

THE EARLY SWEDISH STATE IN THE LATE SOVIET AND POST-SOVIET  
WORKS OF RUSSIAN-SPEAKING HISTORIANS.

O PRIMEIRO ESTADO SUECO NAS OBRAS SOVIÉTICAS TARDIAS E  
PÓS-SOVIÉTICAS DE HISTORIADORES DE LÍNGUA RUSSA

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**Abstract:** The article considers the evolution of Russian-speaking Scandinavia studies in the post-Marxist period, as well as its current state. An extensive review of Russian-language articles is made, directly or indirectly related to the theme of the Swedish «early state». This kind of work, concerning only for Russian-language articles, was carried out for the first time. Key works that influence Russian-language scientific thought are highlighted. The article considers current trends, both partially characteristic of Russian-speaking historiography as a whole, and characteristic only of Scandinavian studies.

**Keywords:** historiography, Scandinavian studies, Russian-language historiography, early state.

**Resumo:** O artigo considera a evolução dos estudos de Escandinávia em língua russa no período pós-Marxista, bem como o seu estado atual. Uma extensa revisão de artigos em língua russa é feita, direta ou indiretamente relacionados ao tema do «Estado primordial» sueco. Esse tipo de trabalho, que diz respeito apenas a artigos em russo, foi realizado pela primeira vez. As principais obras que influenciam o pensamento científico do idioma russo são destacadas. O artigo considera as tendências atuais, ambas parcialmente características da historiografia de língua russa como um todo e comum apenas dos estudos escandinavos.

**Palavras-chave:** Historiografia, Estudos Escandinavos, Historiografia de linguagem russa, Estado primordial.

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The “early state” is a historiographical construct designed to indicate the intermediate position of early medieval Swedish society, which had both proto-state/state, and archaic features.

In recent years, a thematic gap has been clearly observed between European and post-Soviet historiography – often exploring the same topics from different perspectives, historians from different schools and countries do not take into account the research of colleagues on the same issue or take into account in a limited way. In addition, regionalism still dominates in Russian-speaking historical science, the history of early medieval Europe is considered as a set of regional histories, but not an integral history.

This article is intended to introduce into European scientific circulation the most important publications concerning the so-called “Early state” in Sweden, which came out either at the time of the transformation of the Soviet historical school, or already in the existence of a post-Soviet historical school. For researchers who are unaccustomed to the realities of Russian-language historiography, it may seem unusual to both the commitment of Russian-speaking historians to the Russian language as the main language of articles, and the absence of ISBN and ISSN that was common for early post-Soviet publications.

### **Trends, the transition from a Marxist approach**

The study of early Swedish history in the works of Russian-speaking historians is traditionally associated with several themes: the connections between medieval Scandinavia and Ancient Russia, the influence of Scandinavian settlers and merchants in Russia, and finally, the notorious "Norman question."

The choice of precisely these directions was determined by a number of factors directly related to the ideological atmosphere in the country. It was easier for a researcher studying topics related to Ancient Russia to evade rather unpredictable criticism (which could be both scientific and political), it was easier to access publications and it was easier to rely on the Marxist scientific method. Despite certain advantages, by the end of the existence of the USSR, a number of points in Marxist methodology were brought to the point of absurdity. So, the so-

called. The “principle of partisanship”, which required historians not to hide their socio-political views, was transformed into obligatory insertions of quotations from V.I. Lenin or the congresses of the CPSU.

It can be noted that although the collapse of the USSR led to an increase in scientific contacts, as well as a serious facilitation of the access of scholars of Scandinavian history to written sources and scientific literature, in general, there have been no significant shifts over the past 20 years in this matter. However, it is worth noting that some influence of the ideas of interdisciplinarity and the “history of everyday life” can be observed. Nonetheless, the first one, with some reservation, can also be influenced by the legacy of Soviet historiography – most of the Soviet Scandinavists were both high-class philologists and historians (Kan, Steblin-Kamensky, Rydzyevskaya).

