

## 9 Historical transfers

### Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi and the transformations of his late eighteenth-century histories of Denmark and Norway

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The printer and bookseller Christian Iversen (1748–1827) was apparently not a prey to doubt in January 1776, when he advertised the subscription list for a history in Danish of the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway and the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. He was convinced that such a work would find buyers, or, as he put it, “lovers of history” willing to “support a venture so beneficial for the fatherland”.<sup>1</sup> Signing up for these books would not only provide the reader with the latest, most accurate and comprehensive histories of the kingdoms and duchies under the control of the House of Oldenburg, but would also be an act of patriotism, “helping to bring about” a work that would benefit the common good.<sup>2</sup> It was only natural then, that Iversen promised to print the names and titles of all subscribers in the first volume. He would put their love of country on display.

As Iversen also made clear, the historical works he was advertising were translations, and his appeal to patriotism stands out when seen in relation to the originals. The main part, the histories of the kingdoms of Denmark and Norway, was to be based on a two-volume work written in German by a professor at the Gymnasium in Lüneburg, Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi (1735–1802). They were not national histories as such, but part of a popular German universal history, printed by Johan Justus Gebauer’s publishing house in Halle.<sup>3</sup> This series had itself started out as a translation of an English universal history, edited by the Halle theologian Sigmund Jacob Baumgarten (1706–1757), before criticism of the English original and its German rendition made Gebauer commission new editions by historians such as Gebhardi. It is a truly remarkable example of the exchange and circulation of historical thought in Enlightenment Europe.<sup>4</sup> As Monika Baár has shown, it was not uncommon for histories produced in this series to be translated and transformed into national histories outside the German lands.<sup>5</sup> This happened with histories of Hungary and a range of other principalities and territories as well. The different demands of the two genres, universal history and national history, did not prove prohibitive. However, the particular historical circumstances under which the transformations took place still crucially shaped each of these

intellectual exchanges. In the case of Gebhardi's histories, they were bundled together with a translation of the histories of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein by the historian Wilhelm Ernst Christiani, a professor in Kiel. They were to be national histories for a composite monarchy, at a point in time when the men in power at the court in Copenhagen were particularly receptive toward attempts to forge a common patriotic identity in the aftermath of the Struensee affair and its inflammatory effects on Danish and Norwegian national sentiments. In order to grasp the dynamics of this transfer, we need to pay close attention to the contexts in which it occurred. Christian Iversen surely knew what he was doing when communicating, not only with possible readers, but with the authorities as well.

This chapter is a study of the transfer and transformations of Gebhardi's histories of Denmark and Norway as they traveled from the German lands to Denmark-Norway in the second half of the eighteenth century. They were released in Danish in considerably revised and enlarged form, in eight volumes between 1777 and 1798, and in a series that also included six volumes on the histories of the duchies.<sup>6</sup> Johan Ernst Heilmann (1735–1800), a clergyman with literary interests living close to Christian Iversen in Odense, translated most of them, but after the publishing venture passed from Iversen to Søren Gyldendal in Copenhagen in 1784, others were brought in to translate as well. Up to now, Gebhardi himself has gone below the radar of German scholars interested in eighteenth-century historiography, and has ended up in the shadow of prominent figures such as Johann Christoph Gatterer (1727–1799) and August Ludwig Schlözer (1735–1809),<sup>7</sup> nor has he received much attention from Danish historians either. The exception is Casper Paludan-Müller, who has provided a brief overview of his translated Danish history.<sup>8</sup> Apart from that, the fact that his work is a translation, written by a foreigner, seems to have been enough to exclude him from further consideration.<sup>9</sup> I shall argue that paying more attention to it offers a way to study the links and gauge the distance between the historical cultures of Denmark-Norway and the German lands. Gebhardi was a mediator who straddled the borders of these worlds. On a general level, the many connections between Denmark and the German lands are well-known, especially from a Danish perspective. Schleswig-Holstein, as well as Copenhagen, functioned as a hub for the flow and exchange of goods, people and ideas.<sup>10</sup> Yet we know little of what this meant for historical writing in the eighteenth century. From a German perspective, it is clear that the university in Göttingen was a center for the study of Eastern and Northern Europe in the eighteenth century.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the shift from a broad understanding of "Norden", of the North, influenced by the ancients, to a modern distinction between Northern and Eastern Europe owed much to scholars from Göttingen.<sup>12</sup> Nevertheless, what we know of these developments is mostly based on their involvement with the histories and societies of the peoples of Central and Eastern Europe. Their contact and exchanges with Scandinavian scholars, and especially Dano-Norwegian ones, remains somewhat in the dark. The fate of Gebhardi's work offers a chance to shed some new light on this topic.

### Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi and the *Allgemeine Welthistorie*

Gebhardi was born in Lüneburg in the duchy of Braunschweig-Lüneburg. He was the son of Johan Ludwig Levin Gebhardi, a historian, genealogist and professor at the local Gymnasium and Ritterakademie, and received his early education at that institution. Following in his father's footsteps, Gebhardi eventually obtained a position as professor and settled at the Gymnasium in Lüneburg,<sup>13</sup> but before that, he studied at the Georgia Augusta in Göttingen and traveled abroad, staying for four years in Schleswig and Copenhagen as a tutor in a private household,<sup>14</sup> familiarizing himself with the Nordic languages and with Nordic history. As a historian, he published early on a history of the St. Michaelis convent in Lüneburg,<sup>15</sup> and like his father, he also wrote genealogical treatises, publishing a three-volume history of the German hereditary nobility.<sup>16</sup> His most substantial output, however, was devoted to different forms of universal history. In addition to the two volumes on the history of Denmark and Norway, he contributed studies of Hungary, Wallachia, Moldavia, Transylvania, Lithuania, and Prussia.<sup>17</sup> Several of these were translated, not just into Danish, but into Hungarian and Slavic languages as well.<sup>18</sup>

In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, universal history, the genre to which Gebhardi's histories were a contribution, had been closely linked to the various European Churches, confessional struggles and theological concerns. In Protestant Northern Europe, the humanist Philip Melanchthon's Latin reworking of Johann Carion's medieval world chronicle provided the model for such historical writing. Melanchthon used the ancient and biblical scheme of Four Monarchies to organize and assign meaning to world events, and for him, history took on the character of the Christian history of salvation. History unfolded according to God's preordained plan and the troubles of Melanchthon's own time, the persecution of Protestants, the position of the Catholic Church, and the threat from the Ottomans, served as a sign for him that the last days were approaching. In the Catholic South, the French bishop and court preacher Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet applied an equally prominent theological framework to universal history toward the end of the seventeenth century in his *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (1681). Bossuet, who interpreted history as a struggle between God and the Devil, saw the hand of God in the fortunes of the Catholic Church and its secular allies, especially the French monarchy. He wrote history to defend the faith and assert the authority of Scripture.

In the eighteenth century, the varying theological concerns that had marked the writing of universal history became less conspicuous. Historical change could more easily be explicated in terms of causal mechanisms, rather than with reference to some divine plan, and the peoples, empires and geographical areas covered in universal histories were less constrained by Old Testament history and schemes such as that of the Four Monarchies. Historians could more freely integrate perspectives and knowledge accumulated from increasing contacts with the rest of the world. As is well known, Voltaire began his universal

history, the *Essai sur les mœurs et l'esprit des nations* (1756), with China and included treatments of India and Persia as well. However, the interpretative pattern he and many other philosophical historians of the eighteenth century applied—one of progress, especially within the arts and sciences—still served to focus his work on Europe. Other forms of eighteenth-century universal histories were, in a sense, more universal and an impetus in this regard came from England,<sup>19</sup> with a large-scale historiographical enterprise that is important for understanding Gebhardi's career as a historian. The English *Universal History* was primarily a commercial venture, initiated by publishers and written by a group of mostly unknown jobbing writers.<sup>20</sup> Conceived as truly universal in scope, both spatially and temporally, it was an extremely sprawling and voluminous compilation, published in sixty-four volumes between 1736 and 1765. The *Universal History* was divided into an ancient and a modern part, and it became something of a historical archive or library. There was no one historical idea behind this venture, which consisted of contributions from so many different authors. At any rate, the *Universal History* clearly satisfied a significant demand for historical instruction in the eighteenth century. Several editions in different formats were released, and the publishers, William Guthrie and John Gray, even oversaw an abridged version. It reached a diverse audience and proved a great success.

