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THE DUKEDOM OF BRAUNSCHWEIG-LÜNEBURG  
AND THE DATING OF *FAGRSKINNA*

The paper deals with the problem of dating of *Fagrskinna* in the context of literary production on Iceland in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries and especially of the sagas about the Norwegian Kings. The dating and the original writing-context of different sagas and saga compilations are of course of great importance for analysing not only the source value in relation to the history they describe, but also for understanding how the texts represent different positions within the society they were written for. In the following paper a rather recent effort to re-date the saga compilations *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* will be taken into consideration. *Fagrskinna* was written around 1225, and since *Heimskringla* made use of *Fagrskinna*, at least in its later parts, it must have been written somewhat later, suggestively from the middle of the 1220s to the beginning of 1230s.

*Key words:* Kings' sagas, *Fagrskinna*, *Heimskringla*, text criticism.

The vernacular literary production on Iceland in the 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> centuries is unique in Medieval Europe in its great variety, quality, and inventiveness. Among its different genres, the kings' sagas – especially the sagas about the Norwegian Kings – long held a prominent position as sources for North European history. After the source critical challenges of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, historians eventually began to primarily approach the saga-literature from anthropological perspectives, as 'Überreste' from a society rather than as 'erzählende Quellen' to Viking Age and Early Medieval Scandinavian political history. By these means different aspects of a 'world view' could be scrutinized and mapped, and in these perspectives the exact date and context of each work became less crucial and attracted less interest. Still, the dating and the original writing-context of different sagas and saga compilations are of course of great importance for analysing not only the source value in relation to the history they describe, but also for understanding how the texts represent different positions within the society they were written for. In the following a rather recent effort to re-date the saga compilations *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* will be taken into consideration.

## Introduction

The lost original texts of the three extensive kings' saga compilations, *Morkinskinna*, *Fagrskinna* and Snorri Sturluson's *Heimskringla*, were all produced under a relatively short period of time from ca. 1218 to the 1230s. Two of these compilations are undisputedly Icelandic, i.e. *Morkinskinna* and *Heimskringla*, but also the *Fagrskinna* text was long thought to be Icelandic. There are however some rather evident traces in the preserved manuscripts of what can be characterized as Norwegian writing conventions. The *Fagrskinna* text – *Noregs konungatal* – is also known to have been well established in Norway in the middle of the 13<sup>th</sup> century since King Håkon Håkonsson had the *Fagrskinna* text read to him at his deathbed in 1263. Also the genealogies that accompanied the two manuscripts of the text (A [ca. 1325–1350] and B [ca. 1250]) concerned Norwegian aristocracy, and the perspective of the text itself seems in many instances to be quite Norwegian, or at least to reflect a viewpoint from Trondheim and Trøndelag<sup>1</sup>.

The reason that the *Fagrskinna* text none the less was counted as Icelandic for so long was primarily that the author proved to have deep insights into the Old Norse skaldic tradition, a quality that scholars judged to be exclusively Icelandic – at least in the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Furthermore, the fact that only Icelanders were known to have produced this kind of advanced literary works of history in the vernacular contributed to the conclusion that the author must have been of Icelandic origin. The authoritative position of Gustav Storm came to serve as *Stand der Forschung* for almost a century:

hele Samlingen har en væsentlig islandsk Karakter, et saa grundigt Kjendskab til den islandske Skaldelitteratur er kun tænkeligt hos en Islænding, og en saa litterær Holdning passer kun ind i den islandske Litteratur. Derimod kan det ikke nægtes, at flere Udtryk i 'Konungatal' er skrevet fra norsk Standpunkt (Storm 1875. P. 84).

According to Gustav Storm it was quite simply unthinkable that such an extent of knowledge about Old Norse poetry as the *Fagrskinna* author displayed could have existed among Norwegians at the time. Consequently the *Fagrkinna* author must have been an Icelandic. On

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<sup>1</sup> All these aspects were observed already by Storm 1875; see furthermore Indrebø 1917 and Jakobsen 1970.

the other hand Storm also maintained that there was evidence enough to conclude that the work must have been written in Norway (Ibid. P. 84).

