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Translation and the Fracturing of the Law: The Motivation Behind the Norwegian Law of 1604

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Abstract: In the 16th century, numerous translations into Danish were made of the 13th-century Old Norwegian law-code, the Landslov, which was still in force in Norway. This article argues that these translations were made not only due to the linguistic difficulties facing Danes working with a law-code in Old Norwegian, but also reflect an attempt to stop the Norwegian legal system fracturing as a consequence of a multitude of Danish versions of the law.

The first national law-code valid for the whole of Norway, King Magnus Lagabøte's *Landslov*, was passed in 1274. It replaced earlier regional laws, the *landskapslover*.¹ When the *Landslov* was introduced, Norway was an independent kingdom, and the introduction of a national law-code was an important stage in the process of Norwegian state formation and the consolidation of the power of the monarchy.² The *Landslov* stayed in force for an impressive 400 years, and was valid for the reigns of 19 monarchs until well into the early modern period, when it was superseded in 1687 by Christian V's Norwegian Law (*Kong Christian Den Femtis Norske Lov*).³

During the period the *Landslov* was in force, Norway was transformed from a medieval kingdom into an early modern European state. For much of this time, it was in a union with Denmark. In 1380, the Danish King Olaf II Håkonsen inherited the Kingdom of Norway as Olav IV Håkonsson. After his death, Norway was ruled by his mother, Margrete I, from 1387 to 1412. In 1397, Sweden, Denmark and Norway formed the Kalmar Union, which was dissolved in 1523 when Sweden withdrew.⁴ From 1536/1537, Denmark and Norway were in a personal union,⁵ and when in 1536 the Norwegian Council of the Realm was abolished, Norway in effect became a province ruled from Denmark.⁶ Up until 1814, Norway

remained a part of the Kingdom of Denmark–Norway, which in 1660 became the integrated state of Denmark–Norway and an absolutist monarchy.

The *Landslov* was originally written in Old Norwegian. However, by the 16th century, Danish was the language of the administration in Norway and legal officials could no longer necessarily read the Old Norwegian found in the medieval lawbooks and their copies with ease (Vinje 1973: 27, 31). Danish translations of law manuscripts thus had to be made for practical purposes. In the 16th and 17th centuries, these translations were handwritten in manuscripts and, as a result, there are about 120 manuscripts of the translated laws.⁷ In 1604 a government-mandated translation of the *Landslov* was published in Danish, which was the first time that the law had been printed. The observable errors and inaccuracies in the printed translation of 1604 suggest that a perfectly collated and translated law-book in 1604 was an unmanageable task, given the background of the variable translations into Danish in use in Norway.

Previous scholars have emphasized that the immediate aim of the 1604 translation was to provide an adequate Danish translation of the *Landslov*.⁸ I argue that, in addition to solving the practical difficulty of Danish lawmen not being able to read Old Norwegian, the printed

translation of 1604 was put together in an attempt to stop the Norwegian legal system fracturing as a consequence of a multitude of Danish versions of the law, and to consolidate the Danish control over the Norwegian legal system. The printed translation of 1604 aimed to codify law that was valid, thus aiming to incorporate amendments and other regulations that had been promulgated since the time of Magnus Lagabøte, thereby consolidating Norwegian law from the variable translations available by the end of the 16th century. Incorporating 300 years of amendments into the law-code was no easy task, which will have been one of the reasons why it took so long to produce a satisfactory text, and why the results were mixed, as this article will demonstrate. One other important aspect of the assembly and printing of the law-code was to consolidate Danish control over the Norwegian legal system. The Danish king asserted his authority by printing the law and distributing it around Norway, a country still without its own printing press. This move from Copenhagen gave a clear signal of Danish power and wealth. Norwegians were now under the control of a law distributed directly from Denmark, even if the content was still recognisably Norwegian. The absolutism established in Denmark in the 1660s was included in Norwegian law with the introduction of Christian V's Norwegian Law (*Kong Christian Den Femtis Norske Lov*), with which the *Landslov* was finally replaced in 1687.⁹

The article analyses diverging translations of the *Landslov*. I will begin by presenting the background of the *Landslov*'s 16th-century translations into Danish. Secondly, I examine the 16th-century attempts at putting together a new translation, and, thirdly, I will discuss the aims of the printed translation of 1604.

