

POLITICAL HISTORY

DOI: 10.46340/ephd.2023.9.2.1

Vladyslav Kiorsak

ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3144-2405>

*Institute of Ukrainian Studies named after I. Kryp'yakevych
of The National Academy of Sciences of Ukraine, Ukraine*

THE PERCEPTION OF THE RUS IN HAUKSBÓK: THE VOICE AND SILENCE OF HISTORICAL SOURCE

The “Hauksbók” is a valuable source for studying the collective perceptions of Icelanders and the politics of memory in the Norwegian kingdom during the Late Middle Ages. This complex work comprises a collection of texts aimed at promoting the values and scientific frameworks popular in European culture. The author of the book, Haukr Erlendsson, viewed his work as a crucial instrument for political influence. Through his texts, he endeavored to contextualize the histories of Norway and Iceland within a European framework and legitimize the ruling dynasty's territorial claims. It is essential to analyze the role of Rus and Eastern Europe within the historical paradigm of the “Hauksbók”, The author employed plots that were prevalent in medieval Scandinavian tradition. Therefore, understanding the evolving perception of Rus in different periods and traditions becomes pivotal. Upon examining the texts in the “Hauksbók”, a notable decline in interest in Rus compared to other works becomes evident. The author omitted any mention of Eastern Europe in the context of the myth about Trojan migration, and he also avoided incorporating Eastern European plots while describing the Germanic motifs in “Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks”. Furthermore, Rus is absent in the 'empire' of Ragnar Lothbrok. This can be attributed to shifts in worldview and the political landscape. The “Hauksbók” bore witness to a transition towards new cultural values and scientific frameworks. The politics of Europeanization resulted in a stronger influence of European authors in the North, leading to a departure from the prominence of Eastern European elements and a focus on the European Catholic paradigm. Additionally, Norwegian kings lacked family ties with the Rurikids, and the territory of Rus suffered significant destruction during the Mongol invasion in the 13th century. These factors likely contributed to the diminished interest in these territories during the writing of works that held significant importance for the politics of memory in Norway.

Keywords: Collective memory, Medieval Scandinavia, Rus, Sagas, Hauksbók.

Hauksbók stands out as a captivating exemplar of Icelandic literature from the Late Middle Ages. This remarkable work serves as the *magnum opus* of Haukr Erlendsson (1265–1334), a famous Icelandic scholar and influential political figure. What makes this text particularly significant is that it represents one of the few comprehensive works attributed to this distinguished author. While it is acknowledged that not every section bears the direct hand of Haukr himself, the majority of the text was written under his careful oversight. The writing of this book is estimated to have taken place between 1302 and 1310, a period during which Haukr held one of the most prominent positions in the Kingdom of Norway. He served as a lawspeaker, knight, and was a member of the royal council.

The book is currently preserved in three main manuscripts: AM 371, AM 544 4to, and AM 675 4to. Its contents comprise a comprehensive library, as it encompasses a diverse range of texts, including renowned Icelandic works and significant European texts that were translated by Haukr and his colleagues¹. Within its pages, an inquisitive reader will find “Landnámabók”, a foundational text that played a crucial role in shaping pre-modern Icelandic identity and collective memory. Additionally, it includes “Kristni saga”, “Fóstbrœðra saga”, and “Eiríks saga rauða”, texts that provide insights into the historical past of Iceland. Moreover,

¹ Harðarson, G. (2016). Hauksbók og alfræðirit miðalda. *Gripla*, 27, 127-130.

the author dedicates a significant portion of the book to sagas that mythologize the Scandinavian heritage. Notably, these include "Hervarar saga", "Ragnarssona þátr", "Af Upplendinga konungum", and ancient eddic poetry such as "Völuspá"¹.

Works of European origin should be listed separately, including encyclopedic fragments, biblical stories, geographical, theological, and philosophical treatises. Additionally, it is important to distinguish protohistorical compositions such as the "Trójumanna saga", which is a translated text based on the works of Dares Phrygius, Ovid, and Vergil. Other significant protohistorical texts include "Breta sögur", "Seven Precious Stones And Their Nature", the short mathematical treatise "Algorismus", "Prognostica Temporum", and the encyclopedic work "Elucidarius"².

Sverrir Jacobson emphasized the significance of the "Hauksbók" as a representation of Haukr's worldview. By studying this book, we have a unique opportunity to conduct comprehensive research on the author's worldview and the collective worldview of his community. Through the analysis of this manuscript, we can gain insights into the collective memory and intellectual culture of that era³.

Hans Jacob Orning highlights the significance of an approach that emphasizes the research of sagas within the context of their manuscripts. This approach is particularly crucial for the fornaldarsögur and riddarasögur. Orning argues that fornaldarsögur should be seen as a historiographic category. These sagas are often written alongside sagas from other genres, and the combination of these works provides more meaningful insights than categorizing them into specific genres. According to this approach, each version of a saga becomes an independent work worthy of examination. Changes and unique aspects in different versions can be the subject of research. Orning suggests that fragments that lost their relevance may have been modified or omitted, while contemporary themes were expanded upon and improved. Furthermore, studying how these texts were combined in a single manuscript can help us comprehend the author's logic⁴.

The works of Haukr Erlendsson serve as perfect material for adopting this approach. Haukr, being both a learned scholar and a member of the Norwegian royal court, provides us with a valuable opportunity to examine his works through the lens of the politics of memory within the Norwegian kingdom. Furthermore, Haukr's access to European libraries allowed him to draw from the finest primary sources and construct his narratives in alignment with contemporary European historiographical trends⁵.

The objective of this paper is to investigate the distinctive features of Haukr's version of Scandinavian history and gain insight into the position of Rus and Eastern Europe within this historical narrative. By examining the emphasized aspects and the suppressed elements, we can gain valuable insights into the author's values, perceptions of geographical space, and the positioning of Norway within that context.

