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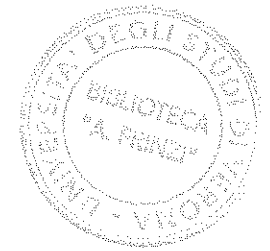
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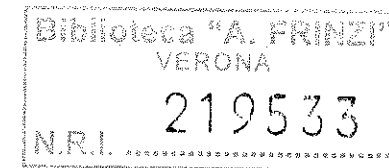


STUDIES IN THE
TRANSMISSION AND RECEPTION
OF OLD NORSE LITERATURE

The Hyperborean Muse in European Culture

Edited by

Judy Quinn and Adele Cipolla



BREPOLS

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EDITING AND TRANSLATING *SNORRA EDDA*: SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE EDITORIAL HISTORY OF SNORRI'S *ARS POETICA*

Adele Cipolla

The Eddas through Italian Eyes

The *Edda* [...] is perhaps the only one of these compositions which deserves the attention of southern scholars: how various, however, are the opinions of the most reputed writers on it! Resen published the *Edda* in Icelandic, Latin, and Danish. Johannes Göransson translated it into Swedish, and Mallet likewise into French [...]: Ihre, Schimmelmann and many others have dealt with the same matter [...]. Nevertheless, scholars' opinions regarding the author, the subject, and all the circumstances surrounding the *Edda* are still at odds. Many affirm that Sæmundr Sigfusson, who died in 1133, composed a large work entitled *Edda* [...] as a treasury of human knowledge, and that, at the beginning of the next century, it was abridged by Snorri Sturluson. [...] But Ihre, who examined the famous old manuscript in the University Library of Uppsala with the most scrupulous care, affirms that it is nothing but an introduction to Icelandic poetry [...]. So, in Ihre's opinion, the *Edda* consists of three parts: the first, which is called *Demisagas*, contains an extract of ancient mythology; the second, *Kenningar*, is merely a poetic treasury; the third, *Liodsgrienir*, which means 'sound distinction', treats Icelandic prosody. (Andrés 1785, 88–90).¹

¹ L'*Edda* [...] è forse l'unica di quelle composizioni, che possa meritare la curiosità degli eruditi meridionali: ma dell'*Edda* stesso quanto sono varie le opinioni de' più stimati scrittori? Il Resenio pubblicò l'*Edda* in islandese, in latino, e in danese. Giovanni Goeransson la tradusse altresì in svedese. Il Mallet l'ha parimente resa francese [...] l'Ihre, lo Schimmelmann, e altri

The text that this quotation is taken from, *Dell'origine, progresso e stato attuale d'ogni letteratura*, published in Parma between 1782 and 1799 by the Spanish Jesuit Juan Andrés, was a sophisticated attempt to encompass universal literary history. It was a highly regarded achievement in its time and ranks today as a milestone in the development of comparative studies.² The passage serves as a suitable introduction to my survey of the interplay between editorial activity and the general understanding of *Snorra Edda* from an Italian point of view, since, as far as we know, it is the oldest detailed and well-documented reference to the Old Norse tradition. In Italy up until that time, information about the hyperborean *terra incognita* had been restricted to the Scandinavian east, known in Counter-Reformation environments through the Paris edition of Saxo (1514) and the *historiae* of Johannes and Olaus Magnus, *Historia de omnibus Gothorum Sueonumque regibus* and *Historia de gentibus Septentrionalibus*, published in Rome in 1554 and 1555 (Santini 1999).

In the age of Gothicism, characters such as Ole Worm and Thomas Bartholin the Younger (both later well known in Italy)³ reflected upon the conceptual framework within which Old Norse sources should be understood. With the assistance of Icelandic collaborators (and particularly their linguistic skill in interpreting old manuscripts), they produced books consisting of multilingual

parecchi hanno trattata la stessa materia. [...] ma nondimeno troppo sono ancora discordi i sentimenti degli eruditi sull'autore, su la materia, e su tutte le circostanze di quello scritto. Vuolsi da molti che Socmondro Sigfuson, morto nel 1133, componesse un'opera voluminosa intitolata *Edda*, [...] ch'era come il tesoro di tutte le umane cognizioni, e che questa venisse poi nel principio del seguente secolo abbreviata da Snorre Sturleson. [...] Ma l'Ihre, il quale colla più scrupolosa diligenza ha esaminato il celebre antico codice dell'*Edda*, che si ritrova nella biblioteca dell'università d'Upsal, sostiene, che non è altro che una introduzione alla poesia islandese [...]. L'*Edda* dunque, secondo l'Ihre, consiste in tre parti; la prima chiamata *Demisagas*, contiene un estratto della mitologia degli antichi; la seconda *Kenningar* è puramente un erario poetico; e la terza *Liodsgrienir*, che vuole dire *distinzione de' suoni*, è una prosodia islandese.

² 'On the Origins, Advancement and Present State of Every Literature', in seven volumes (translated into Spanish at the commandment of King Carlos III in 1784–1806). Juan Andrés y Morell (Valencia 1740 – Rome 1817) moved to Ferrara and subsequently Mantua after the suppression of the Society of Jesus in 1767, where he was visited by contemporary 'celebrities' such as Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. His encyclopaedic compilation won him a strong bipartisan reputation from both the Bonaparte family and the Austrian emperor, and led to his appointment as official librarian in Pavia and Naples. A paper on Andrés's work was presented at the 15th International Saga Conference by Teodoro Manrique-Antón (2012).

³ In the introductory Notice to the libretto of Zeno-Pariati's *Ambieto* (1705), both are mentioned as authorities in the field of Scandinavian antiquity (see the paper by Rossi Corradini in this volume).

glossa to the medieval Icelandic corpus. This corpus was gradually rediscovered and spread from Iceland to Europe via Scandinavian scholarly networks: Worm's and Bartholin's achievements were deeply indebted to Arngrímur Jónsson and Árni Magnússon.⁴ After his death, Árni acquired Bartholin's Icelandic manuscripts which then became part of his own collection, though it was later partly burnt in the Copenhagen fire of 1728. In the same fire, almost all the copies of the first printed edition of *Snorra Edda* from 1665 also disappeared. Some of them had been bound with the text and translation of *Völuspá* and *Hávamál* (renamed *Mythologia Rhunica* and *Ethica Othini*, respectively; see Mats Malm's essay within this volume and the references there), which was the first time the *Edda* of Snorri Sturluson and what was later to become known as the Poetic *Edda* were linked in a printed volume.