The Background of the Translations of the Landslov into Danish ca. 1600

While little work has been done on the Danish translations of the *Landslov*, there are thought to have been 3–4 influential translations actually undertaken that were copied and circulated widely, one from the beginning of the 16th century, one from the 1530s and one from the 1550s. It has been suggested that lawmen with especially good expertise were responsible for

these. In the 1560–1570s and, later, other translations seem to have been undertaken but these were not widely disseminated. (Fladby 1986: 192.)

Disparity arose in the translations of the *Landslov*, both in comparison with the Old Norwegian versions of the law texts (the source texts), and between the translations themselves. For comparative purposes, I will illustrate this with four manuscripts, two from early in the manuscript tradition (ca. 1300), and two later Danish translations, one from the end of the 16th century and one from 1600.

1. Holm Perg 34 4to from the last quarter of the 13th century, the oldest surviving *Landslov* manuscript
2. AM 79 4to from the end of the 16th century
3. NKS 1642 4to from around 1300
4. AM 92 4to from 1600, a copy of NKS 1642 4to

Holm Perg 34 4to is the oldest manuscript of the *Landslov* still preserved. The selection of text examples made in Table 1 concerns the killing of a lawman.¹⁰

Although AM 79 4to is not a direct translation of Holm Perg 34 4to, the translation of the *Landslov* it contains is typical, and its exemplar seems to have been close enough that we can get an idea of the translation strategy employed. Key vocabulary remains recognisably the same: for example, *løgmann* ['lawman'] in Holm Perg 34 4to is rendered by *Laugmand* in AM 79 4to. Old Norwegian *níðingsvíg* in Holm Perg 34 4to is rendered by Danish *nidings verck* in AM 79 4to. The first half of the compound remains the same, but the second element replaces *víg* with *verck* ['deed'], changing the meaning from 'villainous killing' to 'villainous deed'; whether *víg* or *verck*, both misdeeds meant that the perpetrator was considered a *níðingr*, a scoundrel with a malicious and base character. *Skipaðr* in the Old Norwegian means 'appointed', and also has connotations of something having been created. This is rendered by *skickit* in Danish, a Low German loan word (*schicken*) (*Den Danske Ordbog*, s.v. 'skikke'), which means 'appointed', and also has connotations of something having been fashioned or set up in such a way as to be fit for a specific purpose. The lawman in Old Norwegian graphically *höggr niðr* ['strikes down'] justice (more

Table 1. Comparison of extracts from four manuscripts concerning the killing of a lawman.

| Holm Perg 34 4to (late 13 th century) | AM 79 4to (late 16 th century) | NKS 1642 4to (ca. 1300) | AM 92 4to (1600, copy of NKS 1642 4to) |
|---|---|---|--|
| <p>Þat er ok niðingsvíg, ef maðr drepr lögmann þann er til þess er skipaðr at segja mǫnnum lǫgg því at sá hǫggr niðr réttynði fyrri ǫllum mǫnnum því at hann er ǫllum jafnskyldugr svá ríkum sem fátókum þar sem hann er yfir skipaðr. (23v)</p> <p>It is also a villainous killing if a man kills a lawman, that one who is appointed to do this: to say the law to people so that that one exacts [literally ‘strikes down’] justice for all people since he is equally obligated to the rich as to the poor where he is appointed [to preside] over.</p> | <p>Det er oc nidings verck at drebe Laugmand som til des er skickit at sige mend laug. Thi huo det gjør hand nedertrycker ret for alle mand Thi hand er alle plictige loug at sige saa velde fattige som den rige. (33r)</p> <p>It is also a villainous killing to kill a lawman, who to this is appointed: to say the law to people. Because that one does this: he brings justice to bear for all people. Because he is equally obliged to say the law to the very poor as to the rich.</p> | <p>Þat er nidings vigh at uega logman firir retta logsogn. þui at han hoggar niðr rættyndi firir mannon. Þui at han er allum iamskyldugar log at segia þeim sem han er ifir skipaðr. (31a)</p> <p>It is a villainous killing to slay a lawman for a just decision. Because he exacts [literally ‘strikes down’] justice for people. Because he is equally obliged to say the law to everyone that he is appointed over.</p> | <p>Det er nidinningsverck, at mand dræber Lagmanden for rette lagsognn Thi at denn nedhugger retten for mannd Thi hannd er dem alle lige ret pligtige som i hans lag sognn ere. (22v)</p> <p>It is a villainous killing to kill a lawman for a just decision. Because he exacts [literally ‘strikes down’] justice for men. Because he is equally obliged in the law to all those who are in his jurisdiction.</p> |

