

Another step in the marathon across Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla* - this sixth volume of its Italian edition - highlights one more time the extent of Sangriso's remarkable scholarship. After the *Óláfs saga Helga*, the longest section of the *Heimskringla*, dealing with the life and deeds of the saint-king Óláfr Haraldsson, the focus is now placed on his successors, Magnús *inn goði* (Magnus the good) and Haraldr Sigurðarson.

Sangriso's Italian edition is based once more on Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson's 2002 translation and the text is accompanied by comparisons with earlier sagas included in the *Heimskringla*, as well as several other sources from the historical Norse area.

Unlike the previous volumes, however, this book delves into not one, but two separate sagas linked in a continuous narrative, given the time in which the two protagonists jointly held the crown of Norway. Spatially, the events relating to Haraldr's long stay outside his native country - first in the service of Yaroslav the Wise, then in the Varangian Guard of Constantinople - stretch to embrace the Mediterranean basin. Here, the same Harald, primarily by means of extensive and intense looting, amassed a great treasure, which he later shared with his nephew Magnus at the time of his association to the throne of Norway in 1046. Being an even more bellicose ruler than his nephew, he met his death at the Battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066: An event that, together with the following Battle of Hastings, was to reshape the political geography of Europe.

Francesco Sangriso's translation, once again, proves to be fluent and allows the Italian reader to appreciate the flow of the historical text as though it were a pleasant novel. Moreover, as in the previous five volumes, an impressive critical apparatus of detailed footnotes complements the narration step by step, delving into every historical facet; whilst each saga is preceded by an introduction focused on the figures of the sovereigns.

The book ends with two chapters about the poetic inserts in the saga of Magnús *inn goði* and the saga Haralds Sigurðarsonar (which is probably the most impervious reading because of its very specialistic nature, targeted to scholars only), for a total of six chapters. This is basically the same pattern as was followed in the previous volumes, where every saga is accompanied by an in-depth biography of the rulers and a critical insight of the poetic texts.

Overall, the same considerations already made about the previous volumes apply to this sixth as well. Anyone who has enjoyed them will feel at home with Sangriso's method and his unquestionable scientific precision. The reader who is simply passionate and not specialised in the subject, however, will find the text of these sagas an absolutely absorbing read, with a plethora of data useful to the most varied branches of medievalism. The accuracy with which many details of the Norse material culture are described, and the European scale of the narration are definitely a must-read for any researcher who focuses on warfare tactics (check, for one, the description of the siege techniques used by Harald in his Mediterranean raids) and the politics of the 11th century.

Once more, on the minus side, I feel like this book would have benefited from some tables, especially maps, that were probably deemed unnecessary because of its very technical nature. However, in an era dominated by Hollywood-like misrepresentations of the Vikings (with the notable exception of Eggers' *The Northman*), a return to the original sources is undoubtedly recommended to anyone who is seriously interested in that historical age, even if they don't possess the same degree of expertise as Sangriso and his intended audience of academic specialists. The visual appeal of maps and iconography would have supported the 'casual reader' in this endeavour without resorting to external sources, thus improving the comprehension of the text in no less effective a way than the footnotes allow for.