Reframing the Danish Renaissance
Problems and Prospects in a European Perspective

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Edited by
Michael Andersen,
Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen
and Hugo Johannsen

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Fig. 1. Hillerød, Frederiksborg Castle, 1602-1623 (Photo Hillerød, The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle).

THE EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE[1]

Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann

It is difficult to find a single European, better supranational, perspective on the Danish Renaissance. One may even wonder if any definitive view of the Danish Renaissance exists. This paper does not however intend to propose some sort of post-modern thesis which denies the possibility of an objective approach to argue that everything always depends on the point of view of the observer. Even though it may seem ironic that a North American has been called upon to offer the European perspective, this introductory essay will offer some interpretations of the historiographical, geographical, and historical position of the Danish Renaissance, compare it to the Renaissance in other sites, and to suggest not only how it is different from but how it also may be related to them. Nevertheless, the issues involved do seem to suggest the existence of a multiplicity of possible standpoints, which depend on and also determine the questions framed to consider them. They may even cause reconsideration of what is meant by the Renaissance in general.

To put it briefly, the concept of the Danish Renaissance is ambiguous in several respects. Previous reception of the period of the Renaissance in Danish history points to a basic dichotomy in interpretations.[2] In the history of art or more generally of culture (notably music) the Danish Renaissance signifies roughly speaking a century of accomplishment from 1550 to 1650. This era is often considered to be a Golden Age in the cultural history of Denmark, a time in which many of the most famous monuments in the country were constructed or decorated. Kronborg, Frederiksborg, and Rosenborg castles were put up and adorned, major tomb monuments were installed in the cathedral at Roskilde, and several important churches and the Stock Exchange were designed and erected in Copenhagen (Fig. 1, 9). Danish architects and artists of later epochs also regarded architecture and art of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries as exemplary: in the nineteenth century there originated the *Rosenborg-style*, what might be called the Christian IV revival style in architecture, which still marks much of the built landscape of Copenhagen and other places in Denmark, and nineteenth-century painters celebrated the monarch and his deeds (Fig. 2, 3).[3]

Yet from the point of view of political or territorial history, the period of the Danish Renaissance, and notably the long reign, 1588-1648, of Christian IV, also marks the start of what is often called the tragedy of Denmark. This is the sequence of events by which Denmark, once a regional power, became a small and secondary European state. Once the ruler over large stretches of Scandinavia, Greenland, Iceland, the Faroe Is-

Fig. 2. Copenhagen, 'New Rosenborg', 1893, by Ludvig Clausen and H. O. Hagemann (Photo Hugo Johannsen).

lands, and Schleswig-Holstein, as well as a good part of what is now modern Estonia, the lands of the Danish crown have now been reduced to the present rump state of Jutland and the sound islands (Funen, Lolland-Falster and Zeland), with Greenland and the Faroe Islands as quasi-autonomous dependencies. This process was set in motion during the period of the Danish Renaissance. At the beginning of the period Sweden split off from the realm of the three crowns; during the sixteenth century it asserted and maintained its independence, and began to challenge Denmark for domination of the Baltic. The struggle for supremacy continued into the seventeenth century. In the 1620's Christian IV intervened unsuccessfully in the Thirty Years' War on the continent. By mid-century Denmark had lost its place in Livonia and Estonia, as well as substantial portions of what is now Sweden, along with Gotland. The rest of its holdings across the sound were to be lost in the 1650's. The royal treasury was in shambles. Thus by the end of the period, Denmark's perennial claim to exercise the *dominium maris baltici*, to dominate the Baltic Sea, had also dissipated.

To be sure, disjunctions between political importance and cultural accomplishments are often encountered in history. Along with contemporaneous phenomena elsewhere in Europe, the cultural efflorescence of some Danish regions in the second quarter of the seventeenth century may also provoke the question, in the manner of Jean Baudrillard or Jean Cocteau, if the Thirty Years' War ever took place.[4] But there remains a marked distinction between the role that Denmark receives in the political history of the Early Modern period and its neglect in a broader history of European culture of the time; if Denmark enters into European history books, it is precisely mainly in regard to the Thirty Years' War and other conflicts with Sweden.

While the artistic and architectural monuments of the Danish Renaissance are no doubt worthy of broad attention, recognition of their importance is not widespread. A series of publications and major exhibitions of the 1970's and 1980's, which culminated in the 1988 exhibitions devoted to Christian IV and Europe, brought some more interest to the period, but no major symposium was held at the time.[5] And the exhibitions of 1988 did not evoke the kind of lasting resonance one might have expected. Although notable exceptions exist,[6] the period continues to gain little interest outside Denmark. Thus even though some more attention has begun to be paid in the past few decades to the Danish Renaissance, it still does not command much mention from more than a few specialists in other countries. Significantly, the Danish Renaissance still does not appear in most handbooks or surveys of art history.[7]

There are many reasons the Danish Renaissance may not have gained a more prominent position in European historiography. The geo-

Fig. 3. Roskilde Cathedral, interior of the funerary chapel of Christian IV, 1614-1620, by Lourens II and Hans II van Steenwinckel with paintings 1863-66 by Vilh. Marstand celebrating the deeds of the king (Photo Henrik Wichmann).

graphical situation affects everything. Within its immediate surroundings of the Sound and Kattegat in its position between the North and Baltic Seas Denmark may appear central, but from many other geographical perspectives its status is ambiguous, as is even this location. The word surroundings is deliberately chosen instead of region, since one might even wonder to which region Denmark belongs. Traditionally, and by affinity and at times enmity, Denmark is of course included with Sweden, Norway, and Finland in Scandinavia. But because of its position between the North and Baltic seas, Denmark may also be considered to belong to either of these regions as well. In fact, Denmark has been included recently in discussions of both of them.[8] Until 1864 the Duchies of Schleswig-Holstein were annexed to the Danish kingdom, so that historic Denmark might also be related to Central Europe. From another standpoint, this multiplicity of affiliations might have had advantages for gaining a variety of perspectives on Denmark (Fig. 4).

