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1. Textual intimacy

Translation is one of the modes of textual transmission, a movement in the life of the text. But then, what other modes are there?

Answers to this question depend on the technology of the time. Our concepts of textual continuity at the beginning of the 21st century are rather different from those of the medieval scribe whose task was to nurture and pass on some of the texts I shall be discussing in this study. Today we increasingly compose our texts in an open medium: what we write can almost instantly be displayed and archived on millions of computers on this planet; or two seconds later on the Moon; or twenty minutes later on Mars. Furthermore, the texts we disseminate in this way will be exact copies of the text on our desktop. For us, transmission of a text is simply an activity which extends the readership, but does not change the encoding of the text. It corresponds to the medieval manuscript's being circulated within its monastic or conventual community, or being read aloud to many. On the other hand the act of copying the manuscript, and perhaps sending it to another community, was a new departure, since the copy would be different—sometimes subtly, with different spellings, a few omissions or interpolations, some intentional, some not—and sometimes quite distinctly different, being in English instead of Latin, or in West Saxon English instead of Northumbrian. The new text would never be the digital copy that we

are used to, for the digits concerned would be human ones, and the processing system an animate one, which does not copy mechanically, but improves, or depraves, or simply wanders. Transmitted texts like these, new departures, are ones we seldom contemplate today.

Unless, of course, we are thinking of translation. This we can accept as a new seeding, a new life. For us, textual transmission means translation. The rest is simply publication.

In this book I shall cling to the medieval viewpoint, not I hope in withdrawal from the present or the future, but because I believe that our understanding of the nature of translation is missing several essential ingredients which the medieval scribe took for granted.

The scribe was, in turn, rapidly losing touch with earlier insights. In some of the mediaeval texts I shall be discussing there are echoes of an earlier textuality, an unwritten literature of magnificent dimensions, now mostly lost like the snows of yesteryear; just as the echoes of medieval textuality still hum in millions of computers throughout the known world. The massive paradigm change from an illiterate to a literate culture, vividly explored by Lévi-Strauss in *A Writing Lesson* (1989: 295-304), had produced the concept of the inviolate, holy text, the Torah, the Logos, the Koran—the fundamentalist reverence for textual authority which is an essential aspect of academic textuality today.

The next great paradigm change, after the move to writing, was the advent of the printing press; which I venture to suggest is still our present paradigm. The experts of late 20th century technology hailed digital data processing as a new departure, as it surely is; but it is not the radical paradigm change that it is claimed to be. The printing press, too, was essentially digital, insofar as it functioned with a limited number of symbols, of bits of information. The computer uses only two, but the technique still follows the same principles. Language is reduced to a small, and above all discrete, number of tokens which stand archived; and so can be copied bitwise, automatically and exactly.¹ The change from the printing press to electronic encoding is, in this respect, a minor one, a change in the medium of the archive, from a bulky tray of lead to a tiny electronic configuration—a vast improvement of course, but still a physical encoding, and not a qualitative change. The qualitative change, the new paradigm, as different from print as print was to manuscript, and manuscript to oral poetry, may well occur in the new century; but I don't think we are yet in a position to foresee what form it will take.

It is the printing press, then, which stands between us and the medieval

¹ See Hockett (1967:52) for an early discussion of the finiteness of the set of characters for any language and its mathematical implications.

scribe, and which has subverted some of the aspects of textual transmission which I believe are important for an understanding of translation, and through it, of textuality. The scribe's task was compounded by the dialectal diversity of the trade: lettered people were few and far between, and when they came together in the monastic and conventual scriptoria they had to deal with a range of dialects, and copy from manuscripts in dialects appreciably different from their own. Translations between close varieties of language occurred almost imperceptibly as scribes normalized unfamiliar dialectal forms: the scribe was also an editor. And by the same token, the speaker of a medieval European dialect was forever adapting and interpreting. The Old English poem now called *The Battle of Maldon* records Anglo-Saxons and Norwegian Vikings hurling eloquent abuse at each other across an East Anglian tidal estuary in related, mutually intelligible Germanic dialects.²

Printing bypasses the scribe and transmits the text in a standard dialect, a centralized linguistic norm which assigns political power and is equally user-unfriendly for the readers in Bristol and in Aberdeen. The dominance of the Centre is a local as well as a global phenomenon. The English dialectal continuum has been sucked into the Centre, and the speech of the periphery is weakened, deprived of textual support. The descendants of the Anglo-Saxons and the Vikings now believe themselves to speak their own national languages. Today, the English of the Centre reaches, with a certain effort, as far as Aberdeen; but if it crosses the water to Denmark and Norway it has to negotiate a language barrier which English speakers find daunting (but which, for a variety of reasons, some of them pertinent to my discussion, the Scandinavians manage to negotiate with a little less fuss).

Of course, such barriers have always existed, and interpretation has always been necessary. Two centuries before Maldon King Alfred had initiated an ambitious programme of translation from Latin into Old English, seeing fit to comment explicitly³ on the tensions between *word* and *meaning* articulated by Cicero, Horace and Jerome. At the same time he records in his own careful West-Saxon the travelogues of two Norwegian sea-captains, Wulfstan and Othere, who surely spoke to him in a very strange dialect, without seeing the need to comment on this 'translation'. Or was it a translation? I shall try to answer this question in chapter 2.

In this book, I shall be looking at problems which arise when we are faced

² See chapter 2, section 2.2.

³ In the preface to his *Cura Pastoralis*; see 4\9 in section 4.3.

with the task of describing transmission with minimal linguistic shift: the copying of manuscripts between related dialects, or translation between closely related languages. Immediately, several questions surface. To begin with, *closely related languages* is a hazy concept, since languages can be related in a number of different ways. For instance, if we consider large areas of vocabulary, or literary and cultural contexts, then English is more closely related to French than to Danish. But comparative linguistics tells us that English and Danish are close relations, while English and French are distantly related neighbours. This is an example of Trubetskoy's concept of a *Sprachbund*, a community of similar linguistic characteristics which extends over neighbouring languages (cf. Jakobson 1991:180). Sets of thought, metaphors, specialized vocabulary and habits of pronunciation spread easily across language boundaries, and do not seek out channels of linguistic consanguinity.

The term *language* is in itself problematic. Languages are political and social constructs which can rarely be distinguished from one another by strict linguistic criteria. Since there is only one written dialect of Chinese, the Chinese people are thought of as speaking one language; but their spoken dialects are mutually incomprehensible and linguistically quite diverse. On the other hand Danes, Norwegians and Swedes, who can read each others' languages and converse fluently after a bit of practice, are quite clear on the fact that they speak at least three different national languages. Nominally, English is spoken in both Aberdeen and Bristol; but many Swedes and Norwegians understand each other better than Aberdonians and Bristolians do.

This terminological indeterminacy is compounded by the fact that linguists themselves discuss their subject from within the horizons of their own native languages, in which the relationships between one term meaning 'human language in general' and another meaning 'the specific language of a group' are both diverse and highly dynamic. For example, this becomes particularly clear if English speakers try to read French linguists from Saussure and Meillet to Jean-Claude Milner: the terminological mismatches are far more violent and at the same time far more *hidden* than even the most bilingual of us (perhaps especially *the most bilingual of us*) are prepared for.

In this study, I shall use 'closely related' to mean forms of language which are related by genealogy, irrespective of their cultural, social or literary contexts; and in fact much of the tension involved in translation stems from the mismatch between linguistic forms and these contexts. But the idea of *closeness* is still a problem, and the question arises as to how close to each other languages can be before the necessity of translation evaporates. However, one of my first suggestions (see chapter 2) will be that we must ignore any possible dividing line

between ‘translation’ as we usually understand the word, and less radical forms of textual movement such as dialectal adjustment, for any division we make will be straddled by the phenomena I shall be discussing. Thus I shall stay with the term ‘transmission’, at least in the first parts of this book, and ask the reader to apply it to modes of textual movement involving varying degrees of linguistic shift.

As my argument progresses, however, we shall also have to abandon the term ‘transmission’, which suggests a linear movement between texts arranged in chronological sequence. There are several reasons for this. As scholars such as Jerome G. McGann (1985, 1991) have made abundantly clear, a simple chronological arrangement of different ‘versions’ of the same ‘text’ can rarely be maintained. The chronological sequence of some of the closely related texts I shall be discussing is debatable, or accepted as unknown. Most important for my argument, however, is the fact that readers do not always read texts in the order that they were written: they may even thread transmission backwards, like a modern European reading the Vulgate. And finally—and this is one of the main theses of this book—a full and rigorous account of the relationships that exist between two closely related texts cannot be made unless we reject any notions of directional movement between them. If directional movement is taken into account, our results will show a subtle but pervasive bias depending on our point of observation. This, if you like, is a textual version of Heisenberg’s uncertainty principle: if we measure the direction of movement, we cannot fully capture its shape; and conversely, if we attempt a rigorous statement of any single element of this relationship, its direction and its provenance will go by the board.

This is not to say that ‘classical’ measurements (to borrow another term from quantum theory) are not highly relevant to our understanding of many practical aspects of translation and comparative textuality. As Roger Penrose has it (1990:386), cricket balls follow classical rather than quantum trajectories, although their subatomic particles obey quantum laws. In textual studies, this is mirrored by the fact that my main text in this book is a translation made a thousand years after its exemplar, and bears all the hallmarks of this lapse of time. But the non-directional aspects of textuality—and here the analogy with quantum theory ends—are prominent and essential features of the visible cricket-ball existence of the texts, and figure sharply in the interface between text and reader. We have to pin them down if we wish to understand this interface.

For Thomas Kuhn (1970a) the importance of what he calls ‘normal science’, the day-by-day spadework of problem-solving within a given discipline, lies in the way it slowly but inevitably builds up tensions in the

paradigm or conceptual framework that circumscribes it. Kuhn uses the term ‘paradigm’ to mean (amongst other things) the group of theories and assumptions which provide satisfactory explanations for the main body of phenomena addressed by the discipline in question; and this is the way I have been using the term in this introduction.⁴ However, Kuhn continues, as the discipline acquires data on progressively more marginal areas of the phenomena, the central tenets become less satisfactory, forcing modifications and extensions to the paradigm. In time these modifications become complex enough to threaten the paradigm’s explanatory and predictive capabilities. This is a crisis, characterized by conflict between those who reject the new data, or believe that further revision of the paradigm will save the situation, and those who propose entirely new approaches. By Kuhn’s definition, this will not be a fruitful dialogue, since old and new paradigms are incommensurate, and their proponents do not share common ground.

Kuhn’s ideas emerged from, and stand in clear contrast to, the philosophical debate between positivism and the *via negativa*⁵ of Karl Popper’s version of falsificationism. But unlike Popper’s work, Kuhn’s approach has an overt pragmatic turn in that it is capable of informing the work of the practising researcher, enabling her to justify new approaches or accurately locate her conclusions with respect to old ones. It suggests that researchers who are aware of the ephemeral nature of their assumptions are less likely to misread or ignore embarrassing data. It prompts them to ask, ‘Can our data be explained within the existing paradigm? Do they tally with existing theories? Do the theories perhaps even predict them? Or will the theories themselves need to be modified?’ And in due time: ‘Is it time to reconsider our basic assumptions?’⁶

In the case of translation studies, however, Kuhn’s ideas also have a more specific reference. In the Postscript to the second edition of *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Kuhn 1970a), he puts forward the idea that ‘men who

⁴ Kuhn’s original use of the term ‘paradigm’ is not clearly defined in his (1970a). Responding to criticism by Masterman (1970), who supported his views, Kuhn suggested the term ‘disciplinary matrix’ to cover the ‘set of paradigms’ shared by members of a scientific community, which enables them to ‘solve puzzles’ and accounts for their ‘relative unanimity in problem-choice and in the evaluation of problem-solutions’ (Kuhn 1970b:271; see also Kuhn 1970a:182). Ironically, however, it is the original term ‘paradigm’ which is usually associated with Kuhn’s work, and I use it here in deference to general usage.

⁵ The term *via negativa* is used by Jarvie (1998:537), who points out this recurrent theme in Popper’s work, appearing for example in his concepts of falsification in scientific theory and of democracy in *The Open Society* as essentially concerned with unwanted forms of government.

⁶ I am of course interpreting here. Kuhn’s concept of scientific development was not presented, any more than Popper’s, as a prescriptive model for would-be researchers. Since it was proposed, however, it has become fairly widely recognised as a paradigm in itself, and it is in this sense that I suggest its practical relevance to actual research.

hold incommensurate viewpoints be thought of as members of different language communities and that their communication problems be analysed as problems of translation' (175). Kuhn's ideas were sharply criticized at the time, not the least this analogy with translation, which was dismissed in Popper's response to the book as 'just a dogma—a dangerous dogma' (Popper 1970:56). Seen from the viewpoint of translation studies, however, it is an instructive, if not entirely exact, analogy. It suggests that a text to be translated is couched in a conceptual matrix circumscribed by the language in which it is written, a self-consistent system of ideas analogous with the paradigms which Kuhn sees as circumscribing differing scientific disciplines. According to this view, the paradigm—in this case the language of the source text—is essentially incommensurate with the language of the proposed translation. The term 'incommensurate' is crucial: it means that the values expressed by the two paradigms cannot be measured by the same yardstick, which implies there are no simple conversion tables between yardsticks: the yardsticks themselves are incommensurate.

I shall not in fact have much to say in this study on the idea of different languages as different (Kuhnian) paradigms, not the least because this view has often been expressed: this is essentially the Whorf-Sapir hypothesis. But the main aspects of Kuhn's approach, the concepts of paradigm change and the mutual incommensurability of paradigms, will underpin much of my discussion. In particular, Kuhn's implied distinction between central and marginal data highlights the importance of marginal data and provides me with a rationale for suggesting the outlines of a theory based on texts which do not usually figure in mainstream translation studies.

Before I introduce these texts, I should briefly explain that by 'mainstream translation studies' I am referring to a tradition which has grown up around the necessity of translating between relatively dissimilar languages. The European tradition of translation goes back to the literary migrations between Hebrew, Latin and Greek, starting with the Homeric translations of Livius Andronicus and Ennius in the third and second centuries BC and, in the same era, the translation of the Septuagint. Franz Rosenzweig, for whom translation plays a central role in the history of human thought, sees these movements as seminal in the history not merely of translation but of global culture:

The historical moment of the birth of world literature, and hence of supernational consciousness, occurred, in the full light of history, with two events, one of which was only symptomatic while the other had constitutive significance as well. It came when two books, each the very foundation of its

national literature, were first translated into another language. At just about the same time, a prisoner of war in Rome translated the *Odyssey* from Greek into Latin, and Jewish settlers in Alexandria translated the Book of their people into Greek. Whatever unity of spirit and purpose exists on the five continents of this earth today derives from the fusion of these two events, and the consequences thereof, events originally related only because in them the Greeks played the double role of giving and taking. (Glatzer 1953:272)

It may be that our planet has shrunk a little in the eighty years since Rosenzweig wrote, and that the so-called West, in thus naming itself and admitting its subglobal identity, has become a little less sure of the centrality of its cultural heritage,⁷ although we can probably still agree that within that heritage Rosenzweig's sense of the enormous import of these beginnings is fundamental. My interest, however, is in the medium of these transactions, and the set of attitudes towards the activity of translation which were shaped by the chance configuration of the languages concerned. Greek, Latin and Hebrew are linguistically very diverse: Greek and Latin represent two quite different branches of Indo-European, while Hebrew is a Semitic language unrelated to Indo-European. This linguistic diversity is also true of the main languages of literature and commerce in the world today. Thus it is not surprising that the burden of translation theory as we know it concerns problems of translation across quite imposing linguistic barriers, and the strategies that have been used to negotiate solutions. In chapter 4 I shall be examining these mainstream concerns in more detail; particularly their emphasis on the putative underlying structure of language and the radical permutations of this structure which such translation entails.

Mainstream strategies tend to go astray, however, when applied to marginal data, and since I am concerned with translations between closely related languages, where there is minimal linguistic shift between the source text and the subsequent translation, marginal data will figure largely in this book: marginal in so far as they have never loomed large in the literary canon, and are probably of minor commercial importance in the modern world. What I intend to show, however, is that a study of translations between closely related languages—I shall use the term *intimate translation*⁸—forces an assessment of

⁷ Lévi-Strauss points out that the advent of Islam drove a wedge between Christian thought and Eastern religious currents which had fed the early Church (Lévi-Strauss 1989, Chapter 39 'Taxila': 518-530). His blatant disdain for Islam—and we should note that Rosenzweig, too, feels himself free to criticise the Muslim attitude towards the Koran (Glatzer 1953:271)—does not detract from this observation, although it demonstrates how blind we all are to our own horizons.

⁸ For many linguists this term will recall Bloomfield's (1935:461) distinction between *cultural* and *intimate borrowing* of loanwords: '*intimate borrowing* [...] occurs when two languages are spoken in

features which mainstream translation theory tends to ignore; and one of my main arguments throughout this study is that these ‘marginal’ features are essential characteristics not only of intimate transmission, but of translation in general; and in fact should be considered an important aspect of any comprehensive theory of textuality.

A salient characteristic of intimate translation is a relative lack of radical restructuring of the language. While restructuring is practically speaking mandatory in mainstream translation, it becomes progressively less evident as the relationships between the languages become closer. In chapter 2 I shall examine modes of translation between texts in which are linguistically so closely related that they cease to be translations in the generally accepted sense, and become examples of dialectal adjustment. This occurs widely in mediaeval English manuscript transmission, where the range of differing dialects is so rich that manuscript copying is more often than not transdialectal. The two modes of textual transmission, translation and transdialectal transmission, can hardly be essentially different processes, since the one merges imperceptibly into the other, with, as we shall see, the same strategies being applied in both cases. There are in fact not two modes, but a continuum of relationships; their duality simply reflects the two shifting concepts *dialect* and *language*, which have little grounding in the forms of language but rather articulate the group identities of their users. In the same way the assumption that we are in fact dealing with two modes of transmission will only cloud the issue.

Only occasionally, often inconsequentially or waywardly, sometimes mistakenly, does intimate transmission reach into the larger structures of language, syntax and discourse. It moves typically amongst the surface features of language, the physical shapes of the words, both their sounds and their graphemic appearance. Mainstream translation theory has a strong tendency to underplay the importance of these surface features, and to regard their migration from source to translation as intrusive and detrimental—which of course it often is. The literature of translation studies is overburdened with gleeful disdain for the ‘false friends’ of the incompetent translator, the misassociation of words in the source with similar words in the language of the translation. But the other side of the coin, the creative use of surface association by the competent translator, has not received attention as a significant component of the translation process, although it has occasionally been addressed as a feature of stylistics

what is topographically and politically a single community.’ Without invoking Bloomfield’s sociolinguistics at this point it should be said that there are telling similarities between the intimacies of borrowing and textual transmission. Knútsson (1993a) discusses a range of echoic and paronomastic phenomena in lexical borrowing into Icelandic and other languages which would fit well into the analysis offered in Chapter 5 of this study.

(Empson 1961) or (post-)structuralist textuality (Culler 1988).

Commonly, then, intimate translation proceeds by an almost mechanical mode of transmission, a segmental re-encoding or transliteration of text, hardly more than a systematic *respelling* of the language; to extrapolate from Dryden's distinction between *paraphrase* and *metaphrase*⁹ we might call this the *symphrastic* mode: while *metaphrase* denotes word-for-word correspondence, *symphrase* occurs when cognate reflexes—items of vocabulary with full etymological correspondence—are available in the second language for all the source items, with a satisfactory degree of semantic correspondence. For instance we can translate (and transliterate) the Old English sentence *Béowulf is mín nama* as: 'Béowulf is my name'—assuming for the sake of the argument that other translations, for instance 'I'm Béowulf' or 'Call me Béowulf', are less acceptable in the context.

But the symphrastic mode can rarely be sustained, for the texture of cognation is frayed, torn and patched with alien words and snatches of syntax. Intimate transmission falls easily into the radical restructuring of mainstream translation. To stay with our hero, we might translate his next words, *Wille ic ásecgan sunu Healfdenes, mærum þeodne, mín ærende*, as: 'I wish to inform the great king, Halfdan's son, of my purpose'. In this case the only words cognate with the source are 'I', 'Halfdan's son', and 'my'; and the syntactical structure of the source does not survive the translation. These two contiguous sentences of the Old English poem *Béowulf* illustrate how paraphrase and symphrase can alternate seamlessly in the translation. Seamus Heaney for example clings closely to the original with 'Beowulf is my name' but goes on to reorganize the appositive repetitions of the Anglo-Saxon into the word-order of his own English:

Beowulf is my name.
If your lord and master, the most renowned
son of Halfdane, will hear me out
and graciously allow me to greet him in person,
I am ready and willing to report my mission. (1999:13)¹⁰

In fact as we shall see, transitions between these two supposed modes do not

⁹ *Preface concerning Ovid's Epistles*, 1680 (Dryden 1995:385)

¹⁰ Lines 343-345. Here is the original with a close (metaphrastic) translation:
Béowulf is mín nama. / Wille ic ásecgan sunu Healfdenes, / mærum þeodne, mín ærende, / aldre þinum, gif he us geunnan wile / þæt we hine swa godne gretan moton.
Beowulf is my name. / Will I say to the son of Halfdane, / to the great prince, my errand, / to your lord, if he to us will grant / that we so good [a man] may greet.

occur at syntactically or semantically significant points in the translation, and can easily occur in the middle of short phrases or compound words. This can be thought of for the moment as an optimal process: symphrastic transliteration of cognate forms is—as long as the sense holds—the recensor’s most immediate choice, and will continue until the chance configuration (or is it chance?—I shall return to this question shortly) of lexical correspondences between the languages breaks down because a cognate form is missing or has changed its meaning in the language of the translation, or the syntaxes of the two languages do not tally.

This interplay is not of course confined to intimate transmission. It is clearly described by Cicero (see section 4.3, page 98), who was not concerned with intimate transmission as I have defined it. Neither are the examples I have just given from *Béowulf* particularly intimate, since the changes that have occurred in English over the past millennium have produced a language very different in vocabulary and grammar. This illustrates the important point that the symphrastic mode is not confined to intimate transmission, but occurs to varying degrees in all translation. It will even figure sporadically in translations between the most unrelated of languages, for example when it comes to international terms. Thus the Japanese for ‘Iceland’ is *Aisurandu*; while in Biblical translation we would expect personal names such as ‘Jesus’ to be formally related to the original Greek or Hebrew in the vast majority of cases.¹¹ Conversely, and no less significantly, the paraphrastic mode of translation also turns up in translation between the closest of dialects. In chapter 2 I shall be examining examples of parallel manuscripts in two contemporary dialects of Old English, one a copy of the other (or both copies of an ultimate source), where cognate correspondences are missing.¹²

However, this easy transition between paraphrase and symphrase is not simply the optimal process that Cicero suggests. On the one hand there is a tendency for semantic correspondence to be ‘stretched’ or distorted to accommodate cognate lexical correspondence, resulting in unusual (for example archaic) use of words in the derived text, or for the lexical shape of the word to be distorted to accommodate semantic correspondence (for example by wordplay); and on the other hand a freer mode of translation sometimes occurs although the two languages do not demand it. Stylistic or other textual motives can often be adduced for these transitions, but certainly not always.

The most creative and productive feature of intimate transmission is the

¹¹ For the special status of proper names in the translation process, see Lock’s (1999) development of Derrida (1985).

¹² See 2\23 on p. 62.

non-systematic or non-cognate form of surface correspondence between source and translation, which has gone by many names: paronomasia, metaplasm, wordplay, punning. Let us approach this phenomenon by way of a small detour.

I have already suggested that the disparity of the early languages of translation would have set the scene for a paradigm of translation theory which foregrounded paraphrastic translation. It might be instructive to speculate for a moment on how translation studies might have developed in the West if the early languages of literary translation, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, had been more closely related. We will, of course, have to assume that the differences between these hypothetical languages were enough to make translation necessary or at least desirable—on a level for instance of the differences between the modern mainland Nordic languages, or present-day Irish and Scottish Gaelic. We might further imagine that, given a scenario where a high level of symphrastic transliteration was commonplace, it would receive fairly sympathetic treatment. For example, the problem of ‘false friends’ might be located within a systematic and theoretical framework where they could be defined as unsuccessful attempts at essentially productive and creative modes of surface transfer. This would be all the more so in view of the fact that the early commentators on translation, Cicero, Jerome, and Augustine, saw etymological relationships rather differently than we do. Modern concepts of etymology were not formulated in Europe until the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, when the essentially systematic nature of language change was recognized, together with the understanding that formal correspondences of word shape in related languages were not haphazard, but obeyed systematic, structured rules. Before these insights were attained, there was no way of distinguishing between chance formal similarities and real diachronic relationships. Thus when he apparently coins the Latin word *distentio* ‘distension’ to echo Plotinus’s Greek term *diastasis* ‘dimension, stretching’, Augustine makes no comment on the formal similarity, perhaps because it was a subconscious echo on his part.¹³ The Latin cognate for *diastasis* is *distantia* ‘distance’, which actually occurs at this point in Ficino’s 15th-century translation of Plotinus (Ficino 1855); while Augustine’s *distentio* corresponds to another Greek word, *diatasis*, which also has the pathological meaning now associated with *distension*. Since he has comments to make on formal correspondences between Greek and Latin words elsewhere¹⁴ this may suggest that he was unaware of this one.¹⁵ The point to bear in mind, however, is that had he

¹³ It is noted by Chadwick (1991:240 n.27). The transformation from *diastasis* to *distentio* is of exactly the same order as many of the transformations I shall be examining in later chapters.

¹⁴ Civ. Dei. X.i, Loeb 3: 250; X.iii, Loeb 3:262; see also 279.

¹⁵ See however footnote 163 on page 170 for support for the view that this allusion to Plotinus was

commented, he would almost certainly not have remarked on the lack of cognation. In other words, had they been concerned with intimate transmission, the ancients would have drawn distinctions between the presence and the lack of formal (phonetic, graphic) correspondences, rather than tracing etymological relationships in the strict sense of cognation that we assume today. And this is precisely one of the foci of discussion in this study: I shall assume that *cognate* phonetic correspondence is only one aspect of the phenomena of phonetic correspondence.

As we have seen, a stretch of symphrastic transliteration may come to a sudden halt in the middle of a phrase, as it encounters a ‘lexical gap’ where cognate reflexes are missing. In translations where these transitions are frequent, it is as if the surrounding pools¹⁶ of cognate correspondence were exerting pressure to conform, for remarkably often we find that the ‘lexical gaps’ are filled with translations which have a formal but *non*-cognate similarity with the source text: this can range from striking likeness to fragmentary echo. What is more remarkable is that non-cognate surface similarity of this sort quite often occurs in spite of the existence of viable cognate correspondences. Nor does it only occur in the symphrastic mode: it also occurs widely where the translation is paraphrastic, in which case it can also be markedly echoic and paronomastic. It is here that some of the most distinctive and surprising phenomena in my chosen texts occur.

The reader may detect a latent paradox in this formulation. I have introduced the concept of the ‘lexical gap’ as if it were a random effect, and referred to the ‘chance configuration of lexical correspondences’. But how can random movements of language result in ‘distinctive and surprising phenomena’? Later in this study I hope to resolve this apparent contradiction: for the moment, however, I shall note that a mismatch between the intermittent warp of cognation and the interlacing weft of syntax and morphology does not mean that there is no fabric, or even that the fabric is not finely textured. I suggest that this rupture of lexical correspondence is symptomatic of a far deeper grained incompatibility, at the same time as cognation, the surface similarity of forms, signals a deep-rooted compatibility between languages. In chapter 6 I shall examine this connection between surface lexical form and the wider structures of language in terms of *resolution* and *phasing* (section 6.7.4); but I shall not assume that an objective analysis of the movements of language involved is the only or even the most fertile approach to the matter. Franz Rosenzweig’s topographical metaphor of translation reaches deep into the foundations of

contrived.

¹⁶ In section 6.8.1 in Chapter 6 I shall use the term ‘pool’ in a stricter technical sense than here.

language and points exactly in the direction I wish to follow:

The aerial view of a language's *verbal* landscape seems at first glance severed and radically diverse from that of every other language ... The picture alters only through a more geological approach. In the roots of words the severed areas lie together; and still deeper, at the roots of meaning, the roots of physicality, there is, apart from questions regarding some original relatedness of languages, the unity of all human speech which the surfaces of words only let us dimly intuit. The translator must dare to descend to these lower layers. ... He will need for his expedition the miner's lamp of scientific etymology; but he must not then arrogantly disdain to regard the glimmer emanating from the veins of the text itself. Indeed, these later connections, intended, felt, and willed by the speakers and writers of the text, must be more important for his work than the verbal relationships verified, rejected, or revealed by comparative philology. (Buber and Rosenzweig 1994:67)

*

This, then, will be an excursion into what may appear to be marginal territory. In its progress from a boisterous alliance of multifarious dialects to a single written standard, English has lost its propensity for intimate association with other languages, and I have to turn to lesser-known languages for my data. My central text is a modern Icelandic translation of the Old English poem *Béowulf* (Björnsson 1983), and in chapter 2 I shall refer briefly to other Anglo-Saxon and Icelandic texts, and Old Saxon and modern Faeroese will also briefly appear. I have confined the gritty details of my analysis to chapters 5 and 6 of this study, and will do my best to present my arguments in such a way that they can be followed without sparkling fluency in Anglo-Saxon or Icelandic. Throughout the book I shall provide references to the relevant sections in chapters 5 and 6, not the least for those who (rightly) have doubts about the monolinear sequence of my text.

I am reminded of a question I was once asked when I gave a paper on Þorgeir Þorgeirson's Icelandic translation of a cycle of poems by the Faeroese poet Christian Matras (Matras 1978, 1988). The questioner referred to the fact that Faeroese and Icelandic are remarkably close languages, and so wasn't this material rather unsuitable for translation studies? For a moment I was completely at a loss to know how to respond; yes, I thought, what a fool I am to go chasing this marginal material. And again now, perhaps, the translation of a poem in an extinct language—Old English—into a closely-related minority language spoken

today by three hundred thousand islanders in the North Atlantic—Icelandic—may not seem a likely arena for insights into the phenomenon of translation, let alone the wider issues of textuality.

I hope to alay these doubts.

2. The translator and the scribe¹⁷

2.0 Pilgrim, poet, scribe

Typically, the pilgrim is silent.

The medieval pilgrimage is undertaken *pro amore Deo*, an expression of the early Christian understanding of mankind's alien status in this life. The concept goes back to Lev. 25, 23: 'for the land is mine, for ye are strangers and sojourners with me,' where the Vulgate uses the Ciceronian legal term *incola*, 'tax-paying foreign resident without full citizens' rights,' for the Athenian *metoikos*. The Authorized Version repeats the phrase 'strangers and sojourners' in 1.Chron. 29, 15 to represent *peregrinus* 'foreigner', a word whose modern English descendent, *pilgrim*, testifies to the customary stance of an unknown stranger in medieval society. In Anglo-Saxon England the pilgrim-alien is inevitably associated with exile, which is an insistent preoccupation of the Old English texts that have come down to us. Ælfric's *Grammar* translates the Latin verb *peregrinor* as *ic wræcsiðie* 'I travel the paths of exile' (Zupitza 1880:145:19). An Anglo-Saxon devotional texts will explicitly relate 2.Cor.5:6, 'whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord', to the idea of mankind's exile:

¹⁷ Sections 5, 6 and 7 of this chapter are adapted from Knútsson (1995a).

2\1 Cwæð se apostol be ðan, sanctus Paulus: ‘*Dum sumus in corpore peregrinamur a domino*. Swa lange swa we bioð on þyssum deadlicum life & on þyssum mennis[c]an gecynde, swa lange we bioð elðeodige fram ussum Dryhtne.’¹⁸

‘On this point the apostle St. Paul said: ‘*Dum sumus in corpore peregrinamur a domino*, as long as we remain in this mortal life and in this human state, so long are we exiled from our Lord.’¹⁹

The silence of the pilgrim is in part the silence of the traveller who does not speak the tongue of the land. The pilgrim is not (yet) an adventurer spurred on by the search for novelty, and has no wish to learn new tongues. The pilgrimage is not a quest for earthly horizons, but a search for the hermitage of man’s true home: the *straunge strondes* sought by Chaucer’s palmers are the horizons of the mind, Augustine’s vast and secret recesses of memory (*Confessions* X.viii). Their vastness is measured only by silence, which alone expresses the shapes of platonic reality that Augustine found there.

And yet language already speaks in the pilgrim: useless to deny the symbols on the milestones, the names of the guiding stars. The primal phonemic activity, the dance of the smallest significant segments of language, is at work in the syncope and dissimilation which shift *peregrinus* into *pélerin* and stretch it again into the Icelandic *pílagrímur*, the man with the pointed staff (*píla* ‘willow wand’) and grimy mask (*gríma*) of travel, of the alien face. This movement is *per-ager*, beyond the home field, the movement towards the horizon, ever away from the Centre: there is no other proper movement. The pilgrim’s first step away from home is linguistic activity. As even the Centre in its turn was founded upon this outward-seeking: the Latin term *peregrinus* seems to have been modelled on the Greek *nomades*, the roaming, pastoral tribes, from *nomos* ‘pasture, assigned dwelling-place, custom, law’; the law of the nomad turns on himself, his own text.²⁰

This inexorable progress into language, the reason why there are so few pilgrims and so many poets, provides us with our only window on the inner landscape of the pilgrim. The Old English lyrics we now call *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer* relentlessly associate the trackless spaces of the exile’s world, the

¹⁸ *Larspell to swylcere tide swa man wile*. Vercelli Homily XVI, Scragg 1992:240.

¹⁹ Unreferenced translations are mine.

²⁰ The *nomos* enters my account by way of André Furlani’s term *hodonomic*, ‘relating to the customs of the path’, which he applies to the essentially migratory tenor of Anglo-Saxon identity: ‘The poetic consciousness of the Anglo-Saxons took much of its shape and features from a hodonomic imagination in which paths, journeys and wandering are essential figures with which to compass experience.’ (I am indebted to André Furlani for allowing me to quote from unpublished work.) Frank Morley in *The Great North Road* (1961: 16) discusses *hodology* as ‘a respectable realm of science’—disavowing it, however, as his own method (19).

open wintry ocean, with the closed fastnesses of the mind, often in terms which recall Augustine's caverns.²¹ The medieval mind is located in the breast: *The Wanderer* juxtaposes the exile's *bréostcofa* 'breast-chamber, breast-cave, thoughts of the mind'²² with the empty seascapes of his *wræclastas*, his paths of exile; while *The Seafarer* speaks of one who has *gecunnad in ceol cearselda fela* 'explored by ship many halls of care' (5). *The Seafarer* is explicit in associating the voluntary exile of the traveller with the pilgrimage of the mind:

2\2 Forðon cnyssað nú
 heortan geþohtas, þæt ic hean streamas
 sealtyþa gelac sylf cunnige;
 monað modes lust mæla gehwylce
 ferð to feran, þæt ic feor heonan
 elpeodigra eard gesece (33-38)

'thus throb the thoughts of my heart, that I should myself explore the towering seas, the tumult of the salt waves; the desire of my spirit continually urges my soul to travel far hence, *to seek foreign lands*'

The key term here is *elþeodig* 'foreign, alien', compounding *el-* 'alien' and *þeod* 'people, nation' (it also occurs in 2\1). Wrenn (1967:148) points out that this passage echoes *on elþeodignesse faran* 'to go into foreignness', the usual prose rendering of *peregrinam ducere vitam* 'to lead the life of a pilgrim', and in a footnote goes on to mention an echo from Irish:

2\3 The Old English *elþeodig*, literally 'pertaining to alien peoples', has the elements *el* = Irish *aili* 'alien' and *þeod* = Irish *tir* 'land', and these combine, with the normal Irish consonant-change, to form the compound *ailithre* which is the regular traditional word for 'pilgrimage' in this sense.

²¹ 'Memory's huge cavern' is Chadwick's rendering of Augustine's *grandis memoriae recessus* (Augustine 1991:189).

²² OE *cofa* 'chamber', Modern English *cove*, Icelandic *kofi* 'hut, hovel, convent cell', reflect proto-Germanic *keuf-* 'arching, vaulting'. The unrelated words *cave* (Latin *cavum*, a hollow place) and *cover* from *couvrir* from *cooperire* from *con* (intensive) + *ob* (prefix associated with foreclosure) + *parere* 'bring forth', also have their meanings influenced by the Germanic sense of enclosure. The same can be said of *coven*, again unrelated, a version of *convent*, and probably too *coffer* and *coffin*. One of the means by which these formal associations channel the migration of meaning are the insistent intertextualities of even further-flung texts, those which for example couple Augustine's *-ced-* of *recessus* and Chadwick's *cav-* of caverns (footnote 21 above) to the Wanderer's *bréostcofa*, and by another route to Baudelaire's 'Quand le ciel bas et lourd pèse comme un couvercle' and his 'En haut, le Ciel! ce mur de caveau qui l'étouffe', which Lock (1986: 127) couples nicely with Hardy's 'His crypt the cloudy canopy'. I shall return to this wayward association of form and meaning as my argument progresses.

This is a crux, a cross-pattern, an insistent side-step into alien language. Wrenn is on safe etymological grounds in equating *el* and *aili*, at which the Neogrammarians of the 19th century nod their hoary agreement. But his parity sign between *þéod* and *tir* anticipates my use of the wavy parity for (almost) the same purpose in chapter 3, since Old English *þéod* ‘people’ and Irish *tir* ‘land’ are not cognates; *þéod* is related to *Teuton* and *Deutsch* and *Dutch* and possibly to Latin *totus*, while *tir* ‘land’ is related to *terra*. Although the prefix *el-* is not rare in Old English, occurring in words such as *elles* ‘else’ and *ellor* ‘elsewhere’, there is some evidence that the original meaning of *elþéod* was not always clear to its users: in later manuscripts the word also appears as *ælþéod*, which literally means ‘elf-people’, and sometimes *ealþéod* ‘all-people’: there is a thread of connection here with the modern Icelandic term *alþjóða-* ‘international’ (from *al-* ‘all’ and *þjóð* ‘nation’). The association with the Irish term is an expression of this lateral-seeking polysemy, the proper peregrination of the word itself.

Traditionally, Iceland was first settled by the Irish hermit pilgrims who crossed the North Atlantic in their currachs long before the Norsemen arrived and drove them into the sea and up into the mountains—where they took the forms of elves and outlaws, the Hidden Folk who have haunted the Icelandic conscience all the way into the twenty-first century.²³ The original story has of course come down to us through the Icelandic sources, and should be read as such. The Icelander Ari fróði (‘the wise’) writes about the middle of the 12th century that at the time of the Norse settlement in Iceland,

2\4 þá vǫru hér menn kristnir, þeir es Norðmenn kalla papa, en þeir fóru síðan á braut, af því at þeir vildu eigi vesa hér við heiðna menn, ok létu eptir bœkr írskar ok bjöllur ok bagla; af því mátti skilja, at þeir vǫru menn írskir. Benediktsson 1968:5 (*Íslendingabók 1. kap.*)

‘there were Christian people here, known as ‘papar’ by the Norsemen; but they eventually left, for they did not wish to stay here with pagans; and they left behind Irish books and bells and crosiers, which is how we know they were Irish.’

²³ Icelandic elves or ‘hidden people’ (*álfar*, *huldufólk*) are similar in appearance, stature, costume and modes of livelihood to humans (Hafstein 2000:89). The Icelandic folk-tales collected in the 18th and 19th centuries are rich in fearful stories of elves and outlaws (the two species shading into each other) in the unknown central highlands. A survey made in 1974 by Haraldsson (1978:27) indicates that 7% of Icelanders were convinced of the existence of elves, 15% thought their existence likely, 33% possible, 18% unlikely and only 10% out of the question. Hafstein (2000) discusses the Icelandic belief in a hidden elvish population and cites reports from the 1990s of building contractors employing clairvoyants to negotiate with elves over permission for land development, including a case of a municipality in the area of the capital admitting to legal responsibility and awarding compensation to the buyer of a new site who had learnt of the presence of elves and decided to build elsewhere. (90-94).

This is a terse text, difficult because we cannot be sure how laconically we should read it. It says nothing of the size of the Irish settlements, and one wonders at the justification for Gwyn Jones's (1964:10) assertion that 'their numbers would be tiny, hardly a hundred all told'. Ari's phrase *kristnir menn* is typically read in masculinist academia to mean 'Christian men', males under the vow of chastity, but there is no categorical gender or family orientation in the word *menn*, which is best translated 'people';²⁴ nor does Ari's report on the presence of Church artefacts exclude a lay population. Excavations reveal habitations and extensive sheep-farming in the Westman Islands off the south coast of Iceland at least a century before the time of the first recorded Norse landings (Hermanns-Auðardóttir 1989); and vessels that carry sheep across the North Atlantic can also carry women and children. The Norse settlement of Iceland in the 9th century was an aspect of Norse expansion which also resulted in extensive Norse settlements in the British Isles and elsewhere, and we know that peaceful communities holding good farming lands or commanding rich fishing grounds were targeted by the Vikings elsewhere in Northern Europe. On the other hand it may not have been in the interest of the early Icelandic historians to characterize the Norse settlement of Iceland as a violent process of appropriation.

And so the Irish pilgrims preserved their silence, and left it to the Icelanders to write their history. Pilgrims are by necessity, by definition, misrepresented; they cannot lapse into the sequential mode and put the record straight without ceasing to be pilgrims, and so their story is always false. And yet their search for horizons has meaning for us only if they come back to tell us about them:

2\5 Landscape isn't
much to swear by
if it hasn't got a name

says Tómas Guðmundsson.²⁵ The Seafarer returns to his people and becomes an Ancient Mariner: the poet appears.

²⁴ Queen Gunnhildur is described in Egils saga as *grimmur maður* 'a cruel person', using the nom.sg. form *maður* 'man'. *Laxdæla saga* says (chap. 13): *Sá hann þar tvo menn og kenndi. Var þar Ólafur son hans og móðir hans.* 'He saw two people (*menn*) and recognised them: it was his son Olafur and his [Ólafur's] mother.'

²⁵ I have lost the rhyme, but retained the colloquial tone:

<i>Landslag yrði</i>	Landscape would be
<i>einskis virði</i>	worth nothing
<i>ef það hétu ekki neitt</i>	if it wasn't called anything
(Tomas Guðmundsson, 'Fjallaganga' in <i>Fagra veröld</i> , Reykjavík 1946, p.101)	

Other poets are never tempted by the silence of the wilderness. The typical medieval Icelandic poet was of course a seafarer, since he lived in Iceland, but, perhaps because the final horizons were in any case perilously close to his home, his goals were, unlike the pilgrim's, the courts of earthly kings. The majority of the named skalds (court poets) at the courts of the Norwegian kings were Icelanders (our sources for this fact are largely, but not entirely, Icelandic).

The skald is an adventurer and a warrior, staking out his horizons with physical violence. Many of the Icelandic skalds whose works or names survive are portrayed in the medieval Icelandic sources as fighting and often dying in the great Norse and English land and sea battles of the Middle Ages. But the skald also fought his battles and established his horizons with his poetry. The tenth-century Icelandic poet and adventurer Egill Skallagrímsson waged his feud with King Eirík blood-axe not only with the sword but also by means of caustic *níðvísur* or lampooning verses composed in the tortuous *dróttkvætt* metre; he was also adept at magic formulae and could carve shamanistic runic inscriptions. He used his poetry to escape beheading in York by composing the *Höfuðlausn* ('*Head Ransom*') in praise of his enemy King Harald, as did another Icelandic skald, Óttar svartí ('the black') at the court of Saint Ólaf Haraldsson of Norway. Óttar's fellow skald Sighvatur Þórðarson, also an Icelander, was Ólaf Haraldsson's marshal and close adviser, a brilliant poet and a powerful man in Ólaf's court. After King Ólaf's death Sighvatur served his son, Magnús, and had a formative influence on Magnús's policy. Sighvatur's *Bersösglísvisur*, 'Outspoken Verses', urged Magnús to change his aggressive attitude towards recalcitrant landowners, and Magnús later came to be known as 'the Good'.

The poetry of the Icelandic skalds was an oral poetry, its tortuous metre a development of the same oral tradition as that of Old English alliterative metre. And since it was oral, we would know little about it indeed, were it not for the advent of the scribe. Only the scribe can record the poets' acclaim and scorn, the dates of the battles and the shapes of political power; and here we catch our first glimpse of the Third Text. For the scribe does not write the same language as the poet speaks. Not only does the scribe use a different mode (the dialect of the pen) but, crucially, there is a displacement in time and space: the text is written in another century, and in another dialectal area. The scribe is a West Saxon, while the forgotten poet spoke with Mercian inflections. Even more than the poet's own tongue, the scribal version is blurred with an overlay of alien language. The pilgrim moves still in the text: language itself peregrinates.

Since the movements of the poet's text and the scribe's do not fully mesh, a ragged pattern emerges: which is the main theme of this book. Meanwhile, in this chapter, the theme will be the scribe.

As long ago as 1813 Friederich Schleiermacher recognized what I have called *intimate translation* as properly belonging to translation theory. ‘For the different tribal dialects of one nation and the different developments of the same language or dialect in different centuries are, in the strict sense of the word, different languages which frequently require a different translation.’²⁶ In fact Schleiermacher sees the necessity of translation however close the language varieties concerned: he narrows the gap firstly to neighbouring social classes who ‘are not separated by dialect’ but by different levels of education; then to different idiolects within the same social variety, where we are often compelled to translate ‘the words of another person who is quite like us, but of a different temperament and mind’; and finally even to translation within a single individual idiolect: as we ‘translate ... our own words, when we want to make them really our own again.’ This is an express reference to the single variety, an almost Chomskyan abstraction: even our own words need re-translating, when re-invoked as our own.

This understanding has often been reaffirmed. Franz Rosenzweig in 1926 remarks that ‘Everyone must translate, and everyone does. When we speak, we translate from our intention into the understanding we expect in the other When we hear, we translate words that sound in our ears into our understanding....’ (Buber and Rosenzweig 1994:47). George Steiner also singles translation out as the essential mode of language: ‘Thus a human being performs an act of translation, in the full sense of the word, when receiving a speech-message from any other human being.’ (Steiner 1975:47; cf, 4\24). Steiner is on a different course from Schleiermacher, although they cross here like ships that pass in the night. Schleiermacher goes on to formulate a radical Ciceronian difference between close interpretation and free translation—a difference which I shall later suggest (section 4.3) is not so radical and not so Ciceronian; while Steiner would need to accept the essential sameness of intimate and mainstream translation as a corollary of the idea that all language activity is translation. I am venturing on the same waters, although my home port is a distant archipelago. My argument for proposing a single paradigm for textual transmission is based on observations of events at the other end of the scale from Schleiermacher’s and Steiner’s interests: the intimate end, the transmission of texts with very little language shift: the copying of medieval manuscripts with varying degrees of dialectal shift, sometimes minimal; or translations between modes of language which call themselves different languages on political rather than linguistic grounds, like Irish and Scottish Gaelic, Norwegian and Swedish, Czech and Slovenian, Croatian and Serb. It is in the narrow interstices between these

²⁶ Quoted here from Schulte and Biguenet 1992: 36-54 (36).

languages, the small mismatches of sound and structure and meaning, that the most distinctive and coherent patterns emerge; and if these patterns are studied fearlessly they will be seen to be the imprints of a machinery which, I suggest, powers all textual transmission.

2.1 The Germanic dialect continuum

Contemporary accounts give us the impression that up to the end of the Anglo-Saxon period in England, and probably for a good time later, English and Norse speakers experienced no particular difficulties in speaking and communicating with each other. In the latter part of the 9th century the West Saxon king Alfred includes in his translation of *Orosius* (Bately 1980:13-18), apparently verbatim, the reports of two Scandinavian sea-captains, whom he calls by their anglicized names Wulfstan and Ohthere, without feeling it necessary to mention the fact that the finished reports as they have come down to us had undergone any process of translation. This is significant in view of the fact that Alfred was a dedicated translator from the Latin, and has left us an account of his technique of translation.²⁷ In recording the sea-captains' narratives, however, Alfred was creating a text out of the extratextual, the unwritten Norwegian. As travelled merchants and seamen, Wulfstan and Ohthere would be used to tempering their native dialects towards a more central variety of Germanic, but we do not need to postulate a developed Germanic lingua franca in order to explain widespread communication. A mixture of very different English dialects would be commonplace at Alfred's court, where powerful figures from throughout the realm would uphold their regional tongues. The linguistic situation in the British Isles in the middle of the 20th century, where a fairly homogeneous accent was spoken by the ruling classes throughout the islands, was surely an isolated and temporary one. Alfred's court was not the insulated milieu of ruling circles of a later age: his military campaigns against the encroaching Norsemen, and his close contact with the peasantry (he had taken refuge amongst the farming communities of the South West during the high tide of Norse aggression in the mid-9th century) must have introduced him to a wide range of English dialects, many of them difficult for him to understand. An Englishman of the time who had travelled a few days' journey from his home, or even less, would be used to hearing types of English quite different from his own. With very few urban exceptions, a medieval Englishman would be likely to know the names and faces of most people who spoke exactly the same dialect as he did.²⁸ A stranger would be someone with whom linguistic

²⁷ In the preface to his *Cura Pastoralis* (Sweet 1871:6); cf. Susan Bassnett's remarks (1980:50-51). This is further discussed below, section 4.3.

²⁸ This suggestion can be corroborated by plotting what we know of medieval dialect geography against

communication would need extra concentration, extra awareness: he would have the foreign face and the staff of the *pīlagrīmur*. And so it is likely that people were, by modern standards, highly tolerant of strange ways of speaking, used to having to speak slowly and carefully, re-phrasing and paraphrasing if necessary, automatically adjusting to semi-systematic differences of pronunciation, structure and meaning in a way most modern English speakers would find very difficult. Exchange of information, trading, banter and argument were bound to occur in market places and seaports throughout Scandinavia, Britain and the Germanic mainland between strangers speaking dialects so unlike each other that the modern European, accustomed to a relatively gentle linguistic terrain broken only at national borders, would not hesitate to call them different languages. This, I suggest, is the cause of the relative silence of the sources concerning linguistic diversity in the middle ages: it was an inevitable feature of any mobility, like providing fodder for the horses—too commonplace for comment, a minor component of Bakhtin’s ‘adventures of truth on earth’, the ‘slum naturalism’ of the menippean highroad, the taverns, the brothels (Bakhtin 1984:115). Thus Boethius mentions difficulties of travel, differences of language and the vicissitudes of commerce in the same breath: *tum difficultate itinerum tum loquendi diversitate tum commercii insolentia* (Cons. Phil. II.vi). These are factors adduced by Philosophia as hampering the spread of individual fame; for Boethius’s readers they would be familiar as the woes of travel.

The existence of a richly variegated population of dialects is often seen as a result of a process of disintegration: an originally homogeneous language spreads over a wide area, loses cohesion, and breaks up into dialects. This approach goes back to the tree-diagram or *Stammbaum* theory of language change proposed by August Schleicher in 1860 (Schleicher 1969), which in spite of early objections,²⁹ and a general agreement amongst philologists that the actual processes of language change are far more complex than simple

estimates of contemporary population sizes. Among the wealth of later medieval English manuscripts, many can be assigned exact or close geographical locations according to their material. Following this, other manuscripts can be geographically located by comparing them linguistically with the localised ones; “...in favourable circumstances (where there is good backing of localised material) perhaps even to within a few miles” (Macintosh 1989:27). Thus the manuscript of the late 14th-century *Gawain and the Green Knight* “can only fit with reasonable propriety in a very small area in a very small area either in SE Cheshire or just over the border in NE Staffordshire. That is to say, its dialectal characteristic *in their totality* are reconcilable with those of other (localised) texts in this and only this area” (op. cit. 25). If we project these ‘few miles’ of local dialect on to estimates of population densities in England at the time we should have a rough estimate of the number of people speaking that particular dialect. The poll tax of 1377 shows an English population of about 2.2 millions; ‘from 1377 the population continued to decline until it reached a bottom of not much above 2 million at the end of the century’ (Russel 1958:118-119). This would indicate that the speakers of the *Gawayn* dialect at the end of the 14th century were no more than a few hundred.

²⁹ Schleichers’s model and Johannes Schmidt’s (1782) rival wave theory are summarized in Nielsen 1989: 109-116.

movements of disintegration and bifurcation, remains the dominant view of language change to this day.

Much of the evidence would seem at first sight to support the view that the dialectal variegation in the medieval Germanic world was a result of the fragmentation of an earlier integrity. The language of the Old English manuscripts, for instance, shows a high degree of standardisation, and the loss of this literary norm following the Norman Conquest liberated a flood of dialectal variation in Middle English manuscripts, which to the modern observer looks very much like disintegration. In fact, however, all this tells us is that pre-Conquest data on English dialects are meagre compared with post-Conquest data. The linguistic homogeneity of the extant OE manuscripts is the result of a consensus towards standardization, which by the time of the Norman Conquest was already badly strained, since the written standard was lagging far behind developments in the spoken language. Norman dominance finally broke the tottering manuscript tradition, allowing the underlying dialectal flora, by now heavily influenced by the Scandinavian influx into the British Isles, to appear for the first time.

In the same way it is often assumed that the Northern Germanic (early Norse) language was a single identifiable entity during the Viking era, with a dialectal distinction between East Norse, now represented by Swedish and Danish, and West Norse, represented by Norwegian, Faeroese and Icelandic; since then it has fragmented into the Nordic languages of today. A moment's reflection, however, will show that this is unlikely. The development since the 12th century has in many ways eclipsed the early East-West division, for today the mainland Nordic languages, Norwegian, Danish and Swedish, have undergone radical and remarkably similar structural and morphological changes which have hardly affected the insular Atlantic group, Faeroese and Icelandic. Thus there is now a greater discontinuity between Faeroese and Icelandic on the one hand, and the mainland Nordic languages on the other. But there is little to show that the internal differences between the mainland languages are any greater now than they have ever been. Alan Karker (1977) has traced the fragmentation of the Old Norse language into the national varieties of today, but while bringing together a wealth of instructive material on contemporary attitudes to the Nordic vernaculars, and documenting significant instances of difficulty and lack of difficulty of communication, he is prevented by the nature of his data from making a clear enough distinction between the written and spoken idioms; or between the radical fragmentation into the mainland and the insular varieties on the one hand, and 'the creation of different national standards [...] prompted [by] political development' (Karker 1977:489) on the other. The celebrated example from Saxo Grammaticus in which the Norwegian adventurer

Ericus sends two spies ‘who had a perfect knowledge of Danish’ ashore in Denmark (Karker 1977:484)³⁰ tells us in fact only that this probably fictitious 12th-century episode implies a linguistic situation between Norway and Denmark no different from any we know of before or since. Karker’s important point is that in the 15th century the mainland Scandinavian languages could be described either as a single idiom or as various diverse national idioms according to the political point of view of the writer (Karker 1977:488), but again this is also the situation today, and has probably been so at least as far back as our records go. Seasoned travellers and educated men would have been aware of a wide range of dialects sharing enough characteristics in common to warrant the old appellation *dönsk tunga* ‘the Danish tongue’ for the wider language community. The modern view of the Nordic community as a small group of national languages is a result of the spread of national prestige dialects based on standard literary norms rather than any real diversification. While it is true that Danish television subtitles its Norwegian or Swedish news clips, this is a function of the medium rather than the state of the language. Just as the arrival of a Norman French textuality in England had the side-effect of making ancient English dialects visible for the first time, so the advent of television has uncovered an age-old need for cross-Scandinavian translation, and is no indication of a greater fragmentation now than in the Middle Ages. I shall return to this point in section 2.7 below.

2.2 Old English and Old Norse

The Old English and Old Norse texts that have come down to us are clearly written in very different languages. A good academic knowledge of Old English alone does not enable one to read Old Norse, and it is difficult for 21st-century Europeans to imagine that any level of mutual comprehension could obtain between tenth-century English and Norse speakers. But two points should be borne in mind before we pass judgement: firstly, the classical Norse language of the Icelandic texts was written some three to five hundred years after the events recorded by contemporary English texts; and secondly, we have little or no evidence of the dialects spoken by the English and the Norse during the years of maximum contact in the Danelaw and in the semi-Scandinavian English court at the turn of the millennium.

The Norse voice seldom speaks in person in Anglo-Saxon. The greatest Old English epic, *Béowulf*, it is true, deals solely with events in Denmark and

³⁰ *Gesta Danorum* V. II. 10. (Olrik and Raeder 1931-1957:111). These comments are prompted by Frederic Amory’s review of Karsten Friis-Jensen, *Saxo Grammaticus as a Latin Poet: Studies in the Verse Passages of the “Gesta Danorum.”* (Rome: “L’Erma” di Bretschneider, 1987) in *Speculum* 1988: 701-706 (704).

Sweden in the pre-history of the Anglo-Saxons, but does so by way of a total relocation of language; only our knowledge of geography and history tells us that the story is not set in England. The Anglo-Saxon Chronicles always give us the Old English versions of Norse personal and place-names, just as the later Icelandic texts always Icelandicize English names: Eadgar becomes Játgeirr, Æthelred Aðalráðr.³¹ A rare example of direct Norse speech in an Old English text occurs in the 11th-century poem known as *The Battle of Maldon*, which gives the words of the spokesman of the invading Vikings shouting over the tidal estuary in ringing Anglo-Saxon. Fred Robinson (1976, 1986) produces evidence to suggest that this speech (lines 29-41 of the poem) contains ‘the first literary use of dialect in English’, in the form of words and collocations which seem to be Norse features; ‘and it seems likely,’ Robinson goes on, ‘that these features were intended to suggest to an Anglo-Saxon ear the menacing voice of a foreigner’ (1993:123). Robinson’s conclusions appear reasonable in view of the relatively high density of possible Norse forms in this passage, although it must be said that a narrative of a Norse attack could hardly avoid using Norse technical terms, any more than later English sources can avoid French terms such as *castle*, *army* or *dungeon* when speaking of the Normans. More tellingly, however, when some of the examples concerned are considered individually the evidence for each appears distinctly flimsy. Two of the terms Robinson cites as Norse-coloured are *grið* ‘truce’ and *gárrás* ‘assault of spears’. *Grið* ‘truce’ is indeed a Norse loanword, but is so common in OE texts contemporary with *Maldon* that there is no evidence to suggest that it was recognized as such. It appears repeatedly in English laws after the turn of the millennium, and the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle entry for 1052 talks of ‘grið’ between two opposing *English* forces, those of King Edward and Earl Godwine, and remarks ‘it was hateful to almost all to fight against men of their own race, for there were few men else of any consequence except Englishmen on either side’ (Garmonsway 1954: 181). *Grið* is used repeatedly in devotional works: *Godes grið* ‘the peace of God’. Of *gárrás* ‘assault of spears’ Robinson notes that it ‘is found nowhere else in Old English, but its exact counterpart *geirrás* is found in Old Norse’. In point of fact, a large number of poetic compounds are recorded only once each in Old English; and the fact that, as Robinson points out in a footnote, *geirrás* also occurs only once in Old Norse, is hardly evidence of Norse transmission or

³¹ Correspondences between proper names within the Germanic world are by no means always systematic (i.e. etymological). OE *Æþelred* ≈ Icelandic *Aðalráðr* is systematic, both names meaning ‘noble counsel’; but OE *Éadgar* (‘bountiful spear’) becomes *Játgeirr*, instead of the expected *Auðgeirr*; *iát-* is meaningless in Old Icelandic, but is close to being a simple Old Icelandic spelling-variant of the sound of English *éad-*. Similarly OE *Ongenþéow* occurs in Old Norse as *Angantýr*, where *-þéow* ‘slave’ is transformed into the god’s name *Týr*. These alterations are no different from processes that, as I shall show in this study, all types of words undergo in intimate transmission.

that an Anglo-Saxon audience would hear the Norse element in the term.

Although similar objections can be found against the distinctive Norse-ness of many of the terms that Robinson discusses, I am inclined to agree with him that their high frequency in this poem, notwithstanding the subject-matter, is probably significant. Regretfully, however, Robinson does not tackle the question of the realism of the episode: the Battle at Maldon is an attested historical incident, and there would almost certainly have been attempts at negotiation, since the Vikings would have been more interested in plunder and protection-money than actually risking their lives. How English, and how Norse, did the Viking spokesman really sound as he shouted across the Blackwater estuary? Was he a practised interpreter? Did his Viking comrades understand him?

A 12th century Icelandic formulation of the situation is given by the unknown author of the so-called *First Grammatical Treatise*³² who states that ‘we are of one tongue [with the English], even though one of the two has changed greatly, or both somewhat’:

2\6 allz ver erum æinnar tungu þo at giorz hafi miök onnur tveggia eða nakkvað
bááðar (Benediktsson 1972:208)³³

This assertion is in many ways surprising, since it is at variance with the evidence: the large number of surviving medieval English and Icelandic manuscripts are clearly not written in the same language. The term *tunga* ‘tongue’, which can mean ‘language’ in both medieval and modern Icelandic, must have had connotations for the First Grammarian which we no longer recognize; and this is exactly what we would expect given the dynamic state of dialectal continuity that I have been suggesting. For the modern European, ‘language’ means ‘standard language’; but the medieval European recognized only three standard (or, more exactly, *codified*) languages: Hebrew, Greek and Latin, of which only Latin was current. Other ‘languages’ were fluid, indistinct; the Germanic peoples, says Isidor, are in their languages *dissonae*; by which (another mistake of translation) we assume him to mean that they are dissonant, discordant, harsh, oafish. And so he may do; but the adjective *dissonus* properly

³² Preserved in the Codex Wormianus AM 242 fol., generally dated c. 1325; most commentators date the *First Grammatical Treatise* between 1125 and 1175 (Benediktsson 1972:32)

³³ For the full context of this crucial text, here is Haugen’s translation (1972:13), with the sentence I quote given in italics:

Now according to their [the English] example, *since we are of the same tongue, although there has been much change in one of them or some in both*, I have written an alphabet for us Icelanders also, in order that it might become easier to write and read, as is now customary in this country as well, laws, genealogies, or sacred writings, and also that historical lore which Ari Thorgilsson has recorded in his books with such understanding wit.

means ‘having different sounds’ and by extension ‘different, variable; in disagreement’. For Isidor, the barbarity of the vernacular tongues of Northern Europe is evident in their arbitrariness, their instability, their lack of standardization, the ‘uncertain origin of their words’ (*origine vocabulorum incertae*), just as their people are *discolores habitu*, clad in multicoloured (not discoloured) clothes and *variae armis*, bearing various (and thus not standardized) weapons.³⁴ These tongues have no grammar, no rules, since only the classical languages have rules of grammar. The mediaeval romance languages which can be traced back to Latin are corruptions of a norm; in Isidor’s terms they are solecisms. The Germanic languages, on the other hand, have no classical norm to fall back on. One German says *Béowulf is mín nama* and the other says *Nafn mitt er Bjólfur*, and although these are manifestly aberrations each of the other, there is no correct form to measure them by. This is what Isidor means by dissonance, about the ‘uncertain origin of the words’. In the civilized world, where one says *mi chiamo Giovanni* and another *me llamo Juan*, everybody knows they are both using lamentably provincial pronunciations of *me clamo Ioannes*, which is the newest vulgar slang for the classical formula: *est mihi nomen Ioannes*. In the civilized world, these are solecisms; dissonances, on the other hand, are solecisms without a Centre.

The First Grammarian was of course aware, if not of Isidor, at least of the Roman Centre and his³⁵ distance from it. Sverrir Tómasson (1988:76) shows that the *Treatise* is written in strict accordance with the conventions of medieval Latin rhetoric, and it is clear that the author was schooled in the learning of the Centre. But his treatise is a completely new departure, reflecting a vernacular self-identity which defies the Isidorian norm. Of course, vernacular orthographies had been and would be forged all over Europe, and indeed the First Grammarian pays deference to the English example, when four hundred years before him the Alfredian school had paved the way by crafting a writing system for English based on the Latin script. But what is different in the Icelandic *First Grammatical Treatise* is the explicit move towards codification, the desire to transcend the mark of *dissonance*. The First Grammarian has colleagues in other Germanic languages, notably Orm in England (c.1210), but he is alone in specifically discussing his codification. The importance of the *Treatise* lies not only in the unique light it sheds on the phonology of 12th-

³⁴ Germanicae gentes dictae, quod sint inmania corpora inmanesque nationes saevissimis duratae frigoribus; qui mores ex ipso caeli rigore traxerunt, ferocis animi et semper indomiti, raptu venatuque viventes. Horum plurimae gentes variae armis, discolores habitu, linguis dissonae, et origine vocabulorum incertae. Isidor, *Etymologiarum* Lib. IX. ii.

³⁵ Arguably, anonymity is a characteristic of women’s textuality; but the feminine pronoun is still the marked form in early 21st century Standard English, and I would not like to have to argue for the sex of the First Grammarian.

century Icelandic, but also in its significance as a cultural and political statement, the articulation of another linguistic Centre on the fringe of the Empire.

This is in fact true of the manuscript in which it appears, Codex Wormianus AM 242 fol. The codex contains Snorri Sturluson's *Prose Edda*, a textbook of Icelandic metrics and classical poetry, the *First Grammatical Treatise* and three other grammatical tracts. One of them, a treatise on rhetoric by Ólafr hvítaskáld Þórðarsson (d.1259), applies the traditional Latin rhetorical terms to Icelandic poetry, adding Icelandic translations for each – a feat which English writers would not emulate for at least three centuries. Most significantly, Ólafr applies the Latin concepts of *barbarismus*, the barbarian corruption of Latin, and *solecismus*, the transgression of the rules of grammar,³⁶ to Icelandic and Old Norse poetry (Sverrir Tómasson 1998: 295-297). Snorri and his nephew Ólafr are thus marking out a poetic and linguistic standard, the Icelandic *dróttkvætt* poetry which the Icelandic sagas portray as flourishing in royal courts throughout the Nordic world, including the British Isles.

As a corpus, this standard, this new Centre, is of course minute in comparison with Latin, and, apart from the Codex Wormianus, lacks most of the apparatus and accoutrements of Latin textuality, the scholarly tradition of so many centuries and the substantial canonical body of grammars and rhetorics. But there is no doubt of its distinct identity, its self-awareness. Sverrir Tómasson's (1998) account of the medieval Icelandic attitude to 'correct language' bears witness to this self-identity. One of his most telling examples is from the late 14th-century *Lárentíus saga biskups*, the life of Lárentíus Kálfsson, Bishop of Hólar in Iceland, who died in 1330. While studying in Norway the good bishop became a close friend of a learned Flemish cleric, with whom he communicated in Latin, the language of the Church. On several occasions the saga makes fun of the cleric's atrocious command of Norse – the writer uses the usual contemporary term *norræna* for the common language of Norway and Iceland at the time, although the two dialects must have been distinct from each other. Tómasson quotes the episode in which Lárentíus tricks the Fleming into insulting a visiting Icelander by teaching him a bogus greeting in Norse – the joke revolves around a confusion of the word *laus* 'without, -less' with the Latin *laus* 'praise' (Tómasson 1998: 278-9). This joke has a decided edge to it – many an Icelandic student abroad must have suffered ridicule for barbarous Latin, and we can guess that the writer of the saga, an Icelandic cleric and friend of the bishop's (Einarsson 1957: 104), would have delighted in turning the tables on a European scholar. In another episode the Flemish cleric practises a sermon he intends to give in Norse, and we are given a unique and hilarious example of a

³⁶ 'Löstur "gjör á móti reglum rétttra málsgeina"'. Sverrir Tómasson (1998:297)

foreigner attempting to speak the language of the sagas, floundering in muddled inflections and Latin and Low German vocabulary which would have been unintelligible to his intended audience.³⁷ These are clear and pointed instances of what would be *barbarismus* in Latin: the new Centre refurbishes the institutions of the old.

It is within this context, then, that we must read the First Grammarian's claim that Icelandic and English were once the same language. Although as Hreinn Benediktsson points out (1972:195) there are no clear indications in the *Treatise* as to the author's knowledge of English, I question his view that this passage 'cannot be taken to show any insight by the F[irst]G[rammarian] into the historical relationship, in the modern sense, of Icelandic and English' (196) but is rather an expression of the biblical explanation for the multiplicity of tongues in the destruction of the Tower of Babel, where God confounded the original single language—*ecce genus unum et labium unum omnium* (Gen.xi.6)—once and for all. Of course the First Grammarian would not have recognized the full systematic nature of the relationships between English and Icelandic, for they were not discovered until the 18th and 19th centuries; and he probably also subscribed to the Babel account. His attitude to language change is stated in the second sentence of the *Treatise*, whose interpretation is (of course) open to debate:

2\7 Enn af því at tungurnar eru ulikar hverr annarri. þær þegar er ór æinni ok hinn somu tungu hafa gengiðz eða greinz ...
(Benediktsson 1972:206)

Haugen (1972:13) translates 'But because languages are all unlike one another, ever since they parted or branched off from one and the same language....', which may be said to imply the Genesis account of Babel. However the word-order of *þær þegar er* 'they already which' is unusual, and Benediktsson questions earlier assumptions that the relative particle *er* relates to *þegar*, which would give *þegar er* 'as soon as'. Instead he suggests that *þær er* go together, giving 'those which'; and yet he inexplicably goes on to support the Babel reading with his translation 'But because languages differ from each other—which previously parted or branched off from the same tongue -', and interprets *the same tongue* to mean the original pre-Babelian Hebrew. It seems clear to me however that the relationship between *tungurnar ... þær ... er* can only signal a restrictive relative clause: 'those languages which differ from each other in that they had previously parted or branched off from the same tongue' – not all

³⁷ *Lárentíus saga* Chap. 11, page 21. Tómasson omits this episode, evidently for brevity's sake.

languages, the descendents of Babel, but those that had undergone later developments. Harðason (1999:22 fn.) mentions the possibility that *þegar* is a dittographic scribal error which may be ignored – not a necessary emendation, but one which would clinch the restrictive relative clause. Harðason's main argument against the Babel reading however is that it introduces an internal contradiction in the text: the phrase *alls vér erum æinnar tungu* 'since we are of one tongue' is the reason given why Icelandic should follow English in its use of an alphabet. But if this 'one tongue' is the pre-Babelian Hebrew, there is no reason to follow English rather than Hebrew (Harðarson 1999:24). To this I would add that the statement that 'either *or both* of them have changed somewhat' rules out the possibility that one of them is Hebrew, which was seen as the original unchanged language.

It is a mistake to assume that medieval Christianity taught unequivocally that the confounding of languages at Babel was the only linguistic change in the world, although this pedestrian interpretation was of course also in evidence.³⁸ Clear references to language development are not hard to find: Augustine speaks of how some of the descendants of Heber, whose tribe was the only one to retain Hebrew after Babel, 'gradually drifted away to other languages and other nations' (*ceteris ex progenie illius Heber in linguas paulatim alias et in nationes alias defluentibus. Civ. Dei XVI.xii*), and an understanding of language development and change is implicit in the etymology of the *Cratylus* inherited by the Middle Ages. Gunnar Harðason (1999) gives a number of examples of medieval acceptance of diachronic language change, particularly Roger Bacon on the different dialects of French, and Dante's vision of the confusion of tongues at Babel resulting in languages which later further diverged.³⁹ Harðarson is perhaps a little more tentative than I in assigning this understanding to the First Grammarian; but my approach also stems from a belief that we tend to underestimate the medieval capacity for common-sense: many travelled Europeans must have taken the most obvious reason for language diversity – diachronic development – for granted. Changes in language (almost always seen as being for the worse) are a recurrent theme in literatures of all ages. The assumption that language change was not noticed until the eighteenth century is similar to the belief that evolution was unknown before Darwin, in spite of the fact that selective breeding of animals and plants has been a key aspect of human

³⁸ See for instance Gunnar Harðarson (1999:18) and Hreinn Benediktsson (1972:195) for references to *Veraldarsaga*, with its strict Biblical interpretation of the Babel story.