In general, in some way the influence of Marxist scientific thought remains at a high level, despite a serious departure from external forms and dialectics. The science of the former Soviet Union was hardly affected by the “storm” of scientific discussions of the 70s and 80s (although the scientific literature penetrated beyond the Iron Curtain), in particular, the formation of post-positivist archeology in Sweden. The objects of study of post-Soviet medieval archeology due to the specifics of the funds distribution for the most part are burials and, less commonly, hillforts. In addition, most of the excavations are rescue excavations, i.e. unplanned and often carried out in a hurry.

Nevertheless, non-invasive methods for the study of monuments are developing; the interpenetration of scientific ideas and methods has expanded. But this specific issue requires a separate study and cannot be fully described in this paper.

Large-scale theoretical works, devoted directly to the political genesis of the Swedish state and published over the past 30 years, has not been identified by the author of this paper. Therefore, it is necessary to provide a brief and fairly detailed overview of the most important Russian-language works devoted to the early medieval history of Sweden and related to pre-state and early state history of Sweden in general.

## Sources

For the Russian school of Scandinavian studies, a rather strong philological training of historians is a classic feature. A direct consequence of this is a fairly large number of translations of sources from Old Norse into Russian.

The history of translations and the study of sources on early Scandinavian history continued throughout the existence of the Soviet Union and were not interrupted during the time of Perestroika and the collapse of the country. Thus, the school of translations and studies of Old Norse sources was not interrupted.

Due to the high volume of outgoing translations, this section will only list the most important ones.

In order to understand early Swedish history, Swedish regional laws are extremely important. However, they remained translated rather fragmentarily. On the one hand, to 2019 both Upplandslagen (Kovalevsky, 1971; as well as later editions, in particular 1989), and Västgötalagen (only the so-called "Senior Edition", translated by A. V. Fomenkova, published in the *Iz rannej istorii* <...> 1999) were translated and published.

On the other hand, sections of regional laws concerning the Church remain untranslated and their role remains poorly understood. Some fragments of Church laws were published in the *Хрестоматия* <...>, 1963 (English: "Reader on the History of the Middle Ages"). This situation is partly due to the fact that, unlike other historical codes of law, Scandinavian codes are practically not studied by ordinary students-historians, while PhD students by the beginning of the study have sufficient language preparation to read them "from the sheet" (that is, directly from the source, without translation).

In the situation regarding the translation of chronicles, a similar situation can be observed. Some chronicles were translated into Russian, but their number is quite limited. "Three Westrogothic chronicles" (chronicles from Older Västgötalagen manuscript, Codex B 59) were translated into Russian by S. D. Kovalevsky in 1989, "Gesta Hammaburgensis ecclesiae pontificum" – in 1999 (Rybakov, 1999) and 2012 (Dyakonov, 2012).

Translations and scientific commentaries of early Swedish sources not previously introduced into Russian historical science were also made by A.D. Scheglov. In the book "Sweden and the Swedes in Medieval sources", Vita Angsarii, Sancta Birgitta, royal sections of Swedish regional laws and other translated into Russian sources up to the 16th century were published. (Shcheglov etc., 2007). This array of sources is the largest in recent years in terms of the number of translations published at one time from Old Norse and Old Swedish. As a result, Shcheglov's book is one of the "reference books" for Russian researchers.

Translations of some Swedish laws and chronicles from Old Swedish into Russian with reconciliation from Schluter, Holmback and Wessen were performed by the group of translators under the guidance of A.A. Svanidze in 1999 (*Iz rannej istorii shvedskogo <...>*, 1999). The peculiarity of these translations is the "double" translation, in which a verification is made of both previously performed translations into modern Swedish, and the actual translation into Russian.

Indirectly, in the context of the historical works of Olaus Petri, early medieval Swedish sources are described in the work of A.D. Shcheglov "Reformation in Sweden" (Shcheglov , 2017). This work provides a fairly complete overview of the monuments of law, their structure, the processes of lawmaking, as well as the mutual influence of some monuments of lawmaking on each other.