However, from another point of view, Denmark might be regarded as liminal to all of these regions; and more important, regardless of the region for which it has been claimed, Denmark has largely been left on the margins of European cultural as well as political geography. With the possible if problematic exception of Central Europe, all the regions mentioned: the North Sea, even more the Baltic and Scandinavia, are distant from the paradigmatic cultural centers of the continent, in relation to which the place of Denmark seems peripheral. The lands of historic Denmark, especially Norway and the Faroe Islands, are located to the far north of Europe. They are relatively remote from Greece or Rome, and other centers of classical antiquity, as well as from the Near East,

the cradle of western civilization. While it is true that Roman coins and products have been found in Denmark, and that slaves and other goods were traded south, the Romans never penetrated this far beyond the *limes*. Rome's successor states such as Byzantium were far away, and even the Carolingian and Ottonian empires at best reached only the borders of historic Denmark. Denmark's physical location has also had obvious cultural consequences, starting with issues of religion: for example, although Christianity came earlier to Denmark than to some areas of northern and northeastern Europe, it also came relatively late.

Distance has often meant exclusion. Art historical studies of the Renaissance traditionally concentrate on the Italian peninsula, from which Denmark is far distant. In art history the concept of the Northern Renaissance has been constructed as a counterweight to deal with phenomena which were deemed worthy of the same kind of consideration that the Italian Renaissance has received, but this notion has also not included Denmark. Even today in Anglophone countries the concept of the Northern Renaissance applies mainly to the study of Early Netherlandish painting from Van Eyck to Brueghel, with German painters of the period of Dürer, and now perhaps the work of the limewood sculptors included.[9] Moreover, while the art of other countries such as France and Spain which lie on the Mediterranean have also gained international recognition, Denmark clearly has not enjoyed similar favor.

The expansion of art history to cover other European regions has also not included Denmark. As suggested, Denmark might have been included in accounts of art in Central Europe. As duke of Holstein the king of Denmark was considered the leader of the North German circle, an admin-

Fig. 4. 'The Kingedome of Denmarke', by John Speed, 1626. For other parts of the Danish realm, cf. map on p. 54. Copenhagen, The Danish Royal Library (Photo Royal Library).

istrative division of the Holy Roman Empire, and it was as such that Christian IV found a pretext to intervene in the Thirty Years' War. Yet even treatments of art in Central Europe which have covered the period after that of Dürer and the limewood sculptors have not dealt with Denmark.[10]

Geographical distance has also meant chronological disjunction for Danish culture. As is the case with other geographically liminal or remote regions, remote not only in terms of physical geography but in the sense that they are far from the centers in which the major currents of European art and culture originated, many European cultural phenomena, not just Christianity, but aspects of art, and specifically the concern here, the Renaissance, come comparatively belated. If one thinks of the advent of the Renaissance in other lands, and mean by the Renaissance art with classical forms or content, or architecture employing in one way or another the classical orders, then the Renaissance was a tardy arrival in Denmark. Take Central Europe in comparison. Already in the late fifteenth century Florentine sculptors and craftsmen were working at Matthias Corvinus' court in Buda, where they made such fine pieces as Christoforo Romano's relief bust of that ruler. In the early sixteenth century Florentines designed and carved the Bakocz Chapel in Esztergom Cathedral. By the end of the fifteenth century Florentines were also present in Poland. In Kraków, the Polish capital, artists such as Francesco Fiorentino designed the arcaded courtyard in the Wawel, and Bartolommeo Berrecci planned and saw the construction of the Sigismund Chapel in Wawel Cathedral. In the Czech lands, traces of the Renaissance are also visible in Moravia and in the capital of Prague already by the end of the fifteenth century. By the 1530s the Belvedere, a splendid Italianate villa, was being erected in the palace gardens on the Hradčany hill in Prague. Even in other German-speaking lands, art and architecture which was remarkably Italianate could be seen already by the 1540s. Here there may be mentioned as exemplary the important monument of the Stadtresidenz in Landshut, an urban palazzo in Bavaria which some have even gone so far as to attribute to Giulio Romano (Fig. 5). Illusionistic ceiling paintings, depicting subjects *di sotto in su*, which were inspired by Italian prototypes, were also to be seen, most remarkably in the Protestant chapel in Neuburg an der Donau.[11] Nothing like these phenomena is to be encountered in early modern Denmark.

Comparisons of places like Neuburg with Denmark may be hard to make, because some of the

Fig. 5. Landshut, city palace of Duke Louis X of Bavaria, courtyard of the 'Italian house', 1537-43 (Photo Krista de Jonge).

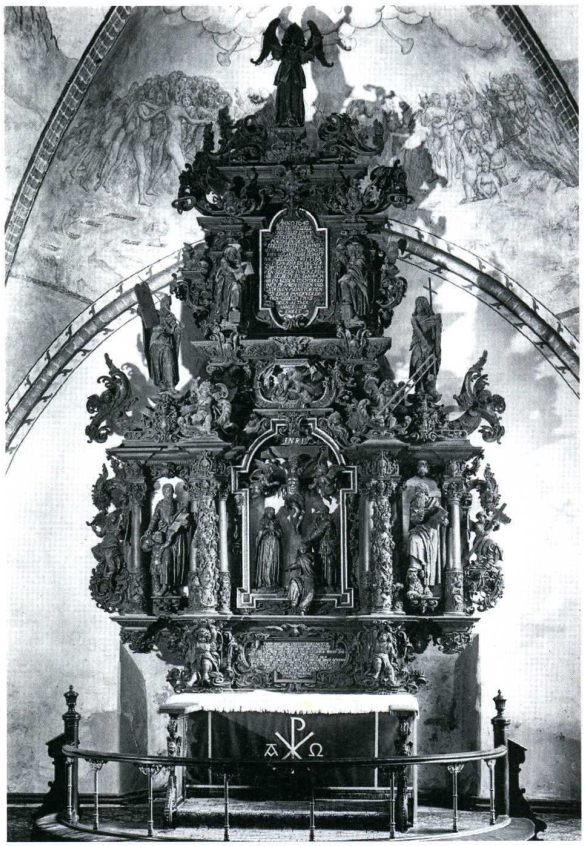

Fig. 6. Hans Gudewerdt the Younger, Altarpiece, 1640. Eckernförde, St. Nicolas' Church (Photo Landesamt für Denkmalpflege, Kiel).