Both the *Universal History* and the abridged version published by Guthrie and Gray led to translations and adaptations, both single volumes and full-scale enterprises, in continental Europe.<sup>21</sup> The somewhat low scholarly quality of some of the volumes in the English original seems to have been a concern to several European editors, who equipped their editions with corrections in introductory essays and in footnotes. In Germany, the influential theologian Sigmund Baumgarten at the University of Halle chose to translate, edit and annotate an already annotated Dutch adaptation of the *Universal History* on behalf of Gebauer. Baumgarten's interest in history was apologetic. While he did not impose biblical interpretative patterns on civil history, as many Protestant historians had done before him, he sought to use history to support the authority of Scripture against freethinkers, especially through historical investigations of sacred history.<sup>22</sup> While Baumgarten was editor, he therefore focused his efforts on the ancient part of the universal history. Upon his death, Baumgarten's former student, the theologian Johann Salomo Semler (1725–1791), took over as editor and carried on the project in the spirit of his former teacher.

Baumgarten's and Semler's strategy of improving deficiencies in the English original through critical introductions and emendations in footnotes had been contentious for some time, when the volume on Russia appeared in 1765. At that point, August Ludwig Schlözer, who in 1769 became professor of Russian history and literature at the university in Göttingen, brought things to a head. He wrote a highly critical review in the *Göttingische Anzeigen von gelehrten Sachen* (hereafter: GAS) and questioned the approach of the German *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte*.<sup>23</sup> As subscribers started to

withdraw, Semler resigned as editor and the publisher discontinued the series. Gebauer then announced a *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Weltgeschichte* with a promise of not just translations, but up-to-date scholarly work, written by German historians. The Northern and Eastern European lands were the areas with which the revived series began. Schlözer seems to have acted as a consultant to Gebauer in this process, and he was hired to write an introduction to Northern history. Johann Christoph Gatterer, professor of history at the University of Göttingen, was likewise involved, agreeing to assist the publisher and use his network, established through his *Historisches Institut*, to help recruit scholars to write the new histories.<sup>24</sup>

Gebhardi was one of the authors who came in at this point for the *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Weltgeschichte*. Since Schlözer's proposed introduction appeared late, in 1771, Gebhardi's histories of Denmark and Norway were the first volumes in the new series when they were published in 1768 and 1770. Not surprisingly, given the commercial aspect of this venture, both were also released in a separate edition for those who did not subscribe to the universal history.<sup>25</sup> Gebauer wanted to get the most out of the histories he commissioned. A further indication of this is the fact that an abridged one-volume version was published a few years later, in 1774.<sup>26</sup> At the same time, as Gebhardi made clear, he had revised and improved both editions in order to take into account recent work by contemporary Danish and Norwegian historians.<sup>27</sup> He thus provided a scholarly justification for the proliferation of his Dano-Norwegian histories as well, and this helped establish Gebhardi as an authority on the history of Denmark and Norway in the German lands. The prominent Norwegian historian Gerhard Schøningh praised "the learned Professor Gebhardi" already in 1771 as someone who had done a great service by increasing knowledge of Norwegian history abroad.<sup>28</sup>

### **Gebhardi's German histories of Denmark and Norway**

As I have suggested, Gebhardi's German history of Denmark and Norway was very much regnal or national in character, in spite of being part of a universal history. He focused on politics and organized his books into separate sections for the two realms, beginning with the history of Norway until the Union of Kalmar of 1397, then moving to a similar treatment of Denmark during the same period. In practice, he composed two separate regnal histories for this period, held together primarily by the preface and by the fact that they were in the same volume and the same series. This was in line with the compilatory technique that marked the *Universal History* since its inception, and is one reason why it was relatively easy to select particular volumes and convert them into stand-alone works. For the period from the Kalmar-Union of 1397 to the reign of King Frederik V (r. 1748–1766), the matter was, in a sense, even more straight forward for Gebhardi. As the monarchy resided in Copenhagen and Norway was without independent state institutions in the early modern period, he classified this era as part of the

history of the Danish realm. For the kind of political history Gebhardi practiced, there simply were very few histories to tell about Norway after the kingdom lost its independence.

In spite of his focus on politics, Gebhardi did try to broaden the thematic scope of his histories. Before his narratives commenced, he offered a survey of the geography of each realm and statistical accounts of their present state. Again, this had been a common way for historians to open ‘national’ or regnal histories since the seventeenth century.<sup>29</sup> Gebhardi was once again following established conventions. In the 1774 edition, he had enlarged this section and added “historical statistics” as well, an extensive analysis of the forms of government, religion, agriculture, trade, customs and manners of the Norwegians and Danes in ancient times but also with a diachronic perspective highlighting historical change in these areas.<sup>30</sup> Thus, he moved beyond politics and into social, economic and cultural conditions. In so doing, Gebhardi clearly hoped to impart some more general lessons to his readers. As he wrote in his preface to the first volume:

For the history of Norway, when accounts from Greenland are included, does not solely impart a truthful image of man in his natural state, before the formation of societies and lordships and before the development of arts. It teaches us also with greater certainty and clarity than the histories of many other peoples, in what ways the ancestors of humanity have peopled desolate places, founded societies and republics, and finally overturned and transformed them into monarchies.<sup>31</sup>

Gebhardi tried at this point to emphasize aspects of the history of humanity that the history of Norway was particularly well suited to illuminate. His work was not only relevant for those who wanted to know more about Norway but also for others with other historical interests. He alluded to more abstract and generalized forms of historical writing that in different guises were becoming popular in the eighteenth century, like the *Geschichte der Menschheit* of Isak Iselin, or Scottish conjectural history like that of Adam Ferguson and Lord Kames. Continuing his list of the usefulness and relevance of Norwegian history, he also pointed to more specific mechanisms at work in European history:

Furthermore, it demonstrates how Christianity in the Middle Ages often was introduced to the pagans with deception, or through the use of violence, and idolatry thus extinguished among them. How the most perfect state gradually by numerous uprisings, civil wars, political tricks, insults and the effects of self-interest has been brought to the most felicitous and best constitution.<sup>32</sup>

Through these remarks, which ended in customary panegyrics of Dano-Norwegian absolutism, Gebhardi demonstrated his familiarity with a kind of

philosophical reflection that marked some of the most celebrated works of history during the Enlightenment.<sup>33</sup> Once his narrative commenced, however, such more general and comparative insights were not particularly prominent. At that point, accounting for the course of events and identifying the causal mechanisms that explained historical change, took center stage. Gebhardi focused on getting the facts right, and he seems to have left more general “reasoning” to his readers.

