

HEIMSKRINGLA AND ITS SOURCES: THE MIRACLES OF ÓLÁFR HELGI  
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Nú er sagðr nokkurr hlutr sögu Óláfs konungs, frá nokkurum tíðendum þeim, er gerðusk, meðan hann réð Nórøgi, ok svá frá falli hans ok því, er helgi hans kom upp. En nú skal þat eigi niðri liggja, er honum er þó mest vegsæmd í, at segja frá jartegnagörð hans, þótt þat sé síðar ritit í þessari bók.

So ends ch. 246 of Óláfs saga helga in Snorri Sturluson's Heimskringla (henceforth Óhelig, Hkr), written some two centuries after the fall of Óláfr Haraldsson inn helgi at Stiklarstaðir in 1030. Snorri has indeed, by this late point in the longest and greatest of his sagas of Norwegian kings, told much of the story of Óláfr, showing his development from an ordinarily self-interested viking to a missionary king in the ruthless mould of his predecessor Óláfr Tryggvason, and finally, in the late dark days of his life, to a man capable of profound piety and Christian forgiveness. And, faithful to his promise, Snorri does later in Hkr narrate many of the posthumous miracles of Óláfr. In his first, separate, version of his saga of Óláfr (henceforth Sep), the posthumous miracles form a kind of legendary appendix (chs. 265-78), but when this saga was placed at the centre of the Hkr triptych and flanked by sagas covering the reigns preceding and following Óláfr's, down to 1177, the posthumous miracles were dispersed throughout Hkr III. These miracle accounts are not particularly long or numerous; for the most part they punctuate the historical narrative rather than contributing importantly to its flow, and indeed they often create something of a stylistic disturbance, but they are there, and their presence raises some interesting questions: what is their relation to other vernacular accounts of the miracles, what is their function in Hkr, and what can we deduce about Snorri's attitude to them? It is with these questions, and particularly with the first, that this paper is concerned. The main emphasis will be on the miracle accounts in Hkr, and references to Óhelig are to the Hkr version of the saga, but much of what is said applies equally to Sep. The differences between them are discussed on pp. 16-18.

The miracles, and their sources and analogues, are perhaps best introduced in the form of a table. (A list of references and abbreviations is given on pp. 19-20.)

PRINCIPAL MIRACLES OF S. ÓLAF / ÓLÁFR HELGI NARRATED BY SNORRI STURLUJON, with parallels

PLACE	MIRACULOUS EVENT	GEISLI (v.)	325 (no.)	HOM (no.)	LEG (ch.)	SEP (ch.)	HKR (saga & ch.)
Skerfursúð	A road is made, food supplied, a demon routed and land made fertile				67	175	Ólhelg 179
Garðar [= N. Russia]	The son of a noble widow is healed of quinsy				72	185	Ólhelg 189
Verdoelafylki	Þorgeirr flekk'r's ruined fields are restored				74(x2)	199	Ólhelg 203
Stiklarstaðir	Óláfr's blood heals Þórir hund's wound				86	228	Ólhelg 230
Stiklarstaðir	A blind beggar gains sight through Óláfr's blood	23-24		I	87(x2) 89	236	Ólhelg 236
Hlýrskógsheiðir [Jutland]	Óláfr appears to Magnús góði in a dream and brings him victory against the Wends	28-30				265	Mgöð 27-8
Mítlagarðr [= Byzantium]	Haraldr Sigurðarson is released from prison					-	HSig 14
Ongulseyjarsund [= Menai Strait]	Guthormr, nephew of Óláfr, defeats an Irish king and so redresses an injustice	31-34	I	II	90-91	266	HSig 54-5
Denmark	A count is blinded and bread turned to stone after Óláfr's feast is ignored	35-36		IV	93	268	HSig 56
France → London	A cripple is healed at Óláfr's church in London		V		101	269	HSig 57
Óláfr's shrine	2 blind people gain sight and a mute his speech			(Iacuna)	105	271	Ólkyrr 6
Streets of Niðaróss	Óláfr's shrine reveals a slain child					272	Ólkyrr 7

(cont.)

## PRINCIPAL MIRACLES OF S. OLAF / ÓLÁFR HELGI NARRATED BY SNORRI STURLUSON, with parallels (cont.)

Streets of Niðaróss	A fire is quenched by Óláfr's shrine: an irreverent man is blinded and cured again		XI	98	273	Mberf 21
Óláfr's shrine	A crippled woman is healed		VII	95;99	274	Mberf 22
Niðaróss	Kolbeinn, his tongue cut out for a minor offence, is healed by Óláfr in a dream	37-38	III	94;101	276	Msona 30
Wendland → Óláfr's shrine	A young Dane captured by Wends is freed and his health restored by Óláfr in a dream		XII	98-99	275	Msona 31
Óláfr's shrine	Halldorr, his tongue cut out by Wends, is healed by Óláfr in a dream	40-41	IV	99;101	277	Hsona 24
Norwegian Upplands	An English priest, Ríkarðr, unjustly mutilated, is healed by Óláfr in a dream	58-61	VI	96	278	Hsona 25
Garðar	Óláfr's sword Hneitir is recovered and set in a church dedicated to him	43-50			246	Hákherð 20
Péznávellir [Bulgaria]	The Emperor Kirjalax and the Varangians win victory against the heathens	51-56	II	92	267	Hákherð 21

## Notes to Table

1. The miracles listed here are the most striking ones, since they are narrated quite fully and have a supernaturally caused event as their main focus, but there are other touches of the miraculous in Snorri's narrative. In the chapters immediately following Óláfr's death there are claims that his body is incorrupt or that a light shines over it (Ólhelg 238, 244, 245) and generalised statements that miracles happened around the body (Ólhelg 240, 244). Later on there are the dream-appearances of Óláfr to his son Magnús and his brother Haraldr (MSig 28 and 82), which are not included in the above table because they do not have any instantaneous, material effect on the course of events.
2. Seq refers to the main MS of Snorri's separate Ólhelg, Stockholm 2 4°. The table does not take account of the many miracle stories added by later scribes in the interpolated texts of the saga (see p. 3).
3. The few parallels to Snorri's miracle accounts in Ágrip, Morkinskinna and Fagrskinna are discussed on pp.12-13.

Before the sources for Snorri's miracle accounts are discussed, a word should be said about the representation of the accounts in MSS. The MSS of Sep fall into three main classes, designated A, B and C in O. A. Johnsen and Jón Helgason's edition. Perg 4<sup>o</sup> nr. 2 in the Royal Library Stockholm (probably second half of the 13th century) is the main representative of class A, and is the best, and indeed only complete, MS of the saga as a whole. It also contains the only full text of Snorri's miracle accounts at its conclusion. AM 325 VI 4<sup>o</sup> is also an A MS at this point, as is AM 321 4<sup>o</sup> throughout, but both are defective for most of the miracle sequence. The C class is also represented at the end of the saga by AM 325 V 4<sup>o</sup> (a C class MS here, though not throughout the saga), AM 325 VII 4<sup>o</sup> and Perg 4<sup>o</sup> nr. 4 in the Royal Library Stockholm, although again these are defective. The few surviving B MSS do not preserve the end of the saga. However, the presence of miracle accounts in both the A and C classes suggests a likelihood that they were part of the original saga, not a scribal addition.

