Passio II* drew heavily on Ailnoth's work, but he also relied on other sources and added original information in his compilation of *Passio II*.

Hans Olrik had already released Danish translations of the older *Passio Sancti Kanuti Regis et Martiris* and *Gesta Swenomagni Regis*... in 1894. For evident reasons, a translation of *Passio II* was not included in that work. In 1984, Erling Albrechtsen released a new Danish translation of *Gesta Swenomagni Regis*.... The present publication marks the maiden translation of *Passio II* into a modern language. It represents the first comprehensive English publication of a medieval hagiographic text concerning Cnut the Holy. The translation was undertaken in 2023 by British historian Francis Young at the request of the Research Centre CENTRUM at Museum Odense, Denmark.

The present translation of *Passio II* is based on Gertz' transcription (Gertz 1908-1912: 538-558). For the parts omitted by Gertz, Schmeidler's transcription (Schmeidler 1912: 88-97) has been consulted to fill in a few lacunae. The additions from Schmeidler are highlighted in the translation with square brackets. Unfortunately, the original Viennese

manuscript was not accessible during the translation process, leaving uncertainty regarding the precise wording of the paragraphs omitted by Gertz and Schmeidler. Consequently, we have included concise summaries of these passages, derived from Ailnoth's chronicle, based on the translation by Albrechtsen (1984), as footnotes to ensure completeness. Throughout the translation, hyphens have been employed to indicate lacunae or illegible sections in the original manuscript. For the sake of clarity, we follow Gertz' division and paragraphing of the text, which is not found in the original manuscript.

To ensure uniformity, the naming convention for persons and places mentioned in the text has been decided by postdoctoral fellow Steffen Hope (University of Oslo) and MA Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard (Museum Odense), favouring modern-day spelling in the respective modern language of origin of persons or places. For instance, "Svend" is preferred over "Sven" since it is the most used spelling in modern Danish. "Harold" refers to an English individual, while a Danish individual is called "Harald". Regarding the protagonist, the form "Cnut" has been adopted to align with the prevailing spelling in recent English research on Cnut the Holy.

We acknowledge that this publication does not have an extensive array of footnotes. For comprehensive linguistic annotations, readers are directed to the works of Schmeidler's (1912) and Gertz (1908-1912). Francis Young has contributed footnotes concerning language, translation, and biblical references (marked FY). Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard has provided essential footnotes on individuals and places, primarily to acquaint foreign readers with the context of Danish history and geography (marked MMB). As with any new translation of a medieval source, this edition opens new discussions and theories about the text's details, context, purpose, and historical significance. Instead of incorporating lengthy footnotes in the translation, some of these themes are elaborated upon in three accompanying articles within this volume.

In his article, Steffen Hope reassesses the historical context of *Passio II*, exploring the identity of its author and the manuscript's purpose through intertextual and historical analysis. Taking an archaeological approach, Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard evaluates *Passio II*'s reliability as a source, particularly with regard to geography and manifest structures. Intriguingly, these analyses lead Hope and Bjerregaard to propose two quite different datings for the manuscript. In the final article, Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen investigates the unusual distribution pattern of one type of coin minted during the reign of Cnut IV, suggesting that these coins may have been revered as votive coins or pilgrim badges for Saint Cnut.

With the present translation, we hope to facilitate access to

one of the sources on the history of Denmark's first royal saint for scholars and non-specialists alike who do not have a comprehensive knowledge of Latin. Moreover, we also hope that the English translation will stimulate international interest in the hagiography of Cnut the Holy. Despite receiving comparatively less scholarly attention than other hagiographic sources on Cnut, possibly due to its relatively late composition, approximately a century after the other texts, *Passio II* offers unique information of relevance to hagiogra-

phers, historians, and archaeologists exploring the events and geographical landscape surrounding the reign, demise, and cult of King Cnut in late eleventh-century Denmark.

Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard, Odense

February 2025



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Illustration of St. Cnut in the Guild Ordinance of the St. Cnut Guild in Tallinn, Estonia, circa 1486.  
Tallinna Linnaarhiiv (TLA, f. 190, n. 1, s. 46).



# The Passion of St Cnut, King and Martyr

*Translated by Francis Young*

*Annotations by Francis Young and Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard*

## Prologue

In the name of the Lord I shall briefly attempt to undertake a life and subsequent passion of the most glorious martyr of Christ, King Cnut;<sup>1</sup> reserving it for the memory of future generations, to pass it on completely to those who look upon it, to the praise of Christ, and to the honour of his soldier and martyr; and equally for the salvation and edification of us and those who shall come after. Indeed, this work of mine is unequal in knowledge ('For the well is deep, and I have nothing in which to draw from it');<sup>2</sup> but truly I trust in the grace of the same one who said, 'Man may approach a deep heart, and God will be exalted'.<sup>3</sup> And again, 'Open your mouth, and I will fill it'.<sup>4</sup> I will narrate the deeds of the religious prince, the athlete of Christ; with the Lord directing my sense, my lips and my mouth, so that I may thus raise up the news of this soldier, insofar as I shall treat the pleasing features of his majesty.

1. And so the blessed Cnut, born from royal stock,<sup>5</sup> gained his name from his great uncle; that is, Cnut the most victorious king of the Danes,<sup>6</sup> who made continual war with the blessed King Olaf of Norway.<sup>7</sup> But Cnut, the victor, obtained three kingdoms – those of the Danes, the Norwegians, and the English. At length he entered into the way of all flesh, and his body was covered over with a famous tablet of stone that enclosed it.

2. The sister of this aforesaid king, named Estrid,<sup>8</sup> was married to the famous Earl of the Swedes named Ulf,<sup>9</sup> and received a most noble son from him, named Svend – that is to say, the father of the blessed athlete of Christ Cnut, whose feast we celebrate today. But this Svend, having been strengthened in the seat of his fathers, and having obtained the crown of the Danes, subjugated Norway for himself with force and arms. At length, having collected a huge fleet, he went to England.<sup>10</sup> But King Edward of England, a holy and just man, choosing peace rather than war, offered tribute to the king of the Danes and established him as the heir of his kingdom after him. Thus Svend, the victor of three kingdoms, therefore ruled quietly in Denmark for twenty-eight years.

3. When he passed to Christ from this present world, therefore, in year of the Lord's Incarnation 1074,<sup>11</sup> there was great dissension between his elder sons – that is to say, Harald<sup>12</sup> and the blessed Cnut, whose memory we celebrate today – concerning which of them should be chosen to reign in their father's seat. Harald, because he was both older by birth and seemed more modest in action, was chosen as king by the common consent of all. The blessed Cnut bore

this as an annoyance; however, he patiently held back, awaiting God's future aid.

4. Indeed Harald, a discreet man and most excellent ruler of the kingdom, instituted excellent laws for the Danes, and confirmed instructions by his royal authority. From these laws, sanctioned by him, the Danes even to this day alight upon those elected and being elected for their kings. But with the same having left this world in the sixth year of his reign,<sup>13</sup> blessed Cnut succeeded him in the kingdom.

5. Since there were eleven sons of King Svend the Great, an agreement was made between them that the eldest born should always rule, for as long as any of them survived. From this, it turned out that five of these brothers held successively the monarchy of the kingdom of the Danes. First Harald held it, secondly St Cnut, thirdly Olaf, fourthly Eric, and fifthly Niels.<sup>14</sup>

## II.

1. Having established the most noble birth of the blessed martyr Cnut, we return to treating the proclamation of the martyrdom of the same. Having thus assumed the crown of the kingdom of the Danes, the holy King Cnut became a victorious prince, a discreet man, a religious man, and an executor of the whole truth and justice without personal exception.

He was merciful to the least of men, and severe and stern to the proud.

At length the martyr, beloved by God, was made by the Lord a fellow citizen of the heavenly saints.

2. The prudence of honest morals naturally flourished charmingly with the grace of youth; he was severe by nature, worthy of the appearance of command, beautiful with vivacious eyes, strenuous in arms and spirit. A wonderful prudence of mind brought forth eloquence of speech. He favoured the starving poor, he clothed the naked and the cold, he mercifully supported orphans and widows, and he sustained pilgrims and the needy with donations of mercy. He honoured the men of religious orders as if they were lords, or as if they were fathers. He adorned the holy churches of the saints of God with gifts of royal munificence, and frequented them assiduously to hear the divine office; and, as he had perceived it by his magnanimous nature, he hid it in the precious closet of his breast.



3. And by the instinct of the divine spirit, disdaining the embraces of concubines and avoiding lasciviousness in the manner of the Roman emperors, he chose for himself a wife named Adela;<sup>15</sup> and with Christ bearing witness, he was content with this marriage alone. This woman was the daughter of Robert of Flanders,<sup>16</sup> by whom he fathered a son named Charles<sup>17</sup> who, after the death of his grandfather Count Robert became Count of Flanders.

4. But filled with the fear of the Lord, the precious martyr Cnut confessed his former ignorance and the shortcomings of his youth to the religious men of his household with all devotion and humility, tormented by skilled examination, as well as to the venerable bishops Gerold and Arnold,<sup>18</sup> or to his familiar chaplains of the royal court. And thus he made himself subject to the divine mercy so that – which at that time seemed incredible – with God bearing witness and conscious of his own secrets, he suffered bodily wounds of penance inflicted by them upon him.

5. Furthermore, he kept both private and solemn fasts for around six days at the royal table. So that it should be thought by his fellow diners that wine or mead were used by him (but with few of his servants being aware of this, however), he used pure water and distributed the banquet of royal delicacies partly to those sitting by him, and partly expended it on the poor. Indeed, he himself revived their bodies with dry bread sprinkled with salt, the accustomed delicacies. For he did not desire that his works should be shown openly in the streets but that they should approved by the searcher of hearts, so that the left hand should not know what the right was doing; since he did not expect the favour of human praise from this, but the reward of his father who was seeing it done in secret.<sup>19</sup>

6. For he placed all his hope in the Lord, preferring truth to custom in all causes of the world. For we read that Christ said, 'I am the truth',<sup>20</sup> but we do not read that he said, 'I am custom'. On account of this he assiduously considered with the chief men of the kingdom, and discussed extensively with the religious how he might increase the religion of the faith of Christ in his kingdom. Accordingly, he examined with keen interest many things passed down from ancient times to be observed in the present, which ought rather to be corrected for the sake of divine justice than continued on account of the favour of the common people. With the grace of the divine judge inspiring him, he commanded them to be suppressed. But the fierceness and hardness of the untameable and obstinate people [*lacuna in manu-script*].<sup>21</sup> They complained in their gatherings that he pursued it from vanity and that he put forth a work as if with new and unheard of inventions; and on account of this, puffed up with the suggestion of the evil spirit, they took counsel how they might cast off the yoke of his dominion from the necks of their rebelliousness.

7. By him the priests in Denmark first obtained a third of the tithes, both of grain and animals to their own use; and even

to this day they obtain this.<sup>22</sup>

8. For these aforementioned causes, and others that were similar, the common people conspired against him. For the common throng did not comprehend what the Lord inspired in the king's heart. For when he tried to tear them from the yoke of sin and lead them back to the freedom of justice, in their blindness they did not see; and considered him as if a seducer and invader of ancient peace and calm and a thief of their ancient liberty.

### III.

1. Truly, a city set high on a hill no-one can hide.<sup>23</sup> The fame of the virtue and constancy of the prudence of this most noble prince spread widely throughout the world; and he was as much held very famous among the Italians, the Spaniards, the Gauls, the English, the Irish and Scots and Orcadians as among the Swedes, Norwegians, Poles, Slavs, Saxons and other German peoples. It even reached them that he was not only admired but also feared among the most noble and warlike Franks.<sup>24</sup>

2. In those days, by the treachery of war, King Harold of England was killed by William, duke of Normandy, whom the English called 'the Bastard'.<sup>25</sup> He oppressed defeated England by force and arms, with too much ferocity. The natives of that land, empathising concerning their lost ancient liberty with the blessed Cnut, king of the Danes,<sup>26</sup> sent emissaries to the king of the Danes desiring to free their necks from the yoke of dominion of the aforesaid William – to the effect that he should hurry to avenge the death of Harold, the former king and his kinsman,<sup>27</sup> and that he should find them prompt in his service in all things.

3. Therefore the blessed Cnut, a strong warrior, having received the English delegation with joy, discussed all these things with the foremost and best men of the realm – that is, it fell out that from the killing of his kinsman the kingdom of the English ought to be his by hereditary right, and he complained that it had been injuriously taken from him. Following the common counsel of all the better men, therefore, he proclaimed an expedition through all Denmark, and ordered a huge fleet to be gathered, as decided at that place and time.

4. But when an innumerable army and fleet had gathered at the port which is called Humlum<sup>28</sup> (from which there was little difficulty in crossing to England), the king was staying in the town of Schleswig dealing with the aforesaid matter, four days' journey away from them. But the common people, impatient of waiting on the shore (as is their way), were complaining in their gathering that their waiting was useless for their domestic affairs, and called more and more either for leave to return to their own homes (when the king was intent on other things), or to have the means of choosing another leader for the expedition themselves,

or to send messengers to the king to make haste with the fleet.

5. But Olaf, the king's brother, aspiring to the kingdom and satisfying their chatter in order to gain the goodwill of the people, gave them leave to go to their own homes by his own authority. Content with this permission, the roughness of the rustics repaired to their own uncouth homes. When the king, far off and attentive in his work (since the business had been carried on longer), had ascertained this counsel of wickedness, he took captive his own aforementioned brother (that is to say Olaf) – since he considered it a diminishment of his own honour and the good of the kingdom. He sent him to his father-in-law Robert of Flanders to be held. For the king had taken his most beloved daughter as his wife, from whom he had also received a most noble offspring for himself, that is to say Count Charles. On this account he trusted him before others to best guard his brother.

#### IV.

1. But the king, imbued with divine wisdom, since he was troubled in his spirit concerning the return of his army, made up the lost time since the days were evil. Yet just as if so much eagerness of piety was in him, he thus and thereafter busied himself with promoting reverence for divine worship, putting forward the rights of the clergy, observance of the principal days and prescribed fasts (just as they are held throughout the whole Christian world), and suppressing many other things contrary to the Lord. He also publicly adjudicated that those slaves were redeemed who were manumitted by the generosity of their masters, or by acquiring their own price by the sweat of their labour. He determined that foreigners and visitors arriving from anywhere, remaining beneath the rule of his kingdom, were equal in rights and equity with the inhabitants. He defended wards, orphans, widows, and the poor who were unable to support themselves with the shield of protection of royal authority. He restrained the obstinacy of rebels, whether against divine or legal institutions, and mastered their unruly necks with the rod of royal justice.

2. But the ancient enemy, and the circling lion searching for whom he may devour,<sup>29</sup> exerted himself in astute machinations for the king's death, since he knew him well to be God's servant. And thus, he armed those who were older and more outstanding in strength against the religious prince, with sinful boldness most ready for wickedness. On account of this, almost all the common people of the land, infected with the same poison and caught in the net of the same malice, plotted the death of the king and martyr.

3. Nevertheless, the king's tax collectors (and, equally, all of the administrators of royal business), seeing that the kingdom was now strengthened in the king's hand, and having been infected with the poison of too much avarice, pursued

more than was due to them in vexatious cases, and in disregard plundered those things appointed for taxation. They determined to pay a lamb for a penny, a sheep for a shilling, and a cow for a shilling and threepence in the king's census. Also, perverting judgements, both noble and common men hastened to oppress the poor with force and power. Very many people, aggrieved by the insolence of the enormity of these men, inflamed at the same time by wrath and envy, poured out all of the aforesaid tyranny to the king.

4. The footpads of impiety and madness therefore ran amok, who were not only quick to commit crimes, but even incited the hearts of the simple (and even the minds of the innocent) against the king – so that they might multiply the accomplices of their crimes and everywhere disturb the right of truth and justice, desiring that their thirst should be slaked by the blood of the king and martyr.

#### V.

1. When the king was staying in Jutland, of which the greater part is in Denmark, and conducting royal business in the southern parts of Jutland as usual, he crossed over to the Vendsyssel beyond the strait which is called Limfjord.<sup>30</sup> For it was at that time an island containing two provinces, that is to say Thy and Vendsyssel, which today should be spoken of more as a promontory than as an island.<sup>31</sup>

2. Arriving therefore at the town of Børglum, accompanied every day only by his court and the army, he declared that he would be spending several days residing there, and ordered the king's ministers to enquire into and complete the business of cases. When his arrival was announced both the nobles and common people, infected by the poison of the evil spirit, having been incited against the champion of Christ and annoyed with the king, did not scruple to make open their hitherto secret plans. They summoned gatherings of the wicked to a bridge called *Cornicus*<sup>32</sup> and did not fear to give a sentence of condemnation against the king's majesty.

3. But the king had decided that he would see a great multitude of them that day and meet them in battle if the support was available. But considering that he could not resist such a multitude with so few, without a huge massacre of his own people, and wanting to mitigate the insolence of the fury of the united multitude (and reckoning the loss of either side an injury of his own men, since all were subject to his rule), he decided the place ought to be yielded. And so that there should be no greater disturbance, he decided to go away quietly as if he were about to discuss the matter with his own men. He was looking out for himself and for his own men, and not aiming to shed his adversaries' blood, but choosing peace above all according to the Lord's command: 'If you are persecuted in one town, flee to another'.<sup>33</sup> He sent the army that he had with him to a royal court which is called Aggersborg,<sup>34</sup> located on the shore of

the strait (that is, Limfjord). But he himself was staying with the venerable man Henrik, bishop of the same diocese, in a house<sup>35</sup> nearby.

4. But desiring to calm the madness excited in the people at the instigation of the ancient serpent he sent to them the venerable Bishop Henrik – who at that time, as we have said, was housing the glorious king with him. Speaking eloquently, so that they might put an end to their insolence now begun, the bishop urged and persuaded them (lest it should become notorious throughout the world) and spoke most elegantly in proposing what was and was not right. But since the Spirit of God was not able to calm those who were inflated and lifted above all by every evil, they belloyed against the sober counsels of the aforesaid bishop. They hurried to rush against the bishop and, so that the common people would not accept the truth and usefulness of what he was saying and persuading, they pursued them with troublesome propositions to dissuade them.

5. When all these things had been conveyed to the king by the bishop, leaving those northern parts and crossing beyond the strait of Limfjord he went to the town of Viborg seeking help; but he found there no helpers, but only new persecutors.

6. But the common people of the wicked gathering of Vendsyssel marvellously – indeed, diabolically – incited all the ends of his land against the king. Proceeding in a great troop they invaded the king's courts and drove out the overseers of business in the same buildings. They inspected everything, investigating with greedy eyes, and like swine they snatched away everything that lay to hand and destroyed it. And they quickly hurried to the town of Aggersborg, where the ministers of the royal treasury had their seat. But they attacked them outside; these men desired to defend themselves from inside. With the multitude of those breaking in growing, some were dragged outside, and others were killed in front of the doors while others were thrown into the river. Others fled, seeking a place to hide after having abandoned the buildings, leaving all furnishings behind them.

7. At length, by a universal edict, all the common people – whether on foot or on horseback – followed the steps of the king. And, lest any place whatsoever should leave any refuge for the religious prince, at the same time the common people zealously competed in madness and insanity, having sent across runners (accompanied on every side by the devil) – so that the disciple and martyr might follow in this, and in other things, the example of his master Jesus Christ. Concerning whom it was said, 'The foxes have holes, and the birds of the heaven have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head'.<sup>36</sup>

## VI.

1. The king, completely leaving behind the northern part of

Jutland, away from the tumult, went to Schleswig – from there to set out to Funen on a sea voyage. Therefore, with the ships having been impressively fitted out and necessities having been brought aboard, the splendid prince, who was about to leave behind both the fury of Jutland and Jutland itself, was carried to the island of Funen by the inlet<sup>37</sup> of Schlei up to the sea, sailing the wave-tossed strait<sup>38</sup> with his household followers and now a band of novices being tested by the challenge. Here, while he was in need of the security of present peace, he did not find it. He merited to be adorned with the palm of eternal happiness and the perpetual memory of a glorious triumph.

2. Therefore, when the king's arrival had been spread abroad, so that which divine providence disposed was not delayed, runners had been sent out both day and night all around. The multitude of the common people of that land gathered together, having united their counsels of wickedness; and they all resolved immediately that they would cast off the religious prince to the ends of the kingdom, or even (which was a crime in speaking it) exile him for life. But when he set out for an important place which is called the town of Odense – as if it were his battle, triumph or lodging – with his brothers Eric, Benedict and Svend,<sup>39</sup> and with his accompanying courtiers, he was going to wait for the outcome of these affairs and discuss them with those he would admit to his counsels. But the seditious multitude grew so much during the day that it sent spies among the royal court and everywhere questioned the king's counsels; and rushing at him with his company it fought everyone eagerly.

3. The leader of this sedition and the deviser of this crime was a certain tyrant named Piper,<sup>40</sup> a very astute character among them, and fruitful in the spirit of the enemy; eloquent in speech, he falsely accused the innocent king. And, to ensure faith in his trickeries, he did not hide the furious counsels of the senseless mob – which, however, brought many things to be made plain through him which should not have been proposed at all. Whereupon he sat down next to the king at the royal table, as if he were faithful to his king, according to that prophet, 'He that did eat of my bread hath lifted up his heel against me'.<sup>41</sup> At length, stuffed with the king's banquet and drunk from his cup, he was honoured with royal gifts.

4. And just as for the master of truth, who said to Judas the traitor reaching out to dip bread into his cup 'That thou doest, do quickly',<sup>42</sup> having received license to return to the common people, he handed over his lord and most holy king on the pretext of peace, according to the example of the traitor – having given a kiss from his poisoned heart, so that by the kiss of peace the disciple who was handed over might follow the master of truth. But the most wicked Piper, running into hostile bands, which he had noticed by the king, denounced him not by stretching out his arms but by changing course; and, when they surrounded him by trickery, he astutely addressed them in instruction.



5. Satisfying the seditious multitude by his persuasions against the aforementioned king, it rushed, gathered together into one, to the place of the royal seat. The snorting of horses, the hissing of the people, the noise of the press and the clashing of arms seemed to touch heaven. The running of feet and the charge of horses struck the ground; throwing up the dust from the ground into the air, cast high and wide, it brought in the darkness of night to what day still remained.

6. Later, with evening approaching, the lord king was about to hear vespers in his accustomed way; and now, he and his own who were about to be commended to the holy king of martyrs made for the monastery of St Alban<sup>43</sup> situated not far away. Many of the more noble participants in his struggle followed, with others designing whatever subterfuges they were able and considering their present life.

7. But the battalion of the enemy, arriving from all around, roamed around and occupied both the royal buildings and halls, breaking in. And they even tried to break into certain holy places when the religious king was in them with his men. Some tried to loosen the doors of the church, to break them with iron crowbars, and some to set fire to it; and they tried either to take everyone alive or leave them dead. But when the fire had been extinguished by virtue of a heavenly shower of rain, the completely undefeated novices inside resisted the enemy outside, forcefully opening up an opportunity with arms and fighting gloriously for their lord.

8. The devout king, meanwhile, sought the king of kings not with Herodian falseness but with Davidic humility. Doing penance, he confessed all his sins to Christ. At last, he enriched both his body and soul with the sacrament of the Eucharist, offering gifts of gold and silver at the altar, with the companions of his suffering doing the same in turn lest the approach of the enemy should become clear, opposing them with arms.

9. At length, with the conspiring multitude running around everywhere, that traitor Piper stood outside in front of the doors and did not hesitate even to abuse with words the king's most faithful man, as if provoking him to single combat. When he did not feebly run inside, he was wounded alternately with hard blows administered on each side, and at last gloriously met his death inside – as an indication of the more evident vengeance due to the one living. For carried to the house, having been most bitterly invaded by the demon, Piper invaded the vicinity as much with teeth as with hands; he broke in and wore them down, and furiously spat foam from his mouth like a boar. Shouting horribly, he yelled, putting forth vain and unheard-of things. He evidently proclaimed the fraudulent crime, and at last with his tongue chewed and cut out with teeth, he finished his life miserably.

10. But the obstinate enemy pressed on the walls of the

church with stubborn insolence and sent arrows with stones through openings; they crushed the king with stones like Stephen and wounded him with missiles like Sebastian, and the monastery's holy pavement was consecrated with the outpouring of the blood of the holy martyrs of Christ. Indeed, so that the devout king might become an imitator of the sufferings of Christ, standing between the battalion of the hostile enemy he asked for water to quench his thirst among the furious missiles. When a certain man, moved by his piety, had given and bestowed it upon the king (who was asking for a draught in a vessel through a window), another spear sent inside knocked the vessel out of the hands of each of them and at the same time emptied out the water. The man slaking the king's thirst obtained rest, but he was not deprived of the reward of his piety. But he who threw down the water, standing above a spring not long after the time of his insane act, as if he was about to slake his own thirst, when he had at last put his head into the depths on his knees, his body was monstrously distended by the wicked spirit sent forth; it left the same, deprived of sense, as if as a sign of divine vengeance to be seen by those coming upon it.

## VII.

1. But when the king's bravest soldiers had dislodged the hostile forces from the doors of the monastery, turning to the east of the sanctuary (where they had seen their most devout prince persevering in prayer inside) they attacked it with swords and axes, severing and pulling down the doorposts. They even threw to the ground the holy cross and the reliquaries of St Alban and St Oswald, laying low the lowest doorpost.

2. For it was a monastery made of wood, consecrated in honour of St Alban, in which at that time was the episcopal seat, which was afterwards translated to the monastery of the blessed Cnut, whose feast we celebrate today, a distinguished building made of brick.

3. Therefore, with the king praying devoutly before the altar, a certain unfortunate spear sent through the window pierced the side of the glorious martyr Cnut and spattered the holy building with his blood. But he, not forgetful of the wounds of Christ, who suffered for us, embraced and gave the kiss of peace to the blessed Benedict, his brother according to the flesh and his ally in the struggle, who was close by and gravely wounded. He prostrated himself on the ground with his arms extended in the form of a cross before the altar of the Lord. For with his veins emptying from the wound, he still called upon the Lord with his last remaining voice and commending his spirit to the Creator just as he was about to cease this present life, he entered the palace of Christ forever. For dying with exceptional torments, the blessed Cnut himself obtained for his Lord the triumph of death, and washed clean his robe, made purple

with his own princely blood, in the blood of the lamb.

4. But the most constant soldiers still did not yield to the enemy even when the king was killed, and they also encouraged one another, exhorting one another to rouse their souls and strength. They manfully threw back the arms that were rushing in, meeting them strongly with arms, and cutting them they each shone brightly, choosing rather to die gloriously than to survive when they had lost such a prince. With the multitude of the hostile forces growing, they were not only laid prostrate but, with the enemy pressing them again and again, they were choked; and the holy building was sprinkled with the blood of the martyrs, and the soil of the temple watered with a wave of blood. And the words of the prophet were fulfilled, in which it is said, 'the heathen are come into thine inheritance; thy holy temple have they defiled';<sup>44</sup> and in another place, 'The blood of your saints they have they shed like water round about'.<sup>45</sup>

5. But when the aforesaid crimes had been committed, the band of sacrilegious men threw down many things. For they not only examined the royal halls but every nook and cranny of the shrines, tearing away everything they found there – even the consecrated ornaments of Christ. So that they could share them they pulled them apart, as is written: 'The stones of the sanctuary are poured out in the top of every street'.<sup>46</sup> From here, scouring around the whole town, they providently busied themselves with being careful that no offspring of the king should be left alive as an avenger of the crime.

6. At length they came to understand by investigations that the blessed Benedict, the precious martyr and king's full brother and his ally in the struggle, was still alive and had been preserved at a nearby lodging. At which, the mob rushed in headlong. The royal youth was found gravely afflicted with wounds. Dragging him by the feet, they pulled him out into the midst of that conventicle of impiety, and according to the Apostle's saying he was made a 'spectacle to the world'<sup>47</sup> and to the ministers of the prince of the world.<sup>48</sup> And by them the administration of iniquity was accomplished. And when they had discussed how or in what manner they should kill him, they now (like hunters disagreeing about the capture) drag him limb from limb and half alive; others cruelly fix his body to the earth with spears; others mutilate and kill him with axes, and many with swords. And thus, gradually freed by very many wounds, life left him by his severed limbs. And when he had given up his spirit, the reward of martyrdom followed.

## VIII.

1. When these aforementioned tumults had calmed down and the workers of iniquity were leaving the temple, the clergy standing there ran to the bodies of those cut up, hiding certain parts of the royal body of his brother in the church of St Alban, commending the bodies of the glorious

martyrs and soldiers to mother earth in the nave<sup>49</sup> of the same church, at the northwest corner.

2. But the rewarder of all good things, Christ Jesus, preparing innumerable good things for those who love him, 'What eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, etc.',<sup>50</sup> multiplied the signs of the miracles of the most blessed king and martyr Cnut and his brother, St Benedict the duke<sup>51</sup>, by merits and prayers.

3. For there was a certain man named Esbern, born in Funen, who from infancy had not known the step of feet, but crept in a four-footed manner on his arms and knees with legs drawn back and knees turned around (his calves cleaved to his hips, his soles to his buttocks), with his head to the ground – he was also a hunchback. This man was praying devoutly in the church of St Cnut on the vigil of the same holy martyr, when the choir in the hour of vespers began this responsory, 'The Lord hath led the just man by straight paths',<sup>52</sup> he received health at the command and plenteous kindness of the blessed king Cnut: with an erect spine, his hump completely gone, and his shins extended. I saw this thing done and heard it while saying the mass of the blessed Cnut; I myself, whose right hand has written these things for you to read.

4. But I saw another man contorted in a similar way, with drawn back shins and arms pulled back in the same way, going around the whole of Funen in a wagon for thirty years and more. The man, who was known very well in all of our land, when very many people were standing in the monastery of St Cnut on Ascension Day and both seeing the man who was thus afflicted and hearing the cracking of nerves from his distension, received health by the merits of the same martyr of Christ when the choir was singing 'Christ ascending on high'. The Lord did many other things in very many places for those who sought the merits and prayers of the blessed martyr: lepers cleansed; demons put to flight. He restored to health very many labouring with different kinds of diseases – people with dropsy, paralysed people, the blind, the deaf, mutes and cripples; to whom be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## IX.

1. Indeed<sup>53</sup> the most prudent wife of the venerable king dear to God, presenting nobility of soul in her face, displaying the now precious members of her most dear husband ... to have an advocate with God ... she did not withdraw in mind.

2. But<sup>54</sup> the singular king and martyr Cnut, beloved of God, rested in the same place for around nine years, with Olaf ... as we have said, broken by illness, as if not chosen by the inspector of virtues, his reign and his life simultaneously ended.

3. But this Olaf was freed from the captivity of the Count

of Flanders after the death of the blessed Cnut by his brother Niels, afterwards his successor. For he made himself a hostage for this brother, so that he might freely return to reign in Denmark. When he had reigned, not being mindful of fraternal devotion, he said he would not redeem his brother – in the manner of Pharaoh's cupbearer.<sup>55</sup> For just as he left Joseph in prison, so Olaf left Niels in captivity.

4. From<sup>56</sup> this, the fields were barren of harvest for all the days of his reign, for he esteemed the sins of the same King Olaf equal to those of the common people of Denmark who innocently slaughtered the king and martyr Cnut. [*He<sup>57</sup> obtained the monarchy by will*], he arose by power, and by the choice of his whole army. For in seeking ... having seen for the blind.

## **X.<sup>59</sup>**

1. But the most prudent king<sup>60</sup> ... so the apostolic authority discerned (on account of the old age of his sense, the maturity of his acts, and the sincerity of his life) that he who was to be commemorated in the canon of saints; it decided that he who had previously been called Cnut (as if by a barbarous word) should be called Kanutus. Like a carbuncle shining among precious gems, he tried to pass on the celebrated deeds to posterity, not just by his care in imitating his father but by his own monument.

2. For thus once Abram [*was approved<sup>62</sup> .... Therefore<sup>63</sup> the legates, strengthened by apostolic authority ... and comforted by the adored patronage of the most blessed apostles Peter and Paul, as they had desired ... entered the desired parts of Denmark ... and returned to their own country,*] ... extolling him assiduously, ... [*and faithfully*] demanding [*his prayers*]<sup>64</sup>.

## **XI.<sup>65</sup>**

1. But the [*most prudent*] queen, Adela ...<sup>66</sup> [*In the sixth year of the rule of the magnificent king*] Eric, when everyone had been gathered together, [*inspected the precious relics of the blessed martyr in the same chest, as we have previously said, with the eyes of an innumerable multitude fixed upon it...*]<sup>67</sup>

*Now safe in heaven with the supreme king, Cnut*

*The martyr and king is found in a golden chest,*

*Who for the performance of justice was wickedly killed;*

*Like the life of Christ, thus death was revealed to each,*

*Having been handed over by the people like God himself in his ministry*

*And asking for a drink a blow of weapons pierced him,*

*A lance – but not his side as Christ was pierced;*

*And dying their sacred spirits mingle in the stars.*

By his bones, therefore ...] ...<sup>69</sup> and what they needed was done for those seeking it by the admirable king of martyrs, to whom be honour and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

## **Collect<sup>70</sup>**

Almighty and eternal God, the strength of those struggling and the palm of martyrs, look favourably upon the solemnity of this day and make your Church to be continually rejoiced in celebration; that, by the intercession of the blessed Cnut your martyr, you might bring to pass the undertakings of all believing in you. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **Secret<sup>71</sup>**

O God, by whose providence the glorious king and martyr Cnut sustained the wicked torments of the cruel people, grant to us your servants that by his merits and prayers we might obtain the joy of eternal life, who deigned to adorn him with heavenly honour and glory. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

## **To finish<sup>72</sup>**

O God, who crowned the blessed Cnut the king with glorious martyrdom, having been killed unjustly by the people subject to him, grant that we may feel him to be an intercessor before you, whom we believe to reign a victor in heaven by your glorious grace. Through Our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

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## End notes

- 1 Cnut IV of Denmark (c. 1042-1086). He reigned from 1080-86. Cnut referred to himself as “ego Cnuto quartus” (Weibull 1963-1964: 49). In modern times, he is usually referred to as Cnut the Holy. Cnut considered his predecessors and namesakes to be Harthacnut (the father of King Gorm the Old), Cnut the Great (reigned 1018-1035), and Harthacnut (reigned 1035-1042). While historical sources firmly substantiate the life and reign of the latter two, the name of King Gorm’s father remains unverified. (MMB).
- 2 This is an allusion to the words of the Samaritan woman at the well to Jesus in John 4:11: *Domine, neque in quo haurias habes, et puteus altus est: unde ergo habes aquam vivam?* (‘Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep: from whence then hast thou that living water?’). All Biblical quotations in the translation are given according to the Authorised Version unless otherwise stated (FY).
- 3 Psalm 63:7-8 (Vulgate) (FY).
- 4 This is an allusion to Ezekiel 2:8: ‘Aperi os tuum, et comedere quaecumque ego do tibi’ (‘Open thy mouth, and eat that I give thee’) (FY).
- 5 Cnut was the son of King Svend Estridsson (reigned 1047-1076) (MMB).
- 6 Cnut the Great (reigned 1018-1035) (MMB).
- 7 Olaf II of Norway (St. Olaf) (reigned 1015-1028) (MMB).
- 8 Estrid Svendsdatter married Earl Ulf by arrangement of her brother, Cnut the Great. Following the assassination of Ulf, Cnut still favoured Estrid (MMB).
- 9 Ulf was a Danish earl who took part in Cnut the Great’s invasion of England in 1016. Ulf’s sister Gyda was married to Godwine and was the mother of Harald Godwinson. As one of Cnut’s most entrusted men, Ulf was regent ad interim in Denmark c. 1024-1026 when Cnut was in England. Ulf was killed for treason on the order of Cnut in 1026 (MMB).
- 10 Edward the Confessor (reigned 1042-1066) (MMB).
- 11 1074, as the year of death of King Svend, is mentioned already in Ailnoth’s chronicle (Albrechtsen 1984: 38). The correct year, however, is 1076. Transcripts of two papal letters from 1075 addressed to Svend Estridsson are preserved (Weibull 1963-1964: 23-24 & 27-29. (MMB).
- 12 Harald III Hen (reigned 1076-1080). (MMB).
- 13 This is a chronological error since Harald’s rule only lasted four years. However, a six-year rule is correct within this text’s chronology, which sets the death of King Svend Estridsson to 1074. Either way, Harald died in 1080. (MMB).
- 14 Harald III Hen (reigned 1076-1080), Cnut IV the Holy (reigned 1080-1086), Olaf I Hunger (reigned 1086-1095), Eric I the Good (reigned 1095-1103), Niels (reigned 1104-1134). (MMB).
- 15 Adela of Flanders (c. 1064-1115). After Cnut’s death, Adela left Denmark. She married Roger Borsa, Duke of Apulia, from 1092 to 1111. She ruled on behalf of her underage son from 1111 to 1114 (Houben 2002: 31). (MMB).
- 16 Robert I, Count of Flanders (reigned 1071-1093). (MMB).
- 17 Charles the Good, Count of Flanders (reigned 1119-1127). Like his father, Charles was murdered in a church and was subsequently venerated as a saint. (MMB).
- 18 Gerold, bishop of Ribe (Denmark) c. 1085-1122. Arnold, bishop of Roskilde (Denmark), c. 1088-1122. The reference to Cnut confessing his sins to two bishops is slightly anachronistic. Arnold only became bishop a few years after Cnut’s assassination. However, Arnold served as King Cnut’s chaplain. (MMB).
- 19 Matthew 6:3-4. (MMB).
- 20 John 14:6. (FY).
- 21 According to Ailnoth, the last part of this paragraph reads: ‘..., however, delayed day by day the execution of his will’ (Gertz 1908-1912: 94). (MMB).
- 22 Tithe was not implemented during King Cnut’s rule. Possibly, his attempt to introduce this new tax was one of the reasons for the riot against him. Tithe was probably implemented with the establishment of the archbishop’s seat in Lund in 1104, and the payment of tithe in Denmark is documented with certainty from 1134 (Dahlerup 1974). (MMB).
- 23 An allusion to Matthew 5:14. (FY).
- 24 Not many foreign chronicles mention King Cnut prior to his assassination. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles talk about Cnut’s raid in England in 1075 and the rumours of his impending conquest in 1085. Whitelock 1961: 157f., 161). (MMB).
- 25 Harold Godwinson (reigned January 5th to October 14th,

- 1066) and William the Conqueror (King of England 1066-1087). (MMB).
- 26 Cnut the Great, Cnut the Holy's granduncle. (MMB).
- 27 Harold Godwinson was the son of Godwine and Gytha, the sister of Cnut IV's paternal grandfather Earl Ulf (MMB).
- 28 Medieval sources suggest various geographical locations for the fleet's place of assembly. Aggesen, in the late 12th century, specifically mentioned Humlum (Christiansen 1992: 66). (MMB).
- 29 An allusion to 1 Peter 5:8. (FY).
- 30 The Latin word 'fluvium' (river) is here translated to 'strait' in accordance with the actual geography. In the original manuscript, the name of the waterway is spelt Limefjorth. (FY and MMB).
- 31 This geographical side note is added by the author of *Passio* II. In King Cnut's time and that of Ailnoth, Thy, Vendsyssel, and intermediate Han Herred constituted the North Jutlandic Island north of the Limfjord. The Limfjord had a westernmost opening into the North Sea, allowing for seagoing traffic. C. 1100, this opening closed due to sanding, which caused the chronicler to note that the areas north of the Limfjord were not attached to the Jutlandic mainland and thus were technically not an island at that time. (MMB).
- 32 The location of this Latinised place name is uncertain. The village of Horne in Vendsyssel has been suggested because of the Latin word for "horn" (cornus) (Gertz 1908-1912: 105). (MMB).
- 33 Matthew 10:23. (FY).
- 34 The royal stronghold Aggersborg was placed strategically, centrally on the northern side of the Limfjord by one of the most important crossings of the strait, at Aggersund. At the end of the 10th century, a rural settlement on the location gave way for a huge ring fortress constructed during the reign of Harald Bluetooth (c. 958-987). At the time of Cnut the Holy, the ring fortress had been abandoned for a long time, but Aggersborg held a royal estate. The exact location of this estate is unknown (Roesdahl et al. 2014: 47-51) (MMB).
- 35 The Latin text has the word "villa", which can translate to a large house, an estate or even a village. It probably refers to Bejstrup (Bishop's Thorpe), six kilometres from Aggersborg as the crow flies (MMB).
- 36 Matthew 8:20. (FY).
- 37 The Latin word 'fluvium' (river) is translated to inlet to correspond with the geography. (FY and MMB).
- 38 This refers to The Little Belt (Lillebælt) between the Jutland peninsula and Funen. The Latin word 'sinus' (bay) is here translated to strait to correspond with the geography. (FY and MMB).
- 39 Benedict was killed alongside Cnut in the riot; Eric later ruled as Eric I the Good (1095-1103). Svend is otherwise unknown. Eric and Svend do not seem to have been accompanying Cnut at the time of the assassination (MMB).
- 40 No historical facts are known about the character Piper. Other medieval chronicles call him by different names: Blakke (Friis-Jensen 2015: 853-857) and Egvind Bifra (Pálsson and Edwards 1986: 76-93). (MMB).
- 41 Psalm 41:9. (FY).
- 42 John 13:27. (FY).
- 43 Monasterium could also be translated as minster (FY). Indeed, the Church of St. Cnut, which is mentioned in the text, was organised as a minister from the Anglo-Saxon model by Evesham monks shortly before 1100. The Younger Passion is the only medieval text to refer to St Alban's as a monastery/minster and not simply a church. (MMB).
- 44 Psalm 79:1. (FY).
- 45 Psalm 79:3. (FY).
- 46 Lamentations 4:1. (FY).
- 47 An allusion to 1 Corinthians 4:9. (FY).
- 48 'The prince of the world', i.e. the devil (John 14:30). (FY).
- 49 The Latin 'atrium ecclesie' literally translates to 'hall of the church'. (FY).
- 50 1 Corinthians 2:9. (FY).
- 51 The other hagiographic text about Saint Cnut does describe Benedict with the term duke. For a discussion of this matter see Hope in this volume, footnote 16 (MMB).
- 52 Wisdom 10:10. (FY).
- 53 Here, Gertz omits a long paragraph in his transcription because of the text's similarity to Ailnoth's Chapter 31 (Gertz 1908-12: 127-128). The chapter deals with Queen Adela, who wishes to exhume her husband's body and have him entomb in a seemlier manner in her homeland of Flanders. Intent on this, she enters the church with a group of people shortly before midnight, only to find the entire church lit by a divine light like the sun at midday. The queen recognises the miracle, and led by this sign from God, she renounces her intention of removing the martyr's body. In a sentiment of joy mixed with sorrow, she venerates Cnut and the relics in the church before leaving (for Flanders). (MMB).
- 54 Here, Gertz omits a long paragraph in his transcription because of the text's similarity to the first part of Ailnoth's Chapter 32 (Gertz 1908-1912: 129-130). The text describes how the number of miracles taking place at the king's grave increases. His holy bones are exhumed and put to the test of fire. Witnessed by all the bishops and a large group of priests, the relics are transferred to the newly built stone church and placed in a sarcophagus in the crypt. As if not fit to see – or accept – these miracles, King Oluf dies simultaneously. (MMB).
- 55 Genesis 40:23. (FY).
- 56 Here, Gertz omits a long paragraph in his transcription because of the text's similarity to parts of Ailnoth's Chapters 29 and 32 (Gertz 1908-1912: 126-127 & 130). The text deals with the hardships of the land and people during the reign of King Olaf, including failed harvests, shortage, pestilence, and famine. This changed as soon as King Eric took over the throne, chosen by his retainers (hirdmen) and supported by the people, God, and the elements. (MMB).
- 57 The subject here is King Erik I the Good, who reigned after Olaf. (MMB).
- 58 The inserted paragraph is from Schmeidler 1912: 95. (MMB).
- 59 Here, Gertz omits a long paragraph because of a close similarity to part of Ailnoth's Chapter 32 (Gertz 1908-1912: 130). The text deals with prosperous times for Denmark during the reign of King Eric. The number of miracles at the grave of King Cnut increases, and many pilgrims seek the saint's aid. (MMB).
- 60 Here, Gertz omits a long paragraph because of its similarity to the first part of Ailnoth's Chapter 33 (Gertz 1908-1912: 131). The text deals with the legates of King Eric travelling to Rome to gain papal approval of King Cnut's sanctity. The assembly, in addition to the Pope (Paschalis II), included bishops and other clerics, unanimously declared Cnut a martyr. (MMB).
- 61 This paragraph of the passion, of which Gertz only transcribes a part, is actually put together by two paragraphs from Ailnoth's Chapter 33 (Gertz 1908-12: 131) and Chapter 6 (Gertz 1908-1912: 92). The two paragraphs are not grammatically integrated. (MMB).
- 62 Here, Gertz omits a long paragraph because of its similarity

- to the last part of Ailnoth's Chapter 32 (Gertz 1908-1912: 131). The changing of Cnut's name to Canutus is compared to how God changed Abram's name to Abraham (Genesis 17:5). (MMB).
- 63 Gertz and Schmeidler only transcribe fragments of this paragraph because it is similar to Ailnoth's Chapter 34 and the first part of Chapter 35 (Gertz 1918-1912: 132-33). The legates return to Denmark, bringing the message of the papal approval. The King and people rejoice, and the cult of Cnut grows. (MMB).
- 64 The inserted paragraphs in square brackets are taken from Schmeidler 1912: 96. (MMB).
- 65 The inserted paragraphs in square brackets in Chapter XI are taken from Schmeidler 1912: 96. (MMB).
- 66 Here, Gertz omits a long paragraph because of its similarity to part of Ailnoth's Chapter 35 (Gertz 1908-1912: 133). The text deals with Queen Adela, who was then married to Duke Roger of Apulia, sending precious gifts to the relics of King Cnut. A precious gilded shrine with coloured gems was made. (MMB).
- 67 Here, Gertz omits a paragraph because of its similarity to a part of Ailnoth's Chapter 36 (Gertz 1908-1912: 134). The text deals with bishop Hubald placing the holy bones inside the shrine wrapped in silk. An inscription was also placed inside the shrine, the text of which is cited above. (MMB).
- 68 In the hagiographical and martyrological tradition, it was considered unfitting for any martyr to die in exactly the same way as Christ (cf. St Peter's crucifixion upside down, St Andrew's crucifixion on a saltire cross), and thus, the martyrologist points out the difference between Cnut's death and Christ's (FY).
- 69 Here, Gertz omits a paragraph here because of its similarity to part of Ailnoth's Chapter 36 (Gertz 1908-1912: 134): The shrine was closed and placed for all to see on the altar. (MMB).
- 70 The principal prayer specific to a saint's feast, spoken aloud by the priest during mass. (FY).
- 71 A prayer spoken sotto voce by the priest during the course of the mass. (FY).
- 72 The concluding prayer of the mass, normally known as the *postcommunio* or postcommunion. (FY).