This abstention from philosophical reflection that marked the Lüneburg historian’s German histories of Denmark and Norway seems to have been a conscious decision. It was mirrored in the scholarly ideals introduced in the prefaces as well. Since Gebhardi’s two volumes were the first to appear after the responsibility of editing the *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte* had moved from Halle to Göttingen, Gebhardi was setting a new standard, one which not only reflected upon himself but also on the new editors. Gatterer wrote prefaces to both of Gebhardi’s two volumes,<sup>34</sup> and in the first preface, he emphasized Gebhardi’s knowledge of Danish and Norwegian historical scholarship, as well as of contemporary Danish state and society.<sup>35</sup> He mentioned Gebhardi’s stay in Copenhagen and sought to bolster his credibility as a witness. Gatterer also underlined Gebhardi’s commitment to telling the truth, claiming: “It is possible to write a more eloquent history of Denmark and Norway, but I do not believe even a Dane can write a more truthful one”.<sup>36</sup> Accuracy and certainty were more important than rhetoric and oratory. These priorities were endorsed and given a positive spin by reviewers as well, by Schlözer and by another Göttingen professor with an interest in Northern history, Johann Phillip Murray.<sup>37</sup> They were also, not least, in line with Gebhardi’s own self-presentation as a historian. In his own preface, he listed a range of different purposes for which historians could write history, before concluding that nothing was more important than striving through historical criticism to tell the truth about the past.<sup>38</sup> Demonstrating his commitment to this ideal, Gebhardi went on to provide a twenty-page introduction to Danish and Norwegian historical scholarship and erudition in the manner of *historia litteraria*. Thus, he sought to further bolster his authority as the author of these histories.<sup>39</sup>

Truth, accuracy and historical criticism were key ideals of many historians working in Göttingen and its hinterlands. The espousal of such values is one reason why some modern scholars have spoken of a Göttingen school of historical writing centered on Schlözer and Gatterer.<sup>40</sup> Gebhardi had studied in Göttingen, became a member of Gatterer’s *Historisches Institut*, and eventually contributed heavily to the GAS.<sup>41</sup> He clearly had links and commonalities with the Göttingen historians. Some scholars have been skeptical of such labels, however, stressing the disagreements and different institutional ties that marked the relationship between “members” of this school,<sup>42</sup> and in the case of Gebhardi, neither his broad adherence to the same historiographical tenets as Gatterer and Schlözer, nor his collaboration with them, shielded him from criticism. It is telling that while Gatterer wrote prefaces to Gebhardi’s histories,

he mainly used these prefaces to publish an otherwise unrelated treatise on the use of historical maps.<sup>43</sup> He kept a certain distance, and criticism of Gebhardi's work appeared in the journal Gatterer edited, *Allgemeine Historische Bibliothek*. A contributing factor in this regard might be that Gebhardi not only was familiar with Nordic history and historical sources but also absorbed some of the scholarly positions of contemporary Nordic historians. What estranged him somewhat from the Göttingen historians might very well have been the same as what endeared him to his Danish and Norwegian colleagues, helping his work gain acceptance in Denmark-Norway.

### **Dano-Norwegian and German historical exchanges**

Gebhardi had befriended the historian, royal archivist and founding father of *Det kongelige danske Selskab for Fædrelandets Historie og Sprog* (Royal Danish Society for the Promotion of Language and Letters), Jacob Langebek (1715–1775),<sup>44</sup> while he was in Copenhagen, and he kept in contact with him. Langebek had a central place in the Dano-Norwegian historical world in the mid-eighteenth century. He had been the protégé of the university professor and royal librarian, archivist and historiographer Hans Gram (1685–1748), and he was heir to an erudite and philologically inclined historical tradition in Denmark-Norway going back to Ole Worm. Langebek devoted his labors to editing and publishing medieval Danish documents and historical treatises, and he was an important interlocutor and patron for the two foremost Dano-Norwegian historians of the 1760s and 1770s, the previously mentioned Gerhard Schøning (1722–1780), who was professor of history and eloquence at Sorø Academy, and his friend and collaborator, the Danish historian Peter Frederik Suhm (1728–1798), later to become royal historiographer. Foreign historians interested in Danish history also sought his advice. He assisted the Swedish historian Sven Lagerbring, and he seems to have played a similar role in the case of Gebhardi, helping him keep abreast of Dano-Norwegian scholarship and introducing him to men like Schøning and Suhm.<sup>45</sup> Gebhardi had sent his manuscript to Langebek before it was printed, and he had received his comments as well as improvements from Schøning and Suhm.

The two latter historians were of particular importance to Gebhardi, since they, like him, worked on regnal histories of Norway and Denmark.<sup>46</sup> Schøning's unfinished three-volume *Norges Riges Historie* (*History of the Realm of Norway*) was released between 1771 and 1780, while Suhm's fourteen volumes on *Historien af Danmark* (*History of Denmark*) appeared between 1781 and 1828. Given that the two Dano-Norwegian historians were engaged in similar historical endeavors to those of Gebhardi, it might seem surprising that they did not see him as more of a competitor. However, there is much to suggest that, in the event, they saw him as occupied with a different, albeit compatible, historical project. The difference in terms of the size or length of their regnal histories, of Gebhardi's two volumes compared to Schøning and Suhm's seventeen, is just one indication in this regard.



Schøning and Suhm saw the Lüneburg historian as a popularizer of Danish and Norwegian history for a foreign audience. As Schøning explained with reference to Gebhardi, the purpose of the universal history did not allow “the admirable man” to “elaborate or go into details”.<sup>47</sup> He had to be brief, while they themselves clearly preferred writing more at length. Furthermore, Schøning and Suhm were convinced of the need to probe the distant prehistorical Nordic past and tackle the many difficult historical issues in that period, before they could commence their regnal narratives. Whereas Gebhardi “did not have the opportunity to go to the most ancient testimonies himself”,<sup>48</sup> Schøning and Suhm spent a considerable amount of time in the 1760s and 1770s writing erudite and critical articles and books concerning Old Norse-Icelandic literature and other historical sources relevant for ancient Northern history.<sup>49</sup> Gebhardi read these works and referenced them dutifully. His tone was deferential when he commented on the writings of what he called his “Nordic benefactors”.<sup>50</sup>

Another factor that was most likely helpful in the relationship between Gebhardi and Schøning and Suhm was the familiarity of the latter two with the *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte* and the historical worlds of Halle and Göttingen. The ancient part of German universal history was taught at the University of Copenhagen, and the two might have read the compilation when they studied in the Danish capital during the 1740s. They first met later on, in Trondheim in Norway, and their first collaborative work, *Forsøg til Forbedringer i den gamle Danske og Norske Historie (Attempts at Improvements in Old Danish and Norwegian History, 1757)*, was an attempt to provide a Danish equivalent to the previously mentioned Sigmund Baumgarten’s translation of a different English enterprise, a biographical compilation.<sup>51</sup> A few years later, Suhm wrote several long articles commenting on the German version of the English universal history and the work of “the learned Doctor Baumgarten” in the proceedings of *Det Trondhiemske Selskab (The Trondheim Society)*, a precursor to the Royal Norwegian Society of Sciences and Letters, newly founded in Trondheim by Suhm, Schøning and Bishop Johan Ernst Gunnerus.<sup>52</sup> He demonstrated a profound and critical engagement with the venture to which Gebhardi contributed so prolifically a few years later.<sup>53</sup>

It is important that Schøning and Suhm also had links with the new editors of the universal history in Göttingen after Baumgarten died and Semler withdrew. They both became members of Gatterer’s *Historisches Institut* and their works, as they appeared in the 1760s and onwards, were followed closely and reviewed in the GAS, most often by Murray.<sup>54</sup> While Suhm and Schøning received a good deal of praise in these reviews,<sup>55</sup> a critical attitude was also discernible, and this emerged even more strongly when August Ludwig Schlözer in 1771 released his historical compilation, *Allgemeine Nordische Geschichte*, as volume 31 of the *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Weltgeschichte*. About forty percent of Schlözer’s compilation consisted of translated excerpts from Schøning’s books and articles. To some extent, this

was a mark of recognition and reflected the fact that Schlözer agreed with many of Schøning's conclusions, but he also voiced misgivings in some rather critical footnotes.<sup>56</sup> Schøning responded in the form of a pamphlet, and a rivalry developed that also helps to shed light on the reception of Gebhardi's work and its transfer to Denmark-Norway.<sup>57</sup>