³⁹ Dante's concept of language change as being consonant with the mutability of the heavens (*Paradiso* xxvi.124ff.) is also mentioned by Lass (1997:358), along with Caxton: 'For we englysshe men ben borne vnder the domynacyon of the mone' (Prologue to *Eneydos*). Lass also quotes Chaucer: 'Ye knowen eke that in forme of speche is chaunge / Withinne a thousand yeer (Troilus and Criseyde II, 22-3).

civilisation from earliest times.

The idea that the Icelanders were ‘of one tongue with the English’ is repeated in *Gunnlaugs saga ormstungu*, the Saga of Gunnlaugur ‘serpent-tongue’, written in the late thirteenth or early fourteenth century. The Icelandic Gunnlaugr visited the court of Ethelred⁴⁰ in London shortly after the turn of the millennium and recited a poem in his honour. The writer explains:

2\8 Ein var þá tunga á Englandi sem í Noregi og í Danmörku, en þá skiptust tungur í Englandi er Vilhjálmur bastardur vann England; gekk þaðan af í Englandi valska, en hann var þaðan ættaður. (*ÍS* II:1175)

‘At that time there was one and the same language in England, Norway and Denmark; but when William the Bastard conquered England there was a change of language; from then on French was used in England, since William had French origins.’

This may be read to demonstrate an Icelandic understanding of the changes wrought in English by the Norman Conquest, after which the vocabularies of Icelandic and English, with their common Germanic origins, began to diverge as English absorbed French loanwords. More probably, however, the writer is describing the sudden change of language at the royal court as the semi-Scandinavian English monarchy was replaced by the Normans. From an Icelandic point of view, the most telling effect of this change would have been that Icelandic court poetry would have lost all currency overnight.

Magnús Fjalldal points out the doubtful historicity of this passage, noting amongst other things that Gunnlaugr’s stay at the English court seems to coincide nicely with the St. Brice’s Day massacre of all Norsemen in England on November 13, 1002, by royal decree, according to the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (Magnús Fjalldal 1993: 607). But historicity of events is not an issue here, and does not bear on the question of the linguistic credibility of the passage. Fjalldal discusses the division of opinion of modern scholars as to whether ‘one tongue’ was actually current in England and Iceland in Gunnlaugr’s day, and suggests that the disagreement ‘demonstrates the semantically ambiguous nature of the passage’ which therefore offers ‘no conclusive evidence’ (604). This ignores the sad fact that scholars may be mistaken, which is surely a more likely hypothesis than that the passage itself is nonsense.

⁴⁰ Ethelred ‘the Unready’ (i.e. ‘the ill-advised’), who ruled 979-1016, so named because of his mismanaged defense against Viking attacks and massive extortion payments to them, is understandably portrayed in Icelandic sources as a great monarch—*Gunnlaugs saga* calls him *góður höfðingi* ‘a good prince’.

Fjalldal suggests (602-603) that it is ‘curious to note that scholars have tended to avoid considering the plainest reading of the ‘language passage’, namely that Old Norse was spoken in all of England at the time of Ethelred II’. If we take pause carefully to translate this passage – both in the sense of intimate transfer between diachronically diverse varieties of Germanic, and in the Kuhnian sense of misunderstanding between paradigms, it should be clear that this is far from being ‘the plainest reading’. There is no disagreement about that fact that extensive areas of the British Isles at the turn of the millennium had mixed Norse-English and Norse-Irish populations; in the Danelaw in the north and eastern parts of England skirting on London, this mixture was to result in a dialect which served as a major component in the development of modern Standard English. There is little doubt that an Icelander would have been able to make himself understood in eleventh-century London, since his dialect would simply have been a variety of the language which many people necessarily spoke. But the question remains: Would he have been *generally* understood? I have been claiming that variations *within the English language* of the time were *at least as great* as the differences between the varieties of English and Norse that were rubbing shoulders in London (and of course the same would be true of the Norse language). This being so, it would make no sense to talk of different *tongues*—except on the level of normalized manuscript convention, which hardly existed in Icelandic until 200 years later, and was lost in English with the advent of the Normans.

More significantly, however, we should ask what is it that the First Grammarian and the writer of *Gunnlaugs saga* mean by *tongue*? Medieval Europeans necessarily had terms for *language*, *tunga*, *gebéode*, *modus loquendi*, which we can only translate as *language*; but the medieval linguistic paradigm (Kuhn again) is couched in language completely incompatible with modern scientific—or lay—linguistic paradigms. We are simply mistranslating if we assume that the *Gunnlaugs saga* passage means – even in its ‘plainest reading’ – that there was one *language* (or for that matter ‘tongue’) in Iceland and England, since our term *language* is irrevocably tied to concepts of national standardization, of correct and incorrect grammar and spelling, which the medieval terms did not have. And we have no ready terms for the *linguae dissonae* which the Icelandic writers called *dönsk* and *ensk tunga* (‘Danish’ and ‘English tongue’), unless we resort to modern linguistic jargon and speak of *dialect continua* (and ignore the resounding uncertainties of even this terminology).

But this does not capture the gesture towards the *whole*, the larger focus of the Northern Germanic languages, into which the First Grammarian wished to admit Old English. The formulation *æinnar tungu* ‘of one tongue’ must be taken

to mean a larger grouping of Germanic dialects which shared a common identity. As a first approximation we can locate this identity in the common pool of Germanic heroic tales preserved in both Old English and Old Norse, in similar metres and poetic dictions, which clearly represent a corpus, however *dissonant* the dialects. It is this corpus which necessarily forces such a wide focus; and although we need not assume that the First Grammarian's *tunga* invokes the full Germanic totality, we can take it to be a good deal broader than the modern term 'language'. This would fit nicely with the usage in the early 13th-century *Icelandic Homily Book*, which makes a clear distinction between language and dialect:

2\9 ...hve mjök vér erum vanbúnir við því es vér skulum guði þjóna á þá tungu ok á þá málýsku es ér kunnuð iamt skilja og umb at mæla sem vér.

'... how unprepared we are [i.e. I am] to serve God in that language [*tunga*] and in that dialect [*málýska*] which you understand and speak as well as we [i.e. I]' (Leew van Weenen 1993: lv. Quoted in Tómasson 1998:294)

This may of course be read as the mere stylistic apposition of two terms for 'language' with essentially the same meaning, particularly if we believe that medieval scholars were generally less astute than we are. I would prefer however to read this passage as echoing the informed 13th-century view of language. Roger Bacon (*Opus majus* III.iii) discusses a passage in Jeremiah (10.11) which is in Aramaic (which Bacon calls Chaldean) and not Hebrew. He illustrates the close relationship of Hebrew and Chaldean by quoting cognate words in both languages, and concludes that 'It is certain that the Chaldean and the Hebrew have the same tongue but a different dialect, like the Gaul and the Picard; for dialect is a particular form of language determined by a nation.'⁴¹ Bacon's terms for 'language' and 'dialect' are *lingua* and *idioma*; this, I suggest, is the same distinction as that made in the *Icelandic Homily Book*, a distinction between 'language', the family of linguistic varieties known broadly as *dönsk tunga*, and 'dialect', the particular variety current in Iceland. There is every reason to assume that the *First Grammatical Treatise* invokes this understanding when it says 'we are of one tongue with the English' (2\6).

The language passage in *Gunnlaugs saga* is atypical in its explicit linguistic comment: other contemporary Icelandic sources imply that Icelandic

⁴¹ Quoted here from Burke's translation (Bacon 1962:I.82). The original reads *Et certum est quod Hebraei et Chaldaei eandem habent linguam, sed diversum idioma, sicut Gallicus et Picardus. Idioma enim est proprietas linguae apud aliquam nationem determinatam* (Bacon 1964:I.73-4).

adventurers were as much at home in the courts of the English as the Norwegian kings. No mention is made in the 13th-century *Egill's Saga* of any problems of communication confronting the Icelandic poet and adventurer Egill Skallagrímsson during his stay at the court of the English king Athelstan in the 930s. The narrator records in graphic and humorous detail the grim set of Egill's features on hearing of the death of his brother Þorólfr in the battle at 'Vínheiði' (the Icelandic rendering of an English place name which has not been identified)—it is not until the king makes handsome atonement in gold and silver that Egill's twisted eyebrows 'get back to normal'. This well-known passage has been read and recited in Iceland for hundreds of years as a piece of meticulous albeit humorous realism, and it may well have been intended as such. However the question of what language was spoken does not seem to occur to the medieval writer, who faithfully records Athelstan's words in good Icelandic and has Egill composing and reciting before the English court extemporary skaldic verses in the tortuous Icelandic *dróttkvætt* metre.

This does not necessarily mean that the English court understood Icelandic *dróttkvætt*; but it is significant that although the author of *Egill's Saga* is paying the realistic attention to detail that is characteristic of mediaeval Icelandic prose narrative, he gives no hint of any difficulties arising when an Icelandic poet recites his verses aloud before an English audience.

Several factors are involved here. Icelandic *dróttkvætt* does not, and probably never did, lend itself to instant comprehension. It is quite clear that only practised poets and connoisseurs would understand some of the skaldic verses at first hearing. They typically show a bewildering degree of displacement of clause-elements, so that the meaning has to be unravelled slowly, like untying a complicated knot. There is some indication that many of the verses had to be learnt first, and then unravelled. This seems to be the case in the *Tale of Sneglu-Halli*, the burlesque story of an Icelandic skald at the court of King Haraldur Sigurðsson of Norway (*ÍS* III:2206-2231).⁴² In one short episode Halli pays a visit to King Harold of England, who was to fall later that same year at Hastings. Halli is granted audience by the king and asks to be allowed to recite a *drápa*, or heroic poem in the king's praise. This is granted, '... and when the poem was finished, the king turned to his skald, who was accompanying him, and asked how good the poem was. The poet said he thought it was good' (*ÍS* III:2228). The king then asked Halli to stay, but Halli declined and said that his boat was leaving. The king replied that since Halli would be leaving before anyone had a chance to learn the poem he would be paid for his offices in the same transient

⁴² *ÍS* gives two versions of *Sneglu-Halla þáttur*, from the *Morkinskinna* MS and from the *Flateyrarybók* MS. I quote from the latter.

vein: silver coins would be poured over his head, and he could keep whatever stuck in his hair. Halli accepted, but asked first leave to go out and empty his bowels. ‘Do as you wish,’ said the king. When Halli returned he had tarred his hair and fashioned it into a plate. ‘You are a tricky customer,’ said the king; but he kept his word, and the coins were poured over Halli who thus received a generous reward. But this is not the end of the story. Halli had to resort to further cunning in order to secure himself a place on the first ship to leave, for the poem he had composed about the king was in fact a string of nonsense, and he couldn’t afford to stay and teach it to anyone.

There are two important points about this narrative. The first is that no one who heard the poem had understood it; the second is that no one had managed to learn it by heart.

The episode is clearly tongue-in-cheek about the English court’s understanding of Norse skaldic poetry, but it is difficult to say to what extent this is to be attributed to a language barrier or to the characteristics of the poetry. At the time of Harold’s short reign only 30 years had elapsed since the Danish king Canute sat in Winchester as king of a Scandinavian empire, and we can assume that skaldic poetry was heard in Canute’s semi-Danish court. On the other hand English poetry of the time was always quite different in texture, although it conformed to the same basic metrical rules.⁴³ All the surviving Old English poetry—some 30,000 lines—is lucid enough to be understood at first hearing. The court poet’s comment on Halli’s *drápa* is problematic; he *kveðst ætla at gott væri*, he ‘said he estimated that it was good’. The wording is no longer idiomatic in modern Icelandic, and it is not easy to pinpoint exactly the tone of the remark: was it doubtful, off-hand, or considered?

Obviously the court poet was unwilling to admit that he was no judge of skaldic poetry, but the question is whether or not he was expected to be one. From the context it is clear that there were people in the court who would be able to learn a Norse *drápa* if it were recited to them slowly enough, and it appears that, once generally known, such a *drápa* would be appreciated widely enough to add acclaim to the king. On the other hand the ability to learn a long and difficult poem at first hearing is a well-attested fact of later Icelandic ríma-poetry, and in an illiterate mediaeval context where all such poetry resided primarily in people’s memories, we would expect such abilities to be fairly common. Thus the situation described here seems different from the one depicted at Athelstan’s court in *Egill’s Saga*, and perhaps a little more realistic. In the *Tale of Sneglu-Halli* the English court seems to have understood enough to know that it sounded very good—and, we know, Halli was a master of

⁴³ The co-called Common Germanic alliterative metre is discussed in section 6.5.4.

words—but not enough to spot the sham. One possibility is that the author is alluding to the differences of dialect no less than of poetic convention. But we should beware of drawing conclusions; the tortuous nature of Norse skaldic poetry was such that one can easily imagine gatherings in Norway itself, at no great remove from the royal court, where Halli could have pulled the same trick, since *dróttkvætt* was never easy. It is no coincidence that the bulk of surviving skaldic poetry was composed by Icelandic poets in the retinue of the Norwegian kings, and that the term *dróttkvæði*⁴⁴ means ‘court poetry’; it was the poetry of a cultured élite, obviously carrying certain prestige in the British Isles. Whatever the uncertainty of our conclusions as to the language-barrier in this case it is quite clear that we are not dealing with a pure foreign-language situation. The question of translation as such does not arise. Sneglu-Halli is conducting himself at the English court within the same cultural framework as he conducts himself in Norway. The ambiguous reception of his poem in London is not so much a breakdown of cross-dialectal communication as a gap between genres, of faulty translation between poetic and colloquial idioms.

2.3 Dialects in the sagas

One is hard put to find references to dialectal differences in the mediaeval literature of Iceland. One possible example that comes to mind is the dramatic entry into *Njál's Saga* of Kári Sölmundarson, whose presence dominates the latter part of the saga. Njál's sons Helgi and Grímr have sailed from Iceland in a merchant ship, and are attacked by vikings as they lie at anchor in the Orkneys. At the height of the scuffle Kári arrives on the scene. Elsewhere, *Njál's Saga* conforms to the normal practice of the Icelandic sagas of introducing the important characters as they appear with a dry formula such as ‘There was a man called ...’, often followed by an account of his family tree. Kári however arrives incognito on the scene of the battle, an impressive figure at the head of a fleet of ten warships in the service of the Earl of Orkney. An element of suspense is introduced before Kári reveals his identity:

2\10 Sjá maðr hafði spjót gullrekið í hendi. Hann spurði: “Hverjir eiga hér leik svá ójafnan?” Helgi segir til sín og sagði að í móti váru þeir Grjótgarður ok Snækólfur. “En hverjir eru stýrimenn?” sagði sjá. Helgi svaraði: “Bárður svarti er lifir en annarr er látinn og hét sá Ólafur en bróðir minn heitir Grímur er mér fylgir.” “Eruð þið íslenzkir menn? segir sjá. “Svo er víst”, segir Helgi. (*Njáls saga* chap. 84; *ÍS* I:220⁴⁵)

⁴⁴ The word is derived from *drótt* ‘king’s men’ and *kvæði* ‘poem’; *dróttkvætt* is the adjective, literally ‘court-spoken’, and *dróttkvæði* means a poem composed in this genre.

⁴⁵ Quoted here in the modernised spelling of *ÍS*. According to the editors, there is no diplomatic edition of *Njáls saga* (*ÍS* I:iv)

‘This man carried a spear in his hand inlaid with gold. He asked, “Who are at this uneven game?” Helgi gave his name, and said that their opponents were Grjótgarður and Snækólfur. “Who are the captains?” he said. Helgi replied, “Bárður the black, who lives; the other is dead—his name was Ólafur; and my brother Grímur is with me.” “Are you Icelanders?” he said. “We are indeed”, says Helgi.

The interesting point about this conversation is that Kári seems to have guessed the brothers were Icelanders as soon as he has heard them say a few words. Kári’s own background is a little unclear. According to the 12th-century *Book of Settlements* his grandfather Þorbjörn jarlakappi had been one of the later Icelandic settlers, moving to Iceland from the Orkneys. However Kári introduces himself in the saga as coming ‘from the Hebrides’; the text at this point does not make it clear whether he was a Hebridean or an Icelander returning from the Hebrides. In any case we can be fairly sure that a Scandinavian sea-captain of Kári’s standing would have known Iceland and the Icelanders, and he certainly recognizes Icelanders when he meets them. Of course, it could well be that he recognised the cut of their clothes or the rig of their ship, but an obvious interpretation of the conversation as it stands is that he recognized the brothers’ dialect. In any case, people wearing unusual clothes or steering strange ships usually also speak in an unusual way.

A less ambiguous example occurs in (early 13th-century) following the battle at Stamford Bridge in 1066 where the English king Harold surprised and defeated the invading Viking army led by king Haraldur Sigurðsson (Harald Hardrada). The setting should be borne in mind; the invaders are Norwegians, while the resident population is a mixture of Northumbrian English and Norse settlers. According to *Heimskringla* King Harold of England has Norsemen with him in his army (chap. 90), while his brother Tosti is fighting for Harald Hardrada, presumably with some English retinue but also, according to the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, with Flemish soldiers from his exile in Flanders. The English army was largely composed of levies brought up from the south or taken into service on the way north, and the invaders would similarly have hailed from all over Norway. The shouting in the battle, rally-cries and other commands, must have been in a variety of English and Norse and Continental German dialects, but if there was any semblance of battle-order on either side there was likely to have been a fairly standardized military jargon that was understandable to everyone, a loosely centralized Norse-English-Germanic variety which would inevitably spring up in a mixed itinerant army. Similar varieties would have been spoken in the surrounding Northumbrian countryside. It is within this linguistic

setting that we must read the passage below.

Escaping from the battle after the defeat, Harald Hardrada's marshal, Styrkár, has an encounter with a countryman. There has been a change in the weather since the Norwegian army, lightly armed in warm sunshine, had been surprised by the English king Harold earlier in the day; a cold wind is blowing, and Styrkár, who is wearing only a light tunic, asks the man for his jacket, and the following Shiboloth-scenario unfolds:

2\11 Þá mælti Styrkár, “Viltu selja kösunginn, bóndi?” “Eigi þérna,” sagði hann. “Þú munnt vera Norðmaðr, kenni ég mál þitt.” (Haralds saga Sigurðssonar,⁴⁶ *Heimskringla*: 192, chap. 94)

‘Styrkár asked: “Will you give me your mantle, farmer?” He replied: “Not you, mate. You’re a Norseman – I recognize your speech.”’

Magnús Fjalldal (1993: 605-6) suggests at this point that ‘the reader is being asked to think of Old Norse and Old English as two dialects of the same language, which would be a more moderate view than we find in *Gunnlaug’s saga*.’ His general conclusion however is that the linguistic situation described is a piece of later Icelandic fiction. But again, I feel that Fjalldal is naming Old Norse and Old English as separate entities, and envisaging the very different varieties of these two languages that have survived in the manuscripts. But the farmer in this passage, whether fictional or not, is portrayed as a native of Northumbria whose first tongue would have been a version of either Northumbrian English or Northumbrian Norse; these two cohabiting varieties were later to merge, and probably had already begun to merge, into the ancestor of modern Yorkshire English. It is thus fully in keeping with historical facts that a Northumbrian of the time would have recognized a Norwegian-Norse accent when he heard it. I suggest that this passage corresponds fully to the passage in *Gunnlaugs saga*.

On the other hand it is clear that the concept of a common identity of the Nordic and Anglo-Saxon tongues did not extend to the Germanic dialects spoken on the European mainland. In the Saga of the Greenlanders in the late 14th-century *Flateyjarbók*, the story is told of Leifr heppni’s discovery of Vínland on the American continent.⁴⁷ One of Leif’s men is called Tyrkir, described in the saga as a ‘southerner’ (*suðrmaður*); he was an old retainer of Leifr’s father Eirik

⁴⁶ *Haralds saga Sigurðssonar*, also called *Haralds saga harðraða*, is a part of *Heimskringla*. The whole episode closely follows the text of the earlier Norwegian manuscript *Fagrskinna*, which Magnús Fjalldal quotes in his article.

⁴⁷ Sverrir Tómasson (2001:35-38) discusses the visionary theme of Paradise as it appears in this account and other medieval Icelandic travel narratives.

the Red and Leifr calls him ‘foster-father’. Wandering off on his own, Tyrkir discovers wild grapevines, unknown of course in Iceland and other Nordic countries, and so delighted is he at having found the fruit tree of his southern childhood that he lapses into his native speech:

2\12 He spoke for a long time in German (*þýska*), making faces and rolling his eyes, and they did not understand him. Finally he spoke in Norse (*norræna*): “I have some splendid news. I found grapevines and grapes.” “Is this true, foster-father?” asked Leifr. “Of course it is,” he replied, “for there was no shortage of grapevines where I was born.”⁴⁸

This incident seems to indicate that continental German is not seen by the saga-writer as occupying the same linguistic territory as Nordic and English; the humour of the incident involves the man’s un-Norse appearance—“He was a man with a bulging forehead, rolling eyes, and an insignificant little face, short and not much to look at, but handy at all sorts of crafts” (translated by Gwyn Jones 1964:150)—, his outlandish name Tyrkir formed from *tyrki* ‘Turk’ with an agentive suffix, and his silly habit of talking to himself in a foreign tongue. Similar humorous and even disparaging references to other languages will be discussed below.

I have dwelt on these relatively unsubstantial examples for the very fact that direct comment in the Icelandic sagas on linguistic variation amongst the Germanic peoples is scant indeed. This may not of course be significant, for reasons which I suggested in chapter 1 (page 29), and we should not forget that even when social contact involving wholly foreign languages is narrated there is

⁴⁸ This passage has often been interpreted as indicating that Tyrkir was tipsy when Leifur and his men found him, having eaten the grapes; until the middle of the 20th century grapes were an unknown commodity in Iceland, and Sveinsson and Þórðarson (1935:252, n. 1) find it necessary to point out that fresh grapes are not alcoholic. If this were the correct interpretation it might be suggested that the Icelanders did not understand Tyrkir because of his drunken speech; however I feel it makes more sense to read the humorous description of his puckish facial expressions as a general description of the man rather than of his state at the time—it is a common trick of the Icelandic sagas to give sudden personal descriptions of hair-colour, height, and facial features of the characters at significant points in the story, inserted into otherwise rapid narrative. His lapse into his native language is the result of this unexpected memory from his childhood. This is also the tenor of Gwyn Jones’s (1964) translation. Here is Sveinsson and Þórðarson’s text:

Leifr fann þat brátt, at fóstora hans var skapgott. Hann var brattleitr og lauseygr, smáskitligr í andliti, lítill vexti og vesalligr, en íþróttamaðr á alls konar hagleik. Þá mælti Leifr til hans: „Hvi vartu svá seinn, fóstri minn, ok fráskili föruneytinu?“ Hann talaði þá fyrst lengi á þýzku ok skaut marga vega augunum ok gretti sik, en þeir skilðu eigi, hvat er hann sagði. Hann mælt þá á norrœnu, er stund leið: „Ek var genginn eigi miklu lengra en þit. Kann ek nökkur nýmæli at segja; ek fann vínvið ok vínber.“ „Mun þat satt, fóstri minn?“ kvað Leifr. „At vísu er þat satt“, kvað hann, „því at ek var þar fæddr, er hvárki skorti vínvið né vínber.“ (Sveinsson and Þórðarson 1935:252)

seldom direct linguistic comment. An exception to this rule occurs in *Guðmundar saga Arasonar*, a 14th-century life of Guðmundr Arason, Bishop of Hólar in Northern Iceland. At one point Bishop Guðmundr is in Norway fighting a losing political battle for his bishopric; he has lost the support of the the Archbishop of Thrándaheim and his fortunes are at a low ebb. As a final gambit he sends Ketill, one of his priests, with a petition to Rome to secure a Papal letter in his support. The story emphasizes the hopelessness of the priest's mission: he arrives in Rome alone, almost without money, poorly clad, to attempt the apparently impossible task of gaining access to the Papal premises to present the petition. But a miraculous chain of coincidences allows him to deliver the petition successfully, and his long wait for a reply begins. Finally one day when his small funds are almost exhausted, Ketill is loitering outside St Peter's when he happens to look up at the wall and sees a high-ranking personage speaking from a window:

2\13 Prestr rennr upp undir vegginn ok vill til heyra, ef til hans verðr talat. Þá segist svo til hans af glugganum: “*Si nuncius Godemundi episcopi de Islandia praesens est, veniat.*” Þat er svo at skilja: “Ef sendiboði Guðmundar byskups af Íslandi er nálægur, komi hann.” Prestrinn tekur til klerkdóms síns ok svarar vel hátt; “*Sum* – ek er sá.” *Guðmundar saga Arasonar* chap 61 (*Byskupa sögur* III:358)

‘The priest runs up to the base of the wall to hear whether the message is for him. The words float down to him from the window: “*Si nuncius Godemundi episcopi de Islandia praesens est, veniat*” – which is to say: “If the envoy of Bishop Godemundus from Iceland is present, let him approach.” The priest then summons up all his clerical learning and answers loud and clear: “*Sum* – that’s me!’”

This last phrase, ‘That’s me!’ (I am colloquializing, I think justifiably, *I am he*), may be intended as a translation of the Latin ‘*Sum*’; but I find it more convincing to read it as Ketill’s actual words (the manuscript does not, of course, use any typographical speech-markers, but neither does it add ‘which is to say’). The point of the story is the unlikely success of Ketill’s mission: even his Latin extends only to monosyllables, and the writer uses a quiet humour to drive this home. The words of the great personage reach him in a dreamlike fashion – the text uses an impersonal construction, literally: ‘Then it is said thus to him from the window’. Bishop Guðmundr’s subsequent vindication and triumphal reinstatement rests upon the Archbishop’s awe not only of the Papal letter, but of Guðmundr’s ability to secure it with only a rude Icelandic country-priest as his envoy. Again, the play of receding Centres, Rome > Norway > Iceland, has the same linguistic undertow as the story of Lárentíus and the Flemish cleric, and it

is because of this undertow that the question of language also surfaces in this text.

Particularly striking is the scarcity of comment in the sagas on communication problems in the Norse colonies in Ireland; Irish is of an entirely different stock from the Germanic languages, and explicit interpretation must have been necessary. Bilingualism must have been common. This is quite a different situation from that pertaining in England where various dialects of the two languages, English and Norse, would have overlapped and shaded into each other, with children from mixed marriages speaking a blended variety. In Ireland, children from mixed marriages would grow up speaking either or both of their parents' languages. But this is rarely a talking point in the sagas which deal with events in Ireland. Thus towards the end of *Njáls saga* a number of Icelanders take part in the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, where the Irish high king Brian Boru fought an Irish-Norse alliance lead by the king of Dublin. One of the Icelanders, Þorsteinn Síðu-Hallsson, is retreating in the rout as the Dublin alliance flees from the battle, and as he stops to tie his shoelace he is overtaken by King Brian's foster-son Toirdelbach, whose name is Icelandicized in the *Njáls saga* as 'Kerþjálfaður':

- 2\14 Þorsteinn Síðu-Hallsson nam staðar þá er allir flýðu aðrir og batt skóþveng sinn. Þá spurði Kerþjálfaður hví hann rynni eigi. “Því,” sagði Þorsteinn, “að ég tek eigi heim í kveld þar sem ég á heima út á Íslandi.” Kerþjálfaður gaf honum grið.
(*Njáls saga* chap. 157, *ÍS* I:340)

'Þorsteinn Síðu-Hallsson stopped as everyone else was fleeing and tied his shoe-lace. Kerþjálfaður asked him why he wasn't running. Þorsteinn said, "Because I'll not get home this evening in any case; my home is in Iceland." Kerþjálfaður granted him his life.'

Unlike the linguistically ostensive episode of the priest in Rome, this has to be read with a certain suspension of belief: does Toirdelbach speak Norse, or does the Icelander speak Irish? The answer, I suggest, is that the point is not problematized in the text: the writer does not consider it important, any more than the weather or the terrain.

Helgi Guðmundsson (1997) deals at length with examples of Norse-Irish contacts as they are recorded in the Icelandic sources, particularly with the wealth of Irish and Norse personal names in both Icelandic manuscripts and Irish manuscripts. His book is a massive catalogue of data and he uncovers a number of threads of identity previously unrecognized, but is not concerned with the linguistic relationships involved. He mentions for instance the Icelandicization

of *Toirdelbach* to *Kerþjálfaður* without pointing out the high degree of phonological relationship: Irish -rd-lb corresponds to Icelandic -rþ-lf: the liquids *r* and *l* are unchanged, while both the lenis stops become equivalent fortis fricatives. He suggests however a plausible reason for the erratic change in the first consonant: T has been misread as C (they have similar shapes in Irish script); perhaps since he is writing in Icelandic he finds it unnecessary to mention that, typically, the Icelandic name can be analysed into incongruent elements: *ker* means ‘a tub’, and *þjálfaður* means ‘trained’, which is either burlesque or meaningless. The Irish name seems to be drawn from *tóir* ‘pursuit’ and *delbach* ‘formed’, i.e. ‘pursuit-like’—an appropriate name for Kári’s pursuer. While *þjálfaður* ‘trained’ and *delbach* ‘formed’ have semantic affinities, *ter* has no meaning in Icelandic: thus the change from *T* to *K* may simply be a burlesque—or perhaps normative—device.

Guðmundsson’s wealth of data demonstrates the bilingual situation in the Norse-Irish areas, the blend of races within the same family, with Norse names in Irish and Irish names in Norse. I suggest that this setting provides us with a template for the less visible Old English/Old Norse interface that was no less a characteristic of large areas in the North and East of the British Isles.

Laxdæla saga provides a rare example of the question of language being integral to the narrative. Höskuldur Dala-Kollsson returns to Iceland with an Irish slave Melkorka, who pretends to be dumb until Höskuldur overhears her talking to their child. The narrative does not state clearly that she was speaking to her son in Irish, but seems to hint that Höskuldur found the conversation unintelligible:

2\15 Það var til tíðenda einn morgun er Höskuldur var genginn út at sjá um bæ sinn. Veður var gott. Skein sól og var lítt á loft komin. Hann heyrði mannamál. Hann gekk þangað til sem lækur féll fyrir túnbrekkunni. Sá hann þar tvo menn og kenndi. Var þar Ólafur son hans ok móðir hans. Fær hann þá skilit at hún var eigi mállaus, því að hún talaði þá mart við sveinninn. (*Laxdæla saga* chap. 13; ÍS III:1548)

‘It happened one morning that Höskuldur was out inspecting the farm. The weather was fine, the sun shining and still low in the sky. He heard the sound of someone talking, and went over to where a stream ran down the slope at the foot of the hayfield. There he saw two people and recognized them as his son Ólafur and his mother; he realizes⁴⁹ then that she was not mute, for she spoke many things to the boy.’

⁴⁹ Abrupt changes of tense from past to narrative present are a feature of the prose style in the sagas.

The narrator's use of the verb 'realizes' (*fær skilit*, literally 'is able to discern') seems to refer to the fact that although he realizes she can talk, he does not understand what she is saying. Later it becomes clear that Melkorka had taught her son Irish, however, for in a rare passage of explicit linguistic comment we find her sending her son to Ireland with the words:

2\16 Heiman hef ég þig búið svo sem ég kann best ok kennt þér írsku að mæla, svo at þig mun það eigi skipta hvar þig ber að Írlandi. (*Laxdæla saga* chap.20; *ÍS* III:1560)

'I have prepared you for leaving home as well as I can, and taught you to speak Irish, so that it will not matter to you where you make land in Ireland.'

Melkorka's point here is that her son will be able to make himself understood whether he lands in Irish-speaking or Norse-speaking areas of Ireland; but it is also possible to read into the passage a reference to the fact that, like Norse, Irish was composed of many dialects, and that in spite of this Melkorka expected her son's Irish to serve wherever he landed.

There may well be a wealth of lost Irish intertextualities in the Icelandic family sagas. Here is one of them: Guðrún Ósvífursdóttir is the non-eponymous hero of *Laxdæla* (none of the sagas are named after women); she is betrothed to Kjartan who sails to Norway and tarries there too long, for when he returns to Iceland she has married his foster-brother Bolli. A feud develops between the two men, and Guðrun eggs Bolli on to kill Kjartan. Bolli is then killed in revenge by Kjartan's brothers. At the end of her life, Guðrún's son asks her which of the men in her life she loved best, and her antithetical reply has rung down the centuries as one of the most memorable quotes from the sagas: *Þeim var ek verst er ek unna mest* 'to him was I worst that I loved most'. I suggest that this ambiguous answer is a reference to a ninth-century Irish lyric known as Líadan's Lament (Murphy 1956:82).⁵⁰ As it happens, *Laxdæla* shows the strongest Irish element of the major Icelandic family sagas, starting with an account of the only woman chieftain among the settlers of Iceland, and one of the very few Christians, Unnur⁵¹ djúpúðga ('the deep-minded'), who came to Iceland from Scotland with a mixed Norse and Irish retinue. Guðrún's great-great grandfather was Unnur's brother, and Kjartan and Bolli are descended from Unnur. Kjartan's father is none other than the Ólafur who, as we saw in

⁵⁰ This suggestion is discussed in greater detail in Knútsson (2003).

⁵¹ In *Laxdæla* her name is given as Unnr; other sources call her Auður. The correlation between -ð- and -nn- is the same as that between *yða* and *unnir* discussed in on p. 157.

2\16, was taught Irish by his mother. Irish names abound among the settlers and their descendents: Kjartan is one of them. Guðrún's father's name, Ósvífr, clearly echoes the name Oswiu⁵² borne by the 7th-century king of Anglo-Saxon Northumbria who supported the Irish Christianity of Aidan's mission in Lindisfarne against the rival Roman rites; Oswiu was educated in the Irish monastery in Lindisfarne. It is not at all unlikely that Irish was still spoken at least sporadically in Breiðafjörður in Guðrún's time, perhaps by women who tended her as a child and sung to her in Irish, and there is no reason why she would not have known at least snatches of Líadan's Lament. At any event her famous words plainly echo the striking third line of the lament: *an ro carus ro cráidius* 'whom I loved I hurt'. This does not of course necessarily mean that the allusion was still actual for the thirteenth century writer and readers of the saga, two hundred and fifty years after the events it narrates; but the words are there, and resound to this day for those who can hear them.

2.4 Literacy

None of the cases of interlingual or interdialectal interpretation discussed so far involve written originals. The writing of English began with the Alfredian school in the late ninth century, while Icelandic saga-writing did not begin until the twelfth century, at least two hundred years after most of the events described. The mode of composition of the *dróttkvætt* poetry recorded in the sagas is explicitly oral. It is not until the Germanic dialects attain the necessary measure of literacy for textual transmission to become commonplace, that we can observe the effects of dialectal variegation at first hand.

When a previously illiterate culture first enters into literacy, the magnitude of this change can hardly be overestimated. Lévi-Strauss's documentation (1989: 295-304) of the attitudes of an illiterate society towards the mystery of writing suggests that what seems to us the obvious, logical connection between the spoken and the written word, is not a natural intuition. Instead of seeing writing as a medium of communication, the illiterate society locates it within the realm of power. For it is as a feature of this threatening dimension, an aspect of an apparently superior language and culture, that members of illiterate societies first experience the power of writing. The early Germanic peoples' first experience of writing in the sense we know it today was

⁵² Oswiu's brother's name Oswald, like other Old English names in Os-, is formed from *os* 'god' and *wald* 'rule, power', while Ósvífr comes from *ó* 'un-' and *svíf*- 'show mercy', thus 'unmerciful'. The echo is not etymological, and if there is a connection it seems the Icelandic is a reanalysis of the original along the same lines as names such as Angantýr and Játgeir (see footnote 31 on p. 32). I am not able to trace the element *-wiu*, and wonder if it exists as Anglo-Saxon root; perhaps the name has a Celtic origin.

as an accoutrement of Roman military technology.⁵³ Later, as a feature of the administrative authority of the Church, writing was confined to Latin, the language of learning and education, and continued to be an arcane mystery for the illiterate majority.⁵⁴

Contemporary sources indicate that the Latin alphabet was first applied to English as part of Alfred's campaign to restore the fabric of society after the ravages of the Vikings in the ninth century. The formulation of a viable phonological and graphological encoding for an unwritten language, the adaption and expansion of the Latin alphabet, was no simple task. Although we do not find unambiguous evidence of the turmoil of its inception in the Alfredian texts, it is quite obvious that the scribes of the time were unaccustomed to constructing English prose, and lacked the overview and structural organisation of later writers. Alfred's first scribes were scholars whose writing skills had been acquired with their Latin; in applying these skills to their own language they had to strike their own roads through the wilderness. To add to their difficulties, there was no single established version of English to aim at. Alfred gathered scholars from many different places and this would also have been true of most mediaeval scriptoria since men of letters necessarily had a variety of backgrounds and native dialects.

Initially, most of the work of English scribes would have been translations and copies of translations of Latin texts. Later would come the creation of original English texts, and, later still, the archiving of selections of the enormous body of oral poetry which had been handed down by word of mouth for generations. As more and more of the body of Germanic and particularly Old English verse came to be committed to vellum the groundwork was being laid for the qualitative change in poetic art which comes when poets first begin to oust their creations from the fluid womb of their memories and to fossilize them into marks on paper. The poem is no longer a dynamic entity whose sole domain is the minds of men and women, whose life depends on their life: instead it

⁵³ I am ignoring here the existence of the native Germanic writing system, the runic alphabet. For the early Germanic peoples this was also an instrument of power, and thus consistent with Lévi-Strauss's account. It appears, at least in the earliest times, before the Latin alphabet became established, to have been used by the initiate as an arcane mystery, the runic staves having magical properties which were at least as important as their sound-values. Egill Skallagrímsson, the Icelandic poet-warrior who sang for Athelstan, used runic magic against his enemies (*Egils saga* chap. 58, *ÍS* 1:452).

⁵⁴ Modern Western levels of literacy are often grossly over-estimated, for the illiterate sectors of the community now form a largely hidden minority, and their attitude to writing as an arcane mystery is compounded by their low marginal status in such a society (around 1 million Danes, in a country with a high level of literacy, suffer from dyslexia or other reading disabilities (*Politiken* 12 April 2000, 3.Sektion p.1). The modern level of computer-literacy provides a closer parallel to the medieval situation: those without knowledge of computers today see them as machines with almost supernatural abilities—a fact ruthlessly exploited by the advertisements.

acquires its own independent existence. It can now be lost or forgotten and still live on; for the first time it can be transmitted virtually unchanged from one person to another; the concept of the *copy* is born.

We do not know how much of the original oral corpus of Old English poetry ever came to be archived in this way. Some 30,000 lines have survived, virtually all contained in four manuscripts dating from the end of the tenth century. Most interesting for the present discussion is the striking level of standardisation of the language in which they are written. Although it is fairly easy to find spellings which point to diverse origins, either of the original poems or of the dialects of the scribes, the language is predominantly that of late West Saxon. We cannot tell for sure to what extent the manuscripts are copies of earlier written texts, or the products of literate or non-literate poets. There are clear indications, both in form and content, that some of the material was originally oral. But English is a fully literary language by the time of these manuscripts, with remarkably stable orthographic traditions, and much of the poetry displays the unmistakable stamp of literary composition. Many of the texts show evidence of dialectal adjustment, and it is clear that the surviving manuscripts were often copied from texts in other dialects, or had passed through the hands of scribes with varying dialectal backgrounds. Klaeber (1950) characterizes the extant text of *Béowulf* as displaying ‘on the whole West Saxon forms of language, late West Saxon ones predominating, with an admixture of non-West Saxon, notably Anglian, elements’ (lxxi). He assumes that the text was copied a number of times, and that ‘scribes of heterogeneous dialectal habits and different individual peculiarities had a share in the work’ (lxxxvii-ix); he finds evidence of early and late West Saxon, Northumbrian, Mercian, Kentish and Saxon influence, but makes a final decision in favour of Anglian origin on the evidence of ‘groups of Anglian forms and certain cases of faulty substitution’ (lxxxiv). Whether or not we can speak of a conscious centripetal tendency towards standardisation in this chain of transmission, it is clear that each scribe would tend to normalize what were for him unusual dialectal forms, and this would be not only a process of conscious editing but also a result of his having acquired certain habits of spelling as the encoding process had become a more or less automatic one.

2.5 Case studies

It is time we looked at some examples of intimate transmission. I shall discuss three texts in this chapter, two of them usually referred to as translations, and the third an example of cross-dialectal copying. The two translations are separated by a millennium; the first is the Old English fragment known as *Genesis B*, found in a late 10th-century manuscript, and usually referred to as a

translation of an Old Saxon poem. The second is Martin Næs's (1983) translation into Faeroese of the contemporary Icelandic poet Snorri Hjartarson's volume of poetry *Hauströkkrið yfir mér* (1979). The third is an example of medieval manuscript variation, a short poem known as *Cædmon's Hymn*, composed in Northumbrian English in the 7th century and found in a number of manuscripts in two dialects, Northumbrian and West Saxon. I shall compare the processes of textual transmission evident in these texts in the hope of throwing light on Schleiermacher's explicit and Steiner's implicit statements concerning the essential sameness of intimate and mainstream translation.

2.5.1 Genesis

In 1875 the German scholar Edward Sievers pointed to unmistakable evidence of underlying continental Saxon forms in a section of the Anglo-Saxon poem *Genesis* (Sievers 1875), and suggested that this part of the text, which has since been known as *Genesis B*, was a translation from a lost continental Saxon original.

Sievers's work in this field is paralleled by Klaeber's. Both find linguistic evidence in their texts for the existence of earlier versions in different varieties of language: Klaeber for dialects within the British Isles, Sievers for a language on the Continent. Sievers's is the more striking, however, since his conclusions were dramatically confirmed some twenty years later when a fragment of an Old Saxon *Genesis*, corresponding to 27 lines of the Old English poem, was discovered in 1894 in the Vatican library.⁵⁵ It is clearly a version of the same text, with almost word-for-word correspondence with the Old English.

Ever since, *Genesis B* has been referred to as a 'translation' from the Old Saxon original. A representative example is Capek (1971), who produces evidence to support his thesis that the translator of *Genesis B* was a Continental Saxon. Citing a number of syntactic aberrations in the OE text which point to Saxon interference, he asks

2\17 who would be more likely to make such slips, an Anglo-Saxon translating out of a closely-related dialect into his own, or a Continental Saxon translating out of his own into a closely-related dialect which he knew imperfectly? Certainly the latter is the more attractive alternative (91-92).

While the doubtful question of the translator's origins is not our concern here, Capek's own reservations are instructive:

⁵⁵ A fuller account of Sievers' findings, of earlier comments on unusual language in *Genesis*, and of the Vatican discovery, are to be found in Capek (1971).

2\18 The number of extant OE texts is small, the number of OS texts very small indeed, and perhaps, were the respective corpora larger, what I have cited here as features of syntax which are irregular in OE might be explained otherwise. (93)

Unfortunately, however, he goes on to reject this wise observation, suggesting instead that ‘larger corpora would support rather than modify a conclusion ... in favour of a Continental Saxon translator’ (93), in that they would continue to emphasize the aberrant quality of the syntax of *Genesis B*.

While this delightful area of speculation, the lost poetry of Anglo-Saxon England, is hardly avoidable in discussions of OE textuality, we should perhaps objectify it a little by better defining the extended corpora that we dream of. The surviving OE poetry is confined to a remarkably narrow range of dialects; if we look to lost poetry within this norm we might well accept Capek’s conclusion, for *Genesis B* will probably remain textually aberrant. If, however, we conjure up a wider range of insular dialects we may find that our present appraisal of *Genesis B* is a result of the striking dialectal purity of the extant corpus rather than any particular characteristic of *Genesis B*.

I shall borrow one of Capek’s examples to illustrate my point. One of the features which distinguishes Germanic from other Indo-European language families is the development of two parallel adjectival declensions, known as weak and strong; the strong form occurs when the qualified noun is indefinite (*a green field*), while the weak is used with a definite noun (*the green field*). All the modern Germanic languages except English retain this distinction; German for instance has *ein grünes Feld* but *das grüne Feld*. Capek notes that *on þissum fæstum clomme* ‘in this tight fetter’ in verse 408a of *Genesis*, the OE text follows OS in using the strong form of the adjective after *þis*; normally we would expect *on þissum fæstan clomme* with the adjective weak.

While this may well be a syntactic calque from Old Saxon, we cannot assume with Capek that the form would necessarily be felt to be alien by an Anglo-Saxon. Capek quotes Holthausen (1921, §352b) to the effect that weak and strong forms of adjectives are used *indiscriminately* in OS in this position; but in fact this can only mean that no significant difference of usage or meaning can be discerned in the OS texts, which is hardly surprising, given the diminutive size of the corpus. It is in fact not very likely that such a complex morphosyntactic feature would have an indiscriminate function in any language.

As it happens, exactly the same situation occurs in modern Icelandic, where the main rule is the common Germanic one, weak adjectives being used with definite nouns and strong with indefinite; but there is also an option allowing strong adjectives with definite nouns under certain conditions, partly

stylistic, including collocations with *þessi* ‘this’. Thus Icelandic allows both 2\19a and b:

- 2\19a þessi skynsama stúlka ‘this sensible[WEAK] girl’
 b þessi skynsöm stúlka ‘this sensible[STRONG] girl’

The usage is not indiscriminate, however, but rather involves a clear, if subtle, difference of signification: in the former, the normal, unmarked form, the adjective is used restrictively as an identifier (it is the *sensible* girl we are talking about, not some other), while in the second it is non-restrictive and interpretative: the girl’s being sensible is new information.⁵⁶

The difference between these two usages is thus stylistic. Its functional load is however minimal and not easily deduced from context; if Icelandic were not a living language we might well describe it as a ‘rare optional form’. This means that if the same situation, or something comparable, were to hold for OS and OE, we would be unlikely to detect the stylistic significance involved.⁵⁷ When dealing with the subtleties of stylistics and poetic language we can rarely make watertight judgements of acceptability without access to native competence. In this case, the only indication of the acceptability of *Genesis B* that we can take for granted is its inclusion in a native insular manuscript. The echoic examples that Capek adduces do not indicate an aberrant translation made by a Saxon with faulty English; they are inevitable features of intimate transmission.

This being so, the real differences between Klaeber’s *Béowulf* and Sievers’s *Genesis B* are, firstly, that the ‘original’ Anglian (or whatever) text of *Béowulf* has not yet been found in the Vatican library (perhaps the last place left

⁵⁶ The use of strong adjectives where one would expect weak is noted but hardly discussed in the best-known Icelandic grammars of the 20th century. Thus Noreen (1923:288): ‘...sonst kommt fast überall die starke flexion zur anwendung’. Both Kress (1963:102) and Einarsson (1949:116) mention only the use of weak adjectives with nouns with the suffixed definite article: Kress says that the strong form occurs ‘in beschreibende Funktion’ while Einarsson calls this usage ‘vivid literary style’. Smári (1920:65-66) speaks of strong adjectives following *þessi* ‘in exclamations and similar expressions’ (*í upphrópunum og líkum orðatiltækjum*) such as *í þessari blessaðri tíð* ‘in this blessed weather’; this example shows that by ‘similar expressions’ he appears to be referring to the appositive use mentioned by Árnason below. Smári is the first to distinguish between the appositive strong adjective (*viðurlag*) and the attributive weak one (*einkunn*), but he does not mention the appositive adjective occurring in the typical attributive position in front of the noun, for his example is *að eiga við þennan mann einhentan* ‘to come to grips with this man [who is] one-handed’. Árnason (1980:1:44) adopts Smári’s terminology and gives examples of appositive strong adjectives preceding the noun with a suffixed definite article (*Gulur bíllinn valt ofan í skurð* ‘The yellow car [the car, yellow as it was] turned over into a ditch’), but does not mention the phenomenon following demonstratives.

⁵⁷ I disregard here, as does Capek (91, endnote 24) the question of scribal confusion of the endings -um and -an. I feel however that Capek is underplaying the issue by referring to it as a ‘spelling confusion’, for it is clearly indicative of the onset of a genuine linguistic merger. This may in fact be the real reason for the form at *Genesis* 408a.

to look for it); and secondly that while this ghostly origin of *Béowulf* is as English as the existing manuscript, the source of *Genesis B* was written on the continent. As with dialects and languages in general, the difference turn out to be political rather than linguistic, and anachronistically political at that. We are mistaken if we assume that 10th-century dialects separated by the North Sea were likely to be more diverse than dialects within the British Isles. Nielsen (1989, 116-120) gives modern examples of a lack of isoglosses (which delineate boundaries of dialectal features) coinciding with the sea-straits of southern Scandinavia and large waterways such as the Rhine, and points out that such waterways have in the past facilitated rather than hindered communication.⁵⁸ It is reasonable to suppose that communications between the continental and insular Saxons, two seafaring peoples sharing a common stretch of relatively sheltered waters, were at least no worse than overland communications between kingdoms separated by the forests and marshes of early England.

On examination, we find that the extent of linguistic shift between the Old Saxon and Old English versions of *Genesis B* is closely comparable with shifts found in insular transmission. To begin with, there is very high word-for-word correspondence between the two texts. The main gaps in this correspondence seem to be due to differences in metrical style within the common Germanic alliterative framework in which both Old Saxon and Old English texts are composed; this difference induces the Old English scribe to condense the text in places, omitting short structural phrases typical of the Old Saxon. I have intentionally chosen the following extract to illustrate a stretch of material with a high level of correspondence. The texts are given interlinearly, with the OS text above. Adam is addressing Eve:

2\20	Hu sculun uuit nu libbian, efto hu sculun uuit an thesum liatha uuesan, Hu sculon wit nu libban oððe on þys lande wesan, ‘How shall we now live or [OE omits:how shall we] in this country be,	805
	nu hier huuilum uuind kumit uuestan efto ostan, gif her wind cymð, westan oððe eastan, ‘when here [OE omits: sometimes] wind comes from west or east,	806
	suðan efto nordan; gisuuerk upp dribit, suðan oððe norðan? Gesweorc up færeð,	807

⁵⁸ This is an echo of Humboldt (1999:14): ‘For enterprising nations, the sea, indeed, has the power of easily connecting, rather than cleaving asunder.’

‘south or north; clouds mount up,

kumit haglas skion himile bitengi, 808
 cymeð hægles scur hefone getenge,
 ‘comes hail’s shower attached to heaven,

ferið ford an gimang, that is firinum kald. 809
 færeð forst on gemang, se byð fyrnum ceald.
 ‘fares forth in profusion [OE: fares frost among the multitude,
 i.e. the people], that is cold to men.’ (805-809)⁵⁹

Apart from the two insignificant omissions in 805 and 806, the Old English extract given here is an almost verbatim rendering of the original. There are some minor word changes, notably *liatha* \approx *land*⁶⁰ (805), *dribit* \approx *færeð* (807) and *ford* \approx *frost* (809), and we shall return to these discrepancies in a moment. For the most part, however, a formulation of the linguistic shift between the two texts would involve no more than a relatively simple and mechanical analysis of the surface (phonemic/graphemic) forms, and have very little to say about the semiotic considerations which lie at the heart of traditional translation theory, the Ciceronian distinction between word-for-word and sense-for-sense translation. Clearly, too, it would hardly extend to those aspects of translation technique whose inaccessibility is bemoaned by George Steiner:

2\21 We have in front of us an original text and one or more putative translations. Our analysis and judgement work from the outside, they come after the fact. We know next to nothing of the genetic process which has gone into the translator’s practice ... We cannot dissect, or only rarely. (Steiner 1975, 273-274)

In the case of *Genesis B* this difficulty is central to our investigation: our knowledge of the circumstances surrounding the production of the Old English recension as we have it is virtually nil. We do not know how familiar the *Genesis* scribe was with the continental Saxon dialect, whatever our evaluation of Capek’s argument. We do not know whether the scribe was translating from memory or making a simultaneous translation from dictation; nor, for that matter, how the Old Saxon text would sound if it were dictated aloud by an Anglo-Saxon. One scenario is however highly improbable, and yet it is the only one to which the term ‘translation’ as we usually understand it can properly be applied. This is the assumption that the scribe was working systematically and

⁵⁹ Both texts are quoted here from *ASPR* I, 27 and 171.

⁶⁰ My use of the wavy parity sign (\approx) between corresponding forms in different texts will be explained more fully in later chapters; see particularly page 83.

conscientiously in the way we expect translators to work, weighing his words and searching for the best rendition in his own tongue, and that the word-for-word nature of his rendition was the fortuitous result of this painstaking process.

It would seem that our use of the terms ‘translation’ for the *Genesis* recension, and ‘dialectal adjustment’ for insular examples of textual transmission, is prompted by other considerations. Scholars of Sievers’s time were deeply aware of national identity, and the possibility of a continental Saxon source for an Anglo-Saxon poem, not to mention the subsequent dramatic proof, had national and political overtones which were a far remove from the nascent national identities of continental and insular Saxons in the Middle Ages.

2.5.2 *Genesis* and *Hauströkkrið*

A fairly close modern parallel is the case of modern Icelandic and Faeroese. These two languages appear from their written forms to be close dialects, roughly speaking as close as Old Saxon and Old English. Icelanders and Faeroese can read each others’ languages fairly easily, thanks largely to the fact that the spelling adopted for Faeroese at the end of the nineteenth century was modelled on Icelandic. On the other hand there are extensive phonetic differences between the two languages, and Icelanders and Faeroese who have not been exposed to each others’ spoken languages find them almost completely unintelligible on first contact. This is part of the reason why their speakers think of them as different languages; but political and geographical considerations weigh at least as heavily. Both are island people, and the boundaries of their languages are sharply defined by cliff and surf; the gentle dialect continuum of medieval Scandinavia no longer washes their shores, and all outsiders now speak alien tongues. But the sharp identities of their languages are no less political: Iceland gained independence from Denmark in 1944 while the Faeroes are now, as I write this, negotiating independence; under such conditions no one speaks dialect.

Martin Næs’s Faeroese rendering (Hjartarson 1983) of the Icelandic Snorri Hjartarson’s Nordic Literary Award book of poems *Hauströkkrið yfir mér* (Hjartarson 1979; literally: *Autumn Dusk Over Me*) can only be thought of as a full translation, in spite of the closeness of the languages. It would be doing it an injustice to suggest that it was a particularly close translation (notice how ‘close’ inevitably assumes the meaning ‘too close, slavish’), and in fact much of Næs’s version is a thorough syntactic and lexical reworking of the original. There are however sustained passages where the linguistic shift between source and translation is no greater than we have seen in *Genesis*. Here is an example:

í litla krá, fyrrum sat ég hér
ungur að reynslu—Árin herfa
akrana sána, nú bíð ég rór.
(Hartarson 1979:16)

Sólgylt leyv á ljóara hyggja
í litla krógv, fyrr sat eg her
ungur og óroyndur—Árini harva
sáddu akrarnar, nu bíði eg í frið.
(Næs 1983:16)

‘Sun-golden leaves at a window look
in at a little alehouse; in past days I sat here
young in experience [Faeroese: young and inexperienced]
- The years harrow
the sown acres; now I wait tranquilly.’

Ignoring, as we must do in the case of *Genesis*, the differences in pronunciation, we find a background of word-to-word correspondence where the significant changes are inscribed only in the spelling, giving pairs such as *krá* ≈ *krógv*, *herfa* ≈ *harva*, of the same order as pairs such as *gisuuerek* ≈ *gesweorc* in *Genesis* 807. There is even a discrepancy in the use of weak/strong adjectives in the correspondence *akrana sána* ≈ *sáddu akrarnar* ‘the sown acres’ (line 4), where the unusual (‘stylistic’) strong adjective in spite of the suffixed definite article in the original is—unlike Capek’s example discussed above—not echoed by the Faeroese, which does not allow the strong form in this construction.

Occasionally, however, just as in the *Genesis* example, there are more radical changes. Thus *dribit* ≈ *fareð* (*Genesis* 807) is paralleled by *rór* ≈ *í frið* (*Hauströkkrið* 4). It is interesting that in both these cases the lexical change is not occasioned simply by a lack of lexical correspondence in the new language: the OS *dribit* (literally ‘drives’) has a valid OE reflex *drifð*, while the Icelandic *rór* ‘calm’ occurs in Faeroese as *rógvur*. In the latter case we have access to native Faeroese speakers who can tell us that *rógvur* is an unusual word which would strike a false note in the translation.⁶¹ But we cannot turn to native speakers of Old English to ask whether *drifð* would be an acceptable reading in the *Genesis B* example or whether it would be semantically unsuitable, implying, say, an image of propulsion too forceful for the context (‘clouds mount up’).

In *Genesis B*, however, there is another possible factor, introducing a complication which does not exist in the modern Faeroese/Icelandic example.

⁶¹ See, for instance, Young and Clewer (1985), where *rógvur* is marked as a rare word.

There is no indication—in fact it is surely rather unlikely—that the *Genesis* scribe was copying from the same manuscript that was discovered in the Vatican in 1894. Thus there is a question of textual variation: it could well be that the translator’s OS source had a form such as *ferit* instead of *dribit* in line 807, in which case the extant OE reading *fareð* would correspond exactly. Let us hold this possibility in abeyance for the moment.

If we turn to other examples of discrepancy in *Hauströkkrið*, an interesting characteristic comes to light. The Faeroese *hyggja* ‘look’ is the most straightforward translation for the Icelandic *horfa* ‘look’. Although not cognate there is a telling similarity between the two words: they are both verbs beginning with the letter h and having the same infinitive inflection -a. In *Genesis*, *liatha* ≈ *lande* (805) displays the same formal similarity, both words being monosyllabic noun stems beginning with l, having a stem vowel a and an inflectional vowel. *Liatha* is a minor crux: it is usually taken as a spelling variant of *liahta* ‘light’ (dative singular). The word occurs in the OS *Heliand* in the sense ‘the light of heaven’ (*lioht forletun* ‘they forsook heaven’, *Heliand* 2816), suggesting that the OS text here means ‘and how shall we remain here in heaven?’ This usage seems to have been unknown to the OE scribe. Possibly he assumed that the phrase *an thesum liatha* in his source was a misreading for *an thesum liudium* ‘among these people’, giving in OE *on þyssum leodum* ‘among these people’, which by a normal extension of meaning in Old English can have the force of ‘in this country’. Whatever the reason for the discrepancy, my point for the moment is that the quantitative phonemic/graphemic shift is the same as in the Faeroese example, *hyggja* ≈ *horfa*.

Similarity of form is even more striking in the case of the pair *ford* ≈ *forst* ‘forth’ ≈ ‘frost’ in *Genesis* 809. Again, the discrepancy may be due to variant readings in the scribe’s exemplar, but in this case a clear motive can also be adduced from the text. The immediately following OS phrase *an gimang* could well have presented problems to the OE scribe. It is an intensive adverbial phrase in OS meaning something like ‘in great profusion’ (cf. *slogun crud an gemang* ‘sprang up masses of weeds’, *Heliand* 2409). The OE *on gemang* has a different meaning, implying crowds of people (cf. *modig on gemonge* ‘brave in the throng’, *Béowulf* 1643). Thus the scribe was quite likely to have read the phrase *on gemang* to mean ‘among the people’ instead of ‘in great profusion’, and would fail to connect it with the ‘showers of hail’ in the previous line, which ‘fare forth in profusion’. Instead he would assume a different interpretation involving people, and would moreover find support for this interpretation in the following half-line: ‘that is cold to men’. This could well prompt him to edit, or misread, *ferið ford* ‘fares forth’ as *ferið forst* ‘fares frost’, and so create an image of ‘frost visiting the people’.

These two ‘translations’, *Genesis B* and *Hauströkkrið*, are widely separated in time and culture, and have totally different verse form and subject matter. Their similarities lie in the closeness of the languages concerned, and both display occasional gaps in lexical correspondence filled by non-cognate words with a tendency towards formal similarity with their sources. At first sight, however, this formal correspondence is complicated in the case of *Genesis B* by the possibility of textual variants. This is a complication we should examine further.

2.5.3 Genesis, *Hauströkkrið* and Caedmon

Two short Old English poems have survived both in their original Northumbrian versions and in their more familiar West Saxon recensions. They are known as *Cædmon’s Hymn* (9 lines) and *Bede’s Death Song* (5 lines). Here is *Cædmon’s Hymn*, with interlinear Northumbrian and West Saxon texts, the Northumbrian above (the poem was originally composed in 7th-century Northumbrian English⁶²):

2\23	Nu scylun hergan hefaenricaes uard, Nu sculon herigean heofonrices weard, ‘Now shall [we] praise Heaven’s ward	1
	metudæs maecti end his modgidanc meotodes meahte and his modgeþanc ‘the Lord’s might and his mind-thought	2
	uerc uuldurfadur, sue he uundra gihuaes, weorc wuldorfæder, swa he wundra gehwæs, ‘wonder-father’s works, as he each wonder,	3
	eci dryctin, or astelidæ. ece drihten, or onstealde. ‘everlasting lord, originally established.	4
	He aerist scop aelda barnum He ærest sceop ylða bearnum ‘He first created for people’s children [=mankind]	5
	heben til hrofe, haleg scepen; heofon to hrofe, halig scyppend; ‘heaven for a roof, holy creator;	6

⁶² *ASPR* VI, xciv and 107.

tha middungeard moncynnæs uard, þa middangeard, moncynnes weard, ‘then middle-earth, mankind’s ward	7
eci dryctin, æfter tiadæ ece drihten, æfter teode ‘everlasting lord; afterwards adorned	8
firim foldu, frea allmectig. firim foldan, frea ælmihtig. ‘for men the earth, lord almighty.	9

At first sight this seems to be an example of straightforward textual transmission with dialectal adjustment, consisting almost entirely of systematic phonemic/graphemic changes. The only morphemic change is a minor one: in line 4 *astelidæ* \approx *onstealde* have different prefixes, providing a parallel to *bitengi* \approx *getenge* in *Genesis* 808. Apart from this, there would appear to be no lexical discrepancies in the recension.

However, if we consider the question of textual variation, which as we saw was a potentially concomitant factor in *Genesis B*, a different picture emerges. In *Hauströkkrið* the two texts concerned are adjacent links in the chain, i.e. there are no variant readings and no need to postulate intermediate texts. In *Genesis B* there is a likelihood (but not a certainty) of intermediate texts and discontinuous variant readings. *Cædmon’s Hymn*, however, allows us to juggle with variant readings, since the Northumbrian version survives in four manuscripts and the West Saxon in thirteen. Together with *Bede’s Death Song* (which survives in at least 30 copies), *Cædmon’s Hymn* provides us with a rare opportunity for studying variant readings in Old English, while nearly all other Old English poetry survives in a single copy, or exceptionally in two.⁶³

I chose the Northumbrian and West Saxon versions quoted above so as to give maximum correspondence. If, however, we substitute some of the variant readings, a rather different picture emerges. Thus *aelda barnum* \approx *ylda bearnum* ‘children (dative) of people’ (line 4) appears in some versions of both dialects as *eordu barnum* \approx *eorðan bearnum* ‘children of earth’. If it had so happened that only one Northumbrian and one West Saxon manuscript had survived, we might have had the correspondence *aelda* \approx *eorðan* ‘of men \approx of earth’, which is

⁶³ The rather special case of the runic text on the Ruthwell Cross, which is an abbreviated form of some 14 lines of the text of the *Dream of the Rood* in the Vercelli Book (*ASPR* II), shows variant readings similar to those discussed here: *to þam æðelinge* \approx *æþpilæ til anum* (58), *forwundod* \approx *gewundad* (62). Both texts are given in Dickens and Ross (1934).

exactly the same level of discrepancy as *liatha* \approx *lande* in *Genesis* 805, i.e. a non-cognate pair with a strong similarity of form.

There are in fact two such examples in this short poem. Some of the West Saxon versions appear to stem from a single version made by a scribe who had not understood *tiadae* ‘established, created’ (line 8), which is orthographically rather different from the West Saxon form of the same word, *téode*. He seems to have mistaken the word for a version of *tida* ‘times’ and emended the half line to *æfter tida*, meaning something like ‘in later times’. This discrepancy, if it were the only surviving reading, would closely parallel *ford* \approx *forst* ‘forth \approx frost’ in *Genesis* 809.

2.6 A continuum of textual transmission

It seems then that we can make the following generalisations about these examples of textual transmission. Firstly, comparison of two texts in any one of these chains of transmission reveals a groundwork of common structure in the form of morpheme-for-morpheme correspondence with systematic phonemic/graphemic shifts. Secondly, this groundwork is occasionally broken by small changes in morphemic sequence, usually confined to single phrases; and occasionally morphemes or strings of morphemes may be added to or missing from the recension. Finally, there is a fairly even scatter of morphemic non-cognate correspondence typically confined to single morphemes or whole words, and characterized by a tendency towards formal similarity—in other words the transferred form ‘echoes’ the original: there is an erratic (might we say *nomadic*?), non-systematic playfulness at work which I shall argue is one of the essential movements of intimate translation. In chapter 3 (section 3.3) I shall apply the term *quasi-cognition* to correspondences such as *ford* \approx *forst* ‘forth \approx frost’ and *aelda* \approx *eorðan* ‘of men \approx of earth’.

It seems reasonable, then, to postulate a cline in the degree of similarity of surface form over any two stages of transmission, roughly corresponding to the level of cognition between the languages concerned. Furthermore, it seems intuitively likely that the level of non-cognate echoic phenomena is in some way related to this cline. And yet it is difficult to avoid the feeling that there are clear qualitative differences between some of the different types of transmission, and it is not easy to equate, say, Næs’s Faeroese translation with routine manuscript copying of the Middle Ages, without significant reservation. Let us look at some points which seem to challenge the idea of a continuum.

When an isolated lack of formal correspondence occurs in intimate transmission, this is often the result of factors which can be adduced from the surrounding text and what we know of the semantic content of the lexical items concerned. However this is by no means always the case. In the medieval texts

these correspondences are complicated by the existence of variant readings, so that we cannot tell whether the changes as we see them occurred at the moment of translation or are a result of the translator using a different source text from the one we have. At first sight this seems to weaken our analysis.

However, a moment's reflection will show that this complication is an artefact of the classification which assumes a distinction between translation and other more routine modes of textual transmission. The point about the disparities in, say, *Genesis B* is that whether they occurred at the time the recension was made or earlier, they occur *at some time in the process of transmission*. If necessary, we could draw a distinction between immediate textual changes, i.e. those occurring at one step between adjacent surviving texts, and discontinuous ones, where lost recensions appear to have existed between surviving texts so that we cannot tell at what stages the emendation or misreading occurred. This distinction is not as trivial as it may seem, since although apparently discontinuous textual changes must always have been immediate at some stage (*ford* does not change *gradually* into *forst*), loss of intermediate texts may create discontinuities which introduce significant instabilities into the process of transmission. The change from *æfter tiadæ* 'later established' to *æfter tíða* 'in later times' in line 8 of some versions of *Cædmon* is an example of a change which, in conjunctions with later misunderstandings, might eventually result in a radically altered text.

Such a distinction would, however, cut across any distinction between 'copying' and 'translation proper', for both immediate and discontinuous textual changes occur in both cases. For instance a translator may have made an intermediate draft which she later reworked without consulting the original. The concept of 'adjacent' texts in a chain of transmission is by no means cut and dried: a host of more or less ephemeral textual fragments may actually have quickened between two otherwise 'adjacent' versions. In any case the translation/recension is necessarily an intertextual phenomenon reflecting material from a variety of sources of which the text to be translated is merely the dominant one. In the same way variant readings in medieval textual transmission may well occur as spin-offs from conscious or half-conscious editorial processes. Just as we can say with some certainty that editorial considerations are a dominant factor in a modern translation such as Næs's *Hauströkkrið*, we cannot rule them out in any of the other texts. In fact, if we could extend our data to include oral re-creation at a pre-literary stage, an important factor for change there would certainly be editorial, an essential feature of the poet-performer's individual technique.

Another objection might be that I have chosen the passages from *Genesis B* and *Hauströkkrið* to offer as close a parallel to the Caedmon fragment as

possible, and that other passages from these texts show much wider differences: the full text of the Genesis fragment has occasional complete hemistiches of non-correspondence, while Næs's Faeroese translations of Hjartason's poems, although often fairly close, are on the whole much freer than the passage I have quoted. But although my intention is not to equate the degrees of linguistic shift evinced respectively by Genesis and Næs's translation, I think I can safely locate them both fairly close together on a scale of transmission types which assumes that the degree of non-correspondence in each pair of texts is indicative of the degree of closeness of the languages concerned. I shall return to this question in greater detail in chapter 5 (section 5.1).

2.7 Polarization

Today, national fragmentation and linguistic polarization are so native to us that we fail, in the main, to notice them.⁶⁴ The essentially arbitrary nature of many of the established norms of spelling, syntax and accident of modern standard dialects is often the result of an uneasy compromise between different dialects at the time when the concept of a 'correct standard' was evolving. For instance the Norwegian *Nynorsk*, a standard written dialect pioneered by Ivar Aasen (1864), uses the common Scandinavian form *barn* meaning 'child', although this form of the word hardly ever appeared in the spoken dialects upon which *Nynorsk* was based. The dialects had instead forms such as *bar*, *badn* and *ban*, and the form *barn* thus had to be imported from the older standard *Bokmål*, itself a compromise between southern Norwegian dialects and Danish.⁶⁵

The sociolinguistic situation in modern Scandinavia offers in fact telling illustrations of the unnaturalness of this polarity. The three mainland Nordic languages of today, Danish, Norwegian and Swedish, are probably no further removed from each other than the medieval English dialects. Yet the polarization of this dialect continuum into five or so national standard dialects (Norway has at least two, and Finland-Swedish is distinct from the Swedish of Sweden), each with its own particular and often arbitrary rules of spelling, syntax and accident, meticulously although rather inefficiently transmitted through the educational systems, results in a huge and ponderous machinery of systematic translation. And indeed the speakers themselves, exposed to the polarizing effects of their own media, are ever less prepared to cope with strange dialects, which they perceive as other 'languages'. The dialectal tolerance to which medieval sources bear ample witness would seem to them a state of Babel. Thus manufacturers of competitive consumer goods aimed at the Scandinavian market today have to make sure that nobody feels they are being neglected. Here is the

⁶⁴ cf the discussion in Chomsky 1977 190-191.

⁶⁵ See Haugen (1965). For *barn* in the Norwegian dialects see Christiansen (1946, 174-175).

blurb, in Danish, Norwegian and Swedish, on a single packet of disposable razors—in English it would read ‘Disposable razor with double blade’:

2\24 Engangsbarbermaskine med dobbeltblad
 Engangshøvel med dobbeltblad
 Engångshyvel med tandemblad

This is on a close par with the varying texts of *Cædmon’s Hymn*, and would probably strike a tenth century scribe as an incomprehensible waste of precious ink, all in one manuscript.

The modern European rarely encounters a written text in a non-standard dialect. Orthography is prescriptive and those who do not follow spelling norms find themselves at a social disadvantage. Standardized spelling involves the adoption of one dialect as a national standard; this dialect becomes dominant in society, and other dialects become sub-standard in their illiteracy. This suppression of literary dialectal variety entails a discontinuity of the medieval process of textual transmission involving dialectal adjustment and forces a polarization of the concept of textual transmission into two categories: literal copying (ideally without mistakes) on the one hand, and translation (ideally without surface interference) on the other.

2.8 Scriptor, auctor

In this study I shall proceed on the assumption that this discontinuity, this polarization, must not be allowed to intrude on our understanding of the machinery of textual transmission in its commonest modern form, translation between radically different linguistic varieties, the normalized national standard dialects. There is a fine sift of surface movement in all translation and all intertextuality, which has gone by a variety of names—metaplasma, paronomasia, *jouissance*, punning, wordplay, false friends, corruption. As we shall see in the chapter 4, this sift is ignored by mainstream translation theory, which is preoccupied with other movements, and we need to search carefully through the catalogues of minor languages and marginal translations in order to find examples of intimate transmission where this surface movement becomes dominant.

Roland Barthes discussed many years ago (in another age, and one which he was already outgrowing) the four literary functions established by the Middle Ages:

2\25 the *scriptor* (who copied [*recopiait*] without adding anything), the *compiler* (who never added his own material), the *commentator* (who only interceded in the copied text in order to make it intelligible) and finally the *auctor* (who

supplied his own ideas, always relying on other authorities).

