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In what disguise do today's readers want to meet the *Eufemiavisor*? Normalized texts and the aims of textual philology.

You may safely view my talk as not on the same level as the other contributions to this conference. I cannot claim that its will serve as comic relief, because it won't be that funny. But at least it will be in a somewhat lighter vein.

My interest in normalized vs. unnormalized editions of Old Scandinavian texts started already in 1979. I then had taken my first course in Old Icelandic, starting like generations of students before me with Þórr's trip to Útgarðaloki. The text that met me looked like this:

OH 1

Later in the same semester I took the first course in Old Swedish. The texts looked quite a bit different even to my untrained eye:

OH 2

The only help offered the student studying this text was found in a few end notes of limited scope. Even though I was in fact studying earlier stages of my native language I found it more bewildering than Old Icelandic which, after a few initial adjustments, rolled on comfortably enough. In Old Swedish you never know if a vowel is long or not and there are orthographical conventions that make for misunderstanding, which I will soon give you an example of. And let's not talk about spelling. It confuses the reader to an extent that I think few realize themselves, and it tires the mind, to boot. When identifying an Old Icelandic word you simply look it up in any of the many convenient dictionaries with translations in a suitable language.

For Old Swedish you need to consult allt of three major dictionaries and any given word may be spelled in many different ways.

Of course, Old Icelandic in reality doesn't look at all what we've come to expect from the editions we use. The same passage I first read looks like this in a diplomatic edition of one of its manuscripts:

OH 3

There are many admirable editions like this one for Old Icelandic texts, useful for a number of purposes. But these are not the one utilized for the most part by Old Nórse scholars. When dealing with the *Eufemiavisor*, or Eufemia's lays as I will henceforth refer to them, the Old Swedish texts have traditionally been presented in a forbidding manner. The present standard edition of *Hærra Ivan*, the one by Erik Noreen in 1931, looks like this:

OH 4

This, of course, is an edition meant for scholars. But since there has been very little else available if you want the whole text it means that everyone interested in *Hærra Ivan* had to use the Noreen edition. The situation for scholars and laymen with an Old Icelandic inclination was and is vastly different. Even in the late 19th century they had access to editions of *Ívens saga* that presented the text in a pleasing and efficient manner, and with very copious footnotes providing immense help in understanding the contents and comparing them with the original in French:

OH 5

Why has there been so little done to make things easier for readers of Old Swedish? Is it because the texts are so much easier. I doubt it, even if in a review of my 1999 edition of *Hærra Ivan*, Arend Quak saw no need for its normalized text, since even his Dutch students had no problems with the diplomatic version. Well, I guess in that respect my work was futile, or perhaps only students in the Netherlands are that good.

In Sweden, university student have met Euphemia's lays in various shapes, but none too appealing in my view. I have already shown you one textbook presentation. In the one used on more advanced levels we find the following excerpt:

OH 6

The textbook was written by Erik Noreen, and this is the same text as the one in his edition, except that expanded abbreviations are not italicized. There are footnotes offering variant and some corrected readings, and there is a short commentary at the end of the book, offering a total of three clarifications for more that 250 lines of text but mostly dealing with manuscript questions of limited interest to the undergraduate student and never alluded to by any of my teachers.

The best thing offered was an eight-volume anthology of older literature. The very short excerpts from Hærra Ivan offered here are presented in a very slightly revised fashion, primarily using Modern Swedish *ä* and *ö*, and with translations where that was felt necessary. The commentary is exceedingly sparse and the orthography left virtually untouched:

OH 7

In fact, Old Swedish texts are as a rule NOT normalized, as many of you know well. But when I claimed in the introduction to my edition of Hærra Ivan that no longer Old Swedish text had been normalized prevoiusly, I was unwittingly lying. Already in 1878 an almost fully normalized version of the famous *Um styrilsi konunga ok høfþinga* was published by Robert Geete:

OH 8

I don't know how well it sold, but the fact remains that it could not have made too much of a favorable impression on the scholarly community, since it left little trace on subsequent editorial efforts. Granted, there have been some efforts to offer more easily digested versions. I have already mentioned my own contribution twice. A more recent work is the 2009 edition of Herzog Friedrich von der Normandie, by Florian Bambeck:

OH 9

If you are not aware of this book, I recommend it warmly. The text is diplomatic, to be sure, but edited afresh from the main manuscript and with a parallel and very close translation into Modern German. The commentary is full and very helpful.

Such is the situation today. If you turn you interest towards Old Swedish, and anyone dealing with Eufemia's lays must do just that, then you are more or less referred to using the

diplomatic editions. Whereas scolars with an ineterst in Old Icelandic have editions of all brands to choose from: facsimile, diplomatic, normalized, and modernized, as well as an abundance of translations. Although I have made no study, I would risk a guess that the majority of scholars quoting or referring to Old Icelandic texts do so from the heavily normalized editions in Íslenzk fornrit, and no one thinks the worse of them if they do.