Extensive study of E.A. Melnikova, dedicated to runic inscriptions, was released in 2011. The actual systematization of runic works is given, recent finds that were previously not practically put into scientific use are examined. In fact, this work seems to be a kind of *opus magnum* of a historian who began work in the Soviet Union. This work is one of the basic works with which Russian Scandinavia studies historians begin their scientific activities. (Melnikova, 2011).

The early history of the Swedish Church can be called quite studied in the works of V.V. Rybakov. In the course of work on the description and reconstruction of the church ceremonies of the Swedish Church, he translated and published a number of church sources (Rybakov, 2000).

The historiographical review of the medieval “roots” of Gothicism, the development of ideas and the basic theories of Swedish Gothicists was produced by A. Tolstikov in his article (Tolstikov, 2008 p. 59–76). This article is one of the few historiographical studies in Russian devoted to Swedish Gothicism.

### **Historical works on the topic of the early state in Sweden**

Despite some lack of work, historical works on the topic of the early state cover the entire body of early Swedish history: from pre-state history to the history of Swedish laws and royalty. According to a similar scheme (from more general to more specific topics) below, a description of the most important, in my opinion, scientific works will be given.

The pre-state history of ancient Sweden is represented mainly by the works of A.A. Khlevov. A.A. Khlevov in a number of works explores the pre-state and early state history of Scandinavia. In particular, a few editions held his monograph “Harbingers of the Vikings. Northern Europe in the I–VIII centuries” (Khlevov, 2015). In this work the historian substantiates the need for the introduction of the so-called “Civilizations of the northern seas” (by analogy with the term proposed by G. Lebedev “Circumbaltic civilization”), and also builds up a fairly complete picture not so much of the historical development of pagan Scandinavian society as the development of cultural and social.

Nevertheless, the book is distinguished by an elaborate review of pre-state Scandinavia, both historically and culturally. The prerequisites for a surge in the intensity of Norman expansion are considered; a brief but very meaningful overview of Northern paganism and the rites associated with it is given.

In the article “The Beginning of the Viking Age – on the Wisdom of the Formulation” Khlevov doubts the validity of linking the Viking era (as a special historical period) to the beginning of the armed Scandinavian expansion to the Western Europe. This approach to the Age of Vikings is still dominant in Russian-language historical literature, and the raid on Lindisfarne traditionally marked as the beginning of the era.

At the same time, the author pointed out numerous characteristic changes in Scandinavian society at the turn of the 6th – 9th centuries and peculiar regions that were “canned” in the development (such as Borg on the Lofotens, "country" of Inglings). In his opinion, these moments prevent at the moment from unambiguously highlighting the beginning of the Viking era. In addition, he notes the complete asynchronous development of the Scandinavian region and the impossibility of applying only one clear "template" of development to the entire region, whether it Iceland, the regions of Sweden or Norway. Khlevov also adheres to the point of view that the modern dating of the lower boundary of the “Viking era” is a historiographical construct that relies primarily on changes in archaeological cultures. However, he does not disclose his opinion on the change of archaeological cultures in ancient Scandinavia (Khlevov, 2018)

Another curious paper on the pre-state history of Scandinavia, written by E.N. Shumilov, was published in the compendium following the results of the 2014 *Skandinaovskiye Chteniya* (Scandinavian Readings) international conference. It is also devoted to an attempt to localize the territory of Great Sweden (semi-mythical place, known from Snorri Sturlson’s *Heimskringla*), using medieval sources and materials. Using as arguments fragments from medieval Arabic works, *Annales Bertiniani* and Russian annals, the author localizes Great Sweden’s possible position in the upper reaches of the Seversky Donets River.

At the same time, he puts forward an assumption, according to which “Great Sweden” was a proto-state entity, whose population consisted mainly of Slavs, but its elite layer consisted of “Rus”, i.e. Scandinavians. According to Shumilov, this education can be reliably correlated with the so-called "Russian Khaganate", a hypothetical state entity that existed on the territory of the future Ancient Russia in the VIII–IX centuries. (Shumilov, 2016, p. 42 – 47).