For Barthes,

2\26 the critical vision begins with the *compiler*: it is not necessary to add to a text in order to “deform” it: it is enough to cite it, that is to say to cut it up: a new perception immediately emerges’ (Barthes 1964a: 76-77).⁶⁶

In this study, I shall retract the critical vision further: it begins with the *scriptor*, the scribe, who is ideally supposed to copy the text verbatim. Possibly he can approach this ideal with authoritative texts, those written in Latin (and observe his constraints: if he wishes to translate he must hide in the cowshed⁶⁷). But when working with texts in the vernacular he is always aware that the text is already a copy, for he can see its copied layers, its multiple substrate: an Anglian inflection here, a Kentish spelling there, a piece of nonsense where the earlier scribe had not understood the Northumbrian, or his mind had wandered out into the hedgerows. As *scriptor* he is always forced to compile, to comment, to write; the work of the scribe is *écriture*.

⁶⁶ le *scriptor* (qui recopiait sans rien ajouter), le *compiler* (qui n’ajoutait jamais du sien), le *commentator* (qui n’entervenait de lui-même dans le texte recopié que pour le rendre intelligible) et enfin l’*auctor* (qui donnait ses propres idées, en s’appuyant toujours sur d’autres autorités) (76-77) il n’est pas nécessaire d’ajouter de soi à un texte pour le « déformer »: il suffit de le citer, c’est-à-dire le découper: un nouvel intelligible naît immédiatement. (77)

⁶⁷ Oddur Gottskálksson is said to have translated the New Testament in the cowshed at the Bishopric of Skálholt in the 1530s. (Einarsson *et al.* 1988:xv)

3. *Béowulf* ≈ *Bjólfskviða*¹

3.1 Halldóra B. Björnsson

Shortly before her death in 1968, the Icelandic poet Halldóra B. Björnsson finished her translation into Modern Icelandic of the Old English *Béowulf*, which she called *Bjólfskviða* ('The Lay of Bjólfur').² Born on a farm in Borgarfjörður in the West of Iceland in 1907, Halldóra was the second of eight brothers and sisters, six of whom published collections of poetry (Björnsson et al. 1993). She herself had published two books of poetry (1949, 1952), a book of translations of Greenlandic and African poetry (1959b), and several prose works before embarking on *Béowulf*; two further volumes of poetry and a collection of essays were published shortly after her death.³ She was well-versed in medieval Icelandic literature and some of her published poems were in the Icelandic *ríma*

¹ Much of the material in this chapter is from Knútsson (1996b).

² The name *Bjólfskviða* was already in use by Icelandic scholars to refer to the poem. In the preface to his Icelandic translation of the OE poem *Widsíð* Stefán Einarsson remarks that it is high time an Icelandic poet attempt a translation of *Beowulf* ('Ekki efast ég um, að hagrðingar og skáld muni gera hér betur, enda ættu þeir að taka sig til og snara öllum ensku hetjukvæðunum og fyrst og fremst *Bjólfskviðu* á íslenzku.' Einarsson 1936: 184). Marijane Osborn (1968: 21) states that in an undated letter to herself Einarsson had mentioned his intention to introduce *Béowulf* to Halldóra Björnsson and to suggest that she translate it. Einarsson's own translation of the first 63 lines of the poem are kept in Einarsson's papers (uncatalogued) in the National Archives, National Library of Iceland.

³ A full bibliography of her works is included in the Bibliography. Björnsson's life and works are summarised in Einars et al. (1968).

(‘ballad’) tradition which has survived from late medieval times.

Halldóra Björnsson’s translation of *Béowulf* is an extraordinary work. She had little prior knowledge of Old English, translating directly from Klaeber’s (1950) edition of the poem, and certain of her solutions reflect her use of Klaeber’s glossary (see for instance her treatment of *hláford* below). She did not consult any translations of the poem.⁴ But native competence in Icelandic is possibly a better platform from which to learn Old English than any other modern language: the closeness of the two languages is apparent in an overwhelming (over 90%)⁵ identity of vocabulary and significant syntactic and inflectional similarities. While these similarities are not sufficient for sustained word-for-word metaphrastic translation, they allow many present-day Icelanders, with a some practice, to read simple Old English texts without great difficulty. Björnsson’s translation is thus *intimate* not only in the sense of the proximity of the languages that I discussed in chapter 2, but also in the sense of her close familiarity with the idiom, an almost palpable domesticity, at only one remove from her familiarity with medieval Icelandic. Her ear was tuned to the idiom of Old English in a distinct fashion, a decidedly, studiedly Icelandic textuality; there is no doubt that the words of the First Grammarian, ‘we are of one tongue with the English’, was for her an explicit reality.⁶

Occasional passages in *Bjólfskviða* can be found which fall into focus with the original in the same way as the passages from *Genesis*, *Cædmon’s Hymn* and *Hauströkkrið* which I examined in chapter 2: they are hardly more than transliterations of the original. Here is an example from line 656 (Old English in the first line, Björnsson’s translation in the second):

3\1 sipðan ic hond ond rond hebban mihte
 síðan eg hönd og rönd⁷ hefja mátti
 ‘since I hand and shield might lift’

⁴ She would of course have read Einarsson’s (1936) translation of *Widsið*, and among Einarsson’s uncatalogued papers in the National Library of Iceland there are two translations of the 19 lines of the Old English lyric *Wulf and Eadwacer*, one by Einarsson and one by Björnsson. Her lack of prior knowledge of Old English and the fact that she did not consult other translations are particulars that I have from her at first-hand. Einarsson’s copy of Klaeber’s *Béowulf* remains in Björnsson’s library, now in the possession of her daughter Þóra Björnsson.

⁵ In the first two sentences (11 lines) of *Béowulf*, 81% of the vocabulary have close Icelandic cognates with little or no change in meaning; another 11% are clearly related to Icelandic words of similar meaning, or to obsolete Icelandic words; 4.8% are clearly related to Icelandic words of rather different meaning; and only the remaining 3.2% have no clear Icelandic cognates. Note however that these figures are higher than those given in Chapter 6, section 5.1.6, which represent the level of cognation in the translation. For discussion on this distinction, see 5.1.0.

⁶ See p. 33.

⁷ Although *rönd* is a modern Icelandic word meaning ‘rim, edge’, only a dwindling minority of modern readers with a grounding in traditional poetic diction would immediately recognise it as meaning ‘shield’.

over the grassy ground. Most translators today would probably opt for a less ostensive communication of the poetic diction of the original, manipulating the wider conditions of discourse to distance the reader in a more subtle way from the register of prose narrative.

However Björnsson's choice of archaic diction, and her coinage *grasmold*, does not involve this stylistic shift. Instead it invokes a poetic tradition which flourished in Iceland until well into the 20th century; Björnsson's youngest brother Sveinbjörn Beinteinsson (1924-93) was recognized as an exponent of this traditional school, and some of Björnsson's poetry was also composed in this tradition.

3.2 Bjólfskviða and the Germanic corpus

It has long been an established view that the relative homogeneity of language and poetic style throughout the Germanic world in the pre-literate and early literate Middle Ages created a medium in which themes and stories and even whole poetic structures moved easily across geographical and linguistic boundaries. F.P. Magoun's extension of the Parry-Lord oral-formulaic theory to Old English poetry (Magoun 1963: 190) maintains that the inherited word-hoard of the Old English poet consisted to a large extent of formulae which could be re-used by singers during rapid extempore oral composition. Given the antiquity of this mode of composition (Magoun 1963: 193) and the close similarity of the early Germanic languages, later writers followed Magoun in assuming that oral re-creation of a poem would occur in much the same way in any of the Germanic dialects. Thus Niles (1983: 142) claimed that 'a hypothetical Old Icelandic or Norwegian poet setting out to retell the Old English story of Beowulf could probably have done so without overwhelming difficulty.'

This claim is couched in surprisingly unconditional terms, given the litotes; Niles seems to have overestimated the similarities between Old Icelandic and the continental Germanic dialects. The classical poetic texts of medieval Iceland are written in a language which has undergone a radical process of syncope resulting in widespread loss of syllables, and complete loss of prefixes. In Old English and other West Germanic dialects similar losses occurred, but they were on the whole less spectacular, and many prefixes were spared. Thus although the basic pattern of Germanic alliterative metre is still observed in Old Icelandic (and is in fact preserved unchallenged until the middle of the 20th century) the verse is denser and more highly syncopated.⁸

⁸ This simplified account of the differences between Old Icelandic and continental Germanic poetry ignores the further Icelandic development known as *dróttkvæði* whereby the metre became stanzaic and developed complex internal assonance and a sophisticated metaphorical and periphrastic diction. In her translation Björnsson frequently has recourse to the vocabulary, though not the metre, of *dróttkvæði*, which thus figures in many of the intertextual relationships discussed in this chapter.

Thus although medieval Icelandic does share elements of a distinctive poetic diction and some measure of a common poetic lexicon with other Germanic languages, a decisive bifurcation has occurred between the times of *Béowulf* and classical Icelandic poetry. Halldóra Björnsson's 20th-century Icelandic is close enough to Old Icelandic for her to fill the role of the hypothetical Icelandic poet that Niles suggests; yet in spite of the similarities discussed in 3.1 she also encounters quite considerable difficulties in her task of translation, contending with radical differences in style and diction.

3.3 Lexical gaps and quasi-cognition

As we have seen, word-for-word transliteration as in 3\1 can rarely be sustained for more than short stretches in the translation. However Björnsson shows a decided tendency to transcend the exigencies of formal cognation by employing a distinctive admixture of non-cognate correspondence which nevertheless retains a degree of formal similarity—in other words the non-cognate reflex in the translation ‘echoes’ the original. We have already encountered this tendency in chapter 2, in texts where non-cognate echoes typically occur when the language varieties of the source and the recension are close enough to enable the recensor to transfer almost mechanically as in 3\1 above: here and there the recensor will encounter a ‘lexical gap’, a word in the source that has no formal correspondence in the language of the recension: perhaps because it has been replaced by a non-cognate form, or its meaning or usage has evolved to make it unsuitable in the context. When this happens the recensor will normally supply a non-cognate form and retain the metaphrastic mode. The interesting point however is that the new form frequently bears a clear formal resemblance to the source, often beginning with the same or a similar consonant, perhaps with a similar vowel and a syllabic structure which echoes the original. I shall refer to this phenomenon as ‘quasi-cognition’, to be discussed in more detail in chapter 6 (section 6.8.3).

If we turn to *Bjólfskviða* we find frequent occurrences of quasi-cognition, although they can often be missed by a cursory investigation: at least two examples occur in 3\2, in spite of the fact that I was at pains to find an extract which demonstrated only straightforward cognate resonances. It was not until I was reviewing the first draft of this chapter that I noticed them: in line 3 of 3\2 there is echoic correspondence between *since* ‘treasure’ and *silfri* ‘silver’, to some extent prompted by the demands of alliteration, and between *-genga* ‘walker’ and *-gandur* ‘steed’, where there is no alliterative requirement in the metre. Neither of these corresponding pairs are cognates.

In the following sections I shall examine some typical examples of quasi-cognition in Björnsson's translation, and discuss their relevance as intertextualities.

3.4 Some echoic phenomena in *Bjólfskviða*

3.4.1 The term *hláford*

Björnsson's technique is well illustrated by her treatment of the noun *hláford* 'king, lord', which occurs 9 times in *Béowulf*. The word is the ancestor of the modern English *lord*. An earlier form *hláfweard* is recorded in the Old English *Paris Psalter* (civ.17), revealing the original meaning *hláf* 'loaf' + *weard* 'ward', i.e. 'keeper of the bread, head of the household'. The compound is not apparently native to other Germanic languages. The Modern Icelandic word *lávarð*,⁹ usually considered a loan from the Middle English *laverd* (see below), refers in Modern Icelandic almost exclusively to the British peerage, and so can hardly double as a reflex of *hláford* in *Bjólfskviða*.

The word first occurs in line 267, where Björnsson's original typescript is closely symphrastic:

3\3 Wé þurh holdne hige hláford þinne
 sunu Healfdenes sécean cwómon
 'We with sincere heart your lord
 the son of Healfdene come to seek (i.e. come to visit)'

Vér því heils hugar hleifvörð þinn,
 son Hálfðanar sækjum heim
 'We therefore with sincere heart your lord
 the son of Hálfðan seek at his home (i.e. come to visit)'

The translation here is smooth and idiomatic and free of archaisms except for the rather awkward compound *hleifvörð* 'keeper of the bread', the exact cognate reflex of the underlying OE form *hláfweard* (which Björnsson would have found in Klaeber's glossary). This compound is an unfamiliar coinage; although the modern Icelandic reader would recognize the two elements 'loaf' and 'ward' she would hardly associate them with the concept of lord or king, any more than would a modern English reader.

However the coinage did not survive the first draft. It was altered in the typescript, in Björnsson's hand, to *hlévörð*, another coinage which at first sight seems to mean 'protector, shelterer'. The first element *hlé* 'lee, shelter' is a non-cognate reflection of the first three letters of *hláford*, while the second element *vörð* 'warden, guardian' remains as the cognate reflection of the underlying OE

⁹ Icelandic strong masculine nouns are cited here in their inflection-free accusative singular form, contrary to usual practice, which is to give their nominative singular form which has the inflection *-r* in Old Icelandic and *-ur* in Modern Icelandic. This is to bring out the echoic similarity with corresponding Old English nouns, which have no inflection in the nominative singular form.

weard. Although just as unfamiliar, this form is decidedly less stilted. A pencilled note in the margin in Prof. Stefán Einarsson's hand reads *fer vel*, 'fits nicely', and although we cannot be sure that this does not refer to the original reading it seems more likely to be a comment on the emendation, among other things for reasons that should become clear shortly. Björnsson goes on to use the new word *hlévörð* for nine of the remaining ten occurrences of *hláford*, only once preferring the form *herra* 'lord', itself a weak reflection of *hlévörð*.

My term 'quasi-cognate' forces a pragmatic assessment of the phenomenon. It has of course a structural dimension in that it typically occurs embedded in a high density of cognate reflection; but its functional role appears in the translator's impulse to create a quasi-cognate term to fill a lexical gap in the language of the translation. In the case of *hláford* ≈ *hlévörð* the impulse may be said to be the ambient bias towards cognation in the translation, but this does not seem to be a necessary condition, since we find the same process occurring where no overt tendency exists.¹⁰ According to 14th-century sources the early eleventh-century Icelandic poet Óttar svarti spent some time at the English court in the early 1020's, when the word *hláford* was a regular form of royal address in English. Óttar later addresses the Norwegian king Ólafr helgi, who had been instrumental in restoring the English Ethelred to his throne, in the following words:

3\4 Comtu í land ok lendir,
 láðvörðr, Aðalráði
 'You brought to land and landed, lord, Ethelred'
 (i.e. you brought Ethelred to his land and established him there, lord.)
 Óttar svarti. Höfuðlausn v.8 (Jónsson 1912: 292)

Óttar's term of address *láðvörð(r)* 'guardian of the land', is a compound not found elsewhere in Icelandic poetry. The term is used here as a form of royal address in precisely the syntactical position where a retainer would have used *hláford* in Old English. The verse is first recorded in 14th-century manuscripts, and we have scant means of checking its historicity; but the echoic form of the word with its compounded stems *láð* 'land' and *vörð* 'guardian' is decidedly different from the established loanword *lávarð* which is no longer a compound but a single disyllabic morpheme (cf. Knútsson 1993: 100-103). Although Eiríksson (1977: 77) dates *lávarð* as '13th. century or even 1200', i.e. earlier than the manuscripts containing Óttar svarti's verse, the echoic quality of Óttar's *láðvörð* lends credence to its authenticity.¹¹ That Óttar's use of the word is

¹⁰ Cf. Knútsson (1993a) for a discussion of echoic phenomena in loanwords.

¹¹ Eiríksson's dating is based on the fact that since modern Icelandic still retains *hl-* as an initial cluster this would have been retained in the loanword if it had come from Old English (Eiríksson 1977: 76);

innovatory is supported by its apparent unfamiliarity: the verse exists in a number of manuscripts, and two variant readings occur, indicating uncertainty as to the original word. The variants are *landvarð*, of which the first element means ‘land’ while *varð* is anomalous in the same way as the later established form *lavarð*, lacking the mutated vowel of the native Icelandic *vörð* and echoing the open vowel of the OE *weard*; and *lávörð*, which again seems to anticipate *lavarð*. That the form *lávörð* is Óttar’s original reading can be adduced from the internal assonance of skaldic metre which requires *lávörðr* to rhyme with *Aðalráði*.¹² This 11th-century coinage is, then, an exact parallel to Björnsson’s *hlévörð*.

Other parallels can be found in Medieval Icelandic.

A *dróttkvæði* stanza in *Egils saga* records the (again, unique) form *lávörðuðr* as yet another poetic *heiti* for ‘king’; this is Óttar’s *lávörðr* with an added agentive suffix,¹³ and the 12th century poem *Harmsól* records the form *lávvaldr* with the same meaning, formed from *láv* ‘land’ and *valdr* ‘ruler’. Björnsson’s *hlévörður* thus adds to the flora of solitary echoes of the late Old English *lawareard*, of which only the Modern Icelandic *lavarður* ‘(English) lord’ has survived.

But this is not the end of the story. Björnsson’s *hlévörð* also calls to mind the appellation *hléföðr* or *hlæföðr*, which occurs as one of Odin’s names in Snorri Sturluson’s 13th-century *Skáldskaparmál* (Jónsson 1912: 681). At first sight this term means ‘lee-father’ i.e. ‘sheltering father’, with the same first element *hlé* ‘lee’ as in Björnsson’s coinage. However, Björnsson probably also had another meaning in mind: the element *hlé/hlæ* in *hléföðr* is considered by Magnússon (1989: 338 under *Hléfreyr*) not to be the modern Icelandic word *hlé* ‘shelter’, but either the obsolete *hléð* ‘famous’ or *hlæ* ‘burial mound’. Snorri’s *hléföðr/hlæföðr* thus means either ‘famous king/father’ or ‘lord of the dead’.

The formal similarity between Snorri’s *hléföðr/hlæföðr* and the OE

the *Oxford English Dictionary* makes the same supposition (*OED* under ‘lord’); this would then mitigate against the authenticity of Óttar’s *lávörð*, which does not echo the initial *hl-* of the OE *hláford*. But this dating overlooks the fact that OE at the turn of the millenium had acquired a fairly standard and rather archaic orthography while the pronunciation of the word had almost certainly lost the initial *h* and was probably approaching a form much better represented by the later spelling *lawerd*. Late OE forms such as *laford* (*Instructions to Christians* 235) support statements such as Brunner’s (1965: 42) that ‘Before consonants (*hr, hn, hl*) it [h] had already been lost in OE, except in Kentish, where it remained until the 14th century.’ In this respect Óttar’s *lávörð* is consistent with the spoken form he would have heard in England. The addition of the voiced fricative *ð* before the *v* is reminiscent of another Icelandic loan occurring in medieval *rímur* (‘ballads’): *afmor* ‘love’ from Latin *amor*, where *f* represents a voiced fricative [v]. These may both be attempts at rendering vowel-length in the donor languages at a time before vowel-length became tied to syllable-length in Icelandic (the so-called Icelandic *hljóðdvabreyting* in the 15th and 16th centuries.)

¹² Árnason (1987: 47) points out that the syllable final consonant (here *ð*) does not necessarily partake in internal assonance. This opens up the minor possibility that that Óttar’s original form was *lávörðr*, later amended to *lávörðr* under the influence of the assonance.

¹³ The added suffix is required by the metre: *Svá hefð leystst ór Lista / ladvardaðar garði* ‘In this way I escaped from the court of the King of Lister (Norway)’ (Stanza 11, *ÍS* 1:422)

hláford might be discounted as a coincidence were it not for the remarkable variant reading *hleifruðr* given by Jónsson (1912: 681), which Björnsson may well have had in mind. This strange term appears to be formed from *hleif* ‘loaf’ and either *röðr* ‘boar’ or *friðr, freðr* ‘peace, protection’; its meaning is therefore ‘boar/peace/protection of the loaf’. This incongruous name for the god Odin may, however, make a little better sense if we connect it with the Old English *hláfweard* ‘guardian of the loaf’, the underlying form of *hláford* which prompted Björnsson’s original translation *hleifvörð*.

Whether or not Björnsson had these forms consciously in mind when she progressed from *hleifvörð* to *hlévörð* is of course an open question; however it is clear that medieval Icelandic poetic diction is an essential ingredient in her choice of terms in *Bjólfskviða* and the critical justification for Stefán Einarsson’s laconic ‘fits nicely’ in Björnsson’s typescript.

3.4.2 Poetic formulae

3.4.2.1 Poetic formulae as intertextual quanta

Magoun’s assumption that the formulaic nature of Old English verse was an unequivocal indication of its oral origin was criticized by Benson (1966) on the grounds that formulaic diction was also characteristic of undeniably ‘lettered’ compositions such as the metrical versions of Boethius. My position is that since the only data we have access to is textual, we have no other option than to treat the poetic formulae as intertextualities in a process of literary textual transmission. I shall use the term ‘quanta’ to refer to the discrete surface forms of these intertextualities; the term which will receive further definition as the discussion progresses, but for the moment we can think of quanta as being strings of surface form which migrate between texts, and whose presence I signal with the wavy parity sign in formulations such as *weard* ≈ *vörð* and *hláford* ≈ *hleifruðr*.

In the following examples from *Bjólfskviða* an unavoidable issue has to be faced, although it is not central to the argument: that of fidelity to the source text. In several places in the translation a cursory reading would suggest mistranslation prompted by misassociation of lexis—the dreaded ‘false friends’ of the translator. Knowing as we do that Björnsson died before preparing her translation for print, it is easy to draw the conclusion that some of these apparently glaring instances reflect a lack of revision.

However the bent of her technique was towards the conscious use of surface reflection, and we can therefore expect her awareness of the dangers to be sharply tuned. Of those places in the translation where the charge of mistranslation may at first sight seem appropriate, most can be clearly shown to be intentional. The charge can of course be effectively dismissed simply by

appealing to the wider context of Björnsson's technique and her evident command of the language of *Béowulf* as a whole; more often than not, however, there is also ample evidence to be drawn from the isolated examples themselves that the 'mistranslation' is neither unconscious nor inept.¹⁴ For the present purposes I shall limit the discussion to two examples, the OE words *ellor* 'elsewhither' and *ellen* 'deeds of valour'.

3.4.2.2 *ellor*

The OE adverb *ellor*, glossed by Klaeber as 'elsewhither', occurs twice in *Béowulf*, on both occasions with the meaning 'to another unmentionable place', i.e. man's abode after death. On both occasions Björnsson's translation seems to ignore this meaning. Here is the first:

3\5 fæder ellor hwearf / aldor of earde
 '[his] father [had] elsewhither departed,
 the elder from [his] estate'

faðir aldinn hvarf, / höfðingi úr heimi
 '[his] aged father [had] departed,
 the chieftain from [this] world' 55-56

The correspondence *ellor* 'elsewhither' \approx *aldinn* 'aged' is striking, and it is easy to assume that Björnsson had mistakenly associated the OE *ellor* 'elsewhither' with Icelandic *elli* 'age'. The environment would appear to be conducive to misassociation, since the echo is embedded in the cognate *quanta fæder ... hwearf* \approx *faðir ... hvarf* 'the father ... departed' where the two texts are in verbatim correspondence.

Of course, it is likely that the similarity of *ellor* and *elli* played its part; but the suggestion that Björnsson misunderstood *ellor* to mean 'aged' does not stand up to investigation. We should note that the form *aldinn* in the recension is actually a reflection of two forms in the source: *ellor* 'elsewhither' in the corresponding position and *aldor* 'lord, elder' in the following half-line—with which it also has a semantic connection. Even if this were not so, however, the correspondence *ellor* \approx *aldinn*, so forcibly suggested by the correspondence of position, is fully compatible with the narrative equivalence of the two texts: the king *was* aged.

The second occurrence is even more striking:

3\6 duguð ellor sceóc
 'retainers elsewhither [had] departed'

¹⁴ See for instance footnote 137 on page 139.

dáð öll skekin
 ‘deeds all shaken’ 2254

The original OE text here is terse and powerful: the poet is describing the grief and loss of the sole survivor of a body of retainers who have fallen in battle with their lord. The verb *sceóc* is the past tense of *sceacan* ‘to shake’, used in *Béowulf* to signify either irrevocable, often violent, departure (death 2727, 2742, the end of the day 2306 or the end of winter 1136), or sudden ‘flashing’ arrival (of arrows over the shield-wall 3118, of daybreak 1802). The dark undertow of violence and finality carried jointly by the adverb *ellor* and the verb *sceóc* would present difficulties to any translator; a flat literal translation such as ‘the retainers had suddenly departed to another place’ is well-nigh meaningless in this context.

Björnsson again solves the problem by allowing surface association to work for her. All three words of the translated phrase are formal reflections of the corresponding words in the source. *Duguð* ‘body of retainers’ ≈ *dáð* ‘deeds of valour’ are not demonstrably cognate, in spite of their similarity; nor are *ellor* ‘elsewhither’ ≈ *öll* ‘all’, to which we shall return in greater detail shortly. Only *sceóc* ‘shook’ ≈ *skekin* ‘shaken’ are cognate, although they are not syntactically equivalent. Nor do they have any solid semantic correspondence in this translation, for the Icelandic verb *skaka* ‘shake’ does not carry the connotations of departure and directional movement of its OE counterpart. It belongs to a rather literary register in modern Icelandic,¹⁵ although the past participle *skekin(n)* ‘shaken’ is current with the meaning ‘shocked, disturbed’, similar to modern English. Its use in this passage to mean ‘broken, annulled’, although evident to the reader, is unusual. Interestingly, this is the only time that Björnsson uses the verb *skaka* to echo the OE *sceacan*, which occurs eight times in the poem.

This is an audacious rendering, reflecting the terse, dark power of the original. The reflection is concrete, quantifiable as a string of quasi-cognate echoic correspondences; and herein also lies its audacity, since Björnsson again lays herself open to the charge of misassociation. However felicitous a ‘free’ rendering of this sort may be, it becomes suspect as soon as echoism is detected. In this case, however, any such charge would miss a crucial point: in striking up a relationship between *ellor* ‘elsewhither’ and *öll* ‘all’ Björnsson is invoking—intentionally or not—formulaic patterns which were already established in the Old English corpus. Consider the following from *Béowulf*:

3\7 wig ealle fornam ‘war destroyed [them] all’ 1080

¹⁵ Except with the secondary meaning ‘to fish with a handline from a small open motorboat’.

ealle hie deað fornam ‘death destroyed them all’ 2236
 ealle wyrd forsweop ‘fate swept all away’ 2814

As echoic formulae, these are not strongly articulated: their formal affinities are the non-alliterating element *ealle* and the verbal prefix *for-*; also, they are all second halves of the double alliterative line. Thematically, they all refer to the death of a body of retainers, as does *duguð ellor sceóc* 3\6, but this in itself is hardly enough to connect *ellor* with *ealle* or Björnsson’s *öll*. However, elsewhere in *Béowulf*, *eal* is formulaically associated with *duguð*:

3\8 *duguð eal aras* ‘retainers all arose’ 1790

although this time the thematic affinity is missing. And looking further afield within the OE corpus we can find *duguð eal* with the death-theme of 3\6:

3\9 *duguð eal* gecrong ‘the retainers all perished’ (Wanderer 79)

The question must surely arise as to whether we can justify a terminological distinction between these two intertextualities, treating *ellor* \approx *öll* 3\6 as a ‘translation’ but *ellor* \approx *eal* 3\9 as ‘formulaic variation’. It would be helpful, perhaps, if we could show that Björnsson does this more often.

3.4.2.3 *ellen*

The first 3 lines of *Béowulf* refer briefly to the glorious past history of the Danes ‘in days of yore’. Björnsson responds to the formulaic character of the text by employing an established formula from Old Icelandic *Edda*:

3\10 *hú þá æþelingas ellen fremedon*
 ‘how those princes deeds of valour performed’ (3)

hversu öðlingar örlög drýgðu
 ‘how the princes [their] fate performed/fulfilled’

taking *örlög drýgja* ‘perpetrate fate/doom/war’ from the Eddic poem *Völundarkviða* (3.10).

At first sight we might hesitate to characterize *ellen* ‘deeds of valour’ \approx *örlög* ‘fate’ as echoic quanta; they have the same consonant-vowel profile VCCVC with phonological affinities between the medial clusters *ll* and *rl*,¹⁶ but

¹⁶ The clusters *ll* and *rl* are both typically pronounced [dl] in modern Icelandic; thus in reading the OE text aloud Björnsson might well have said [edlen] for *ellen*. This would not however be so in *örlög* where a morpheme boundary divides the cluster (*ör+lög*). However the cross-morpheme constraint was apparently weaker in the past and the [dl] pronunciation does occur in certain words today over

this is hardly distinctive. If however we examine the formulaic sets to which these phrases belong we find channels of much closer formal correspondence. The formula *örlög drýgja* of the Icelandic *Völundarkviða* 3.10 occurs in Old English as *orleg dréogan* (*Judgment Day I* 29). The following are examples of this formulaic set in Old English:

3\11

ellen fremman	‘enact deeds of valour’	<i>Béowulf</i> 4
ellen dugan	‘accomplish deeds of valour’	Andreas 460, Genesis 1288
ellen dréogan	‘perpetrate deeds of valour’	Riddle 58 1
orleg dréogan	‘perpetrate deeds of war’	Judgement Day I 29

(data from Bessinger and Smith 1978)

Here we have the same relationships as those we found between *ellor* and *öll/eal* 3\6 and 3\9. Again, we must conclude that Björnsson’s OE/Icelandic reflection *ellen* ≈ *örlög* also occurs within the OE corpus in the OE/OE form *ellen* ≈ *orleg*.

3.4.2.4 Some implications

These correspondences raise interesting questions regarding the recensor’s own relationship to her text, her own textuality. For although we have no clear evidence of the extent of Björnsson’s knowledge of original Old English poetry, there is some evidence that she had little time for further reading;¹⁷ thus there is a strong likelihood that she was unaware of the formulaic resonances she invokes within the OE corpus. This does not necessarily mean that we are faced with spontaneous occurrences of formulaic variation within the terms of the tradition and yet without direct access to it (although we should perhaps be prepared to examine this possibility), since Björnsson’s intimate knowledge of medieval Icelandic poetry goes some way towards explaining her involvement with Old English intertextuality. And yet we need to do more than simply point out these correspondences if we are fully to account for the migration of formulaic components between the Old English text and Björnsson’s translation, with its thousand-year discontinuity of time and culture.

3.5 Discussion

3.5.1 ‘A text must have an edge.’

The post-structuralist re-examination of the differential nature of (textual) identity has provided us with a conceptual matrix against which the phenomena

original morpheme boundaries (e.g. *fal+legur* ‘beautiful’, *Þor+lákur* personal name). These correspondences contribute to the echoism of *ellen* ≈ *örlög*

¹⁷ Björnsson told me that she was learning Old English from her work on the poem which, as the marginal dates in her typescript show, occupied most of her time towards the end of her life.

we have been examining can perhaps be charted. I wish to focus on one particular aspect of this matrix, one which is however by no means a post-structuralist innovation, since it reoccurs in the same distinctive form from Plato to Derrida: the interfacial nature of being, the all-importance of the edges. Thus Plotinus quotes Parmenides: *ejoin gair ejoin ti pelavzei*, ‘being borders on being’ (*Enneads* VI,4,4,25); and we can trace this same taoist-like emptiness of the middle through the Heideggerian *Dasein* — ‘Was er ist und wie er ist, das ist niemand’ (1992: 9)—to post-structuralism. ‘If we are to approach a text,’ says Derrida (1979: 83), ‘it must have an edge’.

But Derrida is not simply thinking of the chronological termini of text or récit, nor even of the ‘invaginated’ folds of the narrative which he explores in *Living on: Borderlines* (1979). He is building on the classic structuralist view of the entities themselves as empty nodes in a web of relationships, having existence only at their multidimensional ‘edges’ where they interacted with other such entities. Barthes (1964b: 216) establishes this point of view in clear-cut terms: ‘Toutes ces unités’, all the entities with which classical structuralism is concerned, ‘n’ont d’existence que dans leurs frontières’—betray their existence only at their frontiers, the interfaces at which perceivable interaction with other such entities takes place.

The implication is that the boundaries of a single text cannot be charted with integral contours. The text is ‘no longer a finished corpus of writing, some content enclosed in a book or its margins, but a differential network, a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself, to other differential traces’ (Derrida 1979: 84). However, if we disregard for the moment the implications of the adverb *endlessly* in this formulation (for which we have Derrida’s permission, as we shall see shortly), it is clearly possible to locate, as I have been doing in this chapter, local small-scale manifestations of these ‘edges’, discrete and quantifiable components of surface structure where textual interaction is actually taking place. An almost organic symbiosis emerges: not only are the identities of the texts articulated by the intertextual quanta we have been examining, but the quanta themselves assume their formulaic character only by virtue of their intertextuality. Without the inter- and intra-textual connections there are no formulae.

Of course this is a truism. It says no more nor less than that by calling *Bjólfskviða* a translation we are in fact suggesting that *Bjólfskviða* is not the only text in the world. The concept of *intertextuality* can indeed carry this commonplace meaning, referring simply to the explicit (or even implicit) references a text makes to other texts. But seen as a constituting principle of the whole text, *intertextuality* takes on further dimensions. ‘The intertextual in which every text is held, it itself being the text-between of another text, is not to be confused with some origin of the text: to try to find the “sources”, the

“influences” of a work, is to fall in with the myth of filiation...’ (Barthes 1977b: 160). Thus the relationships between the poetic formulae of *Bjólfskviða* and the formulae of other texts, the relationships which establish them as formulae, are essentially no different from the processes which establish the language of *Bjólfskviða* as meaningful language.

With this in mind, let us re-examine my use of the parity sign ‘≈’ to signal the link between intertextual quanta. The parity sign expressly rules out progression and expresses the non-sequential character of this link. My definition in 3.4.2.1 of ‘quanta’ as ‘strings of surface form which migrate between texts’ was inadequate insofar as the term ‘migration’ implies a progression. This is inappropriate for the largely non-sequential or peer texts of the OE corpus, where it is seldom practical to trace any direction of formulaic movement between texts. And even in the case of a clearly derived text such as Björnsson’s translation, the formulaic connections do not mark out paths of migration; instead they resonate in a dynamic, differential mosaic akin to Derridean ‘dissemination’. The intertextual conditions which identify the formulae in the Old English *Béowulf* have no intrinsic priority over the identifying conditions of Björnsson’s translation. Instead of indicating a flow, or translation of material from one to the other, the link ‘≈’ represents the mechanism by which the quanta exist as intertextualities.

The Derridean metaphor of the palimpsest might be invoked here: in Spivak’s words ‘the relationship between the reinscribed text and the so-called original text is not that of patency and latency, but rather the relationship between two palimpsests’ (Spivak 1976: lxxv). This reminds us that the erased texts beneath these two linked texts already include echoes of each other. But their relationship is not one of mere neighbourliness; it actually constitutes—together with a host of other such relationships—their very existence as texts. *Bjólfskviða* is a field of non-sequential interaction fuelled from a very large number of sources, of which the Old English *Béowulf* is dominant but not supreme. And for the modern Icelandic reader who turns to the original OE text after reading Björnsson’s translation, the reverse is also true.

3.5.2 The reader as arbiter

The concept of single, *discussable* reading brings us briefly back to Derrida’s formulation of the text as ‘a fabric of traces referring endlessly to something other than itself’. If we are at all to word the discussion, we must halt this *endlessness* by marking out with a stern if arbitrary gesture the horizon of our text, and with a process that Derrida following Nietzsche calls ‘active forgetfulness’ (Spivak 1976: *passim*; e.g. lxxvii) ignore for the moment the slippery nature of the post-structuralist vision and maintain that in spite of its complexity our field of interaction is stable enough for systematic examination,

and that definitive statements concerning limited areas of the field can be made using a consistent set of formulations.

Barthes (1977a: 148) maintains that the reader 'is simply that *someone* who holds together in a single field all the traces by which the written text is constituted.' Here again, the dimensionless totality of 'all' is the elusive focus of the concept; to pin it down we need some *ad hoc* limitation such as taking it to mean the personal *all* of the individual reader. But this is hardly enough, since there are necessarily readers who know their own *alls* to be fragmentary: in the case of Old English poetry, the text itself signals to the modern reader her incompetence in staking out a satisfactory field. And in fact, whatever the text, each reader generates a new and always limited field as she reads. The field constructed by the literary critic looking for formulae is not the same as that of the original audience of the poetry, although in both cases the field is composed of other texts, or other parts of the same text folded back as it were upon itself, superimposed in a single field of interference.

But as far as the burden of translation is concerned, the normal intercourse of interlinguistic administration, and also the greater part of literary translation, the source text is not a component of this field of interference. In most cases the translation is done for the very reason that readers have no access to the source. The field of interference which includes both source text and translation is the privileged province of the analyst, the literary critic. As I pointed out at the beginning of this chapter the stretches in Björnsson's translation of exact correspondence with the original are not marked off in any way in the translation, and the colourful field of echoic correspondences we have been discussing is not available to the average reader for whom the translation was presumably made. Gideon Toury (1980: 37) examines the possibility of regarding the literary translation as 'first and foremost *a given empirical phenomenon*, acquiring its identity by virtue of its position within the target literary system'. This approach necessarily sees the relationships between the source and translation as 'not only *secondary* to [the translation's] classification as a literary translation, but also *objects for study*, rather than basic assumptions' (original emphasis). This purposely limiting view of textual identity calls for a strictly pragmatic model of translation which ignores, as most readers must ignore, some of the more spectacular phenomena thrown up by the translation process. An example of such a model is Nida and Taber's (1969: 484) classical paradigm of transfer between texts at some underlying level, with transformations linking the level of transfer with the surface level of the text.¹⁸ This is a paradigm designed to eliminate transfer at the level of surface structure, the 'false friends' of the unwary translator, and while it may serve as an interim

¹⁸ Discussed further in chapter 4.

model of textual transfer for the hardworking translator whose concern is for those readers who have no access to the source text, it does not cater for readers who perceive the echoic phenomena discussed here, readers who have access to both source and recension. These readers activate fields of interference which we might call *source* ≈ *recension* fields. Nor does the Nida-Taber model accommodate the field of interference activated by the translator at the time of translation, a field which, while not identical with the field of the critical reader, may often be commensurate in several respects. And although *source* ≈ *recension* fields of interference are typically limited to critical readings they are nevertheless members of a large set of fields some of which are clearly integral to the reader/audience reception of a translation. The correspondences examined in this chapter between expressions in Björnsson's *Bjólfskviða* and other medieval Icelandic poems are indicative of a rich field of interference patterns which delineate the appreciation of informed Icelandic readers, and are, thus far at least, relevant to our ideas of audience appreciation of formulaic resonances in the original poem.

3.6 A model of textual transmission

'The lesson of recent critical history,' says Roberta Frank (1993: 101) 'that no text is an island, that every work is a response to a conversation or a dialogue that it presupposes but need not mention, was learned long ago by students of Germanic legend.' I wish to extend this pan-textual concept of discourse to include the surface form of the text, where responses to more or less distant echoes they 'need not mention' can be seen as quantifiable units of intertextuality. This approach treats echoic intertextual phenomena as properly relating to translation theory, and calls for a model of textual transmission which (1) does not need to accommodate transmission of semantically charged graphological-phonological material by reference to underlying structure, and (2) does not need to characterize echoic correspondences as transformation or sequential transfer of material. Instead, we need a model which (3) seeks to delineate a synchronic, non-hierarchic matrix of interacting quanta, accounting for the phenomena involved as interference patterns elicited by the reading.

4. The translator and the linguist

4.0 Non-direction

A recurrent theme in this study is that of non-direction, the triviality of sequence. Intimacy is a relation, not a journey; the pilgrim moves through dimensions that cannot be charted by the magnetic compass. In chapter 3 we found that textual transmission was not an ordered progression from text to text, and in chapters 5 and 6 this lack of directional movement between texts will be seen to be closely bound up with a non-directionality within the texts themselves, a disregard for verbal sequence within the clause. This chapter will consist of a detour into the clockwork of language, where we will find that whatever ticks there does not count out the seconds. Just as a denial of sequence between texts constitutes a denial of filiation, and establishes a parity between the quanta of intertextuality, a mutual enhancement rather than a debt, so we will find that intimate translation lays bare the myth of grammatical derivation, affirms the absence of filiation within the grammar of language. All translation, of course, hints at this conclusion; but intimate translation shows it to be inescapable.

4.1 The model

The last chapter concluded with a call for 'a model of textual transmission'. This immediately betrays my narrow 20th-century horizons, for the concept of the

linguistic model will surely not survive long into the twenty-first, or if it does then hardly in its present form. The Oxford English Dictionary first records this sense of the word *model*⁸⁶ in 1913, when Niels Bohr used it to refer to ‘a theory of the structure of the atom’; it becomes current in the sense of ‘mathematical model’ around the middle of the century. Chomsky uses it freely to mean ‘a representation of grammar’ in *Syntactic Structures* (1957), although the *OED* does not record the linguistic sense until 1973 (in *Scientific American*).

The building of abstract models to explain mental processes became the preferred strategy in the 20th century. We had dissected the human brain and failed to find there a recognizable assembly of logical machinery, and yet we still agreed with Pythagoras, Roger Bacon and Descartes in assuming that language (like all other natural phenomena) is built up on mathematical principles: *Ergo grammatica* (says Bacon) *dependet causaliter ex musica* (*Opus majus* IV.2). Historically, our ideas of how the human body works have always kept pace with current technology (I shall return to this point several times in this chapter), and as we entered the age of electronic digital processing, the abstract model was the obvious candidate. Its use was hardly seen to require any justification; a typical formulation from the generative linguistic community in the 1980s maintains that

4\1 it is useful to perform an analysis of what would be required to build a system that would produce the observed behaviour (Kosslyn 1988:1621)

where the ‘usefulness’ of the endeavour does not seem to have the sort of grounding in reality that laymen usually associate with the word. Linguistic models are judged solely by their ability to emulate limited samples of human language, with little account taken of the range or number of other possible systems which would do the same. The possibility—or better, the likelihood—that the model in question is nothing like the human language capacity is largely ignored; once the model has been drafted its workings are discussed *as if they were the motions of real language*. Very occasionally, linguists pause to comment on this anomaly, but can hardly discuss the matter in any depth since that would put a stop to their model-building. Chomsky has called attention to the possibility that we may never understand language: ‘It is not excluded that human science-forming capacities simply do not extend to this domain, ... so that for humans, these questions will always be shrouded in mystery’ (Chomsky 1976:25). This is as open an admission as it is possible to make that one’s efforts

⁸⁶ ‘A simplified or idealized description or conception of a particular system, situation, or process (often in mathematical terms: so *mathematical model*) that is put forward as a basis for calculations, predictions, or further investigation.’ *OED* 2nd Edn, ‘model’, sense 2e.

may well be vacuous.

Jackendoff (2002) responds valiantly to criticism of model-making. He acknowledges the extent to which linguists are working in the dark, given that neuroscience has little or nothing to tell us about how the brain deals with language; but he counters by asking ‘Should linguists just put all these sorts of study on ice till neuroscience catches up? I submit that it is worth considering an alternative stance that allows for insights from both approaches’ (Jackendoff 2002: 23). Although it may be true in certain cases, as the Icelandic saying has it, that ‘it is better to wave the wrong stick than none at all’ (*betra er að veifa röngu tré en öngu*), my point must be that whenever we rely on the model to verify our conclusions we are discussing not language, but the stick. To be exact: actual language can be used to justify the model, but extrapolations *from* the model are always suspect.

This chapter will first respond to the call for ‘a model of textual transmission’ by discussing the general character of the dominant linguistic paradigm of the 20th century, the generative model associated especially with Noam Chomsky, and assessing its usefulness for a description of translation—more exactly, of intimate translation. It will not be found to be very useful. Whether or not the alternative strategy proposed as the chapter progresses can rightly be called a ‘model’ remains to be seen.

4.2 The data

Before continuing, I shall summarize the phenomena that the model needs to address, concentrating on three examples from Björnsson’s translation, each of which illustrates a crucial aspect of the role of the phonological-graphological form of the text. All of them however raise questions concerning the mechanisms by which semantic material (or ‘meaning’) migrates between texts along purely phonological-graphological channels, independently of morphological or syntactic criteria, and quite often also independently of cohesive lexical criteria.

The examples are numbered 4\2, 4\4 and 4\5. The Old English text is given first, followed by Björnsson’s Icelandic translation. The two are linked by the wavy parity sign (\approx) as explained in chapter 3. In the first passage Hildeburh Hóc’s daughter, a Danish princess, is married to the Jutish king Finn, who is responsible for the deaths of her kinsmen. The poem goes on to recount the death of Finn at the hands of Hildeburh’s Danish kinsmen: the theme of the passage is the grim ethos of the ancient Germanic feud.

- 4\2 Nalles hólinga Hóces dohtor ... bemearn 1076 cf. 5\41
 ‘Not at all without cause did Hóc’s daughter bewail’
 \approx Hló eigi hugur Haka dóttur

‘Laughed not the mind of Haki’s daughter’
(i.e. There was no mirth in her heart)

The striking echoism of the underlined words *hólinga* ‘without cause’ (related to ‘hollowly’) and the unrelated Icelandic *hló* ‘laughed’ flags for the Icelandic reader a no less striking intertextuality from *Prymskviða*, the Old Icelandic Eddic poem dealing with Thor and Loki’s journey to Jötunheim, the Land of the Giants, to recapture Thor’s stolen hammer. When Thor regains his hammer he rejoices at the prospect of revenge for the theft:

4\3 Hló Hlorriða hugar í briósti
er harðhugaðr hamar um þecpi *Prymskviða* 30 (Kuhn 1962:113)
‘Hlorriði’s [Thor’s] heart [mind] laughed in his breast
as, stern of mind, he recognized his hammer’

The essential quality of the phrase *hló hugar* ‘laughs the mind’, i.e. ‘the mind laughs’, is one of mirthless rejoicing at the prospect of feudal revenge, a prospect which Hildeburh is denied. Thus the heroic character of the OE litotes *nalles hólinga* ‘not at all without cause’ in 4\2 is perfectly captured by Björnsson’s *hló eigi hugar* ‘laughed not the mind’. Projecting the figure into modern English we might say that Hóc’s daughter laughed a *hollow* laugh.

This example 4\2 is representative of a large number of similar echoes in the translation, many of which I shall examine in chapter 5; time and time again a phonological similarity appears to steer the translator towards an apt solution for a translation problem. Much of the time of course this echo is the realisation of an etymological relationship which sanctions the semantic connection; very often, however, there is no such justification.

In 4\4 the echoism is graphological rather than phonological:

4\4a nípende niht ≈ nótt niðdimm 547 (cf. 5\25)
‘darkening night’ ≈ ‘night pitch-dim’
b nípende niht ≈ niðmyrk nótt 649
‘darkening night’ ≈ ‘pitch-dark night’
c þrýðum dealle ≈ þreklega þrúðir 494
‘proud in their strength’ ≈ ‘stoutly magnificent’

The correspondences here involve the visual similarity between p and the OE/Icelandic letter þ, which in turn prompts ð, the voiced variant of þ. In Modern Icelandic þ, which occurs only in initial position, is pronounced similarly to *th* in English *think*, while ð has the sound of *th* in English *this*. Although it is probable that these two sounds also existed in Old English, most

Old English manuscripts (including the *Béowulf* manuscript) make no systematic distinction between the two letters. Thus Björnsson would be used to reading intervocalic OE þ as intervocalic Icelandic ð, in words such as Old English *griþ* ≈ Icelandic *grið* ‘truce’. This seems to have triggered the repeated association between OE *níp-* ‘grow dark’ and Icelandic *nið-* ‘lowest ebb, black night’, which are of course not etymologically related. This process is reversed in 4\4c, where the first letter of *þrýð-* ‘strength’ prompts Icelandic *prúð-* ‘proud, magnificent’.

There are several graphological echoes such as 4\4 in the translation, many of them linking the graphs o, ó and ö.⁸⁷ Although not numerous, they provide a crucial indication of the ability of graphological no less than phonological components to migrate in free form between texts.⁸⁸

My third example 4\5 extends the process of 4\2 to include formulaic phrases similar to those discussed in chapter 3, and illustrates how an extended range of intertextualities can play a steering rôle in the textual process. The poet is describing the monster Grendel’s lair on the ‘misty moors’,

4\5 hwyder helrúnan hwyrftum scríþað 163
 ‘whither the hell-counsellors [demons] covertly crawl’
 ≈ hvarleiður helriði úr hvarfi skreið
 ‘the everywhere-loathed hell-prowler [demon] crawled out of hiding’

This translation is a close phonological echo of the original, and is faithful to the alliteration (*hwyder-*, *hel-* and *hwyrftum*).⁸⁹ However it is not semantically close (although it is ‘equivalent’ in many ways): the many demons of the original become only one in the translation, obviously Grendel himself; and there is an apparently unmotivated change from the OE present tense *scriþað* ‘[they] crawl’ to the Icelandic past tense *skreið* ‘[he] crawled’. The reason for these changes becomes clear if we consider the intertextualities involved.

In opting to retain the alliteration of the original text in this line Björnsson runs into difficulties. Icelandic has not retained the Germanic *hw-* form of ‘whither’, but uses instead the old demonstrative *þangað sem* which corresponds to English *thence*; this would immediately disallow the alliteration. Her solution is to use the unusual adjective *hvarleiður* ‘everywhere-loathed’, which occurs only once in Eddic poetry, in verse 36 of *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I*, where Guðmundr Granmarsson engages in a verbal duel with Sinfjötli, Helgi’s

⁸⁷ See chapter 5, section 5.2.1.2.

⁸⁸ On the progression from the phoneme to the grapheme see the discussion following Bakhtin’s comment in 7\10, p. 254.

⁸⁹ For a discussion of the role of alliteration in the echoism of the translation see chapter 5, section 5.2.1.2, page 164.

werewolf brother:

- 4\6 Þú hefir etnar úlfa krásir
 oc bræðr þínom at bana orðit,
 opt sár sogin með svöloom munni,
 hefr í hreysi hvarleiðr scriðit.
 ‘You have eaten wolves’ delicacies
 and killed your own brother;
 often having sucked at wounds with a cool mouth
 you have crawled universally loathed into your den.’

This verse is clearly hiding in the background of Björnsson’s translation. Note that the past participle *scriðit* ‘crawled’ in 4\6, particularly in the modern form of Björnsson’s Icelandic, *scriðið*, is a closer echo of OE present-tense form *scriþað* (or *scriðað*) ‘[they] crawl’ than is the Icelandic past tense *skreið* in 4\5:

- 4\7 hwylftum scriðað ≈ hvarleiður scriðið

—it is clear that this is the route by which the term *hvarleiður* enters the translation. But why does Björnsson progress from the OE present tense *scriðað*, which so well echoes the Icelandic past participle *skriðið*, to the past tense *skreið* in 4\5?

As in my discussion of the surface intertextualities of Björnsson’s translation in chapter 3, we run into difficulties as soon as we attempt to trace simple lines of derivation for the echoism. It is not enough to surmise that a search for an alliterative translation for *hwider* in 4\5 led Björnsson to *hvarleiður*; or perhaps that it was *hwyrftum scriþað* that turned her thoughts to *Helgakviða Hundingsbana I* and so to *hvarleiður*. The totality of the phenomenon includes threads of intertextuality that cannot be traced as linear movements, and do not enter into the relationship between the translator and the translation, for Björnsson had no access to them. As it happens, there is a persistent relationship in the OE poetic corpus between the verb *scriðan* ‘crawl, glide’, particularly in its past plural form *scriþað*, and words beginning with *hw*-. The phrase *hwyrftum scriþað* also occurs in *Christ and Satan* (629), referring to the weary souls of hell; and in the *Metres of Boethius* (28:8) the form *scriðað* ‘they crawl’ refers to the movement of celestial bodies and occurs in the same line (although not the same sentence) as the term *ymbel_hwerft* ‘orbit’. The singular form *scriðeð* ‘crawls’ occurs twice in the *Metres* (20:174 and 28:16), both times in association with the phrase *dogora gehwilce* ‘each day’, and *toscriðan* ‘flow apart’ occurs once in the *Metres* (20:93) with the word *æghwider* ‘everywhere’. Other verbal forms of *scriðan* do not seem so closely bound to

hw- words; there is only *swa scriþende gesceopum hweorfað* ‘thus go wandering by fate’ in *Widsið* 135. These relationships are statistically significant: of the 31 occurrences of the various forms of *scriðan* in the OE poetic corpus 6 are associated with hw- words and another 10 with words beginning in w-; this is over 50% of the occurrences (data from Bessinger 1978).

As we saw in chapter 3, Björnsson was not acquainted with the OE corpus, so that this set of intertextualities cannot be a feature of the translation process. Even if she had been widely read in OE poetry, she would hardly have noticed the peculiar relationship between *scriðan* and the words in hw-, for although this might well have been a background intertextuality for the original OE audiences and poets, it did not become readily accessible to modern scholars until Bessinger’s (1978) concordance appeared ten years after Björnsson’s death.

Turning to Björnsson’s Icelandic background, we find that there seems to be no similar relationship between the Icelandic verb *skríða* ‘crawl’ and words in hv- (the Icelandic equivalent of Old English hw-) in the Eddic poems of the *Codex Regius* except in the citation from *Helgakviða Hundingsbana* 4\6.⁹⁰ But the OE text in 4\5 calls up another striking echo in Eddic poetry, which I believe Björnsson, steeped as she was in this poetry and sharply attuned to echoic material in her translation, also had in mind—especially since it occurs in *Völundarkviða* only a dozen lines from *örlög drýgja* (section 3.4.2.3, example 3\10 on p.80):

4\8 hwyder helrúnan hwyrftum scrípað
 ‘whither the demons (‘hell-counsellors’) evasively crawl’ (= 4\5) *Béowulf*
 163
 ≈ Austr skreið Egill at Ölrúno
 ‘Egill glided [on skis?] eastward
 towards Ölrún [a woman’s name]’ *Völundarkviða* 4 (Kuhn 1962:117)

The correspondence *helrúnan* ‘hell-runes’ ≈ *Ölrúnu* ‘Ale-rune’ is striking in view of their correlation with *scrípað* ≈ *skreið*. The second elements *rún-* ≈ *rún-* are cognates, and their endings *-an* ≈ *-u* are systematically semi-cognate.⁹¹ The first elements of the compound are phonologically very close:⁹² the initial *h* of

⁹⁰ Kellogg (1988) gives only 8 occurrences of the verb *skríða* and its forms in the Edda; two others, apart from 4\6, have words in hv- following fairly soon afterwards, but without the close syntactic association of most of the OE examples.

⁹¹ In the terminology of Chapter 5 the cognate relationships of *rún-* ≈ *rún-* are analysed as a-sys, and the inflexional endings b-sys. The endings *-an* and *-u* would be c-sys on words in syntactic correspondence (see 5.1.3.2), but in this case *helrúnan* is masculine nominative plural and *Ölrúnu* is feminine dative singular.

⁹² In terms of Chapter 5 they are nearly full-profile non-systematic (see 5.2.1.1)

helrúnan, a phonologically volatile onset consonant, is at least a weak echo of the vowel-onset of *Ölrúnu*, while *ö* and *e* are both mid-front vowels, which frequently feature in echoes between the original and Björnsson's translation (see section 5.1.3.3).

Here then is our source for Björnsson's change to *skreið* in 4\5. But equally clearly, a latent intertextuality such as this cannot be evaluated within a simple linear framework of source and recension. Perhaps we should not rule out a concrete intertextual connection between *Béowulf* and *Völundarkviða*, especially in view of the appearance of a sword made by Weland (\approx *Völundur*) in *Béowulf* 455.⁹³ But even if such a connection could be shown it would be surely very difficult to trace clear directions of migration. I shall return to this question of the non-linear derivation of intertextualities in chapter 6.

The crucial point here is that, in spite of their varying complexities, all these intertextualities are established along phonological-graphological channels. There may also be concomitant morphological relationships such as those involved in the case of *skriþað* and *skreið*, and threads of syntactic and semantic cohesion are also in evidence, but pure phonological-graphological relationships such as *helriði* \approx *Ölrúnu*, and *hólinga* \approx *hló*, with no semantic or syntactic support, occur freely. It is as if phonological-graphological form is leached autonomously out of texts (i.e. without reference to other linguistic features), and independently but simultaneously initiates lexico-semantic processes in new texts. I shall be arguing that this is symptomatic of the translation process: various constituent aspects of the text break free from their bound contexts and independently initiate other processes in other texts. I shall distinguish between phonological, syntactical and semantic aspects, and assume that while these three strands are closely woven together in any one text, intertextual connections may easily decompose the stranding. This will be the main focus of chapters 5 and 6. For the moment, however, I shall simplify this decomposition and focus only on the double nature of the Saussurean sign, the signifier and the signified, or, if I may broaden the perspective, form and content. We must attend to their split singularity, their inescapable and simultaneous marriage and divorce.

4.3 The 'hoary concepts'

From the beginning, the burden of translation theory has rested on the tension between *verbum* and *sensus*, form and meaning. In chapter 2 I noted that the Alfredian school of translation does not seem to look upon the task of

⁹³ Weland also appears in the OE poetic corpus in *Déor* (1), *Waldere* (1.2, 2.9), the 10th *Metre of Boethius* (33,35,42), and the inscription on the *Franks Casket*. Fjalldal (1998) deals at length with apparent intertextualities between *Béowulf* and the medieval Icelandic *Grettis saga*. His thesis is that they are all pure coincidences.

translating from Latin as being similar to that of translating from the Norse. Alfred clearly regards the former as an interpretive task, the technique of which he sees fit to mention in his introduction to Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis*. His comments at this point are worth studying in detail:

4\9 Then I began ... to translate into English the book that is called Pastoralis ... now word by word, now sense by sense, as I had learned it under my archbishop Plegmund and my bishop Asser and my priest Grimbold and my priest Johann. When I had learned it so that I understood it and could relate it as accurately as possible, I translated it into English... (cf. 4\13)

The distinction made here between two modes of translation, *word by word* and *sense by sense*, places this comment firmly in the classical tradition of Cicero through to Jerome. Jerome discusses his own translation technique in his 57th Epistle *Ad Pammachium*, where he defends his policy of translating *sensus de sensu* and not *verbum e verbo* and quotes Cicero and Horace to support his argument.

Cicero and Horace both discuss word-for-word translation, seeing it as a technique unsuited to the art of the orator and the poet. Cicero calls it *interpretatio*, by which he means the functional interpretation of a foreign text for those who do not understand it; this is the job of the *interpres* or translator, whose proper mode of work is accurate 'word-for-word' translation. Orators and poets are however not concerned with this type of translation. They retell themes and narratives already familiar to their audiences, who may be conversant with the Greek originals. Paraphrase, according to Cicero and Horace, is an apt mode of transmission from Greek to Latin when we wish to convey the oratorical (for Cicero) or poetic (for Horace) art of the original. In the following much-quoted passage, written in 46 BC, Cicero describes two ways of rendering a Greek text into Latin depending on the nature of the exercise, whether functional translation or as an exercise in oratory. He is speaking of certain translations he has made as a didactic exercise in oratory from the best of the Attic orators:

4\10 I did not convert the text as an interpreter, but as an orator, rendering the original meanings and figures of speech in words corresponding to our own usage. Thus I was not obliged to make a word-for-word rendering, but rather retained the whole manner and essence of the words. I considered it my duty to deal them out by weight, not by number.⁹⁴

⁹⁴ Nec converti ut interpres, sed ut orator, sentiis isdem et earum formis tamquam figuris, verbis ad nostram consuetudinem aptis. In quibus non verbum pro verbo necesse habui reddere, sed genus omne verborum vimque servavi. Non enim ea me annumerare lectori putavi oportere, sed tamquam appendere. Cic. Opt. Gen. Or. 5.14. For the reading *genus omnium verborum* of the codices see

Our tendency today is to see this dichotomy as one between incompetent or slavish translation on the one hand, and expert, paraphrastic translation on the other. But Cicero does not make this unequivocal value-judgement. Of course he has a higher regard for the art of oratory than for functional translation, but he is not belittling the word-for-word technique of the translator. In fact 4\10 reads as an apology, as if Cicero feels the need to defend his own paraphrastic versions. Much the same can be said of Horace's remarks in *Ars Poetica*, some twenty years later. Horace is giving advice on how to retell a familiar story successfully: among the pitfalls to be avoided is that of 'carefully rendering it word for word like a faithful translator' (*nec verbo verbum curabis reddere fidus / interpres*)⁹⁵. The phrase *fidus interpres* is rendered 'slavish translator' in at least two influential modern translations,⁹⁶ an understanding which goes back to the Earl of Roscommon, quoted with great approval by Dryden in his *Preface concerning Ovid's Epistles*, 1680 (Dryden 1995:385):

4\11 Nor word for word too faithfully translate

But 'too' is the (none too faithful) translator's addition: the deprecatory tone of 'too faithfully' and 'slavish' is simply a misunderstanding of the original. It is in fact difficult to read a qualitative distinction in the *verbum/sensus* dichotomy in Cicero's and Horace's texts. Cicero's ideal orator can affect the spirits of his audience in three ways: by teaching (which is a duty), by delighting (which is gift freely bestowed), and by stirring (which is a necessity); and as we have seen the orator who can do this will do so by paraphrasing, when he is using material from the Greek, rather than *metaphrasing* or translating word for word. And Cicero makes it quite clear there is a quantitative rather than a qualitative difference between a good and a bad orator: 'Although it must be conceded that one may be better than the other, the distinction is one of degree, not of kind'.⁹⁷

below, footnote 102.

⁹⁵ Hor. *Ars Poet.* 133-4 The whole passage reads:
 Difficile est proprie communia dicere; tuque
 rectius Iliacum carmen deducis in actus,
 quam si proferres ignota indictaque primus.
 publica materies privati iuris erit, si
 non circa vilem patulumque moraberis orbem,
 nec verbo verbum curabis reddere fidus 133
 interpres, nec desilies imitator in artum,
 unde pedem preferre pudor vetet aut operis lex.

⁹⁶ Thus Rushton Fairclough in the Loeb edition, and Bassnett-McGuire's (1980:44) quotation from the Penguin *Classical Literary Criticism* (1965, 77-97)

⁹⁷ Optimus est enim orator qui dicendo animos audientium et docet et delectat et permovet. Docere debitum est, delectare honorarium, permovare necessarium. Haec, ut alius melius quam alius,

The English phrase *word for word* is in fact remarkably ambiguous. It can sometimes refer to translations with real word for word sequential correspondence, but it is more often used loosely to mean a close, ‘literal’⁹⁸ rendering of the sense of the original, and is usually pejorative, implying an *inelegant* translation. Significantly, it tends not to be applied to stylistically satisfying translations which are coincidentally word for word. But we may not assume that these pejorative connotations of the formulation *verbum de verbo* existed in classical and medieval times.

What little evidence there is seems, on balance, to point to the contrary. In *Topica* 35 Cicero uses the phrase *verbum ex verbo* to characterize his explanatory rendering of the Greek term *etumología* with a Latin calque, *veriloquium* ‘true wording’ (also a formal, but not cognate, echo, juxtaposing *-log-* and *-loq-*⁹⁹) showing that by ‘word-for-word’ he literally means one-to-one lexical correspondence; he then goes on to reject this interpretation as an inapt neologism, and instead uses the term *notatio* ‘meaning’. Augustine, who often quotes Cicero, uses *verbum de verbo* to describe the correspondence between the Greek *páthos* and his own Late Latin *passio*, which are cognates.¹⁰⁰ Possibly *verbum ex verbo* is too ordinary a phrase for us to conclude that Augustine was explicitly evoking Cicero on translation, but it shows that Augustine could also use the term to refer to word-for-word cognation.

If Latin and Greek were closely related languages we might assume Cicero’s usage to imply close and sustained verbal correspondence; but although both Indo-European languages they are not closely related. However, classical literary Latin is strongly influenced by literary Greek idiom, and in an atmosphere where Græcisms were stylistically sanctioned the concept of word-for-word equivalence could well extend to syntactic equivalence. In this case the phrase *verbum ex verbo* might be used to refer to an intermittent degree of structural correlation approaching the syntactical equivalences of the interdialectal Germanic manuscripts discussed in chapter 2. And in fact Cicero counsels reverence for the Greek wording even while emphasizing the superiority of paraphrastic translation, noting that, wherever possible, that is wherever Latin idiom allows, he follows the Greek word-order in his own

concedendum est, verum id fit non genere sed gradu. Opt.Gen.Or.I

⁹⁸ Owen Barfield takes issue with the concept of ‘literalness’, firmly locating the origin of lexical meaning in metaphor and rejecting the idea that words ‘began life as plain labels for plain objects and that is their true nature’ (1985:39). ‘Literalness is a quality which some words have achieved in the course of their history; it is not a quality with which the first words were born’ (41).

⁹⁹ See the discussion on page 163, footnote 160.

¹⁰⁰ Perturbatio est enim quae Graece $\pi\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ dicitur; unde illa voluit [Apuleius speaking of demons] vocare animo passiva, quia verbum de verbo $\pi\alpha\nu\tau\omicron\varsigma$ passio deceretur motus animi contra rationem. Aug.Civ. Dei VIII.xvii.

translation. He even adds that wherever exact word-transference is impossible he has done his best to retain the original parts of speech.¹⁰¹

Something of this ambiguity survives in Jerome's approach, although Jerome is in many ways more decisive—perhaps because he has a particular axe to grind. His *Epistle to Pammachius* is a spirited defence of one of his less meticulous translations. Jerome had in 395 made a quick translation from the Greek of a letter from Bishop Epiphanius of Cyprus reprimanding the Bishop of Jerusalem for pro-Origen tendencies. Origen's writings were at the time still in favour in Palestine, and Jerome, who had followed Augustine and turned against Origen, had made a rapid working translation ('raptim celeriterque') for limited circulation in his own monastery in Bethlehem. Under somewhat mysterious circumstances this translation had come into the hands of Jerome's opponents in Jerusalem, who had attempted to bring Jerome into disrepute by quibbling over his wording.

Jerome's reply is a scathing condemnation of word-for-word translation. Now approaching fifty, he has clearly abandoned his earlier religious rejection of the classical pagan writers on which he had been weaned, for he quotes from both Cicero and Horace to support his argument.¹⁰² But while Cicero and Horace do not condemn the functional verbatim translation of the *fidus interpretes*, Jerome is quite clear on the fact that close translation is stylistically unacceptable: 'what you call accuracy in translation the learned speak of as unhappy imitation (*kakozelia*)'.¹⁰³ To support his argument he adduces evidence of paraphrastic translations in the gospels themselves, giving examples of New Testament quotations from the Old Testament where the wording has been changed. But he is careful to keep his options open: he allows for one situation in which metaphrase is preferable to paraphrase:

4\12 I not only confess, I acknowledge openly with a free voice, that in translating from the Greek I express sense by sense, not word by word, except in those places in the holy Scriptures where the order of the words themselves is also part of the sacred mystery.¹⁰⁴

¹⁰¹ ... verba persequens eatenus ut ea non abhorreant a more nostro. Quæ si e Græcis omnia conversa non erunt; tamen ut generis ejusdem sint, elaboravimus. Cic. De Opt.Gen.Or.7

¹⁰²The text of my quotation (4\10) from Cicero is given by Jerome with one minor change of wording compared to the codices. The reading *genus omne verborum* 'the whole manner of the words' is Jerome's, and this is the reading adopted by Loeb as against *genus omnium verborum* 'the manner of all the words' of the codices, on the assumption that Jerome had access to an older and more authoritative text. Be this as it may, it is worth noting that the reading of the codices is quite commensurate with Cicero's concern for the Greek sequence of words, while Jerome's reading is decidedly more in keeping with Jerome's outright dismissal of *verbum e verbo*.

¹⁰³quam vos veritatem interpretationis, hanc eruditi kakozhli van nuncupant. Ep.57:5

¹⁰⁴Ego enim non solum fateor, sed libera voce profiteor, me in interpretatione Græcorum, absque

Jerome does not enlarge on this distinction between the translation of secular and sacred texts, but the reservation is significant: he does not wish to state categorically that metaphrase is never acceptable. It is significant too that he quotes Cicero's claim to follow the Greek word-sequence and retain the same parts of speech wherever viable. Thus although Jerome makes a far less ambiguous value-judgement between metaphrase and paraphrase than Cicero or Horace he still retains the concept of metaphrase as a legitimate technique of translation.

Such then are the classical attitudes which Alfred invokes in his preface to *Cura Pastoralis*. Although he sees fit to mention both modes of translation, *word be worde* and *andgiet of andgiete* ('word by word' and 'sense from sense'), in the same breath, saying simply that he uses now one, now the other, there is much to indicate that he draws a functional distinction between the two. Of course the conditions under which his own translations and those under his aegis were made did not require the functional distinctions of either Jerome or the classical writers: *Cura Pastoralis*, at least, is not a sacred text in the same way as the Scriptures are, and there is no indication in the writings of the Alfredian school that Cicero's and Horace's views on oratory and poetry are foregrounded concepts. But we should not assume that Alfred's ready acceptance of both modes of translation constitute an attempt to synthesize them, to come to grips with the conflict between form and content in translation with which latter-day translation theory is concerned: he expresses no intention of finding a functional or aesthetic point of balance between the two techniques. Neither is he playing mere lip-service to the classical dictum. I suggest instead that he maintains a clear terminological distinction between them as two distinct modes of translation.

Alfred's explicit programme of translation of Latin texts must surely have given rise to an English terminology of translation in the scriptorium. But the language of Alfred's academic discourse was Latin, and first on his tongue would be the Ciceronian terminology of translation. This is mirrored in what little has survived of his English terminology. When speaking of translations from the Latin he usually uses the verb *wendan* 'to wend, convert' as in 4\9, or *áwendan* with the intensive verbal prefix; these are clearly calques—and, once again, phonological echoes—of Cicero's terms *vertere* and *convertere*.¹⁰⁵ The

Scripturis sanctis, ubi et verborum ordo mysterium est, non verbum e verbo, sed sensum exprimere de sensu. Ep.57:5 Does Walter Benjamin have this passage in mind in the closing remarks on interlinear translation of the scriptures of his 'Task of the translator'?

¹⁰⁵In the terminology of section 5.2.1.2, p.161, they are examples of partial coherent non-systematic p-

text is as follows (translated as 4\9 on p. 95).

4\13 þa ongan ic ... þa boc wendan on Englisc þe is genemned on Læden Pastoralis, & on Englisc Hirdeboc, hwilum word be worde, hwilum ondgite of andgite, swæ swæ ic hie geleornode æt Plegmunde minum ærcebiscepe & æt Asserie minum biscepe & æt Grimbolde minum mæssepreoste & æt Iohanne minum mæssepreoste. Siððan ic hie þa geleornode hæfde, swæ swæ ic hie forstod, & swæ ic hie andgitfullicost areccean meahte, ic hie on Englisc awende... (Sweet 1871: 6)

But Alfred allows of another approach which does not imply full paraphrastic reworking of the translated text. In the same preface he talks of the ability of priests to decipher in English a letter written in Latin (*án árendgewrit of Lædene on Englisc áreccan*). The verb here is *áreccean* ‘set forth, relate’, which refers to the ability to interpret aloud the contents of a letter, the kind of *ad hoc* translation that is used when immediacy dictates: precisely the type of working translation which Jerome is defending in his *Epistle to Pammachius*. Most significantly, however, this verb would also be used to mean the deciphering aloud (we should remember that silent reading was rarely practiced; see p. 242) of a letter written in English; or for Alfred’s retelling of the Norse sea-captains’ reports in *Orosius*. It seems that Alfred is using the verb *áreccean* in 4\13 to refer to close or word-for-word *ad hoc* translation, an immediate interpretation the text for listeners, while *awendan* would refer to the final paraphrastic version: hence my translation ‘When I had learnt it so that I understood it and could relate it as accurately as possible (*andgitfullicost areccean*), I [*then*] translated it into English (*on Englisce awende*).’¹⁰⁶ Alfred is clearly stating that when he was confident that he could do the first, and that he understood the text, he then set about doing the latter. This reads very much as if the two modes are seen as formal, consecutive steps in a translation process, that the final *sensus de sensu* translation is dependent upon an initial *verbum e verbo* exposition. It implies that the final version would then be a mixture of the two.