It lasted until 1970 before Alfred Jakobsen challenged the general agreement about an Icelandic author of *Fagrskinna*. Jakobsen pointed to the vast runic material that had come to light through excavations in the medieval Norwegian city centres during the previous decades, especially in Bergen, and he underlined that there was skaldic poetry contained in this material. According to Jakobsen, this opened up for the possibility that a 13<sup>th</sup>-century Norwegian actually could have had interest enough for skaldic poetry to have been able to write *Fagrskinna* (Jakobsen 1970). Still, however, there were no indications that poetic tradition had any part of Norwegian history writing, and in connection with the edition of the *Fagrskinna* text in *Íslenzk fornrit* 1985, the editor, Bjarni Einarsson, questioned Jakobsen's conclusions. He returned to Storm's position and stated that if it had been a Norwegian who had written *Fagrskinna* he must indeed have been a rare exception in the 13<sup>th</sup>-century Norwegian society (Bjarni Einarsson 1985. P. CXXIX–CXXXI).

It is easy to agree with those scholars who have taken the profound erudition in Old Norse skaldic poetry, and the advanced literary capacity in history writing in Old Norse language, as something unlikely to be found outside the Icelandic context in these years. Authors such as Theodoricus monachus and Saxo Grammaticus (Saxo I. 4) praised the Icelanders for their unique interest for history, and Theodoricus actually underlined that their 'old songs' (*carmina antiqua*) were the frame of their history-telling (Theodoricus. Prologus. P. 4)<sup>2</sup>. The idea that such knowledge could also have been found in his contemporary Norway seems not to have occurred to Theodoricus. The sole fact that the author of *Fagrskinna*, unlike Theodoricus and Saxo, did not say anything about the Icelanders, even though he made extensive use of both their poetry and their history writing, is in itself a good indication that he actually identified himself as an Icelander.

Wherever the *Fagrskinna* author originally belonged, there is however no question about that he wrote for the Norwegian royal court. Already Gustav Storm supposed that the text was aimed at King Håkon Håkonsson himself (Storm 1875. P. 85). In 1917 Gustav Indre-

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<sup>2</sup> Theodoricus mentioned his ineptness of the Icelanders in his first sentence. It is consequently perfectly clear that he valued the information they possessed about history through their *carmina antiqua* as fundamental for his work, and without parallel in Norway.

bø argued that *Fagrskinna* displayed a political bias in favour of King Hákon and against the jarl, Skule Bårdsson, who in the year 1223 had been forced to step back in the competition for the royal crown (Indrebø 1917. P. 275–278). Ólafía Einarsdóttir opposed Indrebø on the latter point, claiming that she could not really find anything in the *Fagrskinna* text that was directly hostile to Skule, but altogether there is still no question about that the goal of the *Fagrskinna* author was to write a text for the uppermost elite of the Norwegian kingdom, primarily for the royal court and King Hákon Hákonsson himself.

### **The problem: Dating *Fagrskinna***

Concerning the dating of the *Fagrskinna* text, a general consensus prevailed throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century. With a few exceptions scholars tended to agree both that *Fagrskinna* had been written in the 1220s, and that Snorri had made use of it, almost immediately, when writing *Heimskringla* in the second half of the 1220s and perhaps in the early years of the 1230s. In an article from 2002, however, Ólafía Einarsdóttir brought this agreement to an end. She had discovered a new circumstance that she found definitely to prove a dating of *Fagrskinna* to after 1235.

Ólafía Einarsdóttir based her argument on an observation made by Gustav Indrebø in 1917 (Indrebø 1917. P. 115). Indrebø had noted that the *Fagrskinna* author usually followed his sources quite slavishly, but in a few cases he changed their formulations. One such case was when writing about the marriage in the early 1040s between Ulfhild – the daughter of King Olav Haraldsson, ‘the Saint’, of Norway – and Ordulf Billung. Where the sources spoke of Ordulf [*Otta*] as Duke of Saxony, *Fagrskinna* altered the wording and called him Duke of *Brunsvik*, i.e. Braunschweig, commonly known in English as Brunswick. According to a short comment by Indrebø, the reason for this change was that the author was aware that the descendants of Henry the Lion only ruled over Brunswick, and therefore he had presumed that the predecessors of Henry had done the same (Indrebø 1917. P. 115, note \* and 273 note \*).