The aim of Hauksbók extended beyond being a mere textbook for the elites of its time. It sought to establish the position of Iceland and Norway within the European Catholic worldview of that era. The author skillfully incorporated the concepts and ideas put forth by European historians and adapted them to fit his own historical framework.

The geographical section of "Hauksbók" comprises translated fragments of treatises authored by prominent figures such as Isidore of Seville, Honorius Augustodunensis, Petrus Alphonsi, Bede, and others. In addition, it incorporates biblical narratives, ecclesiastical and geographical works, as well as protohistoric sagas. This chapter assumes great significance as it serves as a prologue to the subsequent elaboration of concepts presented in the sagas. It constitutes a methodological justification of the author's scientific worldview and establishes the framework for the interpretation of history. By utilizing these texts, the author delineates the geographical boundaries of the known world during their time, which were largely influenced by Greco-Roman and Continental European scientific traditions. This can elucidate the author's particular interest in the exotic lands of the East, which were often associated with ancient legends, tales of unimaginable treasures, and mythical creatures. The Crusades, in particular, reignited a fascination with such legends.

¹ Ashman Rowe, E. (2008). Literary, codicological and political perspectives on Hauksbók. *Gripla*, 19, 57-60; Harðarson, G. (2017). The Hauksbók: An Example of Medieval Modes of Collecting and Compilation. In *The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript; Text Collections from a European Perspective*, 131-135.

² Ibid, 53-56

³ Jakobsson, S. (2007). Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic World View. *Saga-Book*, 31, 36.

⁴ Orning, H. J. (2015). Legendary sagas as historical sources. *Tabularia*, 15, 57-73.

⁵ Jakobsson, S. (2010). State formation and pre-modern identities in the North; A synchronic perspective from the early 14th century. *Arkiv för Nordisk filologi*, 125, 67-82.

The geographic-spatial discourse "Hauksbók" begins with a description of the world's rivers and springs that have magical properties. The author follows the European tradition and singles out four rivers that flow from Paradise. The first is the Phison River flowing in India, the second is the Egyptian Nile, and the third and fourth are the Tigris and Euphrates in Mesopotamia. Thus, the author claims that Paradise is located somewhere in Asia¹. This is confirmed by the next fragment of the text "Fra paradiso" (About paradise). It mentions that "paradis er i austri heimsens" (paradise is in the east of the world)².

In the next fragment, entitled "Her segir fra þui huersu lond liggia i veroldenni", the author describes in detail the riches of Indialand, as well as dragons, griffins, and manticores. He briefly recounts the legend of the Tower of Babel and mentions Mount Sinai and Judea, where Jesus Christ was born, baptized and suffered. In addition to these regions, the author surprises readers with stories about amazing people and fantastic animals from different parts of the East. It combines biblical stories with accounts of important historical events, such as the Trojan War or the Council of Nicaea³.

Rus is mentioned in this part during the description of Europe. According to the author, the easternmost part of Europe is Suípioð hin micla. Ruzcia, also known as Garðariki, is located in this part. The information contained in the mentioned fragment is based on local Scandinavian tradition, as the author goes on to list the largest cities in the country and uses typical Icelandic place names. Hauk mentions eight cities: Moramar, Rostofa, Surdalar, Holmgarðr, Syrnes, Gaðar, Palteskia, Kœnugarðr⁴. Most of these names are found in other works and have a historical background. The only exceptions are the enigmatic names Gaðar and Syrnes, the exact meaning of which is debated⁵. Along with Rus, Hauk mentions Kirialir, Refalir Tafeistaland, Virland, Eistland, Lifland, Kurl(and), Erml(and), Pulína land, Vindland. Further, the author mentions En austr fra Polena er Reiðgota land, oc þa Hunland (To the east of Poland one finds Reiðgotaland and Hunland)⁶.

The author devotes a separate part to the text about the giant nations, which is called "Her segir fra marghattaðum þjóðum." This fragment was also based on "Etymologiae" by Isidore of Seville. In it, the reader meets descriptions of various monsters, giants and terrors that inhabit the Earth. This treatise is not unique to the Icelandic tradition⁷. The same information can be found in another manuscript, AM 198, 8. When comparing this version with Haukr's one, as well as with Isidore's original text, it is noticeable that Haukr omitted geographical details related to Scythia and Svitjod the Great. If AM 198, 8 states that the snow-white giants albanis who live in Scythia and Svitjod the Great, then Haukr simply limits himself to describing their characteristics and does not specify their geographical location. Along with the albanis live warlike women who wage the same wars as men elsewhere. According to the manuscript AM 198, 8, this country was next to the Land of albanis, which was in Svitjod the Great. Haukr avoids such specifications⁸.

This part is an abridged version of a fragment from Isidore's IX book "Etymologiae". In it, the author mentions Scythia as an abstract territory in Asia. The Scythians themselves are considered one of the most ancient peoples, from whom the peoples of Bactria and Parthia came. Albanians and Amazons lived next to the Scythians⁹. Haukr repeated this information but did not use the term "Scythia" or "Svitjod the Great", which is the Norse equivalent of Scythia. Probably, the author deliberately omitted these details, since they are intricately connected with previous fragments, where Svitjod the Great is described as a state on the eastern edge of Europe, where Rus and large cities are located. These peoples and cities were well known to the Normans, who in the 9th - 11th centuries maintained close relations with Rus and the surrounding territories. Therefore, the myth of Scythians, Albanis and Amazons could contrast with the general narrative.

However, this work still mentions the localization of Scythia as part of Asia. In the preface to the story about monsters, there is a fragment that tells about the settlement of the world by the sons of Noah, including

¹ Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnagnaeske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 150-151.