If this is so, there is room to suggest that Alfred regarded translation from Latin on the one hand and textual transmission from Norse on the other as typologically similar processes, and that he invokes the *verbum/sensus* distinction in 4\9 (4\13) in a manner that makes it clear that he was speaking of a single process, in which he moves from one pole to the other as his material

reflection involving the strings *vert-* and *wend-*.

¹⁰⁶Sweet’s translation also makes this distinction: ‘When I had learnt it as I could best understand it, and as I could most clearly *interpret* it, I *translated* it into English’ (Sweet 1871 7; emphasis added), although he translates *áreccan* in the sentence quoted earlier, *án árendgewrit of Lædene on Englisc áreccan*, with ‘translate’.

allows. Jerome translated not only from Greek, where short bursts of metaphrase are quite in order, but also from Hebrew, a language quite alien to Latin, where metaphrastic translation is only coincidentally viable. For Alfred, working in a literary milieu where dialectal polarization into discrete standard languages did not exist, it would be natural to apply the *verbum/sensus* technique to any example of textual transmission, since infinite variations in the proportion of *verbum* to *sensus* are possible. Close copies between similar dialects are aptly described by *verbum e verbo*, while transmission between more distantly related dialects would require proportionally more normalization and more frequent recourse to *sensus de sensu*. And it should be noted that Alfred's own translations from the Latin are *suaviter et cum sensu tractatae*, with Roscommon's Horatian *fidus interpres* rarely intruding.

I am suggesting, then, that Alfred follows Cicero in seeing the difference between these two modes of transmission as one of degree, not kind (page 96): there is no tension between the two modes, and as a result medieval textuality is comfortable with a wide range of fidelity to the source. Medieval transmission of encyclopaedic works such as Alfred's *Orosius* were usually very free translations, in which material could be added, omitted or radically re-written, as the *Ohthere* and *Wulfstan* interpolations in the *Orosius* demonstrate. A later mind would think of these as *imitations* rather than translations. In his *Preface concerning Ovid's Epistles* Dryden (1995: 377-391) makes a three-way distinction of *metaphrase*, *paraphrase* and *imitation*, and sees metaphrase and imitation as 'the two extremes which ought to be avoided'. But we have to wait until the later Romantics for a synthesis of form and meaning. Here is Rossetti:

4\14 Poetry not being an exact science, literality of rendering is altogether secondary to this chief aim [i.e. that of disseminating 'beauty']. I say *literality*,—not fidelity, which is by no means the same thing. When literality can be combined with what is thus the primary condition of success, the translator is fortunate, and must strive his utmost to unite them; when such object can only be obtained by paraphrase, that is his only path.¹⁰⁷

—For Rossetti the happy amalgamation can be made only by sweet chance, if the translator is alert to the opportunity; in the main, however, his dreary path is mere paraphrase. Shelley however is consumed with the 'vanity of translation'; each new version must spring whole from the seed in a single, unhesitating gesture:

4\15 Hence the vanity of translation; it were as wise to cast a violet into a crucible

¹⁰⁷Preface to *The Early Italian Poets*. Rossetti 1926:176. Also in Schulte and Biguenet 1992:64-67 (65).

that you might discover the formal principle of its colour and odour, as to seek to transfuse from one language to another the creation of a poet. The plant must spring again from its seed, or it will bear no flower—and this is the burthen of the curse of Babel. ('A Defence of Poetry' in Shelley 1966: 420-421)

His concept of the *seed* is a synthesis, a symbol of singularity in both time and space: the movement is embryonic and formless, and can only be envisaged as occurring if in time then instantaneously, if in space then within an infinitesimal compass. Walter Benjamin sees the same seminal connexion of meaning, and expresses it with a geometrical image:

4\16 Just as a tangent glancingly, at a single point only, touches the circle, and as the contact and not the point prescribes the law by which it draws its straight line out to infinity, in the same way, glancingly, and only at the infinitely small point of the sense does the translation touch the original, to follow its personal course, set by the law of fidelity, in the freedom of linguistic growth and movement. (Benjamin 1968:94)¹⁰⁸

The vision of a momentary movement of the 'germ' (*Keim*, Benjamin's term) of meaning from source to translation implies a denial of the possibility of any structural information surviving the transfer. Benjamin's position is that 'literalness in regard to syntax destroys any rendering of sense whatever and is in danger of becoming intelligible' (1963:90). And yet his main concern is the unattainable '*reine Sprache*', the 'pure, universal language' that earthly languages can only hint at, the timeless language which can provisionally be 'redeem[ed] by translation from the work that entralls it'. This leads him to see the highest form of translation as the interlinear gloss to the Scriptures, where 'the sense has stopped' (1963:96), and the rendering of translated meaning is not only unnecessary but impossible, since 'where the text belongs immediately, without mediation of sense, to its literalness, to true universal language, to truth and teaching, it is translatable absolutely' (1963:96). Jerome would surely have been intrigued by this appeal to *verbum e verbo* for sacred texts (see footnote 104, p. 98).

The understanding that form and content are one inextricable whole is a recurrent and largely uncontested thesis of later 20th century textuality; so

¹⁰⁸Wie die Tangent der Fflüchtig und nur in einem Punkte berührt und wie ihr wohl diese Berührung, nicht aber der Punkt, das Gesetz vorschreibt, nach den sie weiter ins Unendliche ihre gerade Bahn zieht, so berührt die Übersetzung flüchtig und nur in dem unendlich kleinen Punkte des Sinnes das Original, und nach dem Gesetze der Treue in der Freiheit der Sprachbewegung ihre eigenste Bahn zu verfolgen. (Benjamin 1963: 21-22)

insistent, so forcefully articulated in the face of no real opposition, that the insistence itself becomes significant. ‘There is a something fearful in the song / Plagues them,’¹⁰⁹ an underlying unease, an unspoken impracticality. Lawrence Rosenwald in 1994 says: ‘The distinctions between summary and whole, message and prophecy, moral and allegory, prose and poetry all inevitably support the distinction between content and form: and that distinction, which few of us will argue for but many use, is in thinking about translation and translation theory a severely corrupting error.’ (Buber and Rosenzweig 1994:xliii). In other words although widely used in various domains of textuality, these distinctions are *a severely corrupting error* in translation. If this is true it is also severely disturbing, since translation is usually seen, at least in the later 20th century, as an essential, even central, mode of textuality, as we shall see shortly.

‘Fidelity and freedom,’ says Walter Benjamin, ‘—freedom to render the sense and, in its service, fidelity to the word—are the hoary concepts that occur in every discussion of translation.’ (Benjamin 1968:91). And precisely here in their translation of Benjamin, Hynd and Valk locate the joint between fidelity and freedom and deftly dissect the signifier from the signified, removing the second syllable from *althergebracht* ‘ancient, traditional’ and grafting it into ‘*hoary*’.¹¹⁰ This action is both intimate and radical: it moves at the core of the Saussurean sign, which is constituted precisely by the indivisible unity of the signifier and the signified; it lays bare the bond between the two. This is the audacity which enables all translation, but it is especially in cases such as these, where the phonological form becomes visible in its own right, that we take notice. Crucially, however, if we insist on seeing it as a spatio-temporal process of decomposition and recomposition (a typical linguistic manoeuvre which we shall examine shortly) it becomes almost impossible to describe: we find ourselves dealing with a shapeless form (which is neither *-her-* nor *hoar-* but dwells in both) and a formless concept of age and venerability. Both these aspects of the sign display a miraculous vitality without each other, but what happens to the original sign, now ruptured? Would this not destroy the text, leaving its signs dissected, lifeless? Or is there hope that their new life in the translated text may somehow revive the old one? Regretfully we must now pause to examine these doubts and determine their vacuity, before going on to a mode of description which, by neutralizing the spatial and temporal dimensions of the movement, may hope to preserve the integrity of the sign.

¹⁰⁹Robert Graves, ‘The Bards’.

¹¹⁰Treue und Freiheit—Freiheit der sinngemäßen Wiedergabe und in ihrem Dienst Treue gegen das Wort—sind die althergebrachten Begriffe in jeder Diskussion von Übersetzungen. (Benjamin 1963:18)

4.4 The wrong turning

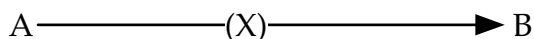
This section is devoted to the implications of intimate translation for generative linguistics. The excursion is an unavoidable one: firstly, as we shall see in section 4.4.1, there is a quasi-generative undertow in much of the self-styled pragmatic discussion in contemporary Anglophone writing on translation theory, and secondly, generative grammar, which is the dominant linguistic paradigm in contemporary Anglophone academia, is severely challenged by translation. This is not unexpected news, since generative linguistics is largely incompatible with literary studies in general—an incompatibility which is partly responsible for the debilitating schism between linguistics and literary studies that characterizes many English departments. In the case of intimate translation I believe that this challenge is particularly clearly defined, and since I also believe that both linguistics and literary criticism suffer radically from each other's absence, I see the following discussion as unavoidable. I regret it none the less, for it is a detour into some rather infertile territory.

4.4.1 'Generative' translation: the Nida-Taber model

Shortly after the middle of the 20th century, at a time when the structuralist amalgam of meaning-and-form was coming into full bloom, the early versions of generative grammar threw up a translation model which expressly invoked a concept of meaning as independent of form. This is the Nida-Taber model of translation, which is still taught as a translation methodology in introductory courses and may well have some value for students approaching translation for the first time. It is nevertheless fatally flawed by its internal contradictions.

Nida and Taber (1974) begin their chapter 3, 'Grammatical Analysis', by describing a simple translation model. Here is their initial diagram and accompanying text:

4\17



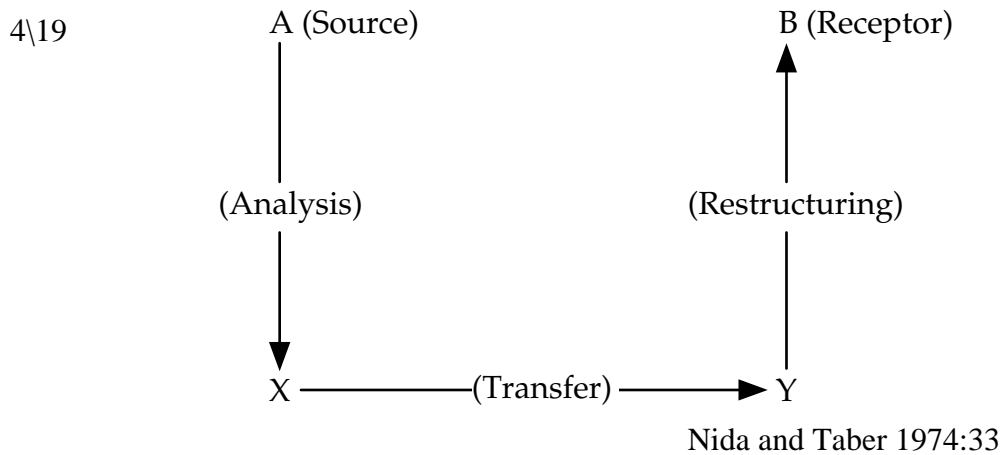
A represents the source language and B represents the the receptor, or target, language. The letter X in parentheses stands for any intermediate structure which may have been set up as a kind of universal structure to which any and all languages might be related for more economic transfer. (Nida and Taber 1974:33)

Interestingly, this model, which the authors reject, can in many ways be interpreted according to Minimalist principles of the 1990s, with (X)

representing a simple conversion module where the various parameters of Universal Grammar are reconfigured. But this is our mistake, for Nida and Taber were writing at a time when generative grammar was seen in terms of a simple dichotomy between deep and surface structure. They expressly associate A and B with

4\18 what linguists call the “surface structure” of language, that is, the level of structure which is overtly spoken and heard, or written and read. (loc.cit.)

Isolating ‘surface structure’ as an entity in its own right sanctions an explicit and prescriptive regulation of the translation process which *disallows* ‘transfer’ at this surface level. Thus the model that Nida and Taber propose instead of 4\17, and which has figured widely in textbooks on translation ever since, is shown in 4\19:



The authors explain X and Y as the ‘kernel structures’ of the language: this is an early generative term¹¹¹ apparently used here to mean a grammatical structure in fairly recognisable lexical form which has yet to undergo some high-level transformations. The movements up and down between the kernels and the surface, here labelled ‘Analysis’ and ‘Restructuring’, are elsewhere described as ‘back-’ and ‘forward-transformations’. ‘Transfer’ is where ‘the analyzed material is transferred in the mind of the translator from language A to language B’ (Nida and Taber 1974:33).

The idea is not new. Nida and Taber are clothing a long-established concept of translation in a new quasi-scientific guise; and it is exactly to this

¹¹¹Chomsky (1995:23) looks back at the term *kernel sentences* as referring to active declarative sentences, thought to be the ‘basic’ form of ‘corresponding’ passive, interrogative, subjunctive or imperative sentences—a concept which Deleuze and Guattari (1987:75-85) attack with vigour. Nida and Taber’s kernels would appear not to be limited to declaratives.

extent that their model may pass as a simple translation heuristic. The central idea harks back to Shelley's seed (4\15); or Schopenhauer's assertion that one of the advantages of polyglottism is that it 'increases the flexibility of thinking since, through the learning of many languages, the concept increasingly separates itself from the word.' Resorting (as everyone does) to metaphor based on the newest technology of his time, Schopenhauer suggests that translation between languages

4\20 requires that we melt down our thoughts entirely and recast them in a different form. Or (if I may be permitted to bring in a comparison from chemistry), whereas translation of a modern language into another modern one requires only disassembly of the sentence to be translated into its obvious components and then the reassembly of them, the translation into Latin often requires a breakdown of a sentence into its most refined, elementary components (*the pure thought content*) from which the sentence is then regenerated in totally different forms. (Schopenhauer 1992:35; my emphasis)

Schopenhauer's 'obvious components' are not far from Nida and Taber's 'kernel structures'; his 'most refined, elementary components (*the pure thought content*)' are perhaps approaching the lower, less tractable depths that Nida refers to in 4\22 below. Both concepts are in complete denial of the integral view of language and thought that informs the classical and medieval writings on translation, and is reaffirmed in 20th-century structuralism and post-structuralism; both are in accord with early generative linguistics. And they are both technologically enthused: while Schopenhauer uses the terminology of the smelter, Nida and Taber's horizons are the mechanics of the computational flowchart.

Although Nida had laid down the groundwork for the model independently of early generative linguistics, he expressly relates his theory of translation to the generative-transformational approach as he sees it (Nida 1974:1049). This is already a misunderstanding: Nida is seeking practical, objective, and above all *conscious* rules for the translator to work by, while the generative models have always been heralded as models of *unconscious* processes. Chomsky's original conception did not include a set of deep structures which are in any way amenable to conscious thought and thus manipulation:

4\21 The rules that determine deep and surface structure and their interrelation in particular cases must themselves be highly abstract. They are surely remote from consciousness, and in all likelihood they cannot be brought to consciousness. (Chomsky 1976:25)

Nida however is attempting to map conscious, logical processes:

4\22 theoretically and ideally the transfer should take place on the level of the deep structures [although] there are a number of practical reasons for carrying this out in actual practice on the kernel level. (Nida 1974:1049)

The reason for not attempting transfer on deeper levels is their intractability:

4\23 We are not advocating that the translator go below the level of the kernels to the underlying bases, the ‘deep structure.’ There are certain theoretical interests in such an approach, but practically, the bases are not useful nor advisable, since these bases cannot be readily manipulated. (Nida and Taber 1969:39)

There is in fact a fundamental difference here between Nida’s concept of ‘deep structure’ as something ‘not easily manipulated’ (which implies that we at least know where and what it is) and the inaccessible early Chomskyan deep structure with its affinities to Schopenhauer’s portentous ‘*pure thought content*’ (4\20). Nida’s model implies a clearly-defined programme of conscious linguistic manipulation, an explicitly prescriptive protocol drawn up to prohibit transfer at ‘surface level’.

The old generative distinction between ‘depth’ and ‘surface’ is itself an embarrassment; but for the moment the mismatch between Chomsky and Nida deserves our attention. Nida is proposing an uneasy conflation of two unrelated concepts of translation, attempting to express the idea of decomposition-recomposition by means of the generative concept of derivation, the model of surface *vs.* underlying levels. The earlier idea, the fluid image of the crucible, suggests the decomposition of *all* the elements of the source text, sound, shape, logic and status, and their subsequent re-composition, together perhaps with added ingredients, into the new text. This allows sound and shape to flow and reform without restraint: the movement between *hólinga* and *hló* in 4\2, and the freedom of this movement from the original semantics of ‘hollow’ on the one hand and ‘laugh’ on the other, takes place as an integral process. On the other hand the primitive generative model to which Nida turns separates these various elements and proposes a pure extract of logical ‘meaning’ which alone will survive the transfer.¹¹² The ‘kernel structures’ presented for transfer are de-

¹¹²This simplistic and mechanical view is of course not new either: it seems to be a remnant from an earlier, more orderly age, before the Romantics fired their crucibles. For Dr Johnson, the translator ‘will deserve the highest praise who can give a representation at once faithful and pleasing, who can convey the same thoughts with the same graces, and who when he translates changes nothing but the language.’ (*Idler* 70; Johnson 1957:387)

lexicalized, separated from the sound and shape of the original text, to enter into a process of reformulation which is insulated from outside interference: de-loused and decontaminated at the frontier check-point, they don the alien garments of the new country. Nida deserves acclaim for setting himself to formulate the radical nature of this transformation, but his use for the purpose of a undeveloped and ultimately abortive linguistic hypothesis persuades him to ignore essential aspects of the process.

4.4.2 Generation and transmission

Generative grammar is a grammar of generation, a grammar whose purpose is to explain how, with limited resources (between 30 and 100 phonemes), the speaking human can produce sentences supposedly never said before, and be understood. The premiss is probably true; perhaps also it is trivial. But for the moment our point must be this: a grammar of generation is manifestly ill-equipped to deal with transmission.

Generative linguistics was not of course developed in response to a desire to understand translation. Generative linguists look on translation in much the same way as professors of medicine look on influenza: as a minor subset of the phenomena. If there were no such thing as influenza, the architecture of medical science would stand firm. For generative linguists, translation is a linguistic activity which, like making poetry or scolding the children, must by definition be generative.

If we reverse the viewpoint, however, the analogy falters. While specialists in the study of influenza do, in the main, regard themselves as doctors, translators tend to have problems in relating to generative linguistic theory. For the generative model purports to account for the *generation* of language, the creation *ex nihilo* of new thoughts and new speech—a concept rejected outright by critical theory in the latter half of the 20th century, one of whose most essential gestures is to deny the author and insist that all linguistic activity is transmission. This stance is also that of the translator, who so far from treating translation as a certain type of linguistic activity, reverses the hierarchy and defines all linguistic activity as translation. George Steiner is a classic example:

4\24 A human being performs an act of translation, in the full sense of the word, when receiving a speech-message from any other human being (Steiner 1975: 47)

If this is so of speech, how much more so of writing? ‘In the full sense of the word’ is a singularly focused expression: Steiner is not invoking a ‘broad’ sense, nor yet a specialized limitation, but a fullness, a conceptual purity: translation is

the naked act of writing, the fundamental literary movement. There is no room here for textual genesis. There is instead only transmission of established material, a reknitting of existing strands, an unremitting intertextuality. Insofar as late 20th-century literary theory needs to contemplate detailed linguistic mechanisms, it finds there a recycling of language, a re-enactment, a sort of generalized oral-formulaic theory. The linguistic act consists of delivering rather than composing a message:

4\25 The model ‘sender to receiver’ which represents any semiological and semantic process is ontologically equivalent to the model ‘source-language to receptor language’ used in the theory of translation’. (Steiner 1975: 47)

For Paul Ricoeur, the interlocutors are in fact eclipsed by the text, which acts as its own mediator. Ricoeur paraphrases Gadamer:

4\26 But lingual experience exercises its mediating function only because the interlocutors fade away in face of the things said which, as it were, direct the dialogue. (Ricoeur 1981:62)

—while Deleuze and Guattari expressly reject any concept of linguistic genesis:

4\27 If language always seems to presuppose itself, if we cannot assign it a non-linguistic point of departure, it is because language does not operate between something seen (or felt) and something said, but always goes from saying to saying. We believe that narrative consists not in communicating what one has seen but in transmitting what one has heard, that someone else has said to you. Hearsay. (Deleuze and Guattari 1987:76)

The *always* here, no less than Derrida’s recursive *toujours déjà*, is the totality which licences the conclusion: in this world, language is merely an ordnance within ultimate horizons. Discourse always picks up where it let off earlier; the poet has already learned his lines. In the menippean back-alleys the familiar cries, *Milk-o! Unclean! All’s well!* echo over generations, and always within closed spaces.¹¹³

One of the great paradoxes of the 20th century is the extent to which this structuralist and post-structuralist account of language and of textuality is belied by the rampant individualism of the period.¹¹⁴ The dismissal of the author and

¹¹³For Franz Rosenzweig only Scripture transcends this enclosed space (Buber and Rosenzweig 1994:56). I shall return to this theme in Chapter 7 (see page 255).

¹¹⁴The paradox also resonates in the person of Chomsky, whose political writings are, by this reading, severely at odds with the individualistic patterning of his linguistics.

the denial of genesis in language are at odds with this individualism, and in many ways reminiscent of older modes of textuality. The formulaic Germanic poetry I have been discussing provides fine examples of recycled language, and this recycling is clearly not confined to poetry. For Saxo Grammaticus, writing in Latin prose, the success of the Norwegian adventurer Ericus at the corrupt Danish court of Frotho depends on his eloquence no less than on his wily fighting tactics (*Gesta* V. II. 10); but Saxo's concept of *eloquence* is not ours, for it consists of extensive and overt use of formulaic cliché—Ericus's speeches are strung with ready-made aphorisms, progressing from proverb to proverb. The function of eloquence in feudal society was to reaffirm the established order and the common social identity, not to innovate.¹¹⁵ Today we expect the eloquent speaker to break new ground, to indulge in formulae if at all then innovatively; our term *cliché* would be totally incomprehensible to Saxo. Our insistence on individual endeavour expects linguistic genesis, demands virtuosity; Hamlet's answer *Words, words, words* speaks to us only of failure and disillusionment.

4.4.3 Generation and directionality

A fundamental mistake of generative grammar, then, is a concept of language production which springs from within the individual speaker, a new creation: generated by the utterance of the divine *logos*, man in God's image continues uttering his own *logoi*, his own creations. This vision fails to cater for any *linguistic* impulse which precipitates new language; in crude generative terms the 'input' to the 'language-generating device' is assumed to be a non-linguistic stimulus from the environment, a bolt from heaven or a cerebral eureka. Perhaps, in the last analysis, we should not rule out scenarios of this kind, although the oohs and ouches produced by such stimulæ are not always very articulate. The point is not essential. What is essential, however, is that the 'input' to the proposed device which produces articulate, complex language will sometimes itself be articulate, complex language. 'Sometimes' is enough for my argument, although it would be tempting with Deleuze and Guattari to argue for 'normally' or even 'always' (4\27). But as soon as we accept that the 'language-generating device' must be able to accept input from real language, to be fuelled not only by the speech of others but also by the multiple dimensions of textuality, then the rationale for underlying structures and ordered algorithms begins to crumble. The right-hand side of Nida and Taber's diagram, the process of 'upward restructuring' from Y to B in 4\19 (page 105), calls for an embryonic, formless input, while the structures of complex language which in fact—or at least no less—make up the input to the 'language-generating device' are shot through

¹¹⁵This is another symptom of the feudal concept of group identity suggested by Lotman (see below, p. 249).

with enthralling sounds and elegant letters conveying multidimensional intertextual significance which can not be accounted for by computable processes of generative linguistics.¹¹⁶ In the case of intimate translation, these sounds and letters may stand out as the strongest features of the input. At all events, the ‘language-generating device’ (to stay for a while yet with this painful idea) must be able to kick into gear at any ‘stage’ in the language-generating process, responding equally readily to sounds, letters, intonation patterns, normal and abnormal syntax, known and unknown words, echoes from absent texts, silences. There can be no straightforward clockwork whatsoever in this machine. Its putative algorithms would be capable of working both backwards and sideways, of accepting unexpected input, feed-back and feed-forward, and themselves of evolving ‘on the fly’ (to use contemporary computer jargon) to an extent that it becomes abundantly clear that we are envisaging at best a clumsy computer-simulation of an organic and integral process. The Gödelian concept of such a process is that it is ‘non-computable’—it is *not* subject to mathematicization; it cannot be encoded in a generative flow-chart. This point will be developed further below (section 4.4.6).

The idea of derivation, the prime expedient of generative linguistics—the formation of ‘surface’ or actual syntactic forms from ‘underlying’ or hidden fundamentals—is itself suspect. Derivation is not of course an exclusive feature of generative grammar, since fundamental structures have always figured in traditional grammar: Latin and Icelandic verbs have their ‘principle parts’ from which their paradigms are derived; comparatives and superlatives have positive adjectives as their bases; nouns can be formed from verbs and vice-versa. Generative grammar breaks no new ground when it proposes a primary active form for every passive sentence, or a positive form for every negative or interrogative sentence.¹¹⁷ However it departs from traditional grammar in assuming that the fundamental forms are necessarily in attendance at some stage in the generation of actual sentences. Early generative-transformational grammar often presented these basic forms in terms which assumed their real existence in an algorithmic process of derivation, and this point of view survives today in the reluctance of mainstream generative linguistics to abandon the concept of directional mapping between stages in the derivation.

This ‘directional’ understanding has however steadily lost ground during

¹¹⁶At least not with the present state of technology. Penrose (see below, p. 127), suggests that such effects are non-computable; I ask readers who do not agree with Penrose to accept nevertheless my point about technology today.

¹¹⁷Deleuze and Guattari (1987:75-85) suggest that that primitive form of the sentence is imperative, not declarative, as it appears to be in generative grammar. This is offered as a gambit, and I find it certainly no more satisfying.

the past decade or so, giving way to potentially simultaneous and non-directional modes of linguistic derivation heralded by schools such as Optimality Theory (Prince and Smolensky 1993), Jackendoff's Representational Modality (Jackendoff 1997, 2002), and even to some extent in Chomsky's own Minimalism (Chomsky 1995). These seem to be converging on an understanding which looks set to invalidate the concept of derivation altogether, and may even finally emerge as frankly non-generative. Within the broader paradigm we begin to see the outlines of a community of related grammatical forms which dog each other in much the same way as intertextual echoes. 'It will be rain tonight,' says Banquo, and the interrogative and the negative hang for a second in the adjacent air, until the modal future collapses into the relentless optative: 'Let it come down!' These shifting frames of syntax demand each other's presence; but, as I hope to show, they do not follow each other in lines of filiation any more than do the intertextual traces we have been discussing.

Within the twentieth-century linguistics community there have of course always been thinkers who although presuming a layered structure of language, a hidden *vs* a surface level, have taken account of the multidimensioned dynamics involved. Thus Roman Jakobson sees what might be considered 'marginal' aspects as intrinsic to the main linguistic paradigm, concerning himself with the movement between the two types of sign that constitute the Saussurean double articulation of language. Jakobson and Waugh (Waugh 1987) discuss Benveniste's division into the purely differential or distinctive function of the first order of signs, whose signatum is 'mere otherness'—the distinctive features, the phoneme, and the syllable—, and the directly significative and meaningful function of the second order, represented by morpheme, sentence and discourse. Their contention is that there is no strict division between these two types, no rigid correlation between them and the *articulatio prima* and *secunda* of language: in particular the distinctive features, and even more so the redundant, expressive, configurative, and physiognomic features—'all of these, rather than having "mere otherness", are *directly significative* in various ways', and can be associated with the immediate 'meaning system' (Waugh 1987:162). Jakobson and Waugh are here invoking 'the mythical, the poetic, the magical, and the playful use of language' (172) — all constitutive of 'normal' language.

Translation, we might suggest, *pace* Steiner, is one of these aspects of language. Time and time again we find that what is one order of signs in one language translates directly into another order in another language. A past tense becomes 'in those days', a clause expressing desire is translated by a modal inflection. And in intimate transmission in particular, a string of phonemes again and again sheds its signatum as it breaks loose from one text, and initiates an entirely new and unrelated process in the new text. Thus intimate translation

highlights an area of language ‘generation’—we might do better to speak simply of ‘language’—where the idea of directional or sequential movement from an underlying primitive to a surface derivation is severely counter-intuitive. But in fact this is also, and no less, true of the typical idealized examples of generative literature, which so often seem to have been cooked up expressly to illustrate the existence of some simple directional derivational structure. We do not need to move into poetic or aberrant language: the ‘data’ of generative linguistic discussion often collapse as soon as we substitute *real* language for the idealized example.

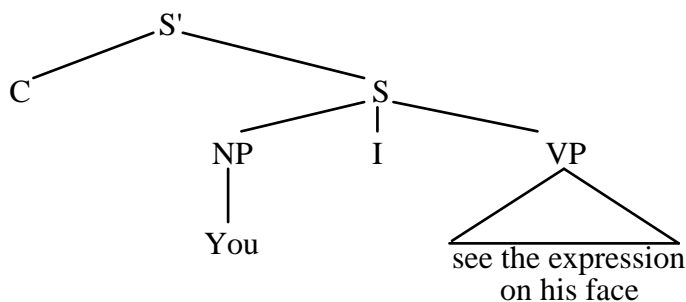
Thus phonological and even phonetic processes in normal language use can often be shown to be fully generated simultaneously with, or even before, the completion of processes typically conceptualized in generative linguistics as being ‘underlying’ and thus occurring ‘earlier’ in the derivational process. Since I shall in later chapters be insisting on simultaneity, non-sequentiality and non-directionality, I can’t really claim that phonological effects occur *in advance* of other aspects of the generation. But I am still bound by a discourse which insists on a chronological, sequential perspective, and I shall be dogged by this constraint in this chapter and the next. (I shall try, however, to be explicit about it, and to indicate clearly when I intend to abandon it.)

Consider for example a modern reflex of the old transformations of the sixties, now known as I-movement into C, in a yes/no question such as

4\28 Did you see the expression on his face?

Let us analyse this sentence along the lines of the generative model which is widely taught to undergraduates today. I assume that the lexical component of this sentence is chosen after the Base has been selected, and first appears in the D-Structure (the underlying structure) in a form shown (somewhat simplified) in 4\29:

4\29



This representation assumes that at D-Structure the main clause will not be a question; it has an empty C ('complementiser'), an NP ('noun phrase'), an empty I ('inflection'), and a VP ('verb phrase', whose internal structure is ignored here). Its transformation into a question is effected by filling the empty I with the modal *did* which is then moved into the empty C. These transformations (referred to now as 'movements') provide the speaker with the S-Structure, which then has to undergo morphophonological adjustment to produce surface structure as it appears in 4\28, and lastly phonetic adjustment to produce the spoken form.

But this formulation implies that things happen in this sequence. In practice, it is clear that the question component of the sentence is selected by the speaker at least at the same time, and by all appearances before, the selection of lexis; also that the selection of lexis occurs at least at the same time, and by all appearances before, the first 'abstract' structure of the sentence has been thrown up by the base. This can be seen in 'false starts' to such a sentence, where it is clear that the speaker has not selected any of the lexis, although she has already started the sentence with abortive attempts at filling the C:

4\30 Have—could—can—did you notice how he—see the expression on his face?

This would suggest that the putative I-movement of the modal into C has already occurred before the final modal *did* has been selected, let alone the first abortive modal *have*. In other words the S-Structure with the modal in C is already at least partly intact before the D-Structure has had time to compose itself: before, for instance, the verb *see* has been selected, and before the decision has been made whether to allow I to merge with *see* into the past tense *saw*, or to be filled with a modal for movement into C. But this is not all. We find that the abortive starts to the sentence have all passed fully through the morphophonological component and have also received their final phonetic form, including all necessary elisions and assimilations. For instance assimilation of *could* /kʊd/ to /kʊg/ before /kɪ/ has occurred; thus the string *have-could-can-did you* is likely to be realized /əv kʊg kɪ dɪdʒə/. In other words the final morphophonemic and phonetic adjustments are made before the selection of the modal has been finalized, i.e. well before 'underlying' D-Structure has been established. When it comes to *real* language, it seems that directional derivation would be a chaotic process indeed.

4.4.4 Fundamentals and derivatives

We have seen how language has tended to be conceived in terms of

contemporary technology. The early generative-transformational model appeared in the middle of the last century at about the same time as the age-old concept of the algorithm achieved new electronic life. The development of generative linguistics has closely followed technological progress in computerization. As speeds of data-processing and access to large electronic data-bases became problematic, so the linguistic demand for non-redundancy and computational economy came to the fore. Chomsky points out (1995:5) that from the early 1960s the trend had been towards ‘simpler and more natural theories’; the whole drift of Universal Grammar has been towards a simplification of the computational component and minimization of the information stored in the lexicon:

4\31 The lexicon should provide just the information that is required for [the] C[omputational] S[ystem], without redundancy, and in some optimal form. (Chomsky 1995:6)

The demand for non-redundancy is not just a desideratum for Chomsky—it is mandatory: redundant principle *must not* be stated in the derivation: on the association between ‘□-roles’ and ‘argument position’ (we can ignore the meaning of these terms) he says:

4\32 And to the extent that the association [between □-roles and argument position] is predictable rather than idiosyncratic, it need not (*hence, must not*) be stated in particular lexical entries. (Chomsky 1995:30; my emphasis)

Chomsky insists that proposals for redundant principles have repeatedly been found to be invalid formulations, and he makes reference to recurrent work in the field which has supported the demand for minimalism and non-redundancy:

4\33 The discovery [of the incorrectness of redundant formulations] has been so regular that the need to eliminate redundancy has become a working principle in inquiry. (Chomsky 1995:5)

But non-redundancy, as he several times points out, ‘is a surprising property of a biological system.’ (1995:5). From our present scientific perspective it is not simply surprising, but also thoroughly implausible; it is so typical a feature of biological systems in general that it may be said to be one of their essential characteristics. While Chomsky acknowledges this he does not address it as a real problem; he mentions in passing the possibility that ‘an “uglier”, richer, and more complex version of U[niversal] G[rammar]’ might better fit the data (*loc. cit.*) but does not pursue the matter further. He gives

empirical rather than theoretical justifications for his demand for ‘some optimal’ form of storing linguistic information in the brain (4\31): redundant formulations, he claims, have proved less efficient. Here we see again the linguist’s unwillingness to recognize the nature of his model, his tendency to regard it as a valid description: the ‘different formulations’ he refers to are variations *within the given paradigm*; the paradigm itself is not called into question by this ‘inefficiency’. The present Chomskyan model is designed for sparse data and ‘parsimonious’ (the current linguistic term) structures; to designate these elements as ‘optimal’ is tautological.

But old habits die hard. One would have thought that the call for parsimony would have extended to directionality, which must surely be an embarrassment to minimality, since it is an additional property of the system. But Chomsky opts to retain this added complexity: in several places in *The Minimalist Program* he touches on the question of the two alternative understandings of the relationships between differing levels of the grammatical model. This is from chapter 1, *The Theory of Principles and Parameters*, originally 1993, co-authored with Howard Lasnik:

4\34 Subtle questions arise as to how the relations among these levels [D-Structure, S-Structure, etc.] are to be construed: specifically, is there an inherent “directionality”, so that the relations should be construed as a mapping of one level to another, or is there simply a nondirectional relation? [.....] We will tentatively proceed on the assumption that the relations are, in fact, directional: D-Structure is mapped to S-Structure, which is (independently) mapped to PF [=Phonetic Form] and LF [=Logical Form]. (Chomsky 1995: 22-23)

In chapter 2, *Some Notes on Economy of Derivation and Representation*, originally 1991, this point is developed further: from a certain standpoint, the role of S-Structure as the ‘sole point of interaction among the three fundamental levels [D-Structure, Phonetic Form and Logical Form]’ (1995:132) makes it an essentially derivative structure, its properties for any one language being determined by those of the fundamental levels. How these fundamental levels work upon S-Structure is not clear to me, but Chomsky mentions two alternative approaches, one in which various levels are ‘simply related’, and one in which there is a ‘directional mapping’ (Chomsky has the latter phrase in quotes). He goes on to opt, albeit tentatively, for directionality:

4\35 My own rather tentative feeling is [...] that there is mounting, if rather subtle and inconclusive, evidence in support of the picture sketched earlier, with three fundamental levels and the D- to S-Structure relation interpreted as a directional mapping.(Chomsky 1995: 133)

These ‘three fundamental levels’ are logical form, phonetic form, and syntax; as we shall see in chapter 6 they will all three reappear in a rather different guise in the analysis I shall propose for intimate translation. For Chomsky, however, they are primitive or hierarchically superior (or on the alternative understanding merely ‘prior’) structures in a directional process of derivation. This is the interpretation he adopts ‘for expository purposes’, although in spite of his own preferences he does not rule out the other possibility. Nevertheless, he sees S-Structure, the structure that emerges as observable data, as a derivative concept, a system that satisfies conditions set up at other levels:

4\36 From this standpoint, S-Structure is a derivative concept. For a specific language L, its properties are determined by those of the three fundamental levels, and by the condition that it be related to them by the appropriate principles. The level of S-Structure for L is a system that satisfies these conditions, something like a solution to a certain set of equations. (Chomsky 1995: 132)

This approach necessarily assumes directional mapping as a constitutive factor, with primitives on the one hand and derived structures on the other. However the rationale for the process is obscure: the understanding seems to be that such processes occur gratuitously in the model as logical consequences of its structure. At least part of Chomsky would probably object here to the term “processes” as implying causative sequential movements, which he appears to deny, at least in a footnote:

4\37 ... the ordering of operations is abstract, expressing postulated properties of the language faculty in the brain, with no temporary interpretation implied. In this respect, the terms *output* and *input* have a metaphorical flavor, though they may reflect substantive properties, if the derivational approach is correct. (Chomsky 1995:380 note 3.)

Atemporality, it seems, is a feature of ‘directional mapping’; but it is not easy to find clear evidence of atemporality elsewhere in the exposition. Significantly, Jackendoff (1997:13), making a slightly different point, also relies on this single footnote to show that Chomsky’s derivation ‘has nothing to do with processing’ (i.e. mental computation). Be that as it may, Chomsky cannot avoid the terminology of temporal and sequential relationships: an operation ‘*delivers* [a derived structure] *to* the module Morphology, which *constructs* word-like units that are *then* subjected to *further* phonological processes that map it *finally* to ...’ (Chomsky 1995:229; emphasis added). And Jackendoff in spite of his

dissatisfaction with the concept of sequential derivation depends on the same chronological terminology (1997:99). I am perhaps being unfair in citing fragmentally and out of context in this way, but the fact remains that it is extremely difficult to make sense of accounts such as these while holding in mind the idea that ‘no temporary interpretation is involved’. It seems clear that Chomsky is using the term ‘mapping’ in a directional sense in 4\34, since he makes the vital distinction between ‘a mapping of one level to another’ on one hand and ‘simply a nondirectional relation’ on the other; and his repeated use of the phrase ‘directional mapping’ is significant, even if ‘directional’ is sometimes (but not always) in scare-quotes.

It is difficult to locate these gestures towards atemporality, and the claim that the ‘ordering of operations’ is simply ‘abstract’ (4\34), among the realities of language. For instance, there is recurrent uncertainty within the discipline as to where the lexicon itself enters the derivation: the early Chomskyan model relied on ‘initial insertion’, i.e. at the start of the syntactical derivation, and under the Minimalist Program ‘the level of D-Structure is directly associated with the lexicon’ (Chomsky 1995:131). Proponents of so-called ‘late lexical insertion’ attempt on the other hand to keep the syntactic derivation free from semantic and phonological features as long as possible.¹¹⁸ Arguments for any particular location (or stage) in the derivation for ‘lexical insertion’ are accepted only in so far as they relate to the structure of the model. The fact that intimate translation often hinges on the phonetic form of the lexis, jumping erratically between phonetically similar forms and triggering new structures built up from new lexis, is simply not admissible evidence, since the model does not cater for it. The argument is circular, the tautology sealed.

This uneasy dislocation of the model from the realities of language is encapsulated in the phrase ‘metaphorical flavor’ (a true meta-metaphor!) in 4\37: is the model a mere metaphor which ‘may reflect substantive properties’? Or does it just *taste* like a metaphor? Chomsky is having his cake and eating it: while it is perhaps reasonable to accept the Chomskyan model as a metaphor,¹¹⁹ the whole question of linguistic innateness on which it rests can only, in Chomskyan terms, be presented in terms of a rigorous, non-metaphorical argument.

¹¹⁸See Jackendoff (1997:13-14,86-87) for discussion. According to Jackendoff ‘Chomsky (1979 and elsewhere) acknowledges the possibility of late lexical insertion, though to my knowledge he never explores it’ (1997:226, note 2).

¹¹⁹Chomsky would perhaps, in the last analysis, accept the concept of *metaphor* in Barthes’s sense: ‘peut-être aussi, dans l’ordre d’objets qui nous occupe, la métaphore a-t-elle, plus que nous le pensons, une existence méthodologique et une force heuristique’ (Barthes 1984:24).

4.4.5 Jackendoff's Representational Modality

In recent years Ray Jackendoff has emerged as a major critic of Chomsky from within the Chomskyan camp. Although he sees himself as working within the same paradigm—‘the work presented here is down to its deepest core a part of the Chomskyan tradition’ (Jackendoff 1997:2)—, his disagreement with Chomsky is radical, turning firstly on their different assessments of the relationship of the model to actual brain processes, and secondly on two interrelated features of the model itself: the traditional generative concept of derivation, particularly its sequential aspect, and the emphasis on the central rôle of syntax. I shall discuss these disagreements in that order.

Jackendoff distinguishes between *competence* theories, which seek to express the whole structure of a certain language variety, and *processing* theories which seek to explain how this structure is instantiated in the brain (2002:30-31). He conceives of the language-processing areas of the brain as realising ‘a “state-space” of all the neurons’ such that ‘when someone hears or produces [an utterance] their brain can be thought of as being at some point in that state-space; it will be at another point for each different linguistic expression’ (2002:24). The linguistic model is a device for symbolizing this state-space using a certain notation.¹²⁰ Processing theories on the other hand seek to explain how the ‘state-space’ is instantiated in the brain and the mechanisms by which the brain moves from one point in the state-space to another. Jackendoff ignores here the fact that the idea of a ‘state-space’ in the brain is no less a theoretical construct (a ‘model’) than the ‘device for symbolizing the state-space using a certain notation’, so that ‘processing theories’ are building on a theoretical construct no less than competence theories: Jackendoff’s implied distinction between the abstractness of competence theories and the aspiring pragmatics of processing theories does not really hold water. Nevertheless I shall stay for the moment with his argument, since my intention is to discuss his struggle against the inherent directionality of the traditional model.

Jackendoff goes on, then, to distinguish (2002:33) between his own ‘soft’ mode of language idealization, which sees the competence model as ‘a matter of convenience’ pending further information as to how the brain actually works, and Chomsky’s ‘hard’ idealization: Chomsky has ‘always been careful to characterize a generative grammar not as a method to construct sentences but as a formal way to describe the infinite set of possible sentences’ (Jackendoff 1997:16). Chomsky’s approach ‘denies the need to go beyond itself; in the end it cuts itself off from the possibility of integration into a larger context’ (2002:33).

¹²⁰ A certain suspension of belief is necessary here. Isn’t the notation already in place, in the form of language itself?

This point is fundamental, and indeed not limited to Chomsky—as we have just seen Jackendoff cannot escape it. It underpins the staple response to much of the criticism levelled at generative linguistics in general, which is that generative linguistics does not concern itself with ‘real’ language, but a certain idealization *which itself needs explaining*. Jackendoff on the other hand attempts to break out of this insulated security: his ‘soft’ approach relies on the belief that competence and processing theories are developing towards the same ultimate understanding, and that if neuroscience and linguistics are sufficiently cognizant of each other the pieces will gradually fall together and a single picture will emerge. There is a naïve and massive optimism in this approach, since it is no less realistic to prepare for the possibility that either neuroscience or linguistics is on the wrong track, and that as our understanding of the brain progresses, one of the two theories will collapse and the other replace it. Unless, of course, both are on the wrong track.

Jackendoff’s assessment of the ‘hard’ approach is that it will lead nowhere, and that, naïve or not, linguistics has to take the soft road. And in fact this apparently practical commitment leads him to avoid some of the mistakes of traditional generative linguistics. An example is his treatment of hierarchy and directionality. Within the context of Chomsky’s ‘hard’ approach sequential order is not really an issue: since the model does not describe real processes, counter-intuitive formulations can be tolerated as mere features of the notation. Jackendoff’s approach on the other hand is essentially constraint-based: that is to say he assumes a system which filters candidate sentences and rejects those which do not fit the requirements:

4\38 a set of conditions that a well-formed structure must satisfy, without specifying any alterations performed on the structure to achieve that well-formedness, and without any necessary order in which the restraints apply. (Jackendoff 1997:12)

Here the asequentiality of restraints is promising; but the verb ‘apply’ is firmly process-orientated; and his concept of a tripartite structure of parallel but ‘independent generative systems’ (1997:108) conjours up traditional images of language generation. These systems handle between them the phonological, syntactical and conceptual (i.e. semantic) structures of the sentence; he sees the three structures ‘converging’ to produce a well-formed sentence if they can be mapped successfully on to each other through interfaces called ‘correspondence rules’. Instead of the problematic ‘lexical insertion’ of traditional generative grammar Jackendoff suggests that the successful convergence of the three structures is ‘licensed’ by the lexicon, which functions as an interface where correspondences between the three modules of the tripartite system come

together in the various lexical entries. These correspondences are conceived rather differently from the algorithms of the early Chomskyan tradition which go back to the insulated ‘rewrite rules’ of Generative-Transformational grammar. Instead we have a control-system of tendency and constraint, whose general operational principle Jackendoff formulates as:

4\39 Configuration X in system A
 {must/may/preferably does} correspond to
 configuration Y in system B (Jackendoff 1975:24)¹²¹

where the choice in curly brackets allows this single rule to represent three different modalities: ‘determinative’, ‘permissive’ or ‘default’. This concept goes some way towards dealing with the problems discussed as 4\28 and 4\30 above, where ‘false starts’ to a sentence run foul of the ‘logical directionality’ (Jackendoff 2002:197) of the standard model. Jackendoff’s concept is ‘logically non-directional’; although still clinging to the fantasy of ‘logical’ linguistic processes he does manage to avoid directionality:

4\40 One can start with any piece of structure in any component and pass along logical pathways provided by the constraints to construct a coherent larger structure around it. For example, one can start with a piece of phonology and, via the interfaces, construct corresponding syntax and semantics. (Jackendoff 2002:198)

This approach is not altogether at odds with certain aspects of the problems presented in section 4.2. Although it does not *explain* how *hólinga* can contribute towards *hló* in 4\2, it does not exactly *hinder* it in the way that traditional generative systems do. But the concept of ‘logical pathways’ is disturbing: there is no leeway for randomness and lateral movement in the guise suggested by Penrose (see section 4.4.6 below), and no concessions to intertextuality or the structures of collective discourse. And of course it completely ignores Jakobson’s “mythical, poetic, magical, and playful” language (page 112 above).

Seen from a traditional generative perspective the most distinctive feature of Jackendoff’s position is his rejection of what he calls ‘syntactocentrism’, the traditional view that syntax is the central aspect of the generative model and that the other main features of language, the phonological and the conceptual (i.e. semantic), are ancillary issues connected to each other only by ‘interfaces’

¹²¹I have slightly simplified this formulation: instead of ‘system A’ Jackendoff has a mnemonic meaning ‘the system B interface level(s) of system A’; similarly for ‘system B’.

through syntax. Jackendoff sees this as a historical accident, possibly unavoidable, resulting from the academic leanings of the early generativists. This, he points out, results in a major problem of the traditional Chomskyan model: its linear transmission of information between various modules involves some improbably routing.¹²² Jackendoff is here, rather understandably, ignoring Chomsky's statement that the 'ordering of operations' is 'abstract' (4\37), since this statement effectively insulates Chomsky from technical criticism which seeks to find flaws in the logic of the model; Jackendoff in other words is forced either to criticize Chomsky's 'hard' or self-enclosed abstract formulation as if it were a 'soft' theory of real generative processes, or ignore Chomsky altogether.

In spite of this reaction against the sequentiality of the Chomskyan model there are unmistakable residual features of derivation and 'syntactocentrism' left in Jackendoff's model, and this, given Jackendoff's commitment to a processing model, would seem to retain the assumption of sequential processes in the brain. My forecast is that algorithmic directionality, and with it any distinction between primitives and derivations, will not survive in linguistic theory; and it will surely not be found in the brain either. For Jackendoff, although syntax does not have the central status that it has in the traditional generative model—'rather, syntax is simply one of the three major generative components of the grammar' (2002:126)—, it is nevertheless 'special in the sense that it is the most "isolated" component: unlike phonology and semantics, it does not have multiple interfaces with other cognitive capacities' (2002:126). Perhaps Jackendoff would concede that this is 'soft' syntactocentrism; but whatever its evolutionary provenance, the position that I shall develop in the rest of this book is that syntax plays no dominant role in the grammar. To be more precise, I shall argue that there are no dominant roles.¹²³

The spectre of hierarchical structure also haunts the concept of the

¹²² Particularly the concept of 'lexical insertion', which according to Jackendoff means that lexical items have to pass through the syntactic module taking with them information concerning their form and conceptual properties which is ignored during the syntactical derivation, having no part to play there: 'the phonological and conceptual structures of lexical items have to be dragged through a syntactic derivation, inertly' (Jackendoff 1997:85). The phonological information remains 'inert' until it is 'unpacked' at one exit point from syntax, the 'phonological interface', while the conceptual information is unpacked at another, the 'conceptual interface' (Jackendoff 1997: 91-92; see also 2002:130).

¹²³ In a later somewhat more speculative chapter Jackendoff goes on to attribute this 'isolated' characteristic of syntax to evolution: early language lacked the developed syntax of modern languages but had similar phonological and semantic modalities as modern language, together with the interfaces with the extra-linguistic environment which he sees as integral to his model (2002:125, Figure 5.4). Syntax has thus evolved within the linguistic capacity, and for this reason lacks connections with the outside world. Carstairs-McCarthy, in a delightfully readable and compelling book (1999), suggests that basic phonological components such as syllabic structure are physiologically determined, and that the basic structures of early human syntax are modelled on them in their turn. These two concepts are not incompatible.

‘interface’, a phenomenon which became prominent in later traditional generative grammar and has assumed dominant status in Jackendoff’s model. The concept of the lexicon as a pervasive interface which ‘licenses’ the convergence of the three main representations is in many ways attractive, but it leaves one asking why there is still a terminological distinction between *interface* and *representation*. This may well be a result of the fact that while the idea of a *representation* can be fleshed out with algebraic-looking rules of transformation, *interface* is merely an upmarket way of saying ‘some sort of connection we cannot formulate’. Jackendoff’s interfaces are to be sure a degree more substantial: the lexicon, at least, clearly exists somewhere in some form, although the way in which it attaches itself to the three main representations is still a process of which we know nothing. Notice at this point that my use of the verb *attach* is already a highly suggestive metaphor, an image of connecting neurons and firing synapses, the self-same image, I venture to suggest, which ‘licences’ (I borrow Jackendoff’s term in meta-series) Jackendoff’s ubiquitous reliance on ‘subscripted indices’ to correlate the different arenas of the model. Although *independent*, the three modules of the tripartite model ‘can cross-check each other simultaneously when necessary’ (1997:96) since their components are ‘explicitly linked by subscripted indices’ (1997:89). This notion—this notation—reaches its full flowering in *Foundations* (2002 *passim*, particularly p. 6), where not only the three main structures, syntax, phonology and semantics, but others such as ‘spacial structure’ are correlated with each other in a close web of various types of indices.

Now of course subscripted indices are no worse interfacial conveniences than ‘rewrite’ arrows or the branching lines of tree-diagrams. For some approaches they are far superior: they tally for instance nicely with Deleuze and Guattari’s (1976) militant preference for ‘rhizomic’ or networking structures as against the ‘arborescent’ or hierarchical tree-structures of traditional generative linguistics. But given Jackendoff’s emphasis on a rapport between competence and processing theories, I find them disturbing in at least two ways. While the instantiation of indices to link multidimensional values is a standard and fully transparent practice in computer science, we must surely pause before we apply it to neurons. My point is that the *terminology* itself does not give us pause, does not invite us look more closely; we automatically apply the terminology of our latest technology to the workings of the brain. Rossetti’s warning against the ravages of technology (4\15) is fully translatable into our present age: as useless to digitalize the violet as cast it into the crucible.

Jackendoff rejects this attitude to our lack of knowledge about the brain as simply disruptive, counter-productive:

4\41 were one to take [such] arguments one step further, one might legitimately claim that there aren't any neurons in the head any more than there are computations: actually, there are only quarks and leptons, and consequently brain function must be explained only in terms of elementary particles. Dennett (1995) has called this absurd sort of argument "greedy reductionism": it demands too much of theoretical reduction and thereby prevents anyone from understanding larger scales of organisation. I submit that neuroscience, like the computational theory of mind, is just another perspective, and that it is at least premature, if not altogether illegitimate, to expect the latter to be replaced entirely by the former. (Jackendoff 1997:217, note 2)

I do not see however that my brand of 'reductionism'—if that is what it is—is disruptive: my term would be *cautious*. I am willing to concede that interfaces and indices are *bona fide* nodes in the discussion; but I insist that we should *at the same time* be uncomfortable with them because we know they are shifting nodes, and that history has many examples of long-overdue 'replacement of former by latter perspectives' being obstructed by entrenched terminology and its underlying metaphors. There may be some truth in Jackendoff's assertion that 'No one denies that cognitive structures subsist on a neural substrate' (2002:23-24), but there is no reason to ignore the fact that this idea will inevitably one day, if mankind survives, be seen at best as a naïve, at worst a mistaken, understanding. It would be very silly to expect no further 'changes in perspective.'

My second quarrel with indices is that, on closer examination, their application implies a strictly derivational environment. In other words I want to question Jackendoff's conception of the *independence* of the modules, which seems to imply that they are capable of *processing* information 'in private' and that their progress is only checked now and then (Jackendoff says 'at any time') by the blowing of a whistle and a spot-count of indices. However one reads this, it looks like a linear process which is checked periodically: in a word, a derivation. This is computerese: in a computer, this monitoring process would be effected by running a background program of interrupts. But Jackendoff seems to have a continuous rather than intermittent indexical framework in mind, since the checking can (and therefore does) occur at 'any piece of structure in any component' (4\40): this surely enmeshes the structures in such a way that *independence* is hardly the right term. It dissolves the idea of a 'structure', since if all parts of the 'structure' are connected with 'indices' (or whatever) to other structures, then their boundaries become *ad hoc* theoretical constructs. If indexicality involves confirmation of correspondences then *continuous indexical linking* implies complete tandem interaction, co-existence within a single system, in a word a common identity. And if we insist on seeing continuously linked

structures as separate entities we lose conception of their integral simultaneity, their co-operation.

In the next section (4.4.6) I shall suggest a technological understanding which will provide us with a theoretical metaphor for such simultaneity. In chapter 5, particularly in sections 5.1.1, 5.1.2 and 5.3, we shall see examples of intertextual linguistic processes (in this case ‘translation’) where the modules although independent are closely integrated with each other, which is what we should expect from such intimate linking. In section 5.3.1 I shall refer to this relationship between the modules as *implicate independence*.

Constraint-based models of the type Jackendoff suggests are in fact no radical break with Chomskyan tradition, as I quoted Jackendoff as saying at the beginning of this section. In spite of his (always ‘tentative’) commitment to sequential derivation and directional mapping, Chomsky’s ‘operations’ often seem to work very much as constraints:

4\42 A guiding intuition of the Minimalist Program is that operations apply anywhere, without general stipulation, the derivation crashing if a ‘wrong choice’ is made. (Chomsky 1995:231)

That Chomsky is thinking—alas!—in binary electronic terms seems to be obvious from his terminology. On the other hand it also seems that technological anxiety over speed of computation no longer haunts the model: the idea that the system simply rejects all ‘wrong choices’ opens the way, with ‘pure’ constraint-based theories such as Optimality Theory, to improbably gigantic tasks of computation, and Jackendoff, committed (as Chomsky isn’t) to a search for actual processes in the human brain, is forced at this point to ‘reject the view that active generation is going on.’ (Jackendoff 1997:103). These are hopeful signs.

4.4.6 Quantum computation

The reader might have guessed by now that in discussing the correlation between our technology and our concepts of the nature of language I am not invoking a causal—or should I say directional—relationship. The question of whether our technology prescribes our understanding of the world, or *vice-versa*, although in all likelihood closely analogous to the problems of directionality in this study, is not part of my discussion—if it were, I would be prepared to argue for an interference model of this relationship in much the same way as I shall now be arguing for an interference model of translation). The point remains, however, that we are justified in expecting this correlation to continue, at least in the foreseeable future; and so speculation on developments in technology will at the same time be speculation on the future development of linguistics. If my

prognosis is correct then we can expect linguistics to move away from the generative model, and with luck this may herald a *rapprochement* between the linguistic and the literary factions of our divided English departments.

As we have seen, one of the lessons of the Kuhnian paradigm-of-the-paradigm is that the time will come when the bioelectronic concept of brain activity will seem as naïve as the mechanical and the metaphysical.¹²⁴ For a time in the late 19th century the brain was a bioelectric system; when transistors were invented it became bioelectronic; in the 1970s it started to become apparent that as nanotechnology developed, the stage would soon be reached when transistors (now called ‘logical gates’) would become so small that single atoms would be involved. However, since Heisenberg formulated the uncertainty principle in 1927 we have known that single atoms do not have discrete binary states. This means that at the nano-level of nuclear or sub-nuclear logical gates, quantum effects of uncertainty and superposition will wreak havoc with classical binary logic. Richard Feynman’s 1981 paper at the First Conference on the Physics of Computation at MIT (Feynman 1982) is cited by Deutsch and Ekert (1998) as being the first discussion of the positive possibilities of these developments, while Deutsch (1985) provided theoretical proof of the viability of quantum computation. In theory, the main advantages of quantum computation lie in the fact that whereas in classical (i.e. non-quantum) systems each ‘bit’ of stored information is either 0 or 1, both possibilities can be stored simultaneously (‘in superposition’) in a single quantum bit, known in the discipline as a ‘qubit’. This information cannot be accessed by the operator since quantum superposition appears to decay into an integral classical state whenever humans observe it; whenever, that is, it is *given* to humans to read it and so becomes a *datum*. However it seems that quantum states can be used in internal computation by the computer. This results in an enormous increase of information storage: while a register of 3 classical bits can store one of eight binary values at a time, a register of 3 qubits can store all eight values simultaneously. It follows that as the number of qubits increases there is an exponential increase in computational ability. Simple mathematics tells us that ‘a 250-qubit register—essentially made of 250 atoms, say—would be capable of holding more numbers simultaneously than there are atoms in the known universe’ (Deutsch and Ekert 1998). While only one of these numbers can be accessed by the operator there are viable techniques of statistical interference tracking which enable output to be tied to input: by 1998 these had already been implemented for single-qubit registers, so that computation of quantum cryptography was then a reality; implementation of

¹²⁴Nor should we forget that the seat of thought has only in recent times moved to the brain from various other organs: where might it travel next? Has it really come to the end of its peregrination?

2-qubit registers had been achieved under laboratory conditions; and results for 3- and 4-qubit registers had been ‘achieved intermittently’. For more than 4 qubits the theory was ‘not yet complete’ (Deutsch and Ekert 1998).

These developments have potentially far-reaching implications for any theory of the mind and language. Soon after Deutch’s (1985) paper the nuclear physicist Roger Penrose pointed out (Penrose 1990) that we are being very naïve if we think of the neurons of the brain as forming computer-type circuits, since each neuron is itself a cell, and single-celled creatures such as amoeba already have complex abilities for processing information: in other words they have biological intelligence. Insofar as it is anything like a component in a computer, every cell is a computer in itself. Penrose then points out that the physical scale of electrochemical processes in the microtubules of human brain-cells is small enough for us to infer the occurrence of subatomic quantum effects, indeterminacy and asequentiality (1995:355-77, esp. 369-371). This leads him to consider the question of time in relation to consciousness, and to suggest that ‘we may actually be going badly wrong when we apply the usual physical rules for *time* when we consider consciousness’ (Penrose 1990:574). He speculates that the ‘flow’ of time is an illusion of our mode of perception, and that over small stretches of time—quantum superposition has been found to occur over periods approaching two seconds—what we have always seen as sequential cause and effect become simultaneous, or more exactly asequential. He cites evidence to the effect that the ‘now’ of human mentation appears to span this period of just under two seconds, presumably long enough for asequentiality to occur without our noticing it (Penrose 1990:568-572).

Penrose (1990) spends some time on Gödel’s theorem and the existence of non-computable processes, and one of his more tentative suggestions is that non-computable processes may be at work in human thought.¹²⁵ He is very careful to point out (519) that he does not see quantum computation, then in its first infancy, as bypassing Gödel and serving as a representation of the human mind, whatever that may be. The practical outcome of this development is no more than the promise of enormously increased computer power. ‘But these are early days yet,’ Penrose adds, and there has been substantial progress since, as Deutsch and Ekert (1998) indicate. My argument is that if quantum computation becomes established as a viable technological development, this will certainly be reflected in linguistics. If computers cease to use ‘registers’ and ‘buffers’ and

¹²⁵Penrose (1990:538) discusses the extent to which *consciousness* is algorithmic; a little later he goes on to discuss the non-algorithmic nature of mathematical insight (541-547) and makes a clearer distinction between *conscious* awareness and unconscious intuition, which nicely matches Jackendoff’s controversial view that reasoning takes place on an unconscious level (Jackendoff 1997:180-208)—which is where most linguists locate linguistic activity.

begin to manipulate ‘qubits’ encoding parallel realities, we can expect linguists to begin to think along what they see as the same lines. Penrose’s suggestion of mental processes simultaneously partaking in different realities which can and do impinge on each other, does indeed seem compatible with the linguistic theory of constraints, which conceives of the ‘correct’ linguistic form appearing somewhat miraculously from a potentially huge volume of more-or-less randomly generated ‘incorrect’ forms.

Already, Jackendoff’s discourse seems to be sliding in this direction. He discusses utterances which, on the phonetic level, are initially ambiguous, but whose ambiguity is resolved by the end of the utterance, so that circuitry of the (brain’s or the model’s?) algorithms have to deal with competing realities until the ambiguity is resolved. Although his example (2002:202) is rather contrived, we do not have to look far to find real language where phonetic ambiguity reigns, if only for extremely short stretches. I offer an example:

4\43 So long as men can breathe, or eyes can see

In its spoken form, *can see* and *conceive* differ only (in many dialects—not for instance in the North of England) in the final consonant: for a fraction of a second (or until ‘So long lives this’ starts) the listener does not know which is being said. (Yes, we know the sonnet in advance; but consider: for an Elizabethan hearing the sonnet for the first time the concept of *eyes conceiving* is not an unlikely conceit.)¹²⁶ Yet we experience no sense of ambiguity; and in fact the phrase *and eyes can see* takes about one and a half seconds for me to say aloud - well within the time-frame of the human ‘now’ according to Penrose (above), and far too short a time (whatever our brain is doing) for us to be consciously aware of the sequence of sounds. Jackendoff’s comment (although admittedly not on Shakespeare) at this point is as follows:

4\44 ... the phonology processor must potentially entertain alternative structures, both of which get passed on by the interface processors successively to syntax and semantics. When the semantics processor resolves the ambiguity, thus “clamping” the intended meaning, the semantics processor cannot by itself reject the incorrect phonological structure. Rather, the interface processors must pass down the inhibition of the rejected structure in succession to syntax and

¹²⁶The typical relative lengths of the final vowels are quoted as 28.0 centiseconds for *see* and 36.0 centiseconds for *conceive* in Gimson (2001:97). On the other hand the word *conceit* has a particularly short vowel (because followed by an unvoiced plosive) with a typical length of 12.3 centiseconds, which, if these lengths have any *sequential* effects, would be more instantly recognisable. But would we know any sooner whether the poet was talking about *the eye’s conceit*? Given Penrose’s 2-second ‘now’, this is question is meaningless.

phonology. (Jackendoff 2002:202)

This may seem an enormously ponderous way to discuss our reception of four short syllables, but my point is only this: Jackendoff's linguistics shows signs of moving into a mode where it does not actually counterindicate the types of linguistic movement we have been discussing in this book up till now. Of course, this is not the same as saying that it elucidates these movements; but the *rapprochement* is perceptible.

This understanding would in fact resolve a number of practical problems encountered in linguistics, such as that of the mismatch between the short-term sequences of speech gestures in the brain and in the articulatory organs. It has long been clear to researchers in articulatory phonetics that since nerve-impulses travel relatively slowly and have to cover varying distances, synchronisation of speech-organs that are removed from each other, such as the lips and the glottis, needs to be managed from the brain in a sequence which differs from the resulting acoustic sequence of speech sounds. This chronological encoding of the sequence takes place in a very small time-scale, well within the limits of quantum indetermination. Research indicates that disturbed sequences of complex speech-sounds occur in normal speech: Wesener (2001) reports realisations of /x/, /h/ and /r/ in the 'wrong' sequential order in German colloquial speech, and interprets Kohler's (2001) discussion of tokens for /t/, realized by creaky voice on the nasal in the word *könnten*, as occurring out of expected sequence with regard to the nasal. These *non-sequential phenomena* (Wesener's term) are not detected by the speakers or listeners. This may be because they occur in shorter stretches than the asequential human 'now'.¹²⁷

To end this section, let us examine how this minor paradigm change in technology—from classical algorithmic computation to quantum computation—, will, if it takes place, erase a linguistic term on which a whole sub-branch of research into cognitive disorders appears to depend. The term 'buffer' is used in the literature of cognitive science to indicate storage of graphemic or phonological strings held in short-term memory at any one go;¹²⁸ it presents a

¹²⁷Counter-arguments are not lacking: Jackendoff (1997:106) cites experimental evidence suggesting that variation in lengths of hesitation observed in differing linguistic tasks correlates with postulated complexity in the algorithmic model. Supportive empirical evidence of this sort is by no means rare in the literature. Even so, an algorithmic understanding of brain activity is not the only way to explain these effects.

¹²⁸Shallice (1988) makes use of the terms 'phonological input buffer' (45) in the context of short-term verbal memory, and a 'graphemic output buffer' (136) in writing. In a footnote (147) he mentions alternative terminologies by other writers, and adds, 'At the present state of knowledge of the agraphias, these alternative means of conceptualising storage processes are not empirically distinguished. I will use the 'buffer' terminology for ease of communication.' Cognitive science is, of course, a highly empirical discipline seeking amongst other things to understand brain processes in

warning example of computer technology being implanted into the theoretical model without questioning the cogency of the implant. A ‘buffer’ is jargon for a bank of short-term memory in a computer used to store incoming data whenever the program that processes it cannot match the speed of the input. The term is already, with increasing computation speeds, becoming dated; in quantum computation the concept will probably become obsolete, since data overflow is integral to quantum superposition, which as we have seen deals with competing configurations of reality simultaneously, or rather achronistically, outside the apparent time-framework. According to Penrose’s reasoning, too, it is highly unlikely that buffering processes exist as such in the brain. The well-known distinction between short- and long-term memory, which has long been seen as a paradigmatic justification of the computer model of brain function, will have to be attached to some other technological metaphor.

4.5 Interference

The term *interference* has several times crept into my argument so far, albeit in two different and even conflicting senses. These are the two distinct meanings of the term in current English, and—significantly as it turns out—these two meanings delineate between them the two main approaches to the phenomena of translation and textual transmission we have been discussing: the filiatory and the non-filiatory.

In everyday usage *interference* means intervention, typically with negative consequences: intrusive, interruptive influence. This concept is filiatory, directional, and hierarchical: I shall call it *simple interference*. The Nida-Taber model (4\19) is expressly set up to combat this interference: it sees the process of transmission as an insulated movement *from* some primary object (the ‘source text’) *to* a secondary object (the ‘receptor text’), and aspires to shield this movement from the undesirable interference of extraneous or at best marginal material, the surface structure of the source text. The second meaning is used in physics to refer to the interaction of frequency or wave systems which occupy the same area of time-space to produce complex interference phenomena: it is non-filiatory, non-directional, and non-hierarchical; in Deleuze and Guattari’s terms ‘rhizomic’ rather than ‘arborescent’. In this section I shall begin to explore this second understanding of *interference* as an approach to the problems I have been discussing.

‘Approach’ is the operative word here; perhaps even ‘point of view’ in the

detail, and as an outsider I would think that relying on a thoroughly explicit term such as ‘buffer’ might introduce a dangerous bias in view of lack of empirical evidence. The concept of a ‘graphemic buffer disorder’ seems however firmly entrenched (see for instance Jónsdóttir *et. al.* 1996). My thanks are due to María K. Jónsdóttir for putting me on this track.

Saussurean sense of ‘a primitive fact of language’ (7\12 on page 257)—I need a term which while it does not rule out the possibility of rigorously articulated description, does not demand it either. I shall not attempt a complete formulation of even small areas of the data, not only because I cannot see clearly how to do so, but also because, given our present scientific stance, any such formulation would have to be broadly algorithmic, and this is the approach I wish to avoid. I do not think it is worth denying that the language faculty, and indeed human mentation in general, may be algorithmic in some sense; at least it may turn out to be possible to imitate it algorithmically, more or less crudely; but I do not find this possibility very interesting. (And to reiterate: even if it is possible to describe it algorithmically now, this will seem very unsophisticated by the time technology has run its course.)

After the brief outline in this section of what I mean by ‘interference’ I shall need two chapters—5 and 6—of close analysis of a passage from Björnsson’s translation of *Béowulf* as a demonstration, before returning in the final chapter to the *approach* itself, and the expectations it raises for our conceptions of textuality in general.

4.5.1 Implicate interference

This second understanding of the term does not assume a filial or directional relationship between the fields of activity involved, but an implicate relationship—hence my terminology. This sense of the term ‘interference’ appears according to the *OED* in the early nineteenth century to describe ‘the mutual interaction of two [or more] waves or systems of waves, in reinforcing or neutralizing each other, when their paths meet or cross’; it was originally used without reference to undulation (until Young’s understanding of transvers light waves), but was seen to be compatible with the concept of light waves and later sound waves, and is used in this sense today. I shall use it in the earlier, more general sense, which does not necessarily imply undulation, although the existence of underlying wave-patterns is not ruled out.¹²⁹ But just as interference between wave-systems is not dependent upon any similarity in the frequencies involved,¹³⁰ so too does the understanding of *implicate interference* that I

¹²⁹Nor does it rule out the possibility that all interference is ultimately undulatory. Thus for instance in dealing with spoken language, any Fourier-type decomposition of sound-waves goes a long way towards uncovering components of the wave which can be related not only to phonological segments but to large-scale discourse features such as intonation patterns (which are in turn related to syntax), including long-term anaphora and even extratextual deixis.

¹³⁰This point is sometimes misunderstood, the term ‘interference’ often being used only of the meeting of similar or identical frequencies. This is when some of the most spectacular effects, known as *interference* or *moiré fringes*, occur; but it is important to remember that this is only a special case. Highly dissimilar frequencies producing complex wave-patterns, for instance in sound-waves, are also a interference phenomena. Dissimilarity is in fact a prerequisite of Fourier analysis, which

suggest here not demand any intrinsic similarity or compatibility of the component systems of the interference pattern; we may call this feature ‘constitutive incompatibility’. Furthermore the fields may well be of unequal strength, and one may tend to eclipse others, but no one field acts directly upon another, and no field undergoes changes in itself as a result of the interference.