The process of political genesis in Scandinavia (in the context of the similarity of the process with that in Russia) was described in a 1985 article by the authorship of I.P. Shaskolsky. In it, the author considers proved the similarity of the development of state features between Russia and the Scandinavian states, with a reservation on a certain temporary gap. (Shaskolsky 1986, p. 95–99).



E.A. Melnikova also gave her characterization of early state formations in Scandinavia. Paper, written in a collaboration with V.Ya. Petrukhin's, highlights the general features of proto-state formations of Russia and continental Scandinavia (Petrukhin, Melnikova 1986., p. 99–108). In addition, the term *husaby* (in which authors tend to see royal places of collecting tributes), as well as its roles in the urbanization of the Scandinavian states, are briefly examined. In general, the course of urbanization of both Russia and Scandinavia seems similar to the authors.

In a later article, Melnikova makes a brief review of previous domestic studies, attempts to typologize, and also compares the circumstances of the political genesis of the Scandinavian countries and Russia (Melnikova, 1995).

Indirectly, the topic is addressed in Grinin's extensive work devoted to political genesis and the formation of states as a whole (Grinin, 2007), as well as a similar article by Yu. E. Berezkin (Berezkin, 2014) and a narrower article of authorship S.V. Sannikov devoted to the political genesis of Germanic peoples (Sannikov, 2003, pp. 36–54).

The corresponding work of E.A. Melnikova, released in 1995 (Melnikova, 1995) is directly devoted to the problem of the typology of pre-state and early-state formations of Northern Europe.

I. B. Gubanov in his works offers a radical view of Old Norse political genesis, more precisely, its absence. According to his theory, Scandinavian society of the X–XII century had too many traditional and archaic features that impeded its further complicated development, therefore, could not give an impetus to the processes of politogenesis, characteristic of more developed communities. (Gubanov, 2016; Gubanov, 2018)

A fairly large array of works is devoted to private topics related to the laws of the early Swedish state. This sub-topic, being traditional for Russian researchers, received its maximum development precisely in the post-Soviet period.

A.V. Fomenkova's PhD dissertation is devoted to a more particular topic, property during the early Swedish statehood, based on the materials of the Götaland regional laws. The



author analyzes in detail the provisions of the Senior and Junior editions of the Westgotlag regarding property – land rights, types of ownership, property taxes, royal lands and so on. The publication includes a translation of the Senior Edition of Westgotlag. Extensive comments are given directly to the sources. (Fomenkova, 2004).

The Stadslag and its enforcement, as well as the peculiarities of justice, are characterized in an article by N. S. Kalashnikova. Despite the fact that the author primarily describes urban law, a brief overview of the situation from the 8th century is given. The process of urbanization and centralization of the Swedish state is briefly described, theories about the origin of legal monuments are given. (Kalashnikova, 2000, p. 79–98).

Another work of G.V. Glazyrina is dedicated to the display of royal power in Sweden and the list of Swedish rulers in Hervarar saga (Glazyrina, 2001, p. 66–71).

A number of T.N. Djackson works devoted to the description of the taxonomy of the Old Norse space (Dzhakson, 2001; 2013 p. 279–419). A similar, but rather more general study on the image of the world in Western Europe of the Middle Ages was conducted by E.A. Melnikova (Melnikova, 1998).

The work of F. Uspensky is devoted to the study of images and mappings of the Swedish kings in external sources (Uspenskij , 2005). This historian and philologist is primarily concerned with onomastics and anthroponomy. The above work is devoted to the possible interpretation of family ties and the status of Steinkel, the semi-legendary king of Sweden, who does not belong, however, to the Yngling dynasty. According to Uspensky, the term *mágr*, meaning indirect kinship, was quickly forgotten in Scandinavia, which led to the emergence of numerous options for Steinkel's status and kinship. Author offers an overview of the term, as well as several options for the possible relationship/kinship between Steinkel and Ynglings, without choosing, however, any one option. Despite some confusion in the narrative, the article is a vivid example of the study of the development and perception by different cultures over time of a social term (in this case *mágr*).