In the interpolated MSS from the second half of the 14th or beginning of the 15th century, Bergsbók, Boejarbók, Flateyjarbók, Thómasskinna and AM 61 fol., the number of miracles is increased, in tune with the redactors' usual tendency to insert traditional legendary material spurned by Snorri; AM 325 V 4<sup>o</sup> also has some additional miracle texts. Each of these MSS has its own particular configuration of miracles, but they include some events from Óláfr's lifetime such as his healing of his sick horse or turning of water into wine, as well as the usual kinds of posthumous wonders: healings, the quenching of a fire, the finding of a lost boy, and the provision of wood for a church in the saint-king's honour.

For Hkr the main MS source is Kringla (K), the unitary name given to a group of 17th- or 18th-century paper copies from a venerable 13th-century ancestor of which only one leaf now survives. K preserves a full canon of miracles, but otherwise they are poorly represented. The other MSS for Ólhelg (Hkr) are to say the least fragmentary and do not cover the Óláfr miracles. In Hkr III the miracles in Mgöð 27 and HSig 14, which are of some historical significance, are preserved in AM 39 fol., Eirspennill, Fríssbók and Jöfraskinna (in a paper transcript), but after that point, and especially after Ólkyrr 6, the miracles are only very sporadically copied. Msona 31, for instance, appears in no other MS than K. Of the 15 last miracles in the Table, Eirspennill has 13 and Fríssbók 3. Jöfraskinna has 8, one of which (corresponding to Hákherð 20) occurs within its text of Ólhelg, which is a copying from an exemplar belonging to the Sep redaction. AM 39 has 4 miracles and the start of a fifth. It is defective, but Ólkyrr 7, Mberf 21 and 22 and Msona 31 are lacking from a text otherwise complete at the relevant points.

If one wished to argue that most of the miracle accounts in Hkr III were scribal interpolations, their poor representation in Hkr MSS would form a mainstay of the argument, but an explanation is to hand (as already pointed

out by Storm, 1873, 170 and Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson, 1951, LXXXI, n.). The scribes of Hkr MSS must have known that the miracles were recorded in Sep and therefore thought it unnecessary to duplicate them. Nevertheless, the omission of miracles from medieval Hkr MSS does amount almost to a literary-critical judgement that they are not essential, and this certainly deserves to be taken into account in assessing their importance.

As the Table (p. 2) shows, all but one of the miracles narrated by Snorri can be paralleled in other vernacular sources (the exception being Ólkyri 7), and in order to characterise Snorri's particular retellings it is helpful to compare them with these sources. First of all, a brief survey of them is necessary. (The development of the Óláfr legend is traced in Holtmark 1938 and Bø 1955, ch. 1.)

#### Glaelognskiða

About 1032 - only two years after Óláfr's death on the battlefield at Stiklarstaðir - Þórarinn loftunga addressed his poem Glaelognskiða "Sea-calm Lay" to Sveinn Alfífuson, son of Knútr of England and Denmark, and himself ruler of Norway (1030-1035). It is a curious poem, but Magerøy, in his study of 1948, does not doubt its authenticity. Þórarinn included the following material bearing on Óláfr's sanctity (verse numbers in brackets): Óláfr has gone to heaven (3). His body is incorrupt (5); bells ring, candles light spontaneously around it (6-7). Óláfr, sinless, saved his soul before he died (7). The sick flock to the saintly king; the blind and dumb are healed (8). Sveinn is urged to pray to Óláfr, "God's man", for successful rule of Norway, "his [Óláfr's] land"; Óláfr obtains good years and peace (ár ok friðr) for all (9).

Snorri quotes all the verses mentioned here in his Ólhelg (both Sep and Hkr versions).

#### Sigvatr's Erfidrápa

About 1040 Sigvatr Þórðarson composed his Erfidrápa "Memorial Poem" for Óláfr. It provides further evidence for the growth of a cult, here interwoven with conventional praise of Óláfr's warrior prowess: The farmers of Trøndelag now regret fighting Óláfr (11). At the battle of Stiklarstaðir they were terrified by the brightness of his eyes (13); the sun in a cloudless sky gave no warmth or light (15); Þórir hund was protected against Óláfr's sword by Lappish spells (16); Óláfr had his Christian supporters on his right (22). Óláfr's hair still grows (23). A golden shrine encloses Sigvatr's lord; the blind are healed there; the skald praises Óláfr's sanctity (24); the skald should celebrate Óláfr's feast (25).

All these verses are quoted by Snorri in Sep and in Hkr (either within Ólhelg or Mgóð there). Snorri shows a great respect for Sigvatr, and this poem afforded him not just authentication of particular points, but also a precedent for introducing the miraculous into what was an essentially secular treatment of the life of a warrior-king.

**Geisli**

In 1152, Einarr Skúlason recited his Geisli "Sunbeam" in Kristskirkja, Niðaróss, before the co-kings Eysteinn and Sigurðr, sons of Haraldr gilli, and the newly appointed archbishop Jón (Storm 1880, XXXIII argues for this date). The principle miracles common to Geisli and Hkr are listed in the Table, but Geisli also contains the following: Óláfr dreams, before death, of a ladder to heaven (15-16); the sun is eclipsed (19). There are miracles on the battlefield; a light is seen over the body (20). 12 months and 5 days after his fall, Óláfr's body is translated through God's will (25). A dumb man gains speech (26). Niðaróss is now an archbishopric and home of a fragment of the true cross (65).

All of the material detailed here is told in some form in the concluding chapters of Ólhelg (Sep and Hkr) or in Hkr III. Only one verse is actually quoted (v. 37, in Msona 30), perhaps favoured because Einarr speaks of himself as an eye-witness there. Snorri refers to the poem as Óláfsdrápa. Einarr is also named in Hákherð 20, as the transmitter of Eindriði ungi's story about the sword Hneitir.

Important though Geisli is, it cannot be seen as a source of the detail or phrasing of Snorri's miracle accounts. It does contain some names of people - Guthormr (31), Eindriði ungi (45) - or of places - Hlýrskógssheiðr (28), Öngulseyjarsund (31), Pézínaveilir (52) - and some other kinds of detail: Guthormr is outnumbered threefold in battle (32); the Varangians are outnumbered sixtyfold (54) and are 540 in number (55). The recovery of the sword Hneitir is narrated with some realism: its Swedish owner girds on the sword in the evening, falls asleep under an open sky, misses it as day dawns and sees it far away from him on the field (47-48). But on the whole concrete detail is minimal. In the Kolbeinn miracle (37, = Msona 30) the protagonists are not named as in some prose sources; they are merely a "noble lady" and a "young man" who is condemned, vaguely, "for little reason". There are also places where Snorri has clearly followed a prose account in preference to Geisli. His HSig 56, for example, concerns a wicked Danish count and his Norwegian servant-woman, but in Geisli 35 the woman is Danish and there is no count.