*San var af den famle Toreskrands.*

*Abbed Henrik Christensen  
Søren og Mogens Vasthus.*

*Dette Billedet Maas afmalde paa en gammel Liden Cathol  
vilde Lave i Sorø Kirke. Læs aftegnet A. 1756 af J. St.*

Drawing of St. Canute (left) and St. Olaf on a now-lost altarpiece from 1526 in Sorø Monastery Church.

Illustration: Søren Abildgaard, 1756. National Museum of Denmark.



# The Younger *Passio Kanuti* – a reassessment of its historical context, its author, and its purpose

by Steffen Hope

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In Martin Clarentius Gertz' edition of the hagiographical account currently entitled *Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martiris* – henceforth *Passio II*, to distinguish it from the first vita of the saint-king by an anonymous Odense-based author from c.1100 – the text consists of a prologue and eleven chapters of varying length, and is followed by three short texts from the mass liturgy in honour of the saint-king (Gertz 1908-1912: 531-558).<sup>2</sup> As has been noted by both Gertz and the first modern editor of the text, Bernhard Schmeidler (Schmeidler 1912: 71-73; Gertz 1908-1912: 535) *Passio II* is essentially an abbreviated reworking of Aelnoth of Canterbury's *Gesta Swenomagni Regis et Filiorum eius et Passio gloriosissimi Canuti Regis et Martyris*.<sup>3</sup> Aelnoth's vita of the saint-king was most likely written in the second decade of the twelfth century.<sup>4</sup> The only known copy of *Passio II* is in the sixteenth-century manuscript Neukloster Cod. D 21, and the text is found on folios 6r-18r.<sup>5</sup>

To the modern reader, it is easy to dismiss *Passio II* as being of little interest due to it being an abbreviation of uncertain date and origin. However, such a modern perspective on texts and text dissemination is an obstruction to understanding the value of *Passio II* as a witness to the later development of the cult of Cnut Rex, both in Odense and elsewhere in Denmark. The very fact that someone spent the time and resources needed to compose this version and commit it to ink and parchment is in and of itself a testament to the importance given to the legend of the saint-king after the first few decades of the cult's existen-

ce. To put it differently, the cost of the materials needed to turn *Passio II* into a book to be used by its intended audience was a considerable investment. Moreover, the skill of the composer of *Passio II* in fashioning and reworking Aelnoth's *Gesta* into a shorter, more manageable and, in a way, more liturgically useful text is also a testament to the importance placed upon this project by whoever commissioned it.<sup>6</sup> I here emphasise the skill of the author because despite the clear evidence that his Latin was inferior, or at least less artful, to that of Aelnoth – as has been remarked by Schmeidler and Gertz (Gertz 1908-1912: 535) – both the organisation of the narrative and the combination of extracts from *Gesta Swenomagni* demonstrate that the author knew how to perform his task well, and went about doing so in a consummate and professional manner. *Passio II* does, therefore, merit much more interest as a source to the cult of Cnut Rex than it has hitherto received.

In the following, I aim to give a more in-depth presentation of *Passio II* and explain how various text elements must be understood in its broader context. The present text will assess the evidence for the possible date of the vita, the evidence for its place of production, an analysis of its content, its relationship with Aelnoth's *Gesta*, and its importance for our understanding of the medieval cult of Saint Cnut Rex. While I agree with Gertz in his assessment of the rough timeframe – c.1220-c.1250 – and the purpose of the book (Gertz 1908-1912: 538), I argue that the timeframe can be narrowed down to some extent and that it must be understood in light of specific historical currents in medieval Denmark.

## The content of *Passio II*

The content of *Passio II* and its concordances with Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni* can briefly be sketched out in the following table. For a more detailed comparison of the two versions, see Hope this volume: 76-96.

Chapter	Content	<i>Gesta Swenomagni</i>
Prologue	Author's presentation of the work.	V
Chapter I	Cnut's lineage and the reigns of his father and his brother Harald.	IV (I.3 and I.4)
Chapter II	Cnut's personal qualities and his reign.	II (II.1), VI and VII (II.2), VIII (II.3, II.6, and II.8), IX (II.4 and II.5)
Chapter III	Cnut's fame, the plans for an attack on England, and Oluf's exile.	X (III.1), XI (III.2), XII (III.5), XIII (III.4)
Chapter IV	Cnut's good deeds as king and the tax collectors' abuse of power.	XIV (IV.1), XV (IV.2), XVI (IV.3 and IV.4)
Chapter V	The uprising in Northern Jutland	XVII (V.1 and V.2), XVIII (V.2), XVIII (V.3), XIX (V.3 and V.4), XX (V.4), XXI (V.6), XXIII (V.5 and V.7)
Chapter VI	Cnut's flight to Odense and his passion (up until his asking for a cup of water).	XXIII (VI.1), XXIV (VI.1), XXV (VI.2, VI.3 and VI.4), XXVI (VI.5, VI.6, VI.7, VI.8 and VI.9), XXVII (VI.10)
Chapter VII	Cnut's martyrdom, and Benedict's martyrdom	XXVIII (VIII.1, VIII.3 and VIII.4), XXIX (VIII.5 and VIII.6)
Chapter VIII	The interment of the martyrs and two miracles	XXX (VIII.1)
Chapter IX	About Queen Adela, the liberation of Oluf, and Oluf's reign.	XXXI (IX.1), XXXII (IX.2 and IX.4),
Chapter X	Eric's reign, the canonisation of Cnut, and Cnut's new name.	VI (X.1), XXXIII (X.1 and X.2))
Chapter XI	Queen Adela.	XXXV (XII.3)

It should be emphasised that *Passio II* has not come down to us in its complete form. Both Schmeidler and Gertz have omitted some parts of the text, due to its reliance on *Gesta Swenomagni* (Schmeidler 1912: 555-558). Moreover, since the manuscript in question is from the sixteenth century, several spelling and even grammar changes might have accumulated since *Passio II* was written down for the first time. Due to these two factors – the incompleteness of the edited text and the late date of the text witness – any analysis of the text must be careful not to oversimplify neither the text's history nor its use of its main source text, namely Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni*.

As can be surmised from the above table, the anonymous hagiographer was closely familiar with Aelnoth's work, given his extensive reliance on both the structure of Aelnoth's narrative and, as we shall see later, several of Aelnoth's formulations. However, the hagiographer has not merely copied and abbreviated. Instead, the composition of *Passio II* shows a deliberate and careful use of the source material, as is most clearly demonstrated in those cases where the hagiographer has employed texts from separate parts of *Gesta Swenomagni* in one and the same chapter. We see one example of this practice in Chapter II, where the text is based on five separate chapters from *Gesta*. Similarly, in Chapter III, the hagiographer draws on chapter

XIII of *Gesta* before chapter XII, which suggests that the text of *Gesta* has been reworked and repurposed rather than merely reiterated. Furthermore, in Chapter V, the hagiographer uses Chapter XXI between sections drawn from Chapter XXIII. The clearest example, however, is Chapter X, where the hagiographer has gone back to Chapter VI and combined it with material from Chapter XXXIII. As these two chapters from *Gesta* both reflect on the meanings drawn from Cnut's Latinised name 'Canutus' and how these meanings reflect aspects of the saint's character, the fusion of these two chapters makes perfect sense. However, given that these two chapters are on opposite ends of the narrative in Aelnoth's text, the combination of these elements, as seen in *Passio II*, indicates that the anonymous hagiographer knew *Gesta Swenomagni* very well.<sup>7</sup>

For most of the narrative, the anonymous hagiographer follows *Gesta Swenomagni*, as is only to be expected. Furthermore, that the text of *Gesta* is both condensed and abbreviated is likewise unsurprising, partly because Aelnoth is a very prolix writer. In addition, several of the classical and biblical allusions of *Gesta Swenomagni* address the historical memory and the political situation in Aelnoth's own time and are, therefore, either antiquated or not necessary for the purposes of *Passio II* (Cf. Winterbottom 2016: 122-123).

However, the several passages that contain material not found in *Gesta* show that this text is not solely the adaptation of a particular book but rather the product of a thriving cult that has continued to evolve after c.1120. This is especially evident from the two miracle stories in Chapter VIII, which describe healing miracles at the shrine in Odense.

Aside from the material most likely drawn from the cult centre in Odense, other forms of history writing also appear to have influenced the anonymous hagiographer's new version of Cnut Rex' vita. This is especially the case in Chapters I and III, the possible sources for which will be discussed more thoroughly below. Additionally, there are also some interesting details concerning Saint Cnut's flight from Northern Jutland to Odense in Chapter V, but this will be discussed in the section on the author.

## Sources to *Passio II*

### The expansionist past and present

The anonymous hagiographer has composed a short prologue that incorporates parts of Chapter V of *Gesta Swenomagni*, which is where the story of Saint Cnut actually begins. However, the text in question is primarily an amalgamation of two Bible passages, namely 'Aperi os tuum, et ego adimplebo illud' ('Open your mouth, and I will fill it'),<sup>8</sup> which consists of Ezekiel 2:8 and Psalm 80:11.<sup>9</sup> The prologue is a brief panegyric to the saint, in which the author states that this text is in praise of Christ and in honour of His soldier and martyr, and for the edification and salvation of future generations. The anonymous hagiographer has also added two other biblical allusions, which further demonstrates that he considered his labour more than mere copying.<sup>10</sup>

Chapter I is a compressed history of Saint Cnut's family, presenting the deeds of Cnut II, Svend Estridsen, and Saint Cnut's brother and predecessor, Harald Hen. Interestingly, the anonymous author emphasises Cnut II's reign over the Danes, the Norwegians, and the English, including a reference to his victory over the blessed king Olaf of Norway, a royal martyr whose cult was widely popular in Denmark (Hope (forthcoming)). The focus on martial exploits continues in the presentation of Svend Estridsen, where the hagiographer states that Svend both received the Danish crown and subjugated Norway by force. Moreover, Svend prepared to launch an attack on England but was bought off by Edward the Confessor, described as a holy and just man who offered tribute and the promise that Svend would be his rightful heir.<sup>11</sup> The chapter then turns to Harald and states that he established good laws for the kingdom, including laws concerning the election of kings, laws that, the hagiographer states, are still in use to this day – although 'this day' comes from *Gesta Swenomagni* and does not provide any clues concerning the date of *Passio II* or the later practices of royal accession in Denmark (Aelnoth: 90-

91). I provide this detailed summary of Chapter I of *Passio II* because it tells us a lot about the historical memory of Denmark in the decades following Aelnoth's composition of *Gesta Swenomagni*. This historical memory is, in turn, important for understanding the purpose of *Passio II*, as well as its context.

First of all, Aelnoth does not mention Cnut II. Moreover, in Aelnoth's rendition of Svend's kingship, the Danish king emerges victorious from battles against external enemies, the Norwegian kings. He is compared to Priam of Troy and King David in the munificence and peacefulness of his reign (Aelnoth: 85). The depiction of Harald in *Passio II*, on the other hand, follows Aelnoth's text quite closely and, at times, also verbatim. Moreover, the passage continues the idea that Cnut patiently bided his time despite his grievances with the election. This idea is formulated by Aelnoth and deviates from the earlier *Passio Kanuti* (*Passio I*), in which Cnut went into exile in Sweden and where the circumstances are described as much more volatile than the relative harmony of *Gesta Swenomagni* (Hope 2017: 242. For *Passio I*, see Antonsson 2012).

*Passio II*'s list of kings and their deeds demonstrates, as mentioned, a very different historical context than the one in which Aelnoth composed *Gesta Swenomagni*. Aelnoth's text was dedicated to King Niels – the fifth and last of Svend Estridsen's sons to reign Denmark, as noted by the anonymous hagiographer at the end of the chapter – and *Gesta Swenomagni* served in large part as a dynastic history (Fritz 2024: 176-94). The purpose of this dynastic history was twofold. Perhaps first of all, Aelnoth's representation of the dynasty served to provide Saint Cnut Rex with a glorious pedigree, demonstrating that he was of noble stock and that he continued and improved the good deeds of his father. Secondly, the historical overview served to legitimise the reigning king and to ensure that King Niels would remain a supporter of the cult of his sainted brother and the monks in Odense who were the custodians of the cult (Fritz 2024: 195-203). It is also possible that Aelnoth's emphasis on the harmony within the family – with the exception of Oluf Hunger's treachery, which, as we shall see shortly, is rendered in a way that deviates markedly from *Gesta Swenomagni* – was aimed at quelling any burgeoning strife between the sons of some of the five kings that followed Svend Estridsen. However, this interpretation might merely be the result of the dubious benefit of hindsight since we today know that the conflicting claims to the Danish kingship led to the murder of Cnut Lavard in 1131 and sparked an internal strife that lasted until 1157.

In light of the political context of Aelnoth's representation of the dynastic past, the difference between *Gesta Swenomagni* and *Passio II* suggests that the context in which the anonymous hagiographer performed his labour was markedly different than that of the early twelfth century. One explanation for this difference is that the dynasty had changed. With Valdemar I's victory in the internal strife of

the mid-twelfth century, there was no longer the same need to emphasise the pacific nature of Cnut Rex's forebears. Moreover, with the Danish territorial expansion in the Baltic Sea from the late twelfth century onwards, we might assume that both courtiers and intellectuals – including monks and clergy – were promoting a narrative of Denmark's glorious imperial past. Such a context might also explain the anonymous hagiographer's embellishment of the extent of Cnut Rex's fame in Chapter III. *Gesta Swenomagni*, on which the passage in question is based, states that Cnut's fame reached the Scots, Orcadians, Irish, English, Gauls, Italians and the Normans. To this list, the anonymous hagiographer adds the following peoples: Spaniards, Swedes, Norwegians, Poles, Slavs, and Teutons.<sup>12</sup> Naturally, part of the purpose of this embellishment is to expand the remit of the saint-king's *fama sanctitatis*, holy fame. However, it is perhaps significant that several of the added peoples mark a Baltic orientation, which might either have sprung out of a wish to legitimise Danish presence in the Baltic or simply be a result of a historical reality in which the Danes were one of the strongest forces in the Baltic Sea.

### The Roskilde-Lund connection

The possibility of an expansionist political context might be especially fruitful when we consider Gertz's hypothesis that the anonymous hagiographer was from one of the religious houses in Roskilde (Gertz 1908-1912: 533), seeing that there were strong ties between Roskilde and the metropolitan see of Lund, whose archbishops were fervent supporters of the Baltic campaigns. However, this possible connection to Roskilde is one to which we will return in the section on the date of *Passio II*. For our present purposes – the content and the sources of *Passio II* – the Roskilde hypothesis serves as an important starting point for delving into some of the other possible sources used by the anonymous hagiographer. As noted by Gertz, the formulation 'Kanuto (...) rege Danorum victoriosissimo' ('Cnut, the most victorious king of the Danes') from Chapter I bears a striking resemblance to the entry for the year 1015 in the *Annales Lundenses* (Gertz 1908-1912: 539). Here, Cnut II is described as 'victoriosissimus rex Kanutus' (*Annales Lundenses*: 50). Another possible link to *Annales Lundenses* might be seen in Chapter III. Here, William the Conqueror is described as 'Bastarch Angli cognominauerunt' ('whom the English called 'the Bastard)').<sup>13</sup> This nickname does not appear often in Danish history writing but is included in *Annales Lundenses* (*Annales Lundenses*: 50). As noted by Gertz, the use of 'English' instead of 'French' might point to the hagiographer himself being English and, like his possible countryman Aelnoth, not having a very positive view of William (Gertz 1908-1912: 537).

Similarly, the formulation 'qui cum beato rege Olauo Norwegiensium continuum bellum habuit' ('who made continual war with the blessed King Olaf of Norway', trl. Francis Young), is notably close to 'contra sanctum Olaf regem Norweie continuum bellum habuit', from the list of Danish kings known

as *Series ac Brevior Historia Regum Danie*, which dates to after 1219 (Gertz 1908-1912: 539; *Series ac Brevior Historia Regum Danie*: 164; see also Mortensen 2012b). The date of these sources is something to which we will return in the section on the dating of *Passio II*. For the present purpose, however, suffice it to say that these connections suggest that the anonymous hagiographer was familiar with the history writing composed in Roskilde and Lund from the mid-twelfth century onwards. These two interconnected centres were responsible for some of the most important Denmark-wide history writing of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries – important because the chronicles and regal lists served to form a Danish historical narrative in a way that no other Danish centre of text production could, or even did, aspire to (Kristensen 1969: 36-61).

The anonymous hagiographer's knowledge of Danish history writing is also suggested by his aforementioned presentation of King Oluf Hunger. In *Gesta Swenomagni*, Oluf becomes the spokesman for the grievances of the Danes as they wait impatiently for the king to either launch an attack on England or let them return to their neglected fields at the height of the harvest season. In *Passio II*, however, Oluf deliberately incites the Danes so that he himself might become king. As suggested by both Schmeidler and Gertz, the source for this interpretation of the events might stem from the *Chronica Universalis* of Radulfus Niger (active c.1200), either directly or indirectly (Schmeidler 1912: 83; Gertz 1908-1912: 537). If the hagiographer indeed did know Radulfus Niger's chronicle, it is perhaps most likely that he would have encountered it in either Roskilde or Lund, if not in England.

### The Odense connection: miracles and the cult of Benedict

Regarding possible sources, one final aspect should be addressed here, namely the Odense connection. Evidently, the anonymous hagiographer knew Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni* thoroughly and, therefore, knew the authoritative version of Cnut's vita as sanctioned by the episcopal authorities in Odense. Whether this suggests that the author was based in Odense or visited Odense for the purpose of his hagiographical labour is a matter that will be discussed below. What is clear, however, is that the author not only knew the Odense version of Saint Cnut's story as it had been established in the 1110s but also that he was familiar with later traditions and practices. This connection is partly suggested by the claim in Chapter II.7 – an entirely new passage – where Cnut is said to have introduced the tithe, which caused resentment among the nobility. This claim is found already in *Passio Kanuti* (*Passio I*), the first vita of the saint-king. While this text was eventually superseded by *Gesta Swenomagni*, the text itself is likely to have been available in Odense, and it is possible that the author of *Passio II* read it during his hypothetical stay in Odense. However, seeing as the anonymous hagiographer followed Aelnoth rather than *Passio I* concerning Cnut's response

to the election of his brother Harald in 1080, it is perhaps not the case that the author drew directly on *Passio I* for Cnut's role in introducing the tithe. Rather, it might be that by the time of the composition, it was already established tradition, in Odense and perhaps all over Denmark, that the tithe had been introduced already in the 1080s.

The question of the tithe notwithstanding, the clearest evidence of the author's familiarity with Odense is seen in his treatment of Benedict, the brother of Saint Cnut, who was also killed during the attack in Odense. Benedict is mentioned four times in *Passio II*. The first time is in Chapter VI.2, where he is merely mentioned together with his brothers, Cnut Rex, Erik, and Svend, as they arrive in Odense. In the description of Saint Cnut's martyrdom, however, the treatment of Benedict shows that Cnut's younger brother was also considered a martyr. In Chapter VII.3, Cnut embraces the wounded Benedict and gives him the kiss of peace. Benedict is here described as 'beato Benedicto, fratre suo carnali et certaminum collega' ('blessed Benedict, his brother according to the flesh and his ally in the struggle').<sup>14</sup> This follows the text of *Gesta Swenomagni*, but here, we also see the importance of small changes to the text. Judging from the surviving versions of *Gesta Swenomagni* – and allowing for the possibility that the anonymous hagiographer might, as suggested by Gertz (1908-1912: 538), have used an earlier redaction than what we have today – the author of *Passio II* has added the term 'blessed', which denotes Benedict's sanctity. Moreover, he has added the word 'carnali', possibly to emphasise that the two martyrs were linked both by a worldly and a spiritual bond. Much of this description is repeated in VII.6, which describes how the attackers sought out, found, and then brutally dismembered Benedict. Here, the author uses Aelnoth's phrasing, with 'ally in the struggle' and 'brother' both retained,<sup>15</sup> but also adds 'blessed' to highlight Benedict's status as a saint.

The final reference to Benedict is found in Chapter VIII.2, where the anonymous hagiographer introduces the many miracles that God wrought in Odense. Significantly, the author states that Christ 'multiplied the signs of the miracles of the most blessed king and martyr Cnut and his brother, St Benedict, the duke, by merits and prayers' ('be- atissimi regis et martiris Kanuti pariter et fratris ipsius, sancti Benedicti ducis,<sup>16</sup> meritis et precibus miraculorum signa multiplicat').<sup>17</sup> That the miracles are said to demonstrate the merits of Benedict as well as Cnut is as clear a piece of evidence as possible that Benedict was also venerated as a saint in Odense, and that the anonymous hagiographer accepted Benedict's sanctity.

The cult of Benedict is not surprising since already the earliest text commemorating the events of July 10 1086, the so-called *Tabula Othoniensis*,<sup>18</sup> described Benedict as 'blessed with martyrdom' ('gratia martyrii').<sup>19</sup> The cult of Benedict has most likely been sustained throughout the twelfth century, although not with the same intensity and effort as was the cult of Saint Cnut Rex. The cult's popula-

rity within the cathedral community has most likely surged and ebbed according to historical circumstances. After all, neither *Passio I* nor *Gesta Swenomagni* label him 'blessed' or 'holy', even though they do call him a martyr, and seem to accept his sanctity (for *Passio I*, see Gertz 1908-1912: 68; for *Gesta Swenomagni*, see Gertz 1908-1912: 120 and 124). What we see in *Passio II*, therefore, is that the cult of Saint Benedict has become somewhat more developed in the time of the author's composition of the new hagiography. The anonymous hagiographer likely became either aware of, or more fully convinced of, Benedict's sanctity through his Odense connection.

Chapter VIII also includes two concrete miracle stories pertaining to Saint Cnut Rex, and these stories likewise point to the anonymous hagiographer having spent time in Odense. The first, in Chapter VIII.3, concerns a certain Esbern, a native of Funen. He is described as having legs that were twisted and calves that were pressed to his buttocks, and he was also a hunchback. This is an image of a miracle recipient that is quite common in medieval miracle collections and might point to the emergence of a certain typology of cures. Yet this description should probably also be understood as a realistic reflection of a common predicament in the medical world of the Middle Ages. In any case, the author states that during the Vesper of the vigil of the feast of Saint Cnut Rex, either April 16 or July 8,<sup>20</sup> Esbern was healed completely, both his legs and his shins, and even his back. The author claims to have been an eyewitness to this cure. As an authenticating detail, and possibly with a sense of the apposite that the more cynical reader might only and reductively deem humorous, the anonymous hagiographer adds that this straightening of Esbern's body happened during the singing of the responsory 'The Lord hath led the just man by straight paths' (Wisdom 10:10).<sup>21</sup> Whatever we might think of the author's claim to be an eyewitness, the story itself is most likely to have come out of Odense.

The second miracle story, in Chapter VIII.4, is likewise claimed to have been witnessed by the author. Here, too, the miracle recipient also suffers from crippled and twisted legs. The man is not named, but the author states that he is well known 'in all of our land' ('omnibus terre') and that he moved about on Funen in a wagon, or at least on wheels, for more than thirty years. The man is healed at Saint Cnut's Church on Ascension Day. This time, too, the cure happens during the performance of chant with a very suitable text, namely 'Ascendens Christus in altum' ('Christ ascending on high'), which is a text used for many types of chants in various offices for the Ascension.<sup>22</sup>

Chapter VIII concludes with a brief catalogue of other cures that took place at the shrine of Saint Cnut. The leprous were cured, those possessed of demons were freed, and those suffering from dropsy or paralysis or who were deaf, blind, mute and crippled, as well as many others, were healed. These are typical cures from medieval miracle collections.



The miracles in Chapter VIII do not provide any strict evidence of the author's connection to neither Odense nor the Church of Saint Cnut. It is entirely possible that these particular miracles are drawn from a book of miracles, most likely kept at the shrine but now lost to us. As noted by Gertz, such a collection of miracle accounts is probably what is referred to in a set of annals covering the period 1101-1313 (Gertz 1908-1912: 58; see also *Annales 1101-1313*, 933-1263: 313). The annals in question, differently titled in different editions, survive in a transcript from c.1700 and are based in part on the Ribe annals, *Annales Ripenses* 254). For the year 1235, we read the following story in *Annales Ripenses*: 'In this year, by the image of the Blessed Virgin from the largest church in Odense, carried by a woman and placed upon the chest, the sick one was completely cured. This here is described in more detail in the book of Saint Cnut'.<sup>23</sup> This story is repeated almost verbatim in the annals from 1101-1313. The so-called 'book of Saint Cnut' is lost to us, but is likely to have been in place at the shrine when *Passio II* was composed. However, the fact that such a miracle collection existed does not necessarily mean that the anonymous hagiographer did not stay in Odense. Even though we might distrust his claim to be an eyewitness to the miracles, it is very likely that he was in Odense at some point and, at the very least, consulted the collection of miracles. The author's stay in Odense is a question to which we will return in a later section.

## The date of the work

Bernhard Schmeidler dated *Passio II* to 'the last third or fourth' of the thirteenth century. However, his reason for this late date is not explained beyond his – justified – certainty that the anonymous hagiographer was not a contemporary of neither Cnut nor Aelnoth. Martin Gertz suggested a slightly earlier timeframe, placing the hagiographer in the period c.1220-c.1250 (Gertz 1908-1912: 537). A much earlier date, c.1200, is suggested in the article on the Church of Saint Alban in Odense in *Danmarks Kirker*, but no justification is provided (IX.3: 1730). In the following, I will examine the admittedly scant evidence for the time of *Passio II*'s composition and offer a slightly revised timeframe.

The only suggestion that has so far been founded on concrete arguments is Gertz' timeframe. The reason for this dating, however, is mainly the miracle story concerning Esbern, which was also included in a poem about the miracles of Saint Cnut by the monk Arnfast, commonly known as *Arnfasti Monachi poemate de miraculis Sancti Kanuti regis et martyris* (Gertz 1908-1912: 537). The date of Arnfast, in turn, has been subject to various opinions,<sup>25</sup> but Gertz puts him in the mid-thirteenth century because he identifies a fire described in the poem as the fire of 1247 (Gertz 1908-1912: 59). Gertz' argumentation, however, merely suggests that Arnfast was either a contemporary of the anonymous hagiographer, or that the poem was composed after *Passio II*. However, we must be careful in thin-

king that Arnfast must have drawn on *Passio II*, which is the implicit conclusion when using one to date the other. If the anonymous hagiographer was, indeed, an eyewitness to the cure of Esbern, it does not follow that Arnfast learned of this story from *Passio II*. Instead, it is likely that the healing of Esbern – whether witnessed by the anonymous hagiographer or not – was recorded in the so-called book of Saint Cnut and that Arnfast used this collection as the source for his poem. Such a hypothesis might be borne out by the reference to a woman who was cured of illness in the chest, calves and thighs. The miracle-recipient is described as a woman from Jutland ('Mulier in Iutia') (Gertz 1908-1912: 164). Given the specification that the woman had an illness of the chest, we should perhaps connect this detail to the aforementioned story from *Annales Ripenses* about the woman cured in the largest church in Odense. Since the woman in Arnfast's poem is from Jutland, it is likely that the woman mentioned in the annals of Ribe in Southern Jutland is one and the same. If this connection is correct, we see that Arnfast drew on the book of Saint Cnut and that we cannot use him to date the composition of *Passio II*, as the two texts are not directly connected.

Although we can dismiss Gertz' argumentation for placing the book in the second quarter of the thirteenth century, this does not necessarily mean that Gertz is wrong. However, if we consider the work's scant internal evidence, we might somewhat reorientate the timeframe. From the use of the sources and some contextual evidence, I argue that we should place the date of the work closer to 1220 than 1250, and possibly even before 1220 as well, although not by much.

### Terminus post quem

The internal evidence for the date of *Passio II* is not extensive, and most of this evidence can only provide a very early *terminus post quem*. If we start from the earliest possible date, we know that *Passio II* was written after Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni*, which puts the date of composition sometime after 1120. The second dating point provided by the text is the reference to Cnut's son, Charles, who became the count of Flanders in 1119. The reference to Charles is intriguing, not primarily because of the date but because Charles was venerated as a saint in Flanders and was the subject of a vita by Walter, Archdeacon of Thérouanne (see Rider 2023). The death and holiness of Charles are not mentioned in *Passio II*, so the anonymous hagiographer's reference to Charles as Cnut's 'most noble offspring', 'sobolem nobilissimam' is likely to serve as a glorification of the holy king rather than a recognition of Charles' own sanctity. Indeed, the status of Charles in medieval Denmark is still understudied in modern scholarship, although as Synnøve Midtbø Myking has recently argued, his legend might have been available in thirteenth-century Denmark through a Danish copy of the *Legendarium Flandrense* (Myking 2023: 151).

The death of Charles in 1127 is recorded in *Annales Lunden-*

ses, albeit for the year 1128, where we read that ‘Charles, duke of Flanders, was killed by his own, [he] who was the son of Cnut king and martyr, [he] who lies [in] Odense, on the advice of Magnus, son of King Niels’ (*Annales Lundenses*: 56).<sup>26</sup> This entry is curious, partly because of the misidentification of Charles as duke rather than count, a mistake also found in *Annales Colbazenses*, which likely drew on *Annales Lundenses* for this entry (*Annales Colbazenses*: 9). Moreover, the claim that the death of Charles is linked to Magnus is unlikely. What we see here is most probably a case of scribal confusion, where the closeness in time between the death of Duke Cnut Lavard at the hand of his cousin Magnus in 1131 and the death of Cnut Lavard’s cousin Count Charles in Flanders in 1127, has caused the annalist to make the count into a duke, and blame Magnus for a second death. The connection to Magnus is not repeated elsewhere in the Danish annals, but the phrase ‘a suis’, which is most likely meant to refer to the Flemish, is repeated elsewhere. In light of this error originating in the history writing in Lund, it is noteworthy that the anonymous hagiographer does not misidentify Charles as a duke but instead correctly labels him a count. While we have good reason to believe that the anonymous hagiographer was familiar with the historiographical output at Lund, as mentioned above, he has received his information concerning Charles from elsewhere, possibly from Odense. Unfortunately, the issue of Charles does not allow for a concise dating of *Passio II* since his death and cult are not mentioned.

The next chronological point of reference is the description of Edward the Confessor as a ‘holy and just man’ (‘vir sanctus et iustus’) in Chapter I.2. Edward the Confessor (d.1066) is a crucial figure in the historical memory of late-eleventh- and twelfth-century England since several chroniclers sought to justify the Norman conquest of England by claiming that it was William, not Harold Godwinson, who was the rightful heir of Edward (Mortimer 2009: 33). Interestingly, the same question of hereditary right is, as mentioned above, broached by the anonymous hagiographer by stating that Edward promised that Svend Estridsen would inherit the kingdom after his death. As for the question of dating, however, the crucial detail here is the word ‘sanctus’. Edward the Confessor was the subject of a cult centred on Westminster Abbey, and although we do not know when this cult began, the first saint’s life about him was composed by Osbert of Clare around 1138. However, Edward’s sainthood was only confirmed by papal canonisation in 1161, and the cult appears to have spread quickly into Scandinavia for a brief period in the late twelfth century (see Toy 2009). In the *Annales Lundenses*, for instance, the entry for 1065 states that in this year, ‘holy Edward, king of the English died’ (*Annales Lundenses*: 54). While we cannot exclude the possibility that the sanctity of Edward the Confessor was accepted by various Danish ecclesiastics before 1161, the reference to ‘vir sanctus’ is most likely based on the dissemination of his cult and fama sanctitatis after 1161.

The sources employed by the anonymous hagiographer, directly or indirectly, provide further clues as to the likely timeframe for *Passio II*. Perhaps the best piece of evidence is found in Chapter III.5, where Cnut’s brother Oluf is presented as an ambitious man attempting to gain the kingship for himself. As both Schmeidler and Gertz notes, this version of the story appears to be drawn from the aforementioned *Chronica universalis* by Radulfus Niger (Schmeidler 1912: 83; Gertz 1908-1912: 537). The chronicle in question ends in the 1190s,<sup>27</sup> and we should expect that it would have taken some years before the chronicle was available to Danish readers, whether they encountered it in England or Denmark.<sup>28</sup> From this evidence, we can, therefore, suggest that *Passio II* was not composed in the twelfth century.

### Terminus ante quem

Having arrived in the thirteenth century, we can return to the discussion about the likely endpoint for the timeframe of *Passio II*’s composition. As argued by Gertz, the text is most likely composed before c.1250, at least if we accept the evidence suggested by the miracle collection in Odense. Following the so-called Book of Saint Cnut mentioned in *Annales Ripenses*, we might also consider that the absence of the woman from Jutland in *Passio II* could indicate that the anonymous hagiographer wrote his work before 1235 since this is the date of this particular miracle. However, we cannot infer such a conclusion from absence since there were most likely several miracle stories available in Odense by the time *Passio II* was composed, as indeed the hagiographer himself suggests through his list of various general cures effected through the merits of Saint Cnut Rex in Chapter VIII.4. The hagiographer’s choice of only two miracles can be explained by his claim that he was an eyewitness to these cures. Most likely, these two accounts are based on incidents that occurred during his sojourn in Odense. Although we might hesitate to accept these events as miraculous, we can easily accept that something happened that was interpreted as miraculous and that the anonymous hagiographer included these, and only these, because they had affected him as either an eyewitness or at least as someone who might have been in Odense when these events occurred. In short, however, the miracles do not provide a reliable timeframe.

The perhaps most extensive evidence towards a *terminus ante quem* is found in the sources used by the anonymous hagiographer. As stated, Chapter I seems to draw on *Series ac Brevior Historia Regum Danie*, which ends with the conquest of Estonia in 1219 (*Series ac Brevior Historia Regum Danie*: 166). In addition, the chapter also seems to rely more extensively on *Annales Lundenses*, which, in their surviving version, end in 1265. Gertz notes that it is likely that the anonymous hagiographer has known an earlier edition of *Annales Lundenses* (Gertz 1908-1912: 537). For more on *Annales Lundenses*, see Mortensen 2012a), and given the incremental nature of annals, this scenario is very likely. Similarly, it might be that the author has known

an earlier version of *Series ac Brevior* – which would allow for a date of the composition prior to 1219 – but since this regnal list is not an annalistic work, it is more likely that the author read *Series ac Brevior* after its composition. This hypothesis would place *Passio II* in the timeframe 1219–47.

As a final section of this discussion, I will go back to the reflections about the expansionist context suggested by Chapters I and III. Both the praise of Cnut II's and Svend Estridsen's territorial expansion and the spiritual expansion represented by the *fama sanctitatis* of Saint Cnut Rex point to an enthusiasm for both military and spiritual conquest that fits very well with the Baltic campaigns that reached their apex in 1219. The conquest of Estonia, however, did not mark the end of Danish expansionism in the Baltics. The period of 1223–38 was a time of intense activity to maintain and reclaim territories in the Baltics, which led to the recapture of Reval (Tallinn) in 1238 (Kristensen and Poulsen 2016: 119), and the subsequent establishment of an episcopal see in the city in 1240 (Rebane 1974: 315). Despite, or perhaps because of, the fluctuating stability of Danish territorial expansion in the Baltics, the period 1219–1240 was likely a time of significant support for the Danish martial activities, at least in certain social echelons. From the pro-expansionist tone in Chapters I and III – which, as we have seen, mark a notable deviation from the more pacific tone of Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni* – we can easily surmise that the anonymous hagiographer was one of the supporters of the Baltic campaigns. If this interpretation is correct, the most likely timeframe for the composition of *Passio II* is arguably 1219–41. This suggested endpoint is the death of Valdemar II, which was followed by quarrels between his successor, Erik Plovpenning and the Church and, eventually, by an internecine war between the various sons of Valdemar II. It was this war which brought about the aforementioned fire of Odense in 1247, and it also resulted in the death of King Erik IV in 1250.

While not impossible, the pro-imperialist tone of *Passio II* is less likely to have been composed after 1241 than before this date. We might read *Passio II* partly as an argument for sustained military and ecclesiastical expansion in the Baltics. Moreover, we might imagine that it was aimed at the bishop of Roskilde and the archbishop of Lund and their respective retinues. The force of such an argument is likely to have carried more weight in a time when the king and the Church were united in their expansionist efforts – i.e., during the reign of Valdemar II – rather than a time when the cost of these campaigns resulted in disagreements, namely the reign of Erik IV. While this argument is far from unassailable, it would allow for a more narrow timeframe that would likewise fit with the evidence suggested by the miracle stories and the hagiographer's reliance on *Annales Lundenses* and *Series ac Brevior Historia Regum Danie*.