major monuments in Denmark are not paintings, but sculpture or architecture, but that is only part of the problem. The Danish monuments of sculpture and architecture which are usually taken into account might be termed works of at best the very late Renaissance, or "Mannerist". It is not necessary to enter in the vexed question of Northern Mannerism,[12] to see how the possible applicability of this notion also points to the relative belatedness of the Danish Renaissance. Even supposedly Mannerist forms are found in their latest manifestations in the lands of historic Denmark. This pertains both to seemingly indigenous creations found in wood altarpieces and epitaphs made by the Eckernförde school of Hans Gudewerdt and his followers in Schleswig-Holstein (Fig. 6).[13] The term also may pertain to the bronze fountain sculpture at Frederiksborg, an important work by Adriaen De Vries. De Vries was a pupil of Giambologna, the very late Renaissance or Mannerist sculptor, making him a sculptor of the seventh generation of the Renaissance. Furthermore, the fountain for Frederiksborg postdates all the work done by De Vries for that supposedly most Mannerist of monarchs, Rudolf II (Fig. 7).[14]

Moreover, if one really wishes to speak about major monuments of painting, and to expand the notion of the Danish Renaissance to cover the reign of Christian IV, as is common, then one may even actually be talking about painters or artists who in most other contexts are usually considered to be 'baroque'. For example, some of the most important commissions for paintings in Denmark went to artists in Amsterdam and Utrecht. In the early seventeenth century Pieter Lastman and other Amsterdam painters were commissioned to supply works for the royal oratory at Frederiksborg.[15] Other pictures depicting episodes from Danish history were meant to pro-

Fig. 7. Adriaen de Vries, Neptune, 1615-18, from the Frederiksborg fountain, dismantled and taken to Sweden as war booty 1659. Erected in front of Drottningholm Palace, Stockholm (Photo Per Magnus Persson, Nationalmuseum, Stockholm).

Fig. 8. Gerrit van Honthorst, Frederik I at the siege of Copenhagen 1623, c. 1640. Hillerød, The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle (Photo Frederiksborg).

vide decoration for a hall at Kronborg, and were commissioned from Gerrit van Honthorst and other major artists active in Utrecht (Fig. 8).[16] However, Honthorst is perhaps best known as an Utrecht Caravaggist, and Lastman as the teacher of Rembrandt; neither may be rightly considered a 'Renaissance' painter, in the sense of traditional style history.

In any event, mention of Adriaen De Vries, Honthorst, and others of their like indicates another important aspect of the ambiguity of the Danish Renaissance. This collection is gathered under the rubric that this essay has heretofore employed, namely the Danish Renaissance. But it would probably be best to choose another term, since if what is meant by Danish those from Denmark, then very few native-born Danes were involved in designing or creating the major monuments of the period. To be sure, many stone or wood workers, limners and joiners may have been indigenous, and there are important local schools of sculpture in the period like that at Eckernförde. The printmaker and painter Melchior Lorck, from Flensburg, may occupy a special place in considerations of art, but his activity in the Danish crown lands was limited. Other painters like Pieter Isaacsz. (Fig. 14), were born at Helsingør, and so were Søren Kiær and probably. Reinhold Thim.[17]

But just as many important works were imported, the preponderance of major artists came from abroad. In addition to paintings and sculpture already mentioned, imports include large works of sculpture, like the tomb monuments by Cornelis Floris in Schleswig, Roskilde (fig. 9), and elsewhere, the monument by Willem Van den Blocke in Odense, or statues from the De Keyser workshop for Frederiksborg.[18] Even the beautiful silvered altarpiece in Frederiksborg castle came from the workshop of Jakob Mores in Hamburg. Paintings were bought *en masse* in Amsterdam. Moreover, many painters, sculptors, and architects who worked physically in the Danish lands were in effect originally foreigners. A few, like the painter Franz Cleyn (Fig. 10), hailed from relatively nearby in northern Germany (Cleyn was from Rostock), but many came from the Low Countries. Netherlanders like Hans Steenwin-

Fig. 9. Cornelis II Floris, Funerary Monument for Christian III, 1574-75, erected 1580 in Roskilde Cathedral, Chapel of the Magi (Photo The National Museum of Denmark, Copenhagen).

kel from Antwerp and Anthonis van Opbergen from Mechelen/Malines played important roles in architecture, in sculpture, as exemplified by Jan Joris van der Schardt from Nijmegen, and in painting by many court artists starting with Hans Knieper from Brabant and continuing to the Delft-born Karel van Mander III.[19] Rather than the Danish Renaissance, it is perhaps thus better to speak about the Renaissance in Denmark (Fig. 11, 12).

The presence of so many Netherlanders also provides a reminder that the Renaissance in Denmark is a Renaissance of a singularly Netherlandish cast. It is important to emphasize this characteristic, because Denmark is even different from Sweden in this regard. Netherlanders were also abundant in Sweden, but there the Italian or Italianate presence was also much more direct. In the 1570s Johan III of Sweden called the Parr (or Pahr) family of architects and masons into Swedish royal service. The Parrs, originally from Lombardy, had introduced an arcaded courtyard in Brzeg, and worked elsewhere in Silesia, whereafter they had gone on to Mecklenburg. In Sweden they were involved in the construction of the castles at Borgholm, Stockholm, Uppsala, and Kalmar, where their efforts are still visible not just in the general disposition of the building and the shape of the towers, but in the decoration of sever-

Fig. 10. Frantz Clein, A nursery, c. 1620. Hillerød, The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle (Photo Frederiksborg).