These disagreements between Göttingen historians such as Murray and Schlözer on the one hand, and Schøning and Suhm on the other, were multifaceted, but at the center were questions about historical evidence. The two Dano-Norwegian historians sought to write comprehensive histories that linked the peopling and settlement of the North with the primeval history in the Bible, the story of the confusion of languages and dispersion of the peoples at Babel.<sup>58</sup> In so doing, they drew on a wide range of ancient testimonies, Biblical as well as Classical, but the most important in their eyes were the testimonies found in the Old Norse-Icelandic literary tradition. The Icelandic skald, chieftain and historian Snorri Sturlason's story of the legendary migration of Odin and his band of æsir from Asia to the North was particularly crucial to Schøning and Suhm in this regard, since it suggested that collective memories of the migrations from the East had lingered on among the Northerners themselves, within skaldic poetry, before Snorri recorded them.<sup>59</sup> Reconstructions of the wanderings of early humans toward the North did not need to rely solely on geographical or etymological speculations based on scanty evidence from the Bible or from Classical literature. Schlözer, however, believed that the story about Odin was a fable concocted by Snorri, and he brushed it aside. On a general level, he was critical of the tendency of Scandinavian scholars to accept the historical credibility of so much of the Icelandic sagas. Murray, on his side, displayed a similar skepticism in his reviews of Schøning's work in the GAS.

Gebhardi had accepted the historical reliability of Snorri's story of Odin and incorporated it into his histories of Denmark and Norway. This led to similar objections on the part of reviewers such as Schøning and Suhm. In the GAS, Murray had pointed out Gebhardi's "predilection for the Northern tradition" and expressed grave doubts about his assumptions regarding the most distant Northern past.<sup>60</sup> At best, the foundations on which he built his historical narrative of this period were uncertain. Similarly, Schlözer in the *Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek* and the reviewer in Gatterer's *Allgemeine Historische Bibliothek* expressed skepticism about Gebhardi's trust in Icelandic sagas. After all, the saga writers based much of their accounts on oral tradition: "the worst and most impure of all historical sources".<sup>61</sup> Gebhardi had anticipated such objections. In the abridged 1774 version of his Danish and Norwegian history, he included a long preface on the status of Odin, in which he laid out his views on the subject at length.<sup>62</sup> Although Gebhardi did not follow Schøning and Suhm without qualifications—he developed his own account of ancient Northern chronology—by accepting the story of Odin as probable, if not certain, history, he had aligned himself with his Nordic benefactors on this issue regarding the earliest part of his Nordic history.

### The transformations of Gebhardi's histories in Denmark

Gebhardi's handling of the evidence and the testimonies that constituted the foundation of his narrative, most likely contributed to a favorable scholarly atmosphere for the transfer of his work to Denmark-Norway. He was broadly in line with the leading Dano-Norwegian historians. It was not, however, historians who initiated the translation of Gebhardi's work into Danish, but the printer and bookseller Christian Iversen, drawing on a network of booksellers across Denmark and Norway. His motive was commercial, as had been the case earlier on with the *Universal History* and the *Allgemeine Weltgeschichte*.<sup>63</sup> Iversen announced the subscription plan in a range of provincial newspapers early in 1776,<sup>64</sup> and he gave several reasons for his initiative. One concerned the timing, and was not related to the work of the Lüneburg historian. Iversen offered the translation of Gebhardi's histories of Denmark and Norway in combination with a translation of the history of the duchies of Schleswig and Holstein, by the professor at the University of Kiel, Wilhelm Ernst Christiani.<sup>65</sup> He believed that the transfer of control of the remaining ducal territories in Schleswig-Holstein to the Danish crown in June 1773 had aroused an interest in the history of the German duchies among the Danish-speaking public.<sup>66</sup> The time was ripe for such a publication.

However, the big idea behind Iversen's historical translation project was clearly to offer an up-to-date, comprehensive historical compilation covering the main constituent realms and principalities belonging to the House of Oldenburg from when they were first settled down to the present. It was only Denmark at this point that, in Ludvig Holberg's three-volume *Danmarks Riges Historie (History of the Realm of Denmark, 1732–35)*, had a recent history in Danish covering the full stretch of the realm's history. Schøning's history of Norway had not yet got beyond King Harald Fairhair and his unification of the realm toward the end of the ninth century, and no other proper alternatives in Danish existed. Christiani had released the first volume of his history of the duchies, but in German. The product Iversen was offering, then, had few competitors, and the fact that a large part of it had its origins within a genre of historical writing that was universal in scope, rather than regnal or national, was not a problem. Iversen's history of Denmark, Norway and Schleswig-Holstein was also a compilation, albeit on a smaller scale, just like the English *Universal History* and the German *Allgemeine Welthistorie*. In neither case were attempts made to provide an overarching structure or system. The work remained serial in nature.

For the printer and bookseller from Odense, the factor that united the different histories in his compilation was patriotism and devotion to the ruling house. In his call for subscriptions, he sought to appeal to the patriotism of his potential customers. According to Iversen, his translation project was a "useful undertaking for the glory of the fatherland".<sup>67</sup> He most likely intended this as a message not only for the public but also for those in charge at the court in

Copenhagen. The rise and the fall from power of the King's physician, Johan Friedrich Struensee, in 1770 to 1772, had awakened strong national sentiments in Denmark-Norway. It had fueled anti-German sentiments in Copenhagen among Danes and stirred hopes among Norwegians of a more equal treatment of the Norwegian kingdom in the union with Denmark.<sup>68</sup> In the aftermath of the fall of the German physician, the new clique in power at court, led politically by Ove Høegh-Guldberg, the new cabinet secretary to the King, tried in various ways to harness and contain the political energies released by Struensee. Guldberg encouraged a patriotism directed not toward the different component parts of the King's House, but to the King and the state.

The most famous policy that emerged from Guldberg's attempts to forge a common identity for the Oldenburg monarchy was the law of 1776, which reserved positions in the civil service for citizens of the state, barring foreigners, including Germans from outside Schleswig-Holstein. However, Guldberg was also very much interested in using history for patriotic purposes. He was a theologian, a former professor at the Academy in Sorø, and on friendly terms with Langebek, Schøning and Suhm.<sup>69</sup> While he was in power, Guldberg reformed the grammar school system and put lessons in the history of the fatherland on the curriculum. At his request, both Suhm and Ove Malling, a historian and prominent civil servant, wrote patriotic textbooks for use in grammar schools, and the framework for both books was quite explicitly that of the conglomerate state.<sup>70</sup> Against such a background, it seems clear Iversen played his hand well when he appealed to the patriotism of his intended customers and when he prefaced the first volumes with dedications to, and engravings of, the royal family. It is significant that the first volume dedicated to the King was followed by volumes dedicated to Dowager Queen Julianne Marie and her son, hereditary prince Frederik.<sup>71</sup> They were Guldberg's patrons, providing dynastic support and legitimacy for his government. Taken as a whole, the presentation of the translations of Gebhardi's and Christiani's work was that of a work devoted to the House of Oldenburg.

