

'fiske' answer to Alan and others

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Due to the fact that I in next message to the groups will be linking the 'fiske' voyage mentioned on KRS to artifacts found in Twin City to Lake Superior area, I send this one to sci.archaeology as well. Better not to have the 'fiske' word discussion twice.

There are words here which I haven't used the English word for more than occasionally during the last 30 years. Thus I write some part in my own language. Almost all of those who dispute against the 'fiske' word can read Swedish. It's also essential for me to explain what I mean. That's why I write those parts in Swedish. Of course I ought to have written this before. I hope this will make my thoughts understandable.

First of all the sentence I put forward for discussion was and still is: 'We war ok fiske.'

In order to explain why the 'fiske' word is correct I start with a short discussion round the words 'We war'.

The two words were used for 'we were' in some Birgittiner monestries' documents in first part of 15th century. That I will not comment here due to the fact that I neither can show it to have been used before 1400 nor intend to discuss when it first was used in Swedish. All I would like to point to in that question is that the '-um' form was dropped earlier than what some non-Swedish scholars assumed.

" § 205 Imperfektum.

..

b. Plural. Den fsv. Böjningen var '-um', '-in' och '-u' eller '-o' beroende på vokalbalans.

'-o' genomfördes hos alla starka verb, även de kortstaviga. Så i 1500-talets bibelspråk. Utanför detta förekommer under 1500- och 1600-talen synnerligen ofta '-e': de ginge, droge, sloge, äre o.s.v. Troligen beror detta på en försvagning av 'o' till 'e' (§159).."

Quote from [Wessén, 1962, page 227]

"§ 159. I götiska och mellansvenska mål försvagas 'or' till 'er' och 'o' till 'e': gater, flicker, de ginge, de toge..."

Quote from [Wessén, 1962, page 142]

In the paragraphs above it's early Nysvenska which Wessén discuss. That's normally set to 1500 but we also use to say the the younger 'fornsvenskan' was used mainly during 1375–1526. As can be seen in the preserved documents with St Birgitta's own writing it's wrong to use a fixed year as starting point on the other hand Wessén and many other say that the younger 'fornsvenskan' still was used in parts of Sweden in late 1500's.

What might have caused problem for those who objected against 'fiske' is that the difference between Old Norwegian and 'Fornsvenskan' were more frequent than between Old Danish and 'Fornsvenskan' on one hand and that during the later period of the 'äldre fornsvenskan', normally said to have been used between 1225–1375 many of the 'yngre fornsvenskan' forms and spellings existed before 1375 in local dialects.

To continue, 'We war' is written in past tense form(imperfekt in Swedish). If we look closer on 'we war ok fiske' the 'fiske' word has been assumed to be wrong due to form used. That had been the case had we been discussing Norwegian or Danish or Middle resp Northern Swedish of 14th and 15th century. But around or short after 1300 we in parts of Sweden started to use 'preteritum' form on strong verbs in cases where the stem for the word was masculine.

In Sweden it seems as if what could be called 'folkspråket'(the language as it was spoken) during 1300's came to be used as 'urkundsspråk'(language used in documents). This leads to a more formative language inflected by Norwegian, Low German and Danish. At the same time there was a more conservative written language used in what's called 'Vadstenaspråket' .(Wessén, 1960 page 91). As can be seen in documents from Vreta Kloster's 'donationslängd' and other documents from Östergötland during the period up to 1380's there also existed a language in between of those two. That's a problem when analysing texts from mid 1300's. You don't necessarily have a clerk writing the way he spoke because he was under influence of a more formally stipulated way of writing. On the other hand as seen in for example following diplomas from Svenskt Diplomatarium: [IEJ: Alan, bara en utviktning för att visa på att variation förekom mer frekvent än vad som brukar nämnas]

7th March 1358, Helsingborg, Diplom 5864:

"Allæ the thaetta breff hōra ælla see helsa iæk Niclis Thurisson.."

31 March 1358 Linköping, Diplom 5883.

"Allum them thætta breff hōra ællæ see sænde iæk Niclis Thurisson... "

Same knight but different clerks as you can see for your self there are more than the difference between 'æ' and 'æ' to be seen in the two originals.

11th March 1358 place unknown

"Allum theem thetta brewf høre allæ sea helsa jak Cecilia Glýsingxdotter..."

19th March 1358, somewhere in Smaland.

"Allum thøm thætta breff hōra ok sea hælsar Swen Vkla.."

Here we have two different persons signing two separate documents, probably written by more than one clerk. Spellings forms etc. can't be said to be in a specific fixed form which unfortunately many Norwegian and Danish linguists seems to believe them to have been in at that time.

You can't expect to find same form and same spelling used over all of King Magnus Eriksson's land in mid 1300's.

Back to 'fiske'. One thing that normally is forgotten when discussing the stem 'fisk' is the differences between Östergötland Småland on one hand and most of other parts of Sweden in 14th century on the other. While the plural 'r' still remain up to the time when it was re-introduced the 'r-' dropping were in regular use. Example:

"R-bortfallet är i fsv. Mest konsekvent genomfört i vissa östgötska och småländska texter(Östgötalagens äldsta fragment, Smålandslagen, Birgittas autografer). Ex.: pl. fiska, biskopa.." (Wessén 1962, sid 42).

As seen in Magnus Erikssons 'stadslag' and in Codex Oxenstierna a new inflected form of 'preteritum' with usage of the ending '-e' in monosyllabic verb's came existed in 14th century.
(Noreen, Fornsvensk läsebok)

Taking all these divergence usage into consideration it's not possible to use 'fiske' as spelt in 'wi war ok fiske' on KRS as an indicator of when KRS was carved.

Inger E

sources:

Wessén, 1960 = Wessén Elias, De Nordiska Språken, sjätte upplagan, Lund 1960.

Wessén, 1962= Wessén Elias, Svensk Språkhistoria I Ljudlära och Ordböjningslära, sjätte upplagan, Lund 1962.