Fig. 11. Johan Gregor van der Schardt, Frederik II, 1577-78. Hillerød, The Museum of National History, Frederiksborg Castle (Photo Frederiksborg).

al rooms and the chapel in the interior (Fig. 13).[20] Along with Netherlanders, the relative impact of Germanic artists and architects may also have been greater in Sweden. This does not mean that some particularly Germanic character was adopted, but it does indicate the possibility of a wider variety of sources and references. Nicodemus Tessin the Elder, the leading architect in Sweden in the mid-seventeenth century, the end of our period, had a broad multi-national orientation: Tessin, who came from Pomerania, brought to Sweden experiences and knowledge not just of local German and Netherlandish sources and models, but also of French architecture and experience in Italy: he had been to Rome, and the effects of this experience are also seen in his designs.[21]

Therefore, in contrast even with the situation with the Parrs in Sweden, if we are to think first of the Renaissance in Italianate terms, the Renaissance came only in mediated forms (and content) to Denmark. In painting it has long been recognized that Netherlanders, or Netherlandish-related artists came as intermediaries or indeed as surrogates for Italians or for the Italian art which the Danes could not get. However, it might again be said that this mediation came only belatedly, and in late or Mannerist forms, and furthermore that it occurred not just at second but at third hand. This process is exemplified by the fascinating figure of Pieter Isaacsz.. Isaacsz. became royal painter to Christian IV, and in addition to making portraits was responsible among other things for the part of the decoration of the Winter Room at Rosenborg. He was also a sort of art merchant, mediating painting purchases in Holland. Under Christian he became master of the sound tolls. However, he was also a spy in Swedish service (and maybe Danish counterintelligence). Isaacsz. had received some of his artistic training in Italy. But the clear stylistic formation of his art did not come merely through his own direct experience, but what he learned while he was working there in the atelier of Hans von Aachen, later court painter to Rudolf II, who the historian Karel van Mander says was his teacher. A drawing by Isaacsz. from this Italian period confirms as much: Isaacsz. signs himself as a *discipulus* of Von Aachen (Fig. 14). And both this drawing and a slightly later painting of 1602 (Basel, Museum) show his adaptation of that northern amalgamation effected by the German-born Von Aachen of both Venetian motifs (the nude with the lute player), northern handling, and Florentine forms, perhaps seen through the Vasari circle and such artists as Frederik/Friedrich Sustris, himself a Netherlander who had worked before in Italy. In this painting these elements are combined with a characteristically Rudolfine erotic charge.[22]

The picture drawn so far might give an impression not only of the ambiguity of the Renaissance in Denmark, but of Danish singularity, even provinciality. Yet this would not be correct, for there are several ways in which Denmark shares features more positively with other places and regions, and other perspectives by which the Danish Renaissance may be interpreted.

One of these is as the result of cultural transfer.[23] This means the ways in which not only ideas or in the present case spiritual culture, but also its

products, namely elements of material culture, in more traditional language, art and architecture, may be passed from one place to another. This happens very frequently in the spread of the Renaissance: what is encountered in Denmark is often met elsewhere.

The phenomenon by which, for example, Netherlanders stand in for Italians, and spread the Renaissance to other countries, is broadly familiar. In the past I have pointed to a remarkable offer made by the sculptor (and mason) Paul van't Hofe, who later worked in Wolgast and elsewhere in Pomerania. Van't Hofe announced himself in Lübeck in the 1540s by advertising that he could work in the antique manner, which was not yet present there. He thus offered himself as a surro-

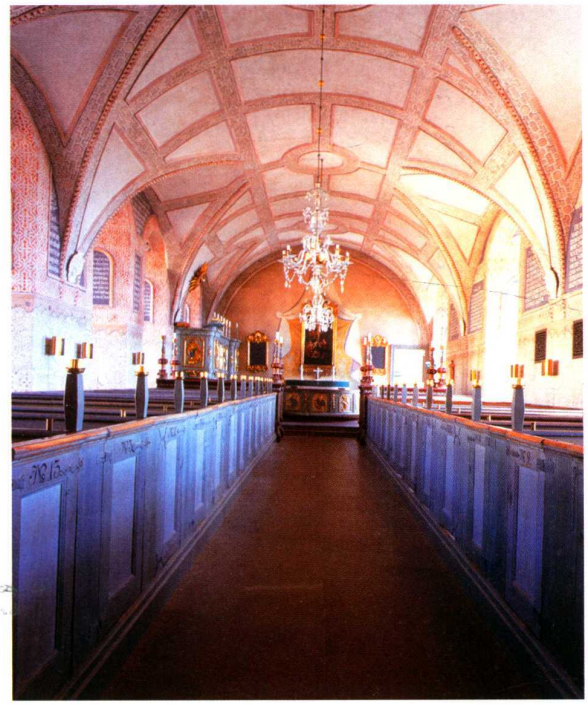

Fig. 13. Kalmar, Chapel of the Castle, 1586, by Domenicus Pahr (Photo Kalmar Castle).

Fig. 14. Pieter Isaacsz., Holy Family with St Catherine, late 1580s. Dresden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen, Kupferstich-Kabinett (Photo Staatliche Kunstsammlungen).

gate Italian. Similarly, the disciples of Giambologna, having trained in Tuscany, spread this sculptor's gospel over much of Europe: Pietro Tacca in Spain, Pierre Franqueville in France, Hans Reichle in Augsburg, De Vries in Augsburg and then Prague.[24] Sustris, who has been mentioned as having been part of Vasari's equipe in Florence, was along with the Bruges-born Pieter de Witte, known as Candid, one of the Italo-Netherlanders who were responsible for directing and creating much of the flowering of architecture, palace decoration, and painting associated with the Renaissance under William V and Maximilian II in Bavaria.[25] The same situation may be traced in many other places, not the least of which was Prague. In addition to a few Italians like Giuseppe Arcimboldo, most of the figures who served Rudolf II had either been Germanophones like Von Aachen and his pupil Joseph Heintz who had been in Italy, or Netherlanders who had also been there like the sculptors De Vries or Hans Mont, or more significantly, Bartolomeus Spranger, the painter who served the imperial court longest of all. Spranger had imbibed art in Parma, Rome, and Florence (Fig. 15).[26]

As far as architecture or sculpture are concerned, the Netherlandish impact made the Baltic sea area during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century in many ways a Netherlandish lake. Masons, architects, and sculptors who were active in Denmark appear in the major Baltic emporium of Danzig/Gdańsk. For example Peter Husen designed the Neptune fountain before the Artus Hof in Gdansk before he was called to Denmark, where he modeled sculpture we may still see in the grounds of Rosenborg. Opbergen, whether or not he was the architect of the Arsenal in Gdańsk, was certainly involved with the fortifications there; earlier he had helped in their design at Kronborg castle. Other Netherlanders worked in many other Baltic centers (Fig. 16, 17).[27]

Fig. 12. Hans Knieper, Frederik II and Prince Christian (IV), 1581-85, tapestry from the series of Danish kings, originally in the Great Hall of Kronborg Castle. Copenhagen, The National Museum of Denmark (Photo National Museum).