Stylistically, Geisli is full of skaldic cliches. Kennings abound, as when the blind man at Stiklarstaðir, described in Ólhelg 236 as a beggar, is referred to as auðar njótr "enjoyer of riches" and órr orms landa "envoy of the serpent's lands [of gold]"; there are many compound epithets, much effusive praise of Óláfr and his miracles and statements about the business of composing the poem. None of this has had any effect on Snorri's miracle accounts.

As well as the rather bare and allusive verse sources, Snorri must have had at least one prose source for the miracles, not identical with anything now extant but quite close to the following three texts.

**AM 325 IVa 4<sup>o</sup> (henceforth 325)**

This comprises two leaves containing vernacular miracles of S. Olaf. An accompanying note in the hand of Árni Magnússon labels them "Ex Miraculis Sancti Olavi". The second leaf contains a florid account of the reform of a depraved young man, which Snorri does not recount. The first leaf, after a scrap of dialogue and narrative, contains six accounts of individual miracles, all of which are also related by Snorri. The sixth probably lacks its original conclusion. Formerly regarded as fragment 7 of the Oldest saga of Óláfr helgi, and published as such in Storm 1893, this leaf is now considered more likely to belong to a Norse legendary of S. Olaf (Louis-Jensen 1970, 47; Jónas Kristjánsson 1972, 161). Its dating is difficult. On paleographical grounds it seems likely to be Icelandic, mid-13th century, but it is clearly a copy of an earlier text, for which a reference to the visit of "Nicolas cardinali" (the papal legate Nicholas Brekespear, later Pope Hadrian IV) to Norway provides a terminus post quem of 1152, and Jonna Louis-Jensen argues that a date c. 1155-65 is not unlikely (1970,59).

**Samal Norsk Homliebok (henceforth Hom)**

The "Old Norwegian Homily Book" is preserved in the Norwegian MS AM 619 4<sup>o</sup> from c. 1200 (Indrebø 1939, \*39). It contains, under the headings "In die sancti Olavi regis et martiris" and "Her segir fra jartæinum hins haelga Olafs konungs", a brief life and twenty vernacular miracles of Óláfr; of which two and two part-miracles have to be supplied from the corresponding part of Legendary saga (below), because of a one-leaf lacuna in the MS. The miracle stories are translated from the Passio et Miracula Beati Olavi compiled by Eysteinn Erlendsson, Archbishop of Niðaróss 1161-88, and, in addition to the ones also told by Snorri (see Table, p. 2), they record more healings, another fire quenched, a lost boy found, a farmer unjustly accused saved from hanging, a wood miraculously provided for a church in Telemark and a depraved young man turned from sin (this last being the same tale as in the second leaf of 325).

**The Legendary saga (henceforth Leg)**

This saga of Óláfr helgi is preserved in a Norwegian MS (De la Gardie no. 8 fol., Uppsala University Library) from the mid-13th century (so Johnsen 1922, XVIII and Heinrichs 1982, 20). The extant MS, like that of Hom, is a copy of an original which is placed early in the 13th century (Jónas Kristjánsson 1976, 293) or c. 1200 (Heinrichs 1982, 20). As well as miracles dotted throughout Óláfr's life, there is a catalogue of posthumous miracles of Óláfr at the end of the saga. This is very similar to Hom's catalogue, and the wording of the accounts is usually almost identical, but it is evident that the Leg compiler had more than one source, for there is one additional miracle and three of the miracles are told twice. The healing of the blind man at Stiklarstaðir is narrated three times, once in the catalogue and twice in the main body of the saga. The second source - as textual evidence shows - was an earlier version of the text in 325, or else something very like it.

The three prose texts mentioned here represent two streams of miracle narration. The Hom versions very clearly preserve the international clerical flavour of their Latin originals. Apparently designed to inspire devotion more than to inform, they stress the emotional and moral aspects of the miraculous events whilst giving little in the way of factual detail (personal or place-names) or narrative elaboration. By contrast, the miracle accounts in the first leaf of 325 represent a much more saga-like tradition, richer in factual and graphic detail and terser in style. The 325 text here does not correspond at all precisely with Hom. Leg, whilst essentially very close to Hom in its accounts of posthumous miracles, reflects both streams of narration. For instance, the miracle of the healing of the young man whose tongue is cut out for a trivial offence (= Msona 30) receives two tellings in Leg, one (ch. 94) which is very close to Hom and another (ch. 101) which shares with the 325 text extra details such as the name of the beneficiary, Kolbeinn, the fact that it was Þóra Guthormsdóttir, mother of Sigurðr, who commanded his mutilation, and that his crime was taking something from her dish of dainties.

I now turn to the textual relations between Snorri's miracle accounts and the three prose versions set out above. Since Hom and Leg contain nearly all the posthumous miracles covered by Snorri, whilst 325 is only fragmentary, I begin with a comparison between Hkr, Hom and Leg. The date and provenance of these works do not preclude the theoretical possibility that Snorri (who visited Norway in 1218-20) could have seen a MS of them, although he could not have seen the extant MS of Leg.

For large stretches of miracle narrative, Snorri's text corresponds very closely with Hom and Leg. Here, there are minor variations of the kind which could well signify no more than individual, and probably unconscious, scribal preference, e.g. variation between er/at, fyrir því/bví, einn/nokkurr/sá, ok/en/þó, or between past/historic present tense of verbs, pronoun/name/common noun, expressed/unexpressed pronouns, and differences in word order. There is also free variation in miracle accounts between terms for Óláfr helgi himself, such as Óláfr konungr/ Óláfr hinn helgi/ hinn helgi Óláfr konungr/ sá helgi maðr.

At many points the three miracle accounts contain essentially the same material but exhibit variations of a more substantial kind which could be indicative either of a difference of exemplar or of alteration, possibly conscious, by a redactor. In order to define a little more closely than hitherto the similarity of the Hkr text to Hom and Leg, I have examined the chief variants of this kind (which number over 200) and categorised them as follows:

- A. Hkr differs from the common reading of Hom and Leg, i.e. Hkr] Hom.Leg
- B. Hkr agrees with Hom, differs from Leg, i.e. Hkr.Hom] Leg
- C. Hkr agrees with Leg, differs from Hom, i.e. Hkr.Leg] Hom



D. Hkr, Hom and Leg have three different readings, i.e. Hkr | Hom | Leg (More substantial departures of Hkr from Hom and Leg are discussed below, pp. 11-12). A few specimens of each will suffice. References are by page and line number to the editions listed on p. 19. Where two texts agree, the spelling of the first-mentioned is given, and trivial differences ignored. "Om." signifies "omitted or lacking".