My question is simple: Why is it accepted to use normalized editions of Old Icelandic texts but not of Old Swedish? I think one answer may be found in the very context we are today. Out of the 23 other talks at this conference only 2 seem to be concerned with the linguistics or manuscript materiality, the rest deal with contents rather than outer form. I am not complaining about this, mind you. But these proportions are probably typical of the interest for the Eufemiavisor in modern times. And, the question is: are scholars with this interest best served by the editions of the Eufemiavisor as they are offered today?

One could argue that if it ain't broke don't fix it, that is: it's worked so far. But I would argue that it hasn't, not really. There are two problems, one small one larger. The first problem concerns the fact that scholars unused to Old Swedish, and particularly to editions of Old Swedish texts, will commit mistakes. I will give but one example. In an article some years ago a respected Old Norse scholar quoted Hærra Ivan lines 3457-58 of the Noreen edition, as well as translated them:

OH 10

Tha halp gudh herra Iwan miok
at thet hug ey radhelika tok

Then God greatly helped Sir Ivan,

so that his mind received divine counsel

The problem is that the translation shows a misunderstanding of the text:

OH 11

Then God helped Sir Ivan much,
so that the blow did not strike so badly; (KP: as it was intended) Hd 2 > rædhelika

What we have here is a confusion of two words:

OH 12

Old Swedish hug *n. 'cut, blow stroke'*
Modern Swedish hugg

Old Swedish hugher *m. 'soul, mind'*
Modern Swedish håg

This mistake would not have been committed if we had allowed ourselves to publish normalized texts where we disregarded the Old Swedish spelling rule that long consonants were not marked orthographically at the end of words, that is not doubled. There are exceptions to this rule, after all, quite a few of them even in the main manuscript of Hærra Ivan itself, as a matter of fact. We could easily standardize these uncommon features, just as the hooked *o, o caudata,* is used in almost all normalized Old Icelandic text, even though it is rare or non-existent in many manuscripts.

We could then present a diplomatic edition like Noreen's:

OH 13

J nampn fadhers oc sons oc thæs hælgha andha
wil iak taka mik till handa
forna saghu fram at føra
them til skemptan ther a wilæ høra

Or, as I did in my edition, texts normalized into classical Old Swedish, on the grounds that *Hærra Ivan*, after all, is written in 1303:

OH 14

I nampn faþers ok sons ok þæs hælgha anda
vil iak taka mik til handa
forna saghu fram at føra
þem til skæmptan þær a viliæ høra

Or we could choose late Old Swedish on the grounds that all of the extant manuscripts date from that period and that is how it has come down to us:

OH 15

I namn fadhers ok sons ok dess hælgha anda
vil iak taka mik til handa
forna saghu fram at fø̄ra
dem til skæmptan dær ā vilia hø̄ra

Or, finally, we could present an edition as adapted as medievally possible to today's Modern Swedish reader:

OH 16

I namn faders och sons och den helge andes
vill jag taga mig till handa
forna saga fram att föra
dem till skämtan där paa vilja höra

I would like to pint out that the orthography of this last example is genuinly Old Swedish, even though it would be quite late at that and not actually ever present in any one manuscript. But I would ask you, what have we lost in this our last example?

We lose some rhymes, but as everyone knows who has read Eufemia's lays, many of them are problematic to begin with. Most complaints would probably come from the philologist. They would say that we lose important information about orthography and phonology and even

morphology if my most radical method would be adopted. My answer would be firstly that even the diplomatic editions traditionally produced obscure much information, not least such of interest to more material and descriptive aspects of modern philology. Secondly, I would argue that since we alreasy have diplomatic editions, why not produce versions suitable for other purposes next time?

This has been an very brief exposé into the history of normalization of Old Swedish texts, or rather the lack thereof. My only contention is that different editorial practices serve different approaches and that we should encourage this diversity rather than denounce it. Different strokes for different folks, as it were.

"Every encoding is another decoding", says Prof. Morris Zapp in David Lodge's *Small World* (1984). When texts make their way from the manuscripts to editions of various kinds, they are simultaneously changed in many ways. Both traditional philology and, perhaps even more so, so-called New Philology, aim at minimizing the "betrayal" of the medieval text when published. However, is a smaller lie in this context better than a bigger? If we do change the medium, might we not as well change the format into whatever best suits our purposes, if this still represents "the text" in many important aspects?

The *Eufemiavisor* have never been very popular in modern times, even though there is now a revival in interest of sorts. I presented a normalized version of *Hærra Ivan* in 1999. As far as I know, it attracted little attention and only one review, by Arend Quak, who was quite critical of the attempt. Yet I continue to believe that normalized Old Swedish texts are an important means of making the literature available to more users, especially literary historians. I will discuss aims for various kinds of normalization in my paper.