Russian studies of Ancient Scandinavia are characterized by an interest in economic history and elite economics. At the same time, the works consider economic systems as a whole rather than their any phenomenon in particular. This feature can be traced from Soviet times to modern times.

The most significant publication on the topic of the elite economy of Northern Europe came out in Soviet times. Such is the article by K. Slaskij “Economic relations of the Western Slavs with Scandinavia and other Baltic lands”, and being in line with the main studies of Soviet medievalists, it considers the relationship of the Slavic population with the Scandinavians (Slaskij, 1963).

This direction is partially touched upon in the monograph “Epokha Vikingov v Severnoy Yevrope” (“The Viking Age in Northern Europe”) by the aforementioned G. Lebedev. In this work, the author put forward the theory of the “Silver Bridge”, which was subsequently criticized as not affecting the mentality of Early Scandinavian society. According to Lebedev, Northern Europe, at the stage of pre-state formations, played the role of an intermediate transshipment point in which silver of eastern (Arab) origin was exchanged for goods from Western Europe (Lebedev, 1985). In the early 2000s, Lebedev expanded and supplemented the text; the resulting book (three times the original volume) was published under the title “The Viking Age in Northern Europe and Russia” after his death in 2003 (Lebedev, 2005).

The aforementioned Elena Melnikova also has an article among the published works on the economic characteristics of the Scandinavian countries. Her work, “Economic Features of the Emerging States of Scandinavia and Russia” is dedicated to highlighting common points in the development of the economies of the early states. The article describes both Russia and continental Scandinavia countries (Denmark, Norway and Sweden). The author notes that both in the case of Scandinavia and in the case of Russia, there were two separate systems of wealth accumulation – through the interaction of the military elite with the local population and through long-distance trade. The merger of both systems and complication of their fiscal system, according to Melnikova, marks the transition from complex chiefdoms to the early

state. The work is distinguished by the widespread use of both Russian-language and European historiography (Melnikova, 2017).

Speaking of historiographic studies indirectly related to the study of early Scandinavian history, one cannot help but get around the extensive historiography of the so-called "Varangian dispute" or "Norman question", one of the oldest debatable problems in the Russian-language history of the Middle Ages. Unfortunately, due to the politicization of theories about the statehood of early Slavic formations, this "dispute" often goes beyond the scope of scientific discussions, turning into the plane of polemics, populism and politics. It is impossible to fully consider the historiography of this issue within the framework of one article. One of the most comprehensive studies of numerous points of view on the "Norman question" is the monograph by Lev Klein "The dispute about the Varangians", published in 2009 (Klein, 2009).

### **Archaeology studies**

Works on archaeological subjects are widely represented, but mainly on the subjects of finds of Scandinavian origin in the territory of Russia. The generalizing works of a narrow nature include the work of G.L. Novikova dedicated to shield-shaped pendants and their distribution throughout Northern and Eastern Europe (Novikova, 1998).

Similar and earlier in time of writing is the work of V.Ya. Petrukhin on the elite burials of the Viking Age, touching upon the funeral rite both in Scandinavia and the "Scandinavian" funeral rite of North-West Russia (Petruhin, 1976)

The works devoted to the relations of Ancient Russia and Ancient Scandinavia include a number of works on the Scandinavian presence in Veliky Novgorod (Jansson, 1999) and Staraya Ladoga.

Closely connected with the latter theme was the figure of G.S. Lebedev (1943–2003). As an archaeologist, he dealt with the issues of the role of Staraya Ladoga and the Scandinavian presence in Northern Russia. However, his research interests also included general issues of

medieval Scandinavian history (Lebedev, 1983, pp. 44–53; Lebedev, 1985) . In addition, there are historiographical studies of his authorship. (Lebedev, 1992; Lebedev, 1996).