When Ólafía Einarsdóttir examined the problem, she found Indrebø’s short comment quite unsatisfactory (Ólafía Einarsdóttir 2002. P. 66–68). She also discovered a circumstance that seemed to her to be of crucial importance for the dating of *Fagrskinna*: in the 1220s there had not existed any dukedom of Brunswick. Only in 1235, at the imperial Diet of Mainz, did the dukedom of Brunswick-Lüneburg come into existence.

Therefore, according to Ólafía Einarsdóttir, *Fagrskinna* could not be older than 1235, since before that year there was no dukedom of Brunswick available for the author of the work to project back into history. Consequently Snorri Sturluson could not have used *Fagrskinna* in the late 1220s and early 1230s, as was commonly believed. Instead Snorri must, according to Ólafía Einarsdóttir, have come across *Fagrskinna* when visiting Norway in 1237–1239 (Ólafía Einarsdóttir 2002. P. 85).

### **On the Marriage between Ulfhild Olavsdotter and Ordulf Billung**

Ólafía Einarsdóttir is definitely right on one point. The way the *Fagrskinna* author actively changes the wording of his sources about Ordulf Billung is quite significant. Otherwise he shortens and copies the text before him in an almost mechanical and rather professional way. The fact that he takes the trouble to actively alter the information concerning the marriage between Ulfhild and Ordulf must signal that there was something of great interest at stake for him and his audience at this point.

The common source for *Morkinskinna* and *Fagrskinna* in this passage is the so-called *Oldest saga of Saint Óláfr* from ca 1200. This source is regrettably lost in the corresponding section, but its text is reflected in a later redaction called *The Legendary saga of Saint Óláfr*<sup>3</sup>. The marriage between Ordulf and Ulfhild is here presented in connection with the marriage between Olav Haraldsson and the Swedish Princess Astrid Olofsdotter, in the following way:

En þau atto dottor Oláfr kunungr oc atrið en hon var kallað ulvilldr. Hon var geven. Hærtoga þæim isaxlande er Otta het. Þau atto sun þann er Magnus het. Hann var síðan hærtoge isaxlande. Hann var allra manna vænstr. Har hans var aðrummægin ræikar bleikt en aðrumægin raut» (Olafs saga hins helga. P. 41–42).

And they had a daughter, King Olav and Astrid, and she was called Ulfhild. She was married to the Duke in Saxony who was called Otta. They had that son who was called Magnus. He was later Duke in Saxony. He was the most beautiful of men. His hair was blond on one side of the head, and red on the other side.

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<sup>3</sup> On the *Oldest saga* see Lönnroth 2000 and Andersson 2012. P. 45–48, and literature referred to there.

This is, as I have briefly noted in another context, a strikingly old-fashioned perspective (Janson 1997). Magnus Billung was probably born around 1045. He had been a young promising prince in the 1060s and 1070s, when he haunted the Archbishops of Hamburg-Bremen – Adalbert (d. 1072) and Liemar (d. 1101) – and repeatedly revolted against King Henry IV of Germany, until he was eventually pacified around 1080 (Fenske 1987). He must also, from a purely dynastical point of view, have posed a considerable peril for Scandinavian rulers. As grandchild of Saint Olav (Haraldsson) through Olav’s only legitimate child, Ulfhild (d. 1070), Magnus Billung was also the closest male heir to Olav’s illegitimate son Magnus ‘the good’ (d. 1047) – King of Norway and Denmark and pretender for England – whose name he had indeed received. Magnus Billung must consequently have been a great potential threat to King Sven Estridsen of Denmark (d. 1076) and to the sons of King Harald Sigurdsson *harðráði*, who ruled over Norway with the support of Sven Estridsen after their father’s death in the battle of Stamford Bridge in 1066.