If, however, we focus on what happened to Gebhardi's contribution to the German universal history once it traveled to Denmark-Norway, Iversen's packaging is not the full story. The printer and bookseller from Odense had initially planned a direct translation of Gebhardi's two volumes on Danish and Norwegian history.<sup>72</sup> However, when Gebhardi himself heard of the translation, he intervened, wanting to carry out another, third revision of his work that would include new material unearthed by other historians, most notably by Langebek, Schøning and Suhm. As he himself admitted, in yet another confirmation of the exchanges between the German and Dano-Norwegian historical worlds, he did not want to disappoint his Nordic benefactors.<sup>73</sup> This intervention caused troubles for the translator, Johann Ernst Heilmann, who complained about having to translate on the basis of a mix of printed texts, manuscripts and notes.<sup>74</sup> It did not, however, stop Heilmann from producing a large number of translations at a steady pace. More and less simultaneously, Heilmann delivered two volumes on the

history of Norway (1777–78), three on the history Denmark (1780–84) and four on the history of the duchies (1776–1781).

At some point after the last of the volumes translated by Heilmann appeared in 1784, the project seems to have stalled. The publisher Søren Gyldendal in Copenhagen released the remaining parts much later, between 1796 and 1798. At that point, Gebhardi's two original German quarto volumes had grown into eight Danish volumes in the same format, two on the history of Norway and six on the history of Denmark. While the Danish volumes were slimmer than the German originals, the product of the translation process was a considerably expanded work. In particular, the period from the Reformation to the death of Frederick V in 1766 received a more extensive treatment. Iversen also rearranged some of the material. Gebhardi's lengthy literary history of the different resources available for those writing histories of the two realms was deemed less important for Nordic readers, and was not included in the important first volume in the series.<sup>75</sup> It appeared later on, and then, it seems, partly to fill the expected number of sheets of paper.<sup>76</sup> A similar strategic consideration might have lain behind the decision to include the antiquarian and statistical treatises from Gebhardi's abridged 1774-edition at the beginning of the first Danish volume. According to Heilmann, these provided "knowledge worthy of any patriot", and the topics they covered had not hitherto "been covered systematically in any work in Danish".<sup>77</sup> He and Iversen believed that they were offering their readers something new. Both the volumes on Norwegian history and those on Danish history now began with an account of customs and manners and forms of government before and after the coming of Christianity.

### **The reception of Gebhardi's Danish histories of Denmark and Norway**

The fact that Iversen received enough subscriptions to put Heilmann to work suggests that the translation of Gebhardi's and Christiani's work was successful. The subscription list counted 1,271 names and included information about title or profession and place of living. This was a high number by Dano-Norwegian standards<sup>78</sup> and seems to reflect an increased interest in history among the expanding reading public in the eighteenth century. An analysis of the list shows that, for obvious reasons, this translation into Danish did not attract many subscribers from the German-speaking duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Iversen succeeded, however, in attracting subscribers in Copenhagen and in Denmark and Norway outside the capital, especially in rural Denmark. The latter is noteworthy, since the Dano-Norwegian market for print was heavily skewed toward Copenhagen. Iversen's list of subscribers thus seems to bear the mark of his network of booksellers across Denmark and Norway.

In terms of the social background of his readers, his advances toward the court do not seem to have paid off. The royal family did not sign up to the same extent as they did later on for other publications, such as for the prominent

monthly journal *Minerva* (1785–1808). A large number of those who subscribed were civil servants, with the clergy being the largest group. In this regard, the list seems to confirm the conventional view of the Dano-Norwegian public as not really bourgeois in the Habermasian sense. The audience that consumed the journals, pamphlets, and books published in eighteenth- and early nineteenth-century Denmark-Norway was, to a lesser extent than in England and France, made up of men and women outside the orbit of the state.<sup>79</sup> As in the German lands, men with a background from universities or academies dominated the public sphere.<sup>80</sup> At the same time, some nuances seem to be called for. Iversen's subscription list also contained quite a few merchants and others occupied in mercantile professions, and military officers were also prominent. There were even some artisans and a few women of high status, although this is probably no guide to the extent of the female readership of this work, since many women would have read copies purchased by their husbands.

The fact that Iversen managed to convince such a relatively large number of people to subscribe to this translated comprehensive history of the various component parts of the Oldenburg monarchy suggests, once again, that the public expected his historical compilation to be an accessible work, not a work mainly for scholars. Iversen had signaled such intentions in his call for subscriptions, when he appealed to patriots and “lovers of history,” and Heilmann confirmed this impression when he explained how the work was meant “not for scholars in particular,” but for “good citizens with a desire to read the history of the twin monarchies in one comprehensive and accurate account.”<sup>81</sup> One reviewer also seems to have indirectly acknowledged the popular appeal of the project, when he complained that Gebhardi's emendations were not visible in the new Danish text. This would have been useful for “those who make history their main pastime,” he argued.<sup>82</sup>

With regard to accessibility and popular appeal, there seem also to have been certain expectations linked specifically to Heilmann. His reputation as a translator, earned through an edition of the poetry of the German philosopher Christian Gellert, was a frequent selling point. In one of the calls for subscriptions, Iversen claimed that “Gebhardi's style would benefit a lot from his translation” so much that German readers with knowledge of Danish would prefer the new edition.<sup>83</sup> While the previously mentioned reviewer was not equally satisfied with how the actual translation turned out,<sup>84</sup> Iversen's comment is interesting when seen in the light of Gebhardi's self-presentation. As we have seen, the Lüneburg historian had stressed time and again his commitment to truth, which he called “the only true goal of any historian,”<sup>85</sup> and had emphasized the need to exercise historical criticism in order to come as close as possible to the truth. On the one hand, he excused the lack of entertainment and eloquence that he believed was a consequence of such critical inquiries, while on the other, he polemicized openly against strategies and techniques designed to broaden the appeal of historical writing, such as capturing the attention of the reader by using rhetoric and embellished language. There was an ambivalence in the way he described his own

historical writing that fits well with Iversen's comment that Heilmann gave his histories some rhetorical flourish. Gebhardi knew that many contemporary readers prized historical writing with such qualities and complained about the prevailing literary tastes.<sup>86</sup>

The tension that is evident in the writings of Gebhardi, Heilmann and Iversen had deep roots. It mirrored a split between history as a form of literature, the highest form of *belles lettres*, and history as an erudite and critical endeavor for scholars.<sup>87</sup> During the Renaissance, the admiration of classical eloquence had bestowed great prestige on forms of historical writing closely aligned with rhetoric and inspired by ancient historians such as Livy. In the eighteenth century, the so-called neo-classical narrative was the starting point for many of the most famous French and Scottish historians.<sup>88</sup> It was epitomized by Voltaire, above all in his *Le Siècle de Louis XIV* (1754). Gebhardi, however, was not alone in being skeptical of the historical priorities he found mirrored in work of Voltaire and other historians, in tune with contemporary literary tastes. As we have seen, historians in Göttingen shared this attitude. Gatterer even made a virtue of Gebhardi's prioritizing of truth over eloquence, and Murray made the same point when praising the Lüneburg-historian in his review. Gebhardi may perhaps have been out of step, but in their eyes, his priorities were nevertheless correct.

It is important to note that the qualities that Gebhardi sought to realize in his historical writing were also broadly in keeping with those prized by leading historians in Denmark-Norway, by Gerhard Schøning and Peter Frederik Suhm. The prefaces to their many critical inquiries into the most distant and impenetrable Nordic past from the 1760s and 1770s were full of similar complaints about contemporary literary tastes and the need precisely for historical criticism.<sup>89</sup> Like Gebhardi, they were also conscious of the demand for eloquent and entertaining history, and of their own shortcomings in this regard. This was indeed pointed out to them in reviews.<sup>90</sup> To some extent, Gebhardi was more fortunate than Schøning and Suhm, in that the initial format of the universal history forced him to be brief and comprehensive. He was not allowed to lose himself in erudite and uncertain speculations about the distant past. As a whole, however, the historical ideals and values articulated by Gebhardi, Gatterer, Suhm, and Schøning suggest some broad similarities between the historical cultures of Göttingen, on the one hand, and Sorø and Copenhagen, on the other. They suggest a shared commitment to an erudite, critical form of historical writing that was somewhat in tension with the expectations of their readers, but perhaps not so much as to turn them off. Again, the preponderance of men with an academic background among the reading public, and the fact that many of them were part of the state bureaucracy, probably made potential purchasers more willing to accept historical writing of a more erudite and critical kind. The number of subscribers to Gebhardi's and Christiani's histories certainly suggests as much.