Much of the argument concerning the revised timeframe for the composition of *Passio II* relies on a connection with Roskilde. I believe Gertz is right to suggest this connecti-

on, but the evidence for the hypothesis must be presented more carefully. In the following section, I aim to do this.

## The author

*Passio II* contains few indications about its date and even fewer indications about its author. In general, I believe Martin Gertz was right in suggesting that the author visited Odense as part of his mission to provide a copy of the life of Saint Cnut for the author's institution (Gertz 1908–1912: 533). Moreover, I also agree with Gertz in the hypothesis that the institution to which the author belonged was in Roskilde and that the institution in question was the cathedral (see below) (Gertz 1908–1912: 533). I will not provide an alternative interpretation. However, while the question of the author's institutional belonging is as settled as it can be, given the evidence, there are nonetheless some aspects of the texts that merit some further commentary, if only because they might shed some light on the times of the author, and the cult of Saint Cnut. These commentaries will also provide some points of reference for a later section, in which I discuss the purpose of the book and why the author was commissioned to write *Passio II* in the first place.

### Funen

While the author is likely to have belonged to a religious institution outside Odense, the question is whether he originally came from Odense or whether he had been a cleric or monk there. As a self-claimed eyewitness to two healing miracles at the shrine of Saint Cnut, we might easily imagine that these incidents occurred while the anonymous hagiographer was himself part of the cathedral community. If he were a cleric at Odense or a native of Funen, this would give a distinct meaning to the formulation 'omnibus terre' ('all of the land', or 'all of our land'), which appears in Chapter VIII.3. When stating that the poor man of Funen, who moved about with the help of wheels for more than thirty years, was well known throughout the land, he might be describing Funen as his own native soil. However, the formulation might simply refer to Funen without connecting the author to the island, or the formulation might indicate that the story was known throughout Denmark – at least in Sjælland.

Whether the anonymous hagiographer was from Odense or Funen is cast in further doubt when we consider his references to the Church of Saint Alban, where Cnut was killed. In general, the author follows Aelnoth's description of the church and the events of the martyrdom, but in Chapter VII.2, we read a passage that is entirely new. The author tells us that the Church of Saint Alban was the episcopal seat in 1086 and that it was a 'monastery made of wood'.<sup>29</sup> The text then states that the relics of Cnut were later brought to the monastery dedicated to him, which the author describes as 'a distinguished building made of brick'.<sup>30</sup>

The author's use of the term 'monastery' is confusing, at least to a modern reader. While we know that the Church of Saint Cnut was reformed into a Benedictine house by King Erik Ejegod around 1100, no other sources suggest that Saint Alban's was also a monastic institution. As noted in *Danmarks Kirker*, the Church of Saint Alban was subordinate to the monks at Saint Cnut's, and it gained independence through an undated royal mandate signed by King Erik III (r.1137-46) (*Danmarks Kirker* IX.3: 1730). The author's use of 'monasterium' might reflect a local memory of the time before the clerics of Saint Alban's gained their independence. However, this suggestion does not explain the term since the subordinate relationship was no longer in effect by the time of the composition of *Passio II*. Another explanation, suggested by Francis Young, might be that the author uses the term 'monasterium' in the sense of a big church, namely a 'minster'.<sup>31</sup> Alternatively, we might also imagine that the author was confused about the status of Saint Alban's and, despite his time spent in Odense, either had forgotten or had never correctly learned the nature of this particular institution. The confusion, however, strongly indicates that he himself was not a native of neither Odense in particular, nor Funen in general.

## Jutland

We then turn to Jutland, which, as the author reminds us in the opening of Chapter V, is the largest part of Denmark. When describing Saint Cnut's flight through Jutland, the anonymous hagiographer deviates from *Gesta Swenomagni* in various small yet interesting details. As noted by Gertz (1908-1912: 535), Aelnoth states that the king was in the southern parts of the other side of Limfjorden, which is to say the southern part of Vendsyssel. The anonymous hagiographer, however, has understood 'southern', 'australis', to mean the part of Jutland south of Limfjorden, and, therefore adds the detail that the king crossed the water to Vendsyssel. The author goes on to remark that the land beyond Limfjorden is an island that, at the time of Saint Cnut, was comprised of two provinces, 'prouincias', namely Thy and Vendsyssel. The author goes on to say that today, however, this island would rather be called a promontory. This correction is noteworthy, as it suggests some local knowledge on behalf of the author. As remarked by Hans Krøngaard Kristensen and Bjørn Poulsen, Limfjorden was 'a proper fjord' in the Middle Ages since the inlet at Agger Tange, which today connects Limfjorden and the North Sea, did not exist (Kristensen and Poulsen 2016: 356). The hagiographer has encountered the term 'insula' when copying Aelnoth, and with the knowledge that, in his own time, this term was not accurate, he has both corrected and commented on this topographical terminology in his version of the story.

Two other details also point to differences in how the anonymous hagiographer and Aelnoth envisioned the events of 1086. When describing the preparation for the attack on England, Aelnoth simply states that the army

was stationed in a port on the western coast. The author of *Passio II*, however, is more precise in his description and notes that this was the port of Humle (Humlum) because, from there, it was easiest to reach England (see Bjerregaard, this volume: 40-42).<sup>32</sup> Secondly, while the army is waiting for the invasion to be launched, the king is called away. According to Aelnoth, Cnut goes to Haithabu (Hedeby), a name whose meaning he translates into Latin, as he also later does with Vendsyssel and Viborg. The anonymous hagiographer, however, claims that Cnut went to Schleswig, possibly drawing on Sven Aggesen. This difference is particularly interesting since it reflects the development in Southern Jutland from the time of Cnut Rex and onwards. By the end of the eleventh century, Haithabu was still an important, if declining, trading hub in Southern Jutland. In the early twelfth century, however, Schleswig began to be even more important, as trade with the Baltic increased, and this development culminated with the establishment of an episcopal see in Schleswig in the first third of the 1100s (Kristensen and Poulsen 2016: 61).<sup>33</sup>

The anonymous hagiographer's details concerning Jutland are intriguing. Partly, they indicate some of the important changes in the urbanisation of Jutland, with Schleswig replacing Haithabu as the main trading hub in the far south. Moreover, some of the details suggest that the author of *Passio II* had a certain familiarity with Jutland and that he perhaps even was himself a Jutlander. For instance, the detail that the Danish army was stationed in Humlum does not come from Aelnoth and might reflect a local historical memory or tradition known to the anonymous hagiographer. That *Passio II* also states that Cnut was called away to Schleswig rather than Haithabu might result from the author's overcorrection when comparing the reality of Aelnoth's time with his own. In the course of the twelfth century, Schleswig came to replace Haithabu, and to the anonymous hagiographer, it made more sense for Cnut to go to an important place like Schleswig rather than somewhere as insignificant as Haithabu. This kind of overcorrection is also seen in the description of Cnut's travel to Vendsyssel, where the author, unaccustomed to using the term 'south' for any part north of Limfjorden, rewrites the text to reflect his own geographical understanding, where a description such as 'south' is incompatible with the northernmost part of Denmark. From these details – the knowledge of the topography, the access to historical tradition, and a familiarity with directions and urban centres that compels him to correct Aelnoth's narrative – it is tempting to draw the conclusion that the anonymous hagiographer was from Jutland. Ultimately, however, we lack any firm evidence to support this notion, and it must remain a tempting possibility that can never attain the rank of hypothesis.

## Roskilde

As evidence for the anonymous hagiographer's connection to Roskilde, Gertz pointed to the three liturgical texts that are included after the text of *Passio II* in the manus-



cript, of which the collect in particular indicates that the text belonged to the Roskilde cathedral (Gertz 1908-1912: 533). In addition, I believe that two other aspects of *Passio II* suggest that the work was written for the community of Roskilde Cathedral and, most likely, by someone from that same community. First of all, the emphasis on the territorial expansion of Cnut's predecessors and the spread of Saint Cnut's holy fame in Chapter I suggests that the text was written in the context of expansionist fervour. During the Baltic campaigns from the 1180s onwards, both Roskilde – as the royal seat – and Lund, as the metropolitan see, were hubs of this expansionist activity. The anonymous hagiographer seems to both endorse and contribute to this enthusiasm.

The second aspect is the author's reliance on historical writings such as *Annales Lundenses*, Radulfus Niger, and *Series ac Brevior Historia Regum Danie*. His use of these texts indicates that he was not only well-versed in contemporary historiography, but also had access to copies of these works since there are verbatim echoes of various passages in Chapter I of *Passio II*. If we accept that the author operated in the first third of the thirteenth century, the most likely places for this access would be either Lund or Roskilde since they were the most important centres of Danish history writing from the mid-twelfth century onwards (Kristensen 1969: 36-61). However, it is more likely that the anonymous hagiographer was stationed in Roskilde than in Lund. The reason for this is that *Passio II* was evidently written for an institution where the cult of Cnut Rex was not particularly strong at the time in question. Lund, however, had a particularly strong connection to the cult of the saint-king. In the *Necrologium Lundense*, written in the 1120s, we find a donation letter from Cnut Rex to the cathedral, and it seems clear that the institutional identity of the metropolitan see of Denmark was closely tied to the figure of Cnut Rex (*Necrologium Lundense*: 81). We should expect that the cathedral of Lund already possessed a hagiographical account of the king, probably a copy of Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni*.

Roskilde, on the other hand, was a different matter. While I will return to this argument in the next section – as I believe it is central to the question of the purpose behind the writing of *Passio II* – I will briefly state here that throughout the twelfth century, the diocese of Roskilde appears to have been a place where Saint Cnut Rex was subject to no more than the most perfunctory veneration. That he was accepted as a saint is evidenced by the historical writings produced at Roskilde, but the same writings point to a widespread negative view of the holy king. This issue, however, will be discussed more thoroughly in the final section of the present article.

### Summary remarks

Like so many authors from the Middle Ages, the anonymous hagiographer will always remain unknown to us. The

author's institutional and geographical affiliation can only be guessed at through speculation based on some details in the text of *Passio II*. After analysing the text, however, we are still left with little beyond a few indications. First of all, the author has spent time in Odense, presumably in order to copy and adapt the text of *Gesta Swenomagni*. Still, it seems unlikely that he was either a native of Odense or a former member of the cathedral community of Saint Cnut's Church in Odense. Secondly, it seems reasonable to conclude that he operated in Roskilde because the very existence of *Passio II* suggests that the author's labour was intended for an institution where the cult of Saint Cnut Rex was not very strong (Gertz 1908-1912: 533-534), and where there also was a library containing some of the most recent historical texts available.

While the evidence for the author's institutional affiliation points to Roskilde, there is also the question of whether he himself came from another part of Denmark. His familiarity with Odense appears to be primarily connected with his time spent there preparing *Passio II*, although much of this impression hinges on how we are to understand his reference to Saint Alban's Church as a 'monasterium'. However, considering that the author displays a detailed knowledge of Jutland, which is not drawn from *Gesta Swenomagni*, it is very possible that he grew up there, although we cannot offer a more precise location.

## The purpose of *Passio II*

At some point in the first third of the thirteenth century, the anonymous hagiographer spent part of a spring, if not more, in Odense in order to copy Aelnoth's account of Saint Cnut Rex. The author's labour was typical of the period, a time which did not operate with the strong distinction between copying and authorship that we have today. The result of this process, *Passio II*, indicates that the hagiographer was familiar with contemporary history writing and that he made a significant effort to complete his mission. The existence of *Passio II*, however, points to a much broader context than the author's work. Whereas today, we are used to thinking of writing as something that can be undertaken on one's own initiative and where it is relatively easy to put together the resources needed for the initial pre-publishing stage of the completion of a book, the medieval reality was very different. *Passio II* is not just the product of the intellectual and creative efforts of the anonymous hagiographer but also of ink, costly parchment, and possibly the use of the Odense scriptorium, to say nothing of the food and lodging required for the author's upkeep during his stay at the cult centre of Cnut. In short, *Passio II* is the product of a commission. And while we might safely assume that the author genuinely performed his work in veneration of Saint Cnut Rex – at least to the point that he sought to do his task accurately and, where he thought it necessary, even correct Aelnoth's text – his piety alone was not enough to complete this endeavour. It was a commission, and some-

one commissioned it. The question is, to what purpose was it commissioned? Based on the idea that the author belonged to the cathedral of Roskilde, I will offer one hypothesis in order to explain why *Passio II* came into being.

The simplest explanation for the composition of *Passio II* is that it was intended for a religious institution that lacked an account of Saint Cnut Rex and, crucially, wanted to have such a text at hand. On the most basic level, the purpose of *Passio II* was to provide the readings in the chapter, at mealtimes, and, most importantly, during the hours of the divine office on the saint's feast day. Saint Cnut Rex had two feasts in the course of the liturgical year. His main feast, commemorating his day of death, was celebrated on July 10. The feast of his translation, commemorating the moving of his relics to a new shrine in the stone cathedral in 1095, was celebrated on April 18. In Odense, the centre of his cult and an important centre of textual production, we know that there were liturgical offices composed for both these feasts and that the chants and readings were based on Aelnoth's account of Cnut's life, characteristics, death, and related miracles (Hankeln 2015: 162-66). The feast of Cnut Rex's death was most likely celebrated throughout Denmark. After all, his sanctity had been acknowledged and confirmed by a synod of bishops from all of Denmark, and we should expect that these bishops instituted the feast of Saint Cnut in their respective dioceses. However, although the saint was commemorated annually in every Danish diocese, we also know that his status varied significantly from place to place. His status, at least in the eyes of the clergy, appears to have been relatively low at the episcopal see of Roskilde.

Around 1138, an anonymous chronicler composed the work now known as *Chronicon Roschildensis*, the Roskilde Chronicle. Naturally, the book includes an account of the death of Cnut Rex, but the text is remarkably restrained in its acceptance of the king's sanctity. The chronicler states that Cnut instituted many 'new and unheard-of laws', that he oppressed his people with taxes, and that he only attained his sainthood through what the chronicler calls 'magna confessione cordis', his great confession in his heart, in his hour of dying. The chronicle does acknowledge that miracles are worked at the king's tomb, but little is said about his life, at least when considering how much material would have been available to the chronicler at the time. Moreover, the brevity of the account is particularly noteworthy given that the chronicler uses the phrase 'new and unheard-of laws', 'noua lege et inaudit' (*Chronicon Roschildense*: 23-24), which seems to be a twist on a formulation by Aelnoth: 'nouis et inauditis adinventionibus' ('new and un-heard of inventions', my translation). This accusation is launched against Saint Cnut by the Danish populace, and the anonymous hagiographer has included it in Chapter II.6 of *Passio II*. The Roskilde chronicler, however, retains the accusation, new and unheard-of, but crucially presents it as a justified accusation, taking the side of the those who were the antagonists in Aelnoth's account.

The negative cultural memory of Saint Cnut Rex found in *Chronicon Roschildense* appears to have been representative of a widely held conviction, at least within the literate circles of the Roskilde diocese. It is also likely that the chronicle contributed to this negative view of the saint-king. That this less-than-positive reputation of Saint Cnut Rex was relatively widespread can be seen in two chronicles from the late twelfth century, namely *Historia Compendiosa* by Svend Aggesen and *Gesta Danorum* by Saxo Grammaticus, both writing under the patronage of Absalon, bishop of Roskilde (1158-92) and archbishop of Lund (1177-1201). Both Svend and Saxo criticise those who entertain the belief that Cnut Rex was killed because of his harsh rule (Svend Aggesen: 126-129; Saxo Grammaticus: 862), and their efforts to strengthen the king's reputation suggest that Cnut's status in Roskilde diocese was not very high at the turn of the twelfth century. Equally important is the fact that the chroniclers, and perhaps even their patron, Absalon, actively sought to rehabilitate Cnut Rex.

It is against the negative view of Saint Cnut Rex and attempts to change this view that we must understand the key purpose of *Passio II*. Sometime in the first third of the thirteenth century, someone, quite possibly the bishop of Roskilde, sought to eradicate the negative memory of Cnut once and for all and commissioned one of the men in his retinue to write down an account of the saint-king's life and death that would correct the misapprehensions that were so prevalent in the Roskilde Church. The anonymous hagiographer performed his task with dedication and not only selected and copied important episodes from *Gesta Swenomagni*, but he also reframed the account to reflect the pro-expansionist mood of his own time and sought to correct the descriptions of his possibly native Jutland.

Whether *Passio II* managed to persuade Roskilde's ecclesiastics about the goodness and worth of Saint Cnut Rex is impossible to say. However, considering that the text survives in a collection of saints' legends in Austria – a collection that clearly has been compiled in German-speaking territory, as indicated by the presence of Saint Gotthard of Hildesheim and Saint Liborius of Paderborn, it is clear that *Passio II* continued to be copied in Roskilde until the end of the Middle Ages. It is also likely that *Passio II* continued to be the primary source of information about Saint Cnut Rex in Roskilde, at least until the printing of the Roskilde Breviary (*Breviarium Roschildense*) in 1517.

The argument concerning the date, place, and purpose of *Passio II*, as presented here, is dependent on a number of specific interpretations regarding a specific source material. For the sake of clarity, it is therefore important to note that these underlying interpretations might be incorrect, and if so, the parameters for the dating of the work will have to be shifted. The dating of *Passio II* is suggested based on other texts, especially *Series ac Brevior Historia Regum Danie* and Arnfast Monk's *Poemate de miraculis Sancti Kanuti regis et martyris*. However, these texts survive in

late manuscripts and late transcriptions, and their dating must, in turn, be imprecise and dependent on other, often equally nebulous, sources. In the case of the Danish regnal list, the dating is fairly secure, ending as it does with the conquest of Estonia in 1219. Arnfast's poem, on the other hand, is much more problematic. It is clear that both the anonymous hagiographer and Arnfast draw on one and the same episode, namely the healing of Esbern, and it is possible that the hagiographer is the earlier of the two authors. However, the dating of one or both to the thirteenth century is an argument primarily based on contextual evidence, and this is an argument that is not uncontested.

As mentioned, Hans Olrik argued that Arnfast wrote his poem in the fifteenth century, and he had good reasons for doing so. If this dating is correct, it does not necessarily follow that *Passio II* also belongs to this century because there is reason to believe that Arnfast relied on a miracle collection in Odense rather than *Passio II* for his information about Esbern. Even so, the quandary provides a good reminder of the need to examine the text of *Passio II* in light of other details aside from the texts. For instance, the anonymous hagiographer's claim that Saint Alban's Church was a 'monasterium', or the statement that the Church of

Saint Cnut was made of bricks, might point to a time of composition after the thirteenth century (see Bjerregaard, this volume: 36-37). Moreover, the emphasis on how the forebears of Cnut Rex were kings of Norway might reflect the new geopolitical reality of the Kalmar Union rather than the pro-expansionist mood of the early thirteenth century.

In short, my argument does not provide any certain foundation for the dating of *Passio II*. My suggested dating is reasonable in light of some contextual evidence, but as so often with medieval texts that have come down to us through much later text-witnesses, other conclusions are also plausible. I believe that *Passio II* was composed in Roskilde in the timeframe 1219-1241. I also suggest that the text was written by an author originally from Jutland who had served at Roskilde Cathedral, who was familiar with the historiographical output at both Roskilde and Lund and who had visited Odense in order to copy and adapt the text of *Gesta Swenomagni*. Finally, I suggest that the purpose of the work was primarily to counter the negative cultural memory of Saint Cnut Rex in Roskilde and to provide the cathedral clergy of Roskilde with a textual repository for reading during Saint Cnut's feast on July 10. Whether these suggestions are correct is another matter.

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## End notes

- 1 I am indebted to Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard, Francis Young, and Mads Runge for their help and collaboration in this work.
- 2 As the English translation of *Passio II* is based on the edition in Gertz' *Vitae Sanctorum Danorum*, the present text will take this edition as its starting point. It should be noted that there are certain divergences between the edition by Schmeidler and the edition by Gertz, ostensibly due to different editorial opinions. The differences in question pertain to the last part of the manuscript, where Schmeidler has included more lines, including part of *Epitaphium Kanutum* (see Schmeidler 1912: 96 and Gertz 1908–1912: 556). These differences are interesting, but I have not addressed them here, as they have no bearing on my analysis.
- 3 For *Gesta Swenomagni*, see Isager and Conti 2012. The most recent in-depth analysis of Ælnoth's work is Fritz 2024. See also Bylinka 2024.
- 4 Michael Gelting has argued for an even narrower timeframe of 1111/12 (Gelting 2011: 38).
- 5 For a description of the manuscript with an (imprecise) overview of its content, see the Hill Museum & Manuscript Library virtual reading room (vHMML) no. 4958 (<https://www.vhmml.org/readingRoom/view/5046> (last accessed 03.11.24)).
- 6 By liturgically useful, I here mean that an abbreviation of Ælnoth's expansive text could easily be adapted for liturgical readings. While the Odense liturgy was based on *Gesta Swenomagni*, and Ælnoth's work therefore had proved to be suitable for liturgical adaptation, a religious house where Cnut was less important than at Odense, would probably find a shorter work more serviceable, given that they needed less material for their lessons at Matins. (For more on the liturgy of Saint Cnut Rex, see Hankeln, 'Kingship and Sanctity in the Historia in Honour of St Canutus Rex'.)
- 7 It is possible that the author of *Passio II* copied from a manuscript of *Gesta Swenomagni* in which Ælnoth's narrative had already been restructured in the way that it appears in *Passio II*. However, given that *Passio II* contains several details not found in Ælnoth's narrative, the most likely scenario is that it is the anonymous author who has restructured the narrative.
- 8 Translated by Francis Young.
- 9 This amalgamation appears to be part of an old and widely known section of the theological repository that circulated in Latin Christendom. Consequently, while the anonymous hagiographer has probably taken it from *Gesta Swenomagni*, Ælnoth is not the author of this combination. 'Aperi os tuum, et ego adimplebo illud' can be found in several other sources, such as Gregory the Great's homily XXI from his homilies on the gospels. Interestingly, it is also found in the prologue of *Vita et Miracula Sancti Ketilli* (*Vita et Miracula Sancti Ketilli*: 260), which is likely to have been composed in Viborg in the late 1180s (Gertz 1908–1912: 252). The biblical amalgamation seems to be sufficiently well known that there is no compelling evidence to suggest any connection between its use in the literature on Saint Cnut Rex and the literature on Saint Ketillus.
- 10 These are from John 4:11 and Psalm 63:7–8.
- 11 This claim is particularly noteworthy, as it is an uncommon representation of events. Interestingly, towards the turn of the twelfth century, we find the earliest surviving formulation of the idea that it was Edward the Confessor who – contrary to the claims of the anonymous hagiographer and his sources – abolished the tribute to the Danes, the so-called Danegeld. This version of events was suggested by Roger Howden in *Chronica* (see Hope 2012: 34).
- 12 The text says 'other Teutons', as this is an addition to the Saxons mentioned by Ælnoth, whom the author knew as a Teutonic people.
- 13 Translated by Francis Young.
- 14 Translated by Francis Young.
- 15 Interestingly, Ælnoth here uses the term 'fratrum germanum', which also emphasises the kinship between Cnut and Benedict. The term 'germanum' is translated by Francis Young as 'full', which is to say that Ælnoth points out that the two brothers were born of the same parents. The meaning of 'germanum' is therefore different to the anonymous hagiographer's use of 'carnalis', and the latter should probably be seen as an addition intended to provide further depth to the quality of Benedict's person.
- 16 That the anonymous hagiographer uses the term 'dux', 'duke', to describe Benedict is noteworthy. The title is not applied to Benedict in neither *Tabula Othoniensis*, *Passio I*, nor *Gesta Swenomagni*. In Latin hagiography, the term can be used either to denote a rank within the secular nobility (in the sense of 'duke'), or as a leader in either religious or worldly terms. It is possible that the title of 'dux' has been applied to Benedict in the aftermath of the death of Cnut Lavard in 1131, who was known as Saint Cnut Dux. The cult of Saint Cnut Dux was promoted by his son, King Valdemar I, and the king's efforts appear to have intended to overshadow and appropriate the cult of Cnut Rex (see Hope 2020: 83–84). We might imagine that the monks and clerics in Odense responded to this encroachment by using the title of Cnut Dux for the martyred brother of Cnut Rex, and that Benedict retained this new title by the time the author of *Passio II* stayed in Odense. The possible connection between this term and the cult of Cnut Dux is further suggested by the anonymous hagiographer's reference to 1 Corinthians 2:9, a passage that elsewhere in the known Danish hagiographical material only appears in a sermon for the translation of Cnut Dux (Gertz 1908–1912: 233). However, the use of this particular biblical reference does not provide us with any certainty, so we should be careful in putting too much weight on what might simply be a coincidence.
- 17 Translated by Francis Young.
- 18 For the importance of *Tabula Othoniensis*, see Petersen 2019: 118–20).
- 19 Translated by Nils Holger Petersen (2019: 119).

- 20 The feast of Cnut Rex is July 10, but the celebration began with the office of First Vesper already in the early evening of July 9. The vigil began with the office of Vesper on July 8. Gertz, however suggests that this was the translation of Cnut's relics, April 18 (1908-1912: 554).
- 21 Incidentally, the text of Wisdom 10:10 is included in the liturgical office for Saint Cnut Rex as it has survived in the *Breviarium Othoniense* from 1482, but there it is found in the fifth Vesper antiphon for July 10 (although see notes by Gertz on the translation office (1908-1912: 554). However, the office as it is transmitted in *Breviarium Othoniense* is an abbreviated version of what was performed in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries (Hankeln 2015: 165-166), so we cannot use this material to dismiss the idea that the responsory in question actually was performed during the Vesper of the vigil. Moreover, this particular biblical passage is frequently used in liturgical offices, and it is highly likely that the clergy of Saint Cnut's Church in Odense did indeed perform this chant at this time.
- 22 As an aside, we might note that if the previous miracle was performed on April 18, it is possible that the miracles are presented here in chronological order, since Ascension Day often falls on a date after April 18. If we take the anonymous hagiographer at his words, this suggests that he was in Odense in April-May.
- 23 'Per imaginem beate uirginis de maiori ecclesia Othonie portatam per matronam et positam super pectus egroti totaliter curatur. Hoc ibi diffuse describitur in libro sancti Kanuti' (my translation) (*Annales Ripenses*: 261).
- 24 'vor dem letzten Drittel oder Viertel' (my translation) (Schmeidler 1912: 77).
- 25 Hans Olrik exemplifies the lack of concrete evidence for the date of Arnfast and his poem. In his introduction to the Danish translation of the poem, he suggests that Arnfast wrote the poem around 1450, but he also concedes that Arnfast might have lived in the thirteenth century (Olrik 1968: 341).
- 26 'Karolus dux Flandrie interfectus est a suis, qui fuit filius Kanuti regis et martiris, qui iacet Othænsø, per consilium Magni, filii Nicolai regis' (my translation).
- 27 The end-date is still a matter of discussion (see Embree 2010: 1251-52).
- 28 Since Radulfus Niger most likely received this version of the story from a Danish informer (see Münster-Swendsen 2016: 205-208), the representation of Oluf as a scheming would-be coup-maker, was most likely known in Denmark prior to the 1190s. However, as both Schmeidler and Gertz have shown notable lexical correspondences between Radulfus' *Chronica* and *Passio II*, it is clear that the anonymous hagiographer has based his rendition of the narrative on Radulfus.
- 29 'Erat enim monasterium ligneum' (translation by Francis Young).
- 30 'insigni de lateribus edificio constructum' (translation by Francis Young).
- 31 Personal communication.
- 32 Note that while Sven Aggesen also states that the army was stationed in Humlum (Gertz 1917: 126), his explanation is that it was because Humlum was the best port. The anonymous hagiographer, however, states that it was because it was the port closest to England.
- 33 It is possible that the anonymous hagiographer has based this information on Sven Aggesen, but the hagiographer deviates from Sven in his explanation of why Knud was in Schleswig. Sven Aggesen states that it was because Cnut heard that 'regni prodicionem perdoceret exortam' ('treason was rising against the kingdom', my translation) (Gertz 1917: 126). The hagiographer, on the other hand, states that the king was 'de negocio prefato pertractans morabatur' 'dealing with the aforesaid matter' (translated by Francis Young). It appears, therefore, unlikely that the hagiographer consulted Sven Aggesen in the course of his work, although he might have read Sven's work at an earlier point in time.



Aerial view of Cnut IV's statue towering over an archaeological excavation at St. Alban's cemetery, Odense.  
Statue by Einar Utzon-Frank, 1953. Photo: Jakob Tue Christensen, 1998.

# The younger passio of Cnut the Holy – Hagiography and Archaeology

by Mikael Manøe Bjerregaard

## Introduction

The manuscript containing the *Passio Sancti Kanuti regis et matris* is presently housed in the Stift Neukloster's library in Vienna (Wiener Neustadt). An inscription on the inside of the book covers indicates its former ownership by Henrik Rantzau (1526-1598), a prominent nobleman who served as Governor for the Danish King in the Duchy of Holstein. Rantzau, known for his multifaceted interest in art, literature, architecture, and astrology, amassed an impressive collection of 6300 volumes in the library of his residence, Schloss Breitenburg (Skovgaard 2011). Among his acquisitions were numerous manuscripts from the monastic library of Bordesholm, including the one under examination here, scripted by "Johannes cum naso" in 1511-1512 (Gertz 1908-1912: 531-32; Schmeidler 1912: 87). Unfortunately, Rantzau's library was dispersed by Wallenstein's troops in 1627 during the Thirty Years War. The manuscript's route to Vienna is obscure.

The passio from the Vienna manuscript is sometimes referred to as *The Younger Passio* to discriminate it from an older text with the same title (Kristensen 1968-1969: 432; Danmarks Kirker IX:3: 1730) – it will hereafter be referred to as *Passio II*. *Passio II* is not considered part of the so-called *Odense literature* because of its comparatively late composition and heavy reliance on sources such as *Gesta Swenomagni Regis et filiorum eius et Passio Glorissimi Canuti Regis et Martyris* by Aelnoth, which diminishes its status as an original work. This might have led to *Passio II* receiving relatively less academic attention. However, the text does contain some original parts, particularly in its descriptions of specific geographical places and the architecture of primarily the churches of St Alban and St Cnut in Odense, which warrant further academic examination. Modern scholarship characterises the text as a hybrid of two literary genres: hagiography and chronicle/historical account. The mix of genres was no paradox to the medieval authors but has been troubling to modern historians. In the first half of the twentieth century, historians reacted to what they considered were naïve and gullible use of hagiographical texts by nineteenth-century historians and dismissed saints' legends and other chronicles as reliable historical sources altogether. Only in the 1980s were these texts rehabilitated as legitimate sources of the social reality of the medieval world (Esmark 2010: 164-166, 168-169). Recently, Brian Patrick McGuire has reestablished *Passio II* as an oeuvre with historical value in its own right (2022: 52, 87-90).

This paper adopts an archaeological perspective to evaluate the historical liability of *Passio II*. The archaeological approach means that this paper will not deal with religious or political aspects of the text but instead focus on what could be considered tangible details. By focusing on physical details within the text, such as geographical and architectural descriptions, which often serve as non-essential background elements to the main narrative, this study aims to discern their authenticity and potential contribution to our understanding of medieval society. From an archaeological point of view, these details are of great interest as they are not likely to be the product of deliberate fabrication and tendentious storytelling for a specific end. In fact, such details could be considered extra trustworthy since they also help establish an atmosphere of matter-of-factness around the hagiographical account. The details set a realistic scene for the course, reasons, and consequences of the human agents' actions, which adds credibility to the narrative. Therefore, those details are not likely to be intentionally incorrect. However, they can, of course, be inaccurate. Their accuracy is contingent upon the author's knowledge or access to reliable information at the time of writing. Consequently, this study seeks to extract these details from *Passio II* and compare them with non-literary sources, including archaeological, climatological, and landscape studies. Three thematic areas are addressed in a general discussion of the text's qualities as a historical source of the following themes:

- The geographical settings with a focus on the assembly points of both King Cnut's fleet and that of the rebels conspiring against the king.
- Climatological evidence for the supposed severe weather conditions during the reign of Oluf Hunger.
- The archaeology of St. Alban's and St. Cnut's churches in Odense.

But before addressing those questions, I will propose a hypothesis based on archaeological data regarding the identity of the unknown author of *Passio II* and the period during which the text was produced.

## The author and date of *Passio II*

The anonymous author of *Passio II* refers to himself twice in the text. Firstly, in the prologue, for instance: "I will narrate the deeds of the religious prince", and secondly, in Chap-



ter VIII, as the eyewitness to two miracles happening at the shrine of Saint Cnut in Odense: “I saw this thing done, and heard it while saying the mass of the blessed Cnut; I myself, whose right hand has written these things for you to read.” (Francis Young’s translation in this volume). The prologue reveals scant information about the author’s identity or affiliation. However, if the eyewitness statements in Chapter VIII are credible, the author was a cleric taking part in performing mass inside the Church of St. Cnut in Odense. Gertz argues that the author only resided in Odense for a while in order to produce the text for usage during masses in his own congregation (Gertz 1908-1912: 533-534). Further discussion on the author’s affiliation will be revisited below.

Whether one subscribes to the belief in miracles or not, the eyewitness format of the healing of a cribbled young man named Esben makes it reasonable to consider *Passio II* as the primary source for this event. The miracle is later recounted in another medieval text, “Arnfast’s poems” (*Arnfasti Monachi Poemate*, Gertz 1908-1912: 163-166). These poems, which deal with miracles performed by Saint Cnut, are preserved in a later revised form, with some sections remaining in their original form while others are summarised in prose, such as the story of Esben. *Passio II* mentions the choir singing “*lustum deduxit dominus per vias rectas*” as the miracle takes place, and this detail is echoed in Arnfast’s text. Arnfast reveals that Esben later joins the monastery of Saint Cnut – a detail omitted in the

*Passio II*, perhaps because it had not yet occurred. In conclusion, Arnfast’s poems were written posterior to *Passio II*. Although the poems’ precise date is uncertain, there is mention of a great fire in Odense that “recently” destroyed large parts of the town but spared the church of St. Alban’s. Gertz believed this to be the fire caused by plundering troops in 1247, and thus dated Arnfast’s text to around 1250 (Gertz 1908-1912: 59). But it could also be a fire that raged c. 1425. Olrik is inclined towards a fifteenth-century fire and thus dates Arnfast’s text to around 1450 (Olrik 1893-1894: 341). Olrik mentions explicitly the year 1444 for the great fire, but this is an unsubstantiated event. Notably, evidence of a fire in the central part of Odense sometime around 1425 is documented in a witness statement from 1480 (Engelstoft 1880: 97). While town fires can be difficult to trace archaeologically, even when the fire is said to have been devastating for large parts of the town, the fire in early fifteenth century presents an exception. Excavations in the area north of St. Alban’s Church in 2013 and 2016 revealed several burnt structures, including the cellar of a half-timbered house lining the town’s main street (OBM9776 and OBM976 II) (Figure 1). Through a combination of radiocarbon and dendrochronological datings and stratigraphical information in a Bayesian modelling, the timeframe for the great fire can be narrowed down to 1401-36 (Haase 2022; Haase and Olsen 2021; Haase 2019: 67). This aligns well with the circa-1425 fire. The archaeological evidence shows that the inhabited area between St. Alban’s Church and the main street was devastated by the fire, leading to the recon-



Figure 1: Wooden remains of a building that fell victim to the fire in central Odense c. 1420. Photo: Museum Odense, 2016.



struction of more houses in brick and a general reorganisation of the affected plots. On the other hand, there is no evidence that the fire reached St. Alban's Church, and this actual event could have inspired the miracle described by Arnfast and would suggest a dating of the text to approx. 1425-50. This would, in turn, be the terminus ante quem dating for *Passio II*, given that Arnfast draws on *Passio II*.

I will argue that, in fact, *Passio II* might have been composed only shortly before Arnfast's poems. This argument is also based on archaeological observations, and it allocates the passio to the fourteenth or fifteenth century rather than 1220-1250 as argued by Gertz (1908-12: 537-538) or a date close to or even before 1220 as argued by Hope (this volume: 24ff). In a passage unique to *Passio II*, Saint Cnut's Church is Odense is described as 'a distinguished building made of brick' (de lateribus) (Young, this volume: 12). Elsewhere in his text, Aelnoth, c. 1112,<sup>2</sup> describes the church as built 'from squared-off stone' (lapideo tabulatu) (Gertz 1908-1912: 129). It is evident that Aelnoth refers to the church built from travertine blocks, which was under construction when Cnut was exhumed and translated in 1095. This church was finished sometime in the twelfth century and was gradually rebuilt in brick after the great fire in 1247. The western part of the church (nave) is believed to have been rebuilt in brick from the 1280s until around 1320, while the eastern part (choir and transepts) was only rebuilt from around 1400 and well into the fifteenth century (Danmarks Kirker IX:1: 134). Could it be this partly or entirely brick-built church that the author of *Passio II* witnessed and referenced in his text? If so, it would push the dating of the text from the thirteenth century (as Gertz and Hope believe) into the fourteenth or even fifteenth century. Consequently, the 'recent' great fire mentioned by Arnfast could be that of c. 1425. The interpretation of the Latin word 'later' (literally 'block') is crucial to this argument. Francis Young and associate professor at Copenhagen University, Christian Troelsgård, concur that the correct translation is 'brick' (made from burnt clay).<sup>3</sup> The fact that the author of *Passio II* explicitly chooses a different term than Aelnoth could suggest that he wishes adequately to describe a different building material. So even though, in all fairness, a precise description of the building material was probably not his focus, the wording is probably more than just a stylistic choice.

The proposed much later dating of *Passio II*, perhaps as late as the beginning of the fifteenth century, aligns with a late medieval resurgence of the cult of Cnut the Holy (Bisgaard 2022: 30). This mirrors the general heightened focus on the veneration of saints in late medieval Denmark. For instance, in Lund Cathedral, where Cnut was considered a significant founder and patron, there is no evidence of an altar dedicated to St. Cnut until 1368, when an association of citizens established an altar. Another Cnut altar was established in 1405, and in the early sixteenth century, the archbishop amplified the celebration of Cnut's feast (Wallin 1986:81-85). All surviving depictions of Cnut the Holy from churches in medieval Denmark date from around 1400 to

1520. The late medieval interest in Cnut seems strongly biased toward Eastern Denmark. The author of this article is aware of 39 depictions of King Cnut in murals, altarpieces, or stone carvings that are either preserved to this day or described in reliable postmedieval sources (Figures 2 and 3).<sup>4</sup> Only four are found in West Denmark/Jutland (in medieval Viborg and Aarhus dioceses). However, the altarpiece now in Nørholm Church could be considered an Odense piece since it was donated by the bishop of Odense, Jens Andersen Beldenak, to his home region (possibly the now demolished church in his home village of Brøndum). From the medieval Odense diocese that housed the relics of Cnut, only four depictions are known, all from the island of Lolland. One depiction survives in Saksøbing Church while a mural from the same church is not lost, and finally two depictions are known to have existed in Godsted Church. Roskilde diocese has/have had eight depictions, three of which are in Roskilde Cathedral. Lund diocese, on the other hand, boasts 23 depictions.<sup>5</sup> If these depictions indicate a reinforced devotion to Cnut the Holy in the late Middle Ages, *Passio II* can be seen as an agent in this development. The Lund Cathedral seem to have been the central actor in this stage of the Cnut cult. Bisgaard demonstra-



Figure 2: Murals on the eastern vault of the choir in Ysby Church, Halland. The figure hovering at the top is interpreted as Saint Cnut because of the globus cruciger and a possible spear (Nilsson 2023: 63-64). The depictions of St. Olaf and possibly St. Eric in the nearby vaults strengthen this interpretation, as the three royal saints are often depicted together in Scanian churches in the late Middle Ages. Photo: Hans Erik Karlsson-Jarnvall, 2024.



Figure 3: Map of preserved and lost depictions of St. Cnut the Holy in medieval Denmark. Some churches have or had more than one depiction. Illustration: M. M. Bjerregaard, 2024.

tes that – just like with the depictions – the usage of the feast day of St. Cnut in the dating of official documents was much more prevalent in Lund diocese and comparatively rare in Western Denmark (Bisgaard 2000: 38ff.) The fact that *Passio II* was copied into a compilation of Scandinavian and North German hagiographies in the Bordesholm Monastery at the beginning of the sixteenth century shows that Cnut was still relevant in the late Middle Ages. The alter piece in Næstved St Peter's Church from around the same time depicts Cnut not only as the exalted saint but also in two scenes from his martyrdom – the killing in St. Alban's Church and the enshrining (Figure 4, and this volume: 67). This illustrates that the entire narrative of Cnut's martyrdom was still relevant, not just the end result – and texts like *Passio II* were a necessity to this end.

The author of *Passio II* likely originates from one of the East Danish congregations. The text he produced was intended to be read during the ecclesial celebration on St. Cnut's feast day, and this is explicit in the text that refers directly to the celebration three times: "Cnut, whose feast we celebrate today" (Chapter I:2 and Chapter VII:2) and "Cnut, whose memory we celebrate today" (Chapter I:3). Although Lund Cathedral might appear to be an obvious conclusion, given that most St. Cnut depictions are found in the Lund diocese, Gertz's comparative literature studies point to Roskilde Cathedral (Gertz 1908-1912: 533-534), which I have no evidence to disprove.