As great grandson of King Olof Eriksson ‘Skötkonung’ of Sweden (d. ca. 1022), through his grandmother Astrid, Magnus Billung was also closely related to the Swedish royal family, which seems also to have died out on the male side in the 1060’s with Astrid’s brother Emund (d. ca. 1060). Astrid’s sister was by the way no one less than the famous Princess Ingegärd Olofsdotter who around 1016 had been married to Prince Jaroslav of Novgorod – Grand Prince of Kiev from 1019 (d. 1054). This consequently also made Magnus Billung a close relative of the later princess in Rus, and, from 1151, also with the royal family of France through Jaroslav’s and Ingegärd’s daughter Anna (d. 1075), who was married to King Henry I of France (d. 1060), and who became the mother of King Philip I of France (d. 1108)<sup>4</sup>, Magnus Billung’s second cousin<sup>5</sup>.

Almost a century after Magnus Billung’s death in 1106, the *Oldest saga of Saint Óláfr* (to be more exact, the *Legendary saga*) still mediates a perspective that praised him as if he was a young promising prince on the Scandinavian arena, enhancing his incomparable handsomeness and spectacularly beautiful hair. This is strikingly obsolete information. Magnus Billung had played no real political role after his death in 1106, and he had actually been a rather insignificant figure also during the two last decades of his life, after he had been reconciled with Henry IV. Furthermore, he had no male heir and became

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<sup>4</sup> Janson 1998. P. 153.

<sup>5</sup> On this extensive web of alliances see Janson 1998. P. 105–175.

the last duke of the Billung family. Two daughters were married to German aristocrats, but these marriages seem not to have caught the interest of the author of the *Oldest saga*, and as far as we can tell, he seems not even to know about them. If he had done so he kept his knowledge remarkably unexpressed. His focus was still totally on the handsome Magnus Billung, not his descendants.

In *Morkinskinna* the marriage between Ulfhild and Ordulf is woven into the great scenery around the famous battle of Lyrskog hede (Lürschauer Heide) in 1043, where King Magnus Olavsson, ‘the good’, through miraculous help from his saintly father, and with military support from Ordulf [*Otta*] Billung, defeated a party characterized as ‘the pagan Wends’. The *Morkinskinna* author obviously writes from memory, calling Ulfhild wrongly ‘Ragnhild’<sup>6</sup>, and his intention seems to have been first and foremost to tell a good story. The marriage between Ulfhild (‘Ragnhild’) and Ordulf was used here for giving the account something of a romantic twist. It all ends in a fantastic way with Ordulf Billung becoming Emperor – after what must be supposed to be Emperor Henry III (d. 1056) – and Magnus Billung, Ordulf’s and ‘Ragnhild’s’ son, is then described as the most beautiful of men (*var allra manna fridaztr symum*: *Morkinskinna*. P. 38–49, the quote is from P. 49). Consequently *Morkinskinna*, just as the *Oldest saga*, focuses on how the greatness of Saint Olav was reflected in the eminent nature of his closest offspring.

*Morkinskinna* differs from the *Oldest saga* by connecting the marriage between Ordulf and ‘Ragnhild’ to a vivid story about the battle of Lyrskog hede. The *Fagrskinna* author, on the other hand, keeps to the version of the *Oldest saga*. He speaks of Ulfhild’s marriage to Ordulf only in connection with the marriage between Saint Olav Haraldsson of Norway and Astrid Olofsdotter from Sweden, but to the information of both *Oldest saga* and *Morkinskinna*, the *Fagrskinna* author adds new stuff:

Með raðe vina sinna gerðe Olafir konongr sætt við Svía konong. Fecc Azstríðar dottor hans oc var þæirra dotter Ulfilðr er gift var Otta hærtogha<sup>7</sup> í Brunsvik. Þeðan var Otta keisare cominn sun Hæinreccs hærtogha (*Fagrskinna*. P. 157).

With advice from his friends, King Olav made peace with the King of the Svear, and received his daughter Astrid [in matrimony]. Their daughter was Ulfhild who was married to Duke Otta in Brunswick. From them descended Emperor Otta, the son of Duke Henry.