## Conclusion

Even if the audience was favorably disposed, the relative popularity of the historical compilation on offer from Iversen, must, as I have argued in this chapter, be understood in the light of other factors as well. The lack of recent histories in Danish covering the full stretch of the history of the Norwegian kingdom and the history of Schleswig-Holstein mattered. There was a niche in the market, which Iversen exploited in a way that was also in tune with attempts by those in power at the court at that time to further a common patriotic identity for the Oldenburg monarchy. Iversen presented the historical compilation he tried to sell as a national history for a conglomerate state. These historical circumstances were crucial for the transfer of Gebhardi's German histories of Denmark and Norway to Denmark-Norway. At the same time, as Monika Baár has emphasized, the component parts of the *Allgemeine Welthistorie* lend themselves to transfers. The transformation of a work such as that of Gebhardi, from a contribution to a universal history, a work for German readers in continental Europe curious about the history of the North, to a national history of Denmark and Norway for Danes and Norwegians was, in a sense, prepared. It was already organized according to realms, and their comprehensiveness and limited length made them well suited to Iversen's historical and commercial enterprise. In the case of Gebhardi, the fact that he had received assistance early on from Schøning and Suhm through Jacob Langebek was also significant. Gebhardi had adopted some of their scholarly positions, and drew on the Old Norse-Icelandic literary tradition when he recounted the early history of the North. In so doing, he got involved in a scholarly rivalry between Göttingen historians such as Schlözer and Gatterer and Dano-Norwegian historian such as Schøning and Suhm. Gebhardi was an important intermediary, negotiating between the historical worlds of Göttingen and Sorø and Copenhagen. The narrative of how his texts developed and traveled helps to shed light on the contacts and exchanges between them. Although the contests could be fierce, these quarrels are also evidence of a shared interest among these historians in the history of the ancient North and of a shared commitment to criticism and questions of historical evidence.

## Notes

- 1 *Kiøbenhavn's Kongelig allene privilegerede Adresse-Contoirs med Posten forsendte Efterretninger*, no. 12 (1776), 7.
- 2 *Kiøbenhavn's Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger*, 7.
- 3 Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie durch eine Gesellschaft von gelehrten in Teutschland und England ausgefertiget*, vol. 32–33 (Halle: Johann Justinus Gebauer, 1768–1770).
- 4 Marcus Conrad, *Geschichte(n) und Geschäfte: die Publikation der "Allgemeinen Welthistorie" im Verlag Gebauer in Halle (1744–1814)* (Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 2010).



- 5 Monika Baár, "From General History to National History: The Transformation of William Guthrie's and John Gray's *A General History of the World* (1735–1765) in Continental Europe," in *Cultural Transfer through Translation. The Circulation of Enlightened Thought in Europe by Means of Translation*, ed. Stefanie Stockhorst (New York: Rodopi, 2010), 63–82.
- 6 Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi and Wilhelm Ernst Christiani, *Kongerigerne Danmarks og Norges samt Hertugdømmene Slesvigs og Holsteens Historie indtil vore Tider*, 14 vols. (Odense and Copenhagen, 1776–1798). This is the title given on the common title page. All volumes also had an additional title page to indicate their place in the history of the realm (Denmark or Norway) or duchy (Schleswig-Holstein) in question. They were assigned numbers according to their place in this latter ranking. In this article, I will refer to these separate titles and their numbering.
- 7 Hans Erich Bødeker and Peter Hanns Reill, eds., *Aufklärung und Geschichte: Studien zur deutschen Geschichtswissenschaft im 18. Jahrhundert* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1986); Martin Peters, *Altes Reich und Europa: der Historiker, Statistiker und Publizist August Ludwig (v.) Schlözer (1735–1809)* (LIT Verlag Münster, 2003); Martin Gierl, *Geschichte als präzisierte Wissenschaft. Johann Christoph Gatterer und die Historiographie des 18. Jahrhunderts im ganzen Umfang* (Frommann-Holzboog Verlag, 2012).
- 8 C. Paludan-Müller, "Dansk Historiografi i det 18de Aarhundrede," *Historisk Tidsskrift* 5, no. 4 (1883): 130–36.
- 9 Gebhardi is largely ignored in Ellen Jørgensen, *Historieforskning og historieskrivning i Danmark indtil aar 1800*, 2nd ed. (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1960); Henrik Horstbøll, "Civilization og nation 1760–1830," in *Historiens historie, Danmarks historie* 10 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1992), 105–97.
- 10 For some recent contributions emphasizing these connections, see Klaus Bohnen and Sven-Aage Jørgensen, eds., *Der Dänische Gesamtstaat: Kopenhagen – Kiel – Altona* (Tübingen: Niemeyer, 1992); Michael Bregnsbo and Kurt Villads Jensen, *Det danske imperium. Storhed og fald* (Copenhagen: Aschehoug, 2004); Eva Heinzlmann, Stefanie Robl, and Thomas Riis, eds., *Der Dänische Gesamtstaat: ein unterschätztes Weltreich?: The Oldenburg monarchy: an underestimated empire* (Kiel: Ludwig, 2006).
- 11 Helmut Neubauer, "August Ludwig Schlözer (1735–1809) und die Geschichte Osteuropas", *Jahrbücher für Geschichte Osteuropas* 18/2 (1970), 205–230; Manfred Hildermeier, "Von der Nordischen Geschichte zur Geschichte Osteuropas im Göttinger Horizont", in *Geschichtswissenschaft in Göttingen*, eds. Hartmut Boockmann and Hermann Wellenreuther (Göttingen, 1987), 102–121.
- 12 Hendriette Kliemann, "Et mångfaldigt begrepp. August Ludwig Schlözers konstruktion av Norden," *Historisk Tidsskrift för Finland* 87, no. 3 (2002): 315–36.
- 13 Dieter Rüdibusch, *Ritterakademie Lüneburg* (Lüneburg: Landkreis Lüneburg, 2007), 23.
- 14 Jacob Langebek, *Breve fra Jacob Langebek*, ed. Holger Fr. Rørdam (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1895), 374; Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Kongeriget Norges Historie*, vol. 2 (Odense: Christian Iversen, 1778), XLII; Rasmus Nyerup, "Udsigt over Peter Friderich Suhms Levnet og Skrifter," in Peter Frederik Suhm, *Samlede Skrifter*, vol. 15 (Copenhagen: S. Poulsen, 1798), 151.
- 15 Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Historische Nachricht von der Ausreitern des Klosters St. Michael in Lüneburg* (Lüneburg, 1754).
- 16 Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Genealogische Geschichte der erblichen Reichstände in Teutschland*, 3 vols. (Halle: Gebauer, 1777–1785).
- 17 See most notably Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Geschichte des Reichs Hungarn und der damit verbundenen Staaten*, 3 vols. (Leipzig: Weidemanns Erben und Reich, 1778–1781).