Figure 4: Altarpiece from Saint Peder Church in Næstved. Now in the National Museum of Denmark. Showing pivotal scenes from Saint Cnut's hagiography. Photo: Lennart Larsen, National Museum of Denmark / CC-BY-SA.

## The Geography of *Passio II*

*Passio II* mentions or alludes to several place names within the Danish realm. Most of these locations are easy to iden-



Figure 5: Map of placenames mentioned in *Passio II*. Towns and villages are in capitals, and regions are in italics. The uncertain location and character of Pontus Cornicus are discussed in this article. Illustration: M. M. Bjerregaard, 2024.

tify and locate, providing a rough understanding of the movements of King Cnut and his allies during the pivotal events leading up to Cnut's death (Figure 5). Most of the place names are Latinised forms of Danish placenames lifted from Aelnoth's text. However, in some instances, the author of *Passio II* updates or specifies Aelnoth's geographical information based on either local knowledge of the areas in question or from other written or oral sources to which he had access.

Chapter V:1-2 exemplifies such "updates", revising the geographical information provided in Aelnoth's Chapter 17. Aelnoth speaks in unspecific terms about a coastal area north of the Limfjord called "Vendle" (Vendsyssel) and elaborates on the name's etymology. *Passio II* omits the etymological paragraph and instead offers a lesson in historical geography: "He (King Cnut) crossed over to the Vendsyssel beyond the strait which is called Limfjord. For it was at that time an island containing two provinces, that is to say Thy and Vendsyssel, which today should be spoken of more as a promontory than as an island (Young this volume: 10)." In addition to this, the author has already specified in Chapter III:4 that from the fleet's assembly point in the Limfjord "there was little difficulty in crossing to England". This alludes to the fact that during Cnut's time, the Limfjord was open to the west, allowing ships to pass directly into the North Sea. However, sometime around 1100, this passage closed due to silt accumulation (Freiesleben et al.

2024: 8f.). Aelnoth does not mention this, perhaps because he was unaware or because the passage was not completely closed in the early 1110s. Nevertheless, the author of the much later *Passio II* finds it necessary to explain to his contemporaries why the fleet would have assembled there during Cnut's time and how geography had changed since the late eleventh century, leading Vendsyssel and Thy to become connected by land to the Jutland mainland.

Aelnoth recounts that upon his arrival in Vendsyssel, King Cnut resides at Børglum. Aelnoth describes Børglum as a "villa regis", while *Passio II* uses the term "civitas" (town). This intentional shift of apposition in the younger text likely reflects an actual update to the contemporary status of the settlement at Børglum. During King Cnut's reign, Børglum was a royal residence, and it may have been designated as the location for the bishop's seat in the Vendsyssel Diocese around 1060 (Kristensen 2008: 55-58). The bishop's seat in Børglum was an exception in the Danish realm, as it was not located within an established urban settlement.<sup>6</sup> Indeed, there were no urban settlements in Vendsyssel in the late eleventh century. By the time Aelnoth wrote in the 1110s, the bishop's seat was well established, but he does not mention it. Additionally, around that time or shortly after that, the cathedral chapter at Børglum was established as a community of canons regular of the Premonstratensian order. A religious centre like Børglum would likely have stimulated the growth of a



secular settlement (Kristensen and Poulsen 2016: 113). Minor archaeological campaigns in the now rural vicinity of Børglum have uncovered scattered evidence of a medieval settlement (VHM 215/1992, VHM259/1995). The settlement was traced over at least 8.500 m<sup>2</sup> and revealed traces of deposits, paving, and houses (one possibly a bakery) tentatively dated from the twelfth to the fifteenth century based on coins. The settlement is believed to be linked to the bishop's seat (Kirk 2023:123-133). Although the minor excavations are not conclusive about the full size or the nature of this settlement, the fact that it existed could have prompted the author of *Passio II* to deviate from Aelnoth's wording and describe Børglum as a town. Alternatively, the author may have inferred that a bishop's seat would naturally be located in a town. The other settlements referred to as "civitas" in *Passio II* are West Danish bishop's seats that were undeniably towns at the time: Viborg, Schleswig, and Odense. Nevertheless, it is plausible that the choice of "civitas" for Børglum represents the author's firsthand knowledge of the secular settlement at Børglum, parts of which have been excavated since the 1990s.

As the examples above illustrate, the geographical information added to *Passio II* by its unknown author can be verified or at least partially substantiated by geological and archaeological evidence. This lends further interest to the detail examined below: the precise locations of King Cnut's war fleet assembly point in 1085 and that of the rebels.

### The fleet's assembly point

In 1085, King Cnut summoned the war fleet to launch a raid on England to liberate the English from the Normans and claim the English throne, to which Cnut believed to have a hereditary claim. Many locations in the Limfjord region have been proposed as the assembly point for this fleet. Some of these locations are based on information from medieval scriptures, while others appear to be rooted in later local traditions or scholarly deductions (Figure 6). From medieval sources, there are two suggested specific locations, namely Fiskbæk, mentioned in *Annales Ryensis* (which I shall return to later), and Humlum, mentioned in *Passio II*.

*Passio II* is quite specific about the location: "... an innumerable army and fleet had gathered at the port which is called Humlum (from which there was little difficulty in crossing to England)" (Young this volume: 9)". Aelnoth is vaguer about the location, referring to it as "the coasts of the Western harbour" (*Occidentalis portus litoribus*) (Albrectsen 1984: 53). Aelnoth does not specify that the western harbour was located in the Limfjord; in fact, he introduces the Limfjord much later in his text, suggesting he does not associate the fjord with any of the earlier events in his account.

Aelnoth typically introduces specific locations in his text with additional geographical or etymological com-



Figure 6: Map of previously suggested locations for the assembly point of King Cnut's war fleet from medieval written sources and younger traditions. Illustration: M. M. Bjerregaard, 2024.

mentary. His lack of such information about the “western harbour” could imply that the location was apparent to contemporary readers or, more likely, that Aelnoth had limited knowledge of the place. Indeed, the harbour in question could not have been located on the Danish west coast, which lacks natural harbours. Thus, a location within the sheltered waters of the Limfjord seems the most plausible option. Albrectsen (1984) argues that while the “Western harbour” suggests a location somewhere in the western part of the Limfjord, the more likely assembly point would be Aggersund, near the late Viking Age ring fortress of Aggersborg. Despite the fortress having been long abandoned at the time of King Cnut, the land remained under royal ownership, and Albrectsen argues that it could have served as a naval assembly point. However, *Passio II*’s specific mention of Humlum supports the idea that Aelnoth was indeed correct about the harbour being located in the Western part of the Limfjord. The author of *Passio II* tends to supplement his sources with geographical or topological information, as in this case with the inserted sentence that crossing from Humlum to England was easy – in past tense. The unknown author may have obtained information about Humlum and access to the sea from the chronicle of twelfth-century historian Sven Aggesen, who also points explicitly to Humlum (Christiansen 1992: 66).

The small east-facing harbour of Humlum opens into the Venø Strait (Figure 7). The hinterland sheltered the wa-

ters from the western wind, while the small island of Venø offers protection to the east. The distance between the mainland and the island is never more than 2.7 km, and to the south, at Kleppen, the lands almost meet, providing a narrow entrance into the strait, which is an ideal location for a natural harbour (Figure 8). The basin is large and relatively deep, with easy access to the North Sea by rounding the headland just north of the harbour through the waters of Oddesund (Odde Strait) and westward through the waters of Nissum Bredning. (A bredning is a large open body of water that is connected to the sea or to other “brednings” through narrow straits or channels). The coast at Humlum forms a small bay with a sandy beach onto a slightly hilly hinterland. The nearby coastline rises both north and south of this bay. Other coastlines in the area, such as large parts of the west coast of Venø and the southern coastline of Nissum Bredning, are characterised by quite steep slopes. The highest point in the Humlum hinterland is Bavnehøj (Beacon Mound), located inland approx. 1.8 km south of Humlum Harbour.<sup>7</sup> Many of these topographical features align with the characteristics of landing places on Danish coasts in the late Iron Age and the early Middle Ages, as highlighted by Ulriksen (1998: 182-195). Geographically and topographically, the beach at Humlum is well-suited as the assembly point of a seagoing war fleet, and Ulriksen also highlights Humlum as a more convenient place than other suggested locations in the Western Limfjord (Ulriksen 1992: 78). There are no archaeological finds or struc-

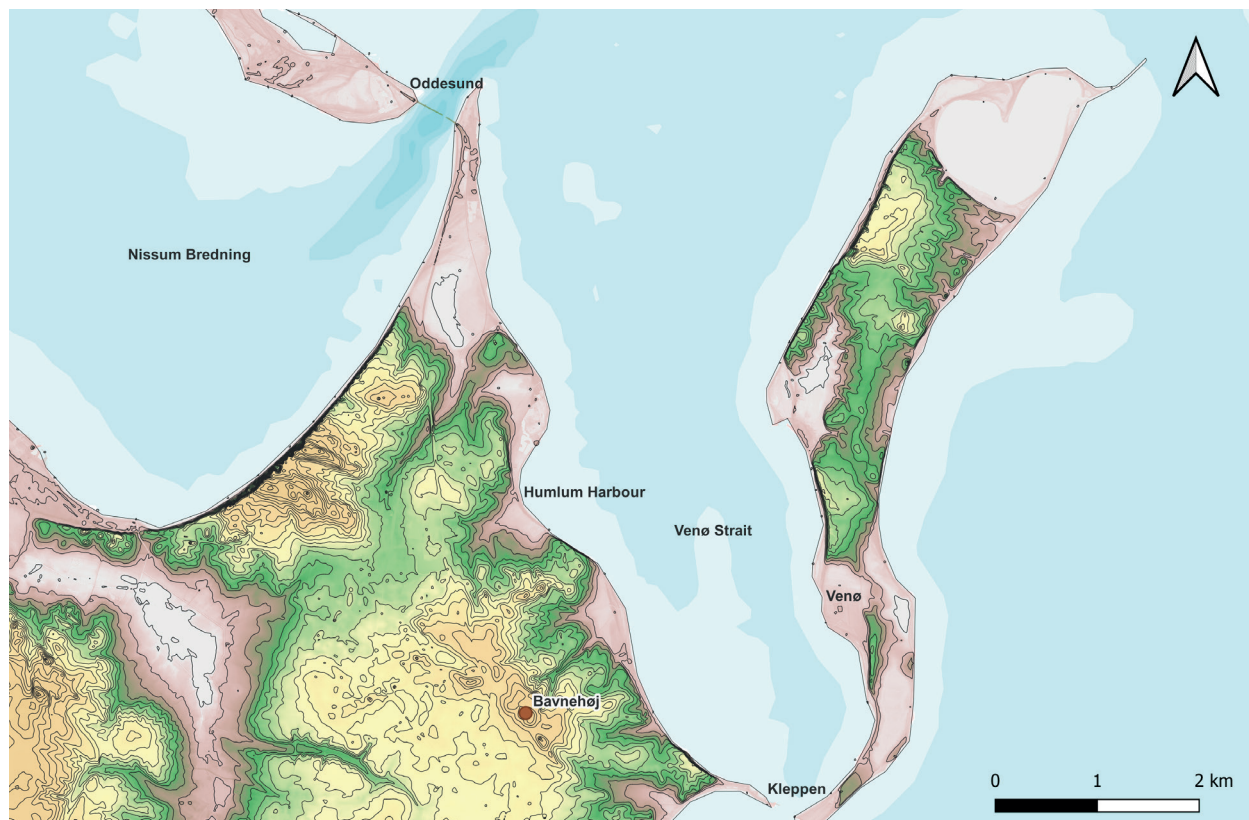


Figure 7: Map of the coastline around the Venø Strait, Odde Sund and Nissum Bredning. Illustration: Peder Dam and M. M. Bjerregaard, 2025.



Figure 8: Panoramic photo of the Venø Strait seen from Humlum Harbour. The coastline can be seen to rise in the distance to both sides. Photo: M.M. Bjerregaard, 2022.

tures from the Humlum coast to support this assumption. Only a few metal objects, interpreted as a fibula and metal beads, can be ascribed to the early Middle Ages. However, it might be expected that a naval assembly point would not exhibit intensive tangible evidence. Activities such as trade, manufacturing, or ship repair were likely less prominent here than in established landing places that function over a significant period.

Curiously enough, another piece of unique information in *Passio II* might support the argument in favour of Humlum. The text states that while the fleet was waiting in Humlum, King Cnut “was staying in the town of Schleswig [...] four days’ journey away from them” (Young this volume: 9).<sup>8</sup> The estimated travel time from Schleswig to Humlum compares quite well with the travel time from Schleswig to the Limfjord mentioned by Adam of Bremen in his *Gesta Hammaburgensis Ecclesiae Pontificum*, composed little more than a decade before the summoning of Cnut’s war fleet: “If one travels the direct route from Schleswig to Aalborg, one has a journey of five to seven days ahead. This was Emperor Otto’s marching route all the way up to the place in the farthest part of Vendyssel, where one reaches the sea, which is still today called Oddesund after the emperor’s victory” (my translation) (Lund 2000: 199).<sup>9</sup> The faster travel time from Schleswig to the Limfjord stated in *Passio II* might be erroneous, or perhaps it reflects that the infrastructure had improved considerably since Adam of Bremen’s time. This is very likely given the dramatic changes in Denmark’s topography in those centuries, where towns grew, new villages were established, and land-based transport of grain and other foods increased (Schovsbo 2018: 15-16). Adam of Bremen’s geographical references are somewhat confusing, mentioning Aalborg in the eastern Limfjord and Oddesund in the western Limfjord in the same breath, and his etymological explanation for Oddesund is incorrect. However, his account is of great interest to the present study. Adam of Bremen evidently refers to a route

from the town of Schleswig to somewhere at the Limfjord. “The farthest part of Vendsyssel where one reaches the sea” could easily refer to the western opening of the Limfjord discussed above, which is also the westernmost point in Vendsyssel. This does not equate Oddesund as Adam of Bremen’s text seems to suggest. Instead, Oddesund is a small strait just north of Humlum, through which one would have to sail to get from the sheltered waters at Humlum to the Nissum Bredning, from which there was access to the North Sea. When Adam of Bremen, who claims to have information from, among others, King Svend Estridsen, refers to this place, it suggests that this was a central location in the Limfjord, which again could emphasise that Humlum was indeed the fleet’s assembly point.

In conclusion, Humlum, the assembly point mentioned in *Passio II*, could very likely be the actual location where Cnut summoned his fleet in 1085. It is certainly more credible than the location mentioned in *Annales Ryensis* from the late thirteenth century. That script uniquely points to Fiskbæk in Hjarbæk Fjord as the fleet’s assembly point (Kroman 1980: 163, 194, 249). Hjarbæk fjord served as the harbour for the inland town of Viborg, but geographically, it seems unnecessarily complicated to access and depart from for a westbound fleet. The *Annales Ryensis* exemplifies that if there was a living narrative based on the actual event behind Sven Aggesen’s account about Humlum, which was later repeated in *Passio II*, the tradition was lost or distorted over time.

### **Pontus Cornicus – the elusive assembly point of the rebels**

Most placenames in *Passio II* can be easily translated from their Latinised form back to their modern Danish equivalents. However, the placename *Pontus Cornicus* has caused some ambiguity. The location serves as the gathering point for the angered men of Vendsyssel and the starting



point of the revolt against King Cnut's regime. The context suggests it is a Latinised term describing a location somewhere in the northern part of Vendsyssel. Aelnoth uses the phrase "Pontus ergo cornicus dicitur..." while *Passio II* refers to it as: "ad pontum, Cornicum appellatum." Unfortunately, in this case, the author of *Passio II* provides no further geographical information beyond Aelnoth's text, which could indicate uncertainty regarding the specific location and that he might not know the Danish equivalent.

In Olrik's late nineteenth-century translation of Aelnoth's text, he interprets the location as "Kragestrand" (literally Crow's Beach), a site on the northwestern coast of Vendsyssel in Tornby Parish (Olrik 1893-94: 65). This interpretation is maintained in Albrectsen's subsequent translations (Albrectsen 1984: 62). Olrik's reasoning behind this translation is not clear, but a paleographical argument suggests that Coruicus (Latin for raven) in the Gothic script could have been misread as Cornicus, leading to his translation as "crow".<sup>10</sup> However, Olrik's interpretation of *pontus* is less clear. In medieval Latin, *pontus* can mean "bridge" as an equivalent of *pons* in classical Latin, which is the translation Young suggests in his present translation. *Pontus* can also refer to an enclosed sea, but this meaning does not seem to apply to any location in Vendsyssel or Denmark as a whole. Even if *pontus* were to be stretched to mean "fjord" or another semi-enclosed body of water, there is no relevant location in Vendsyssel. Therefore, it does not seem reasonable to translate *pontus* as beach, as the correct Latin word would have been *litus*. Indeed, Aelnoth uses the word *litus* elsewhere in his text, as cited above (Albrectsen 1984: 53).

Gertz challenges Olrik's translation and identifies the first part of the place name as the village of Horne in the northwestern part of Vendsyssel. The Danish word "horn" (similar in meaning to English) could then have been Latinised to "cornus". Although Gertz highlights Olrik's peculiar translation of *pontus* as pond, he does not mention the possible translation to bridge. Instead, Gertz identifies the *pontus* as the sea near Horne (Hornehav). He argues that the name of the sea would then later have rubbed off back onto the coastal area at Horne (Gertz 1908-1912: 105). Albøge, with some reservations, supports this argument (Albøge 2009: 48-49). Gertz thus ends up with an interpretation that requires the name of a specific stretch of water to identify the adjacent stretch of land which gave name to the water in the first place. This construction seems unnecessarily complicated.

While I agree that the first part of the name should be translated as *horn*, I suggest that the latter part of the name refers to a bridge. In a country with very little infrastructure, a bridge would have been a focal point in the landscape in the late eleventh century, making it a convenient place to summon people from a larger area. No location named Horne Bridge (Danish: Horne Bro) is known today or from older cartographic sources. Still, if the refe-

rence is to the village of Horne, it might indicate a crossing of the stream Højrup Bæk, some 800 meters south of the village and centrally in Horne Parish. As of yet, there is no archaeological evidence supporting the existence of an early medieval bridge across Højrup Bæk.

The organisation of the Vendsyssel shires has changed several times in the early modern period. However, in 1688, Horne Parish was part of the Horn's Shire (Horns Herred), which spanned the entire Northern Vendsyssel. Shires are mentioned for the first time in a document issued by King Cnut in 1085, which could mean that they represented a new organisation of the realm, but it was very likely based on older legislative structures. It is plausible that "Horne Bridge" may refer to the Horn's shire. In this case, Horn refers to the "horn" of Vendsyssel, its northernmost headland projecting into the Skagerrak. In fact, it would be logical for the public to gather at the shire assembly (Danish: herredsting) to decide on their collective actions against King Cnut. A shire assembly at a common assembly location seems more plausible than a gathering at a remote beach on the west coast. This is particularly relevant as the rebels likely viewed their planned actions as just and lawful rather than as part of a clandestine conspiracy. Indeed, Aelnoth recounts how King Cnut travelled from what is probably a shire assembly (at Børglum or somewhere near) and to "the northernmost parts" to meet the mob at their assembly (conventus) (Gertz 1908-1912: 105), presumably at the aforementioned "Pontus Cornicus". Within the logic of Aelnoth's narrative, it makes sense that the referred location is a shire assembly in the northernmost part of Vendsyssel.

The author of *Passio II* did not seem to know what Aelnoth's *Pontus Cornicus* referred to. Otherwise, given his general stylistic modus, he would probably have added more context. Perhaps the Latinised form was obscure to him, and he apparently did not have information from other sources to clarify the matter.

The author of *Passio II* is generally familiar with Danish place names and geography. Aelnoth, who specifically refers to himself as a foreigner, tends to give (sometimes erroneous) etymological explanations for the Danish place names as if to make them more accessible for (foreign) readers and, indeed, to the foreigner Aelnoth himself. The author of *Passio II* omits the etymology, possibly because the names were familiar to him. On the other hand, he specifies the topographical detail, indicating that he must have had some knowledge of Danish geography.

## Disastrous events during Oluf's reign

In section IX:4, *Passio II* mentions the hardships of the land that followed immediately after Cnut's death during Oluf Hunger's reign. "The fields were barren for all the days of his reign", states the text. The *passio* relies heavily on



Aelnoth in this part. Aelnoth adds to the account of the miseries by listing a shortage of grass, mast, and fish and, in addition, a plague upon people and livestock. Because of this, King Oluf gained the epithet Hunger, which he still holds. The hardships are interpreted in the hagiographic texts as God's punishment on King Oluf and the people for the assassination of the just King Cnut. Still, neither of the texts goes into detail about the direct cause of the failed harvests. Late twelfth-century chronicler Saxo is an example of how famines in the Middle Ages were interpreted within the concept of "economy of sin" – a causality that combines religious, social and natural interpretations (Collet and Krämer 2017: 104). In his *Gesta Danorum*, he elaborates on the events during Oluf's reign and blames long-lasting droughts in the summers and heavy rainfalls and floods during harvest. According to Saxo, the unfortunate farmers had to board small boats to harvest singular ears of grain floating on the submerged fields (Friis-Jensen and Fisher 2015: 865-867).<sup>11</sup> Of course, this is a dramatic exaggeration that Saxo uses as a narrative device. However, older texts such as Aelnoth's could refer to commemorated, actual events that took place only around one generation before the text was written. In fact, a shorter hagiographical text on King Cnut, which is thought to have been written sometime between the death of King Oluf (1095) and the enshrinement of Cnut in 1100,<sup>12</sup> already mentions the heavy rainfalls, epidemics, famine and dearth (Olrik 1893-1894: 16-17, Gertz 1908-1912: 70). Hagiographies and chronicles unanimously claim that the famine lasted for several years, up to nine consecutive years. Such extended periods of famine and hardship had become a literary trope alluding to catastrophes of Biblical dimensions, such as the seven lean years with which God punished Egypt.<sup>13</sup> The Danish medieval texts also agree that the hardships ended when King Eric ascended the throne (in 1095).

Although historically, famine in a region could sometimes be caused by political turmoil or war, famines in the Middle Ages would most frequently be triggered by failed harvests due to extreme fluctuations in the weather, precisely as suggested by Saxo (Ljungqvist *et al.* 2023; Hybel 2002: 270f.). Excessive rainfall would negatively affect the grain-based agrarian system. While a single bad harvest could usually be restrained within a region, famine would occur in the wake of back-to-back harvest failures (Alfani and Ó Gráda 2017: 16-17; Collet and Krämer 2017). If such weather conditions occurred in the late 1080s and early 1090s, it is likely that not only Denmark but also a larger region in Northern Europe was affected. The question is whether it is possible to document any extreme weather condition in an interdisciplinary approach using other written sources that are more neutral and not affected by the martyr narrative of King Cnut and to complement these with climatic studies.

Studies on historical British epidemics provide an extensive list of medieval famine-pestilences dating from 679 AD to the Great Plague, drawn from British chronicles

and annals (Creighton 1891, Whitelock 1961, Hoyle 2016). The list shows that famines were ever reoccurring events and that hardly a decade passed in eleventh to thirteenth Century Britain without at least one famine being mentioned in the annals. However, following 1049 there was a relatively reasonable period, with records of famines accounted only in 1070 and 1082 (Whitelock 1961: 153, 165). From 1086 and onwards, there is a rise in the frequency of hardships mentioned in the annals: 1086 Great fever-pestilence, 1087 Sharp famine, 1093 Floods, hard winter, 1095 Severe famine, 1096-97 Universal sickness and mortality, 1103-05 General pestilence and murrain, 1110-11 Famine, 1112 Destructive pestilence (Creighton 1891: 15-16). Evidently, in the decades around 1100, Britain was marred by many famine-related incidents. The 1080s, 1090s, and 1100s are among the six decades between 900 and 1200 that were most notably marked by successive years of crisis (Rawcliffe 2011: 70). The 1086-87 incident was probably due to two consecutive failing harvests of "corn and fruit" caused by inclement weather conditions with an intermission of widespread sickness. It is not impossible that these challenging weather conditions of 1086-87 could also have affected Danish territory.

Harsh weather conditions result in poor growing conditions, which can be traced in the measurements of tree-rings. A diagram showing the standardised growth of oak trees from AD 1000 to 1200 has been produced for the present study (Figure 9).<sup>14</sup> The diagram draws on data from Southern Denmark (Southern Jutland, Funen, Sealand and adjacent islands). A relatively significant decrease in tree-ring width seems to have occurred during the entirety of Oluf's reign, suggesting some truth in the allegedly worsened weather conditions. However, an in-depth isotopic study of annual resolution must be conducted to establish further evidence for this. This would imply measuring the<sup>13</sup>C-isotopes that correlate with the temperature and the amount of sun and 18O-isotopes that correlate with the amount of rain.<sup>15</sup>

Based mainly on medieval European annals, Hybel does not detect any significantly bad climatic conditions between 1086 and 1095 in territories near Denmark "to the south and west" (2002: 275). It is not evident which territories Hybel includes, but clearly, he excludes the British annals. Studies of written accounts of famines in the Low Countries reveal no indications of famine during the period of interest (Curtis *et al.* 2017: 119), and the same goes for Germany (Collet and Krämer 2017: 103). However, for the years after Oluf's death, especially from 1099 to 1101, there are several accounts of severe weather and failure of harvest in many parts of southern and central Germany, Southern France, and even England (Curschmann 1990). With the "Old World Drought Atlas" database (OWDA),<sup>16</sup> OWDA offers a year-to-year reconstruction of summer (June and August) wetness and dryness in Europe during the Common Era based on tree-rings. It is possible to detect severe summer weather conditions around the turn of

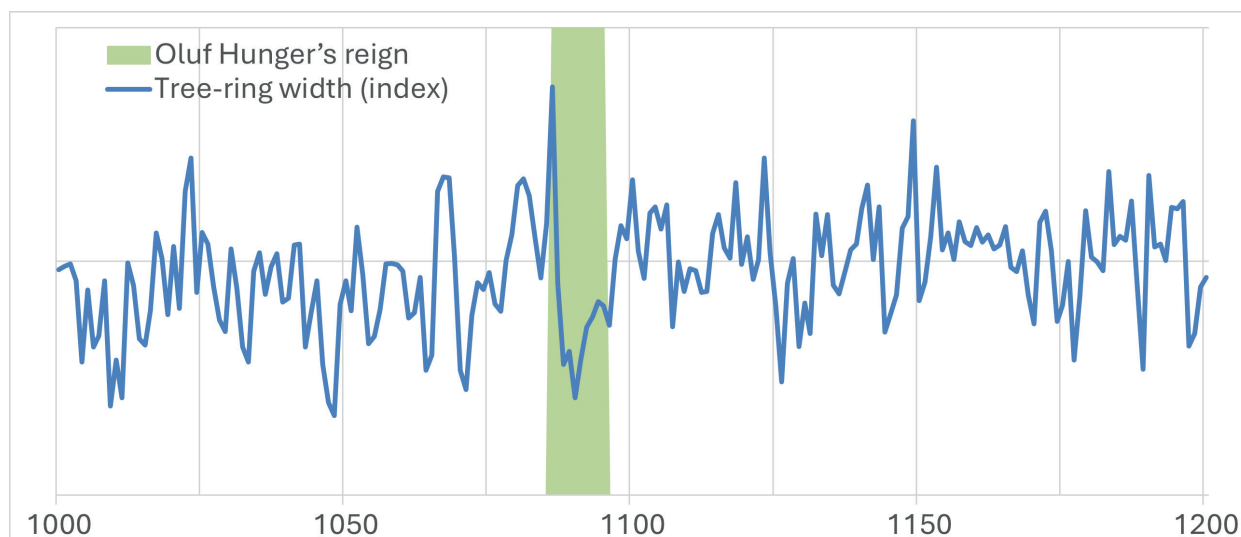


Figure 9: Standardised tree-ring chronology spanning AD 1000 to 1200 based on detrended tree-ring series of oak (*Quercus* spp.) samples from Southern Denmark. Standardisation was done using the modified negative exponential function in the dplR package in R. The timespan of Oluf Hunger’s reign is shown in green. Illustration: Jonas Ogdal, Department of Archaeological Science and Conservation, Moesgaard Museum, 2024.

the twelfth century in Northern Germany, The Lowlands, England, and Denmark (Figure 10). 1100-1102 saw three consecutive dry summers, with the summer of 1102 being the most extreme. These droughts could have caused the back-to-back failed harvests around the turn of the century, even though 1102 does not correspond entirely with the annals. No matter what, the OWDA data does not seem to support the timing of the harsh weather conditions with the rule of Oluf, as there seems to be no dramatic fluctuation of the weather during the summers of 1087-1095. In fact, more severe weather conditions occurred a few years later, during the rule of King Eric.

In conclusion, the only contemporary source that mentions severe weather, failure of harvest, and famine in Denmark after the death of King Cnut is the above-mentioned older *passio* that dates to around 1096-97. The anonymous author of this text, very likely a foreign cleric living in Denmark, claims to have witnessed the elevation of Cnut’s bones in 1095 and could thus have witnessed first-hand the climatic occurrences during the reign of Oluf. Supposedly, the author of this text was one of the English clerics who were summoned to Denmark to help establish the cult around Cnut the Holy. In that case, it is also possible that the severe weather conditions in his homeland mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon chronicles for 1086-87 have affected his narrative, even though supposedly this repercussion from God only affected “almost all of Denmark” (Gertz 1908-1912: 70). Aelnoth, whose slightly younger chronicle builds upon the older *passio* from the 1090s, elaborates on the theme of King Oluf. Possibly, the narrative is reinforced by the severe weather conditions around 1100, which Aelnoth must have experienced first-hand during his early years in Denmark and might erroneously have ascribed to

the reign of Oluf.<sup>17</sup> Both Saxo’s chronicle and the *Passio II* are so remote in time from the actual events that the build-up around Oluf is almost entirely a construction that serves as a narrative tool.

This brief comparison of written sources and climatological data shows that it is challenging to relate information from various sources, such as climate studies, archaeology, and medieval annals. This is due to the still scarce material, for instance, year ring samples from the relevant period and area and the perhaps tendentious nature of some medieval accounts. However, an unrealised potential lies here for looking beyond the historical records to ascertain whether Oluf’s reign was a continuous line of years of hardship. The result would be an “archaeological reading” of the medieval text. I shall apply this method further in the next chapter.

## Passio II and the archaeology of St. Alban’s and St. Cnut’s Churches in Odense

As is evident from the above, *Passio II* contains several passages that can be subjects for topographical and meteorological studies. Additionally, the text includes information about tangible objects or structures within the narrative that can be tested and sometimes corroborated by archaeological evidence. An example of this can be found in Chapter I:1. This short paragraph presents Cnut IV’s granduncle, Cnut the Great (c. 995-1035). This king is not mentioned in Aelnoth’s text, where the predecessors of King Svend Estridsen are merely obscure figures. *Passio II* ends its brief account of King Cnut the Great’s merits

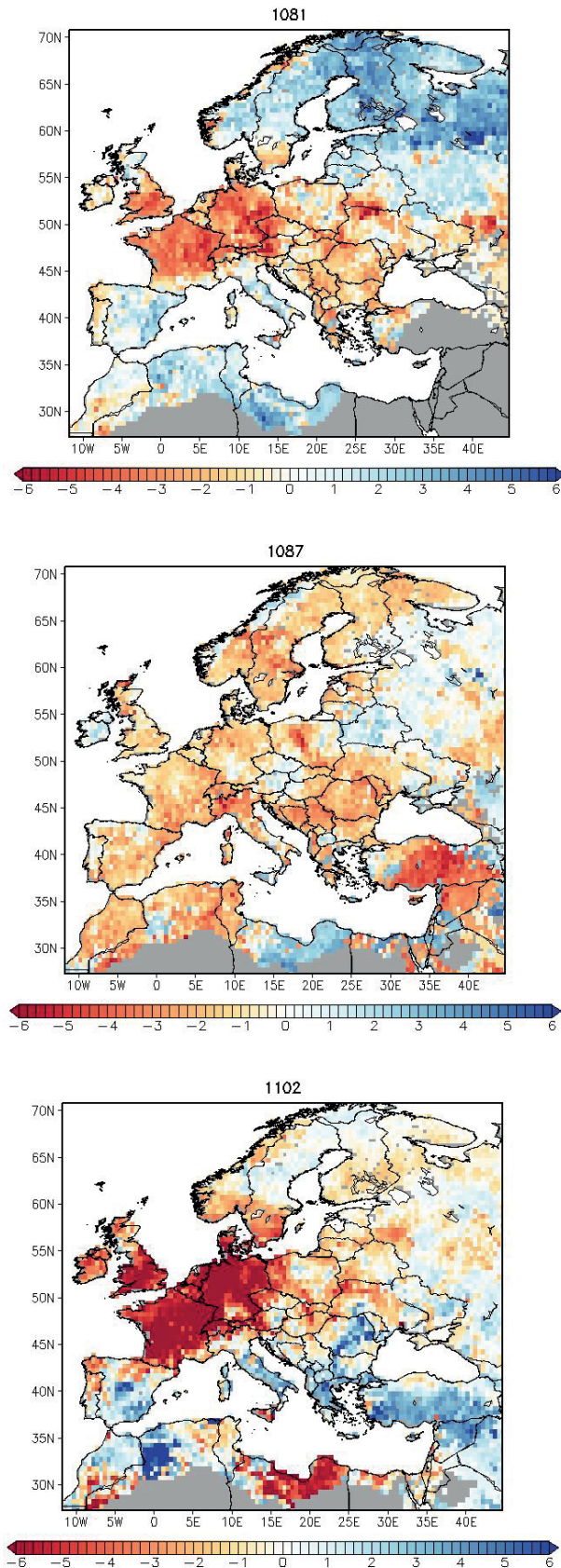


Figure 10: Examples of summer droughts before, during and after Oluf Hunger's reign. No significant fluctuations are detectable until 1102, a few years after the death of Oluf when the summer was arid. Illustrations generated from the Old World Drought Atlas, [drought.memphis.edu/OWDA/](http://drought.memphis.edu/OWDA/)

thus: "At length, he entered into the way of all flesh, and his body was covered over with a famous tablet of stone that enclosed it" (Young this volume: 8). The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle states that Cnut the Great was buried in Winchester in Old Minster but provides no details of his grave monument (Whitelock 1961: 102). The phrasing that the stone tablet covered and enclosed the body suggests a high-rise monument rather than just a flat grave marker. Found in the 1960s in the eastern remains of the Anglo-Saxon Cathedral in Winchester, is a preserved block of limestone with a unique carved eleventh-century relief that had formed part of a longer depiction (Figure 11). The damaged relief depicts a scene from the Sigmund legend and is ascribed to the Anglo-Danish court of Cnut the Great and believed to originate from the tomb of Cnut the Great (Thomson 2022: 252). If the relief had been part of a very long mural frieze in the east part of the church, as suggested by Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle (2016: 216-217),<sup>18</sup> it would certainly have "enclosed" Cnut's grave (as well as the subsequent royal graves of Cnut's dynasty). The wording in *Passio II*, however, seems to suggest a sort of stone sarcophagus, and the relief could very well have formed part of the exterior decoration of that monument. Deducting from the motifs on the block, the total relief could have been approx. 2.6 m in length and possibly 1.4 m high (Biddle and Kjølbye-Biddle 2016: 215-216), which is not unrealistic for one of the sides of a royal sarcophagus. Whether the tablet was a frieze or a



Figure 11: Early eleventh-century limestone relief depicting a scene from the Sigmund legend. Found archaeologically in 1965. The fragment measures 69,5x52x27 cm. Photo: BabelStone, 2022.



sarcophagus, the monument must have been an attraction at Winchester, and it is likely this monument that *Passio II* refers to as “famous”, even though it was long gone by the time *Passio II* was written, with the Old Minster being demolished c. 1093. This example illustrates that *Passio II* can be expected to contain reliable information about tangible structures – even of structures that the author could never have seen. This again indicates that the author had access to information that is now lost to us.

For the study of the churches of St. Alban and St Cnut in Odense, *Passio II* has a unique and very informative paragraph, VII:2: “For it was a monastery made of wood, consecrated in honour of St Alban, in which at that time was the episcopal seat, which was afterwards translated to the monastery of the blessed Cnut, whose feast we celebrate today, a distinguished building made of brick” (Young this volume: 12). The paragraph is inserted into the text almost spontaneously, providing matter-of-fact information in the otherwise dramatic account of the assassins’ attack on the church where King Cnut is kneeling in prayer. The mention of St. Alban Church serving as the bishop’s seat at the time of King Cnut’s assassination is unique information that the author cannot have lifted from Aelnoth or other preserved texts of the Odense literature. The author likely picked up this information on his visit to Odense through oral tradition or unpreserved documents. One can imagine the author questioning the relationship between the adjoining churches that he would have witnessed in Odense and how he would have added this information either for clarification or to showcase his knowledge. The inclusion of this local information strengthens the assumption that the author was indeed present in Odense when composing his text.

In their linguistic and historical approach to *Passio II* and other Odense texts, Olrik, Schmeidler, and Geertz did not consult archaeological evidence. In part for obvious reasons: The medieval church of St. Alban was demolished around 1540, and its precise location had been forgotten over time. In fact, in the second part of the nineteenth century, there was uncertainty as to whether St. Cnut’s Church simply replaced St. Alban’s Church on the same site, even though medieval sources clearly distinguish them as separate churches. Only in 1886, a targeted archaeological excavation in Alban’s Square in Odense identified the location of St. Alban’s Church. However, this investigation only uncovered parts of the medieval stone church and did not provide evidence for the wooden church mentioned in *Passio II*. The wooden church could, therefore, still be considered a possible fictional creation well into the twentieth century.

A series of excavation campaigns from 1980 to 1983 eventually provided archaeological evidence of a wooden precursor to the later medieval stone church of St. Alban (Arentoft 1985: 8–9; Haase 2022) (Figure 12). Consequently, Albrechtsen included archaeological footnotes in his 1984 translation of Aelnoth’s text (e.g. Albrechtsen 1984: 172f). The archaeological findings confirm the existence of



Figure 12. Postholes from the eleventh-century St Alban wooden church during excavation. Photo: Eskil Arentoft, 1983.

the wooden church mentioned in *Passio II* and highlight the relevance of the physical details in the medieval text, emphasising their importance for understanding the archaeology of medieval Odense.

A comprehensive study of all available sources concerning St. Alban’s Church was published around 2000 by the National Museum of Denmark as part of the monumental series *Churches of Denmark (Danmarks Kirker)*. The work discusses the monastery and bishop’s seat at St. Alban’s but concludes that no archaeological evidence supports any of the proposed theories (Danmarks Kirker IX:3: 1730). Nonetheless, in 2015, physical evidence to support the theory that St. Alban’s Church was the first cathedral in Odense was uncovered. Within the subterranean remains of the church, a well-preserved late eleventh-century sarcophagus was found (Figure 13). The sarcophagus, constructed from travertine blocks, contained the skeleton of a man with a silver eucharistic set. Similar sets are found in archiepiscopal graves in Bremen from the late eleventh to early twelfth century (Bjerregaard 2017: 36ff.), and there is little doubt that the grave in St. Alban’s belonged to a bishop who died in the latter half of the eleventh century (Christensen and Hansen 2017: 18 ff.). Bishops were often, but not exclusively, interred inside the cathedral in which they resided. In the “mother cathedral” in Bremen, the grave of archbishop Unni (\*936) was the first recorded of many archbishops’ graves. Written sources account for eleventh-century bishop graves in Lund (Bernhard – o. 1020 – ), Ribe (Odinkar \*1043), and Roskilde (Vilhelm \*1047). On the other hand, the grave of the Schleswig bishop, Rudolf (\*1047), has been uncovered in St. Kunibert’s Church in Cologne, and there are several other examples from the twelfth and thirteenth century of Da-





Figure 13: Eleventh-century bishop's grave excavated within the demolished St. Alban's Church, Odense. Top: the grave before opening. Bottom: In the open grave the eucharistic set is visible by the individual's right hand. Photos: Museum Odense, 2015.

nish bishops being buried in monastic churches to which they had a specific affiliation (Johansen 2017: 84ff.).

Thus, the archaeological evidence supports the existence of the wooden church and, very likely, the bishop's seat mentioned in *Passio II*. Although bishop graves were not exclusively restricted to cathedrals, the uncovering of the travertine grave predating the assassination of King Cnut is probably as significant as it gets in terms of archaeological support of the claim in *Passio II*. The travertine grave found in 2015 also sheds new light on a partly preserved grave that was discovered in 1917 in the St. Alban Church site only a few meters to the west of the bishop's grave (Arentoft 1985: 49). That grave was also built of travertine blocks and signalled a very high status. The newly found bishop's grave suggests that this could also have been a bishop's grave and that St. Alban's Church held a significant status (e.g. episcopal) over an extended period of time.

In Chapter VI:10, *Passio II* describes how St. Alban's Church's "holy pavement was consecrated with the outpouring of the blood of the holy martyrs". The blood-stained pavement is probably no more than a narrative choice from the author. Being distant in time from the event and the original St. Alban's Church, it cannot be considered firsthand evidence. The church in question would have been long gone, and no other sources mention a tile floor. Indeed, Aelnoth, who is closer in time to the events, notes in Chapter 32 that King Cnut is elevated from the *clay floor* of the church for his translation (Gertz 1908-1912: 129, Albrechtsen 1984: 98). While a dirt floor may seem more plausible for an eleventh-century wooden church, *Passio II* may inadvertently reflect historical accuracy in suggesting a tiled floor. The aforementioned travertine sarcophagus was floored with cut travertine tiles that did not align in size precisely with the construction and likely had a different original purpose, such as use as floor tiles in a church, even though the building itself was a wooden construction (Figure 14). Although the bishop's grave, in all likelihood, predates Cnut's death, these findings show that the blood of Cnut and his men could indeed have stained similar tiles, as suggested in *Passio II*.

