

MINUTES OF THE GENERAL MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE HELD ON
SATURDAY 20 AUGUST 1971

Peter Foote was in the chair. He paid tribute to the initiative, energy, cheerfulness and efficiency of Hermann Pálsson in organising the conference. Hans Bekker-Nielsen then presented Hermann with three tankards, a gift from the conference members.

The chairman introduced the topic of the desirability of a saga society and a saga journal. Mr Pálsson suggested that a saga society might help to clarify and elevate the position of the sagas as a subject of university study. Lars Lönnroth welcomed the opportunity that the conference had given for the exchange of views, and hoped that another conference would be organised. The chairman asked the meeting if another such conference should be organised. Mr Macrae-Gibson and others objected to the use of the word "saga" in the title of such a conference. It was agreed that a conference, of a scope to be defined, should be perpetuated.

The chairman asked whether the conference should concentrate on the sagas, or be devoted to the whole literature of mediaeval Scandinavia. Mr Bekker-Nielsen favoured the former, and Professor Heinrichs the latter alternative. George Clark thought that the sagas was the topic that provided the necessary breadth for a conference, in terms of the number of scholars working in the field. Jónas

Kristjánsson agreed, but suggested that other topics could be worked into the conference.

The chairman asked the conference to indicate if they favoured another conference, at least mainly on the sagas, in the foreseeable future: the great majority were in favour. At such a conference, most discussion would be on the sagas, but no one would object to room being found for other literary forms of mediaeval Scandinavia.

The place of the conference was discussed. Jónas Kristjánsson hoped that the conference would come to Iceland, but explained that 1974 was a difficult year. Lars Lönnroth hoped that Reykjavík in 1973 would be suitable. The chairman welcomed the Icelandic offer, and it was agreed that the conference would meet in 1973, or in 1975, if that was not possible.

The formation of an international advisory committee was discussed. Lars Lönnroth hoped that such a committee would co-operate with the hosts of a future conference, and that another committee elected by ballot should frame the programme. The idea of the second committee was not accepted by the meeting. The following 12 persons were elected to the advisory committee:

Hermann Pálsson, Lars Lönnroth, Hans Bekker-Nielsen, Denton Fox, Jónas Kristjánsson,* Pierre Halleux, H. Matthias Heinrichs, Jonna Louis Jensen,

Theodore Andersson, H. Magerøy, Peter Foote,
Peter Hallberg. (These have powers to co-opt
others.)

*(Chairman)

The Chairman said that details of programming the conference must be left to the discretion of the organisers in the host country. Among comments from the meeting: the organisers should consult the international committee on the exact date of the conference; August was too late in the summer; the programme of the present conference had been too crowded; translation facilities should be available at future conferences; a four-year cycle was better than a two-year one; members of the conference should give the committee the names of persons who would care to know about future conferences.

The question of publishing conference proceedings was raised. Hermann Pálsson suggested that the proceedings of one conference could include an announcement of the next conference, and proposed a committee to consider publication of the proceedings of the present conference. Other speakers hoped that, if full publication was impossible, the papers could be reproduced in cheaper form. It was proposed that the meeting appoint members of the advisory committee to consider publication: Hermann Pálsson, Peter Foote, Jónas Kristjánsson and Jonna Louis-Jensen were appointed, with power to co-opt.

The question of texts suitable for teaching purposes was raised. Hermann Pálsson favoured an English equivalent of the Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek, with texts prepared with the help of the manuscript institutions in Reykjavík and Copenhagen: he hoped that the conference could help organise this. Jonna Louis-Jensen asked for more practical details. Carl-Eric Thors mentioned the current Scandinavian series, and suggested that the same publishers might be interested in a parallel series in an international language. There was a general welcome for the idea behind Hermann Pálsson's proposal.

John Simpson.