- 18 Baår, "From General History to National History," 75–80.
- 19 Georg G. Iggers, Q. Edward Wang, and Supriya Mukherjee, *A Global History of Modern Historiography* (Harlow: Pearson Longman, 2008), 29–30.
- 20 Guido Abbattista, "The Business of Paternoster Row: Towards a Publishing History of the Universal History (1736–65)," *Publishing History* 17 (1985): 5–50.
- 21 Guido Abbattista, "The English Universal History: Publishing, Authorship and Historiography in a European Project (1736–1790)," *Storia Della Storiografia* 39 (2001): 100–105.
- 22 Helmut Zedelmaier, *Der Anfang der Geschichte: Studien zur Ursprungsdebatte im 18. Jahrhundert*, Studien zum achtzehnten Jahrhundert 27 (Hamburg: F. Meiner, 2003), 135–63; David Sorkin, *The Religious Enlightenment. Protestants, Jews, and Catholics from London to Vienna* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2008), 142–52.
- 23 Johan van der Zande, "August Ludwig Schlözer and the English Universal History," in *Historikerdialoge: Geschichte, Mythos Und Gedächtnis im Deutsch-Britischen Kulturellen Austausch 1750–2000*, ed. Stefan Berger, Peter Lambert, and Peter Schumann (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2003), 135–56.
- 24 Johann Christoph Gatterer, "Vorrede", in Gebhardi, *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie* (32), 4.
- 25 Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Geschichte der Königreiche Dännemark und Norwegen* (Halle: Gebauer, 1770).
- 26 Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Die Allgemeine Welthistorie durch eine Gesellschaft von Gelehrten in Teutschland und England ausgefertigt. In einem vollständigen und pragmatischen Auszuge. Neue Historie XIII. Band* (Halle: Gebauer, 1774).
- 27 Gebhardi, *Geschichte der Königreiche*, 22; Gebhardi, *Die Allgemeine Welthistorie ... Neue Historie XIII. Band*, 3–4.
- 28 Gerhard Schøning, *Norges Riiges Historie*, vol. 1 (Sorø, 1771), unpaginated preface.
- 29 Lydia Janssen, "Antiquarianism and National History. The Emergence of a New Scholarly Paradigm in Early Modern Historical Studies," *History of European Ideas* 43, no. 8 (2017): 843–56, <https://doi.org/10.1080/01916599.2016.1223732>.
- 30 Gebhardi, *Die Allgemeine Welthistorie ... Neue Historie XIII. Band*, 1–117, 313–427.
- 31 Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, "Vorrede des Verfassers", in Gebhardi, *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie* 32, 37. All quotations in this chapter are translated by the author.
- 32 Gebhardi, "Vorrede des Verfassers", 37.
- 33 J. G. A. Pocock, *Barbarism and Religion*, vol. 2, *Narratives of Civil Government* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Karen O'Brien, *Narratives of Enlightenment. Cosmopolitan History from Voltaire to Gibbon* (Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- 34 Johann Christoph Gatterer, "Vorrede", in Gebhardi, *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie* 32, 3–16; Johann Christoph Gatterer, "Vorrede", in Gebhardi, *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie* 33, 3–10.
- 35 Gatterer, "Vorrede", in Gebhardi, *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie* 32, 4.
- 36 Gatterer, "Vorrede", in Gebhardi, *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie* 32, 4.
- 37 [August Ludwig Schlözer] Z, "Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie", *Anhang zu dem ersten bis zwölften Bände der Allgemeine Deutsche Bibliothek*, no. 2 (1771), 854; [Johann Phillip Murray], "Halle", *Göttingische Anzeigen von Gelehrten Sachen*, no. 65 (1769): 589.
- 38 Gebhardi, "Vorrede des Verfassers", 17.
- 39 Gebhardi, "Vorrede des Verfassers", 17–37.
- 40 Rudolf Vierhaus, "Die Universität Göttingen und die Anfänge der modernen Geschichtswissenschaft im 18. Jahrhundert," in *Geschichtswissenschaft in Göttingen*.

- Eine Vorlesungsreihe*, eds. Hartmut Boockmann and Hermann Wellenreuther (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987), 9–11.
- 41 Anne Saada, “Albrecht Von Haller’s Contribution to the Göttingische Anzeigen Von Gelehrten Sachen: The Accounting Records,” in *Scholars in Action. The Practice of Knowledge and the Figure of the Savant in the 18th Century*, ed. André Holenstein, Hubert Steinke, and Martin Stuber, vol. 1 (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 334.
- 42 Martin Gierl, “Change of Paradigm as a Squabble between Institutions: The Institute of Historical Sciences, the Society of Sciences, and the Separation of Cultural and Natural Sciences in Göttingen in the Second Half of the Eighteenth Century”, in *Scholars in Action*, ed. Holenstein, Steinke, and Stuber, vol. 1, 285–86.
- 43 To some extent, this can be attributed to Gatterer’s desire to distance himself from Baumgarten’s and Semler’s former habit of mending flawed histories by Means of criticism in prefaces. See the comments in the review of Gebhardi’s first volume in *Allgemeine Historische Bibliothek* 8 (1768): 52.
- 44 Paludan-Müller, “Dansk Historiografi i det 18de Aarhundrede,” 87–114; Jørgensen, *Historieforskning og historieskrivning i Danmark indtil aar 1800*, 203–9; Torben Damsholt, “Den nationale magtstat 1560–1760,” in *Historiens historie*, Danmarks historie 10 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1992), 68–70.
- 45 Erik Bollerup, “Lagerbrings Svea Rikes Historia. Tilkomst, utgivning, mottagande”, *Scandia* 36 (1970): 298–299.
- 46 For an English introduction to Schøning’s and Suhm’s historical projects, see Håkon Evju, *Ancient Constitutions and Modern Monarchy: Historical Writing and Enlightened Reform in Denmark-Norway 1730–1814* (Leiden: Brill, 2019), 91–128.
- 47 Schøning, *Norges Riges Historie*, vol. 1, unpaginated preface.
- 48 Schøning, *Norges Riges Historie*, vol. 1, unpaginated preface.
- 49 For some examples, see Gerhard Schøning, “De gamle Grækere og Romeres rette Begreb og Kundskab om de Nordiske Lande, særdeles om den af dem saa kaldte Scandinavia,” *Skrifter, som udi Det Kiøbenhavnske Selskab af Lærdoms og Videnskabers Elskere ere fremlagte og oplæste i Aarene 1761, 1762, 1763 og 1764* 9 (1765): 151–360; Gerhard Schøning, *Afhandling om de Norskes og endeel andre nordiske Folkes Oprindelse* (Sorø, 1769); Peter Frederik Suhm, *Forsøg til et Udkast af en Historie over Folkenes Oprindelse i Almindelighed som en Indledning til de nordiske Folkes i særdeleshed* (Copenhagen, 1769); Peter Frederik Suhm, *Om de nordiske Folks ældste Oprindelse* (Copenhagen, 1770); Peter Frederik Suhm, *Critisk historie af Danmark udi den hedenske Tid fra Odin til Gorm den Gamle*, 4 vols. (Copenhagen: Berling, 1774–1781).
- 50 Gebhardi, *Kongeriget Norges Historie*, vol. 2, XLIV.
- 51 Peter Frederik Suhm and Gerhard Schøning, *Forsøg til Forbedringer i den gamle Danske og Norske Historie* (Copenhagen, 1757), unpaginated preface. The English work in question was *Biographia Britannica, or the Lives of the most eminent Persons of Great Britain and Ireland* (London, 1747–1766), translated into German as Sigmund J. Baumgarten, *Merkwürdige Lebensbeschreibungen berühmter Leuthe grösstentheils aus d. Britann. Biographien genommen*, (Halle, 1754–70). On the circumstances surrounding the Danish adaptation, see Christian Bruun, *Peter Frederik Suhm. 18. oktober 1728–7. september 1798. En levnetsbeskrivelse* (Copenhagen: Gad, 1898), 54.
- 52 Suhm and Schøning, *Forsøg til Forbedringer*, unpaginated preface.
- 53 Peter Frederik Suhm, “Anmærkninger over Verdens almindelige Historie”, in *Samlede Skrifter*, vol. 12 (Copenhagen: S. Poulsen, 1794), 121–432; Peter Frederik Suhm, “Anmærkninger over Verdens almindelige Historie”, in *Samlede Skrifter*, vol. 13 (Copenhagen: S. Poulsen, 1794), 41–341; Peter Frederik Suhm, “Anmærkninger over Verdens almindelige Historie”, in *Samlede Skrifter*, vol. 14 (Copenhagen: S. Poulsen, 1798), 15–225.