A Stratigraphy of Contamination

Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, when Snorri Sturluson's *Edda* was first printed and read throughout Europe (thanks to editions and translations which overlapped within the same volumes), it continued to be copied, re-edited, and revised in its Icelandic homeland — and occasionally by Icelandic hands in the service of Danish and Swedish scholars (Clunies Ross and Lönnroth 1999; Már Jónsson 2010; see also Malm in this volume). The earliest edition, which was widely reprinted, was not based on any known medieval manuscripts, however, but on refashioned modern derivatives, drawn partly from older witnesses that were subsequently lost. What we call *Snorra Edda* is transmitted by a handful of medieval and dozens of modern manuscripts.⁵ At the earliest level of textual transmission, in the thirteenth and four-

⁴ Arngrímur had collaborated with Ole Worm from 1628, giving him the manuscript which was afterwards called Wormianus. In 1663, Árni became an assistant to the Royal Antiquarian Thomas Bartholin, helping him to prepare his *Antiquitates Danicae* (1689).

⁵ A full listing of manuscripts is provided in the online catalogue of the Library of Iceland: <handrit.is> [accessed 1 March 2016]. R = GkS 2367 4to (Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar í íslenskum fræðum), known as Codex Regius, c. 1300–50 (Wessén 1940); W = AM 242 fol. (Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling), known as Codex Wormianus, c. 1375 (Sigurður Nordal 1931); U = DG 11 (Uppsala, Delagardieska samlingen, Uppsala universitetsbibliotek), known as Codex Upsaliensis, c. 1300–25 (Grape et al. 1962); A = AM 748 I b 4to (Copenhagen, Den Arnamagnæanske Samling), c. 1300–25; B = AM 757 a 4to (Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar), c. 1400 (Wessén 1945); C = AM 748 II 4to (Reykjavík, Stofnun Árna Magnússonar), c. 1400 (Jón Helgason 1935–36).

teenth centuries,⁶ a shared poetic and poetological core was combined either with prose mythography⁷ or grammatical material.⁸ In the R, U, W, A, and B manuscripts, the two models merge, with only T entirely lacking any grammatical additions (Guðrún Nordal 2001, 41–72, 225). From the perspective of its medieval manuscript tradition, the authorial identity of the *Edda* fades: *Skáldskaparmál* continued to be updated to contemporary contexts right up until the recent past. Even some of the mythological narratives which were responsible for the work's initial fame and influence (the summary of the Völsung legend in R and T, for instance)⁹ are textually inconsistent.

In trying to outline the changing methods and attitudes of scholars (as well as those of a wider literary audience) toward manuscript witnesses and the critical reconstruction of *Snorra Edda*, I shall select only a small number of items from the primary bibliographical categories of editions and translations.¹⁰ In each manuscript and printed book, the *Edda* materials are arranged quite differently, weaving an inextricable patchwork of authorial and editorial threads. Analysis is further complicated by the prosimetric setting, which alternates narrative and theoretical prose-frames with verse quotations from poetic sources including Snorri's own verse. Over the course of time, attempts have been made to penetrate into the 'Snorrian core' through a kind of stratigraphic detection, and through multi-branched stemmata, relying on internal criteria (Boer 1924, 263; Finnur Jónsson 1931, xxxviii). In the oldest vellum manuscripts, U and A, the *Edda* is explicitly assigned to a well-known author.¹¹ In spite of this, through manuscripts and printed works, we possess nothing other than selec-

⁶ T = Utrecht, Universiteitsbibliotheek, Rijksuniversiteit te Utrecht, Traj 1374, Codex Trajectinus, c. 1595, has been included in this group as a supposed copy of a lost thirteenth-century manuscript (Faulkes 1985).

⁷ The *Prologue* and *Gylfaginning* are found in the four complete manuscripts R/T, U, and W, while a narrative on the wolf Fenrir is found in the fragments A and B.

⁸ The four *Grammatical Treatises* are found in W and U; the *pulur* in R/T, U, W; the so-called *Litla skálda* is preserved in A and B.

⁹ See *Skáldskaparmál* chs 39–42 (Faulkes 1998, 45–51).

¹⁰ For a full listing, see my online bibliography of *Snorra Edda* (snorri.humnet.unipi.it): *Edition/Translation, Edition, and Translation*.

¹¹ Besides the opening rubric of Codex Upsaliensis, Snorri's authorship is stated in the fragment A: 'Here [...] begin *Skáldskaparmál* and kennings, according to what in the past was in the poems of the chief-skalds and later Snorri made to be collected' ('Hér [...] upphefr *Skáldskaparmál* ok kenningar eptir því sem fyrirtfundit var í kvæðum höfuðskálda ok Snorri hefir síðan samanføera látir'; Sveinbjörn Egilsson, Jón Sigurðsson, Finnur Jónsson 1852, 427–28).

tive 'editions' of a textual complex, which is not reducible to the accomplishment of a unique author (Krömmelbein 1992). This level of contamination — of which Paul Maas (1957, 31) laments — is regularly the case in the transmission of medieval works, as countless other examples demonstrate. In the case of *Snorra Edda*, however, internal and external reasons make the editorial task a particularly difficult problem.

Textus Receptus I: *The Twofold Abridgement of the Early Modern Period*

Andrés's chapter on Old Norse literature (called *scalda*), from which the epigraph that heads this paper is drawn, appears within a broadly focused introduction to poetry and its features (*De la poesia in generale*). Displaying impressive erudition, the author considers ancient and more recent literary traditions from all over the world, beginning with Chinese, Hebrew, and Arabic. He exhibits a good acquaintance with the dominant critical attitudes towards *Snorra Edda* of his age. He mentions Ole Worm (*il Vormio*), Arni Magnússon (*Arnas Magneo*), Mallet, Troil, Ihre, Thunmann, Schlözer, and Schimmelmann — and their opposing theses on the two *Eddas*, and the allegedly ancient lore of the Northern peoples, which reflected contemporary ideological debates (Bödl 2000, 69–185; Williamson 2004, 98–112). Andrés argues against the divine Odinic origin of skaldic poetry, but concurs on its antiquity and its inclusion among authoritative ancient poetic traditions.