The unique assertion in *Passio II* that St. Alban's served as a monastery at King Cnut's time remains unverified archaeologically despite numerous campaigns in the, unfortunately, densely developed area surrounding St. Alban's Church. However, the discovery of the bishop's grave lends some support to this claim. Francis Young notes that the Latin term *monasterium* can also be translated as "minster". At this time, a minster constituted a monastic institution that upheld an important religious position as opposed to a cathedral chapter of secular canons, who held the ecclesiastical authority. Evidently, in preparations for Cnut's official papal consecration, Benedictine monks were summoned from Evesham Abbey in Worcestershire to form a monastic community and oversee Cnut's Cult in St. Cnut's Church, thus creating a minster in the English tradi-





Figure 14. The travertine tiles at the bottom of the sarcophagus do not fit the construction's measures entirely. Photo: Museum Odense, 2015.

tion. Some years later, the monks also attained the status of a cathedral chapter. This structure was also prevalent in the early organisation of the chapters in Ribe and Børglum (Kristensen and Poulsen 2016: 87), but only in Odense did it prevail until the reformation (Danmarks Kirker IX:1: 66, 76). It is conceivable that a similar monastic arrangement centred around St. Alban's Church may have existed in Odense already at the time of King Cnut IV in the latter eleventh century. This is also the conclusion of Tore Nyberg who puts further emphasis on the conglomeration of the episcopal see and a monastic institution at St. Alban's by referring to the Odense Bishop Eilbert (\*1072) as "a man with irrefutably monastic inclinations" (2000: 54, 63; Ciardi 2016: 28). Esmark (2010) largely rejects the notion of a cathedral chapter in St Alban's Church during Cnut's time, primarily because there is no evidence of a bishop operating in more than name in Odense until after Cnut's elevation. However, the exhumed bishop's grave mentioned above confirms a bishop's presence in Odense in the eleventh century. Therefore, the clergy mentioned in *Passio II*'s Chapter VIII:1 could refer to a minster community of English construction. There was a significant ecclesiastical influence from the British Isles in eleventh-century Denmark. Odense supposedly had an English bishop around 1030 (Lund 2000: 116-118; Nyberg 2000: 52),<sup>19</sup> and King Cnut himself is said to have brought the relics of St. Alban and St. Oswald from England to the Odense Church (Gertz

1908-1912: 69). Whether *Passio II* projects a later monastic scenario at St. Cnut's Church back onto St. Alban's Church of the late eleventh century remains to be clarified, but the author might be onto something and might have had access to relevant information, now lost, when he was in Odense. At present, however, neither written nor archaeological evidence is available to support the hypothesis of a monastery further.

## Conclusion

In this paper, I evaluated the medieval manuscript *Passio Sancti Kanuti regis et martiris* (*Passio II*) as a valuable historical source of tangible objects, structures and landscapes around the time of King Cnut IV's death. For several reasons, past generations of historians have deemed the manuscript to be of little value: it was considered an unoriginal work - merely a compilation or abbreviation of Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni Regis et Filiorum eius et Passio Glorissimi Canuti Regis et Martyris*; it was temporally further removed from the events than other medieval manuscripts concerning Cnut the IV; and its hagiographic genre was viewed tendentious and dubious as a factual source of actual historical occurrences. This study offers a new reading of the *Passio II*, focusing not on historical or religious aspects but on the text's validity from archaeological,

topographical and meteorological perspectives. From this viewpoint, *Passio II* contains several passages of unique information that make it an essential historical document in its own right. Some tangible details mentioned in the text can now be corroborated through archaeological evidence unavailable when the manuscript was discovered in 1911. Examples included:

- The eleventh-century wooden St Alban's church in Odense excavated in the 1980s
- The information that St Alban's Church was the bishop's seat in Cnut's time, affirmed by the discovery of an eleventh-century bishop's grave found in 2015
- The so-called Sigmund's Stone from Winchester Old Minster, which likely comes from the "famous stone tablet"-monument around the grave of Cnut the Great.

The author of *Passio II* also appears well-versed in Danish geography and clarifies information found in other sources, such as Aelnoth's hagiography. Due to the author's general knowledge, the claim that Humlum in the Limfjord was the assembly point for Cnut's war fleet in 1085 can be considered credible. While topographical observations support the claim, archaeological evidence has yet to confirm it.

These examples demonstrate that many details in *Passio II* are credible, suggesting that some details currently lacking archaeological corroboration may also be accurate. Additionally, based on the building archaeology of St. Cnut's Church, this paper argues that *Passio II* does not date from the thirteenth century as commonly believed but is more likely from the fourteenth or even early fifteenth century.

Given the overall reliability of the tangible descriptions in *Passio II*, further studies into these details would be of great interest. For example, archaeological excavations at Humlum Harbour for possible traces of a late eleventh-century landing place would be very welcome. Another subject worthy of investigation is a climatological study of the evidence behind the alleged extreme weather conditions and subsequent famine in Denmark during the reign of King Oluf. Written sources supporting the factual hardships of the Danes around 1086-1095 are scarce, probably tendentious, and inconclusive. An interdisciplinary study combining archaeology and climatology could clarify historical events where the written sources cast a blur.

This paper demonstrates that revisiting medieval hagiographic sources through the lens of archaeology or other disciplines can yield new information and insight.

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Coin from the reign of Cnut IV. Minted in Slagelse. Photo courtesy of Museum Odense.

# Cnut the Holy's popular coin National currency or votive offering?

by Thomas Guntzelnick Poulsen

## Introduction

The late eleventh century in Denmark was a period of unrest and upheaval between the Viking Age and the Middle Ages. The country changed mentally and physically to such an extent that a person living at the start of the century, would probably not have been able to recognise the country a century later. The numerous changes also encompassed the country's monetary system. Coins had been minted in Denmark since the eighth century, but the Danish coins circulated alongside a large number of foreign coins and were primarily used according to their weight rather than their face value. This changed in the second half of the eleventh century as Danish coins began to dominate the coin circulation.

As we know, all beginnings are difficult, and it was one thing to exclude foreign coins from circulation but something else entirely to convince the general public to accept the new royal monopoly on coins. Thus, the widespread use of coins for everyday transactions still lay more than 100 years into the future (Poulsen 2023). There are several reasons for this, amongst others it is not certain that the Crown had the capacity in the beginning to implement the use of coins for everyday usage. Traces of such use, in the form of single-found coins, are scarce. A few coin types from the late eleventh and early twelfth century seem, however, to have been particularly popular, and especially one Scanian coin type from the reign of Cnut the Holy stands out significantly from its contemporaries. It has been found in a very large number, and its find distribution pattern differs significantly from other coins of the period. This suggests that this coin may have had a different use than just as currency. The article proposes that this other function might have been as a pilgrim badge for Cnut the Holy.

## Svend Estridsen's coin reform

The most important prerequisite that enabled the Crown to administer and regulate the circulation of coins in Denmark was its monopoly on coinage. Dating of the existence of this monopoly needs to be based on coin finds as it is not mentioned in contemporary written records.

Already with Harald Bluetooth's 'cross' coin from Haithabu (Hedeby) (ca. 975-985), Denmark was on its way to a national currency (Moesgaard 2015a). At the same time, the amount of minted silver in hoards surpassed that

of non-minted silver – such as ingots and jewellery (von Heine 2004: 72). This was despite the fact that royal control of the circulating coinage was still limited, and foreign coins continued to be well-represented in the hoards from that time. However, single-found coins from several towns indicates that a certain degree of monopoly had been introduced in these areas (von Heine 2004: 156).

Not before the second half of the eleventh century did the number of Danish coins supersede foreign coins in hoards. This development coincided with several other changes, such as a decrease in the number of different motifs on the coins, meaningful and legible inscriptions, as well as a general reduction in the diameter of the coins (Poulsen 2016: 118). These changes were initially interpreted as an actual coinage reform, attributed to Harald Hen (Erslev 1875: 181), but later research suggested that the reform of the Danish monetary system took place somewhat earlier, during the reign of Svend Estridsen (Rasmussen 1957: 248). This theory is widely accepted today, given that the most significant reduction in the number of foreign coins discovered in hoards is from the second half of Svend Estridsen's reign (Moesgaard 2018: 208).<sup>1</sup> Svend Estridsen's runic coins from the same period may be connected to these changes because the runes made them easier to distinguish from the foreign coins and also provided a distinct national expression (Jensen 1995: 19-20 and 82-84). A similar development occurred at the same time in Norway, where Harald III managed to supplant foreign coins and implement a monopoly on coinage (Gullbekk 2003: 30, 63). The development could be seen as a more general Nordic phenomenon, which occurred at the same time as an overall extension of royal power – such as the implementation of fines and peace bargains, authority over forests and waters, as well as, in a more indirect way, the introduction of feudalism (Andrén 1985: 78).

The Crown benefitted from its monopoly on the circulating coin because other currencies had to be exchanged for the royal coin, which, like today, wasn't a free service. Greater control over the coinage resulted in increased profits from currency exchange. A significant additional income could be gained with the implementation of *renovatio monetæ*, by which new coins were issued at varying intervals, and the country's population had to exchange existing currency for this new coin while incurring a fee. In early medieval society, when fixed taxes were still not introduced, the revenue from *renovatio monetæ* was a significant part of the royal income.

Exactly when an efficient *renovatio monetae* system was first implemented in Denmark has divided numismatists and historians alike since the topic was first addressed. Like many other occurrences, it is only mentioned in written records much later, so indications of its beginning must be looked for in the coin finds themselves.

An efficient *renovatio monetae* system is most easily identified in the form of a "pure hoard", in other words, a hoard with just one kind of coin. This does, however, represent an ideal situation. Instead, most often, one coin type will completely dominate the hoard. The period's small number of hoards makes it challenging to determine the extent of *renovatio monetae* during the period in question. As mentioned, the subject has been widely debated, but regarding medieval Denmark, it seems that *renovatio monetae* was implemented in Scania and Jutland during the reign of Cnut the Holy. On Zealand, on the other hand, there is insufficient evidence to prove that *renovatio monetae* was implemented before the early twelfth century (Poulsen 2023: 70; Moesgaard 2019).

In practice, the system probably functioned as a gradual exchange within a short span of time. The administrative system of the time was far from refined enough to be able to exchange all the country's coinage simultaneously. An essential prerequisite for a successful exchange was that the Crown needed to have enough silver available for the production of new coins to commence. When older coins were exchanged, they could be melted down and included in the production of new coins. In this way, it would have benefitted the Crown that the coins were exchanged gradually. To give the population sufficient incitement to exchange their outdated coins, the Crown probably required taxes and charges to be paid in new currency. This presumption is supported in later written sources that mention amounts to be paid in "new coinage" (Grinder-Hansen 2000: 69-70, 238; Moesgaard 2018: 221).

*Renovation monetae* was not, however, always well-received by the public. As mentioned, it was introduced to Zealand later than in Jutland and Scania, but it also seems that people in Jutland were exceedingly enraged when Cnut the Holy tried to implement *renovatio monetae* to finance his planned invasion of England (Poulsen 2019: 56-57). Aelnoth's *Gesta Swenomagni* describes how Cnut's royal "ombudsmen and bailiffs inflated the value of the mark and gave an *øre* almost the same value as an *ørtug* (Albrechtsen 1984: 58). A medieval *ørtug* should have been worth three *øre*. The passage is included as part of the grievances about Cnut's reign. It shows that the population was very aware that *renovatio monetae* and weight reduction were extra taxes imposed by the king.<sup>2</sup>

## Regional coinage

The production of Denmark's coins through the

Middle Ages was spread across several regional areas. These areas were Scania (including Bornholm), Zealand, and Jutland (including Funen). Jutland was additionally divided into smaller areas: Northern Jutland, Southern Jutland, and the Ribe area. The process of implementing a regional coinage system progressed at slightly different paces in the individual regions. Still, it seemed to have been completed by the late eleventh century and early twelfth century (Jensen 1996; Poulsen 2023: 55).

To implement a regional coinage system, it was important that the coins showed a clear regional affiliation through motif and/or inscription. Some early attempts at this can be seen during the reign of Svend Estridsen, and it becomes evident during the reign of his successor, Harald Hen, with the implementation of coin types SK1 and SJ1 in Scania and Zealand, respectively (Poulsen 2016: 174). The inscriptions on the coins indicate where they were minted, and the motifs made the coins easily recognisable for non-literate people. Both motifs, but especially that on the SJ1, were used on several coin types in the late eleventh century. This practice continued but gradually declined until around the mid-twelfth century, when there was no longer much difference in how the regions were visually represented (Poulsen 2023: 111). This development can be interpreted as an expression of a much greater acceptance of and trust in the royal coin in the population.

It is thought that the placement of the royal mints was linked to the country's administrative divisions into separate regions. This division of the country into various administrative regions, with their own laws and thingsteads (local courts), has its roots far back in time. Linking the production of coins with the country's administrative system also connects the minting of coins to the royal power base and economy and associated royal interests (Andrén 1983: 43). It has been suggested that in Norway, there was a similar association with the royal presence in the form of a royal estate and the placement of mints in all the known minting towns (Ramberg 2017: 159). The connection between the royal administrative system and the mints



Figure 1: Harald Hen's earliest coins – SK1 from Scania and SJ1 from Zealand.



meant that regional coinage, in several instances, has been regarded as an administrative tool, and it has often been suggested that coins had to be exchanged when travelling between regions (Moesgaard 2008: 147). It is, however, still uncertain what the exact reason was for the placement of the mints, and the earliest reference to regional coinage is found in Archbishop Absalon's will from 1201 (*Diplomatarium Danicum* rk. I vol. 4, no. 32). Because, as in the case of the monopoly on coinage, there is no mention of the implementation of regional coinage in the written records, coin finds give the most accurate picture of the extent to which coins circulated in their region of origin and whether there was an actual law enforced interregional coin exchange.

	Scania	Zealand	Jutland
<b>Scanian types</b>	30	7	7
<b>Zealandic types</b>	2	8	1
<b>Jutlandic types</b>	0	0	4
<b>Total</b>	32	15	12

Figure 2: Single found coins from 1074-1103, categorised according to the region of origin and provenance in absolute numbers and percentage. (Poulsen 2016).

The circumstances surrounding the accidental loss of individual coins and the deposition of hoards are very different; therefore, hoards are not included in Figure 2. As shown in the geographical distribution of single coin finds from 1074-1103, the regional coin types overwhelmingly dominate the find material of their region of origin. There are very few coin finds from this period in Danish history, so the numbers should be treated with some reservations, especially regarding the data from Jutland, which is particularly scant. Compared with the larger and more statistically robust material covering the period 1074-1234, the same tendencies are apparent, although the material from 1074-1234 shows even more clearly how the regional coin types dominate in their place of origin. That is, however, to be expected, as the period 1074-1103 constitutes the earliest part of the implementation of regional coinage. Even so, the material suggest that regional coinage was well-established and functional at the close of the eleventh century.

	Scania	Zealand	Jutland
<b>Scanian types</b>	356 (89%)	17 (6%)	2 (1%)
<b>Zealandic types</b>	38 (9%)	258 (88%)	28 (9%)
<b>Jutlandic types</b>	7 (2%)	17 (6%)	289 (90%)
<b>Total</b>	401	292	319

Figure 3: Single-found coins from the period 1074-1234 categorised according to the region of origin and provenance in absolute numbers and percentages. (Poulsen 2023 55 figure 8)

A similar picture appears when looking at the distribution of Danish coin types in coin hoards. Figure 4 shows

that the contents of the hoards are also dominated by coin types that originated in the region where the hoard was deposited. Zealand, however, stands out from the other two regions due to the Egelev Hoard from Falster. The Egelev Hoard comprises a very large number of coin types, of which a significant number originate in Scania, as well as a very large number of several older coin types. The Egelev Hoard is currently an exception, even though the Holsteinborg Hoard, found on South Zealand, shares many of the same features. Unfortunately, the full contents of the Holsteinborg Hoard are unknown, as it was sold after discovery (Poulsen 2016: 123-124). From what is known about the hoard, it is apparent that coins from Lund and older coin types were also a large part of its composition. In this way, these two hoards indicate that older and non-Zealandic coins circulated on Zealand in the late eleventh century. It is still too early to draw a radical conclusion, but, as mentioned earlier, the hoards also indicate that *renovatio monetæ* was successfully implemented on Zealand later than in Jutland and Scania (Moesgaard 2019).

Figures 2 and 3 show that regional coinage was established in the late eleventh century. It is also apparent that the system was not yet as well-established as later in the twelfth and early thirteenth century. Furthermore, it is evident that there was some degree of circulation of coins outside their region of origin both in the late eleventh century and in later periods. However, it would be an overreach to argue, based on the evidence from the finds, that regional divisions included a prohibition on using coins outside their respective regions. The population would just have had to have considered the costs of the exchange rate (Grinder-Hansen 2000: 239). What it does show is that regional coins, to a prevailing degree, dominated the circulating coinage in their region of origin.

The explanation for why significantly different motifs and various administrative laws for coin exchange were at all utilised should again be looked for in the connection between the royal administrative system and the mints. When mixed hoards with large shares of foreign coins are found even late in this period in both Blekinge and Bornholm, it is a clear indication that these regions were still not closely connected to the royal administrative system, among other things, by not having their own mint (von Heine 2004: 151-152). This shows that the mints were an essential part of the royal administration, and their function was not only of a practical nature.

## Everyday circulation in the late eleventh century

As established above, regional coinage, the royal monopoly on coinage, and *renovatio monetæ* were, by and large, implemented by the close of the eleventh century. But how did the general public receive all this? A successful implementation of the royal administrative initiatives was not

Dated	Find	Region	Number of Danish types	Number of regional types	Share of regional coins %
1074	<b>Löddeköpinge</b>	Scania	?	1	?
1082	<b>Holsteinborg</b>	Zealand	4	2	?
1082	<b>Skt. Laurentius</b>	Scania	1	1	100%
1085	<b>Danelund</b>	Jutland	4	3	98%
1085	<b>Jegstrup</b>	Jutland	1	1	100%
1085	<b>Øster Bjerregrav</b>	Jutland	1	1	100%
1089	<b>Fuglie Kyrka</b>	Scania	1	1	100%
1090	<b>Egelev</b>	Zealand	19	9	38%
1095	<b>Skt. Mårten Lund</b>	Scania	2	2	100%
1100	<b>Lund</b>	Scania	1	1	100%
1100	<b>Lundby Krat</b>	Jutland	4	1	92%

Figure 4: Known coin hoards deposited in the period 1074-1103. The table shows the number of Danish coin types contained in the hoards, the number of coin types that originate in the region in which the hoard was buried, and the percentage of the hoard's Danish coins that originate from the region in which the hoard was buried.

synonymous with increased use of coins, as the initiatives themselves did not influence the activity level. An increase in activity required the support of the public, expressed through an increase in the use of coins in more and more transactions. The extent of this can be determined in several ways, but the method used here is the coin loss frequency as a measure of coin usage since that method can easily be applied to the material without many extra considerations or calculations (Rigold 1977; Blackburn 1989). The loss frequency is calculated by dividing the number of coin finds by the estimated circulation time of the coin. This accounts for the fact that coins which have circulated for a long time will also have a higher number of losses.

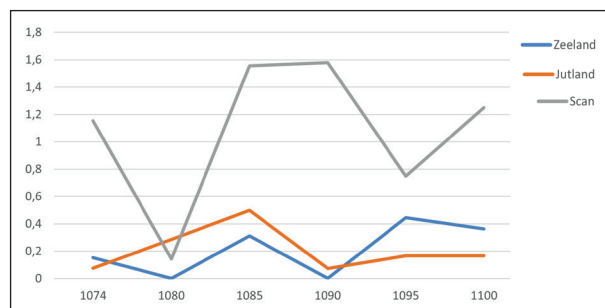


Figure 5: Coin loss rate for each region in Denmark calculated in 5-year periods. The data used for Figure 5 is presented in Appendix 1.

Ideally, the loss frequency for each coin type ought to be calculated individually but as mentioned, Denmark was divided into three regions, each with its own coin, which makes it difficult to compare the regions directly, particularly because a varying number of coin types were minted by each king in each region. Instead, the period from 1074-1103 has been divided into five-year intervals. With intervals this short, the individual coin finds can be ascribed more easily to each timespan. The number of finds, estimated circulation time, and loss frequency for each in-

dividual coin type from the researched periods are listed in Appendix 1.

As mentioned previously, this was a period with notably few single-found coins, and the loss frequency analysis should, therefore, be regarded with caution. Even so, the analysis shows that the loss frequency for the Scanian coins is significantly higher than for the Jutlandic and Zealandic coins. The geographical distribution of single-found coins in Figure 2 shows that the Scanian coin types mostly circulated in Scania. This means that a higher loss frequency of Scanian coins cannot be explained by Scanian coins having a larger circulation area but instead indicates that the level of monetisation in Scania was higher than in the rest of Denmark. Consistent with this, the loss frequency analysis also shows that the activity level varied considerably in all three regions. This could indicate that certain coin types had a longer circulation time than suggested by the hoard finds. As mentioned above, the hoards suggest that Cnut the Holy managed to implement *renovatio monetae* in Scania and Jutland. However, the large variation in loss frequency shows that the implementation was not necessarily entirely consistent and that some coin types continued circulating in ordinary everyday transactions after new types were introduced.

## A particularly popular coin

Especially from the reign of Cnut the Holy, there are coin types with a very high loss frequency. This is true for all three regions, but especially for Scania. There is one particular coin type that stands out and deserves closer inspection: Cnut the Holy's Scania type SK3. This coin type is found in 14 copies, which is an extraordinarily high number for this period. It constitutes almost a quarter of the combined single finds for the entire period 1074-1103. A coin from the reign of Olaf Hunger also has a high loss frequency: SK4.2 from Lund, but this high loss frequency

is just as much due to the coin's short circulation time (far shorter than that of Cnut the Holy's SK3 coin), as its high number of coin finds.



Figure 6: SK3.a from Lund, dated 1082-1084. This coin was also minted in Tommarp, Borgeby and Nordby (The latter is an unknown town name).

The coin's motifs are relatively simple. On the obverse is a central cross surrounded by four small arches and the inscription CNVT REX DANOR, or a variation of this. The reverse also has a central cross and an inscription of the moneyer's name and the town where it was minted. The coin was minted in several Scanian towns: Lund (L or a variation), Tommarp (TV), Borgeby (BVRHI), and Nordby (NORPI). The vast majority, however, were from Lund, and there are no known provenance-determined coins from any of the other three minting towns. A very large number of moneyers are associated with this coin type. At least 42 are known, even taking into consideration the different spellings of the same name, but this is based solely on examples where provenance has been determined, and from published materials (Poulsen 2016: 160-162). No die studies have been conducted on this coin type, but the number of known moneyers alone indicates that the coin was struck in very large numbers.

The SK3 coin type stands out not just because of the large number of single-found coins and a high loss frequency. It is also distinct because of the distribution of coin finds. As mentioned, the coins from this period circulated mainly within their region of origin. SK3, however, is also found outside of Scania. In fact, half of the single-found coins are from Jutland and Zealand, which makes it remarkably different from the other Scanian coins.

During the reign of Cnut the Holy, there are cautious signs of an attempt at a short-term unified coinage between Scania and Zealand in the form of the popular Zealandic SJ1 series and the Scanian SK2 type (Poulsen 2016: 160). There are several signs that Cnut the Holy may have wanted to put an end to regional coinage. Generally, it seems that Cnut the Holy had a significant interest in the monetary system and the possibilities it offered the Crown

(Poulsen 2019: 58). The distribution of SK3, however, follows a different pattern: it was a solely Scanian coin that appears to have enjoyed nationwide popularity.

As previously mentioned, there are very few coin finds from this period, and consequently it can be difficult to argue with precision about the distribution of the individual coin types. Looking at the overall find distribution of the late eleventh century, it is obvious that the majority of single-found coins are found in rural areas. This pattern, however, is under transformation, as the proportion of coin finds from urban areas (apart from occasional deviations during the reign of King Niels and the civil war period in the mid-twelfth century) increases as the Crown gradually success in concentrating coin-based transactions in the towns (Poulsen 2023: 106-107).

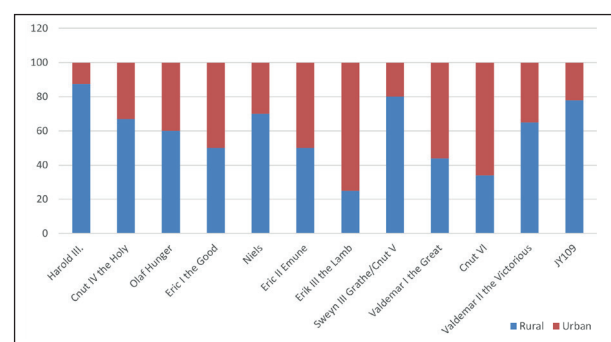


Figure 7: The distribution of single-found coins in percentage split between find categories rural and urban for the whole of Denmark in the period 1074-1241, categorised according to king and the coin type JY109 which circulated from 1234-1250 (Poulsen 2023: 107 figure 29).

Figure 7 shows that the SK3 coin circulated during a period when the majority of coin transactions occurred outside of towns. Consequently, the majority of single-found coins should also come from rural areas. This, however, is not the case, except for in Scania, where five of the seven single-found coins were discovered in rural areas and only two came from urban areas. Nationwide 67% of Cnut the Holy's single-found coins are from rural areas, which corresponds to the distribution of finds of SK3 in Scania.

In the rest of the country, the distribution of finds of SK3 is very different. On Zealand, there are two finds from urban areas, while an older third find is simply attributed to the island of Møn. From Jutland, all four finds are from urban areas - one from Ribe and three from Odense. While considering the small number of finds, it seems that SK3 was used in its region of origin like other coins of the time, but that it had a different function outside of Scania.

To explain what this function may have been, it is helpful to take a closer look at the circumstances of the individual coin finds (see Appendix 2). As mentioned, one of the

Zealandic finds is an old find from Møn (FP3386). Another was discovered with a metal detector in Tårnby, outside of Korsør (FP3987), and the last one came from the garden of St Mary's Hospital in Roskilde (FP1942). This coin is part of a larger collection of coins that were found individually by a gardener. Even though the sites where the last two coins were found are relatively well-documented, both coins were found in disturbed secondary deposits without any connection to other medieval contexts but the larger context of the medieval market town in which they were found. Therefore, none of the three Zealandic coin finds can help explain SK3's finds distribution pattern.

The Jutlandic finds are significantly more informative, as all four coins were found during archaeological excavations. The coin from Ribe comes from the Lindegården ASR 13 excavation. The site was a burial ground in the Viking Age but was a residential area in the late eleventh century, and the SK3 coin was found in a pit located south of the ditches that surrounded the graveyard. The pit is dated stratigraphically to the time around or just before 1100. One could, therefore, be led to believe that the coin was accidentally lost as part of the ordinary transaction in the town, but this is not the case. Before the coin was lost, it had been turned into a brooch. This is extremely interesting as it clearly shows that the coin had changed function - from monetary to ornamental.



Figure 8: Scanian SK3 coin found in a pit at the Lindegården ASR 13 excavation, X482.

The remaining three coins were all found in an excavation conducted by Museum Odense in the area between St Cnut's Cathedral and the Odense Town Hall (OBM 9785). The coins were found in a small trench just north of the now-demolished St Cnut's chapel, built in 1466 (Johannsen and Johannsen 1990: 134). The coins are, unfortunately without context as they were found in the heaps of earth from the trench with a metal detector.

The trench covered parts of the cemetery, and nine graves were registered in the small trench. There were no dated finds in the graves. The arm position was evenly distributed between positions A and B, but since this dating

method is very uncertain, it has not been possible to prove a connection between the coins and the graves. The very broad dating period for arm position A is especially problematic (Hyldgård 2016: 75). The only thing that can be known for sure is that the coins were found in a cemetery.

The location where they were found could suggest that the coins were deposited in a grave or were in some way part of a religious rite. This means that they no longer had a monetary function but instead should be regarded as religious objects. These kinds of coins are broadly described as votive coins (Grinder-Hansen 2000: 162). It can be difficult to precisely determine what makes a coin a votive coin, but coins that have been deposited in graves are unquestionably in this category (Blackburn 1989: 17). There are, of course, numerous examples of coins found in graveyards that aren't necessarily from a grave (Moesgaard 2006a: 238). Even so, there is a substantial probability that the coins were part of a ritual act, as votive coins, and it is quite possible that they, like the coin brooch from Ribe, had been demonetised.

While the three Zealandic coin finds did not provide more information about the SK3 coin's deviating find distribution pattern, the Jutlandic finds were more useful, as these coins had all clearly been demonetised. This, of course, is most obvious with the coin brooch from Ribe. The coins from Odense cannot with the same certainty be proven to have been demonetised, as they were found with a metal detector without a clear context and should be considered stray finds. Even so, the location of the find is extremely striking, particularly when considering that it is where Cnut the Holy was enshrined, and where worship of the Danish royal saint was centralised.

Altogether, there is much to suggest that the deviating find distribution pattern of the Scanian SK3 coin in Western Denmark indicates that the coins were no longer considered monetary objects, but rather votive coins likely associated with the worship of the royal saint, Cnut. The coin finds from Odense play a very important role here and it is therefore worth looking closer at this excavation to see if it can further support the hypothesis.

## St Cnut's Graveyard

The archaeological excavation mentioned above took place in two campaigns in Odense in 1998, in the area between St Cnut's Cathedral and the Town Hall (OBM 9784 and OBM 9785). The excavation primarily uncovered traces from the area's ecclesiastical institutions, since the graveyards of both St Alban and St Cnut churches covered the excavated area. St Alban's Church is the oldest of the two and is in the most recent research dated 978-1055 (Haase 2022: 31-39). The murder of Cnut the Holy took place in the successor to this early wooden church. St Cnut's Cathedral is first mentioned in 1139 (*Diplomatarium Danicum* rk. I vol.



3, no. 77), but Cnut the Holy's remains were moved to the crypt as early as 1095 (Albrectsen 1984: 97-98.). The first church was built of travertine, as revealed in the archaeological excavations in the surrounding area, in the form of thick layers of travertine rubble. The current Gothic church was constructed after the previous church burnt down in 1247 (Johannsen and Johannsen 1990: 134).

Despite the three coins being stray finds, their context can still tell us something about how they were used. The graveyard of St Cnut's Cathedral, where the coins were found, was also quite likely used for other purposes (Christensen 2019).<sup>3</sup> It distinguishes itself in several ways from the neighbouring graveyard of St Alban, even though the two are located right next to each other. For example, the burial density in St Cnut's graveyard is less than half that of St Alban's (Christensen 1999: 88). A previous explanation for this was that St Cnut's graveyard was a more exclusive area reserved for important people. But it could also be that the graveyard had other functions; for example, that it was used for ceremonies related to the worship of St Cnut (Johannsen & Johannsen 2001: 38). This suggestion is further supported by the fact that St Cnut's graveyard was extended in the late Middle Ages. In contrast, St Alban's graveyard was reduced in size (Christensen 2019: 98), despite – as already mentioned – that there were only half as many people buried at St Cnut's graveyard.

We know very little from the written records of how the anniversary of St Cnut's death or the enshrining of his remains were commemorated (Jexlev 1986). St Cnut was, however, a very popular saint, and his grave attracted large numbers of people. Much of the worship and processions must have taken place outside of the church in the graveyard, and it can be assumed that this has influenced the artefacts found in excavations. Since the excavation where the coins were found covered both St Alban and St Cnut's graveyards, the find material from the excavation is well suited to investigate whether the two graveyards did, in fact, have different functions.

To determine this, the head of excavation, Jacob Tue Christensen, studied pottery found in the two graveyards. His analysis shows that the amount of pottery in St Alban's graveyard was significantly greater around the boundary of the graveyard than near the church. At St Cnut's graveyard, on the other hand, the amount was consistent over the entire graveyard. The pottery's high degree of fragmentation shows that it was deposited directly on the graveyard and not first left on a rubbish heap. The proportion of cooking pots, tableware, and imported pottery was uniform at St Alban's graveyard and the part of St Cnut's graveyard that lay closest to the cathedral. On the boundary of St Cnut's graveyard, closest to the main entrance, the amount of tableware increased significantly.<sup>4</sup>

The pottery analysis supports the assumption that the graveyard at St Cnut's Cathedral was used differently

compared to the graveyard at St Alban's Church and possibly to a greater degree around the main entrance. These conclusions are extremely interesting in the interpretation of the three coins found close to the chancel of St Cnut's Cathedral. They increase the probability that artefacts from St Cnut's graveyard were used in ritual ceremonies and should, therefore, be looked at with fresh eyes. As mentioned earlier, coin finds from graveyards can generally be considered votive coins. Regarding the coins from St Cnut's graveyard, this is even more likely the case.

In total, 21 coins were found in the excavation (Appendix 3). The coin finds constitute a much smaller material than the pottery and are less suitable for a comparative distribution analysis. It is, however, worth examining how the coins are distributed across the two graveyards. Nine of the finds were from St Alban's. Two, however, were found by the graveyard wall, so it is unsure which graveyard they came from. Out of the nine coins, all except one could be identified or at least dated with certainty. The coins date from the eleventh to the sixteenth century. Most of them were Danish, and the two foreign coins registered came from periods when foreign coins circulated in Denmark. The coins are distributed relatively even across the 500-year period, which is the most noteworthy fact about the composition of the finds. Normally coins from the period around the late thirteenth century, the early fourteenth century, and the early fifteenth century are overrepresented in the find material, as coins from these periods were of low value and circulated in huge numbers (Märcher 2018: 288). These coins, therefore, also had a much higher loss frequency. Therefore, the composition of the finds further supports the assumption that coins found at the graveyard should not, or only with great reservations, be considered as monetary objects.

Twelve coins were found at St Cnut's graveyard, including the three SK3 coins. So, there was a larger number of coins found at St Cnut's graveyard, but with a timespan covering several hundred years, the difference should not be regarded as very significant. The coins date from the eleventh to the fourteenth century, with the youngest coin ascribed to the reign of Erik Menved, and all of the coins were Danish. Three of the coins could not be identified, and it is uncertain whether two of them were coins at all. Similar to the composition of coins from St Alban's graveyard, coins from the late twelfth century, the early fourteenth century, and the early fifteenth century were not overrepresented in the material.

When compared, the coin finds from the two graveyards resemble each other – if the three coins from Cnut the Holy are disregarded. The composition of coin finds from both graveyards is not what is usually expected to be found in an excavation in a medieval market town, and this indicates, as mentioned before, that the coins found at the two graveyards should not be considered monetary objects. The coin finds from St Cnut's graveyard stand out even more

due to the three Cnut the Holy's SK3 coins. Taking the period into account, this is an extremely high number, in that there are no other examples of coin finds from the period 1074-1103 with more than two examples found at the same locality, and even that would be extremely rare. The SK3 coins from St Cnut's graveyard could, of course, originate from a small hoard, but these sorts of items are only very seldomly deposited in graves. However, the phenomenon is not totally unheard of (Grinder-Hansen 1990: 152-155). With the material at hand, it is impossible to be certain.

## A pilgrim badge for Cnut the Holy

As established above, it seems likely that the SK3's deviating finds distribution pattern in Western Denmark came about because the coins were demonetised and repurposed as votive coins in the worship of Cnut the Holy. Similarly, the excavations at St Cnut's graveyard indicate that the graveyard was not only used as a burial site but likely also as a location for rituals associated with the worship of saint Cnut.

Votive coins are often discovered in churches, where they are found in large numbers when church floors are removed during renovation. The coins were offered at altars or donation boxes, as finds distributions from well-documented church floor excavations have shown (Klackenberg 1992: 35-38). This phenomenon is especially common in the Nordic countries, which can be explained by the widespread use of wooden floors in these countries as opposed to the more dominant stone floors in the rest of Christian Europe. In churches with wooden floors, a dropped coin could easily disappear between the cracks (Rensbro 2021; Gullbekk 2015: 240). Even though thousands of coins have been found in Scandinavian churches, the phenomenon was not widespread in the early Middle Ages. Of the 9,760 coins found in Norwegian churches from 1130-1320, only 18 were from 1130-1170 (Gullbekk 2015: 235). In Denmark, 341 coins from 1074-1241 were found in churches (Poulsen 2016, catalogue and Poulsen 2023, catalogue: 150). Of these, only 24 were from before 1134, and only three were from before 1100. This indicates that coin offerings were not yet ubiquitous, and even though the so-called church-floor coins are a slightly different phenomenon to coins offered at a saint's grave, it shows that the phenomenon of votive coins was still far from established with the general public.

Even though the worship of Cnut as a saint is well known, a pilgrim badge has never been associated with Cnut's shrine in Odense, not in modern times either. Could it be that Cnut the Holy's Scanian coin fulfilled this role after his death? The connection between coins and the divine was, at any rate, not unknown in medieval times. Augustin described people as *nummus Dei* (God's coins) because we are created in God's image (Travaini 2018: 174). This example by no means stands alone, and many examples of similar connections exist, also within non-Christian contexts (Travaini 2018).

Pilgrim badges are found in large quantities, in part thanks to the increasing popularity of metal detectors. On the other hand, not much is known about the production of pilgrim badges. Seven moulds found in Ribe show that it was the location for a large production of, amongst other things, pilgrim souvenirs. Five of these moulds were found very close to each other in the western end of Stenbogade, close to the Cathedral Square, in deposits dated to the thirteenth century (Søvsø, Jensen, and Neiss 2015: 206). Two of the moulds from Ribe have been used to produce religious items. One of them was used to produce small ampoules, while the other was used to make a hollow ball with a puncture-hole pattern. The ball probably held something fragrant or was used as a bell. These types of balls are known from similar finds and contemporary illustrations (Søvsø, Jensen & Neiss 2015: 222-228).

The moulds found in Stenbogade in Ribe are somewhat younger than the Scanian SK3 coins. Another find site, a bronze workshop from the same timeframe as SK3 also discovered near the cathedral, on the other hand, is not. The coin broach made from the SK3 coin was found in the same excavation, although it was found in a different deposit slightly younger than the workshop. The workshop produced large quantities of the Christian broach types that are found in large numbers today with metal detectors. A similar workshop from the same period as the one in Ribe was found at the Budolfi Church in Aalborg, where some remains from coin production were also found. The finds underline the close relationship between the Crown, church, coin production, handcrafts, trade, and the beginnings of urbanisation in the early Middle Ages (Søvsø and Vrængmose 2020: 24-25).

The circumstances of Ribe Cathedral and the Budolfi Church, in many ways resemble that of St Cnut's Cathedral in Odense, in that the area around the cathedrals had several purposes. Unlike Ribe and Aalborg, no traces of metal workshops have been found at St Cnut's Cathedral, but both the pottery analysis and the number of graves signify that the graveyard at St Cnut's Cathedral served as more than just a burial ground (Christensen 2019).

The pilgrim badge moulds found at the Cathedral Square in Ribe and the broaches produced at the bronze workshops in Ribe and Aalborg are, however, quite different from the SK3 coins. The SK3 coins were initially struck as coins and only later transitioned to serving as religious objects. They are, in this way, substantially different from pilgrim badges and ornaments with Christian motifs. Even so, the secondary, non-monetary use of coins is a far from unknown phenomenon. There are numerous examples of coins that have been turned into ornaments, either as broaches – as in the case of the SK3 coin from the ASR 13 excavation in Ribe, or with the attachment of a lug or by making a simple hole so the coin can be used as a pendant. Several kinds of pilgrim badges, including some from Ribe, also greatly resemble coins.

Evidence of coin production was also found at the bronze workshop in Aalborg, in the form of flat bands of silver and coin blanks, as well as a coin of Cnut the Holy's JY4.b coinage from Aalborg. A dendrochronological dating to 1082 supports the dating of this coin find (Søvsø and Vrångmose 2020: 21). Traces of minting were also found in Lund, where a sheet of lead was found at the site of a goldsmith's workshop; the stamp of one of Svend Estridsen's coins had been tried on the sheet (Cinthio 1999: 45). The finds from Aalborg and Lund show with great certainty that the production of coins and jewellery were closely related, perhaps even two sides of the same coin. Therefore, the change of function from coin to religious object was not necessarily a significant shift.



Figure 9: Coin-resembling pilgrim badges from Ribe. Søvsø and Knudsen 2018: 151 figures 14j-14l.

Approximately 200 Carolingian coins have been found in Scandinavia, around half of them in Denmark (Moesgaard 2015b: 88). It would be easy to regard these coins as a result of the Viking raids in France in the second half of the ninth century. Most of the coins, however, are from 793-840, so chronologically, most of the Carolingian coin finds do not fit with the Viking raids. A large number of the registered Carolingian coins were used as pendants. This means they had been demonetised, and the large number has led to the suggestion that they were used for diplomatic exchanges, including baptismal gifts (Moesgaard 2004; 2006; 2013). More recent finds from the port of call, Havsmarken, on the island of Ærø have, however, shown that some of the coins must also have been used as currency. They came to Denmark as currency – either imported intentionally or through international trade. The proportion of coins that have been turned into jewellery is, however, still quite large, and most of them were also found at high-status locations (Moesgaard 2015b: 90-91).