A. Hkr | Hom. Leg.

136/17] 113/18. 212/13 eða vega sigr] ok láta lif sit karlmanlega  
 136/24-5] 113/25-6. 212/20 fekk Guthormr sigr. Þar fell Margaðr konungr] þa  
 lagðe hann við iorðu konungen  
 137/5] 115/3. 214/18-9 om.] ok hvarke raeddisc hann guð ne menn  
 336/32] 117/33. 218/9 En eptir miðja nótt] á aðrum daegi

B. Hkr. Hom | Leg

136/16-7. 113/17] 212/13 með drengskap] með soemd oc með draengskap  
 137/8. 115/5-6] 214/21 er aðan gat ek] er aðan var getet  
 272/11. 116/10] 216/12 heislu ok miskunn] hæilsu  
 336/24. 117/26] 218/3 með hugrenningum] i hug sinum

C. Hkr. Leg | Hom

232/15. 220/31] 120/15 þeim óvittra manni] þæim auma manne  
 273/21. 222/19-20] 121/15-6 skuggi nǫkkurr] scugge noccor eða spar aenar

D. Hkr | Hom | Leg

136/6] 113/7] 212/3 soemiliga] scendar-laust] svivirðingarlaust  
 232/11 120/11 220/28 heitaðisk] haeitaðesc. oc fryði] fryði  
 232/22] 116/23] 216/15 við þjóin uppi] við lendar uppi] undir quið upp  
 274/12 121/35] 222/33 aðrask ekki um] ifasc alz ecci um] dylst aegi  
 274/32] 122/19] 224/10 finna] scilia] sia

Although simple counting of variants is a rather gross tool for assessing the similarity of texts, it does have some value. When groups A to D are counted up it emerges that, where the Hkr, Hom and Leg texts are comparable, groups A and B each contain about one third of the variants, whilst groups C and D each contain about one sixth. In other words, the Hkr text differs significantly from both Hom and Leg and, as the examples above show, the textual variations where Hkr differs from Hom and Leg (group A) are usually more radical than those in the other groups. Meanwhile, Hkr is considerably closer to Hom than Leg, which also lacks some points common to Hkr and Leg. Leg therefore cannot, even in an earlier MS, have been the exemplar for Snorri's miracle texts, and this accords with the common scholarly view that Snorri did not know Leg (e.g. Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1945, IX; Jónas Kristjánsson 1976, 288).

As for Hom, it is clear that, even if Snorri knew the work, he must either have known it in a different redaction from the extant one, or else had an additional prose source for his miracle accounts. The evidence is as follows: (i) The textual variants where Hkr and Leg agree against Hom include, from Mberf 21, þeim óvittra manni in Hkr and Leg against þæim auma

manne in Hom. The reading of Hkr and Leg is better here, since the character in question (otherwise unnamed) has been introduced as óvitr and behaves foolishly in the tale. Again, in HSig 55, Guthormr's opponent King Margaðr has 16 ships in Hkr and Leg but 15 in Hom, and the figure 16 is supported by 325. (ii) A number of factual details in the Hkr miracle accounts are found in Leg (and often 325) but not in Hom. To give a single example, in Msona 30 the Hkr text has detail which almost exactly matches that of Leg ch. 101 and 325, mentioned on p. 7. Hom, on the other hand, together with Leg ch. 94, gives no more than the vague intimation that an innocent youth was accused of a grave crime and, as often happens, paid for another's misdeed. (iii) Certain miracles told by Snorri are not in Hom, as shown in the Table.

Turning to the relationship of Hkr to 325, the fifth miracle in 325 (the healing of the cripple in London, = HSig 57, lacking in Hom) is quite close to the Leg account, but also contains some details which are lacking in Leg but found in Hkr. For instance, 325 and Hkr show the cripple, arrived in London, asking the way to S. Óláfr's church and receiving the answer from bystanders that there are so many churches thereabouts that they do not know to whom they are dedicated (so Hkr; which one is Óláfr's church, 325). At this point a man comes to him and offers to guide him there. In Leg the bystanders' answer is not given, and without it the narrative gives a slight jolt. This begins to suggest that Snorri must have known a legendary source which, in some respects at least, must have resembled 325, and this is very emphatically confirmed by a comparison of Snorri's text with the second and sixth miracles in 325, the Varangians' victory and the healing of the English priest. In the miracle of the Varangians' victory Hkr shows next to no verbal correspondences with Hom or Leg (which are close enough to be treated as one text), and has a wealth of factual detail and descriptive elaboration not found there. A number of the extra factual details are already found in 325: the name of the battlefield (Pézínaveilir), the involvement of French troops (Hkr but not 325 also mentions Flemings; 325 but not Hkr labels the heathen enemy as Bulgarians), and the naming of Þórir helsingr as leader of the Varangians. There are further, larger differences. The Hom/Leg version records vaguely that in the first onslaught the "Greeks" and Varangians were overcome by "the wicked men" and in their despair turned to Óláfr for help against "those foes of God". In Hkr and 325 this is transformed into a lively exchange (in direct or indirect speech) in which the Byzantine king grows angry with his men, who retort that he should send "the Varangians, his wine-skins" (Vaeringja, vínbelgja sinna) into action. The king says he does not want to waste his treasures (görsimum sínum; 325 has sva goda meñ) by sending so few against so many, but Þórir helsingr replies for the Varangians that they would fight for the king's security though blazing fire stood in their way. Only then does the king bid the Varangians pray to Óláfr for help. When Óláfr makes his miraculous appearance Hom/Leg state directly that he leads and urges on the Varangians, but in Hkr

and 325 the blind heathen king asks who is the splendid man riding on a white horse before the enemy troops; his men reply that they can see nothing.

The other miracle in which 325 and *Hkr* contain details not found in *Hom/Leg* is the miraculous healing of the English priest Ríkarðr (named in all sources except *Hom*) who is viciously mutilated by two brothers who falsely suspect him of seducing their sister. Among the extra details are: the two brothers are identified as Einarr and Andréás, sons of Guthormr grábarðr (so *Hkr*; "grabak" 325); they are maternal uncles of King Sigurðr Haraldsson (Sigurðr ungi, 325); and they live in the Upplands (which differs from *Hom/Leg*, where they are from Vík). When they take the priest away from home to torture him they go by ship along the lake Rønd and land at *Skiptisandi*. The torture scene includes the detail that the tormentor used his heel to put out the priest's eye. The mutilated priest is left behind at a definite place (*á Saehheimruð, Hkr, i navst nokkort vid askeims herad* 325), where he is helped not just by a local woman as in *Hom/Leg* but also by her daughter. When Óláfr helgi appears to him in a dream he utters the words, "*Illa ertu leikim Ríkarðr félagi*".