This southern scholar summarized the critical debate on *Snorra Edda*. Being himself a rationalist, bibliophile, and editor, he sided with the codicological party (represented by Ihre) against the mythologic-speculative one, thereby betraying a pragmatic attitude toward Old Norse poetry (Malm 1996, 29–32, 289–90), as well as the presumption of his belonging to a pre-eminent literary culture.¹² Since, in the general plan of his work, Andrés intends the analysis of skaldic poetry to demonstrate the southern provenance of final rhyme as a pillar of modern poetry, he pays most attention to stylistic features, giving a large amount of space to their minute examination. He therefore focuses primarily on *Skáldskaparmál*, a work which would nonetheless gradually become neglected in the ensuing years of scholarship on the *Edda*.

¹² In relation to the aesthetic value of Old Norse poetry he sarcastically remarks: 'Il Troil nondimeno dice, che non si possono leggere senza il più gran piacere il *Bjarkamal* [...] e varj altri di que' poemi. Goda egli pure questo sommo piacere, per me certo non glielo invidio' (Troil affirms that one cannot read the *Bjarkamal* [...] and many similar poems without experiencing quite profound pleasure. Let him enjoy this pleasure, I do not envy him at all!) (Andrés 1785, 94).

Andrés corroborates the shape of the *textus receptus* of *Snorra Edda* at this stage of its history: a collection of *Demisagas*, *Kenningar*, and *Liodsgrienir* (that is, the mythological narratives from *Gylfaginning* and *Skáldskaparmál*, kennings from the latter, and the studies on prosody from the *Second Grammatical Treatise*). This was in accord with the *editio princeps* as it had been corrected from the perspective of Swedish scholars (who were Andrés's main informants) and their 'own' version of the *Edda* preserved in the Codex Upsaliensis. The Danish and Latin translations published by Resen as *Edda Islandorum* had secured the work's widespread reputation outside Iceland, in Scandinavia and beyond.¹³ It was based on *Laufás-Edda* (1608–09), by the Icelandic priest Magnús Ólafsson (working on behalf of Arngrímur, Worm, and the Danish chancellor Christian Friis). At this point, manuscript activity was still very much alive. Magnús's rearrangement was based mainly on Codex Wormianus (when it was more complete than it is now)¹⁴ and probably on further lost manuscripts which seem likely to have agreed partly with W and partly with U, A, and B (Faulkes 1979a, 160–73). Magnús assembled the narrative prose sections from all over the text (displaying them in chapters called *Dæmisögur* or *Apologi*) and made up alphabetical lists of *heiti* and *kenningar* from *Skáldskaparmál* and the *pulur*, labelled according to their referents. The headings he had chosen for the different sections of the *Edda*, however, were not derived from W, since the title *Gylfaginning* is attested in U and in later paper manuscripts, *kenningar* in the fragments A and B and in T (Boer 1926, 91–92), while *Bragaræður*, *Hárslygi* (Hár's lying), and *dæmisögur* do not appear as titles in any extant medieval codex.¹⁵

Magnús's arrangement was very influential. More than a hundred copies of *Laufás-Edda* were written between the seventeenth and the twentieth centuries. It was used in a desultory way by Stephan Stephanus in the commentary of his *Notae uberiores* (1645) and was subsequently edited by Resen (Faulkes 1979a, 17–26). In this edition, the text is divided into two parts (called, in

¹³ Magnús gave the name *Edda Islandorum* to his own work, which received its current title of *Laufás-Edda* only in the Copenhagen edition of 1848 (Faulkes 1979a, 16). Magnús's text had been supplemented by his own Latin version and an anonymous Danish translation; the trilingual arrangement was by Stephanus (Faulkes 1977, 23–24).

¹⁴ On the genesis of this codex and its supposed lost intermediary, see Haugen's essay in this volume.

¹⁵ 'Partar eddu cru tveir. *Dæmisögur ok kenningar* | Firri partur þessara dæmisagna, kallast *Haarslygi* eða *Gylva ginning* [...] sa annar kallast *Braga redr*' (Faulkes 1979a, 189, 9–11; italics are mine).

Latin, *Mythologiae* and *Appellationes*). It is introduced by an *epistula* to the king,¹⁶ and followed by a *praefatio*, in which Resen states that the '*Edda* was twofold: the poetic one being older and genuine; the other younger and more popular'. The text contains seventy-eight *fabulae* or *dæmisögur*; its second part (*altera pars Eddae*) is a trilingual dictionary of kennings; the *Prologue* is published in its entirety (in the longer interpolated version of W) as the third of the three introductory chapters which precede the *Fabulae*.¹⁷

As for *Háttatal*, it was omitted from the earliest type of edition, even though Magnús Ólafsson took it into account, selecting a couple of its *kenningar* for his lists (Faulkes 1979a, 161). From the following century onwards, *Háttatal* came to enjoy an autonomous life as an edited literary piece. During his first diplomatic appointment in Copenhagen between 1779 and 1786, James Johnstone (aided by Thorkelin) produced a selection of eighteen stanzas from Snorri's eulogistic poem.¹⁸ As Johnstone's aim was to collect testimonies of Norwegian and Scottish history from the thirteenth century, he excerpted freely — just as Sturla had done in *Hákonar saga*, as well as Óláfr in the *Third Grammatical Treatise* and the anonymous author of the *Fourth Grammatical Treatise*, all of them quoting *Háttatal* in their works (Faulkes 1991, xxii–xxiii). Johnstone's source seems to have been the longer version of the poem as transmitted in the Codex Regius, but the thematic arrangement of the stanzas follows a quite different order from the text in that manuscript.¹⁹

The earliest *textus receptus* of the *Edda* spread beyond Scandinavia mainly by means of translations into Latin and modern Scandinavian languages, and echoed Andrés's Italian work. In addition to the pivotal French work by Mallet (1756), its derivatives included the influential German and English adaptations

¹⁶ 'In the form of an essay on comparative literature [...] mainly concerned with the form in which ethics and moral teaching appear in literature' (Faulkes 1977, 11), being principally aimed at introducing *Hávamál*, whose original and translated text accompanied *Snorra Edda*.

¹⁷ These chapters were prefaced by the short introduction to *Laufás-Edda* by Magnús and concluded by the *Addenda*, with further information.