Most of the Carolingian coin finds are from one type of coinage from the reign of Louis the Pious (814-840). The obverse shows a centred cross with the emperor's name inscribed along the edge. The reverse shows a building with a cross and the inscription *Christiana Religio* (the Christian

religion) around it. The identity of the building has been much debated, but the cross and the inscription more than suggest that it could be a church. It was in this period that Ansgar was a missionary in the Nordic countries while travelling with Harald Klak back to Denmark after his baptism in 826. This coin type's evident Christian expression, in the form of the cross, the (presumed) church, as well as reference to the Christian religion made it an extremely useful communication tool for Ansgar in his missionary work. An explanation for its overrepresentation in the find material could, therefore, very well be that it was a baptismal gift for newly converted Norsemen (Moesgaard 2004; 2006; 2013). The close connection between coins and baptisms is well-recognised and goes all the way back to early Christian times. Coins found in basins used for baptisms used to be interpreted as a direct payment for baptisms. New research, however, shows that they should be regarded as *art ex voto* – where the relationship between the worshipper and the divine is emphasised (Perassi 2018), a relationship in which the coin's monetary function is irrelevant or, at least, of little importance.

In several ways, Louis the Pious's *Christiana Religio* coinage follows a pattern resembling that of Cnut the Holy's SK3 coin from Lund. Both coin types are overrepresented, just as their find distribution patterns deviate. Regarding motifs, the *Christiana Religio* coin, as already discussed, is a likely marker of Christianity. The SK3, at first glance, seems to be the least likely candidate among Cnut's coins in that, as opposed to most of his other coins, it does not feature his portrait (Poulsen 2016: 131-134, 144-146, 159-162). On the other hand, there is a cross on both the front and back sides of the coin, thus reinforcing the Christian design. A cross, however, can also seem a bit anonymous, particularly when considering that pilgrim badges are often either designed as a picture of the relevant saint or clearly refer to a shrine through the design of the badge. In this way, it has been suggested that the motifs on the reverse of Olaf Hunger and Erik Ejegods' Scanian SK6 coins are portraits of Cnut and his brother Benedict. These coins should be considered a political campaign for the canonisation of Cnut (Poulsen 2016: 165-166). The round, coin-like brooch from Ribe, which is regarded as a pilgrim badge, however, has just a cross in the middle (see Figure 9).

A significant reason why exactly this type of Cnut the Holy's coins ended up as pilgrim badges is that, as mentioned above, numerous copies were made. Apart from being minted in four different towns in Scania, there are also many more known moneyers than with any other of Cnut's coin types or with any other coin type from the period, for that matter. Without any detailed die study, it is difficult to determine the size of production of the SK3 coin accurately, but the number of known moneyers alone shows that production was much larger than any of Cnut's other coins and also larger than those of his predecessor Harald Hen and his successor Olaf Hunger (Poulsen 2016: 157-165).



Based on Zealandic hoards, it has been suggested that some especially popular coin types, despite the implementation of *renovatio monetae* during the reign of Cnut the Holy, could have continued to circulate longer than others (Moesgaard 2019; Poulsen 2023: 116-117). It is quite likely that many more of these coin types may have circulated in Denmark in the late eleventh century and would, therefore, have been easily accessible in large numbers.

However, the large production of this type of coin is not the most significant reason to suggest that it was used as a pilgrim badge for Cnut the Holy. The most significant reasons are the coin type's deviating find distribution pattern and the discovery of three copies at St Cnut's graveyard. Similarly, from the reign of Olaf Hunger comes a Scanian coin type that has been found in large numbers and has a high loss frequency, but it has mostly been found in Scania. There is also no evidence to suggest that the coin has been found in large numbers in urban areas (Poulsen 2016: 163 and 210). This coin type just confirms that more coins were minted in Scania than in Western Denmark and that the monetising process was more advanced in Scania. It also confirms that, despite the generally large volume of coins, only Cnut the Holy's SK3 coin spread beyond Scania.

As suggested above, much more is known about pilgrim badges than about their production. This is also the case for coins, and with Cnut the Holy's SK3 the use as a pilgrim badge in particular. No traces have been found from the production of this coin, let alone in its function as a pilgrim token, and no poorly produced SK3 coins have been registered. Inferior coins would probably be interpreted as an attempt at counterfeit, but they could just as well suggest a secondary production connected to pilgrim badges.

The most obvious explanation of how a potential production of pilgrim badges took place could be that older, non-exchanged coins were used. This is the only explanation that the data can support. It is this subsequent use of SK3 that caused the deviating find distribution pattern.

## Conclusion

So, how should Cnut the Holy's popular Scanian coin be interpreted? Was it a national coin – an early national currency that was able to cross the regional borders of contemporary coin circulation? There can, at any rate, be no doubt that Cnut entertained a great interest in the monetary system and that some of the motifs on coins produced during his reign could suggest a desire and attempt to create an interregional coin (Poulsen 2016: 160 and Poulsen 2019). The SK3 coin's distribution pattern also suggests that it was a coin with a nationwide circulation area, but it is essential to bear in mind that the find distribution pattern in the origin region of Scania substantially differs from the rest of the country. This difference is best explained by the

fact that the coin may have had different functions in Scania and Western Denmark. Presumably, there could also be some chronological differences with the finds, even though this can only be proven with the coin brooch found in Ribe.

An explanation for the coin's wide dispersal and deviating find distribution pattern could be that the coin has some connection to the worship of Cnut the Holy. A very compelling argument in this hypothesis is the large number of finds of SK3 coins at St Cnut's graveyard in Odense, as well as indications that the graveyard had a vital function connected to the worship of Cnut the Holy (Christensen 2019). The offering of coins at places of pilgrimage is a very well-described phenomenon. When pilgrims, after a gruelling and often dangerous journey, had reached their goal, they would, without a doubt, want to touch the saint's grave and strengthen their connection to the saint by offering something of themselves. Coins were perfect for this purpose, as they were small, durable, and carried a direct reference to the offeror by representing something from their region of origin (Travaini 2015: 215). This does not, however, seem to be entirely the case with the SK3 coin, as – apart from in Scania – it should then have been exclusively found at Cnut the Holy's graveyard in Odense. Unique to this coin type, on the contrary, is precisely its wide dispersal in Western Denmark, and that it is always found in urban environments in this region as opposed to the mostly rural environments in Scania.

Votive coins often have quite a low monetary value (Kelleher 2019: 77; Gullbeck 2015: 238; Ingvarsson 2010: 38). In the period examined in this article, just one denomination was used in Denmark, which makes it difficult to prove that more valuable coins were intentionally not used. Instead, it could be argued that the coin was demonetised and, therefore, of very little value. The Egelev Hoard, buried during the reign of Olaf Hunger, shows, however, that Cnut the Holy's coins, and especially the SK3 coin, continued to be regarded as objects of value after Cnut's death. Except for the SK3 coin find from Ribe, it is unclear when exactly the SK3 coin finds from Western Denmark were deposited. On the other hand, it is certain that the worship of Cnut the Holy began shortly after his death. Efforts to canonise Cnut probably started already during the reign of Olaf Hunger if the interpretation of the SK6 coin's reverse motif is correct (Poulsen 2016: 165-166). It is, at any rate, certain that he was canonised in 1100 and that his bones were placed in a shrine on the main altar in St Cnut's Cathedral (Johannsen & Johannsen 1990: 424). So, already very soon after Cnut's death, a cult of St Cnut emerged, to which the coins were connected. They were probably also still used as savings at the same time in other parts of the country.

This is, consequently, also why the possibility of the coin being used as a pilgrim badge has been suggested. It was not essential to choose a coin of low value, but it was important to choose an easily available coin. This is true for the SK3 coin which is evident both with the large number

of coin finds and high loss frequency rate as well as the evidence in hoard material of continued usage after the death of Cnut. As none of the coins, apart from the one from Ribe, show signs of being turned into ornaments or badges, it

is, naturally, difficult to prove with certainty that they were used as pilgrim tokens. The main proof that SK3 was used as a pilgrim token is, therefore, its wide dispersal combined with the deviating find distribution pattern.

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## End notes

- For a more in-depth discussion of implementation of the royal monopoly on coinage, see Poulsen 2023: 59-64.
- A similar claim against King Cnut's tax collectors is put forward in other words in Passio II: '[they] plundered those things appointed for taxation. They determined to pay a lamb for a penny, a sheep for a shilling, and a cow for a shilling and threepence in the king's census/tax survey' (translation by Francis Young).
- Much of the paragraph below has been taken from Christensen 2019, after Christensen directed this author's attention to it.
- Kirstine Haase has raised questions about this interpretation (Haase 2022: 113), but Christensen stands by his conclusion.

### Appendix 1

TGP no.	Circulation time	Number	Loss frequency
JY1.a-c	1074-1086	13	1
JY2	1080-1086	7	2
JY3	1080-1086	7	0
JY4.a-c		6	3
JY5		13,5	1
JY6		6	1
JY7.a-b		6	1
SJ1.1a-b	1074-1086	13	2
SJ2	1080-1086	7	0
SJ1.2a-d	1080-1095	16	5
SJ1.3a-c	1086-1110	15	0
SJ3.a-b	1095-1103	9	4
SJ4	1100-1110	11	4
SK1.1a-d	1074-1086	13	15
SK1.2	1080-1086	7	0
SK2	1080-1086	7	1
SK3.a-d	1082-1090	9	14
SK4.1	1084-1090	7	0
SK4.2		3,375	8
SK5.a		3,375	4
SK5.b		3,375	0
SK6.1		3,375	3
SK6.2		4	3
SK7		4	3
SK8		4	5
			12,59

### Appendix 2

TGP	FP. Nr.	County	Location	Type of location	Find circumstances	Minter
SK03.a	MHM 8538:375	Scania	Bunkeflo Parish	Settlement	Excavation	
SK03.a	MHM 12538:242	Scania	Svennedal, Hyllie	Settlement	Excavation	GODWINE
SK03.a	LUHM 25680	Scania	Uppåkra	Settlement	Metal detecting	
SK03.a	LUHM 28114-818	Scania	Skt. Peter Klosterkirke	Church	Udgravning	
SK03.a	LUHM 9989	Scania	Fjelle Parish	Field	Excavation	
SK03.a	6042	Bornholm	Vester Marie	Settlement	Metal detecting	THVRGOT/THVRKIL
SK03.a	8750	Bornholm	Klemensker	Field	Metal detecting	
SK03.a	1942	Roskilde	Skt. Maria Hospital's garden	Town		DVRSTEIN
SK03.a	3987	Sorø	Tårnborgh	Town	Metal detecting	ULFKIL
SK03.a	3386	Præstø	Møn?			VLV
SK03.a	ASR 13 x482	Ribe	Lindegården	Town	Excavation	VNDI
SK03.a	9012	Odense	Skt. Knud Plads	Cemetery	Metal detecting	ALFFEIR
SK03.a	9012	Odense	Skt. Knud Plads	Cemetery	Metal detecting	GARFIN
SK03.a	9012	Odense	Skt. Knud Plads	Cemetery	Metal detecting	THURSTEIN

### Appendix 3

FP no.	OBM no.	Object number	Date	King	Coin type	Cemetery	Context
6224	9784	244	1137-1146	Erik III Lam	TGP, SJ12	St. Alban's	Cultural layer (234)
6224	9784	43	1422-1422	Erik VII of Pomerania	Copper sterling	St. Alban's	Cultural layer (89)
6224	9784	195			1/2 coin, not determined	St. Alban's	Dirt layer between two clay floors
9012	9785	202	1000-tallet		German?	St. Alban's	Pit (516)
9012	9785	69	1104-1134	Niels?	TGP JY9a-b?, 1/2 coin	St. Alban's	In posthole below pavement (35)
9012	9785	2	1280-1310		Danish	St. Alban's	By cemetery wall (x=123,79; y=98,24; z=2,46)
9012	9785	1	1286-1319	Erik IV Menved	Schleswig, MB506	St. Alban's	By cemetery (x=123,76; y=98,18; z=2,47)
9012	9785	70	1422-1422	Erik VII of Pomerania	Copper sterling	St. Alban's	Stray find (x: 121,49 - y: 98,39 - z: 255)
9012	9785	224	1552-1552		Mecklenburg, half shilling	St. Alban's	Cultural layer (215)
6224	9784	639	1047-1074	Svend II Estridsen	Roskilde, Hbg. 38	St. Cnut's	Below pavement 515
6224	9784	1270	1175-1202	Valdemar I the Great/Cnut VI	TGP JY43.2	St. Cnut's	Metal detecting, eastern trench
6224	9784	777	1234-1241	Valdemar II Conqueror	TGP JY109.5?	St. Cnut's	Western part of mortar production pit (AC)
6224	9784	1211	1241-1334		13 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup> century Danish penny	St. Cnut's	Metal detecting, eastern trench
6224	9784	592			1/2 coin, not determined	St. Cnut's	Fill of grave G566
6224	9784	628			1/4 copper, possible coin	St. Cnut's	Fill of grave G593
6224	9784	682			Copper, possible coin	St. Cnut's	Cultural layer (523)
9012	9785	1005	1082-1084	Cnut IV the Holy	TGP SK3	St. Cnut's	Metal detecting, trench 6
9012	9785	1008	1082-1084	Cnut IV the Holy	TGP SK3	St. Cnut's	Metal detecting, trench 6
9012	9785	1017	1082-1084	Cnut IV the Holy	TGP SK3	St. Cnut's	Metal detecting, trench 6
9012	9785	1009	1280-1320		Danish	St. Cnut's	Metal detecting, trench 6
9012	9785	1015	1286-1319	Erik IV Menved	North Jutland, MB431	St. Cnut's	Metal detecting, trench 6



Side wing of a medieval altarpiece depicting the killing and enshrining of St. Cnut, believed to have been created circa 1500 in Northern Germany. Previously housed in St. Peter's Church, Næstved. Now in the National Museum of Denmark.

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# Passio Sancti Kanuti Regis et Martiris. Transcription of Latin text

by Francis Young

## Editor's note

The text of this edition of *The Passion of St Cnut, King and Martyr* is based on Gertz's *Vita Sanctorum Danorum* (1908–12), pp. 538–57. For the parts omitted by Gertz, Schmeidler's transcription (Schmeidler 1912: 88–97) has been consulted to fill in a few lacunes. The additions from Schmeidler are highlighted in the translation with square brackets. The original folio numbers are included, but no attempt has been made to retain the line numbering or layout of the original text. Chapter numbers are given in Roman numerals while paragraphs are numbered in Arabic numerals, following the paragraph numbering of Gertz's edition (which does not appear in the original MS, and was added by Gertz). Orthography and spellings have been standardised, with 'v' replacing 'u' where 'u' functions as a consonant, 't' replacing 'c' in words such as *etiam* (not *eciam*), and 'i' replacing 'j' in the middle of words. Furthermore, 'i' replaces 'y' except in words of Greek derivation where 'y' stands in for Greek  $\upsilon$ . Where non-standard spellings have been standardised to their more common medieval Latin forms, the unusual spelling in the original MS is noted in a footnote.

Feminine genitives follow the original medieval orthography, which omits the digraph *ae* found in Classical and Renaissance Latin; thus *hec*, not *haec*.

## Passio sancti Kanuti regis et martiris

### Prologus

[fol. 6v] Gloriosissimi martiris Christi, regis Canuti, vitam et passionem posterum memorie reservandas aspicibus contradere, Christo ad laudem, militi suo et martiri ad honorem, nobis posterisque ad salutem pariter et edificationem, in nomine domini temptabo breviter aggredi. Opus quidem mee impar sciencie ('puteus enim altus est, et in quo hauriam non habeo'); verum in ipsius gracia confisus, qui dixit: 'Accedat homo ad cor altum, et exaltabitur deus' et iterum: 'Aperi os tuum, et ego adimplebo illud', narrabo gesta principis religiosi, althlete Christi, domino sensus mei labia et oris dirigente eloquia, ut sic militis eius efferam preconia, quatinus maiestati eius tractem complacita.

### I.

1. Beatus itaque Kanutus, regali ex prosapia oriundus, no-

men a suo contraxit avunculo magno, Kanuto videlicet, rege Danorum victoriosissimo, qui cum beato rege Olavo Norwegiensium continuum bellum habuit; sed victor Kanutus tria regna optinuit, Danorum, Norwegiensium et Anglorum. Qui tandem viam universe carnis ingressus est; cuius corpus reconditum insigni lapideo tabulatu reclusum est.

2. Huius prefati regis soror, nomine Estrit, Sueonum duci inclito, Wulff vel Ulf nomine, maritata, filium ex eo suscepit generosissimum, Swenonem nomine, patrem videlicet beati athlete Christi Kanuti, cuius hodie festum celebramus. Hic autem Sweno in patrum suorum sede corroboratus regnique Danorum diademate potitus Norwegiam sibi vi et armis subiugavit. Tandem ingenti classe coadunata Angliam adiit; sed rex Edwardus Anglie, vir sanctus et iustus, pacem magis eligens quam [fol. 12r] bellum regi Danorum tributum optulit et ipsum post se regni heredem statuit. Sic ergo trium regnorum victor Sweno quiete in Dania XXVIII annis regnavit.

3. Migrante ergo ipso ad Christum de presenti seculo anno dominice incarnationis MLXXVIII facta est maxima dissensio inter filios eius seniores, Haroldum scilicet et beatum Kanutum, cuius hodie memoriam agimus, quis eorum in sede patris regnaturus eligeretur. Haroldus vero, quia et natu anterior et gestu videbatur modestior, communi consensu omnium electus est in regem. Quod beatus Kanutus licet moleste ferret, patienter tamen sustinuit, divinitatis futurum exspectans auxilium.

4. Haroldus vero, vir discretus, regni rector peroptimus, leges optimas Danis instituit et institutas regali auctoritate confirmavit. Unde leges ab eo sanctitas usque in hodiernum diem Dani ab electis et eligendis sibi regibus expetunt. Ipso autem anno regni eius sexto a seculo egress, beatus Kanutus successit ei in regnum.

5. Cum enim XI essent Swenonis Magni regis filii, talis inter eos facta est conventio, ut maior natu semper regnaret, quam diu aliquis eorum superesset. Unde quinque ex illis fratribus contigit Danorum regni successive tenere monarchiam. Primo tenuit Haroldus, secundo sanctus Kanutus, tertio Olavus, quarto Ericus, quinto Nicolaus.

### II.

1. Assignatis siquidem beati martiris Kanuti nobilissimis natalibus, ad ipsius preconia martiris pertractanda redeamus. Adeptus itaque regni Danorum diadema sanctus rex Kanu-



tus princeps effectus est victoriosus, homo discretus, vir religious, totius veritatis et iustitie sine persone receptione exsecutor.

Mitis **[fol. 12v]** erat parvis, atrox asperque superbis.

Tandem martir deo dilectus sanctorum supernorum civium<sup>1</sup> a domino collega est constitutus.

2. Floruit quippe morum honestorum prudentia cum venuste iuventutis gratia; acer erat ingenio, specie dignus imperio, oculis pulcher vivacibus, armis et animo strenuus; mentis mira prudentia sermonis prodebat facundia. Famelicos et pauperes fovebat, nudos et argentes vestiebat, orphanis et viduis clementer succurrebat, peregrinos et egentes misericordie stipendiis sustentabat. Ordinis religiosi viros quosdam ut dominos, quosdam ut patres honorabat. Sanctas sanctorum dei ecclesias regalium munerum donis adornabat, easque divini cursus horas auditurus assiduus frequentabat, et, que ibi capaci percepisset ingenio, preciosi pectoris armario recondebat.

3. Divini etiam spiritus instinctu concubinarum amplexibus despectis lasciviam devitans de Romanorum imperatorum genere coniugem, nomine Ethlam, sibi elegit, soliusque eius connubio Christo teste contentus est. Hec autem erat filia Rodberthi de Flandria, ex qua genuit filium, Karolum nomine, qui post discessum avi sui, comitis Rodberthi, comes Flandrie effectus est.

4. Domini autem repletus timore preciosus martir Kanutus actus prave, ignorantias pristinas et delicta iuventutis sue, sollerti examinatione discrucians, sibi coherentibus religiosi viris, pontificibus venerandis Gheroldo et Arnolde, vel etiam regalis curie capellanis familiaribus cum omni devotione et humilitate confessus est, et divine se ita subiciebat clementine, ut, quod quibusdam tunc temporis videbatur incredibile, **[fol. 11r]** corporalis vindicte plagas, deo teste ipsisque secretorum consciis, ab eis sibi inferri passus est.

5. Insuper etiam tam privatis quam sollemnibus ieiuniorum diebus sextaque feria mense regali assistens, cum a convivantibus vino vel medone uti putaretur, ministris tamen paucis consciis, pura utebatur aqua regaliumque deliciarum dapes ipsi appositae partim ibi consedentibus distribuit, partim pauperibus erogavit; ipse vero pane sicco sale apposite corpus deliciis assuetum refocillabat. Opera enim sua non in platearum concursibus propalari sed ab investigatore cordium desiderabat approbari, ut nesciret sinistra, quid faceret dextra, quia non inde laudis humane favorem, sed patris in abscondito videntis prestolabatur remunerationem.

6. Omnem enim spem suam in domino posuit, veritatem in omnibus causis terre preferens consuetudini. Legimus etenim Christum dixisse: 'ego sum veritas', sed non legimus eum dixisse, quia 'ego cum consuetudo'. Unde prudenter cum principibus regni et maxime cum religiosis pertrac-

tans, qualiter fidei Christiane religionem in regno suo auge-ret, assidue revolvebat. Multa siquidem antiquitus tradita in presens observari sagaci ingenio perspiciebat, que magis pro divina essent iustitia corrigenda qua mob vulgi favorem exequenda. Que superni arbitris inspirante gratia coercere<sup>2</sup> disponebat; sed indomite gentis feritas et obstinate duritia ... Vanitati eum insistere et veluti novis et inauditis adinventionibus operam dare in suis conventiculis conquerebantur, ac ob hoc, qualiter iugum dominationis eius ab eorum contumacie cervicibus excuterent, maligni spiritus suggestionem inflare consiliabantur.

7. Per eum etiam in Dania **[fol. 11v]** primo tertiam partem decime sacerdotes tam de frugibus quam de pecoribus ad usus proprios obtinuerunt et usque in hodiernum diem obtinent.

8. Istis vero predictis causis et consimilibus vulgus contra ipsum conspirabat. Vulgaris enim cetus non percipiebat, que regio pectori dominus inspirabat. Nam cum ipse eos a peccati iugo eripere et ad iustitie libertatem conaretur reducere, obcecati non videntes veluti seductorem et antique pacis et quietis invasorem ac pristinae libertatis cum deputabant ereptorem.

### III.

1. Verum civitas in excelso sita necquid abscondi: fama virtutum et constantia prudentie nobilissimi principis latius per orbem terrarum diffunditur, et tam apud Italos, Hispanenses, Gallos, Anglos, Iros et Scotos et Orcadenses quam apud Sueones, Norwegienses, Polonos, Slavos, Saxones et alios Theutonicos celeberrimus habebatur. Ipsi etiam Francigenis nobilissimis et bellicosissimis non tantum admirandus sed et metuendus insonabat.

2. Illis diebus insidiis belli Haroldus rex Anglorum occisus est a Wilhelmo, Normannorum duce, quem Bastard<sup>3</sup> Angli cognominaverunt; qui Angliam vi et armis devictam nimia ferocitate depressit. Indigene vero terre illius, de amissa libertate pristina condolentes, per beatum Kanutum, regem Danorum, iugum dominationis prefati Willermi ab eorum cervicibus excutere cupientes miserunt legatos regi Danorum, ut ad necem Haraldi quondam regis, consanguinei sui, viciscendum properaret, eosque suo servitio promptos in omnibus inveniret.

3. Beatus ergo Kanutus, preliator robustus, Anglorum legatibus ista omnia pertractans, scilicet de consanguineo sui **[fol. 10r]** nece, adiecit regnum Anglorum sibi hereditario iure deberi, eique iniuriose subtractum conquerabatur. Ex communi ergo omnium meliorum consilio expeditionem per universam Daniam indixit classemque ingentem loco et tempore statuto coadunari precepit.

4. Congregato autem exercitu navali innumero apud portum, qui dicitur Humle, unde minus difficilis in Angliam erat

transitus, rex in civitate Sclewicensi de negotio prefato pertractans morabatur, per quatuor magnas dietas ab illis distans. Vulgus autem, littorea detentione more suo impatiens, prestolaciones domesticis inutilis negotiis suis in conventiculis conquerabatur, et aut sibi licentiam ad propria remeandi aut, rege aliis intento, alium sibi expeditio-nis principem facultatem eligendi aut regi nuntios, ut cum classe acceleraret, transmitti crebrius vociferabatur.

5. Olavus autem, frater regis, ad regnum aspirans, pro benevolentia<sup>4</sup> plebis captanda ipsorum garritui satisfacien s, ad propria remeandi licentiam propria contulit auctoritate. Qua licentia rusticorum contenta ruditas inculta lares ad proprios repedavit. Porro iniquitatis consilio comperto rex perspicacis industrie, negotio diutius pertracto, proprii honoris detrimentum nec non et regni utilitatis considerans dispendium, fratrem proprium prefatum, videlicet Olavum, captivavit et socero suo, comiti Rodberto de Flandria, reservandum transmittit. Ipsius enim filiam carissimam rex duxit in uxorem, de qua etiam sobolem nobilissimam sibi, scilicet comitem Karolum, suscepit; unde illi pre ceteris de custodiendo fratre melius credidit.

#### IV.

1. Rex autem divina imbutus sapientia, quia animo suo de exercitus sui reditione displicebat, dissimulans tempus redimebat, quoniam dies mali erant. Sed veluti hactenus pietatis studio inherebat, sic et **[fol. 10v]** postea divini cultus reverentiam extollere, cleri iura provehere, dierum precipuorum atque legitimorum ieiuniorum observantias, quemadmodum per universum orbem Christianorum habentur, instituere plurimaque alia domino contraria coercere<sup>5</sup> satagebat. Servos etiam dominorum liberalitate manu missos seu proprii laboris sudore pretio adquisito redemptos libertati publice adiudicabat; advenas et undecumque advenientes, sub regni sui imperio degentes, incolarum pares iure et equitate decernebat; pupillos, orphanos, viduas ac pauperes sibi non sufficientes clipeo tuitionis auctoritate regali defendebat; rebellium sive divinatorum sive legalium institutorum obstinatiam refrenebat, et regie equitatis virga indomitas eorum cervices edomabat.

2. Hostis autem antiquus ut leo circuiens querens, quem devoret, machinas astutiarum in mortem regis, quoniam dei servum bene noverat, intendebat. Sicque natu quosque maiores et viribus preeminetiores, audacia ad nefas promptissimos nefaria, contra principem religiosum adarmabat. Unde omnis pene terre vulgus, veneno ipsius infectus ac malitie ipsius laqueis irretitus, in mortem regis et martiris conspirabat.

3. Verumtamen regis exactores pariter et omnes regalium negotiorum executores, regnum in manu regis iam corroboratum conspicientes, plus iusto in causis aggravandis insistebant ac res fisco adscriptas<sup>6</sup> vilipendentes nimie aviditatis infecti veneno diripuerunt. Agnum pro denario,

ovem pro solido, vaccam pro tribus denariorum solidis in regio censu reddi disponebant. Iudicia etiam pervertentes, tam nobiles quam ignobiles **[fol. 9r]** vi et potentia pauperes opprimere contendebant. Quorum enormitatis insolentia plurimi exacerbati, ira simul et invidia accensi, omnem prefatum in regem diffuderunt tyrannidem.

4. Discurrebant ergo impietatis ac dementie intercursores, qui non dumtaxat ad scelera promptos, verum etiam simplicium corda nec non et vel tunc innocentium animos contra regem incitabant, ut complices scelerum multiplicent et veritatis ac iustitie ius usquequaque perturbent, regis et martiris sanguine sitibundi cupientes saturari.

#### V.

1. Rege vero in lutia manente, que maior pars est Danie, ac in australibus lutie partibus regalibus negotiis ex more peractis, ultra fluvium, que Limefjorth dicitur, ad insulam Wendelam transfretabat. Erat enim tunc temporis insula duas continens provincias, Thiutham videlicet et Wendelam, que hodie promontorium magis quam insula dicenda est.

2. Veniens ergo rex ad civitatem Burglanensem, solo aulico et cotidiano exercitu<sup>8</sup> comite, spatiaturus per aliquot dies residere decrevit, regiis exactoribus de causarum negotiis inquirendis et peragendis demandans. Cuius adventu divulgato tam nobiles quam ignobiles, maligni spiritus toxica infecti, contra Christi agonistam incitati, contra regem irritati, consilia prius secreta propalare non dubitant: malignorum conventicula ad pontum, Cornicum appellatum, congregant ac in regiam maiestatem sententiam dampnationis dare non formidant.

3. Statuto autem die rex cum suis multitudinem illorum spectaturus et cum illis, si facultas daretur, preliaturus aggreditur. Sed considerans tante multitudini se cum paucis sine ingenti suorum strage non posse resistere, cupiensque furoris **[fol. 9v]** insolentiam adunate multitudinis mitigare, atque utriusque istarum congregationum lesionem suorum hominum connumerans amissioni, quia omnes sue ditioni subiecti erant, loco cedendum instituit, et, ne maior tumultus fieret, quietius abire quasi rem cum suis pertractaturus constituit; de se suisque prospiciens, adversariorum sanguinem non affectans, sed pacem preelicens, secundum dominicum preceptum: 'si vos persecuti fuerint in civitate una, fugite in aliam', ad regiam curiam, que Akersburch dicitur, in ipsa ripa fluminis, scilicet Limefjorth, sitam, exercitum, quem secum habebat, misit. Ipse autem cum venerabili viro Heinricho, eiusdem diocesis episcopo, in villa ibidem proxima residebat.

4. Sed cupiens rabiem instinctu serpentis antique in plebe excitatam sedare misit ad eos venerabilem antistitem Heinrichum, qui eo tempore, ut diximus, gloriosum regem secum detinebat. Qui facunde perorans, ut ab insolentia

ipsorum iam incepta desisterent, instigat et, ne ad infamiam universi orbis deveniant, persuadet, fas nefasque elegantissime proponens perorat. Sed quoniam super elatos et omni malignitate inflatos spiritus dei requiescere non poterat, sanis prefati episcopi consiliis infrementes insanis clamoribus insonant: in pontificem irruere festinant et, ne vera peroranti et utilia persuadenti vulgus adquiescat, in commodis quibusque propositis dissuadendo insistent.

5. His vero omnibus ab episcopo regi insinuat, aquilonibus partibus derelictis ultra fluvium Limefjorth transiens civitatem Wibergensem adiit querens auxilium; sed non ibi adiutores, immo novos reperit<sup>9</sup> persecutores.

6. Vulgus autem maligne congregationis Wendalensium omnes fines terre illius mirabiliter, immo **[fol. 8r]** diabolice, contra regem instigant: catervatim procedentes regias curias invadunt rerumque provisores ibidem edibus exturbabant; omnia investigantes oculis avaris inspiciebant, manibus queque proxima diripiebant et universa porcorum more subvertebant. Et ad urbem Akersburch, ubi regalium gazarum ministri assidebant, concite properabant; sed illi de foris impugnabant, isti deintus sua defendere cupiebant. Multitudine vero irrumpentium accrescente, alii extrahebantur, alii pro foribus occidebantur, alii in flumine precipitabantur, alii latebras querentes domibus distractis effugerunt, omni postposita suppellectili.

7. Tandem vulgari edicto universaliter tam pedites quam equites regia vestigia insecuntur; et, ne principi religioso refugii locus usquam relinquatur, vesanie vulgi simul et dementie intercursoribus circumquaque diabolo comitante transmissis studiose decertant, ut exemplum magistri Jhesu Christi in his sicut et in aliis discipulus et martir sequitur. De quo dictum est: 'Vulpes foveas habent, et volucres celi nidos; filius autem hominis non habet, ubi caput suum reclinet'.

## VI.

1. Rex vero absque tumultu aquilones omnino lute partes deserens Sleswicensem adiit nautico itinere illinc in Phyoniam profecturus. Puppibus ergo non segniter instructis et necessariis advectis, magnificus princeps, lute furem pariter et lutiam penitus relicturus, per fluvium Slie usque in mare navigans fluctivagos sinus cum domesticis satellitibus et novo iam certamine tironibus experiendis ingrediens insulam Pheoniam advehitur, ubi, dum presentis securitatem quietis requirens non invenit, sempiternae felicitatis palma et perpetua gloriosi triumphi memoria insigniri promeruit.

2. Regis itaque adventu divulgato, ut, quod **[fol. 8v]** divina disponebat providentia, non serius efficeretur, nocturnis simul et diurnis intercursoribus circumque transmissis, multitudo terre illius vulgi coadunata iniquitatis congregat consilia et, ut suis etiam principem religiosum finibus exturbent seu etiam, quod dictu scelus est, vite extorrem

efficiant, omni condicit instantia. Ipse autem ad locum precipuum, utpote certaminis, triumphi et repausationis suae, qui civitas Othoniensis dicitur, cum fratribus suis Erico, Benedicto et Swenone, curialibus suis secum comitantibus, profiscitur, rerum ibidem eventum prestolaturus et, quid suis consiliis consilii admitteret, tractaturus. Seditiosa vero multitudo in dies adaugetur, exploratores curie regali intermittit regiaque undique sciscitabatur consilia, et in eum irruendum cum suo comitatu omni decertat instantia.

3. Cuius seditionis uti princeps et fraudis commentor tyrannus quidam, Pipero nomine, inter eos magis astutus ingenio et fecunditate spiritus inimici, facundus eloquio, regem innocentem fraudulenter adiit; et, ut fidem fraudibus prebeat, legionis insensate furibunda non occultat consilia, que tamen per se quam plurima proponendo haud minime depromit attenuanda. Unde quasi regi suo fidelis in mensa regia regi proximus assidens, secundum illud prophete: 'Qui edebat panem meum, magnificavit super me supplantationem', regis tandem dapibus farcitus et poculo inebriatus, regalibus est honoratus muneribus.

4. Et veluti magistro veritatis, Jude proditori intinctum calici panem porrigendo dicenti: 'quod facis, fac citius', ita exemplo traditoris, accepta licentia ad vulgum redeundi, dominum suum et regem sanctissimum, osculo corde venenato dato, **[fol. 7r]** sub pacis pretextu tradidit, ut pacis osculo discipulus traditus magistrum sequeretur veritatis. Nequissimus autem Pipero, hostilibus catervis<sup>10</sup> occurrens, que a rege perceperat, non pandendo sed pervertendo denuntiat, et, qua eum fraude circumveniant, astute instruendo perorat.

5. Cuius persuasionibus seditiosa multitudo satisfaciens contra regem prenomiatum conglomerate ad locum regie sedis coacervatim discurrit. Equorum fremitus, populorum stridor, pressure fragor, armorum collisio ethera tangere videntur; cursus peditum, impetus equitum humum concutunt; pulvis solo exurgens in aera, latius altiusque diffusus, die adhuc superstite nocturnas tenebras inducit.

6. Porro vespertinali tempore imminente dominus rex more solito vespertas auditurus et iam se suosque sancto martiri regi commendaturus monasterium sancti Albani martiris non longe situm expetit; quem plures nobiliores sui certaminis participes sequuntur, aliis quibusdam latebras, quas poterant, inquiringibus et vite presenti consulentibus.

7. Hostium vero cuneus circumquaque adveniando discurrit et tam edes regias quam et atria irruendo occupat. Quidam quoque sacraria, ubi rex religiosus cum suis inerat, irrumperere temptant: alii valvas ecclesie resolvere, vectes ferreos confringere, nonnulli ignem admittere, omnesque aut vivos comprehendere aut mortuos relinquere conantur. Sed igne rore superne virtutis extincto invictissimi tyrones deintus pro foribus hostibus resistunt, aditum armis non segniter recludentes et pro sui domino gloriose dimicantes.



8. Rex vero interea devotus regem regum non Herodiana fallacia sed Davidica<sup>11</sup> inquit humilitate: omnium peccatorum suorum penitentiam agens Christum confessus est; tandem sacramento eucharistie<sup>12</sup> corpus pariter et animam munens aureis **[fol. 7v]** argenteisque muneribus altaria ditat, sociis sue passionis hec eadem facientibus et vicissim, ne hosti aditus pateat, armis obsistentibus.

9. Conspirante tandem multitudine undique accurrente traditor ille Pipero deforis pro foribus astat et regis hactenus hominem fidelissimum quendam verbis lacescere quasi ad duellum irritans non dubitat. Quo non segniter deintus occurrente, duris alternatim ictibus admissis uterque vulneratur, illo tandem gloriose deintus occumbente, isto ad evidentioris ultionis indicium vivo ad propria delato. Nam ad domum delatus, acerrimo demone invasus, vicina quaeque tam morsu quam manibus invadit, dirumpit et conterit, ore spumas apri more furiosi eicit, horribiliter clamando vociferatur, vana et inaudita profert, scelus fraudulentum evidenter proclamat, ad ultimum lingua dentibus per medium corrosa et abscisa vitam miserabiliter finivit.

10. At vero hostis pertinax obstinaci insolentia parietibus insistit ecclesie et sagittas cum saxis per aperta immittit; regem lapidibus ut Stephanum tundit, telis ut Sebastianum vulnerat, sacrumque monasterii pavementum cruoris sanctorum Christi martirum perfusione consecratur. Verum, ut passionum Christi rex devotus imitator efficeretur, veluti dominus in cruce in medio iniquorum positus, sic et ipse inter cuneum adversi multitudinis constitutus aquam sibi sitiendi porrigendam inter furentium tela expetiit. Quam cum quidam pietate motus in vasculo haustam detulisset porrigensque per fenestram regi dedisset, alius hasta intromissa et vase de manibus utrorumque excusso et aqua simul effuse, regi quidem sitim extinguendi otium abstulit, sed illi pietatis premium non ademit. Qui vero aquam deiecit, haud longo post tempore vesanie<sup>13</sup> actus fonti superminens, **[fol. 13r]** ut pote sitim propriam extincturus, capite tandem in profunda demisso genibusque desuper monstruose distensis spirituque scelesto emisso cadaver ibidem exanime veluti divine ultionis indicium supervenientibus aspiciendum reliquit.

## VII.

1. Fortissimis autem regis militibus hostiles acies a foribus monasterii deturbantibus, versi ad orientem sanctuarii, ubi principem devotissimum precibus insistentem introspexerant, gladii et securibus postibus secandis et diruendis insistent, crucemque sacram nec non et capsulas reliquiarum, sanctorum Albani videlicet et Oswaldi, poste ad ima vergente, solo deiciunt.

2. Erat enim monasterium ligneum, in honore Sancti Albani consecratum, in quo tunc temporis sedes erat episcopalis, que postea ad monasterium beati Kanuti, cuius hodie fe-

stum celebramus, insigni de lateribus edificio constructum translata est.

3. Sanctissimo igitur rege coram altari devotissime orante, infelix quidam lancea per fenestram intromissa latus gloriosi martiris Kanuti perforavit, edemque sacram ipsius sanguine cruentat. At ipse, vulnere Christi non immemor, que pro nobis passus est, beato Benedicto, fratre suo carnali et certaminum collega, vulneribus admodum saucio assistente amplexato et pacis osculo dato, brachiis in modum crucis extensis ante altare domini se prostravit in terram. Ex lateris namque vulnere vena manante, voce adhuc superstite dominum interpellat, ac spiritum creatori commendans de presenti seculo Christi palatium perpetuo pausaturus intravit. Egregia namque vicissitudine mortuo pro suam se domino beatus Kanutus mortis triumphum obtulit, purpuratusque proprii sanguinis ostro stolam suam dealbavit in sanguine agni.

4. Constantissimi vero milites rege interempto non hostibus tantummodo non cedunt, verum etiam adinvicem exhortando animos vires excitare<sup>14</sup> incitabant: per aperta irruentibus non segniter occurrendo armis arma viriliter referebant ipsisque cedentibus vicem resplendebant, gloriose **[fol. 13v]** magis occumbere quam tanto principe amisso eligentes supervivere. Quibus, multitudine hostili catervatim accrescente, non tantum stratis sed et, vicissim opprimentibus adversariis, suffocatis, edes sacra cruore martirum aspergitur, templi solum unda sanguinis irrigatur, propheticum impletur, quo dicitur: 'Venerunt gentes in hereditatem tuam, polluerunt templum sanctum tuum'; et alibi: 'Effuderunt sanguinem sanctorum tuorum in circuitu'.

5. Predictis autem facinoribus perpetratis prophanorum cuneus plura adiecit. Non enim tantum atria regalia sed etiam angulatim perscrutantur sacraria, omniaque ibi inventa diripientes etiam consecrata Christi altaris ornamenta, ut inter se partirentur, distrahebant, sicut scriptum est: 'Dispersi sunt lapides sanctuarii in capite omnium platearum'. Dehinc civitatem totam circumquaque perlustrantes, ne quis regie stirpis, utpote scleris ultor, superstes relinqueretur, provide precavere satagebant.

6. Tandem beatum Benedictum, preciosi martiris et regis fratrem germanum collegamque<sup>15</sup> certaminis, ab investigantibus adhuc supervivere et proximo servatum hospitio cognoscunt adesse. Quo precipiti catervatim cursu irruentes regium iuvenem inventum, vulneribus admodum sauciatum, pedibus extrahentes in medium impietatis conventiculum producunt, ut secundum apostoli dictum 'spectaculum mundo' mundique principis administratoribus<sup>16</sup> efficeretur, et per eos omne ministerium iniquitatis perficeretur. Cumque, quo modo vel quali eum morte perderent, pertractarent, iam, veluti venatoribus de raptu dissidentibus, membratim distractum et semivivum, alii lanceis corpus ipsius terre crudeliter affigunt, alii securibus, nonnulli gladiis mutilant et occidunt; sicque perpluribus vulneribus

vita exemptum ac minutatim per membra secatum relinquunt. Et cum emisisset spiritum, martirii consecutus est premium.