In section 4.4.5 I suggested that a continuous application of Jackendoff’s indexical linking would tend to dissolve boundaries between modules. This would have at least two radical consequences: it would require non-sequentiality, and it would erase the distinction between ‘representations’ and ‘interfaces’. Instead of different modules operating independently we would need to visualize an open, dynamic system. But any account of such a system must be made by tracing—by abstraction—modular activities within it: in all likelihood we shall continue to speak of phonetic, semantic and syntactic processes, among a host of others, as organisational entities, without expecting such entities to be organized hierarchically into arboreal syntax (the same regime as that which licences the filial *stemma* of traditional textuality) or even to be physically identifiable in the brain. Any theoretical need for separate modules of independent processing should be seen as an artifact of the mode of analysis.

The condition of non-hierarchy has radical implications, as we shall see. We begin by representing the interference relationship as

$$4\backslash45 \quad a \approx b \approx c$$

using the wavy parity sign ‘ \approx ’ from chapter 3 which symbolizes the interaction of the two quanta a and b , and three wavy lines ‘ \approx ’ to introduce the interference pattern. Thus 4\45 reads: ‘ a and b are fields of interference resulting in c ’. We should note that this formulation is the same whether we speak of fields or of quanta. The reason for this should soon become clear.

However this formulation, although implicate, is still to some extent filial and directional: the fields (or quanta) a and b are still represented as primitives, and c as the derived structure. In order to remove this remnant of filiation the concept of non-hierarchy must be fully self-constitutive: we are not simply suggesting a democratic ‘round-table’ effect, requiring equality between the participants, but also that the table itself become merely *another participant*. This understanding is essential to the concept of the third text to which I shall return in the final chapter; it is also an essential aspect of the *intimacy* of the phenomena involved. Thus although we assume that a field of interference (such as the ‘surface structure’ of a text) is the result of the interaction of a number of

cannot extract ‘different’ *identical* constitutive waves—if such things can be said to exist—from complex waves.

constitutive fields, this does not imply that the constitutive fields are primitives and the interference field derivational.

Thus the formulation in 4\45 also implies 4\46:

$$4\46 \quad b \approx c \approx a$$

and

$$c \approx a \approx b$$

—in other words the existence of any two presupposes the existence of the third. This relationship can be expressed circularly as

$$4\47 \quad a \approx b \approx c \approx a$$

which can be rephrased: ‘When two fields of interference come together to form a third field, then all three fields, the two primary and the third, have equal status and can each be separately abstracted (insofar as any of them can be abstracted) from the whole.’ This can be summarized as: ‘A field of interference has equal status to each of its components’. The point to bear in mind here is that ‘status’ does not refer to relative strength or force; and ‘equality of status’ does not imply that different fields are present in equal intensities. Thus when $a \approx b \approx c$, any of a, b, c may be quantitatively dominant; in evoking their equality we refer to their equal availability for abstraction. None of the three fields in $a \approx b \approx c$ has a derivational status *vis-à-vis* either or both of the others. At this point we can say that the concept of the quantum from chapter 3 (3.4.2.1 on page 77) has been subsumed; as soon as any quantum enters into the relationship formulated in any of 4\47 to 4\47, it ceases to be a quantum. This point will be further developed in 6.3.1.

According to this view, what we have been calling ‘surface structure’ of the text is a field of interference whose constituent fields are those of syntax, phonology and semantics, among a host of others. These other components include the wide range of intertextualities already discussed, and in chapter 7 we shall consider the possibility of extratextualities. I do however see phonological, syntactic and semantic abstractions as fairly central, and I would be prepared to accept a linguistic model, a linguistic understanding, involving these three fields. Clearly, however, any formulation of ‘rules of correspondence’ to establish connections between them could not be algorithmic in the sense of Jackendoff’s ‘correspondence rules’ (4\39). On the other hand I expect that many linguists now fine-tuning the algorithmic complexities of their models, and working on the assumption that they are approaching an understanding of how the brain actually functions, will be appalled at the vagueness of ‘rules’ such as ‘a and b

are fields of interference resulting in *c'*. I am no less appalled by their reliance on algorithmic processes.

4.5.3 Resolving depth

The principle of self-constitutive non-hierarchy, the levelling of sets which licences our first intuition of the meaninglessness of Russell's Paradox, involves a radical reappraisal of the concept of linguistic depth, the constituent analysis of the classroom. Traditional linguistic wisdom teaches that different-sized parcels of text are arranged together in a structured fashion such that the larger components are built up of the smaller ones. In several important senses this is of course true; but expressing the situation in this way is understood in the generative linguistic paradigm to imply a branching hierarchical structure with insulated channels of domination and subservience between which the flow of information is illegal or at best highly constrained. This is the 'arborescent' structure criticized by Deleuze and Guattari, in which the layer of phonemes is 'blind' to the shape of the words, the layer of words is 'blind' to the syntax, and the semantics is an orthogonal embarrassment to the whole system.

In contrast, a non-hierarchical arena of linguistic structure, a field of interference, requires every word to be saturated with the syntax that enfolds it, every phoneme to resonate with the form of the word that binds it. The *B* of *Béowulf* is not the same as the *B* of *Breca*; the dative *sea* they rowed with their arms (*Béowulf* 544) is not the nominative *sea* that washed Béowulf up on the sands (579). Semantics too is a component in the interference pattern that colours everything it touches: the *sea* that washed Béowulf up onto the sands is not the hellish *sea* at the bottom of which he grappled with Grendel's mother; and it is certainly not the sunless *sea* fed by Alph, the sacred river. Conversely, the sound-profile of the word echoes across different terrains: Grendel's mother's shoulder turns into a flipper (5\36); Hóç's daughter laughs a hollow laugh (4\2). Yet another component is the elusive history of each sound-profile: is Béowulf a Bee-wolf or a Barley-wulf?¹³¹ All these components come together and interact, with a host of others, in a surprisingly small space, to give us the text and its translation and the text-and-its-translation.

We need then to explain what it is we are doing when we salvage concepts such as *phoneme* and *word* and *sentence* from this arena of inchoate activity. David Bohm would call them *abstractions*: 'any describable event, object, entity etc., is an abstraction from an unknown and undefinable totality of flowing movement' (Bohm 1983:49). My feeling is however that we cannot abstract from unknown totalities. Instead, we actively arbitrate the fields of

¹³¹The standard views of the etymology of *Béowulf* are discussed by Klaeber (1950:xxv-xxvii).

interference we study, numbering and naming their components: the intertextualities we recognize, the echoes we hear, the etymologies we know, the meanings we remember. Those that escape our arbitration are those which do not participate in any field of interference accessible to us; they are by definition not within our event horizon, and are invisible to this study.¹³²

4.5.3 The analysis as an interference pattern.

The three component fields of the text, the phonological, syntactic and semantic, form the basis of the analysis of Björnsson's translation which I shall begin in chapter 5. It should be noted from the outset that this is a major limitation of the analysis: it does not include any of the host of other fields of interference involved, although I shall try to hint at them. In chapter 6 I shall be working with a 'third text' which owes its existence to the original *Béowulf* and Björnsson's translation; these are its constituent fields, just as it is a constituent field of both of them. Detailed statements of correspondences between these two texts will take the form of single instances or peaks of interference (which I shall call *moirés* in section 6.3.1);¹³³ these will point to associations between discrete 'quanta' (in the sense of chapter 3) in the texts. The quanta are drawn from constituent fields of each text, the syntactic, phonetic and semantic fields. The strength of these *moirés* will be seen to rely to a large extent on how well their original home-text interference environments—the way in which they interact in their home text—are retained in another text. For instance, the phonological string pertaining to a single word is associated with a certain meaning in one text: we will say that these two quanta, one phonological and the other semantic, are associated in an interference pattern. If both these quanta retain their association in another text a strong and fairly simple pattern will result at this point between the two texts: in simple terms, the word will appear with the same meaning in both texts. For instance, the OE word *dohtor* 'daughter' in *Béowulf* appears as *dóttir* in the translation (see 4\2); note that the phonological changes can be attributed to other fields of interference which we will be examining in the next chapters. If, on the other hand, the semantic and the phonological quanta part company and strike up different patterns in each text, a more complex interference pattern (weaker in some respects, in others more striking) will result: thus *hól-* in 4\2 parts company with its meaning 'without cause, hollowly' in the OE text and becomes associated with the meaning 'laughed' as *hló* in the Icelandic text: again, the phonological rearrangement is also an interference pattern which can be analysed (see 5\41 on page 171). In essence, we shall be tracing three strands or features of intertextuality between pairs of quanta in

¹³²This formulation prefigures the concept of 'resolution' used in chapter 6, particularly 6.7

¹³³See page 189 for clarification on the plural form of the term *moiré*.

different texts: we can therefore speak of intertextualities as being *phonologically, syntactically* or *semantically driven*, or any interfering combination of these three.

5. Reflection: a filiatory analysis

We now come to the central texts of this study, the Old English poem *Béowulf* and Halldóra Björnsson's (1983) Icelandic translation, *Bjólfskviða*. My analysis will be limited in the main to the so-called Breca Episode, lines 499-606, although examples from the rest of the poem will also appear.

The Breca Episode (henceforth *Breca*) consists of an exchange of speeches at a banquet between Unferð, a favoured retainer of the Danish King Hróðgar, and Béowulf, a Geatish prince who has arrived at Hróðgar's court in order to rid the Danes of the marauding monster Grendel. Apparently jealous of Béowulf's prowess, Unferð relates a story of how Béowulf was beaten in a swimming contest by Breca, another neighbouring prince. Béowulf replies at length, describing the contestants' five-day swim at sea in which he kept the lead until they were parted by a storm. After this he swam on for two days and killed a number of sea-monsters before gaining land. Béowulf then accuses Unferð of cowardice and parricide and announces that he will rid Hróðgár's people of Grendel before the sun rises the next morning.

5.0 Reflection

We shall begin our analysis within the largely filiatory framework of traditional textual comparison which has no problems with the concept of simple interference discussed in section 4.5: in other words, we are still dealing with a movement from A to B, a concept of features *originating* in one text and *being*

inherited by another text. I shall however avoid the term *transfer* used in the classical models of translation discussed in chapter 4 (for instance 4\19) as being a not only simplistic but also singularly inapt metaphor (if the feature were in fact *transferred* from one text to another it would leave a hole in the original). Instead I shall use the term *reflection*, which allows us to refer to the *original* and the *reflex*, and distances us a little from the idea of directional movement of material. It should be borne in mind however that this is still a filiatory, and thus inadequate, formulation which we will later abandon.

At the end of chapter 4 I suggested that we speak of intertextualities as being *phonologically*, *syntactically* or *semantically driven*, or any combination of these three. Within the filiatory setting of this chapter, then, we will discuss *phonological*, *syntactic*, and *semantic reflection*. I shall abbreviate these as *p-*, *s-* and *m-reflection* (using *m-* as a mnemonic for *meaning*); as we shall come to see, these abbreviations will facilitate later discussion by distancing us from the original terms. Most of this chapter (sections 5.1 and 5.2) will discuss the first type, *p-reflection*, which for our present purposes is the most colourful of the three and will need the most discussion. In these first sections I shall sometimes abbreviate the term *p-reflection* as simply *reflection*, as long as no confusion arises. In section 5.3 I shall turn to the other main types of intertextualities, *s-* and *m-reflection*, and discuss the way in which the three types interact.

5.1 Systematic and non-systematic p-reflection

I shall start by making a distinction between *systematic* and *non-systematic* *p-reflection*; this relates closely to the difference between cognate, or etymologically 'faithful' reflection, and non-cognate echoism, but as we shall see shortly any distinction in terms of pure cognation will be inadequate in a number of ways.

During the discussion I shall occasionally need to refer to the degree of relationship, whether or not this takes the form of a genealogical kinship, between languages. I shall assume that there is a relatively constant relationship between the two languages of the original and the translation, which I shall call the *General Correlation* (GC). This is not to suggest that the relationship can be quantified in any meaningful way, and I am not going to invoke the concepts of the 'glottochronology' of the fifties or the more recent statistically-based search for language groupings associated with Greenberg.¹³⁴ Nevertheless the concept

¹³⁴ Attempts at quantification of language change were made in the nineteen-fifties by a branch of linguistics known as glottochronology or lexicostatistics, whereby the length of time elapsed since related languages diverged was calculated by a count of cognation of a list of 'basic vocabulary'. See Hockett 1958 Chapter 61, Robins 1989 p.392. These experiments were discontinued in the light of the large margin of error that had to be accepted and the fairly narrow range of viable application. More recently, similar relationships have been invoked in the search for comprehensive language

of a constant relationship between languages can be used fairly rigorously without explicit quantification: we do not need a mathematical analysis to demonstrate for instance that Faeroese is closer to Icelandic than to Danish.

Having established the general relation, we will need to refer to the varying *density*¹³⁵ of cognation as a stylistic feature of the translation. This can be expressed in terms of a variable which I shall call the *Local Correlation* (LC), which will be some proportion of the General Correlation. In other words the General Correlation is the background system shift between texts in the two languages, and the ratio of the Local to the General Correlation will be a stylistic feature of that translation. For instance, in the case of very close recension such as careful manuscript transmission with systematic dialectal normalisation, LC will be close to GC.¹³⁶ On the other hand, in a free translation between closely related languages, entailing a full reworking of syntax and lexicon, LC will be a smaller fraction of GC.

GC is of course an idealized quantity, whether we assume its intangibility to be a reflection of the volume and complexity of the quantification, or an intrinsic amorphism. But I wish nevertheless to suggest that many of the detailed components of any GC are fully quantifiable, and in accordance with this claim I shall discuss systematic p-reflection under three headings, depending on the degree of systematicity of the reflection: first, second or third degree. In order to prepare the ground for the second stage of the analysis presented in chapter 6, I shall refer to them as *a-sys*, *b-sys* and *c-cys* (sections 5.1.1, 5.1.2 and 5.1.3).

5.1.0 Etymology

The first and most distinctive feature of the translation is the extent to which it preserves the vocabulary of the source—inevitably, in view of the closeness of the languages. Thus *scip* ‘ship’ becomes *skip* (35), *meduærn* ‘mead-hall’ becomes *mjöðrann* (69), *geswác* ‘betrayed’ becomes *sveik* (1524). Examples of complete lines of such cognate translation are given in 5\1 to 5\3 below.

But as we have seen the translation also abounds in non-cognate echoes. For example, *yð-* ‘waves’ becomes *æð-* ‘veins’ (2693, see 5\14), *géar* ‘yore’ becomes *gaur* ‘villain’ (1354, see 5\21), *mere* ‘sea’ becomes *máran* ‘more’ (533, see 6\48).¹³⁷ To give some initial idea of the extent of these relationships, we

groupings such as ‘Nostratic’ and ‘Amerind’, of which Greenberg and Ruhlen (1992) is the most famous and controversial example: for criticism of their thesis see Lass (1997:159-169) and particularly Ringe (1995).

¹³⁵For the use of the term *density* instead of *frequency* see 6.8.

¹³⁶See for instance the example of the manuscripts of *Cædmon’s Hymn* discussed in section 2.5.3, where in spite of very close correlation full equivalence between GC and LC is not achieved.

¹³⁷I reiterate here my remarks in 3.4.2.1, which warn against seeing these echoes as mistranslations on Björnsson’s part. Rather they are shifts of reference: the echoic form now appears in another lexical guise, on another word, without interfering with the overall semantic structure. One should not forget

shall see later in this chapter that, on a crude lexical item count, 53% of the text is composed of cognate echoes, and another 13% are non-cognate echoes (although few of them are as conspicuous as the examples given above). Note however that these figures, as well as the terminology, will need revision as the argument progresses (see sections 5.1.6 and 5.2.4).

Up until now in this discussion I have repeatedly used the terms *cognate* and *etymology* without questioning their meaning. The first time I spoke of ‘cognate reflexes’ in chapter 1 I gave a short definition—‘items of vocabulary with full etymological correspondence’ (page 14)—and left it at that. This was inadequate, to say the least: the term *etymology* has had a chequered career in the two thousand years or so of its history and is used in a number of different ways today. Broadly speaking, there are now two poles to its meaning: the original one, which invokes the supposed underlying genius of a word, the ‘true meaning’, and implies (although this is rarely spelt out) a mystic, essential connection between form and meaning which survives as the language develops and changes; and a later ‘scientific’ understanding which assumes an arbitrary and non-essential connection between form and meaning and focuses on the systematic rule-bound nature of the development of language sounds. Let us look first at the ‘scientific’ understanding.

The essentially systematic nature of phonetic development was not generally recognized until the 19th century. The growth of this recognition took some 100 years. One of its earliest manifestations was William Jones’s presidential address in 1789 to the newly-founded Asiatic Society in Calcutta, in which he discussed the similarities between Sanskrit, Greek and Latin and suggested a common origin.¹³⁸ In 1818 the Danish linguist Rasmus Kristian Rask’s *Undersøgelse om det gamle nordiske eller islandske sprogs opprindelse* pointed out correspondences between Indo-European and Germanic, and between 1822 and 1837 Jakob Ludwig Karl Grimm’s four volumes of *Deutsche Grammatik* laid down the rules of consonantal correspondences between Indo-

that mistranslations involving ‘false friends’ are much more likely to occur on cognate pairs of words than fortuitous echoes: consider the French-English pair *ignorer* ‘be ignorant of’ and *ignore* ‘disregard’, which are much more likely to be confused than the equally similar pair *livre* and *liver*. On rare occasions I may have to defend my belief that Björnsson does not misunderstand the original: thus she translates the OE *dréam* ‘joy’, on both of its occurrences, with the cognate word *draum* ‘dream’ (the modern English meaning is probably influenced by the Norse word). I feel however that this is no misunderstanding. In line 721 the phrase *dréamum bedðled* ‘deprived of joy’ refers to the monster Grendel; Björnsson has *horfnir að draumþingum* ‘sunk in dreams’, but her phrase now refers to the hapless sleeping retainers Grendel is about to slaughter. In 850 the phrase *dréama léas* ‘joyless’ refers to the dying Grendel; Björnsson echoes with *draumlaus* ‘[in a] dreamless [sleep]’, but here again I feel that her shift of meaning is intentional. Another possible example of mistranslation occurs in 5\16 on page 159.

¹³⁸ An informal understanding of the potential regularity of sound changes may of course have been around for a long time; Lass (1997:133) mentions for instance the work of Turgot in 1755.

European and Germanic which were later to be known as Grimm's Law. In the latter nineteenth century the so-called *Junggrammatiker* ('Neogrammarians') formulated their initially controversial principle that the laws of phonetic change were absolutely regular and without exception. Obvious parallels with the controversy surrounding Darwin's *Origin of Species* in 1859 can be drawn. Following Karl Verner's demonstration that the apparent exceptions to Grimm's law were also fully regular (Verner 1876), and Friedrich Karl Brugmann's and Hermann Osthoff's exhaustive accounts of the phonetic and morphological evolution of the Indogermanic languages (Brugmann 1886-93, Brugmann and Osthoff 1898-90) the Neogrammarian thesis was generally accepted by the linguistic community.

It remains so to this day. We now make a clear distinction between *etymology* in the scientific, Neogrammarian sense, and what is often called *popular* or even *false etymology*, the traditional associative approach which is generally dismissed as erroneous folk-myth. Thus the detailed etymological explanations in the first and second editions of the Oxford English Dictionary rarely fail to disparage cases of lexical development caused by phonological or graphological associations between genetically unrelated forms, calling them 'misassociations', 'perversions', 'corruptions' and 'erroneous etymologies'.¹³⁹ The twelve-volume edition of the *Oxford English Dictionary* of 1933 was essentially a re-issue of the *New English Dictionary on Historic Principles* (1884-1928), while the 20-volume 1989 Second Edition was simply an 'amalgamation' (the term is used in the Preface) of all earlier versions and supplements; the same applies to the 1992 CD edition. Its etymological information is thus couched almost entirely in the original 19th-century wording, fired with enthusiasm for the Neogrammarian vision. Nineteenth-century linguistics provides a particularly clear-cut example of the paradigm change that a body of knowledge undergoes when it passes from the domain of intuition and commonsense and enters that of specialist knowledge. The characteristic tendency of the *OED* to gloat over the misconceptions of the unenlightened¹⁴⁰ is a result of the wish to consolidate this change, to distance the new science from the older popular understanding.

There are dangers in this fundamentalist, elitist position. The tree-

¹³⁹ A search for the term 'erroneous' in the the etymologies of the 1992 CD edition of the *OED* produces 243 hits, 'corrupt' 197 and 'perverted' 38; typical examples are 'The formal history of this word [acorn] has been much perverted by 'popular etymology' and 'the 19th c. *bridesmaid* is due to the same perverted analysis' .

¹⁴⁰ The *OED* also occasionally points out 'learned' errors. The term *algorism* comes through French from the surname name of the 9th-century Arabic mathematician *Al-Khowarazmi*. The *OED* states that '*algorism* ... passed through many pseudo-etymological perversions, including a recent *algorithm* in which it is learnedly confused with Gr. 2qihlæ| "number" .

diagrams of the Indo-European languages that can be found today in standard undergraduate textbooks and on the fly-leaves of dictionaries trace a hierarchy of relationships which certainly exist, but which have much less relevance to the development of language than introductory textbooks usually allow. This is in part because they make tractable teaching material and provide questions in undergraduate examinations which are easy for teachers to mark. But they also foster the idea that relationships between languages are fundamentally genealogical, that languages grow and develop like living organisms. This is a wholly inadequate analogy. The human gene-set is retained virtually unchanged during the life of the individual; an individual nose does not change its shape in response to noses around it. One person's language, however, changes throughout adult life, far more than was realized before sound-recording came of age. Listening to one's own recorded speech over a span of several decades can be a sobering experience.

There are of course unmistakable genealogical lines of continuity in language change which survive over scores of generations, but their survival is largely fortuitous. Lateral interference is at least as important a cause. For example, the Latin *dies* is not cognate with its semantic counterpart *day* in English, since Indo-European *d* survives unchanged in Latin, but is unvoiced to *t* in the Germanic branch.¹⁴¹ The original root seems to have had the meaning 'to shine', and occurs for instance in Latin *dies* 'day' and *deus* 'god'. The Germanic cognate is the god's name **Tiwaz*,¹⁴² who appears in Old Norse as Týr, and in Old English as Tiw, giving us Tuesday. The word *day* on the other hand has a disputed origin: we need to look for an Indo-European form in *dh-*, which would appear as *f* in Latin. A root meaning 'to burn' has been proposed (> Latin *favilla* and Greek *tephra* 'ashes', Indic *daha-* and Old Irish *daig* 'fire'). An alternative suggestion is that an Indo-European root **agh-* acquired (doubtless in a corrupt and perverted way) an initial *d-* to give Old Germanic **dagaz* > Modern English *day* and Nordic *dag*.¹⁴³ Of the various possible sources for this *d-* surely the most obvious one is the pervading influence of the language of the Roman Empire, the Latin word *dies* which punctuated the dates of the civilized world. This would mean that there is a thread of cognation between *day* and *dies*—exactly the sort of cognation that 'popular' etymology has always maintained. It simply has not come down by the 'right' route.

My point is that the distinction between analogy and truly cognate descent is often too fine to have any practical linguistic significance. And of course the

¹⁴¹The *t* in Modern German *Tag* is a later development from Germanic *d*.

¹⁴² In historical linguistics a prefixed asterisk is commonly used to indicate that the form is unattested.

¹⁴³De Vries (1977:71), *daga*; Magnússon (1989:104) *dagur*; Watkins 1985:1 *agh-2*.

Neogrammarian thesis does not deny changes due to lateral interference: Johannes Schmidt's *Die Verwandtschaftsverhältnisse der indogermanischen Sprachen* (1872) is an early study of the spread of linguistic features over neighbouring dialects and languages, in the form of a *Wellentheorie* (wave theory) of language change. Analogy has always been accepted as a diachronic principle, but there is an almost racist stigma attached to it, an aversion to the mingling of blood; it is seen as an interference effect in the 'simple' sense of my discussion in 4.5. We need a concept of implicate interference (4.5.1) to redress the prescription involved.

And so our terminology has been appropriated by the new paradigm; we can no longer speak as Cicero and Isidor could of *etymology* as a broad intertextual principle, because we have discovered the (intermittent) genealogical warp in the fabric of the text and now limit the term *etymology* to that alone. Thus we now have to say that when Cicero proposed a legal argument *ex notatione* ('by etymology') on the grounds that *assiduus* 'freeholder' was formed from *as* 'coin' and *do* 'give', he was mistaken;¹⁴⁴ when Bede notes that the Latin word *sermo* 'discourse' is composed of the verbs *sero* 'connect in a row' and *moveo* 'move' he was mistaken;¹⁴⁵ when Isidor focuses on etymology as a constitutive principle of the universe he was alas! sadly mistaken. Joseph Engels (1962:99) however maintains that Isidor's *etymologia* is to be understood not as referring to the origin of words, but as *true meaning*, and only coincides with the *origin* of a word 'when the sense of the word is understood by way of interpretation'.¹⁴⁶ In our terms, Isidor's (and Bede's) *etymologia* covers both our *etymology* and *popular etymology*. John Orr is likewise hampered by want of a term for the implicate intertextuality of diachronic change: for Orr, 'popular etymology' is no less an organising and interpretive principle of language than 'scientific etymology'; he upholds the term *étymologie populaire* in favour of *étymologie associative* precisely because he sees *étymologie savante et archaisante* as no less concerned with organisation by association than the *étymologie vivante et agissante* of the people (Orr 1963: 2,8).

In the following sections and in chapter 6 the question will occasionally arise of the relevance for our analysis of cognation, in the strict Neogrammarian sense of genealogy. My approach will be that systematic relationships in the form of kinship between languages are essential features of the interference

¹⁴⁴ *Topica* 10.

¹⁴⁵ *De orthographia liber*, (Migne 1862: 150d); cf. Knútsson (1993a: 117)

¹⁴⁶ So Engels translates *Etymologia est origo vocabulorum, cum vis verbi vel nominis per interpretationem colligitur* (I.xxix), taking *cum* as 'in those cases when': 'L' origine [le motif] des appellations est une étymologie, lorsque le sens du verbe ou du nom est saisi au moyen d'une interprétation.' (Engels 1962:99,102). Engels traces Isidor's concept of *etymology* from Cicero via Boethius.

pattern for the overwhelming majority of readers since, arguably, the minimal level of comprehension required to achieve any reading of the two texts together would include the ability to recognize aspects of this kinship. It follows, however, that specialized details of cognation are irrelevant if they are unknown to readers, and, for that matter, to the translator herself (or, dare I add, to the specialists). A case in point is the relationship of the Icelandic words *borinn* ‘born’ and *barn* ‘child’ discussed in 5\9 below, where the question of Björnsson’s awareness of the ultimate cognation of these two words is largely irrelevant to our evaluation of her use of them as p-reflections in the translation.

Two aspects of this discussion are however crucial. In the first place, since cognation plays a part in the reading, it needs to be defined in some way *within the reading*, that is to say independently of the strict protocols of comparative linguistics. This is the root of my distinction between *cognation* on the one hand and *systematic p-reflection* on the other; as we shall see the established correspondences of formal phonological cognation underly our definition both of systematic p-reflection and also of a number of aspects of non-systematic p-reflection (see in particular section 5.1.5 below). Secondly, it will soon become clear that whereas non-systematic p-reflection can be fairly satisfactorily evaluated in terms of degrees of similarity between reflective pairs, the classification of systematic p-reflection does not correlate with this quantification. Thus for instance close cognate matches can be less distinct (the words less alike) than indirect cognate matches or even non-cognate reflective pairs: *yða* \approx *unnir* ‘waves’ (p. 157) is a close cognate match, but the words are far less alike than *folce* \approx *fylkir* ‘people (dative) \approx leader’ (5\4), which are only indirectly cognate, and also less alike than *yða* \approx *æða* ‘waves \approx veins’ (5\13, 5\14), which are totally unrelated.

This incompatibility between systematic and non-systematic reflection will not be addressed directly in the remaining sections of this chapter, but I shall return to it in chapter 6 (see in particular section 6.6.5, where I shall reconsider the possibility of grading both systematic and non-systematic reflection on the same scale).

5.1.1 First-degree systematic p-reflection (a-sys)

a-sys is the property of a sound-change involved in transforming a lexical item in the source into its direct cognate reflex in the translation. For instance the string *cg* in OE is typically represented by *gg* in Icelandic, and OE *éa* by Icelandic *au*, giving correspondences such as *ecg* \approx *egg* ‘blade, edge’, *bread* \approx *brauð* ‘bread’. Tables of such correspondences are a commonplace of traditional Indo-European philology, and I shall frequently need to refer to these *segmental* a-sys relationships throughout this discussion of p-reflection, both systematic

and non-systematic. Thus when segmental a-sys relationships obtain throughout a lexical item, that item will normally be classed as an a-sys reflex— which will typically, but by no means always, also be cognate. I shall return to this point in greater detail in 5.1.5 below, where I shall also define the concept of a *segment* more precisely; but for the moment we shall examine some examples of this process.

In Björnsson's translation full cognate reflection usually consists of single lexical items or short collocations. Some examples of a-sys extending to complete lines are given in (5\1) to (5\3). As before, the wavy parity sign (\approx) separates the source text from the translation; I shall return to its significance as an interference marker in chapter 7. Line numbers refer to both the original text and the translation.

- 5\1 Weard mæpelode, ðær on wicge sæt
 \approx Vörður mælti, þar á vigg sat
 'Warden spoke, where on steed sat'
 (i.e. sitting on his horse) 286
- 5\2 síþðan ic hond ond rond hebban mihte
 \approx síðan ég hönd og rönd hefja mátti
 'since I hand and shield was able to lift'
 (i.e. since I achieved manhood) 656 (cf. 3\1)
- 5\3 Ne þynceð mé gerysne þæt wé rondas beren
 \approx Né þykir mér reism að rendur berum
 'Not thinks me seemly that (we) shields bear' 2653

When this high degree of cognation is achieved in the translation it often results semantic tension between the source and the translation. This tension emerges here as archaisms: for instance in (5\1) the Icelandic word *vigg* 'horse' will only be understood by Icelanders who are versed in traditional (archaic) poetic diction, and the negative *né* in 5\3 is also archaic. This tension should be seen as an interaction between phonology (p-reflection) and semantics (m-reflection), and this sort of interaction will become even more evident when we turn to b-sys reflection.

5.1.2 Second-degree systematic p-reflection (b-sys)

While a-sys transforms a lexical morpheme in the source to a *direct* cognate reflex in the translation, b-sys adds a further stage, transforming a lexical morpheme in the source into an *indirect* cognate reflex, a cognate at second remove. This involves additional morphological shifts, additions or

losses *within* either language, or both, resulting in additional changes in the reflex which cannot be accounted for by a-sys rules. For example the OE *helm* ‘helmet’ has an a-sys equivalent *hjálmur* in Icelandic; in OE, however, the word has a wider range of meaning including ‘covering’ and ‘protection’ or even ‘protector’. It occurs several times in *Béowulf* in the phrase *helm Scyldinga*, ‘the protector (i.e. king) of the Scyldings’ (371, 456, 13221, 2384). This usage is not available in Icelandic, where *hjálmur* simply means ‘helmet’, so that the phrase ‘helmet of the Scyldings’ would sound as absurd in Icelandic as it does in English. Instead Björnsson uses the word *hilmir*, a further formation from the same root meaning ‘leader, protector’: *hilmir Skjöldunga* ‘the leader of the Scyldings’. This reflection cannot be accounted for by simple a-sys; a further sound-change is involved, in this case i-mutation of the original stem-vowel *e* before the agent suffix *-ir* (Magnússon 1989:236).

In the following two subsections we shall see that b-sys occurs under conditions which can often be correlated to syntactic and semantic environment; here we should recall the discussion on implicate independence in section 4.4.5. This will also be taken up in section 5.3 below.

5.1.2.1 b-sys constrained by semantic environment

This is typically the result of the existence of dual forms with different suffixes, or that exhibit further sound-changes than those defined by a-sys, as in the case of *helm* \approx *hilmir*. Often this is inevitable: thus the Old English translation of the Old Saxon *Genesis* necessarily uses *heofon* ‘heaven’ where the original has *himil* ‘heaven’ (Genesis 808), with a different suffix. The Icelandic form, *himinn*, has yet another suffix: thus Björnsson’s *heofon réce swealg* \approx *himinn svalg reykr* ‘heaven swallowed smoke’ 3155.¹⁴⁷ In other cases it appears to be the result of a stylistic rather than lexical dictate. Thus the OE *flód* ‘sea, flood’ has the a-sys (cognate) reflex *flóð* in Icelandic, but in *Bjólfskviða* 42 Björnsson uses instead the ablauted form *flæður* ‘flooded land, sea’ (*on flódes áht* ‘on the sea’s domain’ \approx *um flæðarvegu* ‘on the roads of the sea’). Similarly Björnsson translates *dógora gehwám* ‘every day’ (88) with the normal Icelandic phrase *dag hvern* ‘daily’. The OE word *dógor*, usually translated ‘day’, actually means ‘one half of the 24-hours’, as distinct from *dæg* ‘day’. The Icelandic a-sys reflex of *dógor* is *dægur*, with the same meaning. But Icelandic does not use *dægur* in the idiom meaning ‘each day’, and so Björnsson uses the b-sys reflex *dag-* ‘day’ instead.

Here are some further examples culled from a short section of *Bjólfskviða*:

¹⁴⁷ Again the ultimate cognation of the two roots is questionable; *OED* calls the OE and OS form with *f* (modern *v*) in the root “app. an entirely different word” from the Gothic and Norse form with *m* (*OED* under *heaven*); while the *American Heritage Dictionary of Indo-European Roots* calls the *v*-form a “dissimilated” form of the *m*-form (Watkins 1985, ‘*ak-*’).

(*ge*)*frægn* ≈ *frá* (74) ‘heard tidings of’, with the nasal suffix lost in the Icelandic; *léoma* ≈ *ljós* (95) ‘light’, parallel formations with different suffixes; *scyppend* ≈ *Skaparinn* (106) ‘creator, shaper, God’, with different agent suffixes and vowel mutation in OE.

b-sys constrained by semantic environment appears to be a fairly common variant of a-sys, occurring sometimes as the result of a stylistic decision on the part of the translator, and sometimes, in close word-for-word translation, because of restrictions imposed by the available lexis. I shall return to this point in section 5.3.

5.1.2.2 b-sys constrained by syntactic environment

When the translation entails syntactic reworking, morphophonemic factors come into play, since cognate reflexes from the source are likely to undergo changes of grammatical class (‘parts of speech’) which, in the Germanic languages of this discussion, commonly produce further sound changes. b-sys constrained by syntactic change is thus common where the translation retains a degree of cognate p-reflection in spite of a re-working of the syntax. Again, this has a bearing on the question of implicate independence brought up in chapter 4, this time involving a tension between phonology and syntax.

Here are examples from *Bjólfskviða*:

- 5\4 *ðá ic furðum wéold folce Deniga*
 ‘when I formerly ruled the folk of the Danes’
 ≈ *Þá ég forðum varð fylkir Dana*¹⁴⁸
 ‘when I formerly became the king of the Danes’ 465

The Icelandic a-sys reflex of the OE *folc* ‘people’ would be *fólk*, but instead Björnsson uses *fylkir* ‘king, ruler’, a word formed from *fólk* with the agent suffix *-ir* and i-mutation of the *ó* to *ý*. Thus *fylkir* is a b-sys reflex of the OE *folc*.

- 5\5 *Nis þæt feor heonan*
 mílgemearces þæt se mere standeð
 ‘It is not far hence
 measured in miles to where the lake stands’
 ≈ *Farinn er þaðan*
 snertispödur til stöðuvatns
 ‘One goes hence
 a short distance to the (standing-)lake’ 1361-2

¹⁴⁸Note in passing the weak non-systematic reflection (see 5.2.1.3) of *wéold* ≈ *varð*; its reflective status is strengthened by the a-sys *furðum* ≈ *forðum* immediately preceding..

Here the normal Icelandic word for ‘lake’, *stöðuvatn*, literally ‘standing-lake’, is a phonological reflex of the verb *standeð* ‘stands’ in the original OE; *stöðu-* (gen.sg.) is a noun, while *standeð* is a verb. The relationships between them are indirect, and so b-sys. (For the correspondence between the OE adverb *feor* ‘far’ the Icelandic past participle *farinn* ‘gone, fared’ see 5\15 to 5\20.)

5.1.3 Third-degree systematic p-reflection (c-sys)

So far we have dealt with lexical or non-grammatical items of vocabulary, the ‘content’-words of the language: nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs derived from adjectives. When we look at the grammatical or structural items in the text, the ‘glue’ which joins the ‘content’-words together, a different picture emerges. Close cognate correlation between ‘content’-words which are also in syntactical correspondence will often involve non-cognate inflectional endings, as is the case with *þynceð* \approx *þykir* ‘thinks’ in 5\3 above, where the Icelandic loss of n before k in *þykir* ‘thinks’ is a regular a-sys change, while the dental 3rd-person singular *-ð* in OE appears as non-cognate *-r* in Icelandic. Similarly the free-standing but structural words *ond* \approx *og* ‘and’ in 5\2 are not cognate reflexes. However, although these structural morphemes are not always phonologically cognate, they are *systematically* reflective insofar as they are in one-to-one isomorphic correspondence—as a general rule each inflectional ending or structural word in either language corresponds to only one counterpart in the other language in much the same way as cognate phonemes do. Here then is another facet of the mismatch between systematicity and cognition: structural elements are systematic insofar as they are isomorphically correspondent, but they are not necessarily systematic on a strict phonological count.

I shall refer to these systematic correspondences between paradigmatic sets as *3rd-degree systematic p-reflection (c-sys)*. Unfortunately, however, this strategy causes an problem of overlap in the analysis: it is possible for systematic structural correspondences to occur which may at the same time be a-sys, b-sys, non-systematically p-reflective, or not p-reflective at all. These possibilities, and a solution to the overlap problem, will be examined in section 5.1.3.3. First, however, we shall discuss the ways in which s-sys reflection occurs under two headings: bound morphemes (inflections and affixes) and free morphemes (words).

5.1.3.1 c-sys involving bound morphemes

First then, let us examine more closely the inflectional endings in 5\1 - 5\3 above. It appears that they are not as fully cognate as I first suggested. For example, OE has lost the original nominative singular masculine ending which Icelandic generally retains as *-ur*, so that we have an apparent mismatch with *weard* \approx *vörður* in (5\1). This mismatch would disappear in the accusative

singular, *weard* \approx *vörð*, but would return again in the plural where the OE accusative has fallen together with the nominative plural to give *weardas*, while Icelandic distinguishes between nominative and accusative plural: *verðir*—*verði*.¹⁴⁹ The rest of the paradigm, the genitive and dative singular and plural of both the Icelandic and OE words, shows undisturbed a-sys inflections. Thus while the two languages have corresponding nominal inflectional paradigms, there are internal differences.

Verbal paradigms show the same general but non-local correspondence. We have already examined *þynceð* \approx *þykir* ‘thinks’ in 5\3; in the same line the 1st person plural present subjunctive inflections in *beren* \approx *berum* ‘(we) bear’ are non-systematic, since in OE all persons of the plural are merged into the 3rd. Both these examples are, apart from their inflections, fully a-sys.

Similar changes involve the Icelandic loss of prefixes, one of the factors contributing to the clipped style of the Old Icelandic version of common Germanic metre. Old and Modern Icelandic stand out this respect from modern English and particularly German, which retain a number of the original Germanic prefixes. Thus for instance the OE past participle prefix *ge-* is missing from Icelandic, giving correspondences such as *gedruncen* \approx *drukinn* ‘drunken’.

Accidence, the system of inflections in a language, is a particularly volatile element in terms of language change, often involving non- and semi-systematic elements such as analogy. Thus one of the first discrepancies to be noticed between neighbouring English dialects is the distribution of the verbal -s ending, or of *was* and *were*. Close dialects with approaching 100% lexical cognation and slight but regular phonetic differences may have non-cognate verbal accidence such as *he go* \approx *he goes*, *we were* \approx *we was* or declensional differences such as *children* \approx *childer* or *yours* \approx *yourn*, but these clearly instantiate no greater dialectal shift than the cognate phonetic differences such as whether *put* and *rub* have dissimilar vowels or not.

5.1.3.2 c-sys involving free morphemes

Much the same can be said for free structural morphemes. Consider the following correspondences:

¹⁴⁹There is a degree of uncertainty regarding the OE mergers of nominative and accusative plural, which could be seen as regular sound-changes, analogical mergers, or mixtures of both. For example Dieter (1900) states that the nom. pl. *-as* of the OE paradigm has ousted the acc. pl., but later adds that it also makes sense to regard both these endings as regularly derived: of the o-stems (*weard/vörður* are u-stems) he says “Die as. und ae. mit dem nom. übereinstimmenden formen auf as. *-as* (*-os*) ae. *-as* können lautgesetzliche vertreter von ug. *-ans* < idg. *-ó-ns* sein, da in beiden mundarten *n* vor *s* schwinden musste ... Dann erlärnt sich der doppelte ausgang *-os* und *-as* im as.: *-os* urspr. nom. ... *-as* urspr. acc. ...” (Dieter 1900:548).

5\6	OE	≈	Icelandic	
	hé	≈	hann	‘he’
	híe	≈	þeir	‘they’ ¹⁵⁰

The forms *hé* ≈ *hann* are b-sys cognates, both going back to the IE root **ko-*; the Icelandic form has a nasal suffix which is absent in the OE. The forms *híe* ≈ *þeir* on the other hand go back to different IE stems, **ko-* and **to-*, and are thus not cognate. They are not even similar enough to be classed as non-systematic reflective (see 5.2 below); their only correspondence is the paradigmatic one.

Similarly, we have:

5\7	OE	≈	Icelandic	
	ond	≈	og	‘and’
	ac	≈	en	‘but’

These pairs are also non-cognate as they stand; however their semantic relationships have been reversed, and if we cross-pair them *ond* ≈ *en* and *ac* ≈ *og* they would in fact be cognates.

Here are further examples:

5\8	OE	≈	Icelandic	
	in	≈	í	‘in’
	tó	≈	til	‘to’
	þon	≈	en	‘than’

These three pairs often occur in fully syntactically corresponding metaphrastic translation, i.e. embedded in strings of full a-sys p-reflection: *geong in geardum* ≈ *ungan í garði* ‘young in the dwellings’ (13); *ic tó sǣ wille* ≈ *vil ég til sævar* ‘I wish to [put to] sea’ (318); *þon þá dydon* ≈ *en þeir forðum* ‘than they did ≈ than they of yore’ (44). In terms of phonological/graphemic correspondence the first two pairs are clearly in the same category: *in* ≈ *í* lacks a final nasal on the Icelandic side, and *tó* ≈ *til* lacks a final liquid on the OE side. In terms of systematic cognation, however, they are different: the Icelandic loss of the final nasal is a regular change, so that *in* ≈ *í* is an a-sys correspondence, but OE *tó* and Icelandic *til* are different words completely.¹⁵¹ The third example, *þon* ≈ *en* shows the least amount of reflection; in fact, however, the two words are exact cognate reflexes with a regular loss of the initial dental in Icelandic, and are thus a-sys.

¹⁵⁰Modern English *they* is a loan from Old Norse.

¹⁵¹Modern English *till* (*until*) is a loan from Old Norse.

The c-sys category however provides shelter for all these types. Thus line 656 (5\2) consists of seven lexical items; statistically speaking, since six of them are fully cognate and one (*ond* \approx *og*) non-cognate, the amount of cognation is 86%. Using the c-sys category, however, we can express our intuition that the line is 100% p-reflective.

Note that the choice of the non-compound word as the basic unit of the analysis (see the discussion on *plots* in section 6.3.2 and *resolution* in section 6.7) results in different treatment of bound and free structural morphemes respectively. Free structural morphemes will figure individually in the data, while the bound morphemes are all attached to lexical morphemes, and their reflective properties appear in the data as properties of these items. An example of this was discussed in section 4.2, where the p-reflection between *helrúnan* \approx *Ölrúnu* in 4\8 is reinforced by the superficially a-sys inflectional endings ('superficially' because the two words are not syntactically equivalent—see footnote 91 on p.93).¹⁵² In this case as in many others, bound structural morphemes figure intimately in the p-reflection of lexical morphemes, and can hardly be divorced from them without losing part of the overall reflective picture. Adopting the class of c-sys reflection redresses this balance to a certain extent, since all syntactically equivalent structural items now become p-reflective.

5.1.3.3 Theoretical issues

Two points of interest now present themselves: firstly, adopting the c-sys category is a move which has relevance for the concepts of General and Local Correlation introduced in section 5.1; and secondly, a means has to be found of incorporating into the analysis the overlap introduced by the new category. The two are interrelated.

To recap: in section 5.1 I suggested the concepts of the General Correlation (GC), the level of cognation obtaining between the two languages of the translation, and the Local Correlation (LC), the level attaining in any particular translation or part of a translation. GC is an idealized background constant applying between the two languages, while LC might be expected to vary stylistically.

Intuitively, we might suggest that stylistic variation is likely to make itself shown primarily in the 'content' lexis of the text. The structural items, the 'nuts and bolts' of the language, would be less variable—they are 'closed-system' grammatical categories offering a more limited choice. It seems reasonable to suggest then that the level of cognation evinced by a count of structural items

¹⁵²Note also that a-sys structural elements may very well partake in non-systematic reflection; see 5\37, *ymbéode* \approx *um...bauð*.

would be representative of GC, while lexical items would indicate LC. Thus we might interpret the missing 14% of non-cognition in 5\2, discussed in the last section, as indicative of the degree of relationship between the two languages, in other words GC.

I shall not test this hypothesis in this study, since it requires comparison with texts outside my present scope. However it would seem that the solution to the problem of data-overlap adopted in the running analysis in Appendix A.2 might provide a tool for such a test. This solution is to use parentheses to tag structural items for the program ('the Profiler') which performs the computation. The term *c* is used inside the parentheses only if the p-reflection is simply paradigmatic, not phonological/graphological; if there is also phonological/graphological reflection this is shown accordingly. The program can then be instructed to record all structural items as *c-cys*, or treat them in the same way as lexical items; it can also be instructed to compute the profile for structural items only, for lexical items only, or for both. Although I shall not follow this line of enquiry any further in this study, the method itself is discussed more fully in the appendices (A.1.5 and tables B\5, B\6 and B\7).

5.1.4 Readerly and writerly aspects of cognition

As we have seen, the criterion of cognition closely parallels but is not fully identical with systematic p-reflection. In 5.1.0 we noted two overlapping reasons for this: in the first place the translator's awareness of cognition is usually an unknown factor, and in the second the question of cognition is sometimes unclear, even to specialists. But however they overlap, these two factors are of completely different orders: the first is writerly (or more properly perhaps *translatorly*) while the second is a specialized readerly criterion.

I shall apply a fairly narrow definition of Barthes' terms *readerly* and *writerly* in this discussion. Writerly criteria involved in the analysis are those which are limited to relationships between the translator and their work, such as translation technique, about which I have not a great deal to say in this study. Readerly criteria in this discussion are quite simply those which do not involve these writerly relationships. The *critical* reading, including the present analysis, is then subsumed under the term *readerly*, following Barthes (1964: 71): 'a critique is, to be sure, an in-depth (or better still, in-tense) reading.'¹⁵³

We shall examine some further examples to explain this point. In discussing the b-sys status of the reflection *helm* \approx *hilmir* on page 146 we saw that the i-mutation of the vowel in the Icelandic word is an addition to the simple a-sys change which gives *helm* \approx *hjálmur* 'helmet', and so this reflection is

¹⁵³ 'Certes, la critique est une lecture profonde (ou mieux encore: profilée).' The formal correspondence between *profonde* and *profilée*, which I have tried to retain, is an essential aspect of Barthes' text.

b-sys. However another interpretation of the word *hilmir* is that it has the original meaning ‘helmsman’, in which case it would in fact be unrelated to ‘helmet’ (the two words have the IE roots **kel-* ‘cover’ and **kelp-* ‘hold, grasp’ (Pokorny 1959: 553 under *4.kel-* and 923-927(925) under *1.(s)kel-*). A third interpretation, and to my mind the most natural, is that both original roots have come together in one word, *hilmir*, which is thus both related and unrelated to *hjálmur*. Cognation cannot be a rigorously defined issue; in describing *helm* \approx *hilmir* as b-sys p-reflection we are articulating a formal rather than a historical relationship. Significantly, too, we are making no statement whatsoever on the translator’s awareness of the etymological criteria: the analysis is totally readerly.

Here is similar example, which might reflect the translator’s awareness of the etymology involved. The following line occurs eight times (529, 631, 957, 1383, 1651, 1817, 1999, 2425) in the poem:

5\9a *Béowulf mæpelode, bearn Ecgbéowes*
 ‘Béowulf spoke, the son of Ecgbéow’

on six of these occasions Björnsson translates:

5\9b *Bjólfur mælti, borinn Eggþjófi*
 ‘Béowulf spoke, born to Eggþjófur’

with a-sys p-reflection on *mæpelode* \approx *mælti*. On the other two occasions she uses a non-reflective verb for *mæpelode*¹⁵⁴ but retains the phrase *borinn Eggþjófi*.

The first half-line of 5\9b is a fully a-sys rendering of 5\9a. In the second Björnsson follows established Icelandic usage with the non-systematic element *þjófur* ‘thief’ instead of the original *þéow* ‘servant’.¹⁵⁵ But how should we characterize her use of *borinn* ‘born’ for *bearn* ‘child’? There are two strands of cognation in this reflection: (a) the two strings *bear-* and *bor-* are cognate, going back to the IE root *bher-* (Pokorny 1959: 131 under *1.bher* 128), and (b) the *-n* of *bearn* and the *-inn* of *borinn* are also ultimately cognate, going back to the suffix *-(a)na* (Krahe and Meid 1969 :103, 105 (§94, 105-108)). In *bearn*, however, the compound has been fossilized into one morpheme, while a

¹⁵⁴These are *ansaði* ‘replied’ 529 and *svaraði* ‘answered’ 1999. In 1383 the typescript includes the variant reading *gaf andspjall* ‘gave reply’.

¹⁵⁵cf. Magnússon (1989: 1183) under ‘-þjófur’. Björnsson uses the same non-systematic reflex in the name of Hróðgar’s queen, *Wealhþéow* \approx *Valþjóf* in 216, but retains the historical Icelandic form *Angantýr* for *Ongenþéow* in 1968 ff., where *-týr* \approx *-þéow* is again is a non-systematic reflex. See footnote 31 on page 32.

bimorphemic structure remains in *borinn*, where *-inn* is a recognisable past participle nom. sg. masc. ending.

Given Björnsson's wide reading and interest in her own language we might expect her to be aware of (a); a knowledge of (b) would presuppose a specialist knowledge, but should not be discounted in Björnsson's case. But these considerations are speculative, and in any case marginal to our analysis, which is readerly and so does not reflect Björnsson's philological expertise. As with *hilmir* above, our analysis records the b-sys relationships in *bearn* \approx *borinn* but concludes that the reflection is non-systematic in that it fails to meet criterion 5\11b for systematic p-reflection, which we shall be examining in the next section. The point to bear in mind is that only in so far as it is strictly non-writerly does it adequately represent the data.

The same questions arise with *bearn* \approx *bur* in 499, which are cognates, but analyzed as non-sys in Appendix B.

On the other hand, of course writerly criteria may well correspond. For example, our a-sys/b-sys distinction has clear writerly co-ordinates. The concept of systematic p-reflection traces the translator's or copyist's linguistic competence in that it delineates their awareness of the *dialectal* shift involved in the translation or recension. This competence will also involve an understanding of the difference between, on the one hand, a-sys changes *between* the dialects, and, on the other, unilateral morphological b-sys changes *within* each separate dialect, which surface as further shifts in reflection (see above, section 5.1.2). While normal linguistic competence will involve awareness (at some level of consciousness) of these features, it does not imply awareness of all relevant 'scientific' etymological criteria, and precisely to this extent does it fail to register in our analysis.

5.1.5 Three conditions of systematic p-reflection

We have yet to formulate a definition which will allow us to draw a clear distinction between systematic and non-systematic p-reflection. To do so, we must start by defining some terms. In the foregoing discussion I have occasionally distinguished between *segmental* reflection, involving phonological segments such as $w \approx v$ and $cg \approx gg$, and reflection of strings of text such as *on wicge* \approx *á viggi* 'on [his] steed'. In later sections (see especially 6.3.2 and 6.7) this distinction will be formulated in terms of *resolution*, and reflection at word-level will be analysed as a lower-resolution *profile* of the higher-resolution segmental reflection.

Neither of these levels of resolution is rigidly tied to fixed sizes of segment or strings. Words themselves come in various sizes, and as we shall see shortly in the case of non-systematic p-reflection, the original morpheme

boundaries and boundaries between words are often lost or displaced in the reflex. In the same way the term ‘segment’ cannot be tied to a fixed graphological/phonological quantity, although the single grapheme/phoneme will figure prominently in the discussion. When reflection is non-systematic it will often make more sense to focus on the constituents of the syllable such as the consonantal clusters that make up the syllabic margins (onsets and codae), and the vocalic strings of the nuclei (or peaks), but even here the analysis will have to be fluid. Consider for instance the following:

5\10 *wæs seo hwíl micel* ‘that while was great (=it was a long time)’
 ≈ *var svo háar tíðir* ‘(it) was so (for a) high time (=long time)’ (146)

where there is clear p-reflection between *seo* ‘that’ ≈ *svo* ‘so’. On a segmental level the reflective onsets of the syllable are *se* ≈ *sv*, i.e. with a vowel reflected by a consonant.

Given, then, the relative fluidity of the term ‘segment’, systematic p-reflection will be said to occur if all of the three conditions in 5\11 are met:

- 5\11 a All segments of the reflex can be derived from a-sys, b-sys or c-sys rules.
 b All segments of the source are retained contiguously in their original sequence.
 c Morpheme boundaries are retained.

Note that the formulation ‘all segments’ allows for reflective correspondence of a segment with zero (Ø): thus the case of *þon* ≈ *en* (5\8), in which the Icelandic reflex has lost the onset consonant, is not a breach of 5\11a since the reflection *þ* ≈ Ø is a-sys.

Any departure from these conditions, then, constitutes a lack of systematic p-reflection.

5.1.6 Frequency of systematic p-reflection in *Breca*

Before continuing we should try to form some idea of the extent of the phenomena we have been discussing: how important a rôle does it play in Björnsson’s translation? It is not easy to give an accurate answer to this question without using a number of terms that have yet to be introduced, but with this proviso we can say that, of the total number of lexical items in Björnsson’s translation of *Breca*, 53% show systematic p-reflection, with a-sys running at 28%, b-sys at 4%, and c-sys at 20% (figures rounded. See table B\1 in Appendix B.)¹⁵⁶ This is a strikingly high proportion, and as we shall see in the next

¹⁵⁶Other tables in Appendix B give a different combination of a- b- and c-sys values, according to different methods of computation discussed in 5.1.3.1 and 5.1.3.2, but the overall value for sys reflection remains around 50%.)

sections it increases significantly if we add non-systematic p-reflection (see 5.2.4). Clearly, we are not dealing with marginal phenomena.

5.2 Non-systematic p-reflection

The types of p-reflection discussed so far in this study have been systematic on two counts: in the first place the transformations involved have formed essentially predictable patterns, and in the second their frequency and range of distribution have been related to (although not bound by) the degree of kinship or GC of the languages concerned and the degree of syntactic correspondence of the translation. Non-systematic p-reflection, as its name suggests, is not bound by these parameters: the transformations are irregular, perhaps including apparently random elements, and their distribution is indicative of translation technique rather than intrinsic linguistic relationships. However certain predictable tendencies appear to occur: certain types of non-systematic p-reflection seem to have affinities with the verse-form, particularly the systematic alliteration of medieval texts (see section 5.2.1.3), while the frequency of others may turn out to be relative (sometimes inversely so) to the degree of syntactic closeness. The potential spectrum of non-systematic p-reflection ranges from striking similarity of lexical shape, even graphemic identity, to faint echo, sometimes bordering on mere coincidence.

In the previous section three conditions for systematic p-reflection were proposed. It should be noted that these conditions define the *type* but not the *degree* of reflection, so that when one or more of these conditions is not met the ensuing reflection is not necessarily weaker. Note also that a non-systematic p-reflex may well contain systematic segments, even exclusively, without fulfilling conditions 5\11b or 5\11c above concerning segmental sequence and retention of word-boundaries.

5.2.0 Coherence

At this point I shall introduce a further parameter, *coherence*, which refers to the degree of change of sequential features such as the sequential ordering of the segments or the positioning of morpheme- and word-boundaries. This will allow a division into the two main categories of *coherent* and *non-coherent non-systematic p-reflection*.

Coherent non-systematic p-reflection occurs when the phonological/graphological correspondences involved are contiguous and the sequence is retained, but the transformations of the segments are not all true a-sys, b-sys or c-sys transformations (they may for instance involve greater or smaller changes, or even no changes at all); in other words conditions 5\11b and 5\11c are fulfilled, but not 5\11a. *Non-coherent non-systematic p-reflection* (section 5.2.2) involves a breach of either or both of 5\11b and 5\11c.

5.2.1 Coherent p-reflection

I shall distinguish between three degrees of coherent non-systematic p-reflection, according to whether the profile is *full*, *partial* or *minimal*. This tripartite division allows us a modular quantification of the phenomena in spite of the complexity of the data: we assign the label *full* to distinct reflections, *minimal* to the smallest degree of reflection registered by the reading, and *partial* where a clear decision cannot be made between the other two. For further discussion of this approach see section 6.6.2.

5.2.1.1 Full-profile coherent non-systematic p-reflection

Full-profile p-reflection is the closest degree of correspondence of lexical shape not dictated by systematic p-reflection. Typically all the segments of the source word reappear in an identical form in the recension. The consonants may display a-sys correspondences in cases where the a-sys shift is slight (e.g. $c \approx k$, $w \approx v$, $\delta \approx \beta$, etc.), but may also undergo no shift at all, reoccurring unchanged in the derived text. Vowels show greater shifts, but are likely to do so within a narrow range, open vowels tending to remain open, front vowels to remain front, and so on. Sometimes the similarities depend on the first mora only of a diphthong, so that for instance the OE diphthongs *ea*, *éa*, *eo*, *éo* may be reflected as *e*, *é*, *ei*, while both *eo* and *éo* may result in *jó* ($éo \approx jó$ is a-sys p-reflection). Here is an example:

5\12 Gúð-Géata léod \approx Gautaleiðtogi
 ‘the man of the War-Geats’ \approx ‘the Geats’ leader’ [1538)

Here the source item *léod*, glossed in Klaeber as ‘man, member of a tribe or nation’, is rendered in the translation as *leiðtogi* ‘leader’, whose first element *leið* ‘way’ is related to the English verb ‘lead’. The relationship between *léod* and *leið* is non-systematic.

A characteristic of full-profile non-systematic p-reflection is that it may at times result in a closer phonological/ graphological correspondence than systematic reflection would produce. This is because quantitative diachronic changes in a language often reach critical proportions within surprisingly short periods of development, producing much less recognisable qualitative changes. An example is the Old Icelandic alternation between the dental fricative δ and the dentalveolar nasal *nn*; thus the OE plural *yða* ‘waves’ appears as the a-sys *unnir* ‘waves’ in Icelandic, and is so rendered in *Bjólfskviða* in 9 of its 17 occurrences. Note that the dissimilarity is compounded in this instance by the c-sys nom. and acc. feminine plural endings, where the OE *-a* appears as *-ir* in the Icelandic.

On two occasions however *yða* is echoed in the translation by a non-systematic full-profile reflex which is much closer to the original surface form. On the first occasion the poet is describing the swirling surface of the hellish lake stained with the blood of the monster Grendel:

5\13 Ðær wæs on blóde brim weallende,
 atol yða geswing eal gemenged
 háton heolfre, heorodréore wéol.
 ‘There was in blood the sea welling,
 fierce waves’ surge all mingled
 with the hot blood, with sword-gore welled.’

≈ Þá var af blóði brim vellandi
 ólgandi æðasjó allt var mengað,
 heitur lífrauður hjördreyri vall.
 ‘Then was with blood the sea welling
 with surging blood all was mingled
 hot life-red sword-gore welled.’ 847-9

Björnsson’s use of the dat. sg. *æðasjó* (nom. *æðasjór*) in line 848 is a complex allusion: in the first place the word is a *kenning* or poetic periphrasis meaning simply ‘blood’ (literally ‘artery-sea’ from Icelandic *æð* ‘vein, artery’ and *sjór* ‘sea’); but coupled as it is in this passage with the verb *ólga* ‘to surge’ it forcibly suggests the verb *æða* ‘rush, rage’: compare *æðandi sjór* ‘raging sea’. The central aspect of this allusion however is that the element *æða* is a full-profile non-systematic echo of the original *yða* ‘waves’ (g.pl.), a much closer p-reflection than the a-sys p-reflection *unna* (g.pl.) would have been.

The same association of forms occurs when the poet describes Béowulf’s wounds during the battle with the dragon:

5\14 swát yðum wéol
 ‘blood in waves welled’

≈ lífsdreyra lét úr æðum
 ‘life’s blood shed from (his) veins’ 2693

Here Björnsson ignores the somewhat lurid metaphor of the blood surging in waves from a major wound but allows the surface form of *yðum* ‘waves’ to reappear in *æðum* ‘veins’.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁷ On the question of misinterpretation by misassociation of ‘false friends’, see again footnote 137 and my original remarks in section 3.4.2.1.

Certain items of vocabulary in the original poem seem to lend themselves readily to full-profile p-reflection in Björnsson's translation. A case in point is the adverb *feor* 'far, to or from a great distance'. Björnsson's treatment of this word shows a marked preference for p-reflection: in only one of the 13 occurrences in the poem is there no p-reflection. Cognate p-reflection occurs 4 times with the Icelandic adverbs *ffær* and *ffarri*, and full-profile non-systematic p-reflection 7 times. It is worthwhile studying these seven examples closely. On at least one occasion the OE adverb appears to have a temporal as well as spatial connotation, referring to earlier times:

5\15a *feor* eal gemon
 'remembers everything from afar' 1701

Björnsson's interpretation here is purely temporal:

5\15b og *fortíðar* minnast
 'and (to) remember the past' 1701

with the full-profile p-reflection *feor* \approx *for-* in *fortíð* 'past'. In line 1988, however, Björnsson gives the OE adverb a purely temporal meaning which it is difficult to justify. *Béowulf* has returned home to the land of the Geats from his heroic exploits in Denmark and his king Hygelac asks him to relate his story -

5\16 þá þú fáringa feorr gehogodest
 sæcce sécean ofer sealt wæter
 'when you suddenly far decided
 combat to seek over salt water'

\approx er af hrpaði hugðist forðum
 sækja með seggjum um saltan lög
 'when rashly [you] decided long ago
 to sally forth with men over salt sea' 1988-89

There can be little doubt that the OE *feorr* prompts the Icelandic *forðum* 'long ago'; perhaps the double r of *feorr* (which is merely a variant spelling) led Björnsson to associations with the Icelandic comparative form *fyrir* 'earlier, before, ago'. This passage is in fact rich in reflection, since another complex reflection group occurs in the next line of 5\16: *sæcce sécean* 'combat seek' \approx *sækja með seggjum* 'assault with men', where Björnsson's *seggjum* 'men' (dat.pl.) seems to cull its reflection from both *sæcce* 'combat' and *sécean* 'seek, search out' in the original, while *sécean* \approx *sækja* is cognate a-sys p-reflection.

Complex echoes of this type occur fairly frequently in *Bjólfskviða*, as the following examples, also of the adverb *feor*, demonstrate. On four occasions the adverb is reflected into forms of the Icelandic verb *fara* ‘go, travel’ (with which it may in fact ultimately be related)¹⁵⁸; once as the past tense:

- 5\17 hé hine feor gewræc
 ‘he (God) him (Cain) far away drove’
 ≈ fór hann einn vegar
 ‘went he (Cain) alone’ 109

and once as the past participle:

- 5\18 nis þæt feor heonan
 ‘it is not far hence’
 ≈ farinn er þaðan / snertispölur
 ‘travelled is thence a short distance’ 1361
 (i.e. ‘it’s not far from there’)

The other two occasions concerning the verb *fara* both display a striking cross-pattern of reflection where the OE verb and its attendant adverb *feor* exchange places in the translation:

- 5\19 on flódes áht feor gewítan
 ‘on the flood’s (=sea’s) domain far to depart’
 ≈ um flæðarvegu fara víða
 ‘on flood(=sea)-roads to travel widely’ 42

In this case the OE adverb *feor* becomes the Icelandic verb *fara* ‘to travel’ while the OE verb (*ge*)wítan ‘depart’ appears as the Icelandic adverb *víða* ‘widely’; semantically, the two words have swapped places. Almost the same thing happens later in the poem:

- 5\20 on féonda gewæld feor síðian
 ‘into the power of fiends far to journey’
 (i.e. ‘go to Hell’)
 ≈ á fjanda vald fara síðan
 ‘into the power of fiends to travel afterwards’ 808

Here *feor* undergoes the same metamorphosis as in the previous example, while

¹⁵⁸Magnússon (1989:181) under *fjarri*; Pokorny (1959:810, 816) under *per*.

the OE verb *síðian* ‘to journey’ changes, just as *gewítan* in 109, into the Icelandic adverb *síðan* ‘then, afterwards’. It is almost as if the translator were reacting to the formulaic character of the original phrases by applying a translation technique that might well be characterized as ‘formulaic reflection’.

Finally, here is one more example of full-profile p-reflection, demonstrating how readily the translator relies on this technique in order to retain the surface structure of the original. The poet is introducing the monster Grendel to his audience:

5\21 *Pone on géardagum Grendel nemdon*
 ‘That [one] in yore-days Grendel [they] named’
 ≈ *Gaur þenna forðum Grendil nefndu*
 ‘That ruffian long ago Grendel [they] named’ 1354

The burden of the reflection here is a-sys : *Pone ... Grendel nemdon* is fully cognate with *þenna ... Grendil nefndu*. The a-sys reflex of *géardagas* ‘days of yore’ would however be *árdagar* in Icelandic, with loss of the initial consonant, and this would spoil the alliteration of the line on *géardagum* and *Grendel*. Björnsson retains the alliteration by introducing the full-profile non-systematic reflex *gaur* ‘ruffian’. The profile of this reflex is striking: it has all the appearances of an a-sys p-reflection, since the two consonants *g...r* are unchanged, and *éa* ≈ *au* is fully a-sys (cf. the OE-Icelandic cognates *bréad* ≈ *brauð* ‘bread’, *fréas* ≈ *fraus* ‘froze’). However the correct a-sys pair would be *gear* ≈ *ár*, with Icelandic loss of the initial *g*, and the vowel correspondence *éa* ≈ *á*. Thus *gear* and *gaur* in spite of their apparent a-sys similarity are totally unrelated words.

5.2.1.2 Partial coherent non-systematic p-reflection

Much of the foregoing discussion is also pertinent to less intact forms of coherent p-reflection. Consider the following:

5\22a *Ful oft gebéotedon béore druncne*
 ofer ealowæge óretmecgas
 ‘Full oft boasted, drunken with beer,
 over ale-cups, the warriors...’ 480-1

The kenning *óretmecg* ‘warrior’, which occurs three times in *Béowulf*, is formed from *óret* ‘battle’ and *mecg* ‘man’. Björnsson translates the first line fairly closely, but without p-reflection; the second, however, has all the appearance of being a word-for word cognate metaphor:

5\22b≈Margir stærðu sig að staupafulli
 yfir ölveigum örvameiðar
 ‘Many boasted, at drink,
 over ale-cups, warriors...’ 480-1

OE *ealuwæg* ‘ale-cup’ and Icelandic *ölveig* ‘drink of ale’ are a-sys cognates, and although there is a semantic shift between OE *wæge* ‘cup’ and Icelandic *veig* ‘(intoxicating) drink’ the two compounds are very nearly equivalent. But when she comes to *óretmæg* ‘warrior’ Björnsson finds no immediate cognates. Her solution is to use the kenning *örvameiðar*, ‘men of arrows’, which, although it may not occur in this exact form in the medieval Icelandic corpus on which Björnsson models her diction, has many distinct parallels: the element *meiðar*, which may be the plural of both *meiður* ‘tree’ (as metaphor for ‘man’) and *meiðir* ‘harm-doer’, combines readily in the literature with terms such as *brynja* ‘coat of mail’, *stál* ‘steel’, *málmhrið* ‘shower of metal (i.e. arrows)’ to make kennings for men or warriors (Egilsson 1913-16:399 under *meiðir*, *meiðr*). Most significant for the present discussion, however, are the formal similarities between the OE and the Icelandic form. The initial non-systematic vowels of *óret* ‘battle’ ≈ *örva* ‘arrows’ are graphologically similar although phonetically different (*ó* is a back, *ö* a rounded front vowel); the medial OE *-r-* appears in the Icelandic as the cluster *-rv-*; and the remainder is non-reflective. The elements *mecgas* ≈ *meiðar* are coherent as far as the onset is concerned, the initial consonant being unchanged and the vowel remaining a medium height front vowel. The medial consonants are non-reflective while the inflectional endings are in fact a-sys.

Correspondences of this sort are common in the Björnsson translation. They are typical of the type of paradigmatic alternation in the Germanic poetic formulae, both within the same language and over language barriers, that we saw in chapter 3; in this respect Björnsson is perhaps influenced by the formulaic character of her exemplar. I shall return to them in section 6.8.3, where I shall use the term *quasi-cognition* and how that they can be formulated as characteristics of the interference pattern. Here are some further examples:

5\23 *billa brogan* ≈ *bíldarbrögð*
 ‘sword terror’ ≈ ‘sword-play’ 583

5\24 *lícsyrce* ≈ *lífsserkur*
 ‘coat of mail’ 550

One part of each of these pairs of terms is in systematic correspondence: *billa* (gen. pl.) ≈ *bíldar* (gen. sg.) ‘sword’ is b-sys, and *syrce* ≈ *serkur* ‘sark, tunic’ is a-sys. The partial profile of *brogan* ‘terror’ ≈ *brögð* ‘sleights, exploits’ exhibits

the same graphemic correspondence $ó \approx ö$ as $óret \approx örva$ (5\22), with clear consonantal correspondence. In 5\24 the pair $líc$ ‘body’ \approx $líf$ ‘life, body’ is a characteristic shift occasioned by semantic shift between the languages: OE $líc$ ‘body’ can be a living body, while in Icelandic the term $lík$ has narrowed its meaning to ‘corpse’. Thus Björnsson cannot use the a-sys reflex $*líkserkur$ which would mean, if anything, a shroud.

This raises a further point, which can only be mentioned briefly here. Björnsson’s lexical shift from $lík$ to $líf$ is not so much a question of personal style as a device of the language. It seems that Icelandic $líf$ ‘life’ has acquired the secondary meaning ‘body, belly’ (according to Magnússon 1987 probably a loan-meaning from German) in order to compensate for the loss of $lík$, which once meant ‘living body’ but now only ‘corpse’, in collocations such as $lífs og sálar$ ‘of body and soul’. This is a clear instance of partial non-systematic p-reflection which seems to be inherent in the language: it is not a peculiarity of this text, but rather the result of an interlingual constraint acting throughout the potential corpus; in other words the reflective material is already present in the most acceptable translation. Similar instances from other languages readily spring to mind: one may point to the correspondence between $(ge)béotodon$ and *boasted* in my English crib to 5\22a above,¹⁵⁹ the Icelandic/Faeroese pair $horfa \approx hyggja$ ‘look’ discussed on page 59. This will not be confined to closely related languages: a typical example between Greek and Latin is Cicero’s calque of the Greek *etumologia* (literally ‘true wording’) as *veriloquium*, where the elements *-logia* and *-loquium* are not cognate.¹⁶⁰

The occasional graphological element that we saw in $ó \approx ö$ (5\22) can occur in pure graphological segmental reflection without phonological correlation. The phrase $nípende niht$ ‘darkening night’ occurs twice in the original poem, and on both occasions Björnsson translates with a compound using $nið$ - ‘complete, pitch-’ (of darkness), with $dimm$ ‘dim’ and $myrk$ ‘dark’ (the following examples, 5\25 and 5\26, are also discussed on page 90):

5\25 $nípende niht \approx nótt niðdimm$ 547
 $nípende niht \approx niðmyrk nótt$ 649

The correspondence here would appear to involve the visual similarity between the p of $nípende$ and the OE/Icelandic letter þ, which then becomes associated

¹⁵⁹-where Heaney uses ‘pledge themselves’ (1999:17); but he has *boasted* for *béotodon* in line 526 (1999:19).