² Ibid, 152.

³ Ibid, 153-155.

⁴ Ibid, 155.

⁵ Jackson, T. N. (2019). *Eastern Europe in Icelandic Sagas*: Arc Humanities Press, 93-106.

⁶ Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnagnaeske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 155.

⁷ Ibid, 165-166.

⁸ Мельникова, Е. (1986). *Древнескандинавские географические сочинения. Тексты, перевод, комментарий*. Москва: Наука, 178.

⁹ Barney, S.A. (trans.) (2002). *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 194-195.

the Eastern part of the world. This passage mentions Svitjod the Great alongside Albanialand, Bactria and Quennland, which is known as the land of the Amazons¹. This fragment may explain the lack of geographical detail in the following chapters, and the author simply avoided repetition, since he had already provided a general map of the world.

The localization of Scythia in the writings of the time was a matter of controversy. If we turn to the "Descriptions of the Earth" of that period, this land was mainly associated with Garðaríki and was located in the East of Europe. However, in one of such works, Svitjod the Great was separated from Garðaríki. While the last one was traditionally depicted in Eastern Europe, Svitjod the Great was in Africa². A good example is the description from the work "Stjorn", where two Scythians are mentioned. The first is near Hyrcania and Bactria in Asia. This area has all the attributes of the Eastern part of the world and is extremely rich and dangerous. Incredible treasures are guarded here by animals and legendary creatures. Later, there is a description of the easternmost part of Europe, which is called Lower Scythia. It is located near Meotida and the Danube. Scythia includes Alania, Dacia and Gothia³. Perhaps it was this thesis that influenced the fact that Reiðgotaland and Hunland appeared next to Rus in Haukr's description.

The Scythia of "Hauksbók" combines various traditions and unites elements that at first glance seem incompatible. On the one hand, this area served as the home of Garðaríki - a real country. On the other hand, the lands of Goths and Huns were located here, and Amazons and snow-white giants also inhabited it. Scythia was both famous and mystified. It occupied the borders of Eastern Europe and Western Asia and became a clear example of how one's own scientific knowledge was combined with the European intellectual tradition.

The concept of Scythia had of great importance for the politics of memory in medieval Scandinavia. In local tradition, it was known as Svitjod the Great and became an important part of historiography. According to Snorri Sturluson, this mysterious land was associated with the Vanirs - one of the groups of Germanic gods⁴. Here, on the coast of the Northern Black Sea, was located their kingdom. In his work "Heimskringla", Svitjod the Great is also portrayed in a dualistic light. The Garðaríki state also existed in this territory, but the fantastic peoples and extreme climatic conditions on its borders were noted. It was important to Snorri because it was the place where the gods lived. Odin's travels from Asia to the North and Freyr, who became the ancestor of the Norwegian kings, began from here⁵. Thus, Eastern Europe was an important setting for Norse myths. It is clear that Greco-Roman mythological stories also influenced the idea of Svitjod. Thanks to these stories, it became the homeland of fictional peoples and fantastic creatures.

This myth is closely related to ideas about Eastern Europe in pieces of literature of that time. Legendary sagas describing exotic lands often depicted these territories through the prism of the myth of Scythia. A classic example is "Yngvars saga víðförla", where the author depicts Rus, mentions the local prince and describes the usual life of the local population. But as soon as the main characters go beyond this familiar space, they get into the fantastic Svitjod the Great, where live amazing peoples, there are flying dragons, with snakes and giants guarding incomprehensible treasures⁶. In general, this pattern became popular in many sagas about ancient times and reflected an intellectual tendency to be fascinated by the East⁷.

The geographic section of "Hauksbók" was aimed at shaping Icelanders' spatial and geographical ideas about the world. The fact that the author paid much more attention to the Eastern part of the world is the result of European influences that gave this place a cult value. However, Haukr did not limit himself to a simple translation, he tried to adapt these fragments to his concept of the politics of memory and introduced Icelandic scientific achievements. The author inherited the idea of the East as the central place of the world. He embodied the thesis that it was in Asia that the Garden of Eden was located and it was from there that

¹ Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnatagnaeanske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 165.

² Мельникова, Е. (1986). *Древнескандинавские географические сочинения. Тексты, перевод, комментарий*. Москва: Наука, 88.

³ Там же, 142.

⁴ Finlay, A., Faulkes, A.(trans.) (2008). *Snorri Sturluson. Heimskringla*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, I, 6.

⁵ Ibid, 7-11.

⁶ Глазырина, Г. (1996). *Сага об Ингваре Путешественнике*. Москва: Восточная литература.

⁷ Kiorsak, V. (2022). Eastern European elements of Egils saga Einhenda ok Asmundar Berserkjabana through the prism of Greco-Roman, and Germanic myths. *Scandia: Journal of Medieval Norse studies*, 5, 6-27.

the ancestors of modern Icelanders came. At the same time, the author tried to include the northern countries in this map, adding information about the sons of Noah, from whom the Normans descended, as well as mentioning the first priests of the Scandinavian lands. Such information not only created a historical myth, important for the formation of early modern identity but also placed the history of Scandinavia in a pan European context.

"Trójumanna saga" and "Breta saga" became the logical continuation of Haukr's story. These works played an important role in education at that time. They were the translations of well-known European works and aimed at attracting the Nordic intelligentsia to European intellectual culture. The choice of these works was not accidental. They largely served to shape important values and adapted to the local cultural context, as well as the politics of memory.