<sup>6</sup> Strangely enough *Ágrip* (Ch. 25) has a third version: *Gunhild*, which Finnur Jónsson – in a note to his edition (P. 27) – suggests to be a mistake by the copyist.

<sup>7</sup> The B-manuscript from ca. 1250 has *kæisara*.

This is indeed a radically new perspective on the marriage between Ulvhild and Ordulf. Their son, Magnus Billung, was simply left out. The *Fagrskinna* author obviously found this to be much too antiquated information for his royal audience. Instead contemporary descendants of Saint Olav were brought into the text. The two persons mentioned were Duke Henry the Lion of Saxony (and Bavaria) (d. 1195), and his son Emperor Otto IV of the Holy Roman Empire (d. 1218). Both were men of tremendous reputation not least through Emperor Fredrik Barbarossa's spectacular deposition of Henry the Lion in 1180 from all his public offices – including the dukedom of Saxony – but also of course through Otto IV's ascension to King (1198) and then Emperor (1209), followed by his excommunication in 1210 by Pope Innocent III, which eventually forced him to abdicate in 1215. It was consequently no minor figures in the politics of Northern Europe that the *Fagrskinna* author chose to include into his text. He seems indeed to have been able to bring in completely new information on this point, since the connection between Henry the Lion and Otto IV on the one side, and Saint Olav on the other, seems not to have been known to his sources<sup>8</sup>.

Ólafía Einarsdóttir has pointed out that one of the reasons for the Norwegian court to pay attention to the German descendants of Saint Olav, was the possibility of marriage alliances. The blood relationship between the Norwegian rulers and their German relatives had exceeded the degree of consanguinity that was prohibited by the Church (Ólafía Einarsdóttir 2002. P. 74 with note 15). Time had ultimately made it possible to consider a marriage alliance with these relatives – an option that might have been of interest in order to strengthen the blood-ties to the *perpetuus rex Norwegiae* – Saint Olav. The increasing interest for history and for reconstructing the royal line of descendants from Harald Hårfager in the Sverre-family had possibly enforced the insight that there still lived descendants of Saint Olav in Saxony. The Norwegian royal dynasty descended not from Saint Olav but from his half brother Harald Sigurdsson, and that was in a way a weakness that under certain conditions might also turn into a threat. It would have been understandable if the royal court of Norway kept an eye on this question once it was

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<sup>8</sup> Ólafía Einarsdóttir (2002. P. 74–76) uses the variations in the B-manuscript to imply that *Fagrskinna* originally referred to both Ordulf Billung and Henry the Lion as Emperors, but this is contradicted not only by the fact that Ordulf in another context in *Fagrskinna* – in relation to the battle of Lyrskog hede – is referred to as *haertoge*, but also by the fact that Duke Henry the Lion was a much too well known figure to be confused with an emperor. It is therefore much more probable that we are dealing with copying-mistakes here.



discovered, and it is also therefore quite explainable that the author of *Fagrskinna*, who as we have seen wrote for the Norwegian royal court, added this information to what he had found in his sources.

### ***Fagrskinna* and the Dukes of Brunswick**

As has already been mentioned, Ólafía Einarsdóttir highlighted another piece of information added by the *Fagrskinna* author. *Fagrskinna* spoke of Ordulf as *hærtoghe i Brunsvik*, ‘Duke in Brunswik’, where his sources called him (and his son) by the title *hærtoge isaxlande*, ‘Duke in Saxony’. Ólafía Einarsdóttir claimed this to be an undisputable proof that *Fagrskinna* was written after 1235, when the new dukedom of Brunswick-Lüneburg was founded (Ólafía Einarsdóttir 2002. P. 60: ‘må betragtes som éntydigt for dateringsproblematikken’). If correct, her conclusion would lead to quite far-reaching consequences for our understanding of dating and context of the kings’ sagas, especially as she argues that Snorri also must have interpolated his own work, *Heimskringla*, around 1240, with material that he had found in *Fagrskinna* when staying in Norway in 1237–1239 (Ólafía Einarsdóttir 2002. P. 84–85).