¹⁸ On Johnstone's and Thorkelin's collaboration, see Clunies Ross (1998, 170–77).

¹⁹ The full text of *Háttatal* was firstly published by Möbius (1879–81). In his Preface, Johnstone mentions 'original manuscripts in the Library of the King of Denmark' in vague terms. Snorri's stanzas are displayed according to the following topics: *Description of a Norwegian Battle* (st. 9), *On King Hacon's Generosity in Rewarding Merit* (st. 44), *On his Patriotism* (st. 10); *His Bravery* (st. 8); *On his Care of the Army* (st. 73); *On the Revels at his Court during Winter* (sts 25, 23, 24, 87); *Eulogy on Duke Skulo* (sts 40, 98); *On the Scalds Desire of Visiting Skulo* (st. 101); *Votive Verses to Haco and Earl Skulo* (st. 102); *Specimens of Singular Versification* (sts 36, 82, 71, 85, 80).

by Gottfried Schütze (1765) and Thomas Percy (1770), as well as the Russian version by Moiseenko (1785).²⁰ The translations maintained the twofold partition between *Mythologiae* and *Appellationes*, occasionally varying the number of the *Fabulae* or (as Mallet, Schütze, and Percy did) removing the *Prologue*: 'a preface extended to a greater or lesser degree in the various originals, equally useless and absurd in each case.'²¹ A characteristic scholarly attitude towards *Snorra Edda* which originated at this time was a tendency to blend the texts of medieval and modern manuscripts, printed editions, and translations. Mallet admitted that, not understanding Old Icelandic, he had used Danish and Swedish versions of the work, as well as hybridized the readings of Resen 1665 with those of U (1787, 42–48). The modern 'creative compilers' anthologized the Resenian *Edda* with some other Old Norse pieces, offering the growing reading audience an enlarged canon of 'ancient' texts. It is interesting, in this regard, to consider the constantly renewed interpretative framework the edited text was surrounded by (see, for instance, the revision of Percy's *Northern Antiquities* by I. A. Blackwell in 1847).²² In this earliest editorial phase, the abridged encyclopaedic rearrangement of *Laufás-Edda* combined with the text of Codex Upsaliensis prevailed (the latter first printed in the Swedish edition of 1746 by Johannes Göransson, which included only *dæmisögur* from *Gylfaginning* and *Bragarædur*).

The editions mentioned thus far include introductions in which the religious commitment of the published text was stressed,²³ and this connection is underlined in the extensive titles to the works:

Hyperborean, Atlantic, or Swi-Gothic and Norse *Edda*: That is the Grandmother, or source of heathen philosophy and theology of those peoples: now finally edited in its Swedish version, along with the Latin: together with a preface on the age and content of the *Edda* [...], and on the most ancient and uncorrupted Schyrians,

²⁰ See Clunies Ross (1998, 23–104; 2001) for a discussion of Percy and contemporary British culture.

²¹ 'Une préface, plus ou moins longue dans les divers originaux, mais également futile et ridicule' (Mallet 1756, 19).

²² In his 'preliminary observations' on the Prose Edda, Blackwell criticized the weak methodological premises of Mallet and Percy (due in turn to the methodological weakness of Resen), and says that he was forced to collate the text with Rask's recent edition (1818), though, following Mallet and Percy, he excluded the *Prologue*.

²³ Magnús's Latin translation was accompanied by an essay on Old Norse poetry, published in Worm's *Rumir* (1636, 191–96) and in Stephanus's *Notae uberiores* (Faulkes 1979a, 19). Resen's *Praefatio*, on its side, would sketch a survey of Old Icelandic literature, based principally on Stephanus's commentary and on the works of Arngrímur and Worm (Faulkes 1977, 11–22).

Gets, Goths, Atlantics, Hyperboreans, Cimbris, Gauls, brought to light by Johannes Göransson's work and study, according to the oldest and most correct vellum Gothic manuscript, which belongs to Uppsala Library.²⁴

Often — as the words of Mallet and Giovanni Andrés attest — *Snorra Edda* was considered an 'excerpt' from an underlying and remote cultural past which time had corrupted and made shadowy, and which scholars had to purify and rescue. This opened the way for future criticism, since the premise was an endlessly hermeneutic one which bound the *Edda* to religion and cultural origins. Resen's edition proposed the form in which the work was to become known all over Europe during the following century, within a cultural pattern of human development in which orality did not yet play an acknowledged role. Accordingly, the text was understood as sacred scripture, and (as exemplified by Andrés's work) the earliest age of criticism was focused on substantiating or denying this assumption. The specific difficulties of interpreting *Snorra Edda* arose within a comparative religious framework, even though the work's function as a handbook for skalds was acknowledged.²⁵ When a new textual approach took hold, the older one still exerted a powerful influence over the appreciation of the essence of the work, with its dual nature as a poetic witness of metaphysical truth and a pragmatic device to transmit rhetorical skill.

Textus Receptus II: *Toward the Prose Edda*

Up until the mid-seventeenth century, the sources of Northern cultural heritage — gathered since the time of the Reformation following the impact of the recently rediscovered Tacitean *Germania* — had been based solely on Latin texts. An autochthonous vernacular 'book' in which this emerging ethnicity could be rooted was found with the *Eddas*, which were simultaneously excerpted, edited, translated, and commented on. Since the interest in skaldic nomenclature as indexed in *Annar partur Eddu* was much more limited outside

²⁴ 'De Yfverborna Atlingars, eller, Sviogötars ok Nordmänners, Edda, det är: stammodren för deras, uti hedendomen, både andliga ok verdsliga vishet: nu första gången på svensko öfversatt, med latinsk uttolking försed; jämte et företal om Eddans ålder ok innehåld [...] samt om de äldsta ok rätta, Skythar, Getar, Götar, Kämpar, Atlingar, Yfverborna, Karlar: Utgifen efter en urgamal, ok ganska fullkomlig Uppsala Academie tilhörig, på götisko, handskrefven permebok' (Göransson 1746, front cover).

²⁵ See, for example, Mallet: 'un cours de poésie à l'usage des jeunes Islandois qui se destinoient à exercer la profession des Scaldes ou des Poètes' (1756, 13).

Iceland than interest in its *mythologiae*, the cultural relevance of *Snorra Edda* depended principally on its role as evidence of a newly discovered mythological system: a kind of cultural archetype, a remote sacred source from which both historical *Eddas* were supposed to derive.