"Trójumanna saga" contains the key information from Dares Phrygius, and "Breta sögur" from Geoffrey of Monmouth. Both of these texts together tell about the European migration of the Trojans and use ancient myths in the late medieval literary tradition. The author of "Trójumanna saga" presents us with a complete overview of these myths, starting with the abduction of Helen and ending with the story of Aeneas¹, which smoothly transitions into "Breta sögur". This work expands on the Trojan myth and tells the story of the founding of Britain by Brutus, the Trojan who discovered the land. The narrative then covers the descendants of Brutus, who became local kings, and describes King Arthur and the Christianization of Britain². The work ends with a list of English kings, including Æthelstan, who became the adoptive father of Haakon, the son of the Norwegian king Harald Fairhair³.

The substantiation of rights to the Trojan past was not uncommon in medieval historiographical traditions. Attribution to the ruling dynasties of Trojan origin, as well as myths about the settlement of various lands by Trojans, became a widespread tool of politics of memory in Europe at that time⁴. The great European powers used this myth to strengthen their power in opposition to Rome, to justify the crusades, and also in the internal struggle for power. States that were in the orbit of intellectual influences imitated these myths and tried to use them during the construction of their own history⁵.

The fragment with the adoption of Haakon by Æthelstan was apparently added by Haukr. It was intended not only to embed the history of Norway in the European context but also to show the kinship of the Norwegian royal family with the Trojan past. According to Sverrir Jakobsson, Britain became a transit point for the northward migration of the Trojan heritage⁶.

The use of Britain as an intermediate point was not the only option in justifying the kinship of the Scandinavians with the Trojans. The already mentioned Odin of "Heimskringla", according to the author, came from Tyrkland, which was located near Svitjod the Great to the south of it. From there he came to Garðaríki where he became the ruler. Then he went to Saxland where he conquered many lands and put his sons to rule these lands. From Saxland he travelled north to Scandinavia and established his kingdom there⁷. Another important figure was Yngvi – Freyr, the legendary founder of the Yngling dynasty. He was a representative of the vanir and came from the Northern Black Sea region. Freyr was one of the priests of Odin and began to rule in Sweden. Many Swedish and Norwegian kings descended from him⁸.

The country of the Turks, from which came Odin, should be identified with Troy. This is confirmed by the Prose Edda, which states that the homeland of the Æsir is Troy, which is located in Turkey⁹. In this work, Snorri Sturluson presents an expanded version of the Trojan story. The author notes that Troy is a huge country in which there are twelve states. One of the supreme rulers of this state, Odin, received a prophecy according to which there were lands in the North where he would gain the greatest glory. Odin gathered

¹ Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnamagnaeanske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 193-230.

² Ibid, 231-302.

³ Ibid, 301-302.

⁴ Eldevik, R. (1993). Troia Redux: A Medieval Tradition, an old Norse mystery. *Enarratio*, 2, 36-46; Faulkes, A. (1979). Descent from the gods. *Medieval Scandinavia*, 11, 1-37.

⁵ MacMaster, T. J. (2014). The Origin of the Origins: Trojans, Turks and the Birth of the Myth of Trojan Origins in the Medieval World. *Atlantide*, 2, 1-12.

⁶ Jakobsson, S. (2007). Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic World View. *Saga-Book*, 31, 31.

⁷ Finlay, A., Faulkes, A. (trans.) (2008). *Snorri Sturluson. Heimskringla*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, I, 7-11.

⁸ Ibid, 7.

⁹ Faulkes, A. (2005). *Snorri Sturluson Edda Prologue and Gylfaginning*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 5-7.

people and went on a journey. First, he came to Saxland. Many great kings descended from him there, who inherited local lands and founded ruling families. Eventually, Odin arrived in Reiðgotaland, which the author associated with Jutland. There, the Scyldings dynasty descended from him. Then, Odin went to Sweden where he became the founder of the Yngling dynasty. Many people who inhabited Saxland and the Nordic countries came from the æsir – Scandinavian gods¹.

In one of the oldest Icelandic works, "Íslendingabók", there are also references to this myth. The author of this work, Ari Þorgilsson, provides a genealogical list of his ancestors. The founder of his family was the aforementioned Yngvi - the mythical ancestor of the Swedish and Norwegian Ynglings. Ari calls Yngvi the ruler of the Turks, and his successor Njörðr the king of the Swedes². The same thesis is developed by the authors of the sagas. In the work "Frá Fornjóti ok hans ættmenným" a list of ancestors of Harald Fairhair is described³. The author considers Burri, the ruler of the country of the Turks, to be the founder of his family. His grandson was Odin. It is interesting that another saga, "Sturlaug's saga nysmaama", tells that the Turks and Asians were the first settlers in the northern lands⁴. "Sverris saga" in "Flateyjarbók" edition provides an expanded version of this genealogy and continues it to the very first man - Adam⁵.

It is obvious that Haukr, as one of the most educated people in Scandinavia at the time, was aware of the popularity of the Trojan theories of the origin of the ruling dynasties of Norway. He develops this theme in one of his genealogical lists, where he traces his family's descent from Adam, Noah, Priam, and Odin⁶. In view of this, it is interesting that Haukr chose a story in his selection that explained the connection of the Norwegian kings with the Trojans not even through kinship, but through adoption. This is even more surprising against the background of the stories of other authors who substantiated the resettlement of people from Troy to Scandinavia.

Such strange myth-making can be explained based on the logic of the author and the political situation of that time. The concept of Scythia gradually lost its meaning from the point of view of contemporary memory politics. The idea of heritage transit through Eastern Europe was replaced by the idea of British succession. This is due to the significant influence of English intellectual culture. In addition, such a pattern was compared with the general tendency of "Europeanization" of Norway and its culture.

One of the steps in this direction was the promotion of translation activities. Starting from the middle of the 13th century, dozens of works were translated at the royal court, the aim of which was to form new values and a new paradigm of the history of the Norwegian kingdom⁷. One such work was "Historia Regum Britanniae", which in the Scandinavian adaptation was called "Breta saga". In our opinion, the use of this work should be considered not only in the context of the migration of the Trojan heritage but also in an effort to add the British myth to the politics of memory of the medieval Norse.