Fig. 15 Bartholomeus Spranger, Venus and Adonis, c. 1595. Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum (Photo KHM).

But Denmark does not need to be grouped exclusively with the Baltic area. Munich and Prague, where similar things occurred, do not lie on the Baltic, but in Central Europe. If the North Sea region be taken into account, then in both sculpture and painting other phenomena like those in Denmark may also be found elsewhere. In England for example Netherlandish painters such as Isaac Oliver (or later, but still contemporary with Christian IV, Rubens and Van Dyck) and Gerard Johnson were active, as were many sculptors.[28]

Cultural transfer is also not merely a matter of influence: it may also involve resistance, bringing up the issue of conscious choice. It has been suggested that the choice of or affinity for Netherlandish art was one such decision. This may help explain why at least in building Netherlandish designs, and the plans of Vredeman de Vries, were preferred over many others.[29]

In any case, as far as Netherlandism is concerned, the use of materials may also have led to a predisposition, at least in architecture, for this choice. Because of a lack of much good stone outside Jutland, from early on brick has long been a predominant material used for building in Denmark. Brick is the material used for castles, like Frederiksborg, for civic structures, like the Copenhagen Stock Exchange, and for churches, like that in Christiansstad, now in Sweden. Brick is moreover certainly not exclusive to Denmark: it has been noted as a common material throughout the Baltic (Fig. 18). However, we may also extend the range in which this material is used to include not only the Low Countries, but England making this not just a regional marker. And of course other choices could also be made: significant monuments like Kronborg were eventually clad with sandstone ashlars.[30]

Religion might be a category which links Denmark with other regions.[31] However, neither the Netherlands nor England is Lutheran, so it is better to focus on other aspects of culture, including the social milieu. Here it is noticeable that much of what is thought of as the Renaissance in Denmark is either the direct result of court patronage and collecting, or made in emulation of the court. Just to recall: the palaces of Kronborg, Rosenborg, Frederiksborg, and Copenhagen itself, along with many others, were all royal residences. The royal chapels at Roskilde, the Round Tower and Trinity Church, and several other ecclesiastical foundations were also paid for by the crown.[32] Major tombs, fountains, and other monuments were also royal commissions. The main painters were in royal employ. And finally the biggest collection was that of the king; others formed by men such as Ole Worm emulated him. The king of Denmark was in a particularly favorable position to call this activity forth, for he owned huge amounts of land, when land was the source of wealth, as it was in early modern Denmark, and the royal purse also benefited from the immense income derived from tolls on ships passing through the sound (Fig. 19).

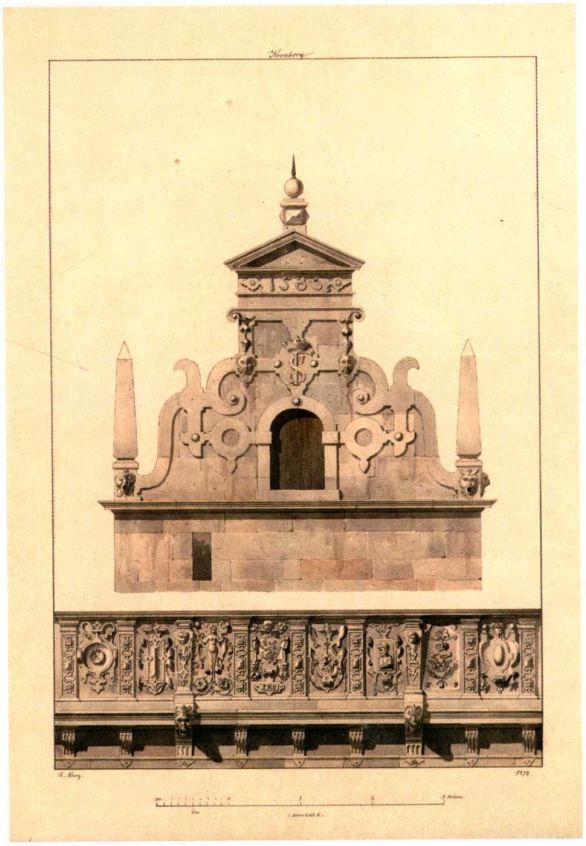

Fig. 16. Elsinore, Kronborg Castle, Dormer 1585 on the western façade of the west wing. Drawing by A. Krog 1876. Copenhagen, National Danish Art Library.

Royal renaissances are by no means exclusive to Denmark. Jan Białostocki once said that the Renaissance came to Eastern Europe as a royal fancy. By this he meant that the places such as Kraków, Buda, and Prague where the first Italian Renaissance monuments were to be seen were brought there because of the desire of the king.[33] *Mutatis mutandis*, much the same could be said about many other areas of Europe. Florentine sculptors appear first in England at Hampton Court, and in France already in the fifteenth century Francesco Laurana was working in Marseilles and Aix en Provence at the behest of René d'Anjou. Francis I brought Leonardo da Vinci and Andrea del Sarto to France, and later Primaticcio and Rosso Fiorentino, where they founded the school of Fontainebleau. In Spain there are a number of different foci, but the concentrated presence of Italians both in the royal palace at Granada, and in making the tombs there, is due to the crown, as is the collecting and patronage, by the way, of early Netherlandish paintings.[34] Closer to Denmark, many Renaissance sites both in the Low Countries and certainly in the Germanic parts of Central Europe were due to court patronage.[35]

In this connection it is important to consider one main reason why Christian IV might not only be regarded as having emulated earlier and contemporaneous monarchs in using patronage and collecting as an expression of magnificence,

Fig. 17. Gdańsk, Armory, 1600-1612 (Photo Hugo Johannsen).

but also to have acted in an environment where monarchs and princes were encouraged to be collectors and patrons. His predecessor, Frederick II, had already followed Emperor Maximilian II in taking the sculptor Johann Gregor van der Schardt into his employ. In Christian IV's time the leading monarch in protocol was Emperor Rudolf II. Rudolf acceded to the imperial dignity in 1576, twelve years before Christian became king, and for the next quarter century of Christian's reign ruled from Prague, where he amassed the biggest and best *Kunstkammer* and painting collection in all of Europe, and brought scores of artists to his court. Rudolfine Prague was the cynosure of the contemporary German courts, and we may also recall that the emperor was also sovereign over the Duke of Holstein, one of Christian's titles.