The huge and not yet totally inventoried textual corpus of the new mythology (editions, translations, reference works) was put together between about 1700 and 1850, with some forerunners including Worm, Bartholin, and Stephanus (Bödl 2000, 8–9). The notion of a barbarian cultural complex (appearing mainly as ‘religion’) gradually became more concrete, but its name and ethnic affiliation were not yet fixed. Inside different cultural environments it was claimed either as a ‘Celtic’ or as a ‘Northern’ or even a *deutsche Mythologie* (Haubrichs 2004, 216–18; Shippey 2004, 330–34, and Julia Zernack’s essay in this volume). In fact, this cultural invention turned out to be useful in the emergence of national self-consciousness (which in the seventeenth century still overlapped with religious identity) and, in a more specifically literary field, as an alternative myth to that of classical antiquity upon which a new aesthetic could be grounded (as Herder states explicitly in his ‘Iduna’ of 1796) (see Malm’s essay in this volume). That is, Old Scandinavian lore, first considered to be an esoteric and sacred doctrine, gradually came to be comprehended as a cultural heritage from shared forbears: an ancient, forgotten *Urvolk*. Via Mallet and his English and German translators, an interest in the ancient *Eddas* now arose across Europe in both the area of emerging mass culture and the increasingly philologically oriented academic milieu. In the German academy predominantly, scholarship on the *Eddas* was woven into a web of highly speculative constructs, while the pragmatic, codicological approach remained on the fringes. The emerging trend climaxed in Jacob Grimm’s 1835 work, *Deutsche Mythologie* (Hartwich 2000).

Grimm’s building of a national mythology was firmly connected with contemporary ideological and political concerns (Williamson 2004, 99). It was an impressive construction which attempted to display the scattered hints of an alleged ethnic ancestry as a system (which was labelled *deutsch* and treated the two *Eddas* as complementary witnesses of a shared religious legacy). Twenty years earlier, the academic field of *Germanistik* had been born with the Grimm brothers’ translation of *Die Lieder der alten Edda* (1815). These were the heroic poems from GKS 2365 4to, the manuscript witness which had not been taken into account by earlier scholars but which now offered a suitable foil for criticism on *Snorra Edda*.

Grimm’s paramount work on mythology followed the appearance of a second textual pattern in the history of the editorial life of *Snorra Edda*, a renewed

attempt to derive a coherent shape from the variant texts of manuscripts (according to the taxonomy of literary genres that modern scholarship had been developing and applying to its medieval objects). The new *textus receptus* arranged the story of *Gylfaginning* and *Bragaræður* in sequence, occasionally including extensive or shorter quotations from further narratives (for instance, on Þórr’s travels, the *Hjaðningavíg*, and the *Völsung* legend) which were scattered variously around *Skáldskaparmál* within each vellum manuscript. In the medieval witnesses, these accounts were connected to the treatment of different kenning groups, without any narrative cross-reference. In arranging *Laufás-Edda*, Magnús took them from his lost sources, since, in the seventeenth century, they were not included in W, and it is plausible that they never had been (Faulkes 1979a, 159). These tales offered editors a free hand to include or exclude them. As for the *Prologue*, it continued to be either published as part of the work or discarded as ‘spurious’, Snorri’s authorship of each part of the work being the most controversial matter of contention.²⁶

The offspring of this updated textual approach was a new Danish translation by the philologist Rasmus Nyerup: *Edda, eller Skandinavernes hedenske Gudelære* (1808). In the *Fortale* to his book, Nyerup pleads for the editor’s right to select *ope ingenii* among the variant readings (on the authority of Mallet, whose suggestions he accepted in excluding the *Prologue*). Nyerup announces that he compared Resen’s text with all printed editions and translations, and, above all, that he collated previous printed versions with copies of the three main manuscripts (*hovedcodices*), W, R, and U (‘den wormske, den kongelige og den upsalske’). In compliance with these criteria, he had translated *Gylfaginning* (dividing it into fourteen chapters), *Bragaræður* (four chapters), and a *Tillæg af forellinger om Thor og Loke* (episodes involving Hrungnir, Geirrøðr, and Sif’s hair). This new unit, freely derived from Resen’s text, lends itself to being differently arranged according to changing needs: Friedrich Rühls, Nyerup’s German translator (1812),²⁷ adds the episodes of Hrólfkraki, Hölgi, the *Hjaðningavíg*, and the complete *Völsung* passage. Rühls explains his choice based on the need to publish the complete text (‘zur Vervollständigung des ganzen’), though he is aware that the included passages could be spurious: ‘selbst wenn sie von anderer Hand [...] seyn sollten’ (1812, 162). Those chapters were transmitted in R,

²⁶ Doubts had been cast on the authorship of the *Edda* from the very beginning of its critical reception up until Klaus von See argued vehemently against Snorri having written the *Prologue* (1988, 1990).

²⁷ Rühls (against whom Grimm had argued in his book on mythology) prefaces the translation with a detailed historico-critical essay.

which was soon to be acknowledged as the *codex optimus* of the work. Rüh's additions, however, do not follow the sequence of Codex Regius — where the narratives were employed to illustrate kennings for gold (Guðrún Nordal 2001, 309–38) — but maintain the order of Resen's text.

Textus Receptus III: The fourfold gemein Text of R

The third phase of the editorial history of *Snorra Edda* in print extends from Rask's work of 1818, via the Copenhagen/Arnarnagnæan-edition of 1848–87 and Finnur Jónsson's achievement of 1931, to the single-part editions by Anthony Faulkes (1979b, 1982, 1991, 1998), which now rank as the standard editions of the work. It might seem a rather extensive group, as it includes methodologically different items. However, such dissimilar products share certain crucially characteristic features, foremost of which is the ambition to restore the arrangement which is actually witnessed in the oldest codices. The established text of the *Edda* is closer to medieval manuscripts than earlier editions, as previous editors were aware of the weight of medieval variant readings but did not manage to deal with them other than eclectically. In this phase, the guidelines for the *Edda*'s future academic life were established. In addition to the diplomatic and facsimile editions of single manuscripts,²⁸ repeated efforts were made to reconsider the interplay between author and tradition, sometimes represented in the shape of a stemma, principally in Boer's essays (Boer 1924 and 1926) and Finnur's *Inlendning* (Finnur Jónsson 1931).