Another work that contributed to the formation of the collective memory of that time was "Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks". This is a fairly well-known work that was based on an epic work, and some of its fragments date back to the Migration Period⁸. The plot of this saga was formed around the magical sword Tyrting, which had the superpower to kill everyone he had to fight with. This relic helped to gain fame, but it was also a curse for the owner as it constantly brought death. The Tyrting sword combined Viking themes with fragments of memory of the Germanic past⁹.

This text existed in several different versions. The oldest among those that have survived is recorded under the editorship of Haukr Erlendsson AM 544 4to; (H). A slightly later version is GKS 2845 4to (R). The differences between these texts are significant, but these differences can provide us with the key

¹ Faulkes, A. (2005). *Snorri Sturluson Edda Prologue and Gylfaginning*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 5-7.

² Grønlie, S.(trans.) (2006). *Íslendingabók, Kristni saga. The book of the Icelanders, The story of the Conversion*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 14.

³ Heimskringla (2020). *Hversu Noregr byggðist. Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda* <http://www.heimskringla.no/wiki/Hversu_Noregr_byggðist> (2023, May, 12).

⁴ Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda (1828). *Eptir gömlum handritum utgefna af C. C. Rafn*. Kaupmannahöfn, 3, 592.

⁵ Vigfússon, G. (ed.). (1862). *Flateyjarbók: En Samling Af Norske Konge-Sagaer*. Christiania: P.T. Mallings Forlagsbohandel, 533-534.

⁶ Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnemagnæanske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 504-505.

⁷ Irlenbusch-Reynard, L. (2011). Translations at the Court of Hákon Hákonarson: a well planned and highly selective programme. *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 36(4), 387-405.

⁸ Прицак, О. (2003). *Походження Русі, Стародавні скандинавські саги і Стара Скандинавія*. Київ: Обереги, 2, 377-378.

⁹ Прицак, О. (1993). *Походження Русі. Т1. Стародавні скандинавські джерела*. Київ: Обереги, 272-273.

to understanding what was important to the authors of the time and how they adapted this narrative to their realities.

Karl G. Johansson noted that the H revision is more historical, while the R version contains more artistic colouring¹. Hauks text does contain more historical information. His story begins with a story about lands in the north of Norway. The author mentions the legendary Jotunheim, Hålogaland and the island of Bólm. These lands were the homeland of giants and people who mingled with each other. Their descendants were famous berserkers, one of whom the author pays special attention to. It was Arngrim, one of the heroes of the saga². This fragment is missing in the edition of R. Instead, there the author begins with a story about the Sigrlami of King Garðaríki, who became the first owner of Tyrfing³.

In Hauks' version, the king's name is Sigrlami. Here he is not named as the ruler of Garðaríki. His kingdom has abstract boundaries, but the author notes that the ruler was the son of Odin. Arngrim killed Sigrlami, took his sword and kidnapped his daughter, whom he later married. They had twelve sons⁴. In the R version, it is told that Arngrim became the commander of the Sigrlami army, for which he received a sword as a gift and permission to marry his daughter⁵. Then the plot revolved around the descendants of Arngrim, who inherited this sword. Hauks' story is much shorter and ends in the reign of Heiðrek, the story from the R version continues to the reign of Heiðrek, son of Angantýr.

Our main interest is how Rus and Eastern Europe in general were reflected in this work. In Hauks' version, Rus appears only in one fragment, in the story about Heiðrek. According to the plot, he wanted to raise the son of the most powerful ruler of that time, the king of Hólmgarð, whose name was Rollaug⁶. He also married his daughter named Hergerðar. The author notes that he received Vindland as a dowry⁷. This land should be associated with the territory of the Baltic Slavs.

In addition to Rus, the toponyms Húnaland and Reiðgotaland are also interesting. From the previous chapters of Hauksbók, we can conclude that they should be looked for somewhere east of Poland, i.e. near Rus. However, in this work, the author denies the previous thesis. He locates the legendary land of the Goths in Jútland, besides, it can be understood that Húnaland is somewhere nearby⁸. There is no information about Jútland in the R edition. Instead, here we find a fragment about the battle of the Goths with the Huns, which is not in the Haukr version. In this part, it is stated that the boundaries of the country of the Goths reached the banks of the river Danparstoðum⁹. Probably, this name should be identified with the ancient Germanic name Dniro, which in the later Scandinavian tradition was replaced by Nepr¹⁰. This version is also supported by Atlakviða from the Poetic Edda. It also mentioned the territory of Ukraine. However, instead of the name Danparstoðum, the abbreviated name Danpar is used here¹¹.

The myth of the Germanic past was one of the foundations on which the historical memory of Icelanders of that time was formed. This is evidenced by the presence of Germanic themes in ancient poetry and important philosophical books such as the Prose Edda. Researchers believe that one of the factors that stimulated the development of this tradition was the influence of English writing, which preserved works

¹ Johansson, K. G. (2012). Narratives and Narrators on the Move: Some Examples of Change and Continuity in the Tradition of Fantastic Fiction. In *The Legendary Sagas: Origins and Development*. Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press, 366-367.

² Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnamagnaeanske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 350-351.

³ Tolkien, C. (trans.) (1960). *The Saga of King Heidrek the Wise. Both in Old-Ice and Engl. Texts*. London: Thomas Nelson and sons, 2.

⁴ Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnamagnaeanske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 351-352

⁵ Tolkien, C. (trans.) (1960). *The Saga of King Heidrek the Wise. Both in Old-Ice and Engl. Texts*. London: Thomas Nelson and sons, 3.