Further proof of Snorri's use of a text close to 325 is found in variant readings. Although there is in most of the miracles little verbal correspondence between 325 and other texts, there are some points where 325 and *Hkr* agree against *Leg* in the miracle of the cripple healed in London (*HSig* 57; not covered in *Hom*). For instance, they have *krypplingr* where *Leg* reads *krypill*, and *ok kann ek leið* for *Leg's ec man visa þer laeiðena*. Also *Hkr* and 325 twice have direct speech where *Leg* has indirect.

Thus a text quite closely akin to 325 seems to have been a model for at least some of Snorri's miracle accounts, and the dating of the 325 text (above, p. 6) makes it possible that Snorri should have known 325 or a text close to it, and have used it in conjunction with one akin to *Hom* to shape his own miracle accounts. At the very least, 325 shows that there was, before Snorri's time, an alternative approach in the narration of the Óláfr miracles, in which *Hom* and *Leg's* emphasis on the moral and emotional aspects of a tale was qualified by the presence of more factual and descriptive detail. 325 cannot, however, have been Snorri's sole source, even if it was once accompanied by other leaves covering the whole canon of Óláfr's miracles, for 325's accounts of the miracles equivalent to *HSig* 55, *Msona* 30 and *Hsona* 24 are abrupt and lack details of fact and phrasing which are common to *Hkr* and *Hom/Leg*.

As to whether Snorri had a single prototype for his miracle stories which already blended the rather abstract kind of presentation represented by *Hom* and the more concrete kind represented by 325, this is possible but cannot be proven. (Styrmir Kárasón's *Lífssaga Óláfs hins helga*, now mainly lost, has been regarded as a crucial intermediary, e.g. by Bjarni Aðalbjarnarson 1951, LXXX and LXXXIII, but without much evidence. For a caution against setting too much store by a reconstructed "Styrmir", see Heinrichs 1976, esp. 18, and

1982, 12-3.)

Although we do not now possess Snorri's prose sources in the exact form known to him, the earlier miracle accounts which do survive enable us to see that in some cases Snorri's account is virtually a verbatim copying of a "classic" legendary text, whilst in others it contains unique features which one can suspect, though not prove, were put there by Snorri himself. The miracles which are evidently little changed by Snorri are *HSig* 56, *Mberf* 21 and 22 and *Msona* 31, and *HSig* 56, as a representative of these, is discussed on pp. 13-15. The following paragraphs, however, are concerned with the ways in which Snorri's accounts differ from earlier ones, beginning with *Hákherð* 21.

As was seen above, Snorri inherits a version of this miracle which, as comparison with 325 shows, was already quite rich in factual detail, but the narrative development has gone a stage further in his account. The Byzantine "king" is named as Kirjalax, the Flemings are mentioned among his troops, but more importantly, the battle itself is elaborated, with particular emphasis on the heathens' strategic use of wagons on the battlefield. The descriptions of the fighting do not add substantially to those of 325, but in style they are a great deal fuller and more leisurely than 325's breathless account, and there is in fact little verbal correspondence between the two texts of this miracle. The other major differences between *Hkr* and 325 are that *Hkr*, like *Hom/Leg* but unlike 325, mentions that the Varangians, calling on Óláfr for help, promise a church for the saint; on the other hand Snorri does not mention (as 325 does, though not *Hom/Leg*) that the heathen king is baptised, nor (as the other sources do) that the church was actually built.

Much the same pattern of similarity emerges from a comparison of *Hsona* 25 with other versions of the miracle of the English priest Ríkarðr who was unjustly mutilated, except that in places the *Hkr* text quite closely resembles *Hom/Leg*. *Hkr* and 325 again give a number of factual details which are not in *Hom/Leg* (discussed on p. 10), and there is slightly more dramatic tension in Óláfr's dream appearance, for he does not declare his identity until he has healed Ríkarðr. The *Hkr* version of the dialogue between Ríkarðr and Óláfr is longer than any other, and indeed the entire miracle is much fuller. The most striking amplification is in the portrayal of Ríkarðr's mutilation, which includes various grim but naturalistic details and which takes up one third of the *Hkr* text compared with one tenth in *Hom* (325 is probably incomplete). For instance, having cut out the priest's tongue and finished their other dire work the tormentors are ready to abandon him and send a man to the neighbouring village to report that the injured priest is there. It is as they await his return (in *Hkr* but not 325; *Hom/Leg* lack the scene entirely) that it occurs to them that the priest might regain his speech, so that they cut out the remains of the tongue. The putting out of the priest's eyes is equally well dramatised, and this increase in the

calculated barbarity of the tale would fit with the idea suggested on p.16 that the miracles have a distinct moral role. It is also noteworthy that the preceding miracle in *Hkr*, the healing of Hallðórr (*Msona* 24), contains another tongue-cutting episode, which is slightly more gruesome in *Hkr* than elsewhere.

Others of Snorri's miracle accounts illustrate the same kind of tendencies: more factual and graphic detail, more dramatisation of central episodes, but less moral evaluation and abstract piety than in other sources. Thus we see the blind beggar in *Ólhelg* 236 crawling into the hut in which, unknown to him, Óláfr's body lies, pushing back his hat as it falls over his face, and so touching his eyes with fingers moistened with the saint's blood. In *Msona* 30 we hear the very plausible circumstance that the accused Kolbeinn claimed that he had taken food from the queen's plate because the cook said he could, but that the cook did not dare give witness before her.

The first four miracles in the Table (p. 2), which appear in Snorri's *Ólhelg* (*Hkr* and *Sep*) and are paralleled chiefly in *Leg*, are of rather a different kind to the posthumous miracles, being closely integrated with the saga accounts of the life and death of Óláfr and even in *Leg* not having a strongly clerical ring. Nevertheless, they provide further opportunity for defining, by comparison, the nature of Snorri's miracle accounts.

*Ólhelg* 189, the healing of the boy with quinsy, contains some rather leisurely dialogue, and is a much more rounded episode than the corresponding *Leg* ch. 72, which is very brief and reads as though unnaturally curtailed. Again, Snorri's ch. 203 places the restoration of Þorgeirr's fields within the context of a dramatic lead-up to Stiklarstaðir and is infinitely more coherent than *Leg* ch. 74, a confused jumble in which the main thread is interrupted by an anecdote about Þormóðr Kolbrúnarskáld eating sausage on a Friday. The accounts of the group of miracles at Skerfssuð in *Ólhelg* 179 and *Leg* ch. 67, on the other hand, are closely similar, in fact they contain such a mass of verbatim agreements that they must derive from a common original, or two very closely related texts. The narrative is already lively and concrete in the *Leg* text, and Snorri evidently felt no need to modify it. The only striking difference of wording is Snorri's *sú yéttr* for the spirit tormented by Óláfr's prayers, where *Leg* has *sú hin illa yéttr*.