idiomatically, ‘exact justice’); in Danish, he *nedertrycker* [‘bears down’] justice (more idiomatically, ‘brings justice to bear’). The AM 79 4to translation lacks the final “hann er yfir skipaðr” [‘he is appointed to preside over’]; Holm Perg 34 4to denotes that each lawman is responsible for his own territory, while the Danish version is more general about the duty of the lawman,¹¹ although it agrees with the Old Norwegian that the lawman is as equally obligated to the rich as to the poor.

AM 92 4to from 1600 is a direct translation of NKS 1642 4to from c. 1300. Again, we can see that key legal vocabulary is preserved (*nidings vigh* is translated *nidinngsverck*, with the same change in the second element of ‘killing’ to ‘deed’), *logman* is translated *Lagmanden*, *logsogn* is translated *lagsognn*. *Hoggar niðr* in the source text becomes *nedhugger* in the target text, which has the same meaning but uses vocabulary with a Low German rather than an Old Norse origin. AM 92 4to translates “þeim sem han er ifir skipaðr” as “som i hans lag sognn ere”, delineating the area of the lawman’s responsibility more precisely. It moves the focus of his responsibility

from the group of people for whom he is responsible in the Old Norwegian, to simply those living in an administrative area in the Danish text.

Variation amongst the Danish translations becomes clearer if we add readings from AM 90 4to, from 1593:¹²

Det er och fredløss gierning att Mand Dræber laugmand, som til dis err skickede att sige huer mannd loug, bode fattige och ryge, ti dem der det gjør hannd nedfelder retten for alle Mand. (28r, emphasis added)

It is also an outlawable deed that a man kills a lawman, who is appointed to this: to say the law to each person, both poor and rich, because it is they who do this: he adjudicates justice for all people.

The translations into Danish differ significantly from one another. Both AM 79 4to (from the end of the 16th century) and AM 92 4to (from 1600) use a version of *nidinngsverck* (Old Norse *niðingsverk*). AM 92 4to translates *nidings vigh* (as given in NKS 1642 4to from 1300) from the source text by switching the meaning of the second element from ‘killing’ to ‘deed’, as discussed above. In AM 90 4to

from 1593, however, we find *fredløss gierning* rather than *nidinngsverck*. A *nidings vigh* was a deed that caused the perpetrator to lose his land as punishment and was not atonable by paying compensation; the offender was executed or made an outlaw. A *fredløss gierning* was an act causing the offender to lose his legal protection, meaning that he could be killed without retribution (cf. *Den Danske Ordbog*, s.v. ‘fredløs’). In terms of practical consequences, these two terms mean much the same, although *fredløss gierning* does not capture the debasement of the offender’s character implied by *nidings vigh* or *nidinngsverck*. In addition, AM 90 4to and AM 79 4to mention the poor and the rich as both receiving the law (*bode fattige och ryge / velde fattige som den rige*), whereas AM 92 4to summarises this as all who are in his jurisdiction (*lag sogn*).

This brief example demonstrates that the translations from ca. 1600 are dissimilar in places. Across the corpus, there are omissions, additions, amendments and so forth, which means that, by the end of the 16th century, there was a certain amount of variation in the law.