Many of the German courts were inspired by the imperial court, and emulated it. They had artistic contacts both direct and indirect with Prague. The German princes gave and received gifts from the emperor, helped the Prague court acquire objects and acquired them on commissions from court artists. In some instances they exchanged servants with the court, sent their own court artists to Prague for training, as did the duke of Saxony, or picked as court artists, as in Wolfenbüttel, artists who had been trained by Prague court artists. They also acquired or had made objects that imitated those created by Rudolfine painters and craftsmen.[36]

In many respects the Danish court followed this pattern. Christian IV commissioned sculpture from the imperial bronze caster Adriaen de Vries. Pieter Isaacsz., Christian IV's court painter, had, as remarked, been the pupil of Hans von Aachen, Rudolf II's court painter. Isaacsz. remained in contact with Von Aachen and with other artists like Vredeman de Vries, who had served Rudolf II, long after he had left Von Aachen's atelier. Copies of compositions by Arcimboldo and the

Fig. 19. Hendrick Cornelisz. Vroom, View of Elsinore and Kronborg Castle, between 1615 and 1629. Cambridge, Fitzwilliam Museum (Photo © Fitzwilliam Museum).

Fig. 18. Hillerød, Frederiksborg Castle, Bathhouse, c.1580 (Photo Hugo Johannsen).

Prague painter Savery are in Rosenborg. Compositions by Spranger provided models for Danish painters. A Danish letter written twenty-five years after Rudolf II's death, and thirty-seven after that of Joris Hoefnagel, refers to that artist as imperial court painter. This suggests something of the continuing cachet that the Prague court enjoyed in Denmark.[37] It may have been this kind of cachet that inspired or at least stimulated the assemblage of the *Kunstkammer* in Copenhagen, as of the dukes of Holstein at Gottorp. The decoration of the rooms in Gottorp which housed the *Kunstkammer* have a noticeably cosmic theme, which was also imparted to and by the *Kunstkammer* in Prague. It is of course also possible that these collections were also stimulated by the general competitive atmosphere of the German princely courts.[38]

Central Europe was the home of many princely houses with which Denmark had close connections. Of these courts Christian was related by marriage and family ties to the rulers in Wolfenbüttel, Dresden, and Brandenburg. These were all ruled by Lutherans (until the conversion of the margrave of Brandenburg to Calvinism), as was Denmark. The leadership of the Protestant cause was important. However, it might also be noted that the dukes of Brunswick-Wolfenbüttel and Saxony were also the rulers who were closest to Habsburg emperors in their politics and love of art. It may well be that interchanges between these courts and Prague created a broader community of interest into which Christian IV also fits.[39] For example, Giammaria Nosseni, the Italian impresario, who was active at the Dresden court, designed a mount of virtue for the coronation of Christian IV in 1596, which was assembled in Dresden, and brought to Copenhagen.[40]

Court relations expanded in other directions, too. Christian IV's sister, Anne of Denmark, was James I's queen. This may have had important consequences for the arts. It might be useful to examine the inspiration that British court painters, most of them Netherlanders, may have had on Christian, who visited England in 1606 and again in 1614, when he was painted by them.

In conclusion, another model may be proposed for considerations of Denmark. In response to the much discussed issue of centers and peripheries, Jan Białostocki saw that the periphery might have a positive advantage for developments in the arts.[41] However, other scholars such as Enrico Castelnuovo have advanced another cultural model which might also be applied to the Danish situation.[42] This is the idea of frontiers, both geographical and cultural. Rather than limiting regions, frontiers may be regarded as sites where cultures meet and contact takes place. Encounters may lead to various forms of cultural production, like those in Denmark. Culturally liminal, Denmark might thus be conceived not just as peripheral, but as having a productive position, productive because it lies on the frontiers of various cultural zones.

In posing this model for consideration, this paper wishes to suggest some new ways to think

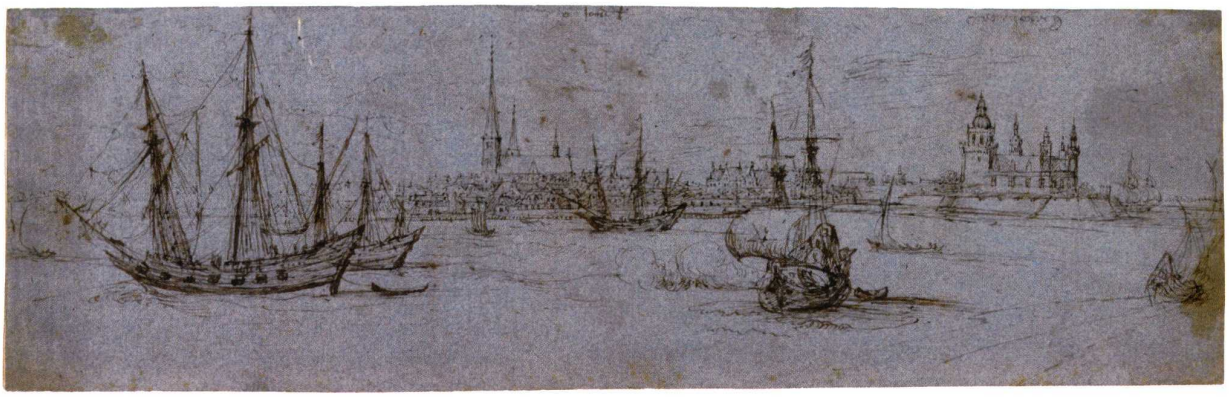

Fig. 20. Artist unknown, Tranquebar (India) with Dansborg, c.1650. Skokloster Castle, Sweden (Photo Jens Mohr, Skokloster).

about the Renaissance in Denmark. But one need not stop with Europe. Denmark was also linked with the wider world: it traded in the Indian Ocean, and established a settlement in Tranquebar, on the east coast of India, whose mercantile and artistic relations with the Danish homeland have been well studied (Fig. 20).[43] With this connection in mind (and Denmark was also later present in Africa, and the Americas, in the Virgin Islands), it is useful to remember that the Renaissance was a phenomenon with a compass broader than Europe. When the globe is taken into account, issues of marginality and liminality become problematic. The place of Denmark in the European perspective of the Renaissance might thus well be rethought in terms of the wider questioning of art in a global setting, which is a pressing concern today.