Three further sources for miracles narrated by Snorri, *Ágrip*, *Morkinskinna* (*Msk*) and *Fagrskinna* (*Fsk*) remain to be discussed. The miracles they contain are:

Victory at Blýrskógshéiðr (= *Mgöð* 27): *Ágrip* ch. 38, *Msk* pp. 41-45, *Fsk* ch. 42.

Haraldr's release from prison (= *HSig* 14): *Msk* pp. 80-83, *Fsk* ch. 43.

Varangians' victory (= *Hákherð* 21): *Msk* pp. 65-66.

(Since the extant *Msk* is defective at the beginning the first two miracles

are supplied from the Flateyjarbók text, and since it only begins at the reign of Magnús góði it could not have contained miracles corresponding with those in Snorri's Ólhelg.)

Thus, the miracles which are linked to historically vital persons and events have a traditional place in the konungasögur which none of Óláfr's other posthumous miracles have. Snorri knew Msk and Fsk, and his tellings of these miracles have points of contact with them in both content and wording, being closer in wording to Fsk than Msk (the summary Ágrip is not really comparable). In Haraldr's release from prison, for instance, Haraldr is accompanied in all three versions by Úlfr stallari and Hallóorr Snorrason; the lady who rescues him (a widow in Msk and Fsk but not Hkr) has two manservants with her; and the prison is furnished with a turn hár ok opinn ofan (turn einn oc openn ofan, Fsk). At the battle of Hlýrskógsheiðr the bell Glöð sounds miraculously and Magnús góði slaughters the Wends sem þúfé. The case of the Varangians' victory is rather different, for the miracle was preserved in legendary sources as well as in Msk, and it seems that Snorri hardly used the Msk account at all. The context and details are radically different in the two accounts. In Msk the battle is set almost a century before it actually took place, and Haraldr Sigurðarson, under his alias of Norðbrikt, is claimed to be leader of the Varangians there. Even the detail that the heathens used wagons on the battlefield, common to Snorri and Msk but not to the other prose versions, need not point to Snorri's use of Msk here because both accounts of the wagons (which differ in detail) could be developed from the hint in Geisli v. 56, vagna borg. Certainly Snorri was not tempted to take over the sillier features of this miracle story in Msk. There, after the battle, the Byzantine Emperor, begrudging S. Olaf the church which the Varangians promised him in return for victory, cuts off the supply of firewood for the dedication feast and has the tongue of the church bell removed, but the Varangians use walnuts, hides and bits of ship's wreckage instead of firewood, and S. Olaf restores the tongue of the bell (pp. 65-66). In the same way, Snorri's account of Hlýrskógsheiðr lacks the prelude of the Msk account, in which Óláfr makes a mysterious appearance at the court of his son-in-law Ótta heretogi of Saxony, and helps his daughter Úlfhildr to heal Ótta so that he can come to Magnús góði's aid (Msk pp. 41-42), and his narrative of Haraldr's escape from prison lacks the terrible venomous snake of the Msk account, as well as some rather pointless dialogue. Snorri's taste, here as generally, is more akin to that of the Fsk author, favouring narratives which are coherent and reasonably plausible.

So far the comparison of Snorri's miracle accounts with earlier ones has focussed mainly on details of content, but now some attention to style is necessary. By and large content and style go together: HSig 56 (about an impious Danish count blinded and bread turned to stone), contains no extra detail in Hkr compared with Hom/Leg, and departs little from the wording

preserved there, retaining their clerical ring. However much the style of Hkr as a whole may vary according to source, subject matter or authorial whim, there can be few stylistic jolts so violent as the one which assaults the reader at the beginning of HSig 56:

Greifi einn var í Danmörku, illr ok ofundfullr. Hann átti ambátt eina norroena, aetzkaða ór Froendalögum. Hon dýrkaði inn helga Óláf konung ok trúði fastliga hans heilagleik. En sá greifi, er áðan gat ek, tortryggði allt þat, er honum var frá sagt þess helga manns jartegnum, kvað ekki vera nema kvitt ok pata einn, gerði sér at gabbi 5 ok gamni lof ok dýrð þá, er landsfólk allt veitti þeim góða konungi. En nú kom at þeim hátíðardegi, er sá mildi konungr lét líf sitt á ok allir Norðmenn heldu. Þá vildi sá inn övitri greifi ekki heilagt halda, ok bauð hann ambátt sinni, at hon skyldi baka ok elda ofn til brauðs á þeim degi ... 10

The features, here and in other Hkr miracle accounts, which might impress one as being uncharacteristic of Snorri are (i) doublets (synonymous or near-synonymous pairs joined by ok) such as gabbi ok gamni, lof ok dýrð (5-6); (ii) attributive epithets denoting abstract (moral or emotional) qualities, as in þess helga manns (4) or þeim góða konungi (6); (iii) use of the demonstrative articles sá, þessi and their inflected forms, as in the phrases already cited under (ii). (Features (ii) and (iii) frequently, though by no means always, coincide.) There are other kinds of emotive and evaluative devices in the Hkr miracle accounts but these three are probably the most frequently occurring and the most useful to investigate, and for convenience they will be referred to as "miracle features" in the following. In order to discover to what extent the style of the miracles in Hkr differs from other parts of the work, I have examined the occurrence of the "miracle features" in the fifteen accounts of Óláfr's posthumous miracles in Hkr III and in a control text of the same length made up from HSig 6-10, Mberf 12-20 and Hsona 11-17, which were chosen at random. There is not space here to give the details of the method or the results but briefly my findings are as follows. Doublets are twice as frequent in the miracle texts as in the control, abstract attributive epithets nearly three times as frequent, and demonstrative articles nearly twice as frequent. The results for the three sections of the control were closely similar, while by contrast the individual miracle accounts in Hkr vary greatly as to the frequency of the features. In HSig 57 and Ólkyrr 7 there are none (according to the rather strict definitions I adopted), whilst in HSig 56, on the other hand, there is a spectacularly high frequency of almost one "miracle feature" per line. Hsona 24 and Mberf 21 also contain a "miracle feature" in more than 75% of lines.

Thus the impression that the style of some of the miracle narratives differs markedly from the Hkr "norm" is borne out by investigation. The next step is to verify the other obvious hypothesis: that the stylistic oddity is a result of fairly mechanical copying of a source. This again proves

substantially true. In general, the Hkr miracles which also occur in Hom/Leg are rather rich in "miracle features", except for Hsona 25 and Hákherð 21 in which the Hkr account is very different. Taking the passage from HSig 56 again as the (extreme) example and comparing it with the corresponding Hom text, the similarities are very striking:

Nu var enn í Danmörku greifi nokkurr, illr ok þfundfullr, ok hvárki hraeddisk hann guð né menn. Hann átti ambátt norroena, aetzkaða ok foedda í Þroendalögum, ok dýrkaði hon ok trúði fastliga á þeim helga Óláf konung. En sá guðs óvinr er áðan gat ek tortryggði allt þat er honum var sagt frá þess helga manns jarategnum, kvað þat 5 ekki vera nema kvitt ok þata einn, gerði sér at gabbi ok at ganni lof ok dýrð þá, er landfólk allt veitti þeim háleita konungi. Nú kom at þeim helga degi, er sá mildi konungr lét líff sitt á ok allir kristnir menn dýrka. Þá vildi sá hinn óvitri greifi því síðr helgi þá halda með þorum mǫnnum, heldr bauð hann ambátt sinni þeirri þroensku fyrir 10 þfundarsakar er hann hafði við þann hinn helga mann at hon skyldi fara ok elda ofn til brauðs ok baka þegar á þeim degi. . .