This variability in the Danish translations was from the mid-16th century onwards subject to the attention of the administration and much lamented, since it meant the law-code had become fragmented. This had to be dealt with to ensure the integrity of the Norwegian legal system. The way the Danish administration in Norway sought to solve this problem was to appeal to the government for a revision of the law-code and for a single translation that could be used everywhere.¹³

The 16th-Century Attempts at Putting Together a New Translation

There were a number of failed attempts to get a state-sponsored translation off the ground. In 1557 and in 1572, there were indications by the Danish administration that a more uniform law was required, but nothing happened. In a meeting in Bergen in 1557, the stated goal was to make the old law and the amendments applicable to the whole of Norway, which can only mean that a new translation was being suggested at the time. Likely this led to simply another translation that was valid alongside the others. In 1572, a declaration from Fredrik II demanded a coherent translation in good

Danish to be used all over the country, but it also effectively came to nothing.¹⁴

By the end of the 16th century, the need for a state-sponsored version of Norwegian law was urgent. While the Norwegian lawmen in the 1500s could still manage to read the Old Norwegian texts, the language was remote, and they could need a translation of the law-code themselves (Vinje 1973: 31). The need for a Danish translation to serve the needs of the Danish administration was consolidated in the late 16th century by three factors: firstly, by the gradual professionalization of legal officials from 1590 onwards (Sunde 2005: 25, 218–219, 225); secondly, by the implementation of the position of *sorenskriver* in Norway in 1590–1591 (a type of administrative legal official, eventually equivalent to a district court judge); and thirdly, by the removal of Norwegian lawmen and the implementation of Danish legal officials in Norway in 1600–1603 (Fladby 1986: 193; Sunde 2005: 177). These officials did not understand Old Norwegian, nor were they familiar with Norwegian laws.

At the beginning of the 1590s, in the time of Christian IV, there was again a royal command that a lawbook in Danish had to be developed for Norway, probably as a reaction to a report of 1590 that stated clearly that Danish and German administrative officials and priests could absolutely not read or understand Norwegian and that there were huge differences between various translations of the law (Hallager & Brandt 1855: viii–xiv). This at least seems to have provoked a flurry of activity and it seems that many people became involved in translation work in the early 1590s (Fladby 1986: 192). However, even that attempt pretty much fell flat, and the results did not have much influence.

Again in 1602, a new order to work on a lawbook for Norway came from Copenhagen. Within a year, a new draft for the Norwegian lawbook was put forward. Such was now the stir around the book that the king himself examined the suggestions, and the work was also reviewed at a meeting in Bergen, where it was substantially revised. (Hallager & Brandt 1855: xiv–xviii; Fladby 1986: 193). Finally, in December 1604, the new lawbook for Norway was published under the title *Den Norske low-bog offuerset, corrigerit oc forbedrit* [‘The Norwegian Law Book: Translated, Corrected

Table 2. Comparison of extracts from three manuscripts and the printed edition of 1604 of the section concerning the killing of a lawman.

| AM 79 4to (end of the 16 th century) | AM 92 4to (1600) | AM 90 4to (1593) | 1604 translation |
|---|--|---|---|
| <p>Det er oc <u>nidings verck</u> at drebe Laugmand som til <u>des er skickit at sige mend laug</u>. Thi huo det giør hand nedertrycker ret for alle mand <u>Thi hand er alle plictige loug</u> at sige saa velde <u>fattige som den rige</u>. (33r)</p> <p>It is also a <u>villainous killing</u> to kill a lawman, who <u>to this is appointed: to say the law to people</u>. Because that one does this: he brings justice to bear for all people. <u>Because he is equally obliged</u> to say <u>the law to the very poor as to the rich</u>.</p> | <p>Det er <u>nidingsverck</u>, at mand dræber Lagmanden <u>for rette lagsognn</u> Thi at denn nedhugger retten for mannd <u>Thi hannd er dem alle lige ret pligtige</u> som i <u>hans lag sognn ere</u>. (22v)</p> <p>It is a <u>villainous killing</u> to kill a lawman <u>for a just decision</u>. Because he exacts [literally ‘strikes down’] justice for men. <u>Because he is equally obliged in the law to all those who are in his jurisdiction</u>.</p> | <p>Det er och <u>fredløss gierning</u> att Mand Dræber laugmand, som til <u>dis err skickede att sige huer mannd loug</u>, bode <u>fattige och ryge</u>, ti dem der det giør hannd nedfelder retten for alle Mand. (28r)</p> <p>It is also an <u>outlawable deed</u> that a man kills a lawman, who is <u>appointed to this: to say the law to each person</u>, both <u>poor and rich</u>, because it is them who does this: he adjudicates justice for all people.</p> | <p>Det er oc nidingsværck, om mand dræber laugmanden for sin dom thi hand da nederfelder low oc ret. (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 41)</p> <p>It is also a villainous killing if a man kills a lawman for his judgement, since he adjudicates law and justice.</p> |