Notes

1 In this essay I have tried to retain the flavor of the original introductory lecture on which it is based, hence the more personal tone. Similarly, I have restricted references; many arguments touched upon here are documented in the other essays in this volume.

2 The historiography of Danish Renaissance art is discussed in the paper by Birgitte Bøggild Johannsen in this volume.

3 The latter subject was the topic of an exhibition in Aarhus which was one of the series devoted to Christian IV in 1988; see Steffen Heiberg (ed.), *Christian IV and Europe. The 19th Art Exhibition of the Council of Europe, Denmark 1988,* Herning 1988, 507-543.

4 Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "La guerre de trente ans a-t-elle eu lieu? Continuities and Discontinuities during the Thirty Years' War", in: Jacques Thuillier et al. (eds.), *Paix de Westphalie. L'art entre la guerre et la paix en Europe/ Westfälischer Friede. Die Kunst zwischen Krieg und Frieden.* Actes du colloque organisé par le Westfälischer Landesmuseum le 19 novembre 1998 à Münster et à Osnabrück et le Service culturel du musée du Louvre les 20 et 21 novembre 1990 à Paris, Paris 1999, 141-167.

5 See Heiberg (ed.) 1988. The notes and catalogue entries refer to much of the literature of the previous decades.

6 I had in mind the work of such scholars as Juliette Rod-

ing and Mara Wade, both represented in the present collection.

7 The present collection, and the sequence of exhibitions to which it was related, remedy this situation. I have not referred to these most recent contributions, which of course will alter the situation to which I am referring *en gros et en detail*.

8 See Juliette Roding & Lex Heerma van Voss (eds.), *The North Sea and Culture (1550-1800)*, Verloren, 1996; Krista Kodres et al. (eds.), *Religious Art and Architecture in the Baltic Region in the 13th -18th Centuries*, Tallinn 2008.

9 For an overview of the bibliography and historiography of the question, especially in regard to the period of the Danish Renaissance, see Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann (ed.), *Art and Architecture in Central Europe, 1550-1620. An Annotated Bibliography*, Marburg 2003 (Revised and updated edition with Heiner Borggrefe and Thomas Fusenig), especially the preface and introduction, 11-23. It may be remarked parenthetically that the category of limewood sculpture has left Denmark out of the picture, as exemplified by Michael Baxandall, *The Limewood Sculptors of Renaissance Germany*, New Haven & London, 1980, which pointedly excludes Claus Berg, who carved in oak, and also does not mention Bernt Notke.

10 I have to confess that my *Court, Cloister and City. The Art and Culture of Central Europe, 1450-1800, Chicago 1995* was also guilty of this oversight. See however Kristoffer Neville, *Nicodemus Tessin the Elder: Architecture in Sweden in the Age of Great Power*, Turnhout 2009 (Architecture Moderna 7), which argues for the inclusion of Sweden in a Central European context, and in passing, also for Denmark.

11 For a general account of these monuments see Kaufmann 1995.

12 See Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "The Problem of Northern 'Mannerism': A Critical Review", in: S. E. Murray & Ruth I. Weidner (eds.), *Mannerism: Essays in Music and the Arts*, West Chester, Pennsylvania 1980, 89-115.

13 For which see Holger Behling, *Hans Gudwerdt. Bildschnitzer zu Eckernförde*, Neumünster 1990.

14 For De Vries see most thoroughly Frits Scholten (ed.), *Adriaen de Vries 1556-1626*. Exhibition catalogue, Zwolle 1998. The Frederiksborg fountain is also treated most recently by Charlotte Christensen and Magnus Olausson in Steffen Heiberg (ed.), *Christian 4. og Frederiksborg*, Copenhagen 2006, 153-183.

15 Hugo Johannsen, "Christian IV's Private Oratory in Frederiksborg Castle Chapel – Reconstruction and Interpretation", in: Badeloch Noldus & Juliette Roding (eds.), *Pieter Isaacsz (1568-1625). Court Painter, Art Dealer and Spy*, Turnhout 2007, 164-179; see also Heiberg (ed.) 2006.

16 For these see H. D. Schepelern & Ulla Houkjær, *The Kronborg Series. King Christian IV and his Pictures of Early Danish History*, Copenhagen 1988.

17 Isaacsz. and his contemporaries were the topic of a recent exhibition at Frederiksborg, see Noldus & Roding (eds.) 2007.

18 For works of the Floris school see most recently Hugo Johannsen, "Willem van den Blocke and his monument (1585-86) for Christoph von Dohna in the Cathedral of Odense. An Example of the Spread of the Style of Cornelis Floris in the Baltic", in: Małgorzata Ruszkowska-Macur (ed.), *Netherlandish Artists in Gdańsk in the Time of Hans Vredeman de Vries*, Gdańsk & Lemgo 2006, 111-115. Activity of the De Keyser workshop is considered in the essay by Konrad Ottenheym in this collection.

19 Some of these figures are considered in the papers by Krista de Jonge and Kristoffer Neville within. The painters however deserve more attention, as does the rather contested oeuvre of Johan Gregor van der Schardt.

20 See August Hahr, *Die Architektenfamilie Pahr. Eine für Renaissancekunst Schlesiens, Mecklenburgs und Schwedens bedeutende Künstlerfamilie*, Strasbourg 1908 (Studien zur deutschen Kunstgeschichte 97); Marius Karpowicz, "La conquista delle corti", in: Cesare Mozzarelli (ed.), *'Familia' del principe e famiglia aristocratica*, Rome 1988, 745-751.