⁶ Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnamagnaeanske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 361.

⁷ Ibid, 364-364.

⁸ Ibid, 359.

⁹ Tolkien, C. (trans.) (1960). *The Saga of King Heidrek the Wise. Both in Old-Ice and Engl. Texts*. London: Thomas Nelson and sons, 46.

¹⁰ Джаксон, Т. (1999). *AUSTR I GORDUM: Древнерусские топонимы в древнескандинавских источниках*. Москва: Языки славянской культуры, 31; Мельникова, Е. (2010). Название Днепра в актуальной и эпической географической номенклатуре древней Скандинавии. В: Джаксон, Т. Н., Коноваловой, И. Г., Цецхладзе, Г. Р. (ред.) *Gaudeamus igitur: сборник статей к 60-летию А.В. Подосинова*. Москва: Русский фонд содействия образованию и науке, 260-267.

¹¹ Jonsson, F. (tolked.) (1930). *De Gamle Eddadigte*. G.E.C Gads Forlag, 306.

dedicated to this era¹. It is quite telling that in the late medieval tradition, the topos of Reiðgotaland and Húnaland acquire a new meaning and adapt to the contemporary political and cultural situation. Perhaps Haukr relied in this matter on his authoritative predecessor Snorri Sturluson, who also localized these territories in Jútland². However, the fact that he was aware of the works that placed this place in the East of Europe seems interesting, since he mentions them in the previous chapters.

The toponym Reiðgotaland was a mythical construct associated with the ancient Germanic past. It was a symbol of the legendary state of the Goths, with which the rulers of the Scandinavian kingdoms associated their past. From the context of contemporary works, it can be understood that some authors located this state on Gotland, in Jútland, and someone connected these territories with the land of the Baltic Slavs - Pomerania. In the case of "Hauksbók", these territories had a double interpretation, however, they hardly indicated the territories near the Dnipro.

The mysterious Reiðgotaland is mentioned in another Hauks' work, "Þátr af Ragnars sonum". There it is used in the context of the story of the inheritance of Ragnar Lothbrok's state by his sons. Reiðgotaland went to Gvítserk, who also got Vindland - the land of the Wends³. From this fragment, it is difficult to conclude the geographical location of this territory. On the one hand, the territory of Jutland is close to the lands of the Slavs, on the other hand, Reiðgotaland could also be associated with this territory.

"Þátr af Ragnars sonum" is an important work from the point of view of constructing Norwegian politics of memory. A detailed analysis of this source was conducted by Elizabeth Ashman Rowe. In her work, she emphasized that this text represents the idea of the "Viking empire". This "empire" was founded by the conquests of Ragnar and his father Sigurd Ring. In different versions, Ragnar's state included various territories, from England in the West to Rus in the East. Haukr Erlendsson skilfully used a well-known myth to prove the nobility of the royal family and justify the right of its representatives to inherit the legendary king⁴.

The role of Rus and Eastern Europe in the myths about the "Viking Empire" is a good indicator of how these territories were perceived from the point of view of the politics of memory in the Late Middle Ages. For example, in Ragnars saga loðbrókar, the already mentioned Hvítserk was mentioned in the context of conquests on the Eastern Path. The author of this work described a great battle in these places. However, Hvítserk's army was opposed by a disproportionate force and was captured and executed at the stake⁵.

This story was based on oral poetry used by the author of the saga. Its antiquity can be evidenced by the fact that Saxo Grammaticus was also inspired by this poem to create a story about Hvítserk. The Danish chronicler devotes much more space to this story, however, using the terms Hellespont and Scythia/Suetia instead of Austrvegr⁶. He describes the execution in detail and also notes that after Ragnar learned of his son's death, he took revenge on the offenders and taxed their country⁷. The last fragment is fundamentally different from the saga because in it Hvítserk went to the east already after the death of his father. Saxo proves that Ragnar conquered this country and made it dependent.

In one of the versions of the already mentioned "Hervarar saga ok Heiðreks", we find a genealogical appendix that talks about Ragnar's descendants and their territorial possessions. The author represents the concept of the "Viking Empire" as follows: "*eftir dauða Ragnars konungs tók Björn, sonr hans, járnsláða Svíaveldi, en Sigurðr Danaveldi, Hvítserkr Austrriki, Ívarr inn beinlausí England*"⁸.

In "Þátr af Ragnars sonum" there is no mention of Hvítserk's campaign on Austrvegr. There, the Eastern European plots are limited to short remarks about Ragnar, who fought in these territories⁹.

¹ Guðmundsdóttir, A. (2012). The Origin and Development of the Fornaldarsögur as Illustrated by Völsunga Saga. In: Jakobsson, Á. *The Legendary Sagas: Origins and Development*. Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press, 59-80;

Мельникова, Е. (2006). Историческая память в германской устной традиции. В: Репина, Л. П. (ред.) *История и память: историческая культура Европы до начала Нового времени*. Москва: Кругъ, 180-223.

² Faulkes, A. (ed.) (2005). *Snorri Sturluson Edda Prologue and Gylfaginning*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 5.

³ Hauksbók (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnemagnæanske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 464.

⁴ Ashman-Rowe, E. (2009). Ragnars saga loðbrókar, Ragnarssona þátr, and the political world of Haukr Erlendsson. *Fornaldarsagaerne: Myter og virkelighed. Studier i de oldislandske fornaldarsögur Nordurlanda*, 347-360.

⁵ Rafn, C. C. (1828). *Fornaldarsögur Nordrlanda 1: eptir gömlum handritum*. Kaupmannahofn, 292-293.

⁶ Elton, O. (trans.) (1894). *The First Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus*. London: Nutt, 376.

⁷ Ibid, 378.