A comparison of Scandinavian paganism in Scandinavia and Eastern Europe according to archaeological data is devoted to the article by A.E. Musin (Musin, 2012). This article presents both a historiographical review of the problem, as well as a review of known data on Scandinavian paganism, as well as numerous amulet finds on the territory of Scandinavia and Ancient Russia – “Thor's hammers”, miniature idols, and so on. The work is distinguished by the widespread use of both Russian–language and Western historiography, as well as finds both in the territory of the former USSR and Western Europe.

The author, based on a comparison of the characters of the finds of pagan amulets in burials, concludes that the Scandinavian immigrants are archaic relative to the pagans of Scandinavia at the same time, as well as the gradual process of assimilation of the Scandinavians in the territory of North–West Russia, taking place against the background of contacts with various local (including Christian/Pagan Slavs and shamanistic) population.

An extensive body of research is dedicated to a bronze pagan idol of Scandinavian origin from the site of the Black Grave mound. In particular, a number of articles by S.P. Shchavelev (Shchavelev, 2002) and T.A. Pushkina (Pushkina, 1984) belong to this array. An equally “classic” research topic is artifacts of Scandinavian origin from the Gnezdovo mounds. Being one of the first studied complexes of Scandinavian origin, the mounds in Gnezdovo are a favorite object for research by Russian archaeologists (Pushkina,1981 Pushkina, 1990 Novikova,1991)

In addition, there are separate publications on individual finds from the excavation. Such, for example, is the publication of S.P. Taranenko and V.G. Ivakin, dedicated to the "hammer of Thor", found on the right bank of the Dnieper in the Kanevsky district of Cherkasy region of Ukraine (Taranenko, Ivakin, 2008)

### **Key areas for studying early Swedish history in Russia and the CIS**

Thus, it is clear from the examples above that, despite some exceptions, most of the historical work on early medieval Scandinavia as a whole fits into a limited number of the following areas.

*- General works*

This category includes works that affect the history of Scandinavia of the Viking Age. The beginning was laid back in the 60s, the publication of works continues to this day. Like similar Western publications, they are distinguished by a very wide range of issues addressed, as well as an indirect touch on the history of Swedish political genesis.

At the same time, historically most of the Russian-language works on the history of Scandinavia were prepared and are being prepared by Scandinavian specialists. Therefore, they all have a powerful source study and historiographic basis, and are extremely useful for getting acquainted with the topic.

*- The study of relations between Scandinavia and Russia*

Traditionally strong direction, both in Russian-language Nordic and Russian studies. Its development, which stalled in the 1930s for socio-political reasons, despite all the contradictions and the political climate, continued throughout the 1970s and 1980s. The studies rely on both written sources and research on archaeological sites, attributed as Old Norse in origin.

*- Runic studies*

The study of runic inscriptions remains in demand for the same reasons as in Sweden. Despite the fact that only three runic stones were found on the territory of the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation, the number of finds with all sorts of "strokes and incisions" amounts to dozens, primarily in the northwestern territories. The large number of monuments, therefore, makes it natural to pay close attention to the study of runes and rune cutting. The main study, magnum opus of Russian-speaking runicism is a monograph by E.A. Melnikova's

“Scandinavian runic inscriptions” (Melnikova, 2001), which considers both fresh finds and new interpretations of classical objects.

*– Early Swedish history in the context of studying Swedish history*

Scientific work on the early history of Scandinavia, as you can understand, came out very little. In fact, the last work affecting the history of the Scandinavian countries in the global aspect remains Kan's work “History of the Scandinavian countries” (Kan, 1971). All other works as a whole processually continue with some differences the Soviet historiographical view of the issue, continuing to consider particular problems in isolation from global ones.

As for works devoted specifically to the Swedish “early state,” they practically do not exist at the beginning of 2020. A similar situation exists even simply regarding the study of the history of early Sweden. With the exception of a number of source studies devoted to early Swedish laws, as well as a short article by Grot L.P., whose scientific reputation does not allow us to consider this work seriously, there is a serious shortage of works on selected topics.