21 These issues are treated in Neville 2007.

22 Isaacsz. is treated in Noldus & Roding (eds.) 2007. For these works and a general discussion see further Juliette Roding & Marja Stompé, *Pieter Isaacsz. (1569-1625). Een Nederlandse schilder, kunjsthandelaar en diplomat aan het Deense hof*, Verloren 1997.

23 For perspectives on the application of this notion to the early modern period see Wolfgang Schmale (ed.), *Kulturtransfer*, Innsbruck 2003 (Wiener Schriften zur Geschichte der Neuzeit 2).

24 See in general Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "Italian Sculptors and Sculpture outside of Italy (chiefly in Central Europe): Problems of Approach, Possibilities of Reception", in: Claire Farago (ed.), *Reframing the Renaissance*, New Haven and London 1995, 47-66.

25 See Thea Wilberg-Vignau, *In Europa zu Hause: Niederländer in München um 1600/Citizens of Europe. Dutch and Flemish Artists in Munich c. 1600*, Munich, 2005.

26 See Eliška Fučíková et al. (eds.), *Rudolf II and Prague. The Court and the City*, London 1997; Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, *The School of Prague. Painting at the Court of Rudolf II*, Chicago and London 1988.

27 For a general introduction to this subject see Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "Påverkan västerifrån: nederländsk

konst och arkitektur", in: Janis Kreslins, Steven A. Mansbach & Robert Schweitzer (eds.), *Gränsländer. Östersjön in ny gestalt*, Stockholm 2003, 17-41 (also published as "Ietekme no rietumiem: Nīderlandes māksla un arhitektūra", in: *Baltija: jauns skatīums*, Riga 2003, 29-48). See also Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "Ways of Transfer of Netherlandish Art", in: Ruszkowska-Macur (ed.) 2006, 13-21. The other essays in this volume also pertain to this theme; see further Krista Kodres, "Der Vredeman de Vries-Stil als Markenzeichen Arent Passers in Reval/Tallinn", and Arnold Bartetzky, "Hans Vredeman de Vries' geschwifte Beschlagwerkgiebel. Zu ihrer Herkunft, Aneignung und Verbreitung in der Architektur Mittel-und Nordeuropas", in: Heiner Borggrefe & Vera Lüpkes (eds.), *Hans Vredeman de Vries und die Folgen*, Marburg 2005 (Studien zur Kultur der Renaissance 3), 50-57, 73-82.

28 See Christopher Brown, "Artistic Relations between Britain and the Low Countries (1532-1632)", in: Roding & Van Voss (eds.) 1996, 340-354, and Christopher Brown, "British Painting and the Low Countries", in: Karen Hearn (ed.), *Dynasties. Painting in Tudor and Jacobean England 1530-1630*, London 1995, 27-31; Juliette Roding (ed.), *Dutch and Flemish Artists in Britain 1550-1800* (Leids Kunsthistorisch Jaarboek 13), 2003.

29 See in general for this circumstance Borggrefe & Lüpkes 2005; Heiner Borggrefe et al. (ed.), *Hans Vredeman de Vries und die Renaissance in Norden*, Munich 2002.

30 For more on the choice of brick as a material see Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "Art and the Church in the Early Modern Era: The Baltic in Comparative Perspective", in: Kodres (ed.) 2008, 20-40. See also Hugo Johannsen, "Kronborg", in: Carsten Bach-Nielsen et al. (eds.), *Danmark og renæssancen 1500-1650*, Copenhagen 2006, 290-299.

31 More is said about this issue in other essays in this collection, for instance that by Jan Harasimowicz.

32 See Juliette Roding, *Christiaan IV van Denemarken (1588-1648). Architectuur en stedebouw van een Luthers vorst*, Alkmaar 1991.

33 Jan Białostocki, *The Art of the Renaissance in Eastern Europe*, Oxford & Ithaca 1976.

34 See Earl Rosenthal, "The Diffusion of the Italian Renaissance Style in Western European Art", *Sixteenth Century Journal* 9 (1978), 33-45.

35 For Central Europe see in general Kaufmann 1995; the continuing publications of Krista de Jonge address this topic in the Low Countries.

36 See Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, "Planeten im kaiserlichen Universum. Prag und die Kunst an den deutschen Fürstenhöfen zur Zeit Rudolfs II.," in: *Hofkunst der Spätrenaissance. Braunschweig - Wolfenbüttel und das kaiserliche Prag um 1600*, Braunschweig 1998, 9-19.

37 This information was pointed out in Thomas DaCosta Kaufmann, review article,"*Christian IV and Europe. The 19th Art Exhibition of the Council of Europe*, Copenhagen, 1988", *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift* 58 (1989),19-22. Of course, it might be remembered that Tycho Brahe, after being in Christian IV's favor, went to Prague to become imperial astronomer, and died there.

38 See Mogens Bencard, „Idee und Entstehung der Kunstkammer", in: Heinz Spielmann & Jan Drees (eds.), *Gottorf im Glanz des Barock. Kunst und Kultur am Schleswiger Hof 1544-1713*, Schleswig 1997, 261-267.

39 For the relation with Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel see the essay by Barbara Uppenkamp.

40 See Heiberg (ed.) 1988, 130, cat. 445. The topic of Danish-Saxon relations is the subject of an exhibition with catalogue, see Jutta Kappel & Claudia Brink (eds.), *Mit Fortuna übers Meer. Sachsen und Dänemark – Ehen und Allianzen im Spiegel der Kunst (1548-1709)*, Dresden 2009.

41 Jan Białostocki, "Some Values of Artistic Periphery," in: Irving Lavin et al. (eds.) *World Art: Themes of Unity in Diversity*, London 1989, 1, 49-58.

42 Enrico Castelnuovo, "La frontiera nella storia dell'arte", and "Le Alpi, crocevia e punto d'incontro delle tendenze artistiche nel XV secolo", in: *La cattedrale tascabile. Scritti di storia dell'arte*, Livorno 2000, 15-45.

43 See most comprehensively Martin Krieger, *Kaufleute, Seeräuber und Diplomaten. Der dänische Handel auf dem Indischen Ozean (1620-1868)*, Cologne, Weimar & Vienna 1998.