¹⁶⁰*Topica* 35.—*Logos* goes back to Indo-European *leg-*, which survives in English as *leech* and as the loanwords *lecture*, *lexicon*, *legal*, while *loquor* goes back to Indo-European *tolkw-* with loss of the original *t-*, giving us *loquacious* (but not *talk*!).

with *ð*. The original OE text, unlike Icelandic, makes no systematic distinction between *þ* and *ð*, and Björnsson would be used to reading intervocalic OE *þ* as intervocalic Icelandic *ð*.

Similarly we find

5\26 þrýðum dealle ≈ þreklega prúðir
 ‘proud in their strength’ ≈ ‘stoutly magnificent’ 494

which is the reverse process, with the *þ* in the OE *þrýðum* ‘strengths’ (dat.pl.) becoming *p* in *prúðir* ‘magnificent’. The vowels in *þrýð* ≈ *prúð* would in other contexts indicate b-sys reflection (*ú* and *ý* are morphophonemically related in OE and Icelandic).

In the examples discussed so far the reflective profile has generally included the onset, so that the reflection has frequently involved alliteration. To some extent this is inevitable, and the objection might be made that reflection which occurs in response to alliterative constraints cannot be analysed as true reflective technique. I cannot see, however, that we can ignore reflection simply on the grounds that it is alliterative; all the more so since alliterative reflections often occur independently of alliterative constraints in the metre. Here is a typical example:

5\27 þær mé við láðum lícsyrce mín,[...] helpe gefremede
 ‘as [for] me against enemies my body-shirt [...] afforded help’
 ≈ Leik við þau háði lífsserkur minn, [...] hjálp veitti
 ‘battle with them waged my life-shirt, [...] afforded help’ 550-1

Here the reflection *láðum* ‘enemies’ ≈ *háði* ‘waged’ occurs on the phonological level without any lexical or syntactical correspondence, and also ignores the metrical alliteration, which remains on *l* in both source and translation: *láðum*—*lícsyrce* and *Leik*—*lífsserkur*.¹⁶¹ Occasionally, too, the alliteration of the original is remodelled in the translation so that the reflective pair do not have reflective onsets. Thus in 5\28 we have *sincgifan* ‘treasure-giver, lord’ ≈ *hringdrifa* ‘ring-distributor, lord’, where neither of the compound elements have reflective onsets (*sinc* ≈ *hring* and *gifan* ≈ *drifa*). On the other hand both compounds participate in the alliteration of their lines (alliteration emphasized):

¹⁶¹The lack of alliteration in the second stress (*háði* instead of a word beginning with *l*-) is acceptable in both OE and classical Icelandic (Eddic) alliteration, where either or both of the stressed staves in the first half-line must alliterate with the third, but never the fourth, in the second half-line. For further explanation of OE and Icelandic alliteration see section 6.5.4

- 5\28 on hyra sincgifan sáre geendod
 ‘on their treasure-giver sorely ended’
 ≈ hringdrifa þeirra hörð endalok
 ‘their ring-distributor’s tragic end’ 2311

At other times we have examples of reflective onsets which do not participate in the metrical alliteration:

- 5\29 Þær git éagorstréam earmum þehton
 ‘There you ocean-currents with arms encompassed’
 ≈ Ægisröst þið reynduð örmum þöndum
 ‘The turbulent ocean you assailed with flexed arms’ 513

Here there is no lexical or syntactic correspondence between the verb *þehton* ‘encompassed’ and the adjectival *þöndum* ‘flexed’, and no contextual call for alliteration. (Note also that the reflection in *þehton* ≈ *þöndum* has a possible *graphic* element here in *h* ≈ *n*. The segments *e* ≈ *ö* are both front vowels distinguished only by the rounding of *ö*; *t* ≈ *d* are both alveolars; and the endings *-on* ≈ *-um* would be a-sys if both words were first person plural verbs.)

We shall return to the rôle of alliterative constraints in reflection in the next section.

In the previous section, reflections with closely matching consonants and similar vowels such as *léod* ≈ *leið* (5\12) were classed as full-profile p-reflections. Marked dissimilarity of the vowel, however, for example the shifts between close and open vowels in 5\30 and 5\31, results in weaker reflection. Consider the following:

- 5\30 ic þis gid be þe / áwræc wintrum fród
 ‘I this tale to you recount, wise in years’
 ≈ gáðu að orðum / aldraðs manns
 ‘mark you the words of an aged man’ 1734-5

Here the reflection occurs in the pair *gid* ‘song, tale, speech’ ≈ *gáðu* ‘mark you’.

- 5\31 hond sweng ne oftéah
 ‘the hand withheld not the stroke’
 ≈ hönd fylgir eftir
 ‘the hand followed after’
 (i.e. followed through the stroke) 1520

Here reflection occurs between *oftéah*, past tense of *of-téon* ‘to withhold’ and *eftir* ‘after’; the dissimilarity of the vowels *o*≈*e* prevents full-profile p-reflection of the first syllable.

5.2.1.3 Minimal coherent non-systematic p-reflection

Minimal p-reflection occurs when reflection is confined to a single segment; this is usually the initial consonant or consonant cluster of a lexical item. In the alliterative metre of the texts this is of course a common occurrence, and the objection that we encountered in the previous section now gains force: surely we cannot regard required metrical regularities as true p-reflection, particularly when this is the sole reflective segment in the word concerned. Our classification at this point appears to be straddling the dividing-line between obvious reflection and what might in the event be coincidental. Here are examples of minimal p-reflection which seem to occur simply by virtue of the alliteration (shown by underlining):

5\32 on sídne sáe ymb sund flite
 ‘on the wide sea in swimming to compete’
 ≈ um svalan sæ sund að þreyta
 ‘on the cold sea in swimming to compete’ 507

5\33 seofon niht swuncon; hé þe æt sunde oferflát
 ‘seven nights (you) laboured; he beat you at swimming’
 ≈ sjö nætur svámuð. Hann þig á sundi vann
 ‘seven night (you) swam. He beat you at swimming’ 517

However, as in the previous section, I suggest that we cannot ignore minimal onset reflection simply because it fits the existing alliterative constraints, since it is not difficult to find it occurring in non-alliterative positions:

5\34 mæton merestræta, mundum brugdon
 ‘(you) measured the sea-streets (i.e. seaways), plied your arms’
 ≈ og í mararstraum mundum brugðuð
 ‘and in the sea-current (you) plied your arms’ 514

- where the alliteration is on m-, not str-; and

5\35 Hæfdon swurd nacod, þá wit on sund rêon
 ‘(we) had naked swords as we rowed (i.e. swam) out to sea’
 ≈ Höfðum sverð nakin, er við á sæ runnum
 ‘(we) had naked swords as we ran (i.e. set out) to sea’ 539

- where the alliteration is on s-, not r-.

It should be noted, too, that minimal p-reflection on initial consonants occurs widely in non-alliterative translations such as the Icelandic-Faeroese translation discussed in section 2.5.2. However I must ask readers who still feel uncomfortable with minimal p-reflection to bear with me for a while yet, since I shall continue in the next sections to investigate the borderline between significant and coincidental reflection, examining amongst other factors the rôle of contextual and functional parameters which should also be taken into account.

5.2.2 Non-coherent p-reflection

Non-coherent p-reflection occurs when the sequential ordering of segments is disturbed, and/or when morpheme- and word-boundaries are ignored or rearranged. Occasionally non-coherent p-reflection will entail a merging of elements from discontinuous or even widely displaced positions in the source (see below, 5.2.3.1, and 6.4.3). Thus non-coherent p-reflection fails to observe either or both of conditions 5\11b and 5\11c for systematic p-reflection suggested in section 1.5. It will usually of course also fail to observe 5\11a, although this is not a necessary condition.

At least three processes can be distinguished in Björnsson's translation in non-coherent p-reflection of single reflected items:

- *disjunction*, in which word/morpheme boundaries in the source are ignored, added or transposed in the reflex;
- *discontinuity*, in which segments of the source string are lost in the reflex or the reflex includes segments not found in the source;
- *transposition (metathesis)*, in which segments appear with a changed sequence.

This threefold distinction is fairly idealistic, however, and cannot be fully maintained in the analysis. Some of the examples (see for instance 5\39 below) can best be analysed as a mixture of two or even all three types. If we were to extend the concept of 'segment' to include morpheme and word boundaries, then disjunction as described above would be subsumed by either discontinuity or transposition; and it is easy to see discontinuity as a subtype of transposition. On the other hand it should be noted that a process similar to discontinuity also occurs on a larger scale when a single item in the recension shows reflection from separate items in the source (see section 5.2.3.1); this will have a bearing on the parallels between different levels of resolution discussed in section 6.7 below.

As a fail-safe option, then, I have retained these distinctions in the analysis given in chapter 6, although, for simplicity, the algorithm used to

compute profiles in Appendix B reads all these three types as one (see section 6.6.3).

The examples I shall discuss in this section entail what is perhaps the most superficially striking feature of Björnsson's technique: her habit of reflecting phonological/graphological form from the original *without reference to the original syntactic or semantic content*, to produce a new and unexpected meaning.

My first example, of disjunct full profile non-coherence, requires some narrative background in order to do justice to the semantic implications of the reflection. At line 1537 the hero *Béowulf* is grappling with a monster referred to as Grendel's mother, in a cave to which he has gained entrance by diving into the depths of an evil-looking lake. Grendel's mother is not described in the poem, and her son, a monster who has harried the Danish king's hall at night for several years, killing and eating the retainers, is only indirectly described; we have the impression of a large humanoid creature with claws, living on the 'misty moors'. In this passage, however, the action takes place underwater, in the monsters' lake. *Béowulf* takes 'a good part of the day' (*hwíl dæges* 1495) to dive through the murky waters to reach their 'hostile hall' (1513), which is described as being on the floor of the lake (1496). The setting is confused, being both under water and apparently in air; there is a fire burning in their dwelling-place (1516), and yet when blood is shed in the course of the combat it wells up and colours the surface of the lake (1591-5). During his wrestling-match with Grendel's mother, *Béowulf*—identified in 5\36a as the 'man of the war-Geats'—reaches out and grips her by the shoulder:

5\36a Geféng þá be eaxle —nalas for fáhðe mearn—
 Gúð-Géata léod Grendles módor
 'Gripped then by shoulder—shrank not from the conflict
 the War-Geats' man—Grendel's mother' 1537-8

In her translation Björnsson explicitly characterizes Grendel's mother as a water-creature by changing 'shoulder' to 'flipper' (on a marine mammal such as a whale or seal):

5\36b Greip þá í bægsli—glímdi ósmeykur—
 Gautaleiðtogi Grendils móður
 'Gripped then by the flipper—wrestled undismayed
 the Geatish leader—Grendel's mother' 1537-8

Now this is a remarkable change, and seems at first sight quite uncalled for. A

straightforward a-sys translation involving the Icelandic *öxl* for OE *eaxl* would be perfectly in order here: *greip þá í öxl* ‘gripped then by the shoulder’. Note that neither the original *öxl* nor the translation *bægsli* is constrained by the alliteration at this point: the OE has *gefeng ... fæhðe* and the Icelandic *greip ... glímdi*.

However the Icelandic word is not as semantically different from ‘shoulder’ as the English crib suggests: *bægsli* refers to the front limb of a whale, and is related to the word *bógur*, the shoulder and upper part of a land-animal’s forelegs. The same root occurs in the verb *bægja frá* ‘push away, ward off’ (presumably originally with the shoulder) and in the word *bægslagangur* ‘commotion; noisy, floundering movement’. Björnsson has taken the interpretative step of portraying Grendel’s mother as a lumbering, fishy creature; perhaps too there are sound-associations with *bæklaður* ‘crippled’, making her malformed or hunchbacked. Interpretation of this sort is of course the stuff of translation: a translator will often embellish one passage in order to counterbalance an impoverishment into which she has been forced elsewhere. But in this case the surface correspondence with the original is the striking feature; the word *bægsli*, sometimes formerly spelled *bæxli*, is a clear echo of the Old English *be eaxle*, ‘by the shoulder’. (For the correspondence between *léod* ≈ *leið(togi)* in the following line see 5\12 above.)

If we ignore the word boundary in *be#eaxle* we have a full-profile p-reflection, where the vowel undergoes what is essentially a graphemic metathesis (*e#ea≈æ*), and the medial consonant cluster is in fact identical, since the two spellings *bægsli/bæxli* indicate the same pronunciation (the *g* and *s* of *bægsli* are both unvoiced). The final vowel in *be eaxle* ≈ *bægsli* is also a-sys. Only the word boundary disrupts this coherence.

Here is a similar example. The Danish queen Wealhþéow goes round the benches at the banquet filling the drinking horns of the guests:

- 5\37 Ymbéode þá ides Helminga
 ‘Went around then the lady of the Helmings’
 ≈ Um gekk og bauð ættvíf Helminga
 ‘Went around and offered[drinks]the lady of the Helmings’ 620

The OE verb *ymbéode* is a compound formed from *ymb* ‘around’ and *gán* ‘go, walk’, past tense *éode* ‘walked’. Björnsson translates this closely with *um gekk*, where *um* ‘around’ is a-sys p-reflection (the *b* is lost in Icelandic) and *gekk*, past tense of *ganga* ‘walk’, is non-reflective.¹⁶² But Björnsson also reorganizes the

¹⁶²Recall that c-sys reflection may occur as non-systematic instances of paradigmatic correspondence: thus OE *gán* and MI *ganga* are b-sys reflections, but their past tenses *éode* ≈ *gekk* are in fact non-sys;

compound *ymb-éode* as if it read **ym-béode* (which is not an OE word) to give the reflection $(ym)béod(e) \approx bauð$ (Icelandic *bjóða* ‘to offer’, past tense *bauð*), which, apart from the displaced morpheme boundary and the final *-e*, would be systematic a-sys ($éa \approx au$). Note that Björnsson has clearly not simply misread the original, since the correct translation *um gekk* shows that she has recognized *-éode* as past tense of *-gan*. In displacing the morpheme boundary in $ymb\#éode \approx um\#bauð$, she is in fact making exactly the same transformation as Augustine with $dia\#stasis \approx dis\#tentio$ (see page 16).¹⁶³

The verb *bjóða* also appears in the next example. When the old Danish king Hróðgar first hears of the arrival of Béowulf and his men he orders them to be shown immediately into his presence:

- 5\38 Béo þú on ofeste, hát in gán
 ‘Be you in haste, ask [them] to come in’
 ≈ Bjóð þú ið bráðasta brögnum inn ganga
 ‘Bid you immediately the men to come in’ 386

Again, there is disintegration of the original to produce the Icelandic verb *bjóða*. Taken separately, all the segments of *Béo þú* ‘(you) be’ \approx *Bjóð þú* ‘(you) invite’ are in a-sys correspondence ($é \approx j$ occurs in the a-sys pair *béodan* \approx *bjóða* ‘offer, invite’). However the original medial *p* appears as $\delta\#p$ in the reflex (here again $\#$ marks a word-boundary), as if the original had read *béod þú* \approx *bjóð þú* ‘(you) invite’.¹⁶⁴

These three examples (5\36, 5\37, 5\38) of *disjunctive* non-coherence have all consisted of p-reflection which, apart from a displacement of morpheme junctions, are to all intents and purposes full-profile. However, non-coherence often entails a more radical re-ordering of the source material. Here is an example of *discontinuity*:

- 5\39 scyld geolorand \approx skjöld glóandi
 ‘yellow-banded shield \approx shining shield’ 438

they are best analyzed as c-sys in view of their paradigmatic correspondence.

¹⁶³ Augustine’s reflection of Plotinus’s *diastasis* into *distentio* carries with it another echoic reflection which closely parallels Björnsson’s technique: Plotinus’s *Diastasis oun zôês khronon ekhei* ‘so the distension of life involves (*ekhei* ‘has’) time’, III.7.10, appears as Augustine’s *Ecce distentio est vitia mea* ‘Thus (*ecce*) my life is a distention’, Conf. XI xxix(39), with the striking cross-reflection between *diastasis* \approx *distentio* and *ekhei* \approx *ecce*. (cf. Knútsson 1993a: 115-116)

¹⁶⁴ Icelandic *p* is an unvoiced dental fricative, and *ð* a voiced one; in OE the two letters are interchangeable. If we ignore loanwords such as *radar* and *modem*, single *d* and *ð* may be analysed as being in complementary distribution in Icelandic; in later medieval Icelandic manuscripts they are usually both written as *d*.

Here the reflex consists of the same consonantal profile as the original (*g-l-nd*) with a loss of the first vowel and the *r*.

- 5\40 ðéah þú heaðoræsa gehwær dohte
 ‘though you prevail every time in battle offensives’
 ≈ þótt þú harðræði þyldir mikil
 ‘though you endured great hardships’ 526

Here the discontinuity in *heaðo-* ‘battle’ \approx *harð-* ‘hard’ consists of the addition of *r* (or a duplication of the *r* of the second element) and the loss of *o*.

Note that, for the moment, we seem to be conflating the two processes of loss and addition under one type. However this is an artefact of the present interim formulation which assumes sequential transforms, and we shall return to this question later (section 6.1).

The next example illustrates *transposition*. The passage describes the sorrow of Hildeburh, here referred to as daughter of Hóc (\approx Haki), following the killing of her son and her brother:

- 5\41 Nalles hólinga Hóces dohtor ... bemearn
 ‘Not without cause did Hóc’s daughter bewail ...’
 ≈ Hló eigi hugur Haka dóttur
 ‘Laughed not the mind of Haki’s daughter’
 (i.e. There was no mirth in her heart) 1076

This example has already appeared as 4\2 on page 89, where the background to the passage is given and the intertextual connection with *Þrymskviða* is discussed (4\3); here I wish to draw attention to the fact that reflection *hól* \approx *hló* involves close identity except for metathesis of the second and third of the three segments. As well as being a startling example of p-reflection, this also results in close semantic and stylistic equivalence.

Generally, however, transposition entails less tidy movement than the neat metathesis of 5\42. Often it is combined with discontinuity:

- 5\43 feorh oðferede ‘[I] carried away [my] life’
 ≈ fjöri forðaði ‘[I] delivered [my] life [from danger]’
 (i.e. I escaped with my life) 2141

In this example the pair *feorh* \approx *fjör* ‘life’ is a-sys (fully cognate) p-reflection.¹⁶⁵

¹⁶⁵Informed readers will notice that the OE verb takes an accusative object (*feorh*) while the Icelandic verb takes a dative object (*fjöri*). In Chapter 6 we will discuss methods of analysing syntactic mismatches of this sort.

The reflection between *oðferede* \approx *forðaði* is quite complex: if we remove the a-sys inflections *-ede* \approx *-aði* we are left with *oðfer-* \approx *forð-*, which is almost an anagram.

Occasionally all three processes, disjunction, discontinuity and transposition, occur together:

- 5\44 ne tó gnéað gifa Géata léodum
 ‘nor too sparing of gifts to the Geatish people’
 \approx eða knífði við kappa Gauta
 ‘or scanted the Geatish heroes’ 1930

In this example the Icelandic reflex *knífði* draws its profile from two sources in the original, *gnéað* ‘niggardly’ and *gifa* ‘gifts’ (gen.pl.); the reflection involves *gn* \approx *kn* in *gnéað* \approx *knífði* and *if* \approx *íf* in *gifa* \approx *knífði*.

Sometimes it is possible tentatively to trace various sub-stages of the reflection. For instance the OE terms *heaðodéor* ‘excellent in battle’ (771) and *heapórasas* ‘battle offensives’ (1047) both become *höfuðstríð* ‘full-scale war’ in the translation. In this case there appears to be an initial non-coherent process involving transposition and discontinuity within the same language: OE *heaðo* ‘war’ \approx OE *heafod* ‘head’. The subsequent movement into Icelandic is an a-sys process: *heafod* \approx *höfuð* ‘head, supreme, absolute’. (For further discussion of the fate of *heaðo* in Björnsson’s translation see 5\49 below.)

5.2.3 The threshold of significance

In the previous section we have inevitably strayed into the borderlands between intentional p-reflection and mere coincidence, where examples of minimal p-reflection would have passed unnoticed in a text where reflection was not a significant feature. Consider for instance:

- 5\45 on fágne flór féond treddode,
éode yrremód
 ‘over the shining floor the fiend trod,
 went angry of mood’
 \approx yfir fáðan flór fetaði dólgur
í jötunmóði
 ‘over the polished floor stepped the fiend
 in giant’s mood’ (i.e. ‘angry as a giant’) 726-7

The burden of the reflection *éode yrremód* \approx *í jötunmóði* is borne by the a-sys pair *mód* \approx *móð* ‘fierce mood’, but the reflection is compounded by the forms *éode* (past tense of *gán* ‘to go’) \approx *jötun* ‘giant’. Standing by itself, *éode* \approx *jötun* is

not strikingly reflective: $éo \approx jö$ is reminiscent of the a-sys p-reflection $éo \approx jó$ in pairs such as $fréosan \approx frjósa$ ‘freeze’, while the final plosives $d \approx t$ are both alveolar; it should also be noted that Björnsson’s Southern Icelandic *linmæli* (‘soft speech’) pronunciation would not distinguish between t and d in this position.¹⁶⁶ This reflection is also weakened by *displacement* (section 5.2.3.1), in that *jötun* is adjacent to *móði* while *éode* is separated from *mód*.

Other examples of minimal reflection discussed above ($gid \approx gáðu$ (5\30)), $oftéah \approx eftir$ (5\31)) also fall within this category, where reflection is so slight that the question might seem to arise as to whether we should, or can, distinguish between weak reflection and mere coincidence. But this would be a writerly criterion to which we have no access; the threshold of significance is by definition the readerly threshold; below the threshold there is, also by definition, no reflection. The analyst records *all* reflection she finds, since this alone establishes the threshold of significance.

This overrides the possibility that some reflection picked up by the analysis was never noticed by the translator. We cannot in any case correlate the sensitivity of the analysis, i.e. the level of the threshold, with the translation process. Striking p-reflection no less than attenuate echoes can occur without the translator’s immediately noticing them; the difference between the two makes itself felt at a later stage, when obvious reflection is (probably, but not necessarily) reviewed and re-evaluated by the translator, while borderline cases may never be consciously reconsidered. But this falls beyond the event-horizon that Steiner invokes in 2\21, and it makes little sense within the present framework to ask whether these borderline cases are a result of subconscious technique or simple coincidence.

5.2.3.1 Displacement

So far in this discussion we have examined the relative strengths of reflective phenomena in terms of their inherent reflective structure, without mentioning what we can for the moment refer to as their *textual alignment*, their relative positions. Most of the examples discussed have been reflective by virtue of the fact that the source item and its reflex in the recension occur at corresponding positions in the texts. For instance the correspondence $hól- \approx hló$ in 5\41 is dependent on the alignment of the forms; if $hló$ had occurred in the translation several lines earlier or later the reflection would probably drop beneath the threshold of significance: hence there is thus no p-reflection between *hólinga* in line 1076 of the OE text and *hlóð* in line 895 of the translation. Note

¹⁶⁶Single intervocalic d does not occur in native Icelandic words, but where it occurs in foreign loans such as *radar* the opposition between t and d is neutralised in Björnsson’s southern Icelandic (*linmæli*) speech.

that we are not dismissing p-reflection here on the intuitive grounds that a displacement of 181 lines is too great; our grounds are more simple (and rigorous) in that this particular example fell below my own (readerly) threshold, and was instead located using the search routine on my computer.

Thus alignment is an essential aspect of p-reflection: the closer the alignment, the more likely that less distinctive forms of reflection will be registered, while more distinctive forms will tolerate greater displacement. Henceforth in this discussion I shall use the term *displacement*¹⁶⁷ rather than *alignment*, since, as we shall see later (section 6.4.3), it makes more sense to quantify displacement as a positive value, and characterize full alignment as a zero value of displacement.

Some degree of displacement has already been examined, since we have had to look ‘sideways’ at discontinuous, disjunct and transposed elements. Even so, this lateral gesture has not extended far beyond the relevant ‘parcel’ of correspondence. The same may be said of the examples encountered so far where the reflex seems to cull its reflection from two words in the original (*be eaxle* \approx *bægsli* (5\36), *gnéað gifa* \approx *knifði* (5\44)), where the source is essentially a contiguous string and the reflective ‘parcel’ is intact.

The next example is of reflection where the components are more widely displaced. The gist of the passage is ‘He begrudged any man credit for deeds greater than he had himself performed under the heavens’:

5\46 *gehéde* under heofenum þonne *hé* sylfa
 ‘... had achieved under heaven than he himself’
 ≈ *undir himni háam en hafði* sjálfur
 ‘... under high heavens than [he] had himself’ 505

The reflective pair *hé* ‘he’ \approx *hafði* ‘had’ shows minimal p-reflection, perhaps attributable simply to the alliteration of the line. However the Icelandic word *hafði* is a stronger (discontinuous) reflection of OE (*ge*)*héde* ‘achieve’ earlier in the line, although here the reflection is weakened by the physical distance between the two components.

The following, the first line of which has occurred before as 5\29, is an example of more distinct correspondences which tolerates greater displacement. The speaker is referring to the swimming contest between *Béowulf* and *Breca*:

¹⁶⁷ This terminology is not intended to invoke Freud. His *displacement* and *condensation* may well be relevant, or perhaps parallel, to the displaced and the overlapping reflections I am discussing, particularly the semantic reflections discussed in 5.3 below (does not the movement from text to translation entail multiple shifts of lexical allegiance?). However they would apply only in the filiality and directional mode in which I am still enmeshed in this chapter.

5\47 Þær git éagorstréam earmum þehton,cf. 5\29
 mæton merestréta, mundum brugdon
 ‘There you ocean-current with arms encompassed
 measured out sea-streets, flung out your hands’

≈ Ægisröst þið reynduð örmum þöndum
 og í mararstraum mundum brugðuð
 ‘The turbulent ocean you assayed with arms flexed
 and in the sea-current flung out your hands’ 513-4

Here the partial p-reflection *stréta* ‘streets’ \approx *straum* ‘current’ is established both by structural and positional criteria, and the fact that the first element in the compound concerned, *mere* \approx *marar* ‘sea’ is an a-sys p-reflection. But there is also displaced reflection from the preceding line, where *stream* \approx *straum* ‘current’ is an a-sys p-reflection. Note for the moment that we are simply discussing the physical alignment of the reflective elements and ignoring closely related features such as semantic correspondence (as for instance, *stream* \approx *straum*, ‘current’) and syntactical correspondence, which play major roles in reflective strength, as we shall see in chapter 6. For the moment, however, we need to examine the role of (dis)placement by itself in establishing some of the weaker forms of reflection.

5.2.3.2 Trace

Consider the following:

5\48 ond norþanwind
headogrim ondhwearf; hréo wáeron ýþa
 ‘and the north wind
battle-fierce turned against (us); rough were the waves’

≈ og norðanvindur
helkaldur móti blés; háar risu unnir.
 ‘and the north wind
hell-cold against (us) blew; high rose the waves’ 547-8

The pairs *headogrim* \approx *helkaldur* and *hréo* \approx *háar* are both non-systematic p-reflections, both participating in the alliteration of the line. *Hréo* ‘rough’ \approx *háar* ‘high’ is a distinct non-coherent p-reflection with disturbed sequence of segments, although a few lines’ separation would erase the correspondence. The pair *headogrim* ‘battle-fierce’ \approx *helkaldur* ‘hell-cold’ are only reflective in the first two segments of the first element, and would clearly tolerate very little

separation. However they constitute a link in a closely-knit pattern of correspondences in Björnsson's translation involving *heaðo*, various Icelandic reflexes beginning *h-* or *he-*, and several other elements forming the second part of the compound:

5\49	<i>heaðogrim</i> ≈ <i>helkaldur</i>	'battle-fierce' ≈ 'hell-cold'	548
	<i>heaðosíocum</i> ≈ <i>helsærðum</i>	'battle-sick' ≈ 'hell-wounded'	2754
	<i>heaðoróf</i> ≈ <i>herfrægur</i>	'battle-famed' ≈ 'war-famed'	219
	<i>heaðoróf</i> ≈ <i>hugrakkur</i>	'battle-famed' ≈ 'brave of heart'	381
	<i>heaðorófe</i> ≈ <i>hughreifir</i>	'battle-famed' ≈ 'glad of heart'	864

Various types of non-systematic p-reflection also occur in the translation in the second element of these compounds: full-profile (*rófe* ≈ *reifir* 864); partial (*heaðo* ≈ *hel* 548,2754; ≈ *her* 2191; *síocum* ≈ *særðum* 2754); fragmentary (*heaðo* ≈ *hug* 381, 864; *róf* ≈ *rakkur* 381); non-coherent (*róf* ≈ *frægur* 2191, where *ó* ≈ *æ* is a distinctive b-sys segment). Clearly, the non-reflective *grim* ≈ *kaldur* 548 must be included in this list, since it functions in the same way as the other elements.

A number of factors are involved: the immediate environment of the reflex (note for instance how the a-sys inflection *-um* strengthens the fragmentary *síocum* ≈ *særðum* 2754), the prosodic or metrical character, and the wider syntactic environment, which will be discussed in section 5.3.

For the moment I shall examine the immediate prosodic environment, and begin by suggesting that the feature (dis)placement is so integral to the phenomenon of reflection that *it can alone result in reflective phenomena, even in the absence of formal segmental p-reflection*. I shall refer to this as *trace reflection*. For our first example, we shall return to the first lines of *Béowulf* which retell the past glory of the Danish kings. We have seen the third line before in chapter 3 (3\10)—here it is again:

5\50	<i>hú ðá æþelingas ellen fremedon</i>	
		'how the princes performed deeds of valour'
	≈ <i>hversu öðlingar örlög drýgðu</i>	
		'how the princes fulfilled their fates' 3

One of the distinguishing features of the Nordic branch of the Germanic languages to which Icelandic belongs is the development of a suffixed definite article; thus a full a-sys p-reflection of *ðá æþelingas* 'the princes' would be *öðlingar-nir* 'the princes', which is a typical example of the occasional 'negative' effects of a-sys p-reflection which we discussed in section 5.2.1.1. Icelandic has however a further stylistic rule which prompts the deletion of the

definite article suffixed to generic nouns in certain narrative contexts: *bóndi* ‘the farmer’, *konungur* ‘the king’, *prestur* ‘the priest’ (instead of *bóndinn*, *konungurinn*, *presturinn*). Björnsson employs this device here with *öðlingar* ‘the princes’, and thus avoids the ‘negative’ reflection of the suffixed article. She is left, however, with a metrical hiatus filled by the article *þá* in the original. Her remedy is simple: instead of the a-sys p-reflection *hú* \approx *hve* ‘how’ she uses an alternative form *hversu* ‘how’. Thus we have the reflection *hú þá* \approx *hversu*, in which the first syllable is b-sys and the second syllable *-su* serves as a metrical slot-filler. As such, it is clearly reflective.

Here is a similar example: the poet is explaining how Cain was the forebear of all evil spirits, including Grendel:

5\51 þanon untydras ealle onwocon
 ‘thence all evil progeny awoke’
 \approx Af honum illþýði uppvaknaði
 ‘from him evil-doers awoke’ (i.e. were descended) 111

The Icelandic verb *uppvakna* is an awkward, although not impossible compound; Old Icelandic lost nearly all the early Germanic prefixes in its preliterate stage, and the subsequent rigid fixing of the accent on the first syllable of the word mitigates against compound verbs with unstressed prefixes characteristic of other Germanic languages. such as the German *bezahlen* ‘pay’ and *versuchen* ‘try’ or the English *believe* and *forget*. Björnsson’s *uppvakna* thus has the stress on the prefix, which is rather an insubstantial element to carry the burden of the major alliterative stave (*höfuðstafur*; see section 6.5.4) as its position as first stress in the second half-line dictates: in the original this slot is filled by the much stronger adjective *ealle* ‘all’. Björnsson seems to be alluding here to the Icelandic noun *uppvakningur* ‘spirit raised from the dead’¹⁶⁸, which if it had occurred here in the translation would comfortably have allowed primary stress on the suffix. As it stands, however, the reflection *on-* \approx *upp-* can best be characterized as trace reflection.

A parallel can be found in the OE translation of the OS *Genesis*, discussed in chapter 2, section 2.5.1:

5\52 kumit haglas skion himile bitengi
 \approx cymeð hægles scúr hefone getenge
 ‘comes shower of hail joined to
 [or: oppressing] the sky’ *Genesis* 808, cf. 2\20

¹⁶⁸OE *onwacan* simply means ‘awake, arise, quicken, be born’, and does not have the magical connotations which Björnsson invokes.

- where the differing suffixes on *bitengi* \approx *getenge* can be analysed as trace reflection. Since unstressed particles such as suffixes are relatively unstable elements, such trace reflection should figure commonly in manuscript transmission with significant dialectal accommodation. And here we see how closely the passage of linguistic form in intimate translation is mirrored by the same movements in diachronic development, where trace elements point to earlier forms of the language. The loss of prefixes in the Nordic branch of the Germanic languages alluded to above seems to have left unmistakable traces in early Icelandic poetry in the form of the particles *um* and *of*, which according to Jón Helgason (1962: 180-182) often to fill the place left by the lost prefix *ga-*. This prefix was typically applied in Old Germanic verbs to signal a perfective aspect, appearing particularly in the past participles—*cf.* German *gewußt*, Old English *gewiten* ‘known’. The particles *um* and *of* typically occur, apparently almost meaninglessly, in front of past participles in Eddic poetry: thus *ek man iötna ár of borna* ‘I remember the giants borne of yore’ *Völuspá* 2; *hin er brúðfiár of beðit hafði* ‘she who had waited for the dowry’ *Þrymskviða* 32 (Kuhn 1962: 1 and 115). Similar examples abound in Eddic poetry and are not restricted to the perfective use of *ga-*, which also occurred as a nominal suffix (see Helgason *loc.cit.* for further discussion).

5.2.4 Frequency of non-systematic p-reflection in *Breca*

We shall conclude this section by looking at the extent of non-systematic p-reflection in Björnsson’s translation. With the same provisos that we made in 5.1.6, we can take figures from table B\1 in Appendix B which show that non-systematic p-reflection runs at 13% of lexical items, of which 10% are coherent and 3% non-coherent. This, added to the 53% for systematic p-reflection mentioned in 5.1.6, means that 66% of the translation shows some degree of formal p-reflection.¹⁶⁹ These are strikingly high figures, and although in the absence of data from comparable translations we can draw only limited conclusions, it is clear that we are dealing with highly significant phenomena.

5.3 Further aspects of reflection: syntactic and semantic reflection

So far in this chapter I have dealt mainly with one aspect of reflection, which I have called *phonological reflection*. The other main aspects, *syntactic* and *semantic*, have however repeatedly entered the discussion (for example in sections 5.1.1 and 5.1.2). The rest of this chapter will look at s- (syntactic) and m- (semantic) reflection, taking the first steps towards arranging them, together

¹⁶⁹ Other methods of computation, discussed in 5.1.3.1 and 5.1.3.2, give slightly different combinations of sys and non-sys values (see Appendix B), but the overall value for p-reflection remains 66%.)

with p-reflection, into a coherent pattern.

5.3.1 Implicate independence

In the discussion on Jackendoff's Representational Modality in the previous chapter (section 4.4.5) I suggested that a more integral mode of interfacing than that offered by Jackendoff's indexical linking would have repercussions for the independent status of Jackendoff's modules. Let us see how this applies to the concept of reflection. In discussing p-reflection in the present chapter so far I have repeatedly made use of syntactic and semantic criteria (among others)—far more often, in fact, than I have explicitly mentioned. Thus p-reflection, particularly systematic p-reflection, often coincides with m- (semantic) reflection in that both meaning and shape in the source retain their connection in the translation: this is what happens to most of the lexical items in 5\1, 5\2 and 5\3. At other times, however, the phonological aspect of a source string becomes disassociated from the semantic aspect (in Jackendoff's terms, indexicality is lost and the interface function of the lexicon ceases to apply), and a new association of p- and m-reflection (a new indexicality) is struck up in the translation. For example, when the phonological component of *be eaxle* \approx *bægsli* in 5\36 is disassociated from the semantic component BY THE SHOULDER in the source text and becomes associated with FLIPPER in the translation, this transaction is registered in the analysis (the *reading*) as a tension between the two competing relationships. What is independent in these processes is the freedom with which these relationships can be formed—in Jackendoff's terms the freedom with which the interfaces can arrange themselves. Thus even multiple relationships can exist on the same string, so that the quantum *be eaxle* can participate simultaneously in both *be eaxle* \approx *bægsli* and *be eaxle* \approx *í öxl* 'by the shoulder'.

Thus these three types of reflection share the property of *displacement* discussed in section 5.2.3.1. When strings of text are in close correspondence, as in examples 5\1, 5\2 and 5\3, then all three types coincide in each word, with the same (zero) displacement. When they fail, we can say that p-, m- and s-reflection are displaced independently. In the following example, Béowulf is claiming that he had greater strength in the water than his swimming-opponent Breca:

5\53 Sóð ic talige, | þæt ic merestrengo máran áhte
 'Truly I say, that I sea-strength more possessed'

≈ Satt eg mæli, | að eg megins meira í mari átti
 'Truly I say, that I strength more in sea possessed' 532-3

The Icelandic *mari* 'sea' (dative singular) shows a double reflective pattern here. Its formal correspondence with the OE *máran* 'more, greater' has zero displacement, but it also has displaced a-sys correspondence with *mere-* 'sea' in the preceding half-line. Its semantic correspondence however is solely with the displaced *mere*. Finally there is no structural correspondence, since there is no locative phrase with its dative form in the OE line.

Compare this to the p-reflection *hól- ≈ hló* in 5\41, which is not accompanied by s- or m- reflection at all. We also find s-reflection without m- or p-reflection, as in the next example. *Béowulf* is describing his combat with sea-monsters:

- 5\54 Ic him þénode | déoran sweorde
 'I served them [i.e. gave them what they deserved]
 with a precious sword'
 ≈ Ðau eg hæfði | dýru vopni
 'I struck them [i.e. aimed and hit]
 with a precious weapon' 560-1

Here the two verbs *þénode ≈ hæfði* show no phonological or semantic reflection, but they are in s-correspondence since they fill the same syntactic slot in their respective sentences.

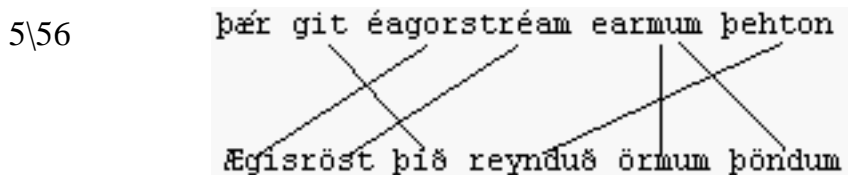
We should also note at this point that so far we have been discussing strings of text of roughly word-length; this has been a result of the lexical emphasis of the discussion. In chapter 6 (section 6.7) we shall extend the analysis to larger structures, and examine the reflective patterns which between them and the smaller structures.

5.3.2 Superimposure of p-, s- and m- reflection

The various patterns of p-, s- and m- reflection are therefore superimposed upon each other, sometimes coinciding and sometimes not. Here is part of the pattern of p-reflection in an earlier example, line 513:

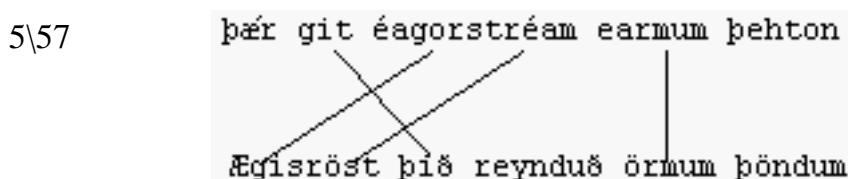
- 5\55 'There you ocean-currents with arms
 encompassed'
 þær git éagorstréam earmum þehton
 Ægisröst þið reynduð örmum þöndum
 'The turbulent ocean you assayed with arms
 flexed'

The pattern of s-reflection is found by pairing syntactic 'slots' in the texts:

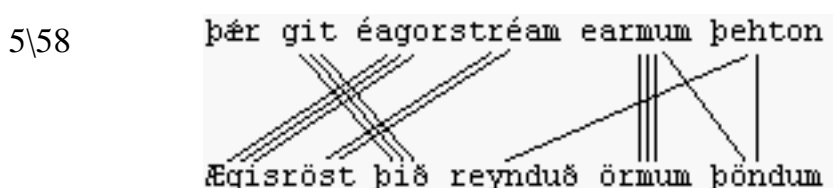


Note that the correspondence *earmum* \approx *örmum þöndum* is a single unit formed from the syntactically corresponding noun phrases. The dotted line simply links *örmum* with *þöndum*.

The m-pattern is again different:



If we superimpose these patterns it becomes clear that different degrees or weights of reflection are present:



This is not a very satisfactory formulation, for it does not show the types of correspondences concerned; but it will serve our purposes for the moment. All three types coincide in *éagor-* \approx *Ægis-* and *earmum* \approx *örmum*, both with a-sys p-reflection, and in *git* \approx *þið* where there is c-sys p-reflection. *Stréam* \approx *röst* have both s- and m-reflection, *þehton* \approx *reynduð* only s-reflection and *þehton* \approx *þöndum* only (partial) p-reflection. *Þöndum* shares the s-reflection with *örmum*. (We ignore here the p- and m-reflection between *stréam* in 513 and *straum* in the following line, 514, see 5\47.)

An instructive feature of these representations is that they break up the linear nature of the texts, since the lines of correspondence between them necessarily cross. More significantly, however, they call attention to another linear dimension: that of the direction of reflection. It is clear that the correspondences shown in 5\58, the slant of the connecting lines which show displacement, will be read in different ways depending on how we rank the texts against each other. In 5\58 the upper text is the source, the lower the derivation. If we reverse this relationship, the slant of the lines will change accordingly:

where we had rightward displacement in 5\58 we will now have leftward displacement. If we are limited to a writerly analysis, one which looks only at the 'translatorly' processes involved in the movement from text A to text B, then only one of these patterns will be correct. As we shall see in the next chapter, however, this is not a viable option.

6. Interference: a non-filiatory analysis

6.1 The problem of direction

The time has come to start drawing together some of the various threads of this study. Chapters 3 and 4 discussed the need for a non-directional approach in two different contexts: the *intertextual*, where the concept of the movement of textual material between hierarchically ranked texts (such as ‘source’ and ‘translation’) was rejected; and the *grammatical*, where directional elements in the derivational concept of language generation was also rejected.

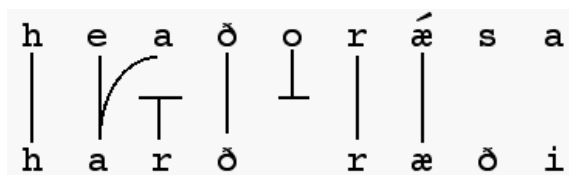
However, chapter 5 reneged on this strategy, discussing intertextuality almost exclusively in terms of directional relationships: the term *reflection* implies a source text and a derived text with original and reflected elements, and I have repeatedly referred to the phenomena under discussion as *processes*, which assumes a linear development *from* an earlier state *into* a later state. This backward step can I hope be justified by the need for some sort of taxonomic analysis of the types of relationships involved, and I shall build on this taxonomy in the present chapter. This will involve a reappraisal of some of the points made in the previous chapter, and will also lead to a call for non-directionality in yet a third, *intratextual* sense, the Augustinian seriality of language: ‘The syllables sounded and have passed away, the second after the first, the third after the second, and so on in order until, after the others the last one came, and after the

last silence followed'.¹

This perhaps surprising suggestion will need some explanation. Seriality is, surely, a fundamental aspect of language: it distinguishes *god* from *dog* and also *God watched the dog* from *the dog watched God*. Even in languages where word-order is not as critical as in Modern English, such as Augustine's Latin, it plays a principle role. All writing systems depend on an analysis of sequential speech-sounds, whether the fairly coarse segmentations of the many different syllabaries or the fine, abstract analysis of the one alphabet. When a text is recorded, in writing or as sound, the sequential aspect is encoded with it, but the encoding is not in itself sequential. Digital textual or sound data can reside in any spatial configuration. On the page, the beginning of the sentence lies to the left or to the right depending on convention, not necessity. Some letters have tails, others are ascenders, but there is no *up* nor *down* in language. Just as the poem in memory, the poem on the printed page has its sequence encoded as a single image, and we have simultaneous access to all its parts. Intratextuality, like intertextuality, has no direction.

We have already encountered the concept of *displacement* in section 5.2.3.1, where I suggested that relative position in the text was an integral aspect of reflection. However the directional framework of the discussion in chapter 5 frequently resulted in loss of significant generalisation. For instance in section 5.2.2 I referred to discontinuous non-coherent reflection as conflating two different processes, those of loss and of addition. In 5\40 we encountered the correspondence between *heaðoræsa* 'battles' \approx *harðræði* 'hardships', which I said involved 'the addition of *r* (or a duplication of the *r* of the second element) and the loss of *o*' (p. 171). Clearly, this depends on the direction of movement, from source to translation, assumed by the analysis; if we reverse the directions we have loss of *r* and addition of *o*:

6\1



Loss and addition, then, are concepts which assume directionality between texts. But we have seen a number of cases in chapters 3 and 4 where directionality cannot be determined: we may be unable to decide which text is the source, or we may be dealing with peer texts where derivation is not a clear issue, or not even a real issue at all. For instance, in chapter 3 I discussed the two quanta *ellen fremedon* in *Béowulf* and *örlög drýgðu* in *Bjólfskviða* ('performed deeds of

¹ Confessions XI.vi; Chadwick's translation (Augustine 1991:225).

valour'), which would hardly constitute an echoic intertextuality were it not for a wide net of formulaic relationships in a number of Old English and Old Icelandic poems (3\10 on p.80). This net is essentially non-directional, not only insofar as the original chronology of the poems cannot be established, but also because it exists only as a readerly structure independently of the chronology of any single reading. This loss of directionality also enters the writerly dimension: we cannot trace Björnsson's progress from *hwyder helrúnan hwyrftum scrípað* to *hvarleiður helriði úr hvarfi skreið* (4\5) without *directionless* detours through Icelandic intertextualities with which Björnsson was familiar (4\6, 4\8) and a distinctive Old English formulaic pattern involving the verb *scríðan* of which she was most probably unaware (see page 93).

Later in this chapter (section 6.5.1) we shall also see that directionality between texts and the intratextual directionality of language are two complementary aspects of a bias in the analysis which can only be avoided by eliminating both directionalities together.

6.2 'The myth of filiation'

One of the aspects of the (post-)structuralist understanding of textuality is its rejection of textual subordination. Intertextuality is not a mode of transmission, but a peer dynamic. Roland Barthes distinguishes between the concept of the *œuvre*, of which the author is the proprietary father ('La mort de l'auteur', in Barthes 1984: 74),² and the text, whose intertextuality 'should not be confused with some origin of the text: to look for the "sources", the "influences" of a work, is to conform to the myth of filiation' ('De l'œuvre au texte', in Barthes 1984: 73).³

Understandably, this approach has not had significant repercussions in the traditional field of textual research, where a strict textual ethic asserts the authority of the source. This ethic is reflected among other things in the ongoing academic search for reliable versions of the more or less defective medieval manuscripts that have come down to us. Since our material is an Old English poem and a modern Icelandic translation, it might seem at first sight ill-advised to assume a non-filiatory analysis.

The strength of the traditional discipline, with its essentially filiationary viewpoint, is undeniable. In Thomas Kuhn's terms, we might say that it forms an established conceptual matrix in which the brunt of the work in progress is

² 'L'auteur est réputé le père et le propriétaire de son œuvre.' Translations and paraphrases from the French in this section are mine.

³ 'L'intertextuel dans lequel est pris tout texte, puisqu'il est lui-même l'entre-texte d'un autre texte, ne peut se confondre avec quelque origine du texte: rechercher les «sources», les «influences» d'une œuvre, c'est satisfaire au mythe de la filiation.'

practical ‘puzzle-solving’ (Kuhn 1977: 234). This is not to disparage; for Kuhn the ‘normal science’ of puzzle-solving is an essential tool for increased understanding. An example is Hanna Steinunn Thorleifsdóttir’s (1996) investigation of the medieval Icelandic translations of Chrétien de Troyes’ *Chevalier au Lion (Yvain)*. Thorleifsdóttir takes issue with repeated and continuing misconceptions based on the subjective opinions of earlier scholars; but to do this she does not need to step outside her chosen arena of established methodology. Her work involves a close analysis of the complete text of the three main manuscripts of the translation in which, necessarily, the original Old French text serves as the authoritative point of reference. The Icelandic manuscripts are late copies, and Thorleifsdóttir necessarily assumes a degenerative process of textual transmission: manuscript transmission ‘inevitably’ involves transmission of ‘errors and inconsistencies’ (Thorleifsdóttir 1996:303),⁴ and any hopes there may be of approaching the original text of the translation depend essentially on the prior authority of the translation’s source:

6\2 When we are confronted with perfect agreement on the translation in three manuscripts, we can be certain that we have the translator’s original text. Where the Icelandic text is at variance with the original, this certitude evaporates. (Thorleifsdóttir 1996:14)⁵

As Thorleifsdóttir’s work demonstrates, this is a fruitful approach, in which the rationale for the authority of the source text over the translation can hardly be debatable. And of course Barthes has no quarrel with such work. He does not deny the existence of the *œuvre*; in seeing it as a ‘traditional concept, in a sense Newtonian’ (1977: 70)⁶ he wishes to define it rather than expunge it, to use it as a point of departure from which to map out his (ultimately no less mythical) concept of the text. Of course he is on the defensive against those who resent his use for other purposes of the data which go into their own investigations, and this is always apparent: he is derisive of the critic who seeks to ‘interpret’ the *œuvre*: ‘The critic cannot presume to ‘translate’ the *œuvre*, perhaps into a state of greater clarity, for there is nothing of greater clarity than

4 ‘En raison de sa reproduction manuscrite, un texte littéraire médiéval n’avait par définition jamais une forme immuable ou définitive. Il est illusoire de s’imaginer un modèle parfait car chaque copie manuscrite contenait fatalement ses erreurs et ses inconséquences. ... Il est effectivement apparu d’après notre comparaison que la transmission manuscrite est à l’origine d’un grand nombre d’erreurs.’

5 ‘Quand nous sommes, avec le concours de trois manuscrits, en présence d’une traduction parfaite nous avons avec certitude affaire au traducteur. Alors que, quand le texte islandais diffère du texte originale, la certitude se dissipe.’

6 ‘- notion traditionnelle, conçue pendant longtemps, et aujourd’hui encore, d’une façon, newtonienne-’

the *œuvre*' (1966: 64).⁷ To some extent, this defensive posture is still necessary. The relatively recent concept of private ownership in the form of copyright (Barthes 1984: 74 dates it from the time of the Revolution) has established a strict protocol linking the author's name to the text. This is a major feature of academic writing, including translation, in the second half of the 20th century. As a result, most translators today have had training in an academic atmosphere which is zealously fundamentalist in its regard for textual authority. In such an atmosphere, a non-filiatory analysis of a prominent medieval text and its translation may at first be counter-intuitive.

However, as we have seen, particularly in chapter 3, aspects of the non-filiatory viewpoint are certainly pertinent to the traditional methodology. When dealing with (for example) transmission of poetic formulae, the traditional methodology must accept that the *processes* (if that is the right word) which identify the poetic formulae in the corpus are always independent of actual historical seniority. Historical seniority can, of course, throw essential light on the epistemology of forms; but a theory of textual transmission is useless if it allows concepts of textual authority to prescribe its understanding of functional textuality, its examination of textual meaning. Individual readers or audiences do not necessarily experience the texts in the texts' chronological order, or in the same sequence as each other, and no particular sequence (such as that of the authors and scribes) can be said to dominate without a rigorous definition of the type of reading chosen for analysis.

Of course, where there is the assumption that the text being read is a translation providing access to another (unreadable, alien) text, this will be enough to establish filiation. But the question still arises as to which reader, which text, is the alien at any one time. Readings in both directions, as it were, necessarily exist: while Icelandic readers of *Bjólfskviða* will see the OE text as the alien one, there are a good number of scholars reared on *Béowulf* for whom the alien text will be the Icelandic one. Sometimes of course both texts are equally alien: consider for instance *Linear A* and *Linear B*, or for that matter *Béowulf* and *Bjólfskviða* as far as most people are concerned.

In this analysis, the reading is of both texts together, and we need to be able to characterize reflective relationships without having to rely on a filiation framework. It will in any event not be feasible to continue the present discussion without attempting as far as is possible to dispense with the arrow of intertextual movement which I have been using as a heuristic until now.

⁷ 'Le critique ne peut prétendre « traduire » l'œuvre, notamment en plus claire, car il n'y a rien de plus clair que l'œuvre.'

6.3 Interference (reprise)

Arborescence and the rhizome, derivation and indexed independence, filiation and non-filiation: I propose to treat these apparently complementary approaches in terms of simple and implicate interference discussed in section 4.5.1. They are not in fact complementary, since in each case the one is subsumed by the other. There is room for arborescent *ad-hoc* hierarchies in the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari 1980:31), but not vice-versa; aspects of independent modularity can be articulated as derivations, but not vice-versa (Jackendoff); filiation sits comfortably as a subset of non-filiatory intertextuality (see the previous section), but not vice-versa. In the same way there are aspects of simple interference which can be diagnosed as critical misbalances in the relative strengths of interacting fields of implicate interference; but the converse does not hold: the concept of implicate interference, with its insistence on a third field, cannot be defined in terms of simple interference.

I shall attempt, therefore, to couch the discussion as far as possible in terms of implicate interference. We will regard the two texts concerned, whether peer texts in a loosely-defined corpus or peer texts in a well-defined chain of textual transmission, as two fields of data which are both positioned in the same conceptual space so that they interact there with each other.

6.3.1 Quantum and moiré

We can begin with the observation that the patterns of superimposed relationships discussed in the previous chapter—shown graphically in 5\58—are best described in terms of implicate interference. In chapter 3 I used the term *quantum* to refer to any textual string which has the potential to interact with another string (usually but not necessarily in another text) to produce an interference phenomenon. Quanta are not intertextualities, but can be activated to produce intertextualities.

At this point I must ask readers who are sensitive to mixed metaphors to bear with me for a while; in speaking in the same breath of *strings of text* and *fields of interference* I am straddling the line between the concepts of reflection and interference, and to some extent I shall have to go on doing this. The interdependent intertextual and intratextual arenas of non-directionality discussed in 6.1 call for *fields* of implicate interference; but when discussing the quanta which constitute these fields we see *strings* of text. Perhaps I can mollify sensitive readers by suggesting that the strings are laid out as furrows in the field, hoping thus to stave off criticism until catachresis sets in.⁸

⁸ Catachresis, the sediment of fossilised metaphor (and etymology) out of which language grows (cf. Lock 1998:334), necessarily tolerates mixed metaphor. But my metaphor is not so mixed: by adding *furrows* to *strings* I am following established practice. The *text* is a woven *textile*, and like the weft it

At any event, in the following discussion we shall need a term for the interference phenomenon itself, the discrete intertextuality. When single quanta such as *behton* \approx *pöndum* interact in 5\58 a small *quantifiable* component of the larger pattern of interference is activated, and we have been referring rather loosely to this small component by using terms such as ‘feature’, ‘correspondence’ or ‘intertextuality’; clearly this terminology needs to be tightened up. The term I shall use in this study will be *moiré*, a term borrowed from mathematics, where it refers to the distinctive new pattern (typically visual) which occurs when patterns of related frequencies interact. This is the effect which can be seen when fishing-nets lie one over another, or when certain types of ‘fish-tail’ interference appear on television screens.⁹ I shall modify standard usage a little and treat *moiré* as a countable noun, so that we can speak of one or more single *moirés*: thus the two quanta *behton* and *pöndum* interact to form a *moiré*, and this *moiré* is symbolized by the wavy parity sign in our formulation: *behton* \approx *pöndum*. It is important to bear in mind that the two formulations *behton* \approx *pöndum* and *pöndum* \approx *behton* describe the same *moiré*: the *moiré* itself is symbolized as \approx .

The simple interference pattern for line 513 drawn up in 5\58 above (p. 181) is a crude representation of some of the implicate *moirés* involved. In spite of its crudeness, however, it achieves a statement of the interference patterns which not only dispenses with the sequential nature of the textual relationships (the filiation aspect), but also transcends the sequential nature—the linearity—of the texts themselves: note firstly that there is no indication of directional movement in the connecting lines, and secondly that the cross-patterns of the *moirés* break up the linear textual sequence. As we shall now go on to see, both these linear features, filiation and linear textual sequence, must be ignored if a rigorous codification of the interference pattern is to be achieved.

6.3.2 Plots

I shall use the term *plot* to mean a single statement of the components of a field of interference (i.e. the individual *moirés*) at any one ‘place’ in the field—

can be woven *boustrophedon*, turning as the ox and cart turn and traverse the field back and forth. And so *furrows* is an apt image, for when pulling the plough the ox does *not* work *boustrophedon*, but works around the field, laying each furrow in the same direction like the lines of the modern text. The lines of a text are successive arcs of the ploughed field; only because of the vastness of language do we not see the orbital curve.

⁹ The word *moiré*, meaning ‘watered’ (of silk), i.e. ‘with a wavy, lustrous finish,’ came to be used during the second half of the 20th century to mean “the wavy or geometrical pattern of light and dark stripes (‘fringes’) that is observed when one pattern of lines, dots, etc., is visually superimposed on another similar pattern, or on an identical one that is slightly out of alignment with the first” (*OED* under *moiré*). According to the *OED* the word is the French pp. of the verb *moirer*, a back-formation from *moire*, an adaption from English *mohair*, which is itself a typically interpretive coherent non-sys adaption from Arabic *muhayyar*, ‘cloth of goats’ hair’.

the term *plot* extends the metaphor of *field* (cf the discussion in 6.7.4 below on *fields* and *spaces*). The aim is to formulate a codification which is not dependent on linear textual sequence, although as a first approximation we will have to limit ourselves to a linear or quasi-linear notation which tends to privilege one of the texts against the other. It is clear, for instance, that the concept of *displacement* as we have been using it is an artefact of this imperfect codification, in that it quantifies the relative left-to-right positions of the two texts. Thus the moirés in 5\58 are represented in a primitive way by the lines linking the quanta, and displacements are shown by the slant of the lines. The term *place* in the first sentence of this section is also problematic, since a field of interference is not dimensioned in the same linear fashion as a text. However in order to draw up the plots we are subject to this linear constraint, not only in our sequential reading of the texts but also in that we move inexorably *from* one text *to* the other. As we shall see our initial physical representation of the plots will necessarily take a sequential form dictated by one of the texts rather than the other. In the closely corresponding texts of this analysis, *Béowulf* and *Bjólfskviða*, the resulting bias will be small enough to be ignored for the moment; as the discussion progresses we shall see how we shall eventually deal with it (section 6.5.1).

The fields of interference crudely represented by 6\1, showing segmental (phonological-graphological) moirés such $h \approx h$ and $ea \approx a$, are very different in scale from the fields such as 5\58 discussed in chapter 5, where the plots correspond to full lexical items. This question of scale will be taken up again in section 6.7 below, where it will be seen in terms of resolution; for the moment it will be sufficient to note that the terms *high resolution* will be applied to the segmental scale and *normal resolution* to the lexical scale.

In the following discussion I shall use the term *p-moiré* for any of the different types of formal echoic reflection discussed in chapter 5; later (6.6) I shall distinguish between different types of p-moiré in the analysis.

6.4 Notation

This section will introduce a notation for implicate interference analysis of closely corresponding texts; this is the notation used in the analysis in Appendix A. The reader may find it helpful to refer from time to time to this text (pages 261-273) to see the notation ‘in action’.

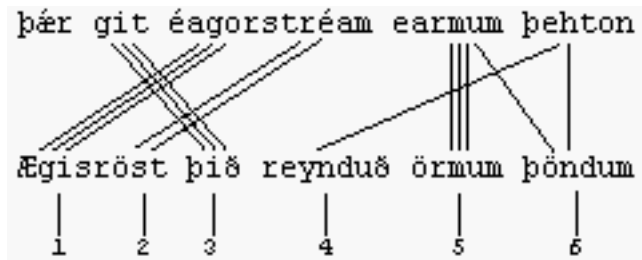
The first stage of the analysis is to enter the plots into the text in a normal word-processing environment. The format of the analysis is determined by two main considerations: it must be both intuitively sound, so that it makes sense to the analyst and later readers; and rigorously unambiguous, so that it can be read by the program (referred to here as ‘the Profiler’) which will compute the

profiles.

6.4.1 Plot positioning

The notation consists of a series of plots, one for each moiré detected at the scale of the lexical item. In general, this means making a plot at every quantum (represented by a lexical item) in one of the texts which reacts with a quantum in the other text. For the moment, we shall ignore the problem of lexical items such as *þær* in 5\58 which do not show correspondence. Here is 5\58 again, with plots labelled 1-6:

6\3



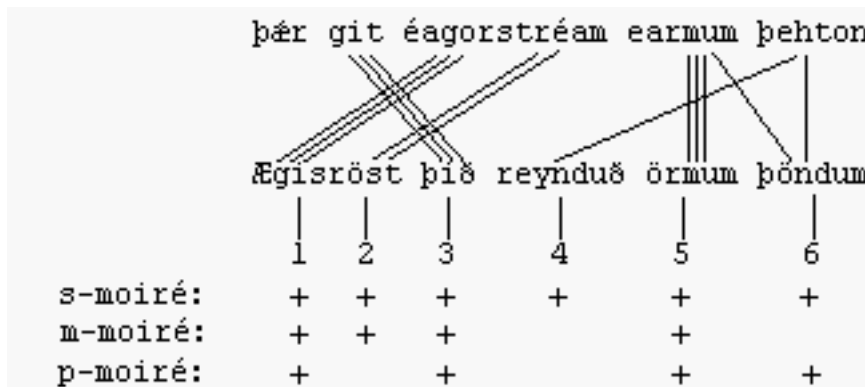
Note the following:

- 1 and 2: the string *éagorstréam* 'sea-currents' contains quanta forming moirés with quanta in *Ægiströst* 'the sea-god Ægir's turbulent waters'. However that strings forming the quanta do not correlate: the *s* at the beginning of *stréam* 'current' forms a p-moiré with the genitive *s* in *Ægis*, but remains with *stréam* to form the m- and s-moirés with the quantum *röst* 'troubled water' (and in fact, as we shall see in 6\12, to form another p-moiré with *straum* in the next line).
- 4 and 6: the two quanta *reynduð* and *þöndum* both form moirés with *þehton*. Number 4, *þehton* \approx *reynduð*, is an s-moiré, and number 6, *þehton* \approx *þöndum*, a p-moiré; the string *þehton* represents two quanta.
- 5: *earmum* \approx *örmum* 'arms (dative plural)' is a threefold p-, m-, and s-moiré. However *þöndum* 'outstretched' constitutes two quanta, since it is a dative plural adjective attached to *örmum* and thus also forms an s-moiré with *earmum*.

6.4.2 Plotting of s-, m- and p-moirés

Each plot records the existence or non-existence of p-, m- and s- moirés at normal resolution. Here is the same passage with active moirés marked with + :

6\4



We are now in a position to detail the types of moiré concerned. We could for instance report the plots in 6\4 as follows:

6\5 1 2 3 4 5 6
 smp sm smp s smp sp

(I shall use the symbol \underline{p} for all types of p-moiré for the moment; in section 6.6 we shall distinguish between different types.) Note that the three moirés, \underline{s} \underline{m} and \underline{p} , are independent of each other and are not intrinsically ordered. For consistency, however, I shall retain the order used in 6\5: smp.

6.4.3 Displacement notation

This section introduces notation conventions for displacement, using the criterion of the linear organization of the texts. This criterion will serve until we examine ways to dissolve this linearity (6.5).

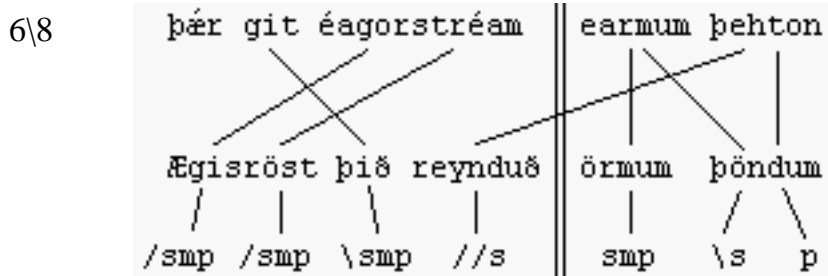
The texts of *Béowulf* \approx *Bjólfskviða* are conveniently divided by the metre into half-lines, which suggests the following displacement values:

- 6\6 zero: both quanta of the moiré occupy the same positions in their respective texts
 1: displacement within the same half-line
 2: displacement by adjacent half-lines
 3: displacement with one intervening half-line
 etc.

These displacement values are shown in the plot by using slashes; no slash means zero displacement, one slash means displacement by one, etc. The slashes give the displacement value for all *following* terms in the plot:

6\7	/sp	s and p are displaced by one; no m-moiré
	//sm	s and m are displaced by two; no p-moiré
	s/mp	s has zero displacement, m & p are displaced by one (composite plot)
	sm///p	s and m have zero displacement, p is displaced by three (composite plot)
	smp	all three moiré are present with zero displacement
	etc.	

Unmarked terms are zero-displaced. For reasons to be discussed shortly (section 6.5.1), composite plots are read by the Profiler as two plots. There are two reasons for the use of slashes instead of numerals: firstly, we have another rôle for numerals (see section 6.6.3 below), and secondly slashes can be used to show the *direction* of displacement. Thus / indicates displacement from the right, and \ displacement from the left. This has no significance for the analysis, serving only to reinforce the linear time constraint, but is useful for analysts and readers checking the plots and is used by the Profiler to check displacement closure (see the comment following 6\14 on p. 196). Returning to our test passage, we now have the following. The double vertical line shows the caesura, or half-line division:



The two plots below *þöndum* could also be written as a single composite plot, $p\backslash s$, in accordance with 6\7.

Note that this formulation is still strongly filiatory: we are notating the interference pattern through the medium of the lower (derived) text, resulting for instance in the invisibility of the unattached *þær* in the upper text. We must clear up a few points before we can deal with this problem.

6.5 Running analysis and profile analysis

We have seen how a group of segmental moirés such as that in 6\1 can be more meaningfully (and more economically) expressed at normal resolution as a p-moiré. The important point here is that a p-moiré is a statistical profile which does not express the linear sequence of string of segmental moirés such as that in 6\1: it has become free from the linear time constraint for that stretch of text. The

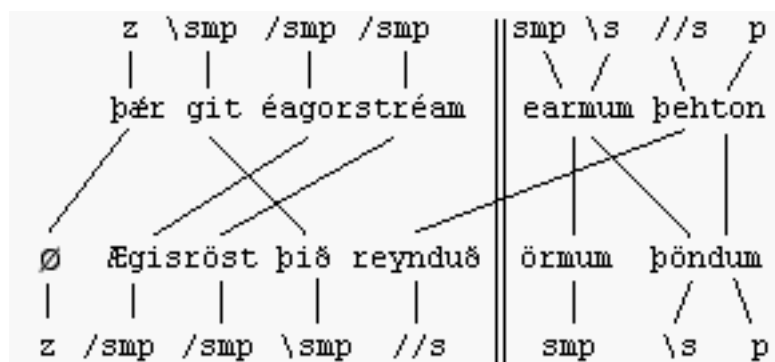
same technique can of course be applied to any length of string, and if this is done correctly, we find that it also frees us from the filiation constraint of analysing the moiré as linear progressions between the texts. This should become clear shortly.

I shall use the term *running analysis* to refer to the sequence of plots made in parallel with the texts, and *profile analysis* to refer to the computation done by the Profiler (the computer program) on the running analysis. For the moment we shall consider the effects of computing a statistical profile for the string of plots in a single line of text, in order to free us from the linear time constraint of that line. Later we shall make computations on strings of greater lengths, and ultimately of the whole text of *Breca*. Such a computation however is an extremely low-resolution profile; there is of course a trade-off between non-linearity and detail. Computations made by the Profiler on the text of *Breca* are given in Appendix B.

6.5.1 Filiation, parallax and displacement closure

As we have seen, there are strong currents of filiation still active in 6\8: we are using the structure of the lower text to build up the plot notation. Let us see what happens if we add a running analysis to the upper line of 6\8, the *Béowulf* line:

6\9



Note firstly that we now have to account for the stray *þær* in the upper line, and the symbol *z* ('zero') is used to indicate that it fails to form a moiré with the lower line. In order to avoid an unequal number of plots in the two lines we introduce a dummy (\emptyset) into the lower line to register the failure there and allow us to mark the plot also as *z* in the lower line. (This solution will cause problems, as we shall see in section 6.5.2.)

The second point to notice is that three double plots now occur: on *earnum* and *þehton* in the upper line, and *þöndum* in the lower line. These are now the domains each of two quanta. (In the complete running analysis of *Breca* in Appendix A they are written as composite plots in accordance with 6\7:

smp\s, p//s and p\s; they can then more easily be written in alignment with the text. In computing the plots of the running analysis to give a profile analysis, any plot with a change of displacement within it is counted by the Profiler as two plots.)

The discrepancies between the upper and lower lines of running analysis bring us back to the question of filiation. We are looking for an intermediate interference pattern, but instead we have two patterns. Clearly some sort of a synthesis between the two is necessary. The situation is in many ways similar to that of optical parallax, the left and the right eye seeing pictures differentiated by small differences in left-to-right sequence which the brain synthesizes into one picture. It makes sense therefore to retain our metaphor of visual interference patterns and adopt the optical term **parallax** to refer to the problem of reading two running analyses as if they were one.

We have already taken some steps towards achieving this synthesis: moiré failures are marked in both lines and composite plots are read as multiple plots. This ensures that the number of plots in both lines will be the same, and that a computation of average values for the line will be the same for both upper and lower lines. We shall refer to this as **profile equivalence**:

6\10 *Non-identical stretches of running analysis differentiated by parallax are said to have profile equivalence if they compute to the same profile analysis.*

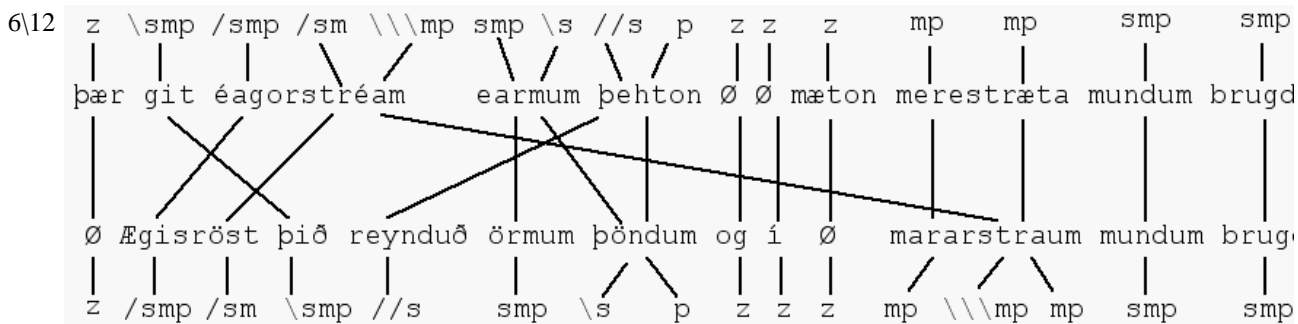
In 6\9 there are eight plots per line. For the moment, we shall express the profile in simple percentage values. This gives us the following values:

6\11	s	6/8.....	75%
	m.....	4/8.....	50%
	p.....	5/8.....	62.5%
	z.....	1/8.....	12.5%

This means that any parallax caused by the intrinsic filiation bias in the running analysis is cancelled out in a profile analysis such as that in 6\11, and we need only plot the moirés for (say) the lower line. It also becomes clear that the *direction* of displacement, / or \, is an artefact of the format; if we reverse the lines so that *Bjólfskviða* is written above *Béowulf* the only change will be that / will be written \, and vice-versa. In practice, the computation ignores the distinction (but see the note following 6\14 in this subsection, and also 6.8.1).