## VIII.

1. Sedatis itaque prememoratis tumultibus pariter et iniquitatis **[fol. 14r]** executoribus a templo discedentibus, clerus ibidem insistentes cesorum corpora currunt, regia quidem membra germanique ipsius in ecclesia sancti Albani recondentes, gloriosorumque martirum et militum cadavera in atrio eiusdem ecclesie, angulo occidentali simul et aquilonali, reservanda terre matri commendantes.

2. Remunerator autem omnium bonorum Christus Jhesus, diligentibus se bona preparans innumerabilia, 'que oculus non vidit, nec auris audivit, nec in cor hominis ascendit etc.', beatissimi regis et martiris Kanuti pariter et fratris ipsius, sancti Benedicti ducis, meritis et precibus miraculorum signa multiplicat.

3. Erat enim quidam, Esbernus nomine, in Fyonia natus, qui ab infantia pedum gressus non noverat, sed cruribus retortis, poplitibus reflexis (sure coxis, plante clunibus adherabant), gibbosus etiam, capite in terram demisso, brachiis et genibus quadrupedum gerens similitudinem reptabat. Hic in ecclesia sancti Kanuti orans devote in vigilia ipsius sancti martiris, choro in horis vespertinalibus hoc responsorium inchoante: 'Iustum deduxit dominus per vias rectas', spinali eius erecto, gibbo annihilato<sup>17</sup>, cruribus extensis, ordinante benignitatis ubertate beati regis Kanuti sanitatem recepit. Hunc vidi ordinatum, et missam de beato Kanuto dicentem audivi, ego ipse, cuius manus dextra vobis haec scripsit legenda.

4. Alium etiam vidi simili modo contractum, cruribus reflexis brachiisque eodem modo replicatis, totam Fioniam triginta annis et amplius reda circumeuntem,<sup>18</sup> qui, omnibus terre illius melioribus notus, plurimisque in die ascensionis domini in monasterio sancti Kanuti astantibus et ipsum sic contractum videntibus pariter et nervorum ex distentione confractioes audientibus, choro cantante 'Ascendens Christus in altum', sanitatem per **[fol. 14v]** merita ipsius Christi martiris adeptus est. Multa etiam alia operatus est dominus plurimis in locis meritis et precibus beati martiris suffragantibus: leprosos mundando, demones effugando, hydropicos,<sup>19</sup> paraliticos, cecos, surdos, mutos et claudos, plurimos etiam diversis morborum generibus laborantes sanitati restituebat, cui est honor et gloria in secula seculorum. Amen.

## IX.

1. Venerabilis vero deo dilecti regis prudentissima coniunx animi nobilitatem vultu pretendens, proponens carissimi<sup>20</sup> coniugis iam pretiosa membra – – advocatum apud deum **[fol. 15r]** habere – – non mente recessit.

2. Requievit autem rex deo dilectus Kanutus et martir egregius eodem in loco annis fere novem, Olavo – – prediximus, egritudine fractus, veluti virtutum non electus inspector, vita simul et regno excessit.

3. Hic autem Olavus de captivitate comitis Flandrie post discessum beati Kanuti per Nicolaum, fratrem eius, postea successorem, liberatus est. Posuit enim se ipsum pro fratre obsidem, ut ille libere in Daniam regnaturus repatriaret. Qui cum regnasset, fraterne devotionis immemor pincerne Pharaonis more fratrem redimere **[fol. 15v]** contradixit. Sicut enim ille Joseph in carcere, ita iste Nicolaum reliquit in captivitate.

4. Unde, ipsius regis Olavi peccatis exigentibus pariter et vulgi Danie, regem et martirem Kanutum innocenter occidentis, omnibus diebus regni ipsius ager frugibus sterilis, – – [voluntate monarchiam obtinuit] surrexit, totiusque exercitus<sup>21</sup> electione – – potentia. Cecis namque **[fol. 16r]** visus – – expetendo.

## X.

1. Rex vero prudentissimus – – ut, qui pridem veluti vocabulo barbaro Knut nuncupabatur, eum iam ob sensus canitiem, gestorum maturitatem, vite sinceritatem pariter et pro eo, quod eum in canone sanctorum iam commemorandum apostolica decernebat auctoritas, Kanutum appellari instituit, qui veluti inter gemmas pretiosas effulgens carbunculus non tantum **[fol. 16v]** patria imitari studia sed et proprii monimenti gesta celebria posteris tradere conabatur.

2. Sic enim quondam Abrahe *[approbatur. Legati ergo apostolica auctoritate roborati – – confortati beatissimorum apostolorum Petri et Pauli sanctorumque patrociniis, prout desideraverant, adoratis – – desideratas partes Dacie partes ingressi – – ad propria deveniunt]* extollens assidua **[fol. 17r]**, qui – – *[eiusque suffragia fideliter]* deposcentes.

## XI.

1. Regina etiam Ethela [prudentissima – – Anno autem sexto imperii magnifici regis] Erics, congregationis **[fol. 17v]** universis, *[pretiosas beati martiris reliquias – – in eadem, quam prediximus, archa oculis innumera multitudo inspexit impositas – –*

*Iam celo tutus summo cum rege Kanutus*

*Martir in aurata rex atque reconditur archa,*

*Qui pro iustitie factis occisus inique*

*Ut Christum vita, sic morte fatetur in ipsa,*

*Traditus a populo sicut Deus ipse ministro*

*Et petiens potum telorum perforat ictum,*

*Lancea nec ne latus ut Christi perforat eius,*

*Spiritibusque sacris moriens sociantur<sup>22</sup> in astris.*

*Ossibus itaque*] et opem exquirendo petentibus efficiuntur per martirum regem probabilia, cui est honor et gloria in secula seculorum. Amen.

## Collecta

Omnipotens sempiterne deus, fortitudo certantium et martirum palma, solemnitatem<sup>23</sup> hodie diei propitius intueri et ecclesiam tuam continua fac celebritate letari, ut intercessionem beati Kanuti, martiris tui, omnium in te credentium vota perficias[.] Per dominum nostrum [Jesum Christum. Amen].

## End notes

- 1 Perhaps an error for *civem*?
- 2 *coarcere* In MS.
- 3 *Bastarch* in MS. Perhaps a play on Latin *bastardus* and the Greek-derived suffix *-archus* to create the compound *bastarch*, meaning ‘bastard leader’.
- 4 *benivolentia* In MS.
- 5 *cohercere* In MS.
- 6 *asscriptas* In MS.
- 7 *tirannidem* In MS.
- 8 *cottidiano excercitu* In MS.
- 9 *repperit* In MS.
- 10 *cathervis* In MS.
- 11 *Davitica* in MS.
- 12 *eukaristie* in MS.
- 13 *vesania* in MS.
- 14 *excercitare* in MS.
- 15 *conlegamque* in MS.
- 16 *amministratoribus* in MS.
- 17 *adnichilato* in MS.
- 18 *circueuntem* in MS.
- 19 *ydropicis* in MS.
- 20 *karissimi* in MS.
- 21 *excercitus* in MS.
- 22 *sociatur* in MS.
- 23 *sollemnitatem* in MS.
- 24 *perhennis* in MS.

## Secretum

Deus, cuius providentia gloriosus rex et martir Kanutus **[fol. 18r]** crudelium populorum nefanda sustinuit tormenta, concede nobis famulis tuis eius meritis et precibus perennis<sup>24</sup> vite adipisci gaudia, qui eum per haec dignatus es celesti decorare honore et gloria[.] Per dominum nostrum Jhesum Christum. [Amen.]

## Conplenda

Deus, qui beatum Kanutum regem a subditis sibi plebibus iniuste peremptum glorioso martirio coronasti, presta, ut ipsum apud te sentiamus intercessorem, quem credimus in celis gratia tua gloriose regnare victorem[.] Per dominum nostrum [Jesum Christum. Amen.]





The killing of King Cnut the Holy in St. Alban's Church, 1086. Detail from an oil painting by Christian Albrecht von Benzon, 1843.



# A comparative overview of *Passio II* and *Gesta Swenomagni*

by Steffen Hope

The present table is an overview of the concordances in both content and formulations between *Passio II* and *Gesta Swenomagni* by Aelnoth, and it is intended to show to what extent and in what ways the anonymous author of *Passio II* relied on Aelnoth. The table uses the texts of these two works as they are printed in *Vitae Sanctorum Danorum* (Geertz 1908-1912). The reader should be aware that the text of *Passio II* has not been double-checked against the manuscript. Unfortunately, I have not been successful in my attempts to contact the manuscript holders. It is, therefore, possible that future studies will correct some of the details of this table and provide further nuance to our understanding of *Passio II*.

The division of the text of *Passio II* follows that of Gertz' edition. I have done so in order to make it easier to navigate the text. All found concordances between *Passio II* and *Gesta Swenomagni* are marked in bold. This is done without distinction between concordances that are verbatim, and those where the anonymous hagiographer has a) used a different word, b) where a word is conjugated differently than in *Gesta Swenomagni*, or c) where the word is written in a different grammatical case.

As an example of the first of these instances, we can note that in chapter III.2, where the anonymous hagiographer has used the term 'regem Canutum', 'king Cnut', instead of Aelnoth's 'principem Canutum', 'prince Cnut'. Both prince and king are used interchangeably in the hagiographical material pertaining to Cnut Rex, so we should not attach much significance to the difference between the two texts.

When it comes to the two main types of grammatical differences, they have even less impact on our understanding of the text. In some instances, the anonymous author has altered the order of sentences or words, and some-

times, the individual words have been retained but put together differently. For instance, in chapter VI.1, we see that the anonymous author has written 'ingrediens insulam Pheoniam', 'entering the island of Funen' when describing Cnut's arrival from Jutland. Both 'insulam' and 'Pheoniam' are in the accusative. In *Gesta Swenomagni*, however, we find 'ingrediens Pheonie partibus', 'entering the parts of Funen'. Here, 'Pheonie' is in the genitive, because the parts into which Cnut and his retinue enter belong to Funen. The difference in grammar, however, has no bearing on the narrative itself. The big difference lies in the rearrangement or rephrasing of Aelnoth's text, but the narratological or dramaturgical impact of these changes can be seen sufficiently clearly by marking all the concordances in bold. The same goes for those instances where the rearrangement of the material has had an impact on the grammatical tense. In chapter IV.3, the anonymous author writes, 'vi et potencia pauperes opprimere contendebant', 'they hastened to oppress the poor by power and force'. In *Gesta Swenomagni*, Aelnoth has used 'ui et potencia opprimere contendere', 'to hasten to oppress by power and force'. Aelnoth uses the infinitive. Here, the important change is that the anonymous author has added 'pauperes' as to express the enormity of the oppression with even greater force. The different conjugation of 'contendere', however, has no impact on the narrative.

The table, in short, is meant to be an analytic aid, and it serves to showcase the degree to which *Passio II* is based on *Gesta Swenomagni* but also to demonstrate to what extent the anonymous hagiographer added new material. It is important to note that the anonymous hagiographer did not mindlessly copy what was in front of him but made those changes he deemed useful and/or necessary and engaged with Aelnoth's text as a model to be refashioned rather than as a relic to be preserved in pristine condition.

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>Prologue</p> <p>Gloriosissimi martiris Christi, regis Kanuti, vitam et passionem posterum memorie reseruandas apicibus contradere, Christo ad laudem, militi suo et martiri ad honorem, nobis posterisque ad salutem pariter et edificationem, in nomine domini temptabo breuiter aggredi. Opus quidem mee impar sciencie ('puteus enim altus est, et in quo hauriam non habeo'); verum in ipsius gracia confisus, qui dixit: 'Accedat homo ad cor altum, et exaltabitur deus' et iterum: <b>'Aperi os tuum, et ego adimplebo illud'</b>, narrabo gesta principis religiosi, athlete Christi, domino <b>sensus mei labia et oris dirigente eloquia, ut sic militis eius efferam preconia, quatinus maiestati eius tractem complacita.</b></p>	<p>V</p> <p>Sed qui dixit: <b>'Aperi os tuum, et ego adimplebo illud', sensus nostri labia et oris dirigat eloquia, ut sic militis eius efferamus preconia, quatinus maiestati illius tractemus complacita.</b></p>
<p>I.1</p> <p>Beatus itaque Kanutus, regali ex prosapia oriundus, nomen a suo contraxit auunculo magno, Kanuto videlicet, rege Danorum victoriosissimo, qui cum beato rege Olauo Norwegiensium continuum bellum habuit; sed victor Kanutus tria regna optinuit, Danorum, Norwegiensium et Anglorum. Qui tandem viam vniuerse carnis ingressus est; cuius corpus reconditum insigni lapideo tabulatu reclusum est.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>I.2</p> <p>Huius prefati regis soror, nomine Estrit, Sueonum duci inclito, Wulff vel Ulf nomine, maritata, filium ex eo suscepit generosissimum, Swenonem nomine, patrem videlicet beati athlete Christi Kanuti, cuius hodie festum celebramus. Hic autem Sweno in patrum suorum sede corroboratus regnique Danorum diademate potitus Norwegiam sibi vi et armis subiugauit. Tandem ingenii classe coadunata Angliam adiit; sed rex Edwardus Anglie, vir sanctus et iustus, pacem magis eligens quam bellum regi Danorum tributum optulit et ipsum post se regni heredem statuit. Sic ergo trium regnorum victor Sweno quiete in Dania .XXVIII. annis regnauit.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>I.3</p> <p>Migrante ergo ipso ad Christum de presenti seculo anno dominice incarnationis. M.LXXIII. facta est maxima <b>dissensio</b> inter filios eius seniores, <b>Haroldum scilicet et</b> beatum <b>Kanutum</b>, cuius hodie memoriam agimus, quis eorum in sede patris regnaturus eligeretur <b>Haroldus</b> vero, <b>quia et natu anterior et gestu videbatur modestior, communi consensu omnium electus est in regem. Quod</b> beatus <b>Kanutus licet moleste ferret</b>, patienter tamen sustinuit, <b>diuinitatis futurum expectans auxilium.</b></p>	<p>IV</p> <p>Sed regiis inter se tyronibus, <b>Haroldo scilicet et Cnutone</b>, iamiamque Canuto nominando, de principatus iure <b>dissidentibus Haroldus, quia et natu anterior et gestu uidebatur modestior, totius gentis electione in regnum asciscitur</b> et, ut felix diu uiuat, princeps Dacie proclamatur. <b>Quod</b> acerrimus <b>Cnuto licet moleste ferret</b>, fraterne tamen potius duxit ire cedere quam secundum Thebanos quondam regios pueros sempiterni rogi incendijs ob regnandi libidinem sese fratremque <b>concertando</b> admittere. Diuinitatis enim sibi <b>affuturum</b> inscius expectabat <b>auxilium</b>, per quod se postmodum tam eminenti gloria ignorabat sublimandum.</p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>I.4 Haroldus vero, vir discretus, regni rector peroptimus, leges optimas Danis instituit et institutas regali auctoritate confirmauit. <b>Vnde leges ab eo sancitas usque in hodiernum diem Dani ab electis et eligendis sibi regibus expetunt. Ipso autem anno regni eius sexto</b> a seculo egresso, beatus Kanutus successit ei in regnum.</p>	<p>IV Ut uero proposita persequamur, Haroldus patrium nactus imperium populi uotis admodum fauere eis que leges et iura non tam, que uellent, eligere, immo, que uel quales elegissent, posteris seruandas <b>regali studebat auctoritate</b> decernere. <b>Unde leges ab eo sancitas Dani usque in hodiernum ab electis et eligendis sibi regibus expetunt</b>, eumque ueluti pacis ac libertatis publice prouisorem pro concessis ab eo legibus laude et fauoribus extollunt. Sed et <b>ipso regni sui anno sexto</b> patria uia <b>egresso</b>, locus eum celebris, qui Vallis uilla (id est: Dalbuj Danica lingua) dicitur, futura resurrectioni reseruandum excepit et exceptum terre matri</p>
<p>I.5 Cum enim .XI. essent Swenonis Magni regis filij, talis inter eos facta est conuencio, ut maior natus semper regnaret, quam diu aliquis eorum superesset. Vnde quinque ex illis fratribus contigit Danorum regni successiue tenere monarchiam. Primo tenuit Haroldus, secundo sanctus Kanutus, tercio Olauus, quarto Ericus, quinto Nicolaus.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>II.1 Assignatis siquidem beati martiris Kanuti nobilissimis natalibus, ad ipsius preconia martiris pertractanda redeamus. Adeptus itaque regni Danorum diadema sanctus rex Kanutus princeps effectus est victoriosus, homo discretus, vir religiosus, tocius veritatis et iusticie sine persone receptione exsecutor. <b>Mitis erat paruis, atrox asperque superbis</b>. Tandem martir deo dilectus sanctorum supernorum ciuium a domino collega est constitutus.</p>	<p>II <b>Mitis erat paruis, atrox asperque superbis</b></p>
<p>II.2 <b>Floruit</b> quippe <b>morum honestorum prudentia cum venuste iuuentutis gracia; acer erat ingenio, specie dignus imperio, oculis pulcher viuacibus, armis et animo strennuus; mentis mira prudentia sermonis prodebatur facundia. Famelicos et pauperes fouebat, nudos et argentes uestiebat, orphanis et uiduis clementer succurrebat, peregrinos et egentes misericordie stipendijs sustentabat. Ordinis religiosi viros quosdam ut dominos, quosdam ut patres honorabat. Sanctas sanctorum dei ecclesias</b> regaliu munerum donis adornabat, easque <b>diuini cursus</b> horas <b>auditurus assiduus frequentabat</b>, et, <b>que ibi capaci percepisset ingenio, preciosi pectoris armario recondebat.</b></p>	<p>VI <b>Crescebat</b> enim in eo <b>morum honestorum prudentia cum uenuste iuuentutis gratia</b>; unde superna tandem prouidente clementia in regni processit fastigia. <b>Acer</b> quippe <b>erat ingenio, specie dignus imperio, oculis uiuacibus, armis et animo strennuus, mentisque industria sermonis prodebatur facundia</b>. Et quia neque uolentis neque currentis, sed miserentis est dei, et ab initio exorientis seculi electi mansionibus ceteris in regia sempiterni patris sunt locandi, dominus in eo elegantem sibi satellitem formabat, quem ex regie dignitatis fascibus comitem supernorum et martyrem faciebat. <b>Sanctas sanctorum dei ecclesias diuini cursus</b> sacratum ordinem <b>auditurus assiduus frequentabat, et, que ibi capaci percepisset</b> auditu, <b>preciosi pectoris armario recondebat.</b></p> <p>VII <b>Famelicos fouebat et pauperes, nudos uestiebat et argentes, orphanis et uiduis clementer succurrebat, peregrinos et egentes misericordie stipendijs sustentabat. Ordinis religiosi uiros quosdam ut dominos quosdam ut patres honorabat</b></p>



Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>II.3          Diuini eciam spiritus instinctu concubinarum amplexibus despectis <b>lasciuam deuitans</b> de Romanorum <b>imperatorum genere coniugem, nomine Ethlam</b>, sibi <b>elegit, soliusque eius connubio Christo teste contentus est</b>. Hec autem erat filia Rodberthi de Flandria, ex qua genuit filium, Karolum nomine, qui post discessum aui sui, comitis Rodberthi, comes Flandrie effectus est.</p>	<p>VIII          Regum quamplurium, sed et ipsius Salomonis, <b>deuitans lasciuam</b>, ob quam eius quondam posteri bis quinis regni partibus ablatis uix duabus irato deo principari merebantur, <b>imperatorii generis</b> nobilissimam sibi <b>coniugem</b> sapientum consilio <b>elegit</b>. Qua insigni honorificentia ex occidentalibus horis adducta, secundum <b>nominis</b> eius estimationem, que <b>Ethela</b> (id est: nobilis) dicebatur, nobilem nobiliter excipiens impudicis concubinarum despectis amplexibus <b>solius eius conubio, Ihesu Christo teste</b> angelisque eius, <b>contentus est</b></p>
<p>II.4          “Domini autem repletus <b>timore</b> preciosus martir Kanutus <b>actus</b> prauos, <b>ignorancias pristinas</b> et <b>delicta iuuentutis sue, sollerti examinatione discuciens, sibi coherentibus religiosiis uiris, pontificibus venerandis Gheroldo et Arnolde</b>, uel eciam <b>regalis curie capellanis</b> familiaribus cum omni <b>deuocione</b> et <b>humilitate confessus</b> est, et <b>diuine se ita subiciebat</b> clemencie, <b>ut, quod quibusdam tunc temporis uidebatur incredibile, corporalis vindicte plagas, deo teste ipsisque secretorum conscijs, ab eis sibi inferri</b> passus est.”</p>	<p>IX          “Crescente ergo in seruo dei et uero rege (quia deo seruire regnare et uiciis imperare dominari est) diuini respectu <b>timoris, actus</b> et <b>ignorantias pristinas</b> ac <b>delicta iuuentutis sue sollerti examinatione discutiens</b> sibique <b>coherentibus religiosiis uiris</b>, tunc quidem <b>regalis curie capellanis</b>, nunc autem <b>pontificibus uenerandis, Geroldo</b> scilicet <b>et Arnolde</b>, uere et sincere <b>confessionis humilitate</b> adaperiens <b>deuotionis</b> sue affectum <b>ita diuine subiciebat</b> dementio, <b>ut, quod quibusdam incredibile uidebitur, corporalis etiam uindicte plagas, ipsis solis, deo teste eiusque secretorum conscijs, ab eis sibi inferri</b> non renueret.”</p>
<p>II.5          Insuper eciam tam <b>priuatis</b> quam <b>sollemnibus ieiuniorum diebus sextaque feria mense regali assistens, cum a conuiuantibus uino</b> uel medone uti <b>putaretur, ministris</b> tamen paucis conscijs, <b>pura utebatur aqua regaliumque deliciarum dapes</b> ipsi <b>appositas partim ibi consedentibus distribuit, partim pauperibus</b> erogauit; <b>ipse</b> uero <b>pane sicco sale apposito corpus delicijs assuetum</b> refocillabat. <b>Opera enim sua non in platearum concursibus propalari sed ab inuestigatore cordium desiderabat approbari, ut nesciret sinistra, quid faceret dextra, quia non inde laudis humane fauorem, sed patris in abscondito uidentis prestolabatur remunerationem.</b></p>	<p>IX          Et cum, qui Christi esse desiderant, carnem suam cum uiciis et concupiscentiis crucifigere non perhorrescant, <b>sollempnibus etiam</b> et <b>priuatis ieiuniorum diebus sextaque sabbati mense regali assidens, cum a conuiuantibus uino</b> seu meile mixtis <b>uti putaretur</b> liquoribus, ministris solum fidis cum occultorum inspectore scientibus <b>pura utebatur aqua, regaliumque deliciarum dapibus</b>, ori tantum <b>appositis</b> delatisque, <b>partim circumsedentibus partim pauperibus distributis</b> atque transmissis <b>ipse pane sicco, sale apposito, corpus delicijs assuetum</b> non tam sustentabat quam et his non ad sufficientiam sumptis cruciabat. <b>Opera enim sua non in platearum occursibus propalari sed ab inuestigatore cordium desiderabat approbari, ut nesciret sinistra, quid faceret dextra; quia non inde laudis humane fauorem sed patris in abscondito uidentis prestolabatur remunerationem.</b></p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>II.6  <b>Multa siquidem antiquitus tradita in presens obseruari sagaci ingenio perspiciebat, que magis pro diuina essent iusticia corrigenda quam ob vulgi fauorem cxequenda. Que superni arbitris inspirante gracia coarcere disponebat; sed indomite gentis feritas et obstinata duricia</b>          [lacuna]</p> <p><b>Vanitati eum insistere et voluti nouis et inauditis adinuencionibus operam dare in suis conuenticulis conquerebantur, ac ob hoc, qualiter iugum dominationis eius ab eorum contumacie ceruicibus excuterent, maligni spiritus suggestionem inflati consiliabantur</b></p>	<p>VIII  <b>Multa siquidem antiquitus tradita in presens obseruari sagaci industria perspiciebat, que magis pro diuina essent iusticia corrigenda quam ob uulgi fauorem exequenda. Que superni arbitris inspirante gratia cohercere disponebat; sed indomite gentis feritas et innata duricia</b> uoluntatis eius effectum in dies differebat</p> <p><b>uanitati eum insistere et ueluti nouis et inauditis adinuentionibus operam dare in suis conuenticulis querebantur; ac ob hoc, qualiter iugum dominationis eius ab indomitis et hactenus inflexis et duris contumacie sue ceruicibus excuterent, haud diuini spiritus illustratione inflammati, sed alieni spiritus suggestionem inflati consiliabantur</b></p>
<p>II.7          Per eum eciam in Dania primo terciam partem decime sacerdotes tam de frugibus quam de pecoribus ad usus proprios obtinuerunt et usque in hodiernum diem obtinent.</p>	N/A
<p>II.8          Istis vero predictis causis et consimilibus vulgus contra ipsum conspirabat. Vulgaris enim cetus non percipiebat, que <b>regio pectori dominus inspirabat. Nam cum ipse eos a peccati iugo eripere et ad iusticie libertatem conaretur reducere, obcecati non videntes ueluti</b> seductorem et <b>antique pacis et quietis inuasorem ac pristine libertatis eum deputabant ereptorem.</b></p>	<p>VIII          Homo enim carnalis non percipiebat, que <b>regio pectori omnis scientie spiritus infundebat. Nam cum ipse eos a peccati seruitute eripere et ad iusticie libertatem conaretur reducere, audiendo non intelligentes et obcecati uidentes ueluti antique pacis et quietis inuasorem ac pristine libertatis eum deputabant ereptorem.</b></p>
<p>III.1  <b>Verum ciuitas in excelso sita nequid abscondi: fama virtutum et constancia prudentie nobilissimi principis lacius</b> per orbem terrarum <b>diffunditur, et tam apud Ytalos, Yspanienses, Gallos, Anglos, Yros et Scotos et Orcadienses</b> quam apud Sueones, Norwegienses, Polonos, Slauos, <b>Saxones</b> et alios Theutoni cos <b>celeberrimus habebatur. Ipsi</b> eciam <b>Francigenis</b> nobilissimis et <b>bellicosissimis non tantum admirandus sed et metuendus insonabat.</b></p>	<p>X          Sed quoniam iuxta <b>Veritatis dictum ciuitas in excelso sita nequit abscondi</b>, et lucerne lumen magis in editor proferri quam in abscondito debeat occultari, <b>fama uirtutum et constantie ac prudentie nobilissimi principis latius diffunditur, et tam apud Scottos et Orcadas Irosque</b>, qui ultimos fere occidentis fines incolunt, quam et apud <b>Anglos et Gallos Saxonesque celeberrimus habebatur. Italicis</b> uero terminis incognitus non erat; sed et <b>ipsis Francigenis</b>, qui et Romani dicuntur, admodum <b>bellicocis non tam admirandus quam et metuendus insonabat.</b></p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>III.2 Illis diebus insidijs belli <b>Haroldus rex</b> Anglorum occisus est a <b>Wilhelmo, Normannorum duce</b>, quem Bastarch Angli cognominauerunt; qui <b>Angliam</b> vi et armis deuictam nimia ferocitate <b>depressit</b>. Indigene vero terre illius, de amissa <b>libertate pristina</b> condolentes, per beatum <b>Kanutum. regem</b> Danorum, iugum dominacionis prefati Willermi ab eorum ceruicibus excutere cupientes miserunt legatos regi Danorum, ut ad <b>necem Haraldi quondam regis, consanguinei</b> sui, vlscendam properaret, eosque suo seruicio promptos in omnibus inueniret.</p>	<p>XI <b>Haraldo rege</b> fortissimo a Willelmo australium <b>Normannorum duce</b> belli insidijs interempto ipsoque <b>Willelmo</b> ita demum <b>Anglorum imperium</b> ui arripiente, eorundem, quos supra commemorauimus, Romanorum seu Francigenarum dominatus iure diutius <b>oppressa</b>, eo tantum modo pristine se restituendam <b>libertati</b> incipiebat presumere, si insignissimum <b>principem Canutum</b> cum sui exercitus uiribus ad <b>ulciscendam consanguinei necem, Haraldi</b> scilicet <b>quondam regis</b> ab eisdem Romanis interempti, Britannie litoribus agnouisset applicare.</p>
<p>III.3 Beatus ergo Kanutus, preliator robustus, Anglorum legatione gratanter suscepta cum principibus et regni optimatibus ista omnia pertractans, scilicet de consanguinei sui nece, adiecit regnum Anglorum sibi hereditario iure debent, eique iniuriose subtractum conquerebatur. Ex communi ergo omnium meliorum consilio expeditionem per uniuersam Daniam indixit classemque ingentem loco et tempore statuto coadunari precepit.</p>	<p>XI Classis uero in dies parabatur, et ad nobilem tam frugibus quam et rerum opulentia terram tam a nobilibus quam et a uulgo omni instantia festinabatur. Verumtamen rumore expeditionis eorum Britanniam usque uelificante atque uniuersum Anglorum orbem cursitando replente Willelmus, arte tuitionis, utpote bellicosus heros, non imperitus, castra et oppida munire, muris et fossatu propugnaculisque castella circumcingere, urbium muros renouare, uicis uigilantiam adhibere, diuersosque ad portus nauticas custodias deputare. Exercitu uero conducto tam a Gallis et Brittonibus quam et a Cinnomannis aggregato ita urbium edes replebantur, ut uix suis domestici focis assidere uiderentur. Anglis autem, quibus non minimi desiderii Danici exercitus aduentum esse didicerat, barbas radere, arma et exuias ad instar Romanorum coaptare et ad deludendos aduentantium uisus per omnia se Francigenis, quos et Romanos dici pretulimus, assimilare preceperat. Quod perpauci facere. Sed hec ibi.</p>
<p>III.4 Congregato autem <b>exercitu</b> nauali innumero apud <b>portum</b>, qui dicitur Humle, unde minus difficilis in Angliam erat transitus, <b>rex in</b> ciuitate Sclewicensi de negotio prefato pertractans morabatur, per quatuor magnas diebus ab illis distans. <b>Vulgus</b> autem, <b>littorea detencione more</b> suo <b>inpaciens, prestolaciones domesticis inutilis negocijs</b> suis in conuentibus <b>conquerebatur</b>, et aut sibi licentiam <b>ad propria remeandi aut, rege alijs intento, alium sibi expeditionis principem</b> facultatem eligendi aut regi nuncios, ut <b>cum classe acceleraret, transmitti crebrius vociferabatur</b>.</p>	<p>XIII Classe igitur parata Danorum <b>exercitus</b> Occidentalis <b>portus</b> litoribus uelis sinuatim distensis aduehitur ibique regie classis aduentum in dies prestolabatur. <b>Rex</b> uero <b>in</b> loco celeberrimo, qui ab eiusdem quondam loci domina Ethe Ethebi uel ab situ campestri Hethebi nomen accepit, quod de Danica lingua interpretatum Campi uilla dicitur, demorabatur cum prudentibus et sapientibus pertractans, qualiter res cepta ob multorum profectum Ihesu Christo auxiliante ad decentem perueniret effectum. Sed quemadmodum Israeliticus quondam populus Moyse cum deo confabulatum demorante ab Aaron deos sibi fieri, qui heremitice eis uie ducatum preberent, exposcunt et ob hoc irato deo desiderati soli tam uisu quam et usu priuantur, ita et <b>uulgus</b> hic <b>impaciens more litoree detentionis prestolaciones domesticis inutilis negotiis querebatur</b> et <b>aut ad propria remeandum siue principem eis alium expeditionis rege alijs intento eligendum seu regi nuncios cum</b> sua quantocius <b>classe accelerandi</b> consilio crebrius inito transmitti uociferabatur.</p>



Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>III.5 Olauus autem, frater regis, ad regnum aspirans, pro beniuolencia plebis captanda ipsorum garritui satisfaciens, ad propria remeandi licenciam propria contulit auctoritate. Qua licencia rusticorum contenta ruditas inculta lares ad proprios repedauit. <b>Porro</b> iniquitatis consilio comperto <b>rex perspicacis industrie, negotio diucius pertractato</b>, proprii honoris detrimentum nec non et regni utilitatis considerans dispendium, fratrem proprium prefatum, videlicet Olauum, captiuauit et socero suo, comiti <b>Rodberto de Flandria, reseruandum transmittit</b>. Ipsius enim <b>filiam</b> carissimam rex duxit in vxorem, de qua eciam sobolem nobilissimam sibi, <b>scilicet</b> comitem Karolum, suscepit; vnde illi pre ceteris de custodiendo fratre melius credidit</p>	<p>XII <b>Porro rex perspicacis industria negotio diutius pertractato Rodberto</b>, occidentalium nobilissimo duci, sibi per <b>filiam</b> (reginam <b>scilicet</b> Ethelam) propinquo, fratrem suum eundem <b>reseruandum in Flandriam transmittit</b> exercituique per internuncios, que uolebat, remandauit.</p>
<p>IV.1 <b>Rex</b> autem diuina imbutus sapiencia, quia animo suo de <b>exercitus</b> sui reditione displicebat, dissimulans tempus redimebat, quoniam dies mali erant. Sed <b>ueluti hactenus pietatis studio inherebat</b>, sic et postea <b>diuini cultus reuerentiam extollere, cleri iura prouehere, dierum precipuorum atque legitimorum ieiuniorum obseruancias</b>, quemadmodum <b>per vniuersum orbem Christianorum habentur, instituere</b> pluriniaque alia <b>domino contraria cohercere</b> satagebat. Seruos eciam dominorum liberalitate <b>manu missos seu proprii laboris sudore precio adquisito redemptos libertati publice adiudicabat; aduenas et vndecumque aduenientes</b>, sub regni sui imperio degentes, <b>incolarum pares iure et equitate decernebat</b>; pupillos, orphanos, viduas ac pauperes sibi non sufficientes clipeo tuicionis auctoritate regali defendebat; <b>rebellium siue diuinorum siue legalium institutorum obstinaciam</b> refrenabat, <b>et regie equitatis virga indomitas eorum ceruices edomabat</b>.</p>	<p>XIV <b>Exercitu</b> igitur ad propria reuerso religiosus <b>princeps ueluti hactenus pietatis studiis inherere: diuini cultus reuerentiam extollere, cleri iura prouehere, dierum precipuorum legitimorumque ieiuniorum obseruancias</b> uindicta proposita regali edicto, <b>quemadmodum per uniuersum Christianum orbem habentur, statuere</b>, et omnia admodum <b>deo contraria</b> pro posse suo <b>cohercere</b> studere; <b>seruos manu missos et proprii sudoris labore precio adquisito redemptos libertati publica adiudicare, aduenasque [et] undecumque aduenientes</b> nec alicui hactenus obnoxios <b>incolarum pares iure et equitate decernere</b>; (quod, licet Danis inuisum et incommodum, deo, ut arbitramur, haud admodum contrarium) <b>rebellium siue diuinorum seu legalium institutorum obstinaciam</b> opprimere <b>et regie equitatis uirga indomitas eorum ceruices edomare</b> contendere</p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>IV.2  <b>Hostis</b> autem antiquus <b>ut leo circuiens querens, quem deuoret</b>, machinas astuciarum in mortem regis, quoniam dei seruum bene nouerat, intendebat. Sicque natu quosque maiores et viribus preeminenciores, <b>audacia ad nefas promptissimos</b> nefaria, <b>contra principem religiosum adarmabat. Vnde omnis pene terre vulgus, veneno ipsius infectus ac malicie ipsius laqueis irretitus</b>, in mortem regis et niartiris conspirabat.</p>	<p>XV  His ergo pietatis inimicus et uirtutis atque ueritatis <b>hostis</b> irritatus, dum per hoc numerum sibi obsequentium iam iamque imminuendum pertimescit, diuersarum insidiarum prestigia discurrit; utque tante religionis tempora perturbet et populum iam tandem per deuoti ducis sollerciam deo quam maxime subiciendum sue potius malignitatis faucibus degluciat, machinas astuciarum intendens <b>ut leo rugiens circuit, quem deuoret, inquitrens</b>. Et iam, ueluti quondam pontifices ac phariseos legisque magistros in ipsum ueritatis auctorem ueneno inuidie incitaret, per quos uulgi simplicitas ad condemnandum uite opificem instigaretur, sic et natu quosque maiores et ui preminentes, facundia etiam ac <b>audacia ad fas nefasque promptiores aduersum religiosum principem</b> iniquitatis antique stimulis incitat, incitando inflammatur, inflammando ad omne nefas pronos et promptos inclinat, atque, ut uiri iusti memoriam solo exterminant, nobiles ignobilesque instigatione non insolita prouocando <b>adarmat. Unde omnis pene terre uulgus ueneno</b> iniquitatis <b>eius infectus et laqueis malicie illius irretitus</b> ad omne scelus preparatur; et auerso sensu uultuque in terram demisso summa inspicere deuitant, ne a malicie semitis iter auertant, quo eorum participes efficiantur, quos sapientia diuina deum a se recedere compellere protestatur.</p>
<p>IV.3  <b>Verumtamen</b> regis <b>exactores</b> pariter et omnes regalium negotiorum <b>executores</b>, regnum in manu regis iam corroboratum conspicientes, <b>plus iusto in causis aggrauandis insistebant</b> ac res fisco asscriptas uilipendentes nimie auiditatis infecti veneno diripuerunt Agnum pro denario, ouem pro <b>solido</b>, vaccam pro tribus denariorum solidis in regio censu reddi disponebant. <b>Iudicia</b> etiam <b>peruertentes, tam nobiles quam ignobiles vi et potencia</b> pauperes <b>opprimere contendebant. Quorum</b> enormitatis <b>insolencia plurimi exacerbati, ira simul et inuidia accensi, omnem</b> prefatam in <b>regem</b> diffuderunt tyrannidem.</p>	<p>XVI  <b>Verumtamen</b>, ut proposita persequamur, regalium negotiorum <b>executores</b> siue <b>exactores plus iusto in causis exaggerandis insistere</b>, staterarum pondera adaugere, rerum quarumque precia uilipendere et, ut uulgariter edisseram, unciarum ualentiam uix <b>solidi</b> precio admittere; <b>iudicia</b>, ut tradunt, <b>peruerrere, nobilesque, quemadmodum et ignobiles, ui et potentia opprimere contendere. Quorum insolentia quamplurimi exacerbati</b>, maiores natu <b>ira simul et inuidia accensi, omnes</b> in regium <b>principem</b> consilio et armis irrumpere et tam in eo quam et in illis, nunciis circumquaque intermissis, publicas, ut arbitrantur, iniurias uindicare.</p>
<p>IV.4  <b>Discurrebant ergo impietatis ac demencie intercursores</b>, qui non dumtaxat <b>ad scelera promptos, verum etiam simplicium</b> corda nec non et uel tunc <b>innocencium animos</b> contra regem incitabant, <b>ut complices scelerum multiplicent et ueritatis ac iusticie ius usquequaque perturbent, regis et martiris sanguine sitibundi cupientes saturari</b></p>	<p>XVI  <b>Discurrunt ergo impietatis et demencia intercursores</b> et non modo <b>ad scelera promptos, uerum etiam simplicium</b> atque <b>innocentium</b> incitant <b>animos, ut complices scelerum multiplicent et ueritatis ac iusticie ius usquequaque perturbent. Proh dolor!</b> abundans exurgit iniquitas, refrigescit et tepescit caritas; fas substernitur et nefas extollitur. Plebs ad omne scelus incitatur et ueluti belua ad deglutiendum parata <b>sanguine sitibunda cupit saturari regio</b></p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>V.1  <b>Rege</b> vero in lucia manente, que maior pars est Danie, ac <b>in australibus</b> lucie partibus <b>regalibus negocijs ex more peractis</b>, ultra fluuium, qui Limefjorth dicitur, ad insulam <b>Wendelam</b> transfretabat. Erat enim tunc temporis insula duas continens prouincias, Thiutham uidelicet et Wendelam, que hodie promontorium magis quam insula dicenda est</p>	<p>XVII  <b>Rex</b> igitur <b>in</b> locis <b>australibus</b> ultra fluuium, qui Lima dicitur, <b>regalibus negocijs ex more peractis</b> ad regionem maritimam, que <b>Wendel</b> lingua Danica nomen habet, quod ‘conuertibilis’ interpretatur, aduehitur</p>
<p>V.2  Veniens ergo rex ad ciuitatem <b>Burglanensem</b>, solo aulico et cotlidiano excercitu comite, <b>spaciaturus</b> per aliquot dies <b>residere decreuit, regiis exactoribus de</b> causarum <b>negocijs inquirendis et peragendis demandans. Cuius aduentu</b> diuulgato <b>tam nobiles quam ignobiles</b>, maligni spiritus toxica infecti, contra Christi agonistam <b>incitati</b>, contra regem irritati, consilia prius secreta propalare non dubitant: malignorum <b>conuenticula</b> ad <b>pontum, Cornicum appellatum</b>, congregant ac in regiam maiestatem sententiam dampnationis dare non formidant</p>	<p>XVII-XVIII  ibique in uilla regia, que a domina quondam loci ipsius <b>Burhlina</b> iam mutata uocali Burhlanis nuncupatur, cum regio satellite <b>spaciaturus residere decreuit, regiis exactoribus de peragendis simul et inquirendis negocijs demandans. Cuius aduentu tam nobiles quam et uulgus</b> incitati impiorum consiliorum <b>conuenticula</b> aggregant et ad inuicem animos ad iniquitatem instigant, pudori deputantes regiis institutis cedere et sese inferiores quam regiam potestatem existimare. Idcirco, dum potestati insidiantur, deo aduersantur, quia iuxta ueridicum apostolum, qui potestati resistit, dei ordinationi obsistit. Ac per hoc in eius deputantur consorcio, qui, dum deo subditus esse contempsit, in profundissima inferni de excelsissimis celorum deiectus cecidit sedibus. <b>Pontus</b> ergo <b>cornicus dicitur</b></p>
<p>V.3  <b>Statuto autem die rex cum suis multitudinem illorum spectaturus</b> et cum illis, si facultas daretur, preliaturus <b>aggreditur</b>. Sed considerans tante multitudini se cum paucis sine ingenti suorum strage non posse resistere, <b>cupiensque</b> furoris insolentiam adunate <b>multitudinis mitigare</b>, atque vtriusque istarum congregacionum lesionem suorum hominum connumerans amissioni, quia omnes sue dicioni subiecti erant, loco cedendum instituit, et, ne maior tumultus fieret, quietius abire quasi rem cum suis pertractaturus constituit; de se suisque prospiciens, aduersariorum sanguinem non affectans, sed pacem preeligens, <b>secundum dominicum preceptum: ‘si vos persecuti fuerint in ciuitate vna, fugite in aliam’</b>, ad <b>regiam curiam</b>, que <b>Akersburch dicitur</b>, in ipsa ripa fluminis, scilicet Limefjorth, sitam, excercitum, quem secum habebat, misit. Ipse autem cum <b>venerabili viro Heinricho</b>, eiusdem diocesis <b>episcopo, in uilla</b> ibidem proxima <b>residebat</b>.</p>	<p>XVIII-XIX  <b>Statuto autem die rex cum suis multitudinem</b> conuentus <b>illorum spectaturus aggreditur</b>, et cognita uoluntatis eorum obstinacia rem pertractaturus ad suos reuertitur. Sed ibidem perpauca, que proposuerat, ob insolentiam insanientium dispositis, furorem adunate et conspirate <b>multitudinis mitigare cupiens et</b> de se suisque prospiciens, <b>secundum illud dominicum preceptum: ‘Si uos persecuti fuerint in ciuitate una, fugite in aliam’</b> loco cedendum instituit et, ne maior tumultus fieret, quietius abire constituit. Aquilonalibus igitur partibus derelictis occidentalium terminos insequitur; et ad locum, qui nunc usque secundum ueteres <b>Acresburh</b> (id est: Urbs agri) <b>dicitur</b>, obsequentium turbis transmissis ipse non longe cum <b>reuerentissimo antistite Heinricho in uilla episcopij</b> eius ibidem proxima <b>spaciaturus</b> cum numeroso comite <b>resedit</b>. Porro regis discessu diuulgato turba diripientium cateruatim <b>regias curias</b> inuadere rerumque prouisoires ibidem edibus exturbare,</p>



Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>V.4</p> <p>Sed cupiens rabiem instinctu serpentis antiqui in plebe excitatam sedare misit ad eos <b>venerabilem antistitem Heinricum, qui eo tempore, ut diximus, gloriosum regem secum detinebat</b>. Qui facunde perorans, ut ab insolencia ipsorum iam incepta desisterent, <b>instigat et, ne ad infamiam vniuersi orbis deueniant</b>, persuadet, <b>fas nefasque</b> elegantissime <b>proponens perorat</b>. Sed quoniam super elatos et omni malignitate <b>inflatos spiritus dei requiescere non poterat, sanis</b> prefati <b>episcopi consilijs infrementes insanis clamoribus insonant</b>: in <b>pontificem irruere festinant et, ne uera peroranti et utilia persuadenti vulgus adquiescat, incommodis quibusque propositis dissuadendo insistunt</b>.</p>	<p>XIX-XX</p> <p><b>Reuerentissimus uero pontifex, qui eo, ut prediximus, tempore secum regem gloriosum detinebat</b>, non insperato aduentu uesane legionis audito sediciosos cuneos cum prudentibus adiit et sermone placido, ut ab insolentia haud sano admodum consilio cepta se compescant, <b>instigat et, ne ad infamiam uniuersi orbis deueniant, fas nefasque proponens</b> facundissime <b>perorat</b>. Sed quia, quos ueritatis inimicus et pietatis hostis perturbatione inquietudinis repleuerat, spiritus diuinus aufugerat, et super inquietos ac tumidos idem <b>dei spiritus requiescere non poterat</b>, ut Iudei quondam Stephanum se redarguentem non ferentes duris dissecabantur cordibus et in eum stridebant dentibus, sic <b>sanis</b> reuerendi <b>antistitis consiliis infrementes insanis clamoribus insonant</b> et iam iamque in reuerendum <b>pontificem irruere</b> impetu facto festinant: hastis sabula litorea spargunt, ethera uocibus impetunt <b>et, ne uera peroranti ac utilia persuadenti uulgus adquiescat, incommodis quibusque propositis dissuadendo insistunt</b>.</p>
<p>V.5</p> <p>His vero omnibus ab episcopo regi insinuat, aquilonalibus partibus derelictis ultra fluuium Limefjorth transiens ciuitatem <b>Wibergensem</b> adiit querens auxilium; sed non ibi adiutores, ymmo nouos repperit persecutores.</p>	<p>XXIII</p> <p>Locus igitur celeberrimus medio fere lucie orbe consistit, qui seu ob sui eminentiam, siue ob antiquorum inibi sacrificiorum uel pretiorum frequentiam uel ob idoli ibidem quondam opinatissimi, qui Wig dicebatur, memoriam <b>Wigbergis</b> (ueluti 'Wigi excelsum' aut 'belli mons' seu 'sacrificationis') lingua Danica nuncupatur, ubi ex totis lucie partibus quamsepius non minima multitudo tam de causis communibus tractatura quam et de legum ueritate siue firmitate discutienda simul et stabilienda conuenit</p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>V.6</p> <p>Vulgus autem maligne congregacionis Wendalensium omnes fines terre illius mirabiliter, immo diabolice, contra regem instigant: cateruatim procedentes regias curias inuadunt rerumque prouisoires ibidem edibus exturbabant; omnia inuestigantes oculis auaris inspiciebant, manibus queque proxima diripiebant et vniuersa porcorum more subuertebant. Et ad urbem Akersburch, <b>ubi regaliū gazarum ministri assidebant, concite properabant</b>; sed <b>illi deforis impugnabant</b>, isti deintus sua <b>defendere cupiebant. Multitudine</b> vero <b>irrupencium</b> accrescente, alij extrahebantur, alij <b>pro foribus occidebantur</b>, alij in <b>flumine precipitabantur</b>, alij latebras querentes domibus distractis effugerunt, omni postposita suppellectili.</p>	<p>XXI</p> <p>Verum, ut confirmatio sermonis maligni perficeretur, illustrissimi uiri spretis exhortationibus et piis eius persuationibus postpositis, ferocitatis complicibus uiatim multiplicatis, sediciosa legio ad omne facinus preceps ad urbem prenominatam, <b>ubi regaliū gazarum ministri</b> seu prouisoires <b>assidebant, concite properat</b> et, ut exinde fama insolentie cepte in uniuersum lucie orbem diuulgetur, decertat. Et quid immoror? Stuperes insanientium irruptiones intuens. Quidam namque nudi stratis <b>extrahuntur, pro foribus suffocantur</b>; nonnulli <b>flumine precipitantur</b>; sed et ipsos magnates undecumque inuestigantes persequuntur, dum et istis armis fugiendi recluditur exitus, et illis simul pro foribus hostis assistit et gladius. Decertat ergo cuneus uterque, <b>illi deforis impugnantes</b>, isti deintus se suaque <b>defendere cupientes. Sed multitudine irrupentium</b> continuatim accrescente quidam ipsis etiam uestibus expoliati in arma nudi prosiliunt, alii saucii et ueluti a beluis dilacerati procidunt; nonnulli domibus quoque distractis effugiunt, dehinc latebras quique quam proximas requirunt; quidamque nauibus admissis furori irruentium cedunt, rege cum suis hactenus ab his tumultibus ultra fluuium transposito. Omnibus igitur illinc tam regiis ministris quam et ipsis domesticis exturbatis suppellex cuncta subuertitur, lectisternia distribuuntur, singulorum mansiunculæ dispiciuntur, hospicia inuestigantur, sed et ipsa effodiuntur atria; et, quid quisque predo auarus rapiat seu famelicus degluciat, ipsis adinuicem predonibus altercantibus auaricia procax decertat. Hinc ignobiles quique et rapaces locupletantur, dum et nobiles ab hostili cuneo propriis priuantur et alii saucio quondam late-re acquisitis expoliantur.</p>
<p>V.7</p> <p>Tandem vulgari edicto vniuersaliter tam pedites quam equites regia vestigia insecuntur; et, ne <b>principi religioso refugij locus usquam relinquatur, uesanie</b> vulgi simul et demencie intercursoribus circumquaque diabolo comitante transmissis studiose decertant, ut exemplum magistri Ihesu Christi in his sicut et in alijs discipulus et martir sequatur. De quo dictum est: <b>‘Vulpes foueas</b> habent, et volucres celi <b>nidos; filius autem hominis non habet, vbi caput suum reclinet’.</b></p>	<p>XXIII</p> <p>Aquilonale namque uulgus, ut supra commemorauimus, furiis infernalibus actum, quod sceleris huius auctor et exordium fuisse dinoscitur, iam <b>uesanie</b> sue signa <b>circumquaque</b> denunciando efflauerat et <b>principi religioso effugii locum nusquam relinquebat</b>. Et, heu, cum <b>uulpibus</b> auxilii <b>fouea</b> pateat et aues consortes sibi <b>nidos</b> requirant, filio hominis (id est: Ihesu Christo) famulantes, <b>ubi caput reclinent, non habent</b>.</p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>VI.1 Rex vero absque tumultu aquilonales omnino lucie partes deserens Sleswicensem adiit nautico itinere illinc in <b>Phyoniam profecturus. Puppibus ergo non segniter instructis et necessarijs aduectis, magnificus princeps, lucie furorem</b> pariter et <b>luciam penitus relicturus</b>, per <b>fluuium Slie</b> usque in mare nauigans <b>fluctuagos sinus cum domesticis satellitibus et nouo iam certamine tironibus experiendis ingrediens</b> insulam <b>Pheoniam aduehitur, vbi, dum presentis securitatem quietis requirens non inuenit, sempiternae felicitatis palma et perpetua gloriosi triumphi memoria insigniri promeruit.</b></p>	<p>XXIII-XXIV Ex hinc portum <b>fluminis</b>, qui <b>Slie</b> dicitur, cum suis absque tumultu adiit, nautico itinere cum fesso iam per terras comite <b>Pheoniam profecturus. Puppibus ergo non segniter instructis et necessarijs aduectis magnificus princeps, lucium furorem</b> simul et ipsam <b>luciam penitus relicturus, fluctuagos sinus cum domesticis satellitibus et nouo iam certamine tyronibus experiendis ingrediens Pheonie</b> partibus <b>aduehitur; ubi, dum presentis securitatem quietis requirens non inuenit, sempiternae felicitatis palma et perpetua gloriosi triumphi memoria insigniri promeruit.</b></p>
<p>VI.2 <b>Regis</b> itaque <b>aduentu diuulgato, ut, quod diuina disponebat prouidencia, non serius efficeretur, nocturnis simul et diurnis intercussoribus circumquaque transmissis, multitudo</b> terre illius <b>vulgi coadunata iniquitatis congregat consilia et, ut suis eciam principem religiosum finibus exturbent seu eciam, quod dictu scelus est, vite extorrem efficiant, omni condicit instantia. Ipse autem ad locum precipuum, utpote certaminis, triumphi et repausacionis sue, qui</b> ciuitas <b>Othoniensis dicitur, cum fratribus suis Erico, Benedicto et Swenone, curialibus suis secum comitantibus, proficiscitur, rerum ibidem euentum prestolaturus et, quid suis + consilij consilij admitteret, tractaturus. Sediciosa vero multitudo in dies adaugetur, exploratores curie regali intermittit regiaeque vndique sciscitabatur consilia, et in eum irruendum cum suo comitatu omni decertat instantia.</b></p>	<p>XXV <b>Regis ergo aduentu diuulgato, ut, quod diuina disponebat prouidentia, non serius efficeretur, nocturnis simul et diurnis intercussoribus circumquaque transmissis multitudo uulgi coadunata iniquitatis aggregat consilia et, ut suis etiam principem religiosum finibus exturbent seu, quod dictu scelus est, uite exortem efficiant, omni condicit instantia. Ipse autem ad locum precipuum, utpote certaminis, triumphi et repausacionis sue, qui Othenswi dicitur, cum Erico fratre suo, rege postmodum gloriosissimo, et Suegnone inclito, Benedicto quoque, laboris atque certaminis consorte, curialibus secum comitantibus proficiscitur, rerum ibidem euentum prestolaturus et, quid de suis consilij admitteret, tractaturus. Sediciosa uero multitudo in dies adaugetur et non tam internuntios quam et exploratores curie regali intermittit regiaeque undecumque sciscitatur consilia et ad eum cum suo comitatu deiciendum omni decertat instantia.</b></p>
<p>VI.3 <b>Cuius sedicionis vti princeps et fraudis commentor</b> tyrannus quidam, <b>Pipero</b> nomine, <b>inter eos</b> magis <b>astutus ingenio</b> et fecunditate spiritus inimici, <b>facundus eloquio, regem innocentem fraudulenter adiit; et, ut fidem fraudibus prebeat, legionis insensate furibunda non occultat consilia, que tamen per se quam plurima proponendo haut minime depromit attenuanda.</b> Vnde quasi regi suo fidelis in <b>mensa regia regi proximus assidens, secundum illud prophète: ‘Qui edebat panem meum, magnificauit super me supplantacionem’, regis tandem dapibus farcitus et poculo inebriatus, regalibus est honoratus muneribus.</b></p>	<p>XXV <b>Cuius seditionis uti princeps et fraudis commentor Pipero dictus, inter eos insignissimus, astutus ingenio, facundus eloquio, principem innocentem fraudulenter adit et, ut fidem fraudibus prebeat, legionis insensate furibunda non occultat conducta, que tamen per se quam plurima proponendo haud minime depromit attenuanda. Mense igitur regali et regi proximus assidens (secundum illud Dauiticum: ‘qui edebat panem meum, magnificauit aduersum me supplantationem’), regiis tandem non modo dapibus farcitus et poculo debriatus quam et muneribus honoratus</b></p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>VI.4 Et <b>veluti magistro veritatis, Jude proditori intinctum</b> calici <b>panem porrigendo dicenti: ‘quod facis, fac cicius’</b>, ita exemplo traditoris, accepta licencia ad vulgum redeundi, dominum suum et regem sanctissimum, <b>osculo corde venenato dato</b>, sub pacis pretextu <b>tradidit</b>, ut pacis osculo discipulus traditus magistrum sequeretur veritatis. Nequissimus autem Pipero, <b>hostilibus catheruis occurrens, que a rege perceperat, non pandendo sed peruertendo denunciatur</b>, et, qua cum fraude circumueniant, astute instruendo <b>perorat</b>.</p>	<p>XXV <b>ueluti magistro ueritatis, Iude proditori intinctum panem porrigendo dicenti: ‘quod facis, fac citius’</b>, religioso duci pacis <b>osculo</b> ficto et <b>uenenato corde tradito</b>, sicut ille lucis auctorem et pietatis eruditorem phariseis sumptis argenteis <b>uendidit</b>, sic et iste luce diei relicta (id est: fidei probitate deiecta), infidelitatis tenebris illaqueatus, ut nox nocti non scientiam sed insipientiam indicaturus <b>hostilibus cateruis occurrit et, que a rege perceperat, non pandendo sed peruertendo denunciatur et, qua eum fraude circumueniant, perorat</b>.</p>
<p>VI.5 Cuius persuasionibus <b>sediciosa multitudo</b> satisfaciens contra <b>regem prenominatum</b> conglomerata ad <b>locum regie sedis coaceruatim discurrit</b>. <b>Equorum fremitus, populorum stridor, pressure fragor, armorum collisio ethera tangere</b> videntur; <b>cursus</b> peditum, <b>impetus</b> equitum <b>humum concuciant; puluis solo exurgens in aera, lacius alciusque diffusus, die adhuc superstitute nocturnas tenebras inducit</b>.</p>	<p>XVI <b>Sediciosa</b> uero <b>multitudo</b>, uesanie sue <b>principem</b> iam <b>prememoratum</b> prosecuta, <b>ad locum regie sedis coaceruatim</b> conglomerata <b>discurrit</b>, ad omne nefas preceps intendit. <b>Equorum fremitus et populorum fragor</b> ac <b>armorum collisio ethera tangit; cursus</b> et <b>impetus</b> hominum <b>humum concutit; puluis solo exurgens</b> et <b>in aera altius latiusque diffusus die adhuc superstitute nocturnas tenebras interserit</b> et caligine nebulosa uisus etiam animo obelatorum inuoluit.</p>
<p>VI.6 <b>Porro uespertinali tempore imminente dominus rex</b> more solito uesperas <b>auditurus et iam se suosque</b> sancto martirum regi <b>commendaturus monasterium</b> sancti <b>Albani</b> martiris <b>non longe situm expetit</b>; quem plures nobiliores sui certaminis participes sequuntur, alijs quibusdam <b>latebras, quas poterant, inquirentibus et uite presenti consulentibus</b>.</p>	<p>XXVI <b>Porro uespertinali tempore imminente deuotus heros</b>, uespertinalem sinaxim <b>auditurus et iam se suosque</b> uniuersorum opifici <b>commendaturus, basilicam</b> preciosi <b>martyris Albani</b> <b>haud longe sitam</b> cum fidis solum et laboris consortibus et non tam certaminis quam et premij, ut credi fas est, participibus <b>expetit</b>, reliquis <b>latebras, quas poterant, inquirentibus et uite presenti consulentibus</b>.</p>
<p>VI.7 <b>Hostium vero cuneus circumquaque adueniendo discurrit et tam edes regias quam et atria irruendo occupat. Quidam quoque sacraria, ubi rex religiosus cum suis inerat, irrumpere temptant: alij ualvas ecclesie</b> resolvere, vectes ferreos <b>confringere, nonnulli ignem admittere</b>, omnesque <b>aut uiuos comprehendere aut mortuos</b> relinquere conantur. <b>Sed igne rore superne uirtutis extincto inuictissimi tyrones deintus pro foribus hostibus resistunt, aditum armis non segniter recludentes et pro sui domino gloriose dimicantes</b>.</p>	<p>XXVI <b>Hostilis uero cuneus circumquaque adueniendo occurrit et tam edes regias quam et atria irruendo occupat. Quidam quoque sacraria, ubi dux religiosus cum suis inerat, irrumpere temptant: alii ualvas basilice infringere, nonnulli ignem admittere; ceteri, ut aut uiuos comprehendere uel ut occumbentibus</b> superstent, insistere. <b>Sed igne rore superne uirtutis extincto inuictissimi tirones deintus pro foribus hostibus assistunt, aditum armis non segniter recludentes et pro suo principe gloriosissime dimicantes</b>.</p>
<p>VI.8 <b>Rex</b> uero <b>interea deuotus regem regum non Herodiana fallacia sed Dauitica</b> <b>inquit humilitate: omnium peccatorum</b> suorum penitentiam agens <b>Christum confessus est</b>; tandem <b>sacramento eukaristie</b> corpus pariter et animam <b>muniens aureis argenteisque muneribus altaria ditat, socijs</b> sue passionis <b>hec eadem facientibus et vicissim, ne hosti aditus pateat, armis obsistentibus</b>.</p>	<p>XXVI <b>Rex interea deuotissimus regem sempiternum non Herodiana inquit fallacia sed humilitate Dauitica</b>, se <b>criminibus</b> reum, illum uero uerum uere <b>confitendo deum</b>; et non solum uere et sincera confessioni insistent, immo uitalis <b>communione sacramento</b> se <b>muniens, aureis</b> tanquam <b>et argenteis muneribus ditat altaria, socijs</b> etiam <b>hec eadem perficientibus et uicissim, ne hosti aditus pateat, armis obsistentibus</b>.</p>



Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>VI.9</p> <p><b>Conspirante tandem multitudine vndique accurrente</b> traditor ille <b>Pipero deforis pro foribus astat</b> et regis <b>hactenus</b> hominem <b>fidelissimum</b> quendam verbis la- cessire <b>quasi ad duellum</b> irritans non dubitat. <b>Quo non segniter deintus occurrente, duris alternatim ictibus admissis</b> vterque <b>vulneratur, illo</b> tandem <b>gloriose de- intus occumbente, isto</b> ad euidencioris ulcionis indi- cium viuo ad propria delato. Nam ad domum delatus, <b>acerrimo demone inuasus, vicina queque tam morsu quam manibus inuadit, dirumpit et conterit, ore spumas</b> apri more furiosi <b>eicit, horribiliter clamando vociferatur, vana et inaudita profert, scelus fraudu- lentum euidenter proclamat, ad ultimum lingua denti-</b> bus per medium corrosa et <b>abscisa vitam miserabiliter finiuit.</b></p>	<p>XXVI</p> <p><b>Conspirate tandem</b> legionis <b>multitudine undecumque accurrente</b> et ecclesie parietibus circumquaque insi- stente monstruosus <b>Pipero deforis pro foribus assistit:</b> regiarum gazarum <b>fidelissimum hactenus</b> prouisorem <b>ueluti ad singulare certamen</b> aduocat et, si quid cordis uel uirium assit, sibi ut occurrat, interpellat. <b>Quo haud segniter deintus occurrente duris alternatim ictibus admissis sauciantur, illo deintus gloriose occum- bente, isto</b> ad euiden- tioris ultionis indicium ad mo- dicum superuiuente. Nam domum dehinc <b>delatus et acerrimo demone inuasus uicina queque tam morsu quam manibus inuadere, dirumpere, conterere, ore spumas eicere, horribiliter uociferando acclamare, uana et inaudita proferre, scelus fraudulentum eui- denter edicere, ad ultimum lingua mordicus abscisa uita miserabili terribiliter excedere.</b></p>
<p>VI.10</p> <p><b>At vero hostis pertinax obstinaci insolencia parietibus insistit ecclesie et sagittas cum saxis per aperta immittit;</b> regem <b>lapidibus ut Stephanum tundit, telis ut Sebastianum</b> vulnerat, sacrumque monasterij pauimentum cruoris <b>sanctorum Christi martirum</b> per- fusione <b>consecratur. Verum, ut passionum Christi rex deuotus imitator efficeretur, ueluti dominus in cruce in medio iniquorum positus, sic et ipse inter cuneum aduerse multitudinis constitutus aquam sibi sicienti porrigendam inter furencium tela expecijt. Quam cum quidam pietate motus in vasculo haustam detulisset porrigensque per fenestram regi dedisset, alius hasta intromissa et vase de manibus vtrorumque excusso et aqua simul effusa, regi quidem sitim extinguendi ocium abstulit, sed illi pietatis premium non ademit. Qui vero aquam deiecit, haut longo post tempore vesania actus fonti superimminens, ut pote sitim propriam extincturus, capite tandem in profunda demisso genibusque desuper monstruose distensis spirituque scelesto emisso cadauer ibidem exanime ueluti diuine ulcionis indicium superuenientibus aspiciendum reliquit.</b></p>	<p>XXVII</p> <p><b>At uero hostis pertinax obstinaci insolentia basilice parietibus insistit et cum sagittis saxa per aperta emittit;</b> duceque precipuo tam <b>lapidibus (ut Stephano) tunso</b> quam et <b>telis (ut Sebastiano)</b> saucio edes sacra tam eius quam et sociorum uulneratorum ac demum occisorum cruore perfunditur et, ut ita fatear, <b>preciositate martyrii</b> eorum iterato <b>consecratur. Verum, ut passionum Christi rex deuotus imitator efficeretur, ueluti dominus Ihesus in cruce in medio iniquorum positus, sic et iste inter cuneum aduerse multitudinis constitutus aquam sibi sitienti porrigendam inter furentium tela expetiit. Quam cum quidam pietate motus haustam deferens ei per fenestram porrigeret, alius hasta intromissa et uase de manibus utro- rumque excusso ac simul aqua effusa regi quidem sitim extinguendi ocium ad modicum abstulit, illi uero pietatis premium non ademit. Ille autem haud longo post tempore uesania actus fonti superimminens, utpote sitim propriam extincturus, capite tandem in profunda demisso genibusque desuper monstruose distensis spirituque scelesto ad infima baratri extracto cadauer ibidem exanime ueluti diuine ultionis indicium superuenientibus inspiciendum reliquit.</b></p>
<p>VII.1</p> <p><b>Fortissimis autem regis militibus hostiles acies a foribus monasterij deturbantibus, versi ad orientem sanctuarij, ubi principem deuotissimum precibus insistentem introspexerant, gladijs et securibus postibus secandis et diruendis insistunt, crucemque sacram nec non et capsulas reliquiarum, sanctorum Albani uidelicet et Oswaldi, poste ad ima vergente, solo deiciunt.</b></p>	<p>XXVIII</p> <p><b>Fortissimis igitur heroibus hostiles acies a foribus basilice deturbantibus, ad orientem sanctuarii, ubi principem deuotissimum precibus insistentem introspexerant, uersi gladiis et securibus postibus secandis et diruendis insistunt capsulasque reliquiarum preciosorum martyrum, Albani scilicet necnon et Oswaldi, cum cruce sacra interposita, poste ad ima uergente, solo deiciunt.</b></p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>VII.2</p> <p>Erat enim monasterium ligneum, in honore sancti Albani consecratum, in quo tunc temporis sedes erat episcopalis, que postea ad monasterium beati Kanuti, cuius hodie festum celebramus, insigni de lateribus edificio constructum translata est.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>VII.3</p> <p><b>Sanctissimo</b> igitur <b>rege coram altari</b> deuotissime <b>orante</b>, infelix <b>quidam lancea per fenestram intromissa latus gloriosi martiris Kanuti perforauit, edemque sacram</b> ipsius <b>sanguine cruentat. At ipse, vulnerum Christi non immemor</b>, que pro nobis passus est, beato <b>Benedicto, fratre suo carnali et certaminum collega, vulneribus admodum saucio assistente amplexato et pacis osculo dato, brachijs in modum crucis extensis ante altare domini se prostrauit in terram. Ex lateris namque vulnere vena manante, voce adhuc superstitite dominum interpellat, ac spiritum creatori commendans</b> de presenti seculo Christi palacium perpetuo <b>pausafurus intrauit</b>. Egregia namque vicissitudine mortuo pro se domino beatus Kanutus mortis triumphum obtulit, purpuratusque proprii sanguinis ostro stolam suam dealbavit in sanguine agni.</p>	<p>XXVIII</p> <p>Inter hec celesti sponso secretorum suorum iam proxime conscium futurum ad eternum aduocante cubiculum, <b>rege insignissimo pectore</b> simul ad <b>aram et ore conuerso, quidam</b> ex impiorum caterua <b>lancea per fenestram intromissa latus eius perforat et edem sacram sanguine</b> innocentis <b>cruentat. At ipse, Christi</b> etiam post <b>uulnus exitiabile non immemor, Benedicto fratre suo, certaminum collega, uulneribus admodum saucio assistente amplexato et pacis osculo dato, brachijs in crucis modum extensis</b> membrisque solo <b>ante aram sacram expositis, sanguinis uena ex uulnere lateris emanante, uoce adhuc superstitite Ihesum interpellat ac spiritum creatori commendans</b> preciosi glebam cadaueris sanguine consecratam relinquit et secretum misericordie sempiternae ab his tumultibus perpetuo <b>pausaturus intrauit</b>.</p>
<p>VII.4</p> <p><b>Constantissimi vero milites rege interempto non hostibus tantummodo non cedunt, verum etiam adinuicem exhortando animos vires exercitare incitabant: per aperta irruentibus non segniter occurrendo armis arma viriliter referebant</b> ipsisque <b>cedentibus vicem</b> rependebant, gloriose magis occumbere quam tanto principe <b>amisso eligentes superviuere. Quibus, multitudine hostili cateruatim accrescente, non tantum stratis sed et, vicissim opprimentibus aduersarijs, suffocatis, edes sacra cruore</b> martirum <b>aspergitur, templi solum vnde sanguinis irrigatur, propheticum impletur, quo dicitur: ‘Venerunt gentes in hereditatem tuam, polluerunt templum sanctum tuum’; et alibi: ‘Effuderunt sanguinem sanctorum tuorum in circuitu’.</b></p>	<p>XXVIII</p> <p><b>Constantissimi uero commilitones duce interempto non modo hostibus non cedere, uerum etiam adinuicem exhortando animos incitare, vires exercere, per aperta irruentibus haud segniter occurrere, armis arma uiriliter referre, cadentibus uicem amisso eligentes superuiuere. Quibus, multitudine hostili cateruatim accrescente, non tam stratis quam et, uicissim opprimentibus aduersarijs, suffocatis edes sacra cruore conspergitur, templi solum unda sanguinis irrigatur, et illud propheticum impletur, quo dicitur: ‘Venerunt gentes in hereditatem tuam, polluerunt templum sanctum tuum, effuderunt sanguinem sanctorum tuorum in circuitu’.</b></p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>VII.5 Predictis autem facinoribus perpetratis <b>prophanorum cuneus</b> plura adiecit. <b>Non enim tantum atria regalia</b> sed etiam <b>angulatim perscrutantur sacraria</b>, omniaque ibi inuenta diripientes etiam <b>consecrata</b> Christi <b>altaribus ornamenta</b>, ut <b>inter se partirentur, distrahebant</b>, sicut scriptum est: <b>‘Dispersi sunt lapides sanctuarii in capite omnium platearum’</b>. Dehinc ciuitatem totam <b>circumquaque perlustrantes, ne quis regie stirpis, utpote sceleris ultor, superstes relinqueretur</b>, prouide precauere satagebant.</p>	<p>XXIX Duce igitur prestantissimo cum inuictissimis athleticis infra sacras edes interempto, eodemque sacrario occisorum cruore non tam uiolato, immo iterato, ut credi fas est, <b>consecrato, prophanorum cuneus non tam atria regalia</b> quam et ipsa <b>angulatim perscrutatur sacraria</b>, dona aris nuper imposita diripiens et pridem admissa et habita longiusque conseruata non relinquens, ut, que sacris <b>distrahebant altaribus, ornandis inter se partirentur</b> nuribus, ut illud propheticum etiam litteraliter impleretur: <b>‘Dispersi sunt lapides sanctuarii in capite omnium platearum’</b>. Dehinc regie sedis locum <b>circumquaque</b> curiose <b>perlustrantes</b> et, <b>ne quis regie stirpis, utpote sceleris ultor, superstes relinqueretur</b></p>
<p>VII.6 Tandem beatum <b>Benedictum, preciosi martiris et regis fratrem germanum conlegamque certaminis, ab inuestigantibus adhuc superviuere et proximo seruatum hospicio cognoscunt adesse</b>. Quo precipiti cateruatim cursu irruentes regium iuuenem inuentum, <b>vulneribus admodum sauciatum, pedibus extrahentes in medium impietatis conuenticulum producunt, ut secundum apostoli dictum ‘spectaculum mundo’ mundique principis amministratoribus efficeretur, et per eos omne ministerium iniquitatis perficeretur</b>. Cumque, quo modo uel quali eum morte perderent, <b>pertractarent, iam, veluti venatoribus de raptu dissidentibus, membratim distractum et semiuuium, alij lanceis corpus ipsius terre crudeliter affigunt, alij securibus, nonnulli gladijs mutilant et occidunt; sicque perpluribus vulneribus uita exemptum ac minutatim per membra secatum relinquunt</b>. Et cum emisisset spiritum, martirij consecutus est premium.</p>	<p>XXIX prouide precauere cupientes <b>Benedictum, tam preciosi iam martyris</b> quam <b>et regis fratrem germanum conlegamque certaminum, ab inuestigantibus adhuc superuiuere et</b> quam <b>proximo seruatum hospicio cognoscunt adesse</b>. Quo precipiti cateruatim cursu irruentes et regium iuuenem inuentum uulneribus <b>admodum saucium</b>, quod dictu nefas est, <b>pedibus extrahentes in medium impietatis sue conuenticulum admittunt, ut secundum apostoli dictum ‘spectaculum mundo’ mundique principis administratoribus efficeretur, et per eos omne ministerium iniquitatis perficeretur</b>. Cumque, quo modo uel quali eum morte perderent, <b>pertractarent, iam, ueluti uenatoribus de raptu dissidentibus, membratim distractum etiam semiuuium</b>, ut nichil crudelitatis imperfectum relinquerent, <b>lanceis alii nobile corpus terre affigunt, quidam securibus, nonnulli gladiis impetunt; et, ut nullus prophani sceleris expers existeret, quod quisque manu proximum arripuerat, adiciunt et mille uulneribus uita exemptum ac minutatim per membra secatum relinquunt,</b></p>
<p>VIII.1 <b>Sedatis itaque prememoratis tumultibus pariter et iniquitatis executoribus a templo discedentibus, clerus ibidem deo deuotus fideliumque laycorum ceterus humanitatis officio insistentes cesorum corpora curant, regia quidem membra germanique ipsius in ecclesia sancti Albani recondentes, gloriosorumque martirum et militum cadauera in atrio eiusdem ecclesie, angulo occidentali simul et aquilonali, reseruanda terre matri commendantes.</b></p>	<p>XXX <b>Prememoratis ergo sedatis tumultibus et impietatis executoribus a templo diuino simul et a deo recedentibus, clerus ibidem deuotus, fidelibus aggregatis, humanitatis officio insistentes casorum corpora curant, regia quidem membra germanique ipsius infra basilicam certaminis ipsorum in singulis loculis recondentes gloriosorumque militum cadauera in atrio eiusdem basilice, angulo occidentali simul et aquilonali, in diem resurrectionis reseruanda terre matri commendantes.</b></p>

Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>VIII.2</p> <p>Remerator autem omnium bonorum Christus Ihesus, diligentibus se bona preparans innumerabilia, ‘que oculus non vidit, nec auris audiuit, nec in cor hominis ascendit etc.’, beatissimi regis et martiris Kanuti pariter et fratris ipsius, sancti Benedicti ducis, meritis et precibus miraculorum signa multiplicat.</p>	N/A
<p>VIII.3</p> <p>Erat enim quidam, Esbernus nomine, in Fyonia natus, qui ab infancia pedum gressus non nouerat, sed cruribus retortis, poblitis reflexis (sure coxis, piante clunibus adherebant), gibbosus eciam, capite in terram demisso, brachijs et genibus quadrupedum gerens similitudinem reptitabat. Hic in ecclesia sancti Kanuti orans deuote in vigilia ipsius sancti martiris, choro in horis uespertinalibus hoc responsorium inchoante: ‘Iustum deduxit dominus per vias rectas’, spinali eius erecto, gibbo adnichilato, cruribus extensis, ordinante benignitatis vberrate beati regis Kanuti sanitatem recepit Hunc vidi ordinatum, et missam de beato Kanuto dicentem audiui, ego ipse, cuius manus dextra uobis hec scripsit legenda.</p>	N/A
<p>VIII.4</p> <p>Alium eciam vidi simili modo contractum, cruribus reflexis brachijsque eodem modo replicatis, totam Fioniam triginta annis et amplius reda circueuntem, qui, omnibus terre illius melioribus notus, plurimisque in die ascensionis domini in monasterio sancti Kanuti astantibus et ipsum sic contractum videntibus pariter et neruorum ex distensione confractioes audientibus, choro cantante ‘Ascendens Christus in altum’, sanitatem per merita ipsius Christi martiris adeptus est Multa eciam alia operatus est dominus plurimis locis meritis et precibus beati martiris suffragantibus: leprosos mundando, demones effugando, ydropicos, paraliticos, cecos, surdos, mutos et claudos, plurimos eciam diuersis morborum generibus laborantes sanitati restituebat, cui est honor et gloria in secula seculorum. Amen.</p>	N/A
<p>IX.1</p> <p><b>Venerabilis vero deo dilecti regis prudentissima coniunx animi nobilitatem vultu pretendens, proponens karissimi coniugis iam preciosa membra — — aduocatum apud deum habere — — non mente recessit.</b></p>	<p>XXXI</p> <p><b>Venerabilis uero deo dilecti regis et prudentissima coniunx</b>, inter pressuras imminentes <b>animi nobilitatem uultu pretendens</b> et de se situque suo admodum <b>prospiciens, carissimi coniugis iam preciosa membra</b> a strepitu incursantium hactenus persecutorum eripere et secum ad natiuos sibi terminos aduecta Gandauis scilicet, Blandiniensi cenobio apostolorum principi consecrato, honore decenti disponebat recondere.</p>



Passio II	Aelnoth
<p>IX.2</p> <p><b>Requieuit autem rex deo dilectus Kanutus et martir egregius eodem in loco annis fere</b> nouem, Olauo — — prediximus, egritudine fractus, veluti virtutum non electus inspector, vita simul et regno excessit.</p>	<p>XXXII</p> <p><b>Requieuit autem rex deo dilectus Canutus et martyr egregius eodem in loco annis</b> bis quaternis et mensibus fere ter ternis, Olauo regni eius successore imperante</p>
<p>IX.3</p> <p>Hic autem Olauus de captiuitate comitis Flandrie post discessum beati Kanuti per Nicolaum, fratrem eius, postea successorem, liberatus est. Posuit enim se ipsum pro fratre obsidendi, ut ille libere in Daniam regnaturus repatriaret. Qui cum regnasset, fraterne deuotionis immemor pincerne Pharaonis more fratrem redimere contradixit. Sicut enim ille Joseph in carcere, ita iste Nicolaum reliquit in captiuitate.</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>IX.4</p> <p>Vnde, ipsius <b>regis Olau</b>i peccatis exigentibus pariter et vulgi Danie, regem et martirem Kanutum innocenter occidentis, omnibus diebus regni ipsius ager frugibus sterilis,--- surrexit, tociusque exercitus electione — — potencia. Cecis namque visus — — expetendo.</p>	<p>XXXII</p> <p>Illo autem e terra leuato, euidentibusque signis eum dei sanctum fore declarato, <b>rex Olauus</b>, quem eius regni successorem prediximus, quo etiam regnante fames et pestilentia, morbus et hostium metus Dacie terminos occupauerat</p>
<p>X.1</p> <p>Rex vero prudentissimus — — ut, qui pridem veluti vocabulo barbaro <b>Knut nuncupabatur</b>, eum <b>iam ob sensus caniciem, gestorum maturitatem</b>, vite sinceritatem pariter <b>et pro eo</b>, quod eum <b>in canone sanctorum iam commemorandum apostolica</b> decernebat auctoritas, <b>Kanutum</b> appellari instituit, <b>qui veluti inter gemmas preciosas effulgens carbunculus non tantum patria imitari studia</b> sed <b>et proprii monimenti gesta celebra posteris tradere conabatur</b>.</p>	<p>XXXIII + VI</p> <p>Rerum igitur gestarum apicibus in palam prolatis atque perlectis, regiisque mandatis ab internuntiis facunde peroratis, immensas omnipotenti grates exsoluunt, qui in diuersis mundi partibus electos suos glorificando manifestat; ac ita demum communi consilio et pari omnium decreto regem quondam gloriosum beatorum in celis iam martyrum ascisci decernunt collegio, cum martyrii gloria nominis etiam dignitate adaucta, ut, qui pridem ueluti uocabulo imperfecto et ligamine insoluto <b>Cnut nuncupabatur</b>, <b>iam ob sensus canitiem et gestorum maturitatem ac pro eo</b> quam maxime, <b>quod iam in canone sanctorum connumerandus</b> adiudicabatur, <b>Canutus</b> diceretur.</p> <p>Gloriosi igitur Suegnomagni regis inclita soboles licet omnis paternę uirtutis industriam innata sibi emularetur prudentia, insignissimus noster Cnuto — quem sedes postmodum <b>apostolica</b>, summo pontifice presidente quampluribusque tam presulibus quam et religiosi ordinis uiris assidentibus, seu propter sensus caniciem uel uite sinceritatem et candorem seu pro hoc, quod eum in canone sanctorum connumerandum decernebat, Canutum censi instituit — <b>ueluti inter gemmas preciosas effulgens carbunculus non tam patria imitari studia quam et proprii monimenti gesta posteris conabatur tradere celebra</b>.</p>

<p>X.2 Sic enim quondam <b>Abrahe</b> — — extollens assidua, qui — — deposcentes.</p>	<p>XXXIII Et pulchre martyr preciosus ac deo dilectus Canutus ad instar <b>Abrahe</b> uocabuli amplificatione insignitur, qui eiusdem Abrahe sinu exceptus eterne quietis felicitate perfrui signis euidentibus approbatur.</p>
<p>XI.1 <b>Regina eciam Ethela</b> — — Erics, congregatis vniuersis — — et opem exquirendo petentibus efficiuntur per martirum regem probabilia, cui est honor et gloria in secula seculorum. Amen.</p>	<p>XXXV <b>Regina etiam Ethela</b> prudentissima, eius hactenus, ut pretulimus, coniunx nobilissima, iam ultra Italia terminos Rogeri, Appuliensium ducis illustrissimi, thalami comes effecta, tantis et adeo desideratis de carissimo quondam coniuge rumoribus auditis superno bonorum auctori debita referens, preciosa dilecti sui pignora preciosis transmissis donis adornat, ut, cui hic coniugii pudici affectu decenter inheserat, eum iam a seculo sequestratum ac superis associatum et mente recoleret et, quem presentia non poterat, muneribus transmissis decentibus honoraret.</p>





The remains of the Cnut the Holy and his shrine in St Canute's Church, Odense. Photo: Peter Helles, 2017.