and Improved’], known as Christian IV’s Norwegian Law.¹⁵ In June 1605, the lawmen in Norway received their copies.

The Results of the Printed Translation of 1604

If we compare the 1604 translation of the lawman section to the other translations from ca. 1600 in Table 2, we can see that the law of 1604 is considerably shorter. The whole final section of the law, stating that the lawman is equally obliged to say the law to all men and to provide justice for the rich as to the poor, is missing.

A lot of material added to the law of 1604 does not correspond to the *Landslov*. In some cases, the sources of the laws are not known, but much of it derives from identifiable texts (as listed in e.g. the notes in Hallager & Brandt 1855), and some of it was drawn from customary practice. Tingfarebolken (the section on travelling to the thing) ch. 2, for example, contains material that is not in the source (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 9n.2), but has a rule inserted that the 1604 translation says “haffuer verit sædvaanligt” [‘has been customary’] nevertheless.

In general, the law of 1604 includes a number of mistakes and misinterpretations. These include some simple printing errors, for example *hindis* for *hans* (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 77). More serious misunderstandings can be illustrated by the following five examples:

Tingfarebolken, Ch. 4

In Tingfarebolken (the section on travelling to the thing), ch. 4, the meaning of the source’s term *nauðsynjarvitni* (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 12) is misunderstood, and the law of 1604 has: “IV. Ere de vidner, som mand met lowen nædis til at bere, paa sin egen vegne, eller effter en andens ord” [‘They are witnesses, as a man obliged by law to testify, on his own behalf or for another’s word’]. A *nauðsynjarvitni* is in fact a witness produced to prove impediment (Cleasby & Vigfusson 1957: s.v. ‘nauðsynjarvitni’).

Landeversbolken, Ch. 4

The beginning of Landevernsbolken (the section on coastal defence), ch. 4, contains a misunderstanding that makes the whole chapter confusing.¹⁶ The original Old Norse, normalised from Holm Perg 34 4to,¹⁷ reads “Nú ef hers er vån í land vårt, þá skulu men vitavörð sinn reiða” (18r) [‘Now if an army is expected in our country, then men should attend to their watch-beacon duty’]. The translation reads “Er der feide formodendis paa rigit, da skal vædvarder oc vardehusze ferdig giøris” (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 26) [‘If a war is expected in the country, then beacons and watchhouses should be made ready’], mistranslating the expectation that men will

attend to their legal duty to man the beacons with readying beacons and watchhouses.

Landeverbsbolken, Ch. 9

The beginning of Landeverbsbolken (the section on coastal defence), ch. 9, has been misunderstood (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 26n.9). In the 1604 translation:

Naar skib skal vdsættis, oc skipperen lader tilsige saa mange der til behoff giøris: da skal huer som icke kommer vden lowlig forfald, bøde konningen to marck sølff: oc flytte dog skibit i haffne, oc foruare det, til det bliffuer anlagt. (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 30)

When a ship shall be launched and the captain asks for as many men as are needed, then shall each who does not answer the call without a legal reason be fined two marks of silver to the king; and yet the ship moved into the harbour and secured until docked.

The original reads:

Nú skal stýrimaðr boð upp skera, er skip skal út setja, ok stefna svá víða mǫnnum til sem hann sér at þarf. En hverr sem eigi kǫmr eftir boði forfallalaust, sekr eyri silfrs við konung, ok flyti skip til hafnar. Þeira ábyrgð er á þar til er fest er” (19v)

Now shall the captain send a summons when the ship shall set out, and summon as many further men as he sees necessary. And each who does not answer the summons, without a legal cause, is fined an eyrir of silver to the king, and has to move the ship to the harbour. Their responsibility lasts until it is moored.