Ólafía Einarsdóttir’s argument may seem convincing enough, but her conclusions can actually not be upheld when more closely scrutinized. It was not by any means impossible for the *Fagrskinna* author to use the title *hærtoghe i Brunsvik* before 1235. The title *hærtoghe i Brunsvik / dux de Brunswik* that the *Fagrskinna* author wanted to project back in history to Ordulf Billung, was not a new creation in 1235. The connection between the dukedom of Saxony and Brunswick was well established already in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Bernd Schneidmüller has well summarized the conditions from Henry the Lion’s early years to the beginning of the 13<sup>th</sup> century:

Heinrichs frühe Urkunden belegen ihn wiederholt in Braunschweig, und konsequent bezeichnen ihn sowohl die Bündnisurkunde welfischer Gegner von 1167 als auch der indes später schreibende Pöhlde Annalist zu 1145 als Herzog ‘von Braunschweig’, ein frühes Glied in der langen Kette von entsprechenden Quellenzeugnissen des 12. und 13. Jahrhunderts, die vor dem Sturz Heinrichs des Löwen wie vor allem danach die Benennung der Herren und der Herrschaft nach dem Zentralort Braunschweig bezeugen (Schneidmüller 2003. P. 55–56).

The deposition of Henry the Lion in 1180 had caused great confusion to the status and formal position of both himself and his descendants (on Henry the Lion see now Werthschulte 2007 and Ehlers 2008), but the idea that Brunswick was the kernel of their power persisted well into the 13<sup>th</sup> century. Saxony never recovered from the smashing intervention by Fredrick Barbarossa against Henry the Lion, but even if the dukedom was not revived as identical with the old Saxon territory that the Billungs and Henry the Lion had headed (von Heinemann 1882. P. 195–239; notice especially in this context note 2 on p. 207), Brunswick still held a firm grip over the minds as the centre of that realm for the family of the Welfs (Scheidmüller 2003. P. 30–31; cf. von Heinemann 1882. P. 197–198).

On the official level there was some ambivalence about what the proper title of the Welfish dominion in Saxony should be, but in the 1190s even Emperor Henry VI called the deposited Henry the Lion *dux de Brunswic* (1194: Regesta Imperii, IV: 3, nr 384), and Henry the Lion's son, Henry of Brunswick, was also referred to as *Heinricus dux de Bronswich* (1194: Regesta Imperii, IV: 3, nr 368) and *dux de Bruniswic* (1195: Regesta Imperii, IV: 3, nr 482), in spite of the fact that none of them formally were dukes. In 1223, after inheriting his uncle Henry of Brunswick, *Otto de Luneburch*, 'the Child' (d. 1252), son of Henry the Lion's son Wilhelm (d. 1213), used the title *dux de Brunswik* for himself (Origines Guelficae IV. P. 98), and from 1226 he made the title *dux de Brunswic* standard (Ahrens and Patze 2002. P. 594)<sup>9</sup>. Formally, however, he became duke at the Diet of Mainz in 1235 with the foundation of the dukedom Brunswick-Lüneburg.

We can consequently conclude that between the deposition of Henry the Lion in 1180 and the Diet of Mainz in 1235, no one in this dynasty had the formal right to the title *duke*. From a strictly constitutional point of view there was no dukedom of Brunswick before that. Still there were dukes of Brunswick who officially used the title and acted in relation to their vassals and superiors as if they had been dukes, and often they even had implicit consent from the emperors (von Heinemann 1882. P. 195–239).

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<sup>9</sup> In the foundation letter of 1235 Emperor Fredrick II avoided calling Otto by this title – so intimately connected to the power of Henry the Lion. Otto was here referred to as *Otto de Luneburch*, and Brunswick as *dominium Brunesuic* (Constitutiones et acta. 2. P. 263–265; Brandi 1914). Only months later however, the historical and political density of Brunswick made the Emperor's chancellery refer to *ducatus de Brunesuic* (Ahrens and Patze 2002. P. 595).