⁸ Tolkien, C. (trans.) (1960). *The Saga of King Heidrek the Wise. Both in Old-Ice and Engl. Texts*. London: Thomas Nelson and sons, 60.

⁹ Hauksbók (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnemagnæanske Handskrifter*. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675, 459.

There are no details in this fragment. It is also interesting that Hvítserk, in this work, did not inherit the territories of Eastern Europe, instead, Haukr named him the lord of Vindland and Reiðgotaland. This work is the only text dedicated to Ragnar Lothbrok that excludes Eastern Europe from his sphere of influence.

"Þátr af Ragnars sonum" was an important work for shaping the identity of that time. It had a clear political colour and tried to adapt one of the most popular myth of the time, dedicated to the Viking Age. The fact that Rus was not part of Ragnar's "empire" in Hauksbók is, in my opinion, important evidence of the decline of the interest of the Norwegian ruling elites in this territory at the turn of the 13th and 14th centuries. It was during this period that the Norwegian kingdom was actively developing, expanding its borders and political influence. Such works as Þátr were supposed to justify imperial ambitions and form a sense of proto-national identity in subjects.

"Hauksbók" was written largely during the reign of Haakon V Magnusson. During this period, the territory of Rus was almost completely conquered by the Mongols. By comparison, Saxo wrote his work during the reign of Valdemar I Knudsen. This Danish ruler was the grandson of the Rus Prince Volodymyr II Monomakh and was also married to Princess Sophia, who also came from Rus. Norwegian rulers of the 14th century no longer had family relations with representatives of the Rurik dynasty. Instead, the aforementioned Haakon was married to the daughter of Vitslav II, prince of Rügen. This may be one explanation why Hvítserk was named the ruler of Vindland and Reiðgotaland instead of Austrvegr.

"Hauksbók" is an interesting and extremely important source. However, it is not surprising that until now there have been no studies that would deal with the targeted analysis of plots related to Rus or Eastern Europe in it. Rus does not completely disappear from the pages of the manuscript, but its mentions in this work are much less compared to other Scandinavian texts of the Late Middle Ages. This territory was important from the point of view of forming the myths of historical memory. Starting with the story of the origin of the gods and ending with the political vicissitudes of Scandinavia in the 11th century, these territories played a significant role in shaping historical narratives¹. Eastern Europe was an organic part of all periods of Nordic history, which was reflected in the literature of that time. With that in mind, Haukr's ignoring of these plots seems a bit strange.

In our opinion, the author's silence can be explained by a change in the intellectual paradigm in Scandinavia at the time. From the end of the XI century, the influence of Byzantium on Scandinavian culture begins to decline. The 12th century was marked by civil strife in the Rus state and the weakening of its foreign policy influence. Later in the 13th century this state completely disappears from the political map of Europe. Rus scenery does not disappear from the pages of Icelandic authors of that time, on the contrary, they are more often used by the authors of legendary sagas when they wanted to depict exotic or abstract places. However, for Haukr, such decorations lost their meaning. The didactic message of his work was clear. He tried to create a proto-national history of Norway and Iceland. Through such texts as "Trójumanna saga", "Breta saga", "Hervarar saga", as well as "Ragnarssona þátr", he emphasized the historicity of this state and also justified the rights to neighbouring territories. In addition, it was important for the author to show the European nature of the Norwegian kingdom. This, in my opinion, was the key reason why the significance of Rus in Haukr was less than that of his predecessors such as Snorri Sturluson or Saxo Grammaticus.

References:

1. Heimskringla (2020). *Hversu Noregr byggðist. Fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda* <http://www.heimskringla.no/wiki/Hversu_Noregr_byggðist> (2023, May, 12).
2. Ashman-Rowe, E. (2008). Literary, codicological and political perspectives. *Hauksbók. Gripla* [Hawk book. Grasp], 19, 57-60.
3. Ashman-Rowe, E. (2009). Ragnars saga loðbrókar, Ragnarssona þátr, and the political world of Haukr Erlendsson [Ragnars saga loðbrókar, Ragnarssona þátr, and the political world of Haukr Erlendsson]. *Fornaldarsagaerne: Myter og virkelighed. Studier i de oldislandske fornaldarsögur Norðurlanda* [Ancient stories: Myths and realism. Studier i de oldislandske ancient stories of the Nordic countries], 347-360. [in Icelandic].
4. Barney, S.A. (trans.) (2002). *The Etymologies of Isidore of Seville*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
5. Eldevik, R. (1993). Troia Redux: A Medieval Tradition, an old Norse mystery. *Enarratio* [Narrative], 2, 36-46;
6. Elton, O. (trans.) (1894). *The First Nine Books of the Danish History of Saxo Grammaticus*. London: Nutt.

¹ Orning, H. J. (2016). Transient Borders The Baltic Viewed from Northern Iceland in the Mid- Fifteenth Century. In *Imagined Communities on the Baltic Rim: From the Eleventh to Fifteenth Centuries*. Amsterdam University Press, 353-378.