Landeverbsbolken, Ch. 18

There is an incorrect explanation of the word *Styrehamle* in Landeverbsbolken (the section on coastal defence), ch. 18 (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 39n.4), where it is explained in the translation “som kallis det rum, skipper oc styrmand haffuer til deris redskab” (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 39) [‘as the room is called, which the skipper and helmsmen have for their equipment’]. This is actually the strap that secured the steering oar. The incorrect definition found in the law of 1604 made its way into the *Dansk Ordbog udgiven under Videnskabernes Selskabs Bestyrelse* (1848 VI: 919) as the explanation for *Styrehamle*.

Mannhelgebolken, Ch. 7

“Da skulle de sette hannem fangen paa omudsmandens bekostning” [‘Then they should keep him prisoner at the ombudsman’s cost’] from Mannhelgebolken (the section on personal rights), ch. 7, is an incorrect translation in the law of 1604 (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 46n.6). The original in chapter 9 of the *Landslov* reads: “þá skulu þeir...setja hann bundinn á flet hans” (25r) [‘then they should set him bound [on the floor of] his house’].

In addition, sections of the *Landslov* were included that were clearly antiquated by 1604. Some examples are:

Tingfarebolken, Ch. 8

Tingfarebolken (the section on travelling to the thing), ch. 8, is a misunderstanding of the *Landslov*’s Tingfarebolken’s chapter 8, to the point where it could have been omitted, since it contains a distinction relevant to a situation where a killing was punished with a killing, a practice long since forbidden (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 17–18n.3).

Landeverbsbolken, Ch.1

The introduction to Landeverbsbolken (the section on coastal defence), ch. 1, is clearly outdated; it begins: “Norgis konnung skal raade, oc biude offuer hans vndersaatte effter lowen: oc biude dem i leding oc vdfærd, naar behoff giøris.” (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 24n.3) [‘Norway’s king shall rule, and have command over his subjects according to the law, and command them in readying crew and ships for defense and for campaigns as needed’].

Arvetallet, Ch. 17

In Arvetallet, “da skal hand steffne hannem til sit eget rettelige” in ch. 17 (Hallager & Brandt, 1855: 90–91n.1) [‘then he shall serve him lawful summons at his own [home]’] is the translation of chapter 28 in MLL, “þá skal hann stefna honum heimstefnu rétta” [‘then he shall serve him lawful summons at his own home’], a practice that in the time of Christian IV was long out of use, and thus the provisions in this passage are antiquated (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 91n.1).

Some legal decisions that had since been replaced were included anyway, while amendments and other regulations that were still valid were not included or were inserted into the wrong place, or misunderstood.¹⁸

It is tempting to dismiss the law of 1604 as a poor effort – but to produce a perfect translation that was also a solid revision was always going to be very difficult. The *Landslov* at this point was over 300 years old, written for a medieval state that had become an early modern society. The new regulations that had been introduced in the intervening time period, and that should have ideally been seamlessly incorporated by the translators, were numerous, made by many different people and legal bodies over a long period of time, and highly scattered, which made the production of an early modern version of the *Landslov* an impossible task.

The inconsistencies and mistakes in the translation of 1604 quickly came to light. As early as the mid-17th century, it was recognised that the law was no longer fit for its purpose due to the changes in society since the 13th century. It was especially Norway's *Kansler* ['Chancellor'],¹⁹ Jens Aagesen Bjelke, who made efforts to do something about this from 1619 onwards, but they were never realised, and he gave up in the 1640s (Aubert 1877: 66–70; Prebensen & Smith 1887: vii). From the perspective of King Frederick III (1648–1670), more pressing was that the Norwegian law-code did not reflect his 'total sovereignty' (*absolutum dominium*) and sovereign rights concerning royal succession.²⁰ This, along with other defects, was to be corrected in a revision of the Norwegian law, as the king makes clear in a missive to Ulrik Frederik Gyldenløve (then *Stattholder* ['Governor-General'] in Norway)²¹ on 25 March 1666.²² The resulting law from 1687,²³ *Kong Christian den Femtis norske Lov af 15 April 1687*, introduced absolutism in Norway.