It is obvious therefore that Ólafía Einarsdóttir's argument that *Fagrskinna* could not have used the title *hærtoghe i Brunsvik* before 1235, does not work. In the perspective of the *Fagrskinna* author, the focal point of power in the Saxon dukedom had long been Brunswick, and more than half a century before he wrote *Fagrskinna* – that is to say all his life – the title *dux de Brunswic* had been firmly established. When he modernized the text, and cut out Magnus Billung in order to make room for Otto IV, it was, accordingly, nothing but perfectly natural to also change the title *hærtoge isaxlande* for Ordulf Billung to *hærtoghe i Brunsvik*. It provided a certain modern air to a text that he aimed to be read before the King and the royal court.

## Conclusion

Ólafía Einarsdóttir has argued that the fact that the *Fagrskinna*-author changed the title *hærtoge isaxlande* in his source to *hærtoghe i Brunsvik* must lead to the conclusion that the text was written after the Diet of Mainz in 1235, when Emperor Fredrik II founded the new dukedom known as Brunswick-Lüneburg. There was no dukedom of Brunswick before that according to Ólafía Einarsdóttir, and consequently *Fagrskinna* could not have referred to it before that.

This argument cannot be accepted. Formally there was no dukedom of Brunswick between 1180 and 1235, but as we have seen, there were nonetheless dukes of Brunswick acting officially as such, with tacit consent from the emperors. Indeed, even if he actually was Duke of Saxony, Henry the Lion was known as *dux de Brunswik* already before his deposition in 1180, and after that both he and his son Henry of Brunswick were repeatedly referred to as Dukes of Brunswick – even in official imperial documents. When Otto ‘the Child’ took over the leading position of the Welfs in Saxony in 1223, he immediately began to use the same title, and this was in fact the title he had used for a decade until Fredrick II decided to adapt to reality and formally grant him the ducal status at the Diet of Mainz in 1235. There is accordingly no reason to change the established dating of the *Fagrskinna* text on the grounds Ólafía Einarsdóttir has offered. From this follows also that there is neither any reason to presume a second phase around 1240 of Snorri's work on *Heimskringla*. The generally accepted dating of *Fagrskinna* and *Heimskringla* is still intact from this point of view. For

*Fagrskinna* that means that it was written around 1225<sup>10</sup>, and since *Heimskringla* made use of *Fagrskinna*, at least in its latter parts, it must have been written somewhat later, suggestively from the middle of the 1220s to the beginning of 1230s<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>10</sup> Based on Gustav Storm 1875, Gustav Indrebø suggested that *Fagrskinna* was written after 'around 1225' but before 1230, suggestively at the end of the 1220s (Indrebø 1917. P. 271–275). Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1937. P. 179, argued that Storm's conclusion actually demanded an earlier dating, and found the early 1220s more probable. Alfred Jakobsen (1970. P. 113 with note 34 and P. 114 note 36) followed Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson. Both interpretations are pressing the argument, and a date around 1225 would fit more smoothly with the sum of the evidence. Cf. for example Bagge 1991. P. 19 and Andersson 2016. P. 65.

<sup>11</sup> The question of the authorship of *Heimskringla* is however without complications, see for example the discussion in Louis-Jensen 2013.

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## ГЕРЦОГСТВО БРАУНШВЕЙГ-ЛЮНЕНБУРГ И ДАТИРОВКА «КРАСИВОЙ КОЖИ»

Статья посвящена проблеме датировки свода королевских саг «Красивая кожа» (*Fagrskinna*) в контексте литературной жизни Исландии XII–XIII вв. и, особенно, истории создания саг о норвежских королях. Датировка как отдельных саг, так и их сводов, конечно, имеет большое значение не только с точки зрения достоверности этих источников, но и для понимания того, как в сагах отразились представления, бытовавшие в различных группах породившего их общества. В статье рассматривается сравнительно недавняя попытка передатировать «Красивую кожу» и «Круг земной». «Красивая кожа» может быть датирована ок. 1225 г., а поскольку она использована в «Круге земном», последний должен был быть создан несколько позже, предположительно между серединой 1220-х и началом 1230-х годов.

*Ключевые слова:* королевские саги, «Красивая кожа», «Круг земной», текстология.