(p. 115, normalised for ease of comparison).

However, a glance at the two reveals that the moral blackening of the Danish count is slightly less insistent in Hkr than in Hom. For sá guðs óvinr in Hom (4) Hkr (3) has the neutral sá greifi; and the damning phrases ok ... menn (1-2) and fyrir þfundarsakar ... mann (10-11) are lacking. One might also note Hkr's simple aetzkaða (2) for Hom's tautological aetzkaða ok foedda (3), and the detached Norðmenn heldu (8) for kristnir menn dýrka (8-9; on all these points the Leg text has the same reading as Hom). A similar pattern is evident in all the passages in which Hkr is close enough to Hom/Leg to be compared word-for-word: the Hom/Leg version is still more laden with doublets, epithets, demonstratives and other emotive devices.

Much more spectacular is the contrast between the Hom/Leg telling of the Varangians' victory and the Hkr one in Hákherð 21. As well as being much richer in factual and descriptive detail (as seen on p. 11 above), the Hkr account here is in quite a different stylistic world from theirs, with its sharp moral polarities (holy/heathen, good/evil, God's saint/ God's foe) and heavy emotionalism (in phrases like suttum ok naouðum "sickness and distress", með trv ok með taorum "with trust and with tears", or Ó goðer menn fagnar iartæinir mego þér nu haeyra "O good people, now you shall hear a beautiful miracle"). When the "miracle features" are examined in the accounts of this miracle, Hom is found to contain 20 attributive epithets, Leg 19 and the Hkr account (which is roughly the same length) 7. There are 11 demonstrative articles in Hom, 10 in Leg and 3 in Hkr, and 5 doublets in Hom and Leg against 3 in Hkr. 325 contains nothing but one attributive epithet.

To conclude the comparison of Snorri's miracle accounts with their counterparts, some of them are clearly quite close copyings from a legendary



exemplar, although even then they do not quite attain to the extremes of Leg and Hom. In others there are quite substantial changes, especially the addition of factual and graphic detail and scraps of dialogue, and the reduction of abstract phrases, which are probably of Snorri's own doing. It would therefore not be quite fair to conclude, with Sigurður Nordal, that Snorri set little value on the miracles (sýnir á einkennilegan hátt, hveru litlar mætur hann hafði á jarsteinunum), and for that reason deputed his amanuensis to copy them out instead of clothing them in his own style (1920, 157). Insofar as this is true (and, as seen above, it is only partly so), the reason need not be Snorri's lack of interest in the Óláfr miracles, and the following pages contain some evidence which might suggest the contrary.

The existence of Snorri's Ólhelg both as a separate saga and a part of a cycle provides an interesting example of an author acting as redactor for his own work, and the present section is devoted to the differences between the miracle accounts in Sep and Hkr. At the outset it should be said that the differences are not great. One miracle is added in Hkr: Haraldr Sigurðarson's release from prison in Byzantium (HSig 14). A more substantial change was Snorri's decision to distribute the posthumous miracles, often in pairs, throughout the reigns of Óláfr's successors in Hkr, rather than offering them in a cluster at the end of his own saga, or even omitting them altogether. Some of them definitely belong to later reigns, but others are too vague to belong anywhere in time, and Snorri may have had other reasons than chronological propriety for scattering them throughout Hkr III in this way. Whatever his intention, their effect is to suggest Óláfr's continuing presence and to provide a yardstick of justice and mercy against which the chaos and brutality of Norway in the 12th century can be measured. Snorri seems here to be perpetuating, in his own way, the well-established idea that Óláfr lived on and ruled on which is implicit in the verses of such skalds as Þórarinn loftunga (above, p. 4) or Arnórr jarlaskáld, who refers to Magnús góði's victory at Hlýrskógsheiðr as given by God (Magnússdrápa 10) and Óláfr (Hrynhenda 13, where sigr grams ens dígra probably refers to the miracle). The idea is most famously embodied in the phrase rex perpetuus Norvegiae in Historia Norvegiae, p. 109.

The reigns within which Óláfr's posthumous miracles are placed are much the same in Hkr as in Sep. This is true of the miracles in Móðr 27, Ólkyrr 6 and 7, Mberf 21 and 22, Msona 30 and 31 (which are in reverse order in Sep and Hkr), and Hsona 24 and 25. On the other hand, there are differences. Four miracles appear in Sep chs. 266-269 within the section on Magnús góði's reign, but in Hkr within later sagas, as HSig 54-55, Hákherð 21, HSig 56 and HSig 57 respectively. The most striking change of ordering is the removal of the two miracles involving the Byzantine Emperor Kirjalax, the finding of Óláfr helgi's sword and the victory at Pétínaveilir, from their positions in Sep (ch. 246, before Magnús góði's return to Norway, and ch. 267, within

Magnús' lifetime) to the reign of Hákon herðibreiðr, one-and-a-quarter centuries later. Both miracles are covered in Geisli, from 1152/3, whereas Hákon did not begin his reign until 1157, so that the miracles are undoubtedly out of their rightful chronological place in Hkr, and presumably known to be so by Snorri. (The battle probably took place in 1122, in the reign of John II Comnenos, and the finding of the sword in the reign of his father Alexios I: see Blöndal/Benediktz 1978, 148 and 205.)

Turning to the treatment of individual miracles in Hkr and Sep, the texts in the two works are for the most part close enough to be regarded as representatives of the same redaction, whose differences need reflect no more than scribal preference, e. g. þa/bar, segir/svarar, heill/alheill or ok/bvíat. From the rather limited MS record (see p. 3), it seems that the Hkr text (as represented by K) is based on a Sep text most like that in 2, but not identical with it, for there are many readings where Hkr disagrees with 2 but agrees with one or more of the other Sep MSS, usually from the 'C' class MSS (such as 325 V) since those are best represented at the end of the saga. The position thus matches that of the main body of Óláfs saga helga: the A-, B- and C-class MSS of Sep descend from a now lost archetype on which Hkr is based.