Rask proposed a composite text (whose parts belonged to different genres) in keeping with the fourfold structure of R,²⁹ though he took from W the interpolated *Prologue* to fill the lacuna at the beginning of the Codex Regius,³⁰ and also included the *Grammatical Treatises* (under the title of *Málslistarrit*), apparently with the aim of representing the actual contents of the medieval codices. Dependent on a sequence of forerunners (since translations as well as editions need to be taken into account in his work), Rask's *Edda* proposed the *gemein Text* — as Boer describes it (1926, 64) — of what was judged to be a stratified composition. For the first time, *Háttatal* was included as a constituent part of the *Edda* (though it was still joined to *Skáldskaparmál* under the

²⁸ See the list of editions in *An Online Bibliography of Snorri's Edda*.

²⁹ Rask (1818, 8): 'eptir þessari uppskrift minni er þessi útgáfa prentuð; því Kóngsedda var allra Eddu bóka ágætust.'

³⁰ Rask (1818, 8): 'Út henni hefir ég tekit [...] það sem vantaði í formálan.'

title of *Skálda*). After more than a century of editorial life, our text, though still displaying different titles for its single parts, finally acquired the dimensions that we recognize today. Rejecting the division between *demisögur* and *kenningar* in the earliest books, Rask renamed the *Edda* components *Snorra-edda svo köllud* (= *Prologue/Gylfaginning/Bragaræður*),³¹ *Skálda* (= *Skáldskaparmál/Háttatal*), and *Málslistarrit* (= *Grammatical Treatises*).

Notwithstanding the editors' enduring awareness of the chronologically stratified composition of the work across several generations, they continued to seek the authorial 'original' behind the actual manuscript contents. This ideal design was detected in the Codex Regius, whose fourfold structure (where *Prologue/Gylfaginning, Skáldskaparmál, and Háttatal* were arranged in unbroken sequence) and prosimetrical setting (which alternates theoretical and narrative prose with poetic quotations by multiple authors) seemed to have been confirmed by the Codex Trajectinus.³² The theoretical parts of *Skáldskaparmál* and the complete text of *Háttatal* were, therefore, included in the new format of the *Edda*, underwritten by the authority of R's structure and reinforced by the opening rubric of Codex Upsaliensis, which hints at Snorri as the one who had 'put together' (*saman sett*) the 'book' *Edda*, composed of a mythographic part (*frá Ásum ok Ymi* = *Gylfaginning*), a rhetorical-lexicographic part (*Skáldskaparmál*), and a metrical-prosodic part (*Háttatal*).

Before scholarship on Snorri turned to the Trajectinus manuscript (rediscovered in 1846), the extensive Copenhagen (or Arnarnagnæan) edition appeared in three volumes in 1848, 1852, and 1887. Here, for the first time, the parts that we accept as belonging to *Snorra Edda* were named with the still current titles of *Gylfaginning, Skáldskaparmál, and Háttatal*. The edition was based on Rask's edition (which had been occasionally emended, as the detailed introduction explains) but it moved the *Formáli* (in the longer version of W), *Gylfaginning* ch. 54, and the *eptirmáli* at the end of *Bragaræður* (Faulkes 1982, 54, 36–55, 57; 1998, 5, 25–26, 29), to an appendix. In so doing, the editors attempted to disentangle the Trojan-frame from the rest of the text. This frame, strongly reduced in the U version (which was confined to the second volume of the Copenhagen series, thereby presenting itself as a *collectio variorum*), is one of the most controversial parts of the transmitted text, and is thematically linked with the *Prologue*.

³¹ His suggestion was later followed by Boer (1926, 93): 'Gylfaginning and Bragaræður are two sections of a unique book. Snorri had named this book Edda' (Gylfg und Bgr sind zwei Abteilungen eines einzigen Buches. Dieses Buch hat Snorri Edda genannt).

³² T exhibits a similar layout and does not have any additional material.

Disseminating Textual Intricacies

The diffusion of the four-part R-oriented text by means of translations and scholarly editions proved to be considerably slower than that of the previous 'abridged' edition types. Apart from the Swedish translation by Cnattingius (1819), which left out the *pulur* (which were present in the Rask version on which it was based),³³ and the Latin translation by Sveinbjörn Egilsson which accompanied the Arnarnagæan edition, the newest *textus receptus* was disseminated in its integral shape to a wider reading audience only through the English and Swedish translations by Anthony Faulkes (1987) and Karl G. Johansson and Mats Malm (1997). These were both based on the above-mentioned single-part editions by Faulkes himself, and also the Danish translation by Rolf Stavnem and Kim Lembek (2013). Meanwhile, the abridged type had continued to flourish. In 1838, under the heading *Edda de Snorre Sturleson*, a French translation appeared by Rosalie Du Puget, who had grown up in Sweden and was well known as the translator of Tegnér and of contemporary Swedish literature. She had translated the *Prologue* (according to W), *Gylfaginning*, and *Bragarædur* (up to *Eptirmáli*), to serve as a preamble to the Poetic Edda, which followed Snorri's work within the volume. As a consequence of this, Du Puget assigned only the first mythological part of the work to Snorri's authorship, attributing the whole composition to subsequent generations within the Sturlung family (a hypothesis first proposed by Rask). The source of this French version was not divulged — presumably it was one of the recent Swedish translations, either Adlerbeth's (1811) based on Nyerup (1808) or Cnattingius's (1819) based on Rask (1818) — and the selection was made according to Du Puget's editorial interests.

In Britain and Germany, within whose academies more broadly focused attempts to interpret *Snorra Edda* and Old Norse traditions were taking shape, the critical approach which had secured the *Edda*'s renown as a prose mythology enjoyed an enduring allure, thus inhibiting the progress of the emerging editorial trend based on medieval manuscripts. In Britain, George Dasent translated a selection from the Rask text in 1842, moving the *Prologue* to the end of the volume,

[...] chiefly because he is desirous to save the reader from falling at the very threshold, into those false conceptions [...] with which the Foreword in question is filled. (1842, v–vi)

³³ Cnattingius's translation ends with *Skáldskaparmál* ch. 74 (Faulkes 1998, 109).