We should note that profile equivalence will not hold if there is displacement in the string concerned which is greater than the length of the

string. Thus I have ignored so far the fact that *stréam* in 6\9 forms a pm-moiré with *straum* in the next line (compare 5\47), so that displacement obtains over two lines, and profile equivalence will not hold over the single line. It will, however, hold if the profile is computed for both lines together. To check this, we shall compute the values for both lines of 5\47:



We now have 16 plots, giving:

6\13	s	8/16	50%
	m	9/16	56%
	p	9/16	56%
	z	4/16	25%

The greater the span of displacement, then, the longer the string of plots needed to ensure profile equivalence of upper and lower running analyses. We can express this by invoking a **displacement closure** requirement:

6\14 Displacement closure *occurs when the string of running analysis is long enough to achieve profile equivalence.*

A computation of the profile analysis must thus keep track of the maximum value for displacement (number of slashes) encountered in each computation. The direction of slant of the slashes is therefore important to the the program used in the Appendices: back-slashes are checked for their distance from the beginning of the string, and forward-slashes for their distance from the end of the string.

6.5.2 Textual alignment and the computation of the profile

We have introduced intra- and inter-textual non-directionality into the analysis by assuming back-and-forth displacement and allowing single quanta to support multiple moirés. But there is a price to pay. As we break up the linear dimension of the texts so too we begin to lose the ability to align the texts

against each other. Two aspects of this problem immediately present themselves. Firstly, if it transpires that the three types, *s*, *m* and *p*, have unequal tendencies to double up on quanta, this will effect the relative percentages. Secondly, the expedient of assuming a non-existent quantum \emptyset in one text for every *z* in the other effectively doubles the number of zero moirés as against other values, which need quanta in both texts; the value 25% for *z* in 6\13 is thus far too high. Two solutions suggest themselves.

6.5.2.1 Mean line profile

The first is to ignore moiré failure entirely on the grounds that we are only interested in interference, not its lack. Instead of formulating the profile in terms of total plot-count we could report active moiré levels against some other spatial features against which we can align the texts. Syntactical features such as clause or sentence are far too variable to be of use, and lower-resolution features such as chapters or sections will suffer from the trade-off of detail mentioned in section 6.5. For our purposes, however, we have an admirable metrical feature upon which the two texts are in alignment throughout: the verse line. The Profiler would then report the average occurrence per line (or group of lines) of the moiré types, and values for any one type would not skew the percentages for others. Note however that this would introduce filiatory parallax where displacement closure (6\14) exceeded the line (or group of lines), as it does in 6\12 (*stréam* 314 \approx *straum* 315). The combined figures for both these lines are :

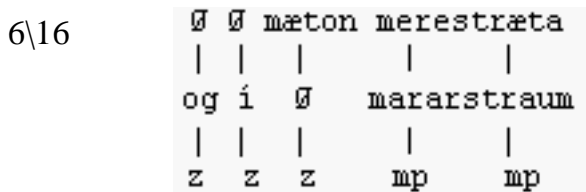
6\15	average per line
<i>s</i>.....8.....	4
<i>m</i>.....9.....	4.5
<i>p</i>.....9.....	4.5

These figures are divided by the number of lines in the profile, here 2, to give 4, 4.5 and 4. This is the procedure followed in the profiles in Appendix B. Further adjustments could be made, for instance by adjusting the values for each line or each profile proportionally according to its deviation from the average length (standard deviation); this might be a feasible strategy in texts where the textual feature chosen for profile-length was highly variable.

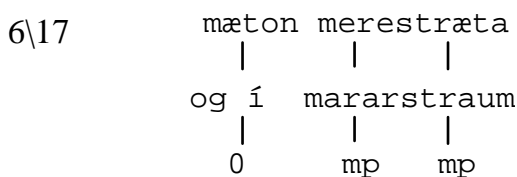
6.5.2.2 Mean plot profile

The second solution assumes it would be sufficient to eliminate the bias in the figures for moiré failure; this could be done on a rather *ad hoc* basis by pairing off contiguous non-active quanta (i.e. quanta which do not form a moiré) in one text against contiguous non-active quanta in the other text. The relevant

plots in 6\12 are, recall:

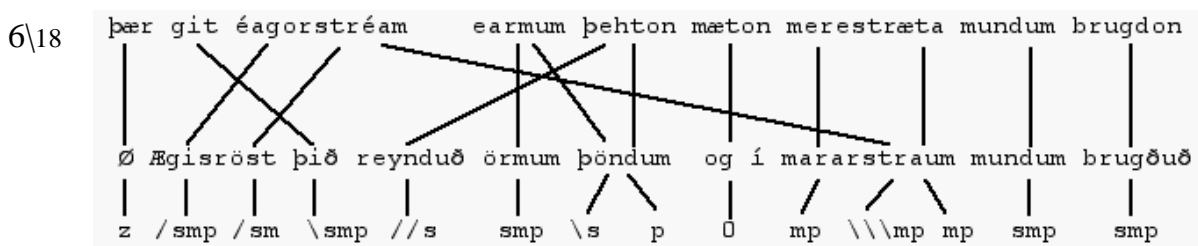


This protocol would allow us to record a zero-valued moiré, which we would write as 0:



This would be roughly equivalent to halving the number of zero moirés, although it would not affect the status of the z-quantum *bær* at the beginning of 6\12, which has no corresponding z in the other text.

Incorporating these changes into 6\12, we have:



Note that zero p-interference in the plot is normally shown by omitting p (or whatever term is being used for p ; see 6.6). Thus *stréam* ≈ *röst* and *þehton* ≈ *reynduð* also have zero p-interference. With *mæt* ≈ *og i*, however, no other term occurs, so that 0 is necessary to register the occurrence of the plot. The number of 0's in (6\18) is therefore 4, written /sm, //s, /s and 0.

We can now recalculate the figures from 6\13, which will have changed since the plot total is now 14 instead of 16. The question arises as to whether we should retain a distinction between z for moiré failure (i.e. assuming ∅ in one of the texts) and 0 for zero reflection without s or m. Empyirical reasons for retaining this distinction can be seen in the displacement figures for z and 0 given in table B\1, column 5, in Appendix B (see page 277), where z always shows zero displacement. The figures for 6\18 (cf. 6\13) are thus:

6\19

s	.....	8/14	.....	57%
m	.....	9/14	.....	64%

p	..... 9/14.....	64%
o	..... 4/14.....	29%
z	..... 1/14.....	7%

Note that $p + o + z \approx 100\%$.

This solution, which I shall refer to as **mean plot profile**, is the one adopted in this study. The reason for this choice is that a running analysis written with a mean plot profile in mind is the ‘fail safe’ option, since it will also serve for the computation of a line-average profile; a program can be written which will produce both types of profile as needed (see Appendix B). In the present texts, with high degrees of correspondence in all three s-m-p-moiré types, it will be advisable to leave this choice open; but if the analysis were applied to less closely corresponding texts it would be doubtless practical to opt for a mean line profile (assuming that some corresponding unit of both texts, such as the verse line, can be found) and leave stretches of moiré failure unmarked in the running analysis.

In the profiles computed in Appendix B both mean-line and mean-plot values are given.

6.5.3 Computing displacement in the profile

The question now arises as to how displacement, that essentially filiatory concept, can be represented in the non-filiatory profile. We have seen how profile equivalence applies to each type of moiré, s m or p, over a range of plots, and that this includes values for displacement. The profile algorithm can also therefore compute average displacement values from either line of the running analysis by totting up values for displacement and dividing them by the total number of the type of moiré concerned. Note that the figures will be the same for a mean line analysis as for a mean plot analysis, since the count for each displaced plot will be the same in either case. Here are the figures from 6\15 and 6\19 with mean displacement values added:

6\20	mean line profile from 6\15	mean plot profile from 6\19	number of occurrences	total displacement	mean displacement
s	4.0	59%	8	6	0.75
m	4.5	64%	9	6	0.67
p	4.5	64%	9	5	0.56

6.5.4 Displacement with word-alignment and metre-alignment

In tackling the problems of displacement we are in fact looking for ways of

‘aligning’ the two texts; at the same time we are attempting a non-linear statement of their interaction. Two methods of alignment seem to present themselves: we can rely on textual length based on word-count, or we can align some equivalent periodic feature of both texts such as metre. In examples such as 6\18 above I have used a rough word-count, so that *éagorstréam* and *Ægisröst* are displaced by the fact that two words precede *éagorstréam* while *Ægisröst* starts at the beginning of the line.

If we were to rely on metre for our alignment, however, we would get a different picture. In order to discuss this we must first understand the metrical characteristics of the two texts.

The OE text is composed in the so-called common Germanic alliterative metre, and Björnsson follows this metre closely in her translation. Each line is divided by a caesura¹⁰ into two half-lines both of which have two strongly stressed syllables, usually known as *lifts*, and a variable number of other syllables with lesser degrees of stress, including unstressed syllables. The third lift—the first lift of the second half line—is the main lift or ‘head-stave’ which establishes the alliteration for the line. Either or both of the first two lifts alliterate with the head stave, while the fourth or final lift never alliterates, thus marking the end of the alliterative sequence. This can be shown by the formula:

6\21 x 1 x 2 x | x 3 x 4 x

where

- 1,2,3 and 4 are the lifts;
- either or both 1 and 2 alliterate with 3;
- 3 is the main alliterative lift or ‘head-stave’;¹¹
- 4 does not alliterate;
- x represents zero or more syllables which may be lesser stresses (‘half-lifts’) or unstressed syllables;
- | is the caesura.

This basic pattern survived in England until the fifteenth century. It occurs in essentially the same form in Old Icelandic *Eddic* poetry;¹² later it acquired

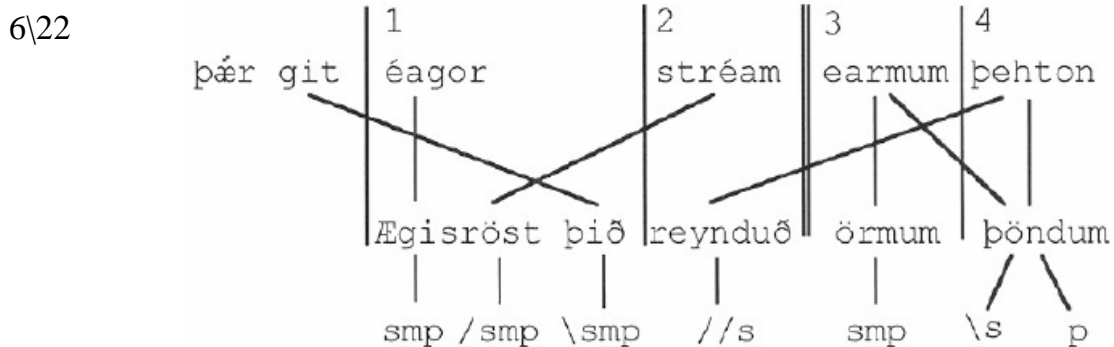
¹⁰ Traditionally Old English texts are now printed in this way with the caesura shown by an increased space, while editions of Old Icelandic alliterative texts treat the long line as two lines. (This distinction is of course not made in the manuscripts, in which poetry is written continuously as prose.) In the typescript of her translation Björnsson breaks the Icelandic tradition, typing long lines and showing the caesura with a space.

¹¹ The Icelandic term is *höfuðstafur*, ‘head-stave’; the corresponding Old English term has not survived.

¹² Modern editors usually print OE poetry in long lines composed of two hemistiches with the caesura marked by a gap; Icelandic poetry is usually printed in two lines. Needless to say this distinction is

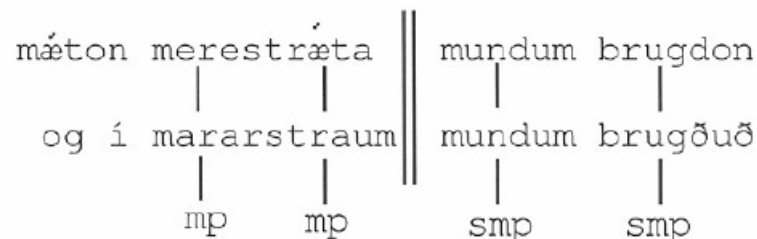
stricter rhythmical constraints and as such remained the ruling poetic form in Iceland until the middle of the 20th century. Something of the resilience and flexibility of this metre can be seen from the fact that it survived radical quantitative changes in syllabic structure in both English and Icelandic. This means that although medieval Icelandic alliterative metre is experienced by Icelandic speakers today in a somewhat different way from that of medieval Icelanders, it retains a strict, well-defined structure, which Björnsson would instinctively apply to her reading of the OE text. She is also able to use the same metre in her translation, allowing close lexical and phrasal correspondence between corresponding half-lines of the original and the translation. The question of formal alliterative correspondence between the OE and Icelandic texts is further discussed in section 6.7.5.

If we redefine the alignment of the first line of our test-passage with reference to the alliterative metre we will find a very different displacement pattern. In 6\22 below the alliterative staves are labelled by number according to 6\21—note that only 1 alliterates with 3 (for translation, refer to 5\47 on page 175):



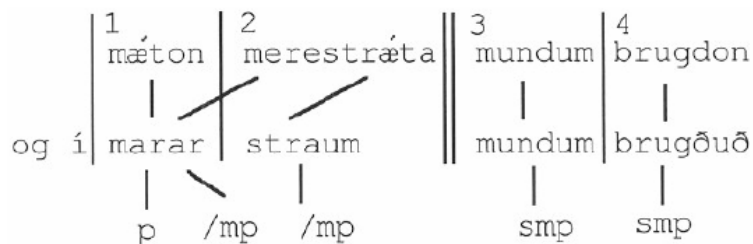
Although in many ways an attractive solution, this often produces counter-intuitive results. Compare for example the second line of 6\18 aligned by word and by metre:

6\23(a) by word:



not made in the manuscripts, in which poetry is written continuously as prose. In the typescript of her translation Björnsson breaks the Icelandic tradition, typing long lines.

6\23(b) by metre:



Interestingly, the metrical alignment of 6\23(b) creates an additional p-moiré, with the alliterative *m* of *máeton* \approx *marar* (see 5.2.1.3 on minimal non-systematic reflection) which is too weak to survive the displacement between *máeton* and *marar* in 6\23(a). However, 6\23(a) seems to me the more natural and convincing alignment. Note that although Icelandic metrical intuition would favour 6\23(b) for the scansion of the OE line, with the first two lifts on *máeton* and *mere-*, the implied scansion of the OE line in 6\23(a) is also plausible, with the lifts on *mere-* and *stráeta*, and the first lift, *máeton*, demoted to the anacrusis status of the Icelandic *og í*. This at least is the most obvious readerly analysis: the Icelandic quantum *mararstraum*, which obligatorily bears both the first two stresses in its line, strikes up too strong a p-moiré with the OE *merestráeta* to make any displacement a viable option in the analysis.

This is of course how our reading is grounded: we can invoke *the most obvious readerly analysis* whether or not we might expect an Old English reader to agree. I shall therefore stay with word-alignment in this study.

6.6 Notation of p-moiré types.

Recall that ‘p-reflection’ is a cover term referring to the various types of echoic reflection discussed in chapter 5. Henceforth, instead of writing p in the plot, we shall classify the p-reflection types as we did in chapter 5, using a different symbol for each type. The following table summarizes the reflective types described in chapter 5, giving the term which replaces p in the plots.

6\24	systematic:	
	a-sys—1st-degree systematic shift.....	a
	b-sys—2nd-degree systematic shift.....	b
	c-sys—3rd-degree (paradigmatic) sys shift	c
	non-systematic: coherent	
	full profile	5
	partial profile.....	3
	minimal profile.....	1
	non-systematic: non-coherent	
	disjunction	j1–5
	discontinuity.....	k1–5
	transposition (metathesis)	x1–5
	cover-term for non-sys non-coh.....	q1–5
	zero moiré	0
	moiré failure	z

The following sections discuss this notation in more detail.

6.6.1 Notation of systematic moirés

The use of a, b and c for a-sys, b-sys and c-sys p-moirés is self-explanatory, but the notation for non-systematic moirés needs some clarification.

6.6.2 Notation of non-systematic coherent moirés

Coherent moirés are assigned a value from 5 (full profile) to 1 (minimal profile). The score 5 is assigned if we encounter the distinctive full non-systematic profile (section 5.2.1.1). The score 1 is assigned if there is minimal profile, i.e. single-segment correspondence which catches the reader's eye (5.2.1.3; cf. 5.2.3). If we cannot immediately decide whether the profile is full or minimal, we will simply write 3 for partial profile. However we still have the option of 2 and 4 if we wish to show a further tendency.

Zero is not written, since zero p-moirés are indicated by their absence in the plot, in the same way as s- and m-moirés. However 0 is used to indicate an 'empty' plot where none of the three moirés, s, m or p, occurs. On the distinction between the zero moiré 0 and moiré failure, written z, see section 6.5.2 above.

6.6.3 Notation of non-systematic non-coherent moirés

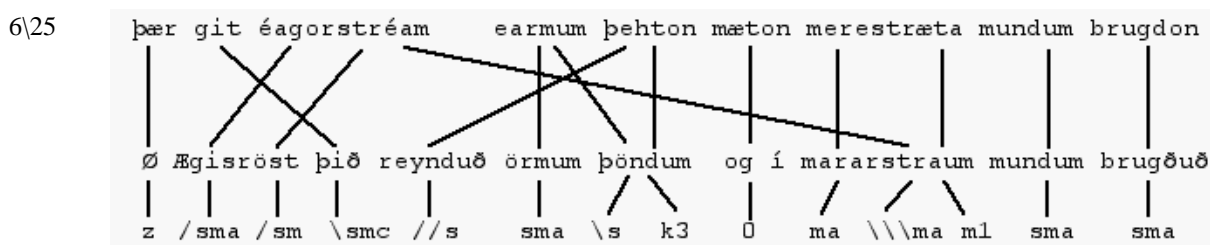
Non-coherent moirés are notated in the same way using 1–5, prefixed by a term k, j or x which labels their type (cf. 6\24). Thus k3 labels the partial discontinuous moiré *néah* 'near' ≈ *neðan* 'beneath' at line 564, and x5 is the full-

profile transposed moiré *hréo* ‘wild, course’ ≈ *háar* ‘high’ at 548 (see Appendix A). Minimal or single-segment non-coherent interference does not of course exist, since a single segment cannot be disjunctive, discontinuous or transposed.

As we saw in section 5.2.3 the distinction between these three types, disjunction, discontinuity and transposition, is not always clear, and the moiré is sometimes a mixture of two or all of them. In the analysis in Appendix A I use a fourth term, \mathfrak{q} , for use in uncertain cases; \mathfrak{q} is thus a cover-term for all non-sys non-coh interference, and to simplify read-outs the program used in Appendix B is set to read all four terms, \mathfrak{q} k j and x , as representing the same value, called \mathfrak{q} (see A.1.2.3).

6.6.4 Full profile

We can now write 6\18 with full notation of the p-moirés:



and we have reached the stage where we can make our first full computation of the profile of lines 513-514 of *Breca* (cf. 6\20):

6\26	mean line profile (cf. 6\15)	mean plot profile (cf. 6\19)	number of occurrences	total displacement	mean displacement
s	4.0	57%	8	6	0.75
m	4.5	64%	9	6	0.75
a	3.0	43%	6	4	0.67
c	0.5	7%	1	1	1
total sys	3.5	50%	7	5	0.71
coh	0.5	7%	1	0	0
ncoh	0.5	7%	1	0	0
total non-sys	1	14%	2	0	0
total p	4.5	64%	9	5	0.56
0		29%	4		
z		7%	1		

6.6.5 sys and non-sys weight

One final adjustment needs to be made to the figures for non-sys moirés (coh=coherent and ncoh=non-coherent), which make no distinction between relative weightings of the plots k_3 and m_1 in 6\25. The p-moiré *stráeta* \approx *straum* is minimally coherent (1), while *pehton* \approx *pöndum* is clearly stronger, a discontinuous partial profile (k_3). This could of course be expressed in the profile by adding together the strengths 1 and 3 and finding their average, and this method is adopted in Appendix B. But the question then arises as to why we do not demand a similar system for the sys moirés a b and c.

In several respects, however, sys and non-sys are incompatible. As we have seen, full-profile non-sys interference can be more distinct than a-sys (see for instance the discussion on 5\13 on p. 157), and a- and b-sys moirés are often equally reflective, while c-sys is an umbrella category which includes moirés which have no formal p-interference at all (see section 5.1.3). I have already discussed the qualitative incompatibility between systematic and non-systematic interference (see section 5.1.0), which indicates that it is not feasible to grade systematic reflection on a linear scale of strength using the distinction between a, b and c.

It would of course be possible to treat systematic interference as a subset of non-systematic interference, and assign a-, b- and c-interference the same secondary status within p-interference as the various types of coherent and non-coherent interference (see 6\24). Systematic moirés would then receive the same 1-5 weighting as the non-systematic moirés; a-sys moiré would by definition be a_5 (in accordance with 5\11), and b-sys would converge on b_3 while varying according to the amount of secondary cognate shift. But there would be both technical and theoretical difficulties in this approach. We have seen that non-sys interference is sometimes stronger than a-sys (compare *yða* \approx *unnir* \approx *æða* in 5\13 and 5\14): this implies that a-sys moirés should sometimes be classified as a_3 or even lower. But this would invalidate the rules of segmental cognation to define systematicity in 5\11, which assume that rules such as *éa* \approx *au* (*bread* \approx *brauð* ‘bread’, *fréas* \approx *fraus* ‘froze’), with a small amount of vowel-shift, are intrinsically no different from *nn* \approx *ð* (*unnir* \approx *yða* ‘waves’), where the consonant shift is much more distinctive.¹³ We would also run into difficulties with c-sys, which as we have seen can have zero segmental interference, but is classed as systematic on paradigmatic grounds (cf. *and* \approx *og* in 5\7).

I have not resolved this methodological question in the analysis presented in Appendix B, but instead kept the options open. Both sys and non-sys moirés

¹³ Voicing (+voice) and articulatory position (dental) are unchanged; articulatory manner and length are both different (nasal/fricative, long/short).

are treated as having the same weight: the values given are calculated on raw rates of occurrence of sys, non-sys coherent and non-sys non-coherent, and a term 1 ranks equal with a term 5. For non-sys moirés however, extra information on average weight is given in the next column, from 1 to 5. The relevant values for coh and non-coh in 6\26 now read as follows:

6\27	mean plot profile	mean weight
coh	7%	1
noncoh(k)	7%	3
total nonsys	14%	2

We have now achieved a fully non-filiatory, non-directional analysis of this short stretch (lines 513-14) of the interference pattern. It is however a distinctly myopic analysis, seeing the material at a single level of resolution, which we have called normal-plot resolution. In the remaining sections of this chapter we shall see how we can integrate different levels of resolution (section 6.7), and how further details of the interference pattern can be characterized (section 6.8).

6.7 Resolution

In section 6.5 we saw that the single plot corresponds roughly to a string of text of the size of a single lexical item. This is not a precise formulation, however, since we are also dealing with non-coherent moirés which may ignore word-boundaries. We have also discussed segmental moirés, roughly corresponding to the size of phonemes or graphemes, and we shall soon need to go on to discuss longer strings corresponding to phrases and clauses.

In chapter 4 I discussed the problems that arise when linguistic structure is visualised in terms of hierarchic depth, and sided with the view that such hierarchies hinder interaction between different levels and force a modular and fragmented conception of language. I suggested that the principle of self-constitutive non-hierarchy (p. 132) *resolved* these problems by assuming equal status of all participating bodies: phonemes are ‘saturated’ by their words, words by syntax, syntax by semantics, semantics by phonemes, in reciprocating fields of interference. They also *resolve* each others’ existence; otherwise we would not be able to talk of phonemes and of semantics, or rather to distinguish between the two. But we do, to keep the discussion rolling.

In keeping with the optical metaphor which underpins much of the terminology in this study, I shall use this concept of *resolution*¹⁴ to manipulate

¹⁴ ‘Orig., the effect of an optical instrument in making the separate parts of an object (*esp.* the stars of a nebula) distinguishable by the eye. Now more widely, the act, process, or capability of rendering

the idea that it is possible to focus on a single moiré at a time, seeing nothing else, but acknowledging the invisible presence of larger or smaller, variously overlapping or displaced concomitant moirés that we would ‘see’ if our focus were different. The degree of resolution which enables us to ‘see’ the lexical-sized moirés is normal resolution, and the resolution which ‘sees’ the phonological-graphological segments is high resolution. Low resolution will be introduced in section 6.7.2. Any opacity between different components of the interference pattern is not therefore a feature of the field, but of our own myopia; we know that we are free to change our focus at any time and see more, or less.

An objection should be raised here. A few paragraphs above I invoked the concept of an ‘event horizon’ which delimited the field; now I appear to be evoking a concept of myopia which does not delimit the field. If there is such a thing as a (textual) horizon beyond which we cannot ‘see’, how does this tally with any myopia *within* the horizon? I think that what is happening here is that my optical metaphor is limiting the discussion, in spite of my calling the horizon an *event* horizon. I have argued that there are different degrees of resolution possible, with a significant flow of information between them. They interfere (implicately, of course) with each other, and are therefore *on the same level* (to use an arborescent term); they are necessarily within the same field, within the same horizon. In order to save the optical metaphor I might invoke the idea that we do not *see* the whole mountain at once: we have to go round it to see its various faces. But all its faces exists within the horizon of our text.

These then are our two modes of movement through the field: the serial, as Augustine sings his psalm; and the resolatory, as Augustine scans his memory, focusing in and out. Normally speaking, we use both modes simultaneously. As we traverse the text in the serial mode our focus is continually changing, concentrating on a single word here, a clause there. This resolatory movement affects our serial progress, since any movement out from the field, any change to a lower resolution, extends our view both forward and backward. Resolatory movement is at the same time predictive and recapitulatory: our eyes flicker unevenly over the text, both far and near, not only in saccadic movement within the line but also in larger sweeping movements on the page, between the facing pages of the text and translation, from the page to the clock, to the coffee-pot. There is continual displacement: in the interference field of source and translation the two texts shift sideways relative to each other as our resolution changes. The act of focusing on a single displaced moiré neutralizes the displacement by shifting it to the periphery,

distinguishable the component parts of an object or closely adjacent optical or photographic images, or of separating measurements of similar magnitude of any quantity in space or time; also, the smallest quantity which is measurable by such a process.’ *OED, Resolution*, sense 2c.

giving equal and opposite displacement to all the surrounding moirés.

In the following sections I shall give examples of interference at high, normal, and low resolution. I shall then examine the interference patterns that occur when different degrees of resolution interact with each other: when, in fact, there are moirés of moirés. This will be referred to as *resolution phasing* (section 6.7.4).

6.7.1 High resolution

We have discussed the relationship between high and normal resolution, seeing that a statement of p-interference at normal resolution is essentially an abbreviation for the disposition of the high-resolution p-moirés. I shall not pursue the question of whether there are high-resolution analogues of m- and s-reflection, beyond what I have already said in 6.7, except to note that onomatopoeic aspects of semantics appear typically in the segments, and there are clear morpho-syntactic correlations with certain segments in related languages: in the languages of our texts, Old English and Icelandic, we could point to the appearance of dental segments in the past tense of ‘weak’ verbs, to vowel gradations in verbal morphology, to the typical presence of -r- in adjectival and pronominal genitive plurals, and a host of similar phenomena. These are background interference patterns which tend not to play dominant roles in Björnsson’s translation, perhaps due to their entrenched nature and their high levels of correlation in Icelandic and Old English; they are phenomena of the sort that Jakobson is referring to in his discussion of the interactivity of the first and second order of signs (see page 112).

6.7.2 Low resolution S-interference

Just as a change of focus between high and normal resolution presents us with different interference patterns, so we may expect similar effects if we step back further and focus on larger areas of text than the lexical unit. Here we find that the clearest patterns are associated with m- and s-interference. Low resolution p-interference is a different matter, and will be discussed later (section 6.7.5).

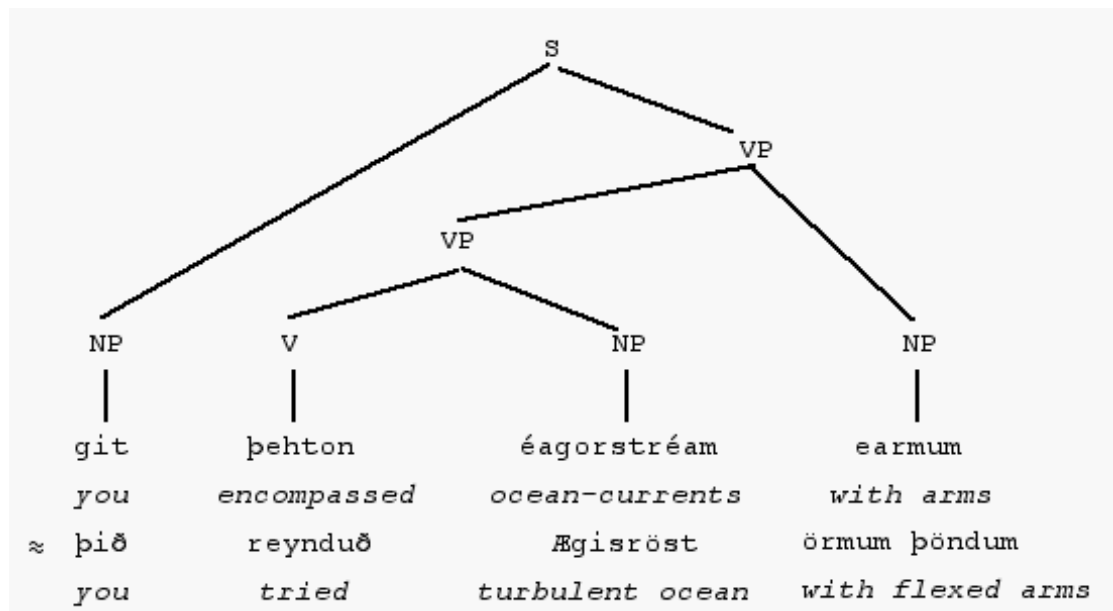
The essentially myopic character of normal-resolution s-reflection is evident in the fact that distinctive syntactic moirés often occur without *reinforcement* from their wider syntactic environment. For instance, the two genitives *Hóces* \approx *Haka* in 5\41 form an s-moiré, but the noun phrases in which they participate, *Hóces dohtor* \approx *Haka dóttur* ‘Hóc’s daughter’ are not syntactically equivalent: the OE *dohtor* ‘daughter’ is the nominative subject of its clause, while the Icelandic *dóttur* ‘daughter’ is the thematic dative subject.¹⁵

¹⁵ Not a genitive, although apparently possessive (‘the daughter’s heart’): Icelandic prefers a personal

The s-moiré *Hóces* \approx *Haka* does not appear at lower resolution. Where interference patterns are confined to a narrow degree of resolution, as in this example, I shall refer to them as *simple* moirés; where they survive the change, and remain in focus at lower resolution, I shall speak of *reinforced* moirés.

If we return to our test-passage as it appears in 6\9, we find that with the exception of the z-moiré *þær*, both texts have the same sentence-structure insofar as they have the same constituents, three NPs and a verb, although the order of these constituents is not the same. If we reorganize the word-order so that the same structural description can be applied to both strings, we can swallow our pride and apply a traditional generative tree-diagram to the sentence, mindful of Deleuze and Guattari's observation that nodes of arborescence are not excluded from the rhizome (Deleuze and Guattari 1980:31).¹⁶ This will show us that the larger syntactic patterns of the source and translation strings are congruent:

6\28



Thus we can say that the s-moiré *þehton* \approx *reynduð* is *reinforced* in that both quanta are 3rd person plural past-tense indicative verbs residing in syntactically corresponding sentences. The other s-moirés in 6\28, *git* \approx *þið*, *stream* \approx *röst* and *earmum* \approx *örpum*, are also reinforced.

As we have seen, however, full syntagmatic correspondence at sentence-level is not at all the rule, in spite of the closeness of Björnsson's translation. Here is a typical example of lack of full syntactic correspondence. The poet is relating the retainer Unferð's jealousy at Béowulf's glorious swimming exploit

dative for parts of the body.

¹⁶ Les rhizomes ont aussi leur propre despotisme ... -Il y a des nœuds d'arborescence dans les rhizomes, des poussées rhizomatiques dans les racines.

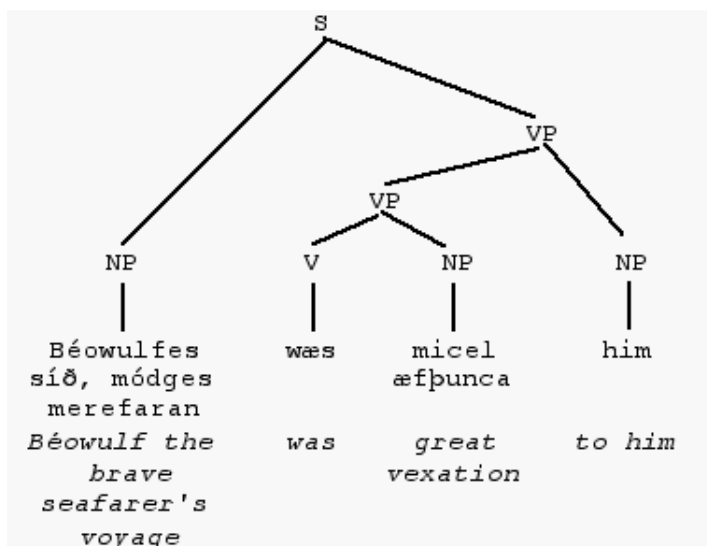
(501-502):

6\29 wæs him Béowulfes síð, móðges merefaran, micel æþunca
 ‘to him was Béowulf’s journey, the brave seafarer’s,
 great vexation’ (i.e. he was greatly vexed by Béowulf
 the brave seafarer’s journey)

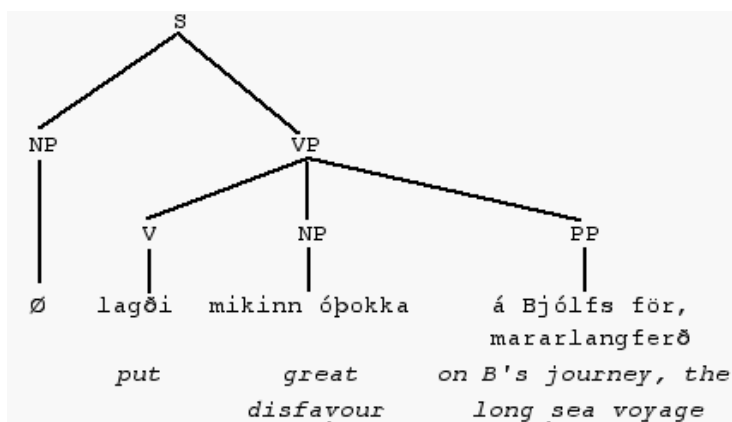
≈ lagði á Bjólfs för, mararlangferð, mikinn óþokka
 ‘[he] placed on Béowulf’s journey, the long sea voyage,
 great displeasure’

These two passages have quite different sentence-structures, in spite of their narrative correspondence. This can be seen in 6\30 and 6\31, where for ease of explication I have again re-arranged the word order.

6\30



6\31



Note that in spite of these different syntactic structures, there are clear s-moirés at normal resolution: *wæs* ≈ *lagði*, which both parse as the 3rd person singular

past-tense verbs, and *Béowulfes* \approx *Bjólf's*, which are both genitive singulars connected to the quanta *sið* and *för* ‘journey’. *Sið* and *för* form m-moirés but not s-moirés, since *sið* is the nominative head of a subject NP, and *för* is an accusative NP in a prepositional phrase.

I shall distinguish between s-interference at normal plot level, and the larger syntactic interference pattern detectable at lower resolution, by referring to the latter type as S-interference, using an upper-case S to indicate the parallelism with s-interference. Before discussing further the interaction between these two degrees of resolution (section 6.7.4) we shall examine the low-resolution analogue of m-interference.

6.7.3 Low resolution M-interference

Semantic interference is of course a far more elusive concept than syntactic, but for the sake of my argument I shall gloss over the problems of semantic equivalence at this point; any more detailed account of semantic structure would apply to both texts equally and would hardly disrupt the resolatory framework I am proposing. I shall therefore assume that for most of the time it will be possible to make a clear distinction between *equivalent* and *non-equivalent* quanta in our texts. To give some idea of the level of detail I propose we will say that any of the 28 core terms for *king* in *Béowulf* may form an m-moiré with any of the 32 terms for *king* in *Bjólf'skviða*,¹⁷ or may be a component in a noun phrases forming an m-moiré.

The low-resolution analogues of these m-interference patterns are the wider configurations of narrative apparent at clause- and sentence-level. For instance, the two passages in 6\29 are semantically—or more exactly *narratively*—equivalent, forming a single low-resolution moiré involving content or discourse. This pattern may be informally given as ‘Béowulf’s voyage vexed him (the courtier)’. I shall refer to this as *M-moiré*, using an upper-case M to indicate the parallelism with the m-moiré. That it is not identical with the string of m-moirés in the running analysis can be seen if we look at the moiré *móðges merefaran* ‘brave seafarer’s’ \approx *mararlangferð* ‘sea-long-journey’, where although *mere* \approx *marar* is an m-moiré there is no m-correspondence between *faran* ‘voyager’ and *ferð* ‘voyage’. (Note however the close p-interference between these correspondences, with the vowels of *mere* \approx *marar* (a-sys) and *faran* \approx *ferð* (b-sys) changing places.) Again, these two degrees of resolution, m- and M-interference, also react together, as we shall see in the next section.

¹⁷ This is a conservative count, based on the terms for *king* in *Béowulf* given by Fjalldal (1987:117-134). By ‘core term’ I mean the heads of their respective NPs; in both texts the concept *king* is more often than not rendered by a circumlocution or *kenning* which is either a compound (for example *gúðcyning* \approx *gunnkonungur* ‘war-king’, 119) or a noun phrase (*beaga brytta[n]* \approx *baugabýti[s]* ‘ring distributor’, 1487; Icelandic spelling convention writes the NP as a single word in this case).

6.7.4 Resolution phasing, surface texture

I have argued that there are different degrees of resolution possible within the same field, and that there is a significant flow of information between them in that they interfere with each other within the one field, within the one horizon. Thus there is only one level of the text, that which in ‘arborescent’ terms is called the ‘surface’ level, at which all interaction takes place, all communication between the hierarchic layers of the tree diagram, or all indexicality of parallel architecture. But, as we have seen, our inescapably metaphorical terminology often converges on the dominant linguistic paradigm: if we invoke the ‘surface’ level of text we cannot allow depth; if we invoke depth we see only layered surfaces. And yet we need a free range of dimensions if we are to see the text as an interference pattern. This is difficult, for we live and work on surfaces, pinned by gravity on two-dimensional planes; our experience of other dimensions is typically optical, and optical depth is merely a mental interpretation of dimensional data printed on surfaces—our two retinae, the flat mirror, the computer screen. Thus I have constantly used the term ‘field’ rather than ‘space’ when speaking of interference patterns: ‘space’ has both depth and time (under ‘space’ the *OED* gives the temporal senses priority) in which float the mathematical algorithms and directional vectors I wish to avoid. Thus when I suggest two different ‘layers’ of resolution coinciding so that a certain common pattern is ‘reinforced’ I am not invoke underlying abstractions, sisters and daughters, government and binding, but a common movement upon the same field, on the retinal surface which images Langland’s ‘fair field of folk’. ‘Retinal’ means ‘netted’; again we return to the moiré patterning of superimposed fishing-nets: although the nets are under- and over-lying there is no hierarchic depth to their positioning, and the resulting pattern occurs on the single surface, according to the degree of resolution we choose to apply.

Thus degrees of resolution move independently in and out of each other as the focus of the analysis—the resolution—changes. When we find, in spite of their independence, that the same pattern holds through changes of resolution, we see the moiré *reinforced*. What is in fact happening is that two interference patterns at different resolutions come into phase at this point, reinforcing the whole pattern. I shall call this *resolution phasing*.

Recall that 6\29 was a complete M-moiré, i.e. there was full discourse correspondence at sentence-level. Nevertheless there was a lack of phasing, for example at *merefaran* \approx *mararlangferð*, where *faran* \approx *ferð* is not an m-moiré. Where the translation is less close this is a common occurrence. In line 534 *Béowulf* claims he has greater stamina as a swimmer than any other man:

6\32 earfeþo on ýþum ðonne áenig óþer man

‘...toil in waves than any other man’
 ≈ við unnar erfiði tek ég öllum fram
 ‘at wave’s toil I excel everyone’

The second half of this line, *þonne éinig óðer man* ‘than any other man’ ≈ *tek ég öllum fram* ‘I excel everyone’ is a stretch of freer translation in that it forms part of an M-moiré but has no m-interference: none of the lexical items in themselves have semantic correspondence between the texts. Again, we can say that there is lack of phasing: the M-moiré is not supported at normal resolution.

Here is a similar example for S- and s-moirés (535-6):

6\33 Wit þæt gecwædon cnihtwesende | ond gebéotedon
 ‘This we said being boys, and vowed ...’
 ≈ Við það sögðum á sveinaaldri | og bundum heitum
 ‘This we said at boys’ age, and vowed’

where *cnihtwesende* ‘being boys’ ≈ *á sveinaaldri* ‘at boys’ age’ is not an s-moiré, although it is a part of the low-resolution S-moiré of the whole sentence.

The reverse situation, with s-moirés without support from lower-resolution S-interference is probably more common in *Béowulf* ≈ *Bjólfskviða*, since even in the close languages of Björnsson’s material, full syntactic correspondence is not easy to achieve for long although phonological correspondence continues. In the following, the young King Scyld is described as growing in stature:

6\34 wéox under wolcnum, weorðmyndum þáh
 ‘[he] grew under skies, received tokens of honour’
 ≈ Óx hróður hans und himinskautum
 ‘His fame grew under the quarters of the heavens’ (8)

The plot at *wéox* ≈ *óx* ‘grew’ would read sma: i.e. s since both words are 3rd person singular past verbs; m since they both mean ‘grew’; and a with the regular loss of Icelandic initial *v* (≈ OE *w*) before back vowels. However, although structurally equivalent as far as the verbal accident is concerned, the two verbs do not occur in syntactically equivalent sentences: the subject of OE *wéox* is King Scyld in an earlier line, while the subject of *óx* is *hróður* ‘fame’. We have seen this happen before in 6\29, where *was* ≈ *lagði* and *Béowulfes* ≈ *Bjólfs* are *unsupported* or ‘rogue’ s-moirés.

The following is another example of unsupported s-moirés, which also provides an example of an unsupported m-moiré. The retainer Unferð is giving

his version of what happened to Breca after the swimming-contest:

6\35	ðonon hé gesóhte swæsne éþel,	thence he visited his dear homeland,
≈	þaðan fór hann til feðra óðala,	thence he went to his forebears' homeland,
	smc ¹⁸ /sm \smc z 0 ma	
	léof his léodum, lond Brondinga	the beloved his people, the land of the Brondings
≈	ljúfra ættmenna í landi	of his beloved kinsmen in the land of the
	Bröndunga	Bröndungs
	ma z m z ma sma	(520-521)

The failure of S-interference throughout this passage means that the s-moirés in the first line, i.e. the syntactically corresponding *þonon*≈*þaðan* ‘thence’, *hé*≈*hann* ‘he’ and *gesóhte* ≈ *fór* ‘visited ≈ went’, are unsupported (these are the plots smc and the cross-displaced /sm and \smc). In the first half of the second line there is temporary M-failure as well as S-failure, since the two phrases ‘the beloved of his people’ ≈ ‘of his beloved kinsmen’ are not semantically equivalent: in the OE it is the beloved (*léof* nom. sg.) Breca who is visiting his clansmen, while in the Icelandic it is Breki who is visiting the land of his beloved (*ljúfra* gen. pl.) kinsmen. This change, the shift of the epithet *léof* ≈ *ljúfra* ‘beloved’ from Breca to his kinsman, is a temporary failure in the M-moiré, so that the plots ma and m are rogue m-moirés. Here is another example:

6\36	þæs þú in helle scealt	for that you shall in hell
≈	Í helvíti muntu	In hell you shall
	z smc sma z sm \smc	
	werhðo dréogan, þeah þín wit duge	endure damnation, though your cleverness excels
≈	fordæming líða vegna lymsku þinnar	endure damnation, because of your craftiness
	sm sm s m \mc z	[588-9]

The analysis here assumes that *wit* ‘intelligence, cleverness’ is semantically close enough to *lymska* ‘craftiness, slyness’ to allow m to be marked; however the two final half-lines are not semantically or syntactically equivalent at low resolution. The moiré *wit*≈*lymsku* is thus a rogue m.

6.7.5 Low-resolution P-interference: alliteration

Although there are clearly definable parallels between s- and m-interference on the one hand and S- and M-interference on the other, the picture

¹⁸Note that **smc** is here written for **sma** (ð ≈ n) in accordance with section 5.1.3

is not as clear with regard to p- and a putative P-interference. Normal-resolution p-interference does not form inside an analogous domain of low-resolution reflection in the way that s and m form within the contexts of S and M. There are, however, both high- and normal-resolution p-quanta in these texts which make themselves known at low resolution, and although they are not strictly analogous in the same way as S- and M-interference, it makes sense to utilize the opportunity afforded by an otherwise redundant term P.

These features appear in metrical structure. Both the original *Béowulf* and Björnsson's translation comprise 3182 lines of Common Germanic Alliterative metre (see section 6.5.4); thus we can say that there is a strong metrical moiré detectable both at the level of resolution of the whole poem, and at every line. In the running analysis in Appendix A, P is used to register one aspect of this metrical moiré, that of alliteration. Although the relationship between p and P is not the same as that between s-m and S-M, there are certain parallels. Just as p-reflection is written in a variety of ways (a b c 1 2 3 etc.) to show the statistical profile of the constituent high-resolution moirés, so we need different ways of writing P to denote different types of alliterative correspondence. In Appendix A the terms A B and C are written for P, as follows:

- A indicates equivalent alliteration. The alliterative stave is in a-sys correspondence between texts, and alliteration falls in the same metrical positions (in section 6.5.4 we saw that there are essentially three alliterative patterns for the four lifts of a normal line—see 6\21). Here are examples of equivalent alliteration:

<i>heard hondlocen, helpe gefremede</i>	1 1 | 1 0
≈ <i>hörð handsmíð hjálp veitti (551)</i>	1 1 | 1 0
<i>be ýðláfe uppe láegon</i>	1 0 | 1 0
≈ <i>við útfiri uppi lágu (566)</i>	1 0 | 1 0
<i>Eart þú sé Béowulf, sé þe wið Breca wunne</i>	0 1 | 1 0
≈ <i>Ert þú sá Bjólfur er við Breka reyndi (506)</i>	0 1 | 1 0

- B indicates a-sys correspondence of alliteration in text and translation, without full positional correspondence:

<i>þæt ic merestrengo máran áhte</i>	1 0 | 1 0
≈ <i>að eg megins meira í mari átti (533)</i>	1 1 | 1 0
<i>flód æfter faroðe on Finna land</i>	1 1 | 1 0
≈ <i>flæðarstraumur að Finnalandi (580)</i>	1 0 | 1 0

- C indicates different alliteration:

<i>Wæs merefixa mód onhréed</i>	1 0 | 1 0 alliterating on <i>m</i>
---------------------------------	------------------------------------

≈ Voru lagardýr lostin undrum (549)

1 0 | 1 0 alliterating on *l*

6.7.6 Plot notation of low-resolution moirés

To summarize: although low-resolution moirés are not fully definable at normal resolution, their presence *resonates* throughout the normal-resolution plots (using another metaphor in 6.7 I said they were ‘saturated’): thus any normal-resolution moiré may be *reinforced* by low-resolution moirés. And so a normal-resolution plot must also record the status of low-resolution moirés obtaining at that place in the interference pattern—at that plot in the field. In the running analysis in Appendix A the existence of low-resolution moirés is not however stated in each plot: the program used in the Appendices to read and compute the plots (the ‘Profiler’) is set to read low-resolution data whenever it encounters it in the running analysis, and add it automatically to each succeeding plot until this data is changed. The notation will be very simple:

- S S-interference
- M M-interference
- P P-interference, written A B or C (see 2.4.4.3)

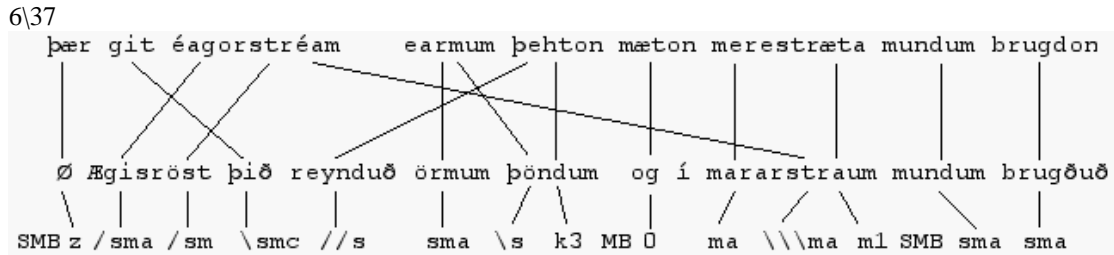
We shall stick to the same notations as with normal-resolution moirés, signalling zero S or M by omitting the term in the plot; but P will always be written (appearing as A B or C), giving us the following possibilities:

SMA SMB SMC SA SB SC MA MB MC A B C

Thus when the term P is written alone (i.e. as A, B or C), this signifies that neither S nor M are present.¹⁹

As an example, this is how we will add the low-resolution moirés to the running analysis of 6\25:

¹⁹ Another method of signalling absence of **S** and **M** would be necessary in texts where metrical structures did not form interference patterns. This would be to adopt a term such as **T**, an even lower-resolution moiré involving the whole text; this moiré would by definition be present throughout the two texts which form the interference pattern, but need not be written except to show absence of both **S** and **M**.



This will give us the following plots:

6\38 SMBz SMB/sma SMB/sm SMB\smc SMB//s SMBsma SMB/S SMBk3
MB0 MBma MB\\a MBm1 SMBsma SMBsma

We can now return to 6\35 and 6\36 above, now adding the low-resolution plots :

6\39 ðonon hé gesóhte swásne éþel,
 • þaðan fór hann til feðra óðala,
 MC smc /sm \smc z 0 ma

léof his léodum, lond Bröndinga
 • ljúfra ættmenna í landi Bröndunga
 B ma z m MB z ma sma (cf. 6\35)

The plot MC indicates lack of S; B indicates lack of both M and S, but M returns again with BM. The Profiler reads the plots as follows:

MCsmc MC/sm MC\smc MCz MC0 Mcma
 Bma Bz Bm MBz Mbma Mbsma

Unsupported m-moirés signalled clearly by having m but no M in their plots: Bma (*léof* ≈ *ljúfra*) and Bm (*léodum* ≈ *ættmenna*). All the s-moirés are unsupported, having s but no S. Here is 6\36 again:

6\40 þæs þú in helle scealt
 • Í helvíti muntu
 SMA z smc sma z sm \smc

werhðo dréogan, þeah þín wit duge
 • fordæming líða vegna lymsku þinnar
 SMC sm sm C s m \mc z

The plots are now

SMAz SMAsmc SMAasma SMAz SMAsm SMA\smc

SMCsm SMCsm Cs Cm C\mc Cz

This shows strong reinforcement of all moirés in SMA_{smc} SMA_{ma} (*in helle* ≈ *í hel-*), and unsupported *s* in the final four plots.

A slight problem arises here. We have no real option other than to count the occurrences of S and M as we do with the normal-resolution moirés, reporting them in mean line or mean plot profiles. This is in order as long as we remember that S- and M-moirés are not formed at normal resolution: the notation in 6\38 does not give us a direct low-resolution plot analysis, but simply records the low-resolution conditions obtaining whenever a normal-resolution moiré is encountered. In fact a pure low-resolution analysis would be severely problematical, since the strings would have to be quantified in terms of textual length, in which they differ widely. They also differ significantly between the two texts concerned, which raises the filiatory issue again. The solution adopted in this study is to regard normal resolution as the lowest resolution amenable to the quantifying methods at our disposal, and to accept that all low-resolution information is filtered through the normal-resolution lens, which does not allow us an overall picture.

6.8 Further aspects of the interference pattern

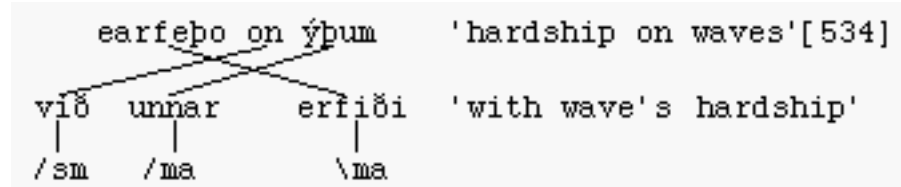
We have seen how phasing in *resolutory* movement creates reinforced patterns. But we have stressed that the differences between *lateral* and *resolutory* movement are not differences of dimension, since the *field* of interference is not layered: *there is no resolutory movement without lateral movement*. This suggests that reinforcement may also occur through lateral relationships.

6.8.1 Lateral plot phasing

In addition to resolution phasing, then, we might look for reinforcement in consecutive plots at the same degree of phasing; we can call this *lateral plot phasing*. We should remind ourselves at this point however that *phasing* as we have discussed it so far is a feature of the running analysis, the filiatory series of plots with its parallaxic bias. The profile analysis will state the *density* of reinforcement as a statistical value. Since the profile is a non-serial (in our textual terms, not left-to-right) statement concerning areas of text, we cannot properly speak of *frequency*, which implies movement in space-time; hence the term *density*.

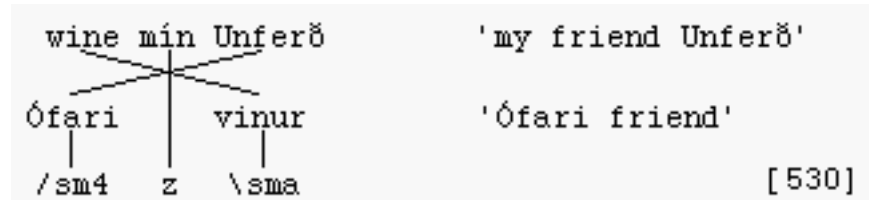
We have repeatedly seen in this discussion that displacement in plots often occurs in groups. Consider 6\41, where the two m-moirés in *on ýpum* ≈ *við unnar* are displaced together as a group, although there is no coincident s- or m-interference:

6\41



Symmetric cross-displacement within groups also occurs:

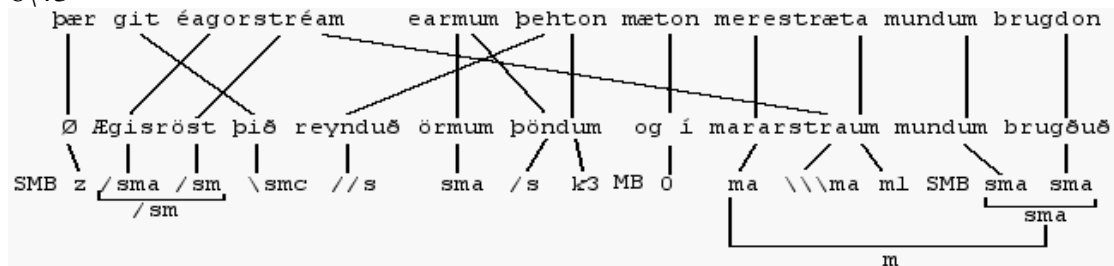
6\42



Note that although displacement can occur as a feature of blocks of text, this is not necessarily a low-resolution and thus resolatory phenomenon, since the groupings of displaced moirés occur at normal plot resolution. We can refer to these groupings as *pools*.

Returning to our test passage as it appears in 6\37, we can show the pools in this way:

6\43



This shows three pools, which are, reading from left to right, (1) a pool of 2 displaced sm-moirés, (2) a pool of 4 m-moirés, and (3) a pool of 2 sma-moirés.

Note that the two sm-moirés do not form a group with the following \smc which is displaced from another direction. This may seem to discredit our earlier conclusion that showing direction in the running analysis with / and \ has no analytical significance (2.4.1.3), but in fact the problem is not limited to direction alone, but to the exact vectorisation of displacement. Thus although a running analysis records two consecutive displaced plots, for example //sma //sma, this is not an unambiguous indication of a pool, since the two terms // only indicate that both plots form moirés with quanta in the other text at two half-lines distance: these quanta may well be in different places in the other text. Only when displacement is zero can we be sure that the pool is genuinely non-filiatory.

Consider now the pool of 4 m- moirés in 6\37 and 6\43. The texts

merestréta mundum brugdon and *mararstraum mundum brugðið* form a distinct run of 4 plots with zero-displaced m. However the running analysis interposes another plot `\\a` on *straum* (displaced from *stréam*), which disrupts the running analysis based on the Icelandic text, although it would not appear as a disruption if it were based on the OE text. In other words, the extent of the pool is less than the displacement closure requirement (see 6\14) for this section of the text. As we saw in 2.4.2.1, full non-filiation cannot be achieved in the profile analysis for strings of running analysis shorter than displacement closure.

This means that width-pools need to be tagged explicitly in the running analysis if full precision is to be achieved. We might envisage rewriting the plots in 6\43 adding tags as subscript numerals:

```
6\44  SMB z /sma1 /sm1 \smc //s sma ks
      MB 0 ma2 \\a m12 SMB sma2,3 sma2,3
```

But this not a particularly user-friendly notation, and the introduction of subscripts is not even computer-friendly, since the algorithm would now have to read formatting. To get round the problem we would need to introduce a new set of symbols into the running analysis in order to tag width-pools. Neither of these options has been attempted in the running analysis in Appendix A, and the values recorded under the heading ‘lateral plot phasing’ are slightly inaccurate: firstly because they treat all adjacent displacement codes as referring to adjacent sources, and secondly because they interpret ‘interposed’ plots such as `\\a` in 6\43 as signalling a new pool. Both these inaccuracies arise when the extent of the pool is less than the displacement closure, which introduces a filiatory bias into the analysis, since the upper and the lower running analyses will give slightly different values. These inaccuracies have been allowed to stand in Appendix A as the price paid for simplicity in the running analysis.

In 6\48 below, plot phasing information is treated as an attribute of the single moiré type and reported as an index showing mean pool-size associated with each moiré, whereby 1 = minimal pool size, 3 = 3 adjacent plots in a pool, etc.

6.8.2 smp phasing

Another combination of moirés which has appeared constantly in the discussion without comment until now is the coincidence of two or three of the different types of normal-definition moiré within the same plot. The coincidence of different types of moiré at the same level of resolution is of course a further interference pattern, another moiré of moirés.

I shall use the term *smp phasing* for this co-occurrence of different terms within the same plot, and assume that peer support increases the strength of the

single moiré. For example: an a-moiré in a plot sma is stronger than an a-moiré in a plot ma, which in turn is stronger than in the plot a.

This reinforcement will become particularly clear when we consider the concept of *quasi-cognition* in section 6.8.3. We should also note that the concept of sm_p phasing means the plot itself emerges an interference phenomenon in its own right.

6.8.3 Quasi-cognition

With closely related languages such as OE and Icelandic, close translation with high levels of s- or m- interference will also coincide with high levels of systematic (a b and c) reflection; in other words there will be high levels of plot phasing. However, non-systematic (non-cognate) p-interference often intrudes, occurring when a stretch of close translation with high systematic reflection encounters a ‘lexical gap’ where a systematic reflex cannot be found. There is a distinct tendency when this happens for the gap to be filled with a non-systematic (usually coherent) p-moiré. We have already seen how this happens in 5\22, which we will re-examine here as 6\45. Note the compound words: *éalowége* and *öl-veigar* ‘ale-cups, *óret-mecgas* ‘battle-men’, and *örva-meid̄ar* ‘arrow-men’:

6\45 ofer ealowége óretmecgas
 ≈ yfir ölveigar örvameid̄ar (481)
 SM sma sma sma sm₃ sm₃
 ‘over ale-cups, the warriors...’

This is a pool of sm plot-phasing stretching over the whole line. The first two words, or three plots, are sma. But then comes a ‘lexical gap’ where Icelandic has no cognate form for *óretmecgas* (see the discussion following 5\22). Thus *óretmecgas* ≈ *örvameid̄ar* are plotted sm₃ sm₃, two coherent partial non-systematic moirés with sm-phasing. Note how this phasing reinforces the correspondence, as does the pool-extent of the whole line and the SM low-resolution phasing.

This ‘stop-gapping’, which I shall call *quasi-cognition*, seems to be a common phenomenon in closely related texts. In chapter 2 we saw how it occurs in OE manuscript transmission with dialectal adjustment, and in modern translations of poetry between Icelandic and Faeroese, and I suspect that it is a common interlingual occurrence. The Icelandic ≈ Faeroese example in 2\22 is *horfa* (Icelandic, ‘look’) ≈ *hyggja* (Faeroese, ‘look’) occurring as sm₃ embedded in a string of at least 12 sma moirés with SM support. But this non-systematic substitution is rather a feature of the languages concerned than the translation technique, since Faeroese *hyggja* is the most obvious translation for Icelandic

horfa ‘look’—the verb *hyggja* occurs in Icelandic with the meaning ‘think, consider’, but *horfa* in Faeroese means ‘turn, look out on to’).

Quasi-cognition is only to a limited extent sanctioned by phonological interference: semantic (m-) interference is essential, and good plot phasing is also important. In the following, *þræce* \approx *þras* is partial profile (sm3), *léode* \approx *liða* and *éower* \approx *jöfurs* are full profile (5); none of them is cognate:

6\46 atole ecgþræce éower léode
 ‘fierce sword-fury of our people’
 \approx atalt eggjaþras jöfurs liða
 ‘fierce sword-quarrel of the king’s retainers’ (596)
 sma sma sm3 5 sm5

Here the clear quasi-cognate effect of *þræce* \approx *þras* ‘fury \approx quarrel’ and *léode* \approx *liða* ‘people \approx retainers’ is a result of their sm-phasing and the ambient plot-phasing; *éower* \approx *jöfurs* ‘our \approx king’s’, on the other hand, in spite of its strong phonological interference, has no sm and is not at all quasi-cognate.

Other examples of this close plot phasing in the Breka episode are *heaðorása* ‘battles’ \approx *harðræði* ‘hardships’ in 526, discussed above as 5\40 and *heaðoláce* ‘battle-play’ \approx *hjörvaleik* ‘sword-play’ in 584, where the first element is quasi-cognate (sm3), and the second a-sys (sma).

Although quasi-cognition often occurs in alliterative positions, this is by no means always the case, as can be clearly seen with *léode* \approx *liða* in 6\46, which are both the non-alliterative fourth lifts of their lines (see 6.5.4). There are several examples in *Breca* where quasi-cognition does not participate in the alliteration:

6\47 Unferð mapelode, Ecgláfes bearn
 ‘Unferð spoke, Ecgláf’s child’
 \approx Ófari tók til orða, Eggleifsbur
 ‘Ófari spoke up, Eggleif’s offspring’ (499)

Alliteration here is on the vowels of *Unferð* ... *Ecglafes* \approx *Ófari* ... *Eggleifs*, while *bearn* \approx *bur* is the non-alliterative fourth stress. Here the reason for the quasi-cognate *bearn* \approx *bur* is to some extent stylistic: *barn* ‘child’ also exists in Icelandic, so there is no lexical gap. However *barn* shares with English *child* connotations of immaturity which the Old English seems not to have. We have seen elsewhere that Björnsson often avoids the word *barn* in this connection: in 5\9 she uses *borinn*, which like *bur* is ultimately cognate with *bearn*, although analysed them as non-systematic for the same reason as with *borinn* (see 5\9).

We should also note that the Icelandic-Faeroese example quoted above

also occurs in a non-alliterative poem.

6.8.4 Final profile

We are now finally in a position to write the profile for lines 513-4 of *Breca* (cf. 6\37).

6\48	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
		line	plot	weight	displ	res	lateral plot	smp
						phasing	phasing	phasing
	s	4.0	53%		0.75	100%	12/8=1,5	19/8=2.4
	m	4.0	53%		0.37	100%	13/9=1.4	23/9=2.6
	a	3.0	40%		0.67			
	b	0.0	0%					
	c	0.5	7%		1.0			
	sys	3.5	47%		0.71		9/7=1,29	19/7=2,7
	coh	0.5	7%	1	0			
	non-coh	0.5	7%	3	0			
	non-sys	1.0	14%	2			2/2=1	3/2=1,5
	z	2.0	29%					
	0	1.0	13%					

Column 1 gives the various terms. ‘sys’ is the total of all systematic p-interference. ‘non-sys’ is the total for ‘coh’ (coherent non-systematic; here only the plot m1 on □*tream* ≈ *straum*) and ‘non-coh’ (non-coherent systematic, k3 on þehton ≈ þöndum).

Column 2 gives the line index profile from 6\15—the average number of times the term occurs in each line.

Column 3 gives the mean plot profile from 6\19—the percentage of plots in which the term occurs.

Column 4 gives the mean weight (1-5) of the non-systematic moirés in column 3.

Column 5 gives the mean displacement of the terms in column 1, from 6\19.

Column 6 gives the mean resolution phasing of s and m—the number of times s and m are accompanied by S and M in the plot, expressed as a percentage of the number of occurrences.

Column 7 gives the mean lateral plot phasing (pool extent). Each term in a plot is assigned a value representing the number of adjacent plots with the same term (and the same displacement): 1 if it is alone, 2 if it is in a pool of 2, 3 for a pool of 3, etc. The average value is shown in this column. Thus for s in the first line there are 8 occurrences, with a total value of 12 = 1.

Column 8 gives the mean smp phasing, 1-3. Thus if *s* occurs alone in a plot its value is 1; if it occurs with both *m* and a *p*-term, its value is 3.

This is as far as we will go in this study towards a non-filiatory statement of the interference patterns obtaining between corresponding lines of *Béowulf* ≈ *Bjólfskviða*. Apart from occasional minor biases in column 7, discussed in the comment following 6\43 above, this table is fully non-filiatory.

These values can be compare with the values computed for the whole text of *Breca* in Appendix B, lines 499 to 606 (table B\1 on page 261).

6.9 A third text

We have come a long way in our search for the third text, and the reader may at this point be asking whether this drab table of figures is really what we are looking for. To be sure, it is a tolerably non-filiatory statement of many of the interfering features of the two texts (although there are still some minor problems of parallax in column 7, discussed in 6.8.1), but does this mean that our resulting data is so purged of language that it reads like a railway timetable?

It is of course not quite true to say that 6\48 and the tables in Appendix B are purged of language, since they codify a number of complex facts about certain texts and these facts can be ‘read’ from them if the reader has the necessary expertise. Nevertheless, they are hardly what we are looking for: they are not couched in ‘language’ in the way the texts they relate to are, but are written in a simple inflexible code quite different from the codes of human language. They are produced by a fairly simple computer program: 6\48 computes two lines of text only, and was also worked out by pencil and paper to check the program, while the tables in Appendix B are computations made on 107 lines of text which would have been a long and boring task with a pencil and paper (and full of mistakes). Thus these tables *are* third texts, but not really human ones, for it takes a computer (or at least an algorismic process with paper and pencil) to produce them.

The natural language equivalent of these tabular analyses would be more readable, more rich in detail, but at the same time far more incomplete and fragmentary. As a final illustration, let us examine the running analysis of two half-lines of *Béowulf* ≈ *Bjólfskviða* (572-3), with the running analysis as proposed in this chapter:

6\49

<u>Wyrd</u> oft nereð / unfægne eorl	‘ <u>Fate</u> often spares the doomed warrior’
≈ <u>Verður</u> oft þannig / ófeigum forðað	‘Often thus the doomed <u>becomes</u> [=is] saved’

MA b sma 0 ma
 \m1

A brief translation of the running analysis would be as follows:

- MA indicates that these two lines have no syntactic correspondence, but they ‘tell the same story’; they also have the same metrical alliteration;
- b indicates that *wyrd* ‘fate’ and *verður* ‘becomes’ are second-degree cognates, but have no syntactic or semantic correspondence;
- sma indicates that *oft* and *oft* are fully cognate, the same parts of speech, and have the same meaning;
- 0 indicates that *nered* and *þannig* do not match in any way;
- ma indicates that *unfægne* (acc. sg. masc. adjective) and *ófeigum* (dat. sg. masc. adjective) are fully cognate and have the same meaning but have no syntactic correspondence;
- \m1 indicates that *eorl* and *forðað* have no syntactic correspondence but that *forðað* ‘saved’ has semantic connections with, and a slight phonetic similarity to, *unfægne* ‘undoomed’, which is displaced by a minimal amount in the other text.

Let us examine the relationship between *wyrd* and *verður* a little closer—the relationship indicated by the terse b in the running analysis. A more detailed and discursive version of the interference pattern at this point might be something along these lines:

These two words have quite different meanings: the Old English word refers to a particular concept of ‘fate’ which has no single lexical equivalent in Modern English, while the Icelandic word is the third person singular present indicative of the auxiliary verb *verða* ‘become’, here forming a passive verb phrase with *forðað* ‘saved, avoided’, and also imparting a distinct future meaning. There is in fact a thread of semantic identity between the two words tracing a concept of futurity: *fate* is something that has yet to *become*. This thread of identity is in fact etymological: the name of the first of the three Fates in Icelandic mythology, *Urður*, *Skuld* and *Verðandi*, is the exact cognate of the OE word *wyrd*; these three are close relatives of Shakespeare’s *Wierd* Sisters (*weird* is the modern English reflex of *wyrd*). The two names *Urður* and *Verðandi* are connected to the Icelandic verb *verða* ‘become’ (which loses its initial *v* and becomes *urðum*, *urðu*, *urðu* in the past indicative plural.) *Verðandi* is the present participle/gerund of *verða*—‘becoming’. And, to complete the picture,

Skuld ‘debt’ is cognate with *skal* ‘shall’, another reference to a future event.

But there is another underlying pattern in the formal similarity between the words *wyrd* and *verður* in 6\49. The Old Germanic nominative singular inflection has been retained in Icelandic as *-(u)r* but was lost in Old English: we have seen a number of Icelandic words such as *konungur* ‘king’ and *hugur* ‘mind, thought’ whose cognates in Old English are *cyning* and *hyge*. This mostly occurs in masculine nominative singulars, but can also occur in some feminine words such as *wyrd* \approx *Urður*. In Modern Icelandic, the lack of the ending *-ur* suggests the accusative (direct object case), and Björnsson would have found this ‘accusativeness’ of Old English nouns slightly confusing at first; thus she would soon have become accustomed to mentally adding *-ur* to OE words in order to ‘Icelandicize’ them. But the Icelandic *-ur* is also a common 3rd person singular present verbal ending, occurring in *verður* ‘becomes’. The reflection of the noun *wyrd* into the verb *verður* is also an expression of these relationships.

How much of this does the running analysis in 6\49 capture? In fact a surprising amount: the plot *b* on *wyrd* \approx *verður* shows secondary cognation (they are in fact ultimately related, and Björnsson would have known this, although the relation is almost tenuous enough to allow us to plot 5, full-profile non-systematic). What is significant about this plot is the lack of smp-phasing: there is no *s* (no syntactic correspondence), and more strikingly there is no *m*: the words do not ‘mean’ the same in spite of their cognation. This is even more surprising in view of the fact that there is background low-resolution M-correspondence—the two sentences *do* ‘mean’ the same. Further, the *moiré* is immediately followed by a full *sma* (with simple unreinforced *s*, syntactic correlation although the whole sentence is syntactically dissimilar), and later an *ma* and then *m1*—there is a high degree of surrounding phonological and semantic interference. The upshot is that this single *b* is a distinctly complex *moiré*, clearly signalled as such in the running analysis; these facts enter the profile analyses in Appendix B as components of the values for resolution, plot and smp-phasing for *b*.