There is no reason to think that Snorri, incorporating the miracle accounts into Hkr, went back to his legendary sources. Very rarely is the Hkr text closer to Hom than that of Sep. The only points where the pattern of agreement might be more than accidental occur in Hsona 25 (Sep ch. 278), where Hkr and Hom have með sér heimamann sinn against Sep's heiman með sér mann sinn, and have towards the end of the miracle fengit ina beztu heilsu, which is lacking in the main Sep MSS, and these are probably to be explained as cases where the archetype of Sep from which Hkr derives was more faithful to the legendary source than the extant MSS.

Apart from necessary modifications to suit their new context, the miracles in Sep tend to be transferred unaltered into Hkr. There are only three in which the two texts diverge to any notable extent: Mgöð 27, HSig 54-55 and Ólkyri 6. The narrative of Magnús góði's victory against the heathen Wends at Hlýrskógsheiðr in Jutland is recognisably akin in Hkr (Mgöð 27) and Sep ch. 265. In both the miraculous support given to the outnumbered and dispirited Norwegians by means of Óláfr's dream-appearance to his son Magnús and the uncanny sound of the bells of Niðaróss on the battlefield is crucial. But in the fuller Hkr account the miraculous element is reinforced by further details. The night before the battle Magnús is at his prayers until near daybreak (ch. 26-27); after the battle he bids twelve gentle-handed men tend the wounded, picking them out by stroking their palms. It is not an act of healing by the king himself, but enough to supply a muted echo of his saintly father's powers, just as his prayers echo his father's piety. The episode ends in Hkr, but not Sep, with a comment that the miracle which Óláfr had performed became widely famed, and it was generally said that there was

no point fighting against Magnús when his father was by his side (vaeri honum svá nákvaemr, ch. 28).

In HSig 54 the beneficiary of the miracle, Guthormr, is introduced somewhat more elaborately in Hkr than in Sep, his intelligence and popularity being mentioned and more importantly his relationship with Haraldr Sigurðarson, as nephew and favoured counsellor. Once the story is under way, of how the Irish King Margaðr denies Guthormr his share of plunder, and how Óláfr helgi helps Guthormr defeat him in battle, the two accounts are virtually identical, so that in this case the miraculous element remains of equal weight in Hkr. The additions to Hkr simply help to integrate the tale with Haraldr's saga.

In Ólkyrr 6 the Hkr text is characterised by abbreviation rather than expansion. In this chapter, three miraculous healings are reported to have occurred on the anniversary of the dedication of Kristskirkja in Niðaróss. Sep ch. 271 but not Hkr adds, "oc at þeim degi er sa guðs dýrlingr enn helgi Ólafr konungr scilðiz við heim þenna oc for til eilifrar dýrðar. i þenna tíma haufðv þangat fluz .iii. siukir menn til hans helgu grafar oc hugðv ser til miscvnnar oc heilso"; and the following sentence, though present in both texts, differs in emphasis. Sep reads, "nv fecc einn af þeim syn sina a messoapninom er sionlauss com þangat", while Hkr reads, "þat var Óláfsvökuaptann, at blindr maðr fekk þar sýn sína" (Hkr). The Sep sentence contains the before-and-after contrast so characteristic of miracle accounts, and here, as in the previous quotation, Sep's text is very close to Leg whereas Hkr departs (Hom is defective at this point). Thus the changes in Ólkyrr 6 tend to reduce the element of pious and abstract verbiage in the account, and this matches the alterations in the other two miracle stories. The general tendency in the Hkr revision of the Sep miracles is away from the abstract (moral and emotional) and towards more concrete and detailed narration, in other words it continues the development already observable in Snorri's accounts as compared with Hom/Leg.

I conclude with some thoughts on the importance of the miracle accounts in Hkr. In the development of the konungasögur, Snorri's Hkr is often seen as standing at the zenith, offering the best blend of art and science, of literature and history, but it might seem at first glance that both art and science have lapsed in the accounts of the Óláfr miracles. Here are unverifiable wonders which interrupt the flow of historical events and which are in many cases highly derivative, whereas in general Snorri does not often take up, let alone seek out, opportunities to introduce miraculous or other supernatural material. His interest in purely human causation and his critical handling of sources are usually too strong for that, and they do colour his treatment of the miraculous to the extent that there is some selecting out of miracles and some rationalising. Nevertheless, the second glance given to the miracles in the above pages suggests that Snorri's

treatment of the miracles is not dismissory. The importance of Óláfr's cult in Norwegian history and the solidity of the tradition about his miracle-working made him, to Snorri, something of a special case, so that, unlike the compilers of *Msk* and *Fsk*, he has taken the trouble to record miracles which were already safely recorded for posterity, even adding one (*Ólkyrr* 7) to their number. He is indeed conservative in his treatment of miracle accounts from ecclesiastical sources, often leaving them in a style unlike anything else in *Hkr*, but even here there has been some modification of the sentimentally pious tone of the originals (as reprented by *Hom*), and in other miracles there is more direct speech and more factual and graphic description than in any other version. The fact that this is in tune with Snorri's usual treatment of sources, and that this tendency is continued, albeit modestly, in the adaptation of the miracles of *Sep* for inclusion in *Hkr*, suggests that it was Snorri rather than some intermediate redactor who produced these particular tellings of the stories. Finally, although some of his miracle accounts are apparently detachable from *Hkr* and indeed sometimes omitted by scribes, they do enhance the literary quality of the work, providing both variety and continuity. Within the saga of Óláfr helgi, Snorri makes discriminating use of miracles, letting them point the hero's development from kingship to sainthood, whilst in *Hkr* III they suggest Óláfr's continuing presence and embody an ideal of justice and healing against which the vicious and self-interested strife of later reigns, especially those of the twelfth century, can be seen in its true, dark colours. In my view, the evidence suggests that the miracles of Óláfr helgi were for Snorri an essential part of the saint-king's saga, and remain so for readers of *Heimskringla*.

#### REFERENCES AND ABBREVIATIONS

##### 1. Primary Literature

- Ágrip - *Ágrip af Noregs konunga sögum*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, Altnordische Saga-Bibliothek 18, Halle 1929.
- Fsk - *Fagrskinna*, ed. Finnur Jónsson, Samfund til Udgivelse af gammel Nordisk Litteratur XXX, Copenhagen 1902-3.
- Geisli - in *Den norsk-islandske Skjaldedigtning* ed. Finnur Jónsson, Copenhagen 1212, repr. 1967-73, vol. AI, Tekst efter håndskrifterne pp. 459-73 and BI, Rettet tekst, pp. 427-445.
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## 2. Abbreviations of sagas in Heinekringla

- |                                   |                                    |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Ólhelg - Óláfs saga helga         | Mberf - Magnúss saga berfoetts     |
| Mgðð - Magnúss saga ins góða      | Msona - Magnússsona saga           |
| HSig - Haralds saga Sigurðarsonar | Hsona - Haraldssona saga           |
| Ólkyrr - Óláfs saga kyrra         | Hákherð - Hákonar saga herðibreiðs |

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