In Germany, the influential and much reprinted translation by Karl Simrock selected only those narrative parts that corresponded to the *fabulae* edited by Resen, along with the 'whole' Poetic Edda (that is, the text of GkS 2365 4to with the addition of the *Eddica Minora*).³⁴ Later, in his scholarly anthology (1877–83), Ernst Wilken presented *Gylfaginning* and the prose tales from *Skáldskaparmál* again, along with *Volsunga saga* and *Norna-Gests þáttr*, his focus being on epic 'eddic' material. Wilken's text had been excerpted from the Copenhagen edition, which by that stage was regarded as a landmark in the emerging manuscript-oriented editorial trend; he therefore presented the mythological tales scattered around the theoretical description of kennings in *Skáldskaparmál* according to the same order as their appearance in R.³⁵

The complete *Skáldskaparmál* (in the R version) was translated for the first time into English by Arthur Gilchrist Brodeur in 1916, into German in 1925 by Gustav Neckel and Felix Niedner (in the *Sammlung Thule*; see Zernack's essay in this volume), and the four-part text entered the broader European academic domain through Georges Dumézil's *Mythes et dieux des Germains* (1939), which took Finnur Jónsson's edition of 1931 into account. Between 1935 and 1957, the normative historical survey of ancient Germanic religion by Jan de Vries also appeared. He showed himself to be increasingly influenced by Dumézil's tripartite ideology (Lindow 1988, 476–77).

The Fluid Snorrean Canon

Despite a growing awareness of the intricacies of the *recensio* of *Snorra Edda*, with the exception of the recent edition of the Uppsala Edda (Heimir Pálsson 2012), few have dared confront the audience of editions and translations with the composite, heterogeneous character of the work in medieval manuscripts. The tendency to publish excerpts of the *Edda* which were focused on their mythological or, less frequently, epic 'eddic' contents, whilst disregarding the complex manuscript texts, survived in editorial practice even as recently as the standard scholarly edition by Jón Helgason and Anne Holtmark (1950). Further *Edda* translations were based upon this work until the 1990s, overlapping with the newest type of integrated translation begun by Faulkes in 1987.

³⁴ From 1937 onwards Simrock's translation (which had also been among Richard Wagner's primary sources) was re-edited by Hans Kuhn, one of the most influential scholars in the field of *germanische Altertumskunde*.

³⁵ This was the same format as Rasmus B. Anderson followed in his 1880 English version.

The practice of excerpting confirmed the identity of Snorri as a mythographer and contributed to the subsequent (and still current) dominance of the debate regarding his attitude toward heathen beliefs. The history of this debate across the twentieth century has included contributions by Mogk (1932) and Baetke (1950), up to those by von See (1988, 1990) and Clunies Ross (1987, 1991, etc.). The *Prologue* (along with those prose frames firmly connected to it on thematic and textual grounds) was definitively omitted from the edition by Jón Helgason and Anne Holtmark and from its several derivatives, which, some decades later, disseminated the work to French and Italian audiences. These editors did not renounce the eclectic attitude toward the translated text:

We have followed the example of the original edition provided in 1950 by [...] Anne Holtmark and Jón Helgason. As they did, we have excluded the *Prologue* and *Epilogue* from *Gylfaginning*, insofar as their attribution to Snorri is still controversial [...]. If, following most of the previous editors of the work, Anne Holtmark and Jón Helgason opted to reproduce the text offered by one of the four main manuscripts as faithfully as possible, emending it only in light of defective or undeniably incorrect readings, we thought it appropriate to bring it closer to the archetype. (Dillmann 1991, 22–23)³⁶

A turning point in scholarship came at the end of the 1980s with Margaret Clunies Ross's monograph on *Skáldskaparmál* (1987), the title revealing the drastically changed perspective: the *pars pro toto* now focuses on the 'language of poetry'. After Clunies Ross's contribution, *Snorra Edda* was recoded as evidence of thirteenth-century Icelandic literacy. Each manuscript was analysed as a self-sufficient text in which particular structural tendencies were at work (Krömmelbein 1992). The chronology of Snorri's achievement was revised in order to explain its textual variability as a consequence of its composition as separate strata, and the specific *mouvance* of *Skáldskaparmál* was understood as an outcome of a mobile archetype, rearranged differently in response to changing interests (Guðrún Nordal 2001).

³⁶ [...] nous avons suivi l'exemple de l'édition originale procurée en 1950 par [...] Anne Holtmark et Jón Helgason. Comme eux, nous avons écarté le prologue et l'épilogue de la *Gylfaginning*, d'autant plus volontiers que leur attribution à Snorri est toujours sujette à caution. [...] Si, à l'instar de la plupart des éditeurs de l'oeuvre, Anne Holtmark et Jón Helgason prirent le parti de reproduire aussi fidèlement que possible le texte fourni par l'un des quatre principaux manuscrits en ne l'emendant, en règle générale, qu'en présence de leçons ou lacunaires ou indéniablement fautives, il nous a paru opportun de tenter de nous rapprocher davantage de l'archétype.' In Italy Giorgio Dolfini's and Gianna Chiesa Isnardi's translations (exhibiting the same attitude) both appeared in 1975.

What did not change, within the wide chronological and typological span encompassing the narrative I have sketched, was the apparently irreconcilable conflict between the medieval tradition of the *Edda* and the established procedures of the genealogical method of textual criticism which had been developing during this period. A highly unstable text was disseminated by editorial and translational activity which, while adopting hybrid methods of selection from the totality of chirographic and printed versions, nonetheless conformed to a gradually emerging fluid canon of the text, oriented to its mythological or, more generally, narrative contents. Notwithstanding the commonly acknowledged gap between manuscript evidence and the assertion of an individual author, authorship continues to be employed in a desultory way as a guide to editorial choices, even in the standard editions by Faulkes. A textual reconstruction based on multiple manuscript readings was attempted in the editions of *Laufás-Edda* and the *Prologue* (Faulkes 1979a, 1979b), both editions utilising the copious modern paper manuscript tradition.³⁷ Although he acknowledges the existence of more than one revised version of parts of *Skáldskaparmál* in the thirteenth century, Faulkes maintains that R 'is taken to represent Snorri's work most accurately', and that 'it is unlikely [...] that the arrangement in the Uppsala manuscript gives a better idea of how Snorri intended the work to be than the Codex Regius does' (1998, xii).