7. Faulkes, A. (2005). *Snorri Sturluson Edda Prologue and Gylfaginning*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
8. Faulkes, A. (ed.) (2005). *Snorri Sturluson Edda Prologue and Gylfaginning*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, 5.
9. Faulkes, A. (1979). Descent from the gods. *Medieval Scandinavia*, 11, 1-37.
10. Finlay, A., Faulkes, A. (trans.) (2008). *Snorri Sturluson. Heimskringla* [Snorri Sturluson. World pretzels]. London: Viking Society for Northern Research, I, 7-11. [in Icelandic].
11. Grønlie, S. (trans.) (2006). *Islendingabók, Kristni saga. The book of the Icelanders, The story of the Conversion*. London: Viking Society for Northern Research.
12. Guðmundsdóttir, A. (2012). The Origin and Development of the Fornaldarsögur as Illustrated by Völsunga Saga. In: Jakobsson, Á. *The Legendary Sagas: Origins and Development*. Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press, 59-80;
13. Harðarson, G. (2016). Hauksbók og alfræðirit miðalda [Harðarson, G. (2016). Hauksbók and medieval encyclopedia]. *Gripla* [Grasp], 27, 127-130. [in Icelandic].
14. Harðarson, G. (2017). The Hauksbók: An Example of Medieval Modes of Collecting and Compilation. In *The Dynamics of the Medieval Manuscript; Text Collections from a European Perspective*, 131-135.
15. Hauksbok (1892). *Udgiven efter de Arnamagnaeanske Handskrifter* [Published according to the Arnamagnaeian Manuscripts]. Kobenhavn: Thieles, 371, 544 og 675. [in Danish].
16. Irlenbusch-Reynard, L. (2011). Translations at the Court of Hákon Hákonarson: a well planned and highly selective programme. *Scandinavian Journal of History*, 36(4), 387-405.
17. Jackson, T. N. (2019). *Eastern Europe in Icelandic*. Sagas:Arc Humanities Press, 93-106.
18. Jakobsson, S. (2007). Hauksbók and the Construction of an Icelandic World View. *Saga-Book*, 31, 31-36.
19. Jakobsson, S. (2010). State formation and pre-modern identities in the North; A synchronic perspective from the early 14th century. *Arkiv för Nordisk filologi* [Archive for Nordic Philology], 125, 67-82. [in Swedish].
20. Johansson, K. G. (2012). Narratives and Narrators on the Move: Some Examples of Change and Continuity in the Tradition of Fantastic Fiction. In *The Legendary Sagas: Origins and Development*. Reykjavík: University of Iceland Press, 366-367.
21. Jonsson, F. (transl.) (1930). *De Gamle Eddadigte* [The Old Edda Poems]. G.E.C Gads Forlag. [in Danish].
22. Kiorsak, V. (2022). Eastern European elements of Egils saga Einhenda ok Asmundar Berserkjabana through the prism of Greco-Roman, and Germanic myths. *Scandia: Journal of Medieval Norse studies*, 5, 6-27.
23. MacMaster, T. J. (2014). The Origin of the Origins: Trojans, Turks and the Birth of the Myth of Trojan Origins in the Medieval World. *Atlantide*, 2, 1-12.
24. Orning, H. J. (2015). Legendary sagas as historical sources. *Tabularia* [Files], 15, 57-73.
25. Orning, H. J. (2016). Transient Borders The Baltic Viewed from Northern Iceland in the Mid- Fifteenth Century. In: *Imagined Communities on the Baltic Rim: From the Eleventh to Fifteenth Centuries*. Amsterdam University Press, 353-378.
26. Rafn, C. C. (1828). *Fornaldarsögur Nordrlanda 1: eptir gömlum handritum* [Ancient stories of Nordrlanda 1: based on old manuscripts]. Kaupmannahofn [Copenhagen], 292-293. [in Icelandic].
27. Tolkien, C. (trans.) (1960). *The Saga of King Heidrek the Wise. Both in Old-Ice and Engl. Texts*. London: Thomas Nelson and sons.
28. Vigfússon, G. (ed.). (1862). *Flateyjarbók: En Samling Af Norske Konge-Sagaer* [Flateyjarbók: A Collection Of Norwegian King]. Christiania: P.T. Mallings Forlagsbohandel, 533-534. [in Danish].
29. Glazyrina, G. (1996). *Saga ob Ingvare Puteshestvennike* [The saga of Ingvar the Traveler]. Moscow: Oriental Literature. [in Russian].
30. Jackson, T. (1999). *AUSTR I GORDUM: Drevnerusskiye toponimy v drevneskandinavskikh istochnika* [AUSTR I GORDUM: Old Russian toponyms in Old Norse sources]. Moscow: Languages of Slavic Culture. [in Russian].
31. Melnikova, E. (1986). *Drevneskandinavskiy geograficheskiy sochineniya. Teksty, perevod, kommentariy* [Old Norse Geographical Works. Texts, translation, commentary]. Moscow: Science. [in Russian].
32. Melnikova, E. (2006). Istoricheskaya pamyat v germanskoy ustnoy traditsii [Historical memory in the Germanic oral tradition]. In: Repina, L.P. (ed.) *Istoriya i pamyat: istoricheskaya kultura Yevropy do nachala Novogo vremeni* [History and memory: the historical culture of Europe before the beginning of the New Age]. Moscow: Krug. [in Russian].
33. Melnikova, E. (2010). Nazvaniye Dnepra v aktualnoy i epicheskoy geograficheskoy nomenklature drevney Skandinavii [The name of the Dnieper in the actual and epic geographical nomenclature of ancient Scandinavia]. In: Jackson, T. N., Konovalova, I. G., Tsetskhladze, G. R. (eds.) *Gaudeamus igitur: sbornik statey k 60-letiyu A.V. Podosinova* [Gaudeamus igitur: a collection of articles on the 60th anniversary of A.V. Podosinova]. Moscow: Russian Foundation for the Promotion of Education and Science], 260-267. [in Russian].
34. Pritsak, O. (1993). *Pokhodzhennya Rusi, Starodavni skandinavski sahy i Stara Skandynaviya* [Origin of Rus, Ancient Scandinavian Sagas and Old Scandinavia]. Kyiv: Oberegy, 1. [in Ukrainian].
35. Pritsak, O. (2003). *Pokhodzhennya Rusi, Starodavni skandinavski sahy i Stara Skandynaviya* [Origin of Rus, Ancient Scandinavian Sagas and Old Scandinavia]. Kyiv: Oberegy, 2. [in Ukrainian].