- 54 See the list in Rasmus Nyerup and Jens Edvard Kraft, *Almindeligt Litteraturlæxicon for Danmark, Norge og Island*, vol. 2 (Copenhagen: Gyldendal, 1820), 548–549, 587–89.
- 55 For a flavor of these mixed reviews, see [Johann Phillip Murray], “Sorøe und Kopenhagen”, *Göttingische Anzeigen von Gelehrten Sachen* 1 (1770): 577–84.
- 56 August Ludwig Schlözer, *Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie durch eine Gesellschaft von gelehrten in Teutschland und England ausgefertigt*, vol. 31 (Halle: Johann Justinus Gebauer, 1771), 4–206; See also Schlözer’s criticism of Schøning in his own essay in this compilation, 263–272.
- 57 [Gerhard Schøning], *Sigurd Sigurdsens Anmærkninger i et Brev til sin Ven over den 31te Deel af algemeine Welt-Historie forfattet af A. L. Schlözer* (Sorø, 1773).
- 58 For more on Schøning and Suhm’s historical project, see Evju, *Ancient Constitutions and Modern Monarchy*, 91–101.
- 59 Håkon Evju, “Gerhard Schøning som religionshistoriker: Odins rolle i hans historiske forfatterskap”, *Teologisk tidsskrift* 12, no. 2 (2023): 126–137.
- 60 [Murray], “Halle”, 591.
- 61 Anonymous, “2. Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie”, *Allgemeine Historische Bibliothek* 8 (1768): 76; Schlözer, “Fortsetzung der Allgemeinen Welthistorie”, 854.
- 62 Gebhardi, *Die Allgemeine Welthistorie ... Neue Historie XIII. Band*, 3–52.
- 63 Abbattista, “The Business of Paternoster Row”; Conrad, *Geschichte(n) und Geschäfte*.
- 64 *Kiøbenhavnns Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger*, no. 12 (1776); *Jyske Efterretninger*, no. 15 (1776); *Den Viborgske Samler*, no. 17 (1776); *Trondhiems Kongelige allene privilegerede Adresse-Contoirs Ugentlige Udgivende Efterretninger*, no. 9 (1776).
- 65 Wilhelm Ernst Christiani, *Geschichte der Herzogthümer Schleswig und Holstein*, 4 vols. (Flensburg and Leipzig, 1775–1779). Only the first volume had appeared when Iversen announced his call for subscriptions.
- 66 *Kiøbenhavnns Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger*, no. 12 (1776).
- 67 *Kiøbenhavnns Adresse-Contoirs Efterretninger*, no. 12 (1776).
- 68 Ole Feldbæk, “Fædreland og Indfødesret. 1700-tallets danske identitet,” in *Fædreland og modersmål 1536–1789*, ed. Ole Feldbæk, *Dansk identitetshistorie 1* (Copenhagen: C. A. Reitzels forlag, 1991); Ole Feldbæk, “‘For Norge, Kiæmpers Fødeland’. Norsk kritik og identitet 1770–1773,” *Historisk tidsskrift* 73, no. 1 (1994): 23–48.
- 69 Claus Mechlenborg, “Une créature subalterne. En borgersøns vej til indflydelse under den danske enevælde: Ove Høegh-Guldberg 1731–1772,” *Fortid og nutid*, no. 2 (2003): 109–29.
- 70 Peter Frederik Suhm, *Historien af Danmark, Norge og Holsten udi tvende Udtog til den studerende Ungdoms bedste* (Copenhagen: Lauritz Simmelkiær, 1776); Ove Malling, *Store og gode Handlinger af Danske, Norske og Holstenere* (Copenhagen: Søren Gyldendal, 1777).
- 71 Gebhardi, *Kongeriget Norges Historie*, vol. 1; Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Kongeriget Danmarks Historie*, vol. 1 (Odense: Christian Iversen, 1780).
- 72 Johan Ernst Heilmann, “Til Læseren”, in Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Kongeriget Norges Historie*, vol. 1.
- 73 Heilmann, “Til Læseren”.
- 74 Heilmann, “Til Læseren”.
- 75 Heilmann, “Til Læseren”.
- 76 Christian Iversen, “Forerindring”, in Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, *Kongeriget Norges Historie*, vol. 2.
- 77 Heilmann, “Til Læseren”.
- 78 Iversen claimed that 1,200 subscribers signed up for the original German edition of Christiani’s history of the duchies. Other different multi-volume enterprises, however, such as the collected works of Jens Schieldrup Sneedorff (9 vols.) and Peter Frederik Suhm (15 vols.), had 700 and 500 subscribers. A best-selling single-volume work of

- political thought, such as Michael Birckner's book *Trykkefriheden og dens Love* on freedom of the press from 1797, supposedly sold 2,000 copies.
- 79 Thorkild Kjærgaard, "The Rise of Press and Public Opinion in Eighteenth Century Denmark-Norway," *Scandinavian Journal of History* 14, no. 3 (1989): 215–30; See also the discussion in Henrik Horstbøll, "Enevelden, opinion og opposition," *Historieljyske Samlinger* XVII (1987): 40–42.
- 80 This point is made for Germany in Georg G. Iggers, "The European Context of Eighteenth-Century German Enlightenment Historiography," in *Aufklärung Und Geschichte*. ed. Hans Erich Bödeker et al., 225–45; See a similar argument which includes Scandinavia in Kasper Risbjerg Eskildsen, "Den nordeuropæiske oplysning," *Fortid og nutid*, no. 1 (2005): 25–38.
- 81 *Kiøbenhavns Adresse-Contoires Efterretninger*, no. 12 (1776); Heilmann, "Til Læseren".
- 82 *Kiøbenhavnske Nye Efterretninger om lærde Sager*, no. 15 (1779), 229.
- 83 *Trondhiems Adresse-Contoires Efterretninger*, no. 30 (1776).
- 84 The reviewer complained more about accuracy and adherence to the original than about style, see *Kiøbenhavnske Nye Efterretninger om lærde Sager*, no. 15 (1779), 229–234. Gebhardi himself was supposedly happy with Heilmann's translation, see Iversen, "Forerindring."
- 85 Ludwig Albrecht Gebhardi, "Forfatterens Fortale," in Gebhardi, *Kongeriget Norges Historie*, vol. 2, XLIV.
- 86 Gebhardi, "Forfatterens Fortale," VII-VIII.
- 87 Arnaldo Momigliano, "Ancient History and the Antiquarian," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 13, no. 3/4 (1950): 285–315; Anthony Grafton, *What Was History? The Art of History in Early Modern Europe* (Cambridge: University Press, 2007).
- 88 Pocock, *Narratives of Civil Government*.
- 89 See, for instance, Schøning, *Afhandling om de Norskes Oprindelse*, 4; Schøning, *Norges Riiges Historie*; Suhm, *Critisk historie af Danmark udi den hedenske Tid fra Odin til Gorm den Gamle*, vol. 1, 3–5.
- 90 *Kiøbenhavnske Efterretninger om lærde Sager*, no. 44 (1769): 727; *Kiøbenhavnske Kongl. Privl. Adressecontoires Kritiske Journal*, no. 46–47 (1772): 369.

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