As I have just intimated, since 1900 there has been more than one attempt to interpret the *Snorra Edda* tradition in the light of the genealogical method, ranking manuscripts and displaying the *Textüberlieferung* in the form of a stemma. To describe a complicated situation in simplified terms: in attempting to establish the critical text, Boer (1924, 1926) and Finnur Jónsson (1931) propose R as the *bon manuscript*, a status it had carried from Rask's edition onwards. In spite of this, the minute analysis by Boer was mainly concerned with a kind of stratigraphic detection of supposed scribal or editorial additions (conceived as single frames), some of which represent constitutive elements of the R version (for instance the Trojan-frame). The excellence of R among medieval witnesses is self-evident. Nevertheless, taking it 'to represent Snorri's work most accurately' (Faulkes 1998, xii), the newest *Edda* criticism depends on a long history of conjectures and displays just as creative an approach toward the manuscript evidence as its forerunners did.

Most recently the entire text of Codex Upsaliensis has been re-edited by Heimir Pálsson and translated into English by Anthony Faulkes. *Snorra Edda*

³⁷ Faulkes (1979b) used modern copies to reconstruct the R version of the *Prologue*, whose beginning chapters had been lost in the initial lacuna of GkS 2367 4to.

itself is presented along with additional materials (which sometimes interpolate text, as happens with the *Second Grammatical Treatise* which is inserted between what we call the theoretical part of *Skáldskaparmál* and a short version *Háttatal*). The edition also includes the conspicuous rubrics unique to this manuscript and some younger drawings (which have been reproduced at the place where they occur). The editor introduces his chapter 'Manuscript Relations' with the statement 'that what is here referred to as the Codex Regius version is largely the foundation of the texts in four manuscripts' or, in other words, that 'It has generally been accepted as certain that all versions are ultimately derived from the same archetypal manuscript'. He then reiterates the still-open question regarding the choice between the more complete and coherent R text and the rougher and abridged U version: 'Then there seemed to be only two possibilities: either the Uppsala Edda version is a shortening of the Codex Regius version or the latter is an expansion of the former' (Heimir Pálsson 2012, xlii).

Heimir provides a normalized text — 'in the conventional way, in the main as in *Norron Ordbog*' (Heimir Pálsson 2012, cxxiv) — in order to reproduce the linguistic features of Snorri's time, about eight decades before the manuscript was copied. This is quite an odd consequence (and occasioned a rebuke in a review by Kevin Wanner) to the statement that the editor did not wish to 'reconstruct the original text of Snorri [...] but rather to examine exhaustively the text the anonymous scribe set down on parchment around the year 1300' (Heimir Pálsson 2012, cxxv). Moreover, the Uppsala Edda edition has been criticized for 'some misalignment between the apparent policies followed in the edited text on the one hand, and in the translation on the other. In the case of the former, the practice is generally to retain apparent scribal errors in U while drawing attention to what was probably the intended word, based on other manuscripts' readings, in footnotes'; nevertheless 'such errors are usually silently corrected in the translation', which 'at times does not accord with the corresponding edited text' (Wanner 2013). This confirms what was said above about how hard it is to deal with the actual readings of *Snorra Edda* and to render its *mouvance* to the larger public. Normalization is required to allow non-specialists access to the vocabulary. This, however, frustrates the scholarly desideratum of accessing the manuscript version in its integrity.

Cyber-Hybrid Eddas: Some Conclusions

It is legitimate to query how updated means of diffusion of the *Edda* are at work in today's critical and wider cultural context, and whether the methods developed through the cooperation between textual philology, and information

and communication technologies, can suggest new ways of safeguarding and interpreting what I would term the 'Snorrean textual network'. Within comparable vernacular traditions (such as the Middle High German epic), earlier and spontaneously manuscript-oriented approaches have produced synoptic editions of multiple-version works. Consider, for instance, the editorial history of the *Nibelungenlied* and *Klage*, with contributions by Brackert (1963), Batts (1971), and Bumke (1999). Aside from the acceptance of new-philologic positions, the relevance of single witnesses within the mobile and creative medieval tradition of *Snorra Edda* is obvious. The newest perspectives opened by the digital challenge and by hypertextual layout now promise (and have partly achieved) results previously unexpected, with codicological analysis of single manuscripts publishable separately on the web, each manuscript considered as an autonomous product of the literary and editorial industry of the fourteenth century. Beyond the Codex Wormianus and Upsaliensis editions within the MENOTA-project (the former continuing Johansson's study of 1997), a synoptic edition of the *Prologue* and *Gylfaginning* according to the four complete manuscripts (each given in a semi-diplomatic and in a normalized version), aimed at a broader web-audience, is available on-line on the site 'Eybjörn':

The name of this website is Jörmungrund. Its subject is Old Icelandic literature, primarily Eddaic and Skaldic poetry. There are no religious strings attached. The Webmaster is neither Ásatrúar nor 'Asatruar'. His interest in the subject is strictly philologic and antiquarian.

'Eybjörn' offers synoptic editions of further multi-version poetic texts, such as *Völuspá* and *Hymiskviða*, plus some subsidia — *Skáldatal* (in an updated edition by the webmaster himself), *Kenningar*, *Lexicon Poeticum*, facsimiles of AM 748 I 4to, etc.). The semi-diplomatic versions of *Prologue*/*Gylfaginning* in the synoptic edition, however, do not present special characters, abbreviations, paragraphs, or other features of manuscript layout; supposed omissions are represented by brackets.

To return to Italy, a 'traditional' printed translation of the whole 'common text' of *Snorra Edda* is still wanting, but an on-line edition/translation is in progress on the 'Bifröst' site, and has now reached *Skáldskaparmál* ch. 39 (though the numbering is different in this hypertextual work). It is an amateur enterprise, but it follows old academic paths in selecting freely from manuscripts to constitute the text (established on the basis of R, with the *Prologue* from W). The editor, Stefano Mazza, claims to have edited the manuscripts directly, without using any previous editions (though those of Faulkes are desultorily mentioned in the bibliography). The editor thus appears to be creating

a 'zero degree' of cyber-writing, directly connecting manuscripts to the screen. The editorial frames transformed into hypertext (mainly in the form of editorial titles), however, have been inherited from a long prequel of forerunners in print, and the hybrid text is presented through a traditionally eclectic paratextual arrangement.

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³⁸ All websites accessed 1 March 2016.