*– Translation and study of Old Norse texts*

Post-Soviet school of study of Old Norse texts dates back to Steblin-Kamensky. At the moment, the translations are presented by both academic (Melnikova, Rybakov, Shumilov, Glazyrina), and independent (Timofei Ermolaev and others) authors. The main publication on Scandinavian written sources – “Skandinavskaya filologiya” (“Scandinavian Philology”), publishing twice in a year. Of the trends, it is worth noting the unflagging interest in Icelandic sagas, as well as the growing interest in the continental sources according to the early medieval history of Scandinavia. The latter leads to a growing number of translations and articles devoted directly to sources.

*– Web technologies*

An important role in the accessibility of scientific knowledge and works in Russia is played by web resources. The “official” resources, the use of which is strongly encouraged by scientific organizations, include the RSCI (Russian Science Citation Index, [elibrary.ru](http://elibrary.ru) – a

bibliographic database of articles, collections and books published in Russia and the CIS, sometimes containing full texts), local university databases (for example, «Истина», Moscow State University). Among the amateur sites created by enthusiasts, can be highlighted two of them. “Ulfdalir” ([ulfdalir.ru](http://ulfdalir.ru)) and “Norroen Dýrð” ([norroen.info](http://norroen.info)) publish, after the approval of the copyright holders, both rare editions of the Soviet period and relevant publications and materials devoted to Nordic studies in the broad sense the words. The “Cyberleninka” website occupies an intermediate position ([cyberleninka.ru](http://cyberleninka.ru), the name of web resource is an allusion to both cyber technologies and the nickname of the Russian State Library – Leninka, i.e. “Leninskaya”, named after Lenin). Articles published there are provided directly by publishers under a Creative Commons Attribution (CC BY) license.

A separate role is played by social networks, often acting as a kind of author’s blog and a platform for discussion, both specialized (Academia.edu) and ordinary.

*– Conferences as a way of scientific communication*

An important role in scientific communication with the current concentration of scientific thought in the main cities of the post-Soviet space (primarily Moscow and St. Petersburg) is played by scientific events. As a rule, they have the traditional format of the conference, much less often – seminars, almost never – seasonal workshops and schools. In conference conditions, specialists, both young and old, can communicate on the topic of modern scientific theories, meet reasoned criticism, and so on.

The modern scientific space of the post-Soviet countries has, as a rule, an ascending structure of scientific conferences, which ensures the participation of researchers from high school to PhD. An important feature is the presence in the organizing committee of existing university researchers and teachers, directing the theory of novice researchers in a constructive direction.

Student conferences specializing in Scandinavian studies are currently not available. Nevertheless, all-Russian and international conferences are regularly held, which include a section on the foreign history of the Middle Ages. These include, in particular, the annual



conference “Lomonosov”, “Ideal and Real in Antiquity and the Middle Ages” held on the basis of Moscow State University on the basis of Moscow State University, and on the basis of Moscow Pedagogical University, as well as various archaeological conferences (Ural-Volga Archeological student conference, "Problems of the archeology of Eastern Europe", etc.).

Of the academic conferences, the most important are the “Scandinavian readings”, which take place every two years, as well as indirectly related to Nordic studies “Readings in memory of the corresponding member of the USSR Academy of Sciences V.T. Pashuto”, held annually at the Institute of General History of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

Thus, on the one hand, there is an extensive body of research and an established scientific school. On the other hand, there is a certain lack of specialized publications on Scandinavia studies, as well as a lack of highly specialized conferences. The spread of scientific knowledge is also definitely hindered by the geographical centralization of major scientific schools around the “two capitals” – Moscow and St. Petersburg.

Nevertheless, over the past decade, new features of modern Russian-language Scandinavia studies have become noticeable – broad interdisciplinarity, the use of web technologies for the interaction of researchers, and the wide involvement of students in publishing. Thus, the appearance of works (undoubtedly future ones that have a look different from the views of Western historians) on the formation of the Swedish state is a matter of time.

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<sup>2</sup> Names are translated from Cyrillic to transliteration. The translation of Russian-language titles into English is given in square brackets.

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