Conclusion

The translation of 1604 was put together in an attempt to stop the Norwegian legal system fracturing as a consequence of a multitude of Danish versions of the law. The differences in the translations from manuscripts are quite visible in the examples given above, which

demonstrate variable phrasing as well as fluctuating vocabulary for the same terms. The examples drawn from the translation of 1604 showed that the state-sponsored translation produced yet another version of the law, one that also contains misunderstandings and strangely placed, antiquated rules. The printing and distribution of the translation from 1604 was a display of Danish power, which culminated in the law of 1687, when the *Landslov* was finally replaced.

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Notes

1. See Iuul & Leidgren 1965: 230.
2. See Helle 2003: 380–385. For state formation in the Middle Ages, see Bagge 1986; 2010. The role of legislation in state formation in Norway and the other Nordic realms has been explored by Imsen 2013.
3. *Kong Christian den Femtis Norske Lov af 15de April 1687*, printed in Copenhagen in 1687; for a facsimile edition, see *Faksimilie utgave av Norske Lov Trykt hos H. kongl. Højh: privil: Bogt. Joachim Schmedrgen i Kiøbenhavn i det Herrens aar 1687* (1991).
4. For overviews of the Scandinavian politics and inter-relations, see Olesen 2003: esp. 722, 769–770. And Schück 2003: esp. 683, 685, 689. See Albrechtsen 1999 for Norway's relationship to Denmark 1380–1536.
5. A personal union is a union between two or more states by the same monarch, while their interests (e.g. boundaries, laws) remain separate.
6. See Jespersen 2016: 346–347.
7. For an overview of the manuscripts of the *Landslov*, see Storm 1879; Rindal & Spørck 2018: 18–50. Those discussed in this article have been selected on the basis that they are: the oldest version in existence (Holm perg 34 4to), broadly representative (AM 90 4to, AM 79 4to), or a translation (AM 92 4to) of a known medieval manuscript of the law (NKS 1642 4to).
8. See for example Prebensen & Smith, who comment that the plan for the 1604 lawbook was "at levere en ordnet Oversættelse af Magnus Lagabøters Lov med tilhørende Retterbøder, derimod ikke nogen ny eller omarbejdet Lovbog" ['to deliver a mended translation of Magnus Lagabøte's law with accompanying amendments, not a new or revised lawbook'] (1887: 7).

9. See Prebensen & Smith 1887; Iuul 1954.
10. All translations are my own.
11. The source text of the translation may simply have not contained this line.
12. Although a copy of Thott 2086 4to from 1589 (see Storm & Keyser 1885: 453, 585).
13. For a brief overview of the appeals, see the introduction to Hallager & Brandt 1855; see also Fladby 1986: 192–194.
14. For overviews of this process, see Hallager & Brandt 1855: v–viii; Fladby 1986: 192–194.
15. The original is listed in the bibliography under *Den Norske Lov-Bog, offuerseet, corrigerit oc forbedrit Anno M.DC.III*. This is edited in Hallager & Brandt 1855.
16. “Denne Misforstaaelse har bragt Vildrede i hele Kapitlet” [‘This misunderstanding brings confusion to the whole chapter’] (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 26n.6).
17. This is the normalised transcription provided by Robert Paulsen via his Emroon.no digital edition.
18. See for example Mannhelgebolken (the section on personal rights) ch. 24, in which an amendment from King Håkon from 29th May 1303 has been inserted into the text but partially misunderstood (Hallager & Brandt 1855: 24n.4).
19. The *Kansler* had significant political influence and was head of the judiciary.
20. On the introduction of absolutism in Denmark, see Jespersen 2016: 343–358.
21. The *Stattholder* was the representative for the monarch.
22. The missive is printed in Prebensen & Smith 1887: xxxix–xl.
23. For an overview of the process of compiling the law of 1687, see Prebensen & Smith 1887; Iuul 1954.

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