The difference between these two formulations lies in their notation: one is a simple, inflexible code, a table of symbols; the other a complex and shifting one, known as Standard English. Both speak in their own ways of the third text.

7. The third text

7.1 Centre and horizon

Meaning invades the text, flooding in from beyond the horizon. Because this is terrifying, we mistake it for the central problem of translation: how to sophisticate these invading hordes, how to teach them etiquette, and in time wean them to a textual ethic which re-signs them to the new country.

It is natural that we should fear the invaders, for they challenge our culture. The Russian term for the Germanic peoples is *nemets*, the speechless: for the Romans adopted from the Greeks the term *barbari*, the incoherent, for those who spoke other languages. The Chinese call their home ground *Zhong guo* ‘the Central State’, and the Germanic peoples used much the same term, Middle-Garth, adapted by Tolkien as ‘Middle-Earth’. The Inuit are the People. The Nordic people who invaded (then as now) the Inuit text used the same term—*heim*—for both Home and the World.

Perhaps the invaders will abandon their home text, and like the Vikings in Normandy learn new table-manners, lose their dissonant Germanic accents and participate in the discourse of their hosts. That is how the story goes. But in fact their alien gestures will always redefine the terrain, forever change the landscape. They will never fully abandon their original text: they can only recast it to include the new country, just as their hosts recast theirs. The two hordes meet in a field of turbulence, of sharp and complex structure: a new text

is born.

Our attitude to these new meanings is no different from the attitude of all hordes, all hosts. Our text is not only the dominant text: it is inevitably superior. Our text *is* the Central Country,¹ we *are* the People, hordes and hosts alike. The Nostratic² centrism of the text is not a misconception we can shuck off: it is a constituent characteristic, marking out the necessary centre and the inevitable horizon. All vision is ever and only of horizons; our eyes can move them out, but never see beyond them. And if we do not focus our eyes upon the horizons, forcing them ever outwards with visionary language, they will close in on us.

If our first movement is to make peace with Islam, with the Babbling People who live beyond the line of trees yonder, then our next is to locate the new centre and mark out the new horizon. These movements, the spinning out of new texts from new centres, are no more than normal linguistic activity: the movement of language is to extend horizons. And so all texts share the same global climate, and although they may jostle with each other for a time, their local horizons impinging and imploding, there is a wider horizon encompassing them all. The little, inner horizons of translation, of conquest and misery, of resistance and isolation, all speak to us of the wider horizon, and teach us to listen to the meanings which also seep in from beyond the silence; and to spin out our texts towards them, so that the final horizon drifts always outwards.

A horizon presupposes a centre, and the centre is necessarily defined by its horizon. This is of course a fairly elementary dualism, and I want to pursue it a little further before ceding to Plato: 'Two things cannot be rightly put together without a third' (*Timaeus* 31).

7.2 The Black Madonna

For the moment, then, we shall hold to the idea that there are centres, and there are horizons, and ignore the warning voice which says we may have to renege on this simplistic view ere long. Our first task is to ask whether we should disentangle the idea of *text* from that of *paradigm*, Kuhn's *conceptual matrix*; or can we claim that an abstraction is bound to take the form of a text, insofar as we define it in language; and that any paradigm, if not a text, is a corpus of texts? Are we perhaps confusing different orders of abstraction here, equating the partly coterminous concepts *text* and *paradigm* with the also partly coterminous concepts *corpus* and *conceptual matrix*? This is reminiscent of Masterman's (1970) criticism of Kuhn's lack of distinction between *paradigm*

¹ On the text as landscape, see Knútsson (1993b).

² On Greenberg's concept of the super-language family *Nostratic* see Ringe (1995).

and *groups of paradigms* (see footnote 4 on page 10), and is the way I wish to develop my argument: I shall argue against a theoretical justification for distinguishing between bodies of language (or writing) and the smaller bodies of which they are composed.

A strategy would be to turn to the mathematical concept of a *set*, a collection of entities some or all of which may also be sets. Now the notion of recursive structures is commonplace: just as parts of sentences can themselves be sentences—*that thou hast her it is not all my grief*—so texts can be parts of texts. Like sets, corpora can be made up of corpora; and since texts combine to form corpora we have a fairly lucid recursion, clouded only by surfeit terminology. If Genesis is a text, and the Bible is a text, then surely Christianity is a text; and it follows that there is a set of all texts, the universal text.

But this is more than a mere enumeration, the result of a careful tally of texts and corpora. It is a mathematical concept, and as such an abstraction, for it includes all the lost texts which live only as imperceptible intertextual traces in those texts which have not yet been lost, and all the inaccessible texts in proscribed collections and indecipherable codes. As such it is coextensive with Yuri Lotman's concept of the semiosphere, the 'semantic space necessary for the existence and functioning of languages' (Lotman 2001:123), for although this space is 'not the total sum of different languages', having 'prior existence' and being 'in constant interaction with languages' (*ibid.*), our access to it, if not mute, must be within the text. This can be said in spite of Lotman's willingness to mark out the spacial coordinates of the semiosphere, the outskirts (140) and the 'night-time world' (141) of the city, the frontiers of the Roman and Chinese empires (142)—the fact that by convention I must cite the page-numbers demonstrates my point. Note how Lotman speaks of 'the languages which *fill up* the semiotic space' (125, my emphasis): there are no *textless* spaces in the semiosphere.

My claim that the semiosphere is coextensive with the universal text must also face the objection that the concept of the semiosphere can be pluralized, indicating that within the universal text there are many semiospheres. At the same time in proposing a *single* universal text I am on dangerous ground: Ricoeur notes that Gadamer's concept of the fusion of horizons when two consciousnesses communicate 'signifies that we neither live within closed horizons, nor within one unique horizon.' (Ricoeur 1981:62). This is the Kuhnian paradigm problem again, but now we see it more clearly as a question of horizons and boundaries: 'The notion of a boundary separating the internal space of the semiosphere with the external is just a rough primary distinction. In fact, the entire space of the semiosphere is

transected by boundaries of different levels, boundaries of different languages and even of texts, and the internal space of each of these sub-semiospheres has its own semiotic “I” (Lotman 2001:138). Perhaps we can accommodate both Lotman and Gadamer by suggesting that a horizon is a boundary seen from within; it follows that there is no ultimate horizon, since it is always given to us to pass it and look back at it as a boundary—whereupon it evaporates as a horizon. We may even find ourselves in familiar territory by so doing, for semiotic space (as perhaps physical space) is easily turned back upon itself: Derrida calls this *invagination* when it occurs at local boundaries (Derrida 1979:97). And yet, even without an ultimate horizon, one can and must still speak of the universal text, still use *semiosphere* as a single uncountable noun, for it is also given to us to point to any one horizon and say, however mistakenly: that is the edge of the universe.³ We know that even if this is true now, it will soon be false: the flat earth was never an option in any experienced mariner’s mind. In Knútsson (1993b:76) I used an Icelandic term *altexti* to mean what I have here referred to as *universal text*, and also suggested using it for the term *intertextuality*, which had not then acquired an accepted Icelandic translation.⁴ I still see the two terms *altexti* (universal text) and *intertextuality* as each highlighting a different aspect of the same singular reality, the universal living-space of texts on the one hand and the local manifestations of this space, the individual connections between texts, on the other. But it is misleading to suggest a distinction between the two aspects, for they are one and the same: the whole does not exist otherwise than in its local manifestations. The process by which I wished to quantify the term *moiré* into individual *moirés* in chapter 6 (p.189) is the same (but in reverse, an opposition

³ The Icelandic poet Steinn Steinar (1908-1958) expresses this thought in the poem *Utan hringsins* ‘Outside the circle’: from *Ferð án fyrishesits* ‘Journey without promise’ (1942):

Ég geng í hring í kringum allt, sem er.	I walk a circle round everything that is.
Og innan þessa hrings er veröld þín.	Within this circle is your world.
Minn skuggi féll um stund á gluggans gler.	My shadow fell in passing on the windowpane.
Ég geng í hring í kringum allt, sem er.	I walk a circle round everything that is.
Og utan þessa hrings er veröld mín.	Outside this circle is my world.

(Steinarr 1963:151)

⁴ The Icelandic term is now usually *textatengsl* ‘textual link’ or *textavísun* ‘textual reference’.

which is herewith neutralized) as that of dequantifying the term *intertextuality* to mean the environment itself, the living space in which and by which *textuality* is constituted.

The linguistic paradigms I discussed in chapter 4 struggle with two uneasy notions: firstly the Kuhnian understanding that there can be no dialogue between different abstractions, since if there were, the different abstractions would be parts of the same abstraction; and secondly the sleight of hand by which different abstractions—linguists bravely call them *modules*—are linked together with ‘interfaces’, for instance by stringing threads of identity, Jackendoff’s ‘indices’, rhizome-wise through the arboreal foliage. Something like this must be predicated of the mathematical set: if x resides in more than one set at a time (as most x ’s do), then is it really one and the same x ? And if it is, if there is a common identity between x in set X and the ‘same’ x in another set Y , then this is surely a flaw in the fabric of structuralism. Consider for instance the structuralist concept of the phoneme, defined by its status in the set of phonemes of a particular idealized language. The English phoneme /p/ is a member of and only of the set of the phonemes of some idealized variety of English, and its status in that set is an essential characteristic of /p/. Now it so happens that the Icelandic phoneme /p/ is realized, and modified by surrounding phonemes, in practically the same way as the English /p/; but its identity depends on a different set of phonemes. In other words /p/ cannot be a phoneme of English *and at the same time* a phoneme of Icelandic. But now suppose that our phoneme is also a member of the set of all the phonemes realized between 11 and 12 o’clock last Tuesday in the multilingual queue of people waiting to file past the Black Madonna of Montserrat. The queue is supposed to observe silence, but does not, and this is fatal for our phoneme which depends for its identity on its membership of a single set only. Thus the members of the set of all the phonemes in the queue cannot be phonemes, but a collection of human speech-sounds which can no longer be clearly differentiated from each other; they cannot even be abstracted from their respective voices into recognisable segments.

This then is the Black Madonna Paradox: the set of abstractions in various other sets whose identities are defined exclusively by their membership of the single set to which they each belong. In some ways it is a variant of Russell’s Paradox, which concerns the set of all sets which do not include themselves: the question is, does it include itself? Russell’s paradox appears to evaporate if we insist on orders of abstraction: we assume that since the concept of a set is an abstraction, then a set of sets is a new order of abstraction. For example, suppose we have a set S_n , i.e. a set S which is an abstraction of the order n . Any set which includes S_n will be a higher order of

abstraction, say S_{n+1} . Thus the set S_{n+1} , which contains a number of sets of the order S_n , cannot contain itself, for any set containing S_{n+1} will be at a higher order of abstraction, say S_{n+2} . In other words, we cannot specify that members of sets are abstractions without specifying the order of the abstractions concerned; and any specification of the order of abstraction of members of a set requires that the set be at a higher order than its members.

This response to Russell's Paradox⁵ relies on a sort of negative version of Jackendoff's mystical indices. While Jackendoff's indices establish common identity, this version denies common identities by assigning different indices. But, like Jackendoff, it is having its cake and eating it, imposing new orders of abstraction *while still retaining the old ones*. This happens when we make a set of sets without noticing that the horizons between them are *inner* horizons which we have *already crossed*, like the inner horizons of sentence-within-sentence and text-within-text.

The Black Madonna paradox involves a similar confusion: it does not mix *orders* of abstraction, but instead dissolves horizons between neighbouring abstractions of the same order while attempting to preserve the old centres. This is a recurrent problem of translation: consider for instance the set of all the colours seen by an Irish monk and a Norwegian viking who are both, unbeknown to each other, watching the same rainbow under the Eyjafjöll Mountains in Southern Iceland on a forgotten afternoon in the ninth century. The Irishman's language does not slice the colour spectrum in the same way as the Norwegian's: for each, the concept 'colour x' depends on only one set of colours. The set of all their colours that memorable day is not of any earthly rainbow, and cannot be saved by any number of indices.

These paradoxes point to the futility of arranging our shifting centres and horizons in indexed or hierarchical orders of abstraction. Cohabiting concepts necessarily occur *at the same level of realisation*, and underlying abstractions only create more problems—and more radical problems—than they solve. Linguistically, this means that all phenomena occur at what may be called 'surface' level. The English and the Icelandic /p/'s rub shoulders before the Black Madonna without impinging on each other's identities, however much their identities may depend on other phenomena in the same queue; but this does not invalidate the concept of the queue—or the rainbow. In chapter 6 I proposed a strategy for dealing with these pools of interacting phenomena, using the idea of *resolution* instead of hierarchic depth. This strategy leads to the adoption of a third term, and an acknowledgement of the fact that the

⁵ This formulation is probably closer to Zermelo's solution by 'hierarchical levels' than Russell's own solution by type theory, except that each of Zermelo's levels contains all members of all levels below it, and all levels are joined in the highest (Moore 1998).

duality which produces it is a chimera: there are no primary or secondary terms (cf. 4\47).

7.3 The third term

Plato's account of plurality, his exhaustive demonstration that the existence of one inevitably leads to the existence of all number (*Parmenides* 142b-144a), depicts a fluid duality which was lost to the later Classical world and unknown to the Middle Ages. The later Pythagoreans could still express this duality in terms which might apply to the *yin* and the *yang* of the *I Ching*: according to Porphyry, Pythagoras divided the world into 'opposite powers: the better is the Monad, light, right, equal, stable and straight; while the worse is the Dyad, darkness, left, unequal, unstable and curved' (Guthrie 1987:130). But while the East manages to see the motions of the world as tensions and shiftings between these two alone, the West espoused a far more ornate numerology in which every duality immediately (*toujours déjà*) implies a third term. The triad was in fact, even from before Pythagoras, always present: Pseudo-Iamblichus quotes Poseidon's angry claim to equality with Zeus and Hades in the *Iliad* xv.189: *trichtha de panta dedastai*, 'into three parts is everything divided' (cf. Waterfield 1988:53), and we have already seen Plato's 'Two things cannot be rightly put together without a third' (*Timeaus* 31). But in the Pythagorean and Christian numerology of the European Middle Ages the monad and the dyad are both ineffable: the monad is the unmoving, the dimensionless, the Centre; the dyad is the first progression into movement, the only movement, from the Centre towards the horizon. But the first we can perceive is the triad, which gives us the triangle, the first space: 'The monad is like a seed in containing in itself the unformed and also unarticulated principle of every number; the dyad is a small advance towards number, but is not number outright because it is like a source; but the triad causes the potential of the monad to advance into actuality and extension' (Pseudo-Iamblichus; Waterfield 1988:50). Perhaps we should also bear in mind at this point that it is not until the tetrad, the four corners of the Earth, that we find tangible bodies, the concrete universe; but we are dealing with texts, which as we shall see shortly are not tangible bodies.

Einar Pálsson has written in detail about the Pythagorean presence in medieval Iceland. Pálsson was a graduate of the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London in 1948; he directed and managed his own English Language School in Reykjavík for 30 years, until his retirement in 1984. The eleven published volumes of his *Rætur Íslenzkrar Menningar* [The Roots of Icelandic Culture] (1969-95) represent only a small part of his work (Pálsson, private communication). Towards the end of his life he wrote three volumes in English, the final one published posthumously (1993, 1994, 1998). Pálsson

finds a rich texture of allegory in the medieval Icelandic sagas and in the topography of the Icelandic landscape in which the saga events took place; and a recurrent thread in this texture is Pythagorean numerology, the principle whereby the Norse and Irish settlers in Iceland marked out their worldly centres and established their horizons.

The Icelandic academic community has not on the whole been receptive to Pálsson's work. Only in recent years have his ideas appeared on humanities curricula at the University of Iceland, where they are still regarded as marginal. Pálsson does not bow to established academic discourse, particularly in his earlier works, which present a bewildering array of concepts without grounding in anything his Icelandic reader knows or understands; he seems averse to detailed exposition, putting forward a ceaseless barrage of hypotheses without revealing their provenance or their mutual relationships, allowing instead their manifest explanatory success to suffice—he describes his method in Pálsson (1984), a short booklet written in English. Taken separately, many of his findings look like quaint coincidences, but their strength rests in their huge number and consistency. Some years before his death I brought up in conversation with him the question of the strange order of the Germanic runes, which do not follow the alphabetical order that we know, but start *f-u-p-a-r-k...* in the Norse version, or *f-u-p-o-r-c...* in the Old English. We know this sequence amongst other things from the striking fact that many surviving runic inscriptions simply consist of this runic 'alphabet'. Surely, I suggested, there was some meaning in the sequence. Pálsson's rather gruff comment was that their meaning was obvious to anyone with the most superficial knowledge of Indo-European linguistics, and I should be able to work it out for myself. But it was not until several years after his death in 1996 that I saw where he was leading. The correlation between *fupark* and *Pythagor(as)* is as neat a partially a-sys, slightly incoherent (transposed) moiré, as many of the echoes in Björnsson's translation of *Bjólfskviða*. According to the First Germanic Sound-shift, often called Grimm's Law, Greek *p* and *g* appear as *f* and *k* in Germanic: in the terminology of chapter 5 they are first-degree systematic p-reflections (a-sys segmental moirés, cf. 5.1.1). The correlation between Greek *theta* (θ) and Germanic *thorn* (*þ*) is non-systematic (Greek θ generally appears as *d* in Germanic), not dissimilar to the non-systematic relationship between *þ* and *t* in the Old English name *Ongenþéow*, which regularly appears as *Angantýr* in Icelandic sources (see footnote 31 on p. 32). The vowels *u* (written *y* in Roman script) and *a*, either side of θ /*þ*, are unchanged, giving a three-segment sequence of full-profile coherent non-systematic reflection (cf 5.2.1.1) in the middle of the moiré. The metathesis of *r*, which follows *g* in the Greek name but precedes *k* in the runic sequence, is not surprising, since *r* commonly

undergoes metathesis in Germanic. The string *-θαγορ-*, with its two vowels *a* and *o*, reacts in turn with both the Norse and Old English strings *-þark-* and *-þorc-* to produce a non-coherent moiré in the same way as *hól≈hló* (5\41) and *gealorand≈glóandi* (5\39). The modes of p-reflection evinced in intimate translation occur readily in loanwords and movements of proper names between widely dissimilar languages (cf. Knútsson 1993a); where systematic (etymological) correspondences are still active in the receiving language they are likely to be followed, and where not, their place will be taken by non-systematic (phonetic) correspondences. Thus icelandicizations of foreign names notoriously involve a mixture of systematic (etymological) and unsystematic sound-similarities, including metathesis, syncope and epenthesis; in this study we have seen, in addition to Angantýr, the name Játgeirr (also discussed in footnote 31 on p. 32) and Kerþjálfaður (in the discussion following 2\14 on p. 48). In a later age the change from *Zeus* and *Odysseus* to the established Icelandic equivalents *Seifur* and *Ódysseifur* follows this same pattern, as does the frication of the diphthong in *Evrópa* ‘Europe’, *Evgenía* ‘Eugène’.⁶ The relationship between *Pythagor-* and *fupark/fuporc* follows this pattern in accordance with the linguistic situation at the time of the earliest Germanic contacts with Greek and Latin.

The ubiquity of the Pythagorean triad in Western Europe is best seen in her recurrent trinities: the Homeric, the Neoplatonic, the Christian, the Norse. The 14th-century Snorri Sturluson names the gods of the Norse trilogy *Hárr*, *Jafnhárr* and *Priðji* ‘The High, The Equally High, and The Third’ in his *Gylfaginning*, one of our main authorities for Norse heathenism. The name ‘Equally High’ (generally assumed to be Snorri’s own designation) is reminiscent of Poseidon’s concern with the equality of the three sons of his father Chronos (see above, p. 233) and no less so with the equal status of the members of the Christian trinity.

Until the Cartesian division, which reintroduced the dual into Western thought, the first real number was three. Thus Cicero’s, Jerome’s and Alfred’s distinction between word for word and sense for sense translation (section 4.3) lacks the distinct polarity that we read into it. Alfred is not merging *alternatives* when says he translates ‘*now* word for word, *now* sense by sense’ (4\9), but working within a continuum; in Cicero’s words, the distinction is one of degree, not of kind (see page 96). For Cicero there is no natural progression towards a *tertium comparationis* in the manner of the scholiasts’ syllogisms; and this explains to a large extent the apparent lack of clarity surrounding these

⁶ cf. also the addition of the fricative in *amor* ≈ *afmor* and *laverd* ≈ *láðvörð* discussed in footnote 11 on page 75.

old writers' use of the phrase 'word by word' which I complained of in chapter 4 (section 4.3).

Dryden, 35 years younger than Descartes, is perhaps the first writer on translation to polarize the two modes; and this leads him not surprisingly to an explicit third term: he offers *paraphrase* as the middle road between the two extremes of *metaphrase* and *imitation* (section 4.3). A century later Goethe affirms this progression, not however as Dryden's comfortable compromise but as a new direction, a new *epoch*. Goethe's progression has clear Pythagorean overtones in that it arises spontaneously from the tension between the first and the second, a triangulation which completes the circle:

7\1 Because we cannot linger for a very long time in either a perfect or an imperfect state but must, after all, undergo one transformation after another, we experienced the third epoch of translation, which is the final and highest of the three...

We are led, yes, compelled as it were, back to the source text; the circle, within which the approximation of the foreign and the familiar, the known and the unknown constantly move, is finally complete. (In Schulte and Biguenet 1992: 61, 63.)

But Goethe's *epoch* is a holding-on (*epi-ekhein*), a resting-place, a confirmation which invites stagnation, a plateau of no movement—just as Husserl's *epoché* is a reduction whose brackets are the illusory horizon. In its textual realisation (there is no other, if we accept Ricoeur's understanding) it is a staunchly filial vision, looking to the outcome, the translation: the source text remains inviolable, unchanging. And yet Goethe comes close to drawing the source text itself into the fray, for the third and highest type of translation 'attempts to identify itself with the original' and so 'ultimately comes close to an interlinear version' (63). The term 'interlinear' speaks compellingly of the triad: between *which two* lines? As yet, both belong to the source text. Walter Benjamin, taking up Goethe's theme of the interlinear gloss, is so close to an explicit triangulation of the source, the translation and the third text that one wonders why he does not say so outright; but his interlinear gloss still lies between lines of the source text, although it has now become all but a sacred silence between the two languages: it is all but *intertextually* interlinear, all but inscribed between the parallel lines of the two texts.

For Hugo Friedrich (1904-79) the third term of this triple progression is also a 'logical' consequence, which 'go[es] beyond the appropriation of the context to a releasing of those linguistic and aesthetic energies that heretofore have existed only as pure possibility in one's own language' (in Schulte and Biguenet 1992:13). Friedrich is here echoing von Humboldt: 'Nevertheless

these undertones of language slumber, as do the sounds of an unplayed instrument, until a nation learns how to draw them out' (ibid., 57). What is striking in these formulations is the overt attention to language, to its sounds and aesthetics, together with an apparent (from our perspective) unwillingness to probe any further in that direction. The source text remains in the background, a monadic first cause, its contribution that of the unmoved mover. At the same time the linguistic features of the translation are absent, or at best arcane and irrelevant: they are first and foremost semantic and stylistic, rarely syntactic, while the proscribed phonological elements are kept out of sight like Eve's unwashed children in the folktale, the ancestors of the Icelandic elves. This bias is an unrelenting characteristic of the discourse of translation from the very beginning: the phonological and syntactical texture of the material is excluded, even in times when a detailed understanding of linguistic structure was available (at least from Humboldt onwards). The reason why Cicero, Jerome and Alfred did not divorce the form and the semantics of *verbum* was simply that they had no conceptual need to do so; later, when this need had arisen,⁷ the old formulation lived on, and what was once a unity became a confusion: even today the phrase 'word-for-word translation' rarely implies a one-to-one correspondence between the words of the source and the translation. 'Literalness', in spite of its etymology, has never had much to do with the alphabetical letters. Friedrich's 'linguistic and aesthetic energies' are not grammatical forms, and Humboldt's 'sounds of an unplayed instrument' are not phonological sounds, except when clothed in respectable Neogrammarian apparel, diachronically washed and combed.

What then do these later writers mean by *sounds* and *aesthetics* of language? How do they see them as effecting these third epoch texts? Their lack of exposition of these movements may lead us to wonder if they are really linguistic at all. We may be led to agree that the latent possibilities of the home language may be unleashed by the foreign text, but see this as only coincidentally a linguistic effect: a Shakespeare, an earthquake or a revolution might produce no less spectacular results. Translation may be the trigger, but it does not follow that the process is linguistic, any more than an avalanche is bronchitic when triggered by too loud a cough in the valley.

But this is too slick an argument, and quite untenable. The avalanche is forever inexorably linguistic, in spite of misguided attempts to deny the fact.⁸

⁷ Owen Barfield (1985) maps out this need and points to elements of that earlier continuum which would be better retained.

⁸ Thus André Lefevere: 'Translation is not primarily "about" language' (1992: 57); discussing Cowper's comment on translating the Iliad—'It is difficult to kill a sheep with dignity in a modern language'—he insists: 'My contention is that language has absolutely nothing to do with it' (90).

Its first innocent movement begins in the smallest grains of linguistic form: it is a *valanche* into the *valley*, a *lavanche* which *washes* down the hillside like a stream of *lava*.⁹ If not bronchitic, the beetling summits and avalanches of the Alps are for Byron's Manfred, for one, an inspiration to pulmonary fantasies: 'a leap, a stir, a motion, even a breath...' (i.ii 16), and a little later: 'Ye avalanches, whom a breath draws down, / In mountainous o'erwhelming, come and crush me—' (75). The end of the story, since we have embarked on this whimsy, is that ever afterwards that fateful winter was known as 'the winter of the great cough'. To deny these movements is to purge all language of anything linguistic, to see the Saussurean arbitrariness of the sign as an impenetrable silence rather than an infinite resource. There is no middle way here. Either the Elephant and Castle has everything to do with L'Enfant de Castille, or nothing. The Icelandic term *tannfé*, 'tooth-fee', the price of a tooth in a brawl, the proper legal fraction of the Germanic *wergeld* or compensation for homicide, entered the domestic scene as 'a gift to an infant when it cuts its first tooth' (Cleasby and Vigfússon).¹⁰ In Iceland today the concept of *tannfé* is attached to the (European?) custom of placing a milk-tooth under the pillow for the fairies to exchange for a monetary gift; but in Norway the French loanword *fé* 'fairy' has intervened to produce *tannfé* 'tooth fairy'. A similar linkage occurs between the English and Icelandic terms for streaks of high cloud, *mare's-tails* and *maríutásur* 'Mary's skeins (of wool)'. Knútsson (1993a) gives a number of similar examples. These are truly 'literal' correspondences, pairings and substitutions of the letters and sounds themselves. So far from wondering whether the *sounds* and *aesthetics* of language are really linguistic at all we might begin to wonder whether there is really anything going on *except* language: is it not always Much Ado—even when About Nothing?

7.4 The third text

The movements towards the third term that I have been discussing are

This is a radical reduction indeed, for in fact Lefevere does not mean language, but that so dubious abstraction *the National Language*. The last of Lefevere's four 'factors' that 'determine the translator's strategy' (45) is 'language'—elsewhere (100) he calls it 'linguistics'—but his explanatory example from *Lysistrata* concerns a connotative sexual joke which revolves on trans-dialectal misunderstanding. This is exactly Dr Johnson's misunderstanding (cf. footnote 112 on p. 107).

⁹ These variants and their sound-associations are recorded in the *OED*, which also refers to *Manfred*.

¹⁰ I am speculating in associating *tannfé* with compensation for damages, but the connection is not unlikely. The Laws of Alfred and Ine award 8 shillings for a front tooth, and 3 shillings extra for a molar: *Gif mon oðrum ðone toð onforan heafde ofaslea, gebete þæt mid VIII scillingum. Gif hit sie se wongtoð, geselle III scillinga to bote*. In the 13th-century Icelandic *Saga of Þorgils and Hafliði* the chieftain Hafliði loses three fingers in a brawl, and later demands and is awarded exorbitant damages; the reply has become a proverb in Icelandic: *dýr mundi Hafliði allur* 'all of Hafliði would be expensive'.

movements of linguistic form; our task is to search out the intimate details of *linguistic interaction* between the two (or more) languages (or varieties of language) concerned. And of course ‘interaction’ implies a third term; we can no longer discuss translation without discussing the third text, triangulated on the source *and* the translation. This is not a problem, unless we are anxious about the endemic paradoxes of set theory. All texts, sources and translations alike, are already third texts. Three, as Pseudo-Iamblichus explains, is the Beginning of Number.

The Icelandic scholar Ástráður Eysteinnsson has made an explicit statement of the existence of a third text occurring as the inevitable consequence of the juxtaposition of source and translation, in the form of an ‘interaction of two languages and cultures resulting in the formation of a third text which is perhaps not one discrete text but rather the locus of many possible texts’¹¹

(Eysteinnsson 1996:216). He is critical of the neglect of the source text and the analytical bias that comes from centring the translation as the proper object of analysis: the source and the translation are each to be ‘examined in the light from each other’ (141-2).¹² This is an express denial of filiation.

Eysteinnsson sees the third text as being potentially realized when a critic discusses translation, or a text is read in a bilingual edition, with the translation on a facing page:

7\2 In the case of a bilingual reader with a fairly open mind about the original text, this activity can be visualized as a fusion; the outlines begin to take shape in the reader’s mind of a new text constructed from the other two. In most cases this text does not materialize, or only partly materializes, but we can hardly escape the conclusion that our understanding of the work, which is in fact two works, is the fruit of this indirect fusion, some sort of third text.¹³
(Eysteinnsson 1996:173)

For my taste, Eysteinnsson is hedging here: his ‘third text’ arises only exceptionally, or ‘only partly’; and then only when the bilingual reader keeps ‘an open mind about the original text’. This tentativeness is belied by his next,

¹¹ ‘... samspil[...] tveggja tungumála og menningarheima sem leiðir til mótnar þriðja texta, sem er kannski ekki einn afmarkaður texti heldur vettvangur margra hugsanlegra texta.’

¹² ‘Þessir óvissuþættir [i.e. unexpected intertextual connections, PK] birtast oft einkar vel þegar þýðingin og frumtextinn eru skoðuð í hvers annars ljósi.’

¹³ Sé maður læs á bæði málin og hafi ekki of fastmótaðar hugmyndir um frumtextann, má líkja slíkri reynslu við samruna; í huga manns verða til drög að nýjum texta sem byggist á hinum tveim. Í flestum tilvikum raungerist þessi texti ekki, að minnsta kosti nema að hluta, en ætla verður að skilningur okkar á verkinu sem við höfum lesið (sem í raun er [sic] tvö verk) sé afurð þessa óbeina samruna, einskona þriðji texti.

very sensible remark:

7\3 The question arises as to whether something of this sort doesn't occur in the case of all creative reading.¹⁴

—although the blow is softened, even here, by ‘creative’: at least since Roland Barthes we have been able to conceive of *all* reading as creative. In order really to complete the triangulation we need to abandon these conditions, and say outright that when we read, it is always a third text we are reading.

7.5 Where is the text?

Then why *third*? If the third text is the only text we can perceive, why not simply call it a *text*?

Our hesitation is a response to the polysemy of the term: I have used it so far in this study in an indefinite and shifting sense. Consider for instance the idea of ‘the text of *Béowulf*’: is there any single object that might supremely bear this name? If we are referring to the 10th-century manuscript known as Vitellius A. xv. in the Cottonian collection in the British Museum, from which all existent copies of the poem derive, we are no longer speaking of the most reliable version, for fire and age have taken their toll, although much was saved by copies made by the Icelander Grímur Jónsson Thorkelin in 1787. The ‘text’ in my computer, based on Klaeber’s 1950 edition, is a much better—or should I say authoritative—one. It seems that ‘texts’ can exist in numbers of variations which are also ‘texts’—a recursion which recalls the problem of sets and horizons. There is a fascinating literature on the landscape of textual variation: see for example McGann (1991) and Robinson (1993). And so before we can speak dispassionately of ‘positioning two texts in the same cognitive space’, the main concern of this study, we must ask ourselves what these objects are that can be so positioned.

Paul Ricoeur returns to this question in a number of essays. He establishes the independence of the text firstly from the writer—‘What the text signifies no longer coincides with what the author meant’ (1981:136)—and also from the original audience, or, for that matter, from any single reading, and so from any and all subsequent readers (cf. 1981:91). In Bakhtinian terms, the text achieves its own voices. Ricoeur’s hermeneutical programme leads him to establish the identity of the text in terms of its interpretation: the text is to be found in what it (itself) means.¹⁵ This implies that for Ricoeur as for

¹⁴ Einhver kann að spyrja hvort eitthvað svipað gerist ekki við allan skapandi lestur.

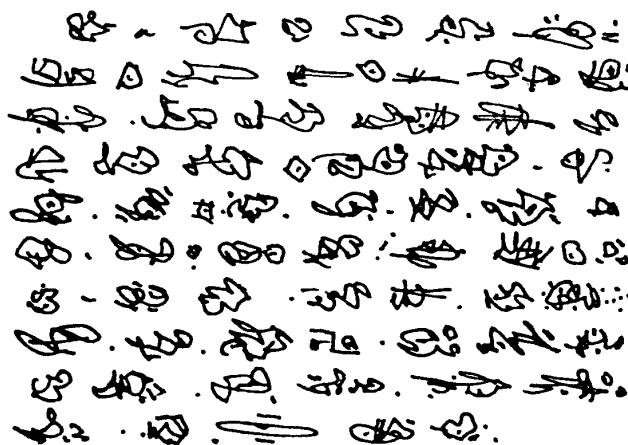
¹⁵ I am not summarizing Ricoeur, but retaining only a few steps of his arguments; for Ricoeur, the independence of the text occurs in a number of aspects of ‘distanciation’ and ‘decontextualization’,

Bakhtin the text is already present; it *has already been found*. But if we accept an ontology which assumes that the text is an arena of interference patterns in the sense outlined in previous chapters, then we have to answer some prior questions before we can attend to its interpretation. We must ask where (in what space) it resides: for until we can locate the space, we cannot register the fields of interference resonating within that space. Ricoeur asks *What is a text?* (1981:145-164), and begins by offering a preliminary answer: 'a text is any discourse fixed by writing'. The prior question would be: *Where is the writing? Show it to me!* And when Ricoeur goes on to refine his definition by relating the text not to its writing but to its reading, the prior question would be: *Where is the reading? Show it to me!*

For the sake of the argument, let us assume that we are talking about a well-known text. To clear the decks we'll steer away from the landscape of intimate translation and return to the Ancient Mariner (who has already appeared briefly in chapter 2). At once a marvellous alchemy occurs: you the reader know what poem I mean, although neither you nor I can point to any substantial entity which is really the poem in question. Where is it to be found, and what is its form? Obviously not on the printed page, which is a meaningless pattern to anyone who does not possess at least three areas of knowledge: (1) knowledge of the language of the text; (2) knowledge of the writing system of the text; and (3) familiarity with the convention of writing. The progression is crucial. We may be ignorant of the language of the text but still be able to manage a 'reading' of sorts: for example we may be able to decipher whether the text is prose or poetry, and even work out some of the rules of its metrical system such as whether rhyme or alliteration is being used. If we do not understand the writing system we can still be fairly sure that we are dealing with a human text: we can for instance recognize Max Ernst's *Preface* as a *text*, although we may at the same time suspect that it is not *language*: (Nordgren *et al.* 1995:51)

and the question of the identity of the text is subsumed by the question of its interpretation. These issues are not pertinent to my argument here.

7\4



(detail)

And so the printed pages of *The Ancient Mariner* are not the poem, but only a *representation* of the poem; the poem does not disappear if the book is destroyed. Is it then correct to say that the text is an object which materializes in the act of reading? If so, we have to deal with the fact that there are several types of readings available to us: we can read silently or aloud, and we can also commit the text to memory and ‘read’ it there, in our minds. Let us examine these possibilities.

When the poem is read aloud it could be said that it materializes as sound, as acoustic waves in the air. But in fact whatever reservations we have about the poem residing in its printed form apply at least as forcefully to the spoken form: the sound waves are also symbols, with only a vague emotive meaning for those who do not understand the language, and meaningless for beings who do not understand the significance of speech. Our conclusion must be that the poem does not materialize in its recitation any more than it does in its writing—and in fact if we follow Ricoeur’s or Bakhtin’s accounts of written language we will find that in recitation it suffers significant loss.

How about the act of reading the poem in silence, that strange activity of Bishop Ambrose that intrigued Augustine (*Confessions* VI. iii)?¹⁶ Is it possible that the poem materializes as some pattern of thought in our minds? According to the present precarious state of our knowledge of the brain this pattern is formed by bioelectric activity in the neurons. We might suppose then that such neural activity is only another pattern of encoded symbols, like writing or

¹⁶ The considerable implications of this episode are set out by Lock (2001:72-73). See below, p. 253.

spoken language, and indeed we cannot rule out the possibility that some day we will be able to record the brain's activity in such detail that we could factor out the poem itself from the data. But records of brain activity are rather different from conscious sign-systems; here we may invoke the distinction often attributed to the Jansenists of Port-Royal des Champs, Antoine Arnauld and Pierre Nicole in 1662, between conscious encoding of information such as language on the one hand, and on the other, natural systems which also impart information, such as cloud formations (from which we can read the weather) and human bodily functions such as heartbeats (from which we can read information about the body's health).¹⁷ Data from human brain activity is of this second type. They do not constitute a sign-system which is meaningless until decoded by the reader; they themselves constitute a reader's decoding, an 'understanding' of the poem.

To say that this brain activity is a real instantiation of the poem would then be parallel to saying that cloud formations are a real instantiation of weather; and we might do worse than this. But at least two complications are involved. Firstly, the poem would now be fragmented into an unknown multitude of private readings, their differences depending amongst other things on how well readers knew the works of the poet, and on what personal intertextualities were evoked by their readings. Secondly, the patterns of brain activity produced by the poem are not materialisations of the poem in the same way as written signs or sound waves, because the individual brain which hosts them is itself highly patterned beforehand. This is not necessarily to invoke innatist theories of language (although it may also do that); whether innate or acquired, the prior patterning of the mind must weigh heavily on the outcome. A reading of the poem, insofar as it takes place in the brain, must be a tertiary field of interference formed from a large number of fields of which the input from the written page and the prior patterning of the mind are two of many. In Eysteinnsson's words, 'We read this material together with what is already in our minds', *Við lesum slíkt efni saman við það sem í okkur býr* (173); the Icelandic verb *lesa* 'read', like the German *lesen*, retains some of its original

¹⁷ Arnauld and Nicole make three distinctions between signs: firstly between certain and probable signs (which goes back to Aristotle (Arnauld et Nicole 1981:378 n.56); secondly between signs which are joined to and separated from their signata; and thirdly 'La troisième division des signes est, qu'il y en a de naturels qui ne dependent pas de la fantaisie des hommes, ... & qu'il y en a qui ne sont que d'institution & d'établissement.... Ainsi les mots sont signes d'institution des pensées, & les caractères des mots' (Arnauld et Nicole 1981:54, Logique I,4). The editors note that this particular distinction is also made by Augustine, *De doctrina Chr.*, I.2 (378 n.58): 'Signorum igitur alia sunt naturalia, alia data.' Augustine's distinction is in fact primarily between cloud formations on the one hand (his example is smoke, signifying fire), and animate signs on the other; he then makes a further distinction between unconscious animate signs such as heart-beats and conscious ones such as words.

sense ‘to glean’ (English *lease*), often used in Icelandic in the sense of gathering together strands of wool. We weave this material together with what we already have in our minds: this is how we allow the outside world into our minds; this is how we perceive.¹⁸ Or, to return to Ricoeur, ‘To read is, on any hypothesis, to conjoin a new discourse to the discourse of the text.’ *Conjoin* points to the same image as Eysteinnsson’s *reading* (gathering) *together*, and describes the activation of an interference pattern by *positioning in the same cognitive space* the text and ‘what we already have in our minds’. Using the Heideggerian concept of ‘being-in-the-world’, Ricoeur ‘appl[ies] it to the theory of the text. For what must be interpreted in a text is a *proposed world* which I could inhabit and wherein I could project one of my ownmost possibilities’ (Ricoeur 1981:141-2). Interestingly, Ricoeur places the locus of this interaction ‘in front of the text’—I do not have to *go through the text* to find it. This is the proper locus of the interference pattern, between myself and the text.

In this sense, then, ‘text’ means no more nor less than ‘third text’: we are *always* referring to interference patterns in cognitive space. And yet somehow woven into this third text lies the thread of identity which links my *Ancient Mariner* to yours, and allows us to understand each other, if only imperfectly. This thread of identity is of course to be found in (at least) one of the participating fields of interference, the input from the written page: we are almost back to where we started, except that we are hard put indeed to extricate this input from the third text before us.

But there is a mode of reading which we have yet to investigate: not reading aloud, not silent reading, but ‘reading’ of the text as it resides in our minds. Here again we are dealing with a cluster of configurations in the brain, but a new element has emerged: the poem is no longer in strict serial form. Relapsing into the technological metaphor we might say that the poem now resides in Random Access Memory: we can dip into it as we will, threading rhyme and repetition in various directions, not even fully remembering their sequence. This is not the same as our back-and-forth reading as we turn the pages of the printed text, for there we break up the sequence of the encoding by ignoring it; perhaps it is a little closer to our saccadic eye-movements ‘along’ the printed line, an unconscious overlapping collection of ‘nows’ from which seriality has yet to be extracted. But when the text resides in our minds, this sequence may in fact be absent, or radically fragmented: we may be unable to recall the sequence of the lines, we may even be unable to remember more than

¹⁸ Knútsson (1993b, particularly p.68) discusses the common terminology of textiles and textuality. Harris (1998:104) gives a good illustration of the variability between individual instantiations of the ‘same’ text.

the most rudimentary snatches of text, and yet we can still discuss the poem and even perhaps make original remarks about it. We can focus on minute details without being able to locate them: there is a place *somewhere* where Coleridge was in difficulties with both the rhyme and the image: *something like* ‘till clomb above the Easter bar / the hornèd moon, with one bright star / betwixt the nether tip...’—and there are other versions with *something like* ‘below the nether tip’ and ‘almost atween the tips’—he is bothered by the two tips of the moon, between which no star can ever appear, the plural -s, which spoils the rhyme with—what was it? ‘my life-blood seemed to sip’? or is that part of something else? This is not simply a question of the varying editions published in Coleridge’s lifetime, but also of my own reconstruction of a text *I cannot fully remember*. Yet this is not simply a private reading, for I can discuss it with others and they will know what I mean. With or without sequence, even without any of the original wording, the poem in my mind retains a texture which my interlocutors also recognize.

We are clearly having problems with our floating abstractions, finding some more or less ‘tertiary’ than others. This is a fundamental misconception. Tertiarieness is not a range of different states, but a single condition of perception: whatever comes to mind is in tertiary form in that it is composed of other forms which interact. If we can pick out those other forms they will also by definition be tertiary forms; they are not hierarchically or sequentially organized. Thus when we talk of a poem in this way we are not handling a sequentially organized text. The third text which has quickened in the marriage of the ‘original’ (invisible, unreadable) poem and the patterned brain and constitutes our understanding of the poem does not exist as a serial construct. There is also evidence to suggest that the poem—or any logical or artistic serial creation—does not necessarily acquire its seriality until late in the process of creation. Penrose (1990:451-547), quotes Hadamard for accounts of creative activity where works of art (Mozart) or mathematical theorems (Poincaré) are formed in the minds of their creators in complete and apparently non-sequential form; days or even weeks of hard activity are then needed to commit these creations to paper. Coleridge’s own famous account of the genesis and loss of *Kubla Khan* is a case in point.

7.6 Where is fancy bred?

Jackendoff (1997: chapter 8, 179-208) sees consciousness as an intermediate stage between the unconscious ‘outer’ shell of sense-perception and the also unconscious ‘inner’ shell of brain activity, including logical thought. According to Jackendoff we do not become consciously aware of the causative chain of sense-perception until remarkably late in the process: we cannot, for

instance, extricate the right-eye image from the left-eye image (except by physically shutting one or the other off), and we cannot follow the process by which we merge these two images together. We hear sounds as sounds, not as rapid variations of air-pressure, and the (mathematically) enormously complicated processes by which we make pitch- and formant-extractions from audial wave-forms is not performed on a conscious level. Physical skills such as walking or bicycling or washing up, immensely complicated as they are, are largely unconscious.

The inner core of brain activity, then, is unconscious, lying within this conscious shell. Logical thought is at least partly unconscious: ‘certain steps behind common sense are hidden from conscious experience’ (Jackendoff 1997:180); our laborious attempt to present our logical conclusions in language are essentially retrospective, codifying and thus stabilizing them. Jackendoff sees this as connected to the difference between *working* memory and *long-term* memory:

7\5 We can be aware of a (long-term) memory only if the memory is recovered into working memory. Hence, for example, the lexicon and the rules of grammar are not accessible to awareness. Only their consequences, namely linguistic expressions, are consciously available. (Jackendoff 197:181).

This tallies nicely with Augustine’s term *memoria* for what we would call not only memories but also *concepts* (*Confessions* X): it is in the ‘fields and vast palaces of memory’ that we store not only what we have experienced or learnt (X.viii, ix, Chadwick’s translation), but also the Platonic forms of logic and mathematics (X.xii, xiii) which Chomsky calls *innate*. And Jackendoff continues to recycle Augustine in pointing out the power of the conscious mind/memory to ‘construct thoughts about thoughts, otherwise unframable’ (Jackendoff 1997:205)—Augustine notes that ‘I also remember that I remember’ (X.xiii). In this respect Jackendoff is careful to emphasize that there are no clear-cut borderlines between conscious and unconscious thought: in manipulating them consciously (‘bringing them into working memory’) we can build on them, re-rationalizing, employing unconscious logical patterns and conscious linguistic formulations in turn or simultaneously. As we formulate, we see the limitations or errors of our formulation; we ‘think as we write’. But the actual moments of rational thought, Penrose’s non-algorithmic understandings, occur unconsciously: ‘thought *per se* is *never* conscious’ (Jackendoff 1997:187). The narrow shell of consciousness, the agile workspace where we arrange and codify sense-perceptions and reasoning, is essentially (once again) an ‘interface’.

In seeing the conscious mind as simply a ‘visible’ phase in the connection between the outside unconscious and the inner unconscious, Jackendoff is in fact aligning himself with Owen Barfield’s conception of the *signans* and the *signatum* as being two segments of the same continuum. Barfield sees our distinction between mind and matter as a later mental construct: ‘The distinction between inner and outer, which seems so fundamental to us, will be seen to have been brought about by man himself in the very process of exercising the symbolizing faculty which gave him language’; mankind ‘did not *start* as an onlooker; the development of language enabled him to *become* one’ (1985:16-17). Barfield quotes Emerson: “It is not only words that are emblematic; it is things which are emblematic” (15): our consciousness is the lens in which we can see the threads of connection between the metaphors which already exist in the natural world (Barfield) and the logic of our own minds (Jackendoff); while Augustine hammers home the point that these threads of connection are the sounds themselves, the images that have already passed away and whose echoes we also keep in our memories (Conf. X.x).

7.7 Knitting loose ends

We left the text a little while ago woven firmly into our various insulated minds: we still have to account for its public identity. The common denominator appears to be the text for which we are still searching, the text of which the printed page is one of the keys, and of which the private reading in the individual mind is a minor, ephemeral instantiation; we are being driven back to a Platonic metaphysics, or a web of unseen connections, some wonderful universal particles in the spirit of David Bohm’s hidden variables, the sub-atomics of the Universal Mind: the poet has access to the godhead. This is of course the concept of *inspiratio* from the time before Descartes severed mind from matter, before the poetic genius took up its abode in the individual mind and *mania* became a mere pathological condition (Barfield 1985:121). We seem to have ground to a halt, simply assigning to our poem the same incomprehensible ontology as all other being. Unless, useless as it is, and in any case impossible, to return to an earlier understanding, we may be able to pick up some dropped threads and find they are still firmly anchored. The extratextual traces which we have caught sight of here and there in this study are of this nature: they are threads of connection to unknown entities, and we ought not to give up our search for the text before we have unravelled them.

It remains then to follow up certain irregular features of the moiré we have been discussing in earlier chapters which do point to the influence of extratextual fields. For one thing, it is clear that the idea of a simple third text

formed by ‘reading together’ two other texts, source and translation, is simplistic in the extreme, even given that the two component texts are themselves third texts. The interlinear analysis proposed in chapter 6 and applied in Appendix A addresses only a minimal set of gross abstractions from the texts concerned; while the inchoate third text proposed in this chapter is necessarily built up of a vast range of component fields of widely different strengths, from dominance to fleeting trace, which no Fourier analysis however finely grained will manage to factor out. This can sometimes be seen in the individual moirés we have discussed. Consider for instance *be eaxle ≈ í bægsli* ‘by the shoulder ≈ by the flipper’, discussed as 5\36 on page 168. In order to define this moiré it is not enough to align the two texts and point to the segmental correspondence. We must also state the lack of *sm̄p* phasing (i.e. that there is no associated syntactic moiré, see section 6.8.2), and the fact that the associated semantic moiré is somewhat strained (we might say semantically *displaced* if we had not reserved this term for physical textual displacement) in that it involves a correspondence between the concepts SHOULDER and FLIPPER which goes outside the understanding of these two texts, and is in part an extratextual understanding. The free-floating phonological correspondence with the absent Icelandic word *bæklaður* ‘crippled’ is also a minor eddy on the surface. The moiré is a complex of various peaks of interference of which only a few can be abstracted as simple linguistic quanta: many are too weak or tiny to register. Some are extratextual.

Extratextualities thrive in a tightly-woven intertexture, as the following example demonstrates. We have seen that the recognition of a moiré implies a degree of resolution, and in section 6.7.4 I proposed the term *resolution phasing* to describe a moiré which remained ‘visible’ at different degrees of resolution. Here is an example of a half-line of *Béowulf ≈ Bjólfskviða* with a high degree of resolution phasing; it may be added to the examples of ‘full cognate reflection’ with which I opened chapter 5 (5\1, 5\2 and 5\3):

7\6 Ðæt wæs gód cyning
 ≈ Það var góður konungur (11)
 SMA sma sma sma sma
 ‘that was a good king’

To refresh the reader’s memory: the plot SMA is a low-resolution plot referring to all the following plots, stating that there is full semantic and syntactic correspondence (S and M) at sentence-level and that the alliteration of the original appears unchanged in the translation (A). The four normal-resolution plots sma state that each quantum (in this case, word) in the source forms a

threefold syntactic (s), semantic (m) and phonological (a) moiré with an undisplaced quantum in the translation. The term a indicates that the phonological correspondence is built up of etymologically equivalent high-resolution segments.¹⁹ In other words, the correspondence shown by the running analysis could not be closer: there is resolution-phasing (S and M co-occur with s and m), smp-phasing (each plot has phasing in all three moiré types) and plot phasing (there is a pool of identical moirés). The two lines are the ‘same’ in all the features described by the running analysis.

But this is still a limited analysis. The two texts at this point are non-equivalent in one important respect, one that does not register in the analysis simply because the lowest range it addresses is the sentence-level SMA. We can however envisage lower ranges: we have already encountered a level of resolution which ‘sees’ the whole text (cf. footnote 19 on page 216), the level assumed in the formulation ‘*Béowulf* ≈ *Bjólfskviða*’. Lower ranges still are the domains of corpora, of languages, and of wider cultural contexts, of Lotman’s semiospheres. An exhaustive statement of the moiré in 7\6 would have to admit moiré failure at a very low-resolution grid at which a number of different domains become visible. For instance, throughout Björnsson’s translation there is an underlying semiotic tension between cultures separated by the lapse of a millennium, although their disparities are belied by a similarity of the language; thus the concept of the GOOD KING has changed radically over the ensuing centuries. In the context of the original poem the king was the focus of social consciousness, an ever-present figure in the Hall, united with many of his people by blood relationship, the living repository of much of the tribal wisdom and expertise upon which their existence in a hostile environment depended. More tellingly, the sense of individual identity which has developed in the West since the Renaissance was unknown in the feudal hall. Yuri Lotman describes the shared identity of the boyar, his family, his serfs and villagers under Ivan the Terrible, pointing out that the ‘notion of collective (in this case, clan) personality, and not individual personality, lies behind the idea of the blood feud, according to which the whole clan of the murderer is perceived to be responsible’ (Lotman 2001:139). This shared identity of lord and subject is manifest in *Béowulf* and in Anglo-Saxon society as late as *The Battle of Maldon*; it also underlies the family feuds in the Icelandic sagas. But it is not explicit: no medieval text expresses its lack of the modern concept of individual identity in so many words. This patently obvious remark can be restated as a principle of low-resolution interference: some patterns occur at so

¹⁹ In accordance with section 5.1.3 the two structural moirés *þæt≈það* and *wæs≈var* would in fact be plotted smc, or alternatively placed in brackets. I have ignored this protocol here.

low a frequency, so great a wavelength, that they do not appear in the high-resolution forms of the text.

The concept of kingship is arguably more alien to a modern Icelandic than to a subject of the British monarchy: throughout the long history of the Icelandic settlement it has been anomalous at least, if not at times downright suspect. Modern Icelanders tend to be proud of their republican status and a shade derisive of the royal pageantry of the English or Scandinavian thrones. In other words there is a lack of phasing at a wavelength far lower than those we have been working with so far. But it registers nevertheless in the moiré in that there occurs a correspondence, as it were, between two non-correspondences at either end of the scale: just as *cyning* and *konungur* refer to different concepts—although we have little choice other than to translate them both as ‘king’—, so *c* differs from *k* and *y* differs from *o*. The moiré is identifiable by this characteristic: one of the components of this segment of the moiré is of such low resolution that individual phenomena cannot be perceived, although it resonates throughout the field; its wavelength encompasses elements outside any of the local texts which participate in the field of interference.

In order to understand more clearly in what way this wavelength transcends the horizons of language, we might compare it to another moiré failure in the same example (7\6), this time fully intralinguistic, residing only in linguistic form. It concerns the pronoun *þæt* / *það* ‘that’ at the beginning of the sentence. This time the mismatch occurs between Modern English on the one hand and Old English and Icelandic on the other; between Old English and Icelandic there is full agreement. The difficulty becomes apparent if we examine some of the choices made by Modern English translators of *Béowulf*:

- 7\7 A good king was that. (Morris 1910-1915)
 A noble king was he! (Clark Hall 1911)
 A good king he! (Kennedy 1940)
 He was an excellent king. (Wright 1956)
 ... : king worth the name! (Morgan 1964)
 That was a good king. (Hieatt 1967)
 He was a noble king! (Crossley-Holland 1968)
 He was a good king! (Alexander 1973)
 That was a good king. (Donaldson; Tuso 1975)
 That was a great king! (Swanton 1978)
 Yes—a good king! (Osborn 1983)
 That was one good king. (Heaney 1999)

Only Hieatt and Donaldson are content with the symphrastic (i.e. fully pma) translation *that was a good king*; the other translators are uncomfortable with

the antecedent of anaphoric *that*. In Modern English *that* is not marked for case or gender and refers unequivocally to the king who figures in the discourse: the copula *was* joins *that* and *a good king* in an equation: *that = a good king*. But in Old English there is a grammatical mismatch between *þæt*, which is neuter, and *cyning*, which is masculine: the masculine form of the neuter *þæt* is *sé*, and the Old English form for the equation *that = a good king* would be *sé wæs gód cyning*. In classical Old English poetry we find that in sentences of the type ‘that + copula + complement’ the form for ‘that’ is either in gender agreement with the complement:

- 7\8 *sé wæs héah ond bréd* ‘that [=Béowulf’s *hlæw* ‘burial mound’, masc.] was high and broad’ (*Beowulf* 3156)
sé wæs eald genéat ‘that was an old retainer [masc.]’ (*Battle of Maldon* 309)
séo is eallum cúð eorðbúendum ‘that [= *wundorlicu wiht* ‘wondrous being’, fem.] is known to all earth-dwellers’ (*Riddle* 7)

or has the neuter form without agreement:

- 7\9 *þæt wæs drihten sylf* ‘that was the lord [masc.] himself’ (*Andreas* 248)
þæt wæs egeslic wyrd ‘that was a terrible fate [fem.]’ (*Dream of the Rood* 74).

The difference between these two structures is that the form in agreement (*sé*, *séo*) refers directly to its antecedent, while the neuter form without agreement has a wider scope, referring to the discourse of which the antecedent is the subject. Thus the use of the neuter *þæt* in 7\6 widens the scope to apply to the whole panoply of Scyld's kingship from the time of his miraculous coming as a foundling: 7\6 really means *this phenomenon was a good king*.

Modern English *that* carries no gender, and so cannot partake in these structures. Many of the translations in 7\7 attempt to reflect this wider reference, not only by tampering with *that* but also by using a more elaborate adjective than *good*, or rearranging the syntax. Wright responds by substituting ‘excellent’, while Clark Hall’s ‘noble’ evokes post-feudal royalty. Swanton’s ‘great’ is spoilt by the modern colloquial use of the word. Morgan turns the sentence into an appositive exclamation in order to render the tone and ceremony. Morris, unfettered by the trammels of acceptable English, achieves the weight of affirmative summing-up of the OE sentence with a shift of word-order. Osborn manages to achieve the summing-up without unnatural word-order, and retains a degree of measured but vital ceremony; but this all hangs on the literary register of ‘yes’, which is perilously close to *yeah, man*. In contrast, playing with registers is not a danger for Heaney, with his express commitment to the speech-patterns of Ulster.

In Icelandic, however, the situation is exactly the same as in Old English: *það* is the neuter form of masculine *sá* and feminine *sú*. The usage is the same, and modern Icelandic has the same options here as the Old English. Thus these questions simply do not arise: Björnsson's *Það var góður konungur* does exactly what the original does.

And so the translation problems concerning *that* in this passage are of an entirely different nature from those concerning the *good king*. *That* is anaphoric and intralinguistic; it creates tensions between languages without reference to their cultural backgrounds, segregating analytic Modern English on the one hand from the more synthetic Old English and Modern Icelandic together on the other. In contrast, *good king* sets up other tensions which are not confined to the structure of the language but rather involve another discourse: the historical development of kingship. And yet both these different types of tension, the inter- and extratextual, can be expressed in the same tritextual terms: they occur as interference patterns at different levels of resolution but within the same arena of text. The two modes of activity, the inter- and the extra-textual, occupy the same ground. Here again we see the principle of constitutive incompatibility (page 132): fields do not have to be compatible in order to interfere one with another.

What I have been calling *tension*, then, is in fact another interference pattern; as always, the primitive fields that interact to form interference patterns are already themselves interference patterns. This homomorphism is a recurrent feature: we do not have to look far to find other domains of discourse which display the same propensity to produce interference patterns. The domain of social structure in which the concept of the king developed beyond the wildest imaginings of the *Béowulf* poet is only one aspect of the momentous changes which occurred between *Béowulf* and Björnsson's translation. In chapter 2 (p. 53) I invoked the movement from memory to the manuscript, the advent of writing, a movement which was still in progress at the time the *Béowulf* manuscript was written. In a figure which meshes nicely with Derridean or Bakhtinian concepts of writing, Franz Rosenzweig identifies a later, perhaps even more momentous development, the establishment of holy scripture: 'So also in the life of a people: a moment comes when writing ceases to be a handmaiden of language and becomes its mistress. This moment comes when a matter encompassing the whole life of a people has been cast into writing' (Buber and Rosenzweig 1994:51). The time-scales are very different: *Béowulf* was committed to vellum long before the Bible became a canonical English text, and a good while before Icelandic became a written language. Charles Lock (2001) has explored the relationship between the fashion of silent reading that grew up in the west in the eighteenth century and Bakhtin's

conception of the proliferation of voices in ‘novelistic discourse’: only silent reading can elicit the ‘unspeakable intonation’ of the novel. Clearly this emancipation of the single word, its diastasis in a plurality of voices, ‘perpetually, without hope or fear of resolution’ (Lock 2001:86), also ushers into the text a host of gestures from outside the immediate horizon, transforming it with intertextual and therefore multitextual plurality: the explicit reference to another text, the bent finger pointing over the local skyline, demands the same mute intonation. And so here we encounter another radical divide between Björnsson’s exemplar and her translation: the *Béowulf* manuscript is the archive of a recital, of a single voice, perhaps chanting, perhaps accompanied by a harp; the flow of narrative, the poet’s occasional comments, the poem’s spectacular digressions, are all strung together in the same monolinear channel, the voice of the Anglo-Saxon *scóp*, the maker and the speaker of the verse. Björnsson’s text on the other hand is not limited in this way. By virtue of its epoch alone, the epoch of silent reading and silent writing, it is already infected with the freedom to shift and multiply its references. This infection pervades all its levels of resolution, but it is in those we have been discussing in earlier chapters that it is most apparent. Both texts, the original and the translation, are woven of intertextualities, as all texts are; but in each text the role of these intertextualities in establishing the reading is radically different. The *scop*’s conventional formulations were elements in his *wordhord*, his treasury of words, the tokens known and understood and expected by his audience. His choice of the formula *ellen fremedon* ‘performed deeds of valour’ in *Béowulf* 4 is normal poetic usage, involving no explicit reference to similar formulae in other Anglo-Saxon poems (see 3\11), any more than his choice of the word *æpelingas* ‘princes’ in the same line explicitly invokes the 150-odd occurrences of the word elsewhere in the Anglo-Saxon poetic corpus.²⁰ In contrast, Björnsson’s translation *örlög drýgðu* ‘performed deeds of fate’ at this point (3\10) is a multi-layered reference, explicitly linking the Old Norse *Völundarkviða* with the Old English *Béowulf* in a statement so articulate that it has its own discourse—that established by the First Grammarian in the words *ver erum æinnar tungu* ‘we are of one tongue’ (2\6, page 33).

But we are discussing intimate translation, and so we must also consider phenomena at higher resolution than word and formula. Here too we find rich evidence of the same Bakhtinian dialogic. Formulations such as *í bæxli* ‘by the flipper’ (5\36) or *hló eigi* ‘laughed not’ (5\41) speak at one and the same time of the straightforward narrative and of the intimate form of the original, *be*

²⁰ Figures from Bessinger and Smith (1978)

eaxle ‘by the shoulder’ and *nalles hólinga* ‘not without cause’—references which can only be signalled by the ‘irrational intonation’ of silent reading. And here too we encounter a crucial aspect of this intonation, Bakhtin’s progression from the phoneme to the grapheme:

7\10 In the novel ... the phoneme yields almost completely its auxiliary functions (to designate signification, to elicit movement, to be the basis for intonation) to the grapheme (cited in Lock 2001:77).

This process is clearly at work in the essentially graphological moirés we encountered in 5.2.1.2, where similar graphs without phonological similarities, such as $\delta (=p)$ and p , partake in the interference pattern: *nípende* \approx *niðmyrk* (5\25) and *þrýðum* \approx *þrúðir* 5\26; see also 4\4.

This imbalance between *Béowulf* and Björnsson’s *Bjólfskviða* leads us again to an essential characteristic of the interference pattern: the equality of different strengths. Clearly, in appealing to the idea of a third text we cannot invoke an isosceles triangulation. Our tritextual viewpoint does not allow us a balanced stereoscopic focus on *Béowulf* and *Bjólfskviða*, for the rich dimensions of Björnsson’s translation exert enormous gravity and slew her text towards the common centre of the participating bodies: in other words, our own parochial perspective inevitably foregrounds Björnsson’s text.²¹ This is not to invalidate our attempts in 6.5.1 to avoid parallax, which is essential if our representation is to be unbiased; but it does point to the dangers of the optical metaphor of *parallax* and *foreground* which assumes a Euclidean perspective plotted in the three dimensions of human space. This is not the shape of the Third Text, which travels in and out of its own constituents, ignoring even Time in its rôle of the shadow of further dimensions: the formula ‘ $a \approx b \approx c$ ’ which I proposed in 4\45 is exactly equal to ‘ $b \approx c \approx a$ ’ and ‘ $c \approx a \approx b$ ’ in 4\46: a field of interference is coequal and coterminal with its components, all of which can be factored out in the same fashion and using the same means as those which (*in their incompatibility*) constitute the field of interference itself. This enables us to accept that Björnsson’s translation is a multi-layered text in a more overt sense than the original poem, a more naked and self-conscious text; not only because it is read (in the tritextual sense of this chapter) by con-temporary, con-textual readers while the original poem is no longer (if it ever was); not only in that it is a translation and thus has closer ties with its original than one usually finds between neighbouring texts; but also in that it is an *intimate* translation in the sense of chapter 1. And this rich

²¹ Here I should say *my* parochialism: for Anglo-Saxon scholars for whom *Béowulf* is the familiar text, and *Bjólfskviða* the alien, the situation will be reversed.

quality goes a long way towards justifying the residual bias that we left behind in chapter 6: the running analysis in formulations such as 6\25 is firmly anchored to the translation rather than the original; in the extended analysis of the *Breca* episode in Appendix A.2 it is the translation which is printed interlineally, between the original and the running analysis.

In invoking intimacy as the translation's prime characteristic we have come full circle; but perhaps now we can sense a more tangible equality between the partners. One text may be the muted echo of its former self, its long lineage of oral Germanic poetry mostly lost, its sound and music left to the mercy of our speculation, while all plurality, the rich physical repository of phonological-graphological echoism, may appear to be centred in the translation. But this apparent asymmetry does not invalidate the underlying equality of the relationship. The echoes can only be heard with the full and equal participation of the two texts. More importantly, the echoes also claim full equality for themselves: the intimacy they substantiate is a three-way intercourse between them and their texts. At the same time the concept of intimacy also licences any apparent misbalance between the three, for although their common centre may lie closer to the centre of one of them than another, it is nevertheless the common centre of them all. This is a post-Copernican understanding: the Earth does not revolve around the Sun, but rather they both revolve around the gravitational centre of the Solar System. The next step is to discover that there is no discrete Solar System, for its centre is also swayed by bodies outside it. Texts, like heavenly bodies, do not orbit in discrete systems, and systems, like texts, are always open-ended. The Universal Text is poised for its encounter with other universes.

Rosenzweig sees Scripture as being constituted by its essential extratextuality:

7\11 For the voice of the Bible is not to be enclosed in any space—not in the inner sanctum of a church, not in the linguistic sanctum of a people, not in the circle of heavenly images moving above a nation's sky. Rather this voice seeks again and again to resound from outside—from outside this church, this people, this heaven. It does not keep its sound from echoing in this or that restricted space, but it wants itself to remain free.' (Buber and Rosenzweig 1994:56).

Although the echoes and the formulae discussed in earlier chapters are denizens of this restricted space (see page 109), they also consort with extratextual company. There is in fact little reason to segregate Scripture in this respect from textuality in general—not that Rosenzweig would wish so to do.

If the text is open-ended, then it is hardly surprising that we thought we hadn't found it: it is constituted, amongst other things, by our search. In looking for its boundaries we will doubtless encounter extratextual incursions, but they will already have been internalized by the text; if ever they existed as unnameables they became named as they entered the text. Thus the terms employed on the borders and in the margins of textuality, and the interlinear silences throughout the text: we may invoke Lacan's *lalangue*, (Miller 1975, Milner 1978); or Derrida's *remainder*, adopted by Lecercle (1990). To this we might add Attridge's (1988) *peculiar language*, and doubtless other formulations — 'There is a limit,' says Barfield (1977:124), 'to the number of times a man can profitably inform his neighbour, or be informed by him, that the inexpressible cannot be expressed'. These are the aspects of language which cannot be accounted for by the grammar, however widely we define that term; they are what remains and is still essential to language when the rules no longer hold. But there is a giddy circularity in all these formulations, an outer-set paradox. If the remainder is what is beyond all rules, then it needs the rules to discontain it: it is itself a set beyond. Happily, however, language is prior to all our grammars; they can only come into being *within language*, and so can never encompass language, rather it is language which encompasses them; they are by definition subsumed, inadequate. We are duty bound to abandon them. Can the remainder survive without the grammar which discontains it? If at all, it can only survive by becoming all of language, by becoming a true synonym of language. And in language, as we know, there are no true synonyms.

But there are still traces of the unnameables. Whenever textual quanta can be extracted from the interference pattern, then some may be found to quantify the unknown: they appear as inscrutable variables in the *moiré*. These are the extratextual traces, and they constitute the most palpable evidence we have found yet for the presence of the text. The quanta themselves are only visible from the point of view of the complete *moiré*, the act of perception: we must (hopelessly) attempt to look *through* the third text we have adopted to see the other texts beyond. Eysteinnsson (1996:141-2) expresses this by saying that the text and its translation are each read in 'the light from each other';²² Knútsson (1993b:74) even claims that this can involve conscious orientation: 'We can always look for the source of the light we use for reading'.²³ But the forms we have been manipulating in this discussion, the quanta that come together to form a *moiré*, are not sections of real texts, however we may track them down by performing a running analysis such as that in Appendix A. They

²² See footnote 12 on page 239.

²³ Því alltaf má athuga úr hvaða átt það ljós kemur sem notað er við lestur.

are not ‘facts of language’, as Saussure (the real Saussure, not witnesses) makes clear:

7\12 It is false to say: a fact of language must be observed from several different viewpoints; or even: this fact of language is in reality two different things, according to viewpoint; for then one has started out with the assumption that the fact of language exists prior to the viewpoint.

Instead we must say: the viewpoint is the primitive; otherwise it is impossible to grasp any fact of language. (Saussure 2002:19)²⁴

The third text is a viewpoint; the text we have been looking for in this chapter, if it is a fact of language, is constituted by this viewpoint.

7.8 Lack of direction again

It seems we have reversed the aspect of Plato’s cave. I am now looking *in* at the text: its visible form is the third text, its only window to the world. But in fact if ‘I’ (the reader) can locate the third text in the sphere of consciousness between ‘me’ and the outside world, it makes very little difference whether ‘I’ am on the outside looking in, the text a black hole into which I fall, the third text hovering on the event horizon between me and the unseen text within; or whether the text is ‘in here’ and reality ‘out there’, the third text hovering in the skies above me on the event horizon of a white hole. With Owen Barfield, we begin to see the essential sameness of the unconscious within and the unconscious without. The third text *is* our consciousness; it surveys them both.

²⁴ On n’est pas dans le vrai, en disant: un fait de langage veut être considéré à plusieurs points de vue; ni même en disant: ce fait de langage sera réellement deux choses différentes selon le point de vue. Car on commence par supposer que le fait de langage est donné hors de point de vue.

Il faut dire: primordialement il existe des points de vue; sinon il est simplement impossible de saisir un fait de langage. (Saussure 2002:19)

Appendices

Appendix A: running analysis

This appendix gives lines 499-606 of *Béowulf* \approx *Bjólfskviða*, the so-called *Breca Episode*, with a running moiré analysis as proposed in chapters 5 and 6. The *Béowulf* text is Klaeber's (1950); this was Björnsson's source. The text of *Bjólfskviða* is from Björnsson (1983). The running analysis is described in detail in chapters 5 and 6, and the notation follows the suggestions made there, particularly sections 6.6 and 6.7.6. The combined texts as they are printed below (A.2) serve as input to a computer program ('the Profiler') which computes the profile analysis given in Appendix B. For the distinction between running and profile analyses see section 6.5.

The notation used in the running analysis is as follows.

A.1 Key to plot notation used in the *Breca episode*

Each line of analysis begins with a comma (,) which flags the line for the Profiler. The Profiler ignores all other lines. Comments are prefixed by an asterisk (*). For further details, refer to section-numbers given.

A.1.1 Low resolution statements (6.7, particularly 6.7.6)

are shown by the upper-case letters S M P:

S low-res structure (syntactic correspondence) (6.7.2)

M low-res meaning (narrative or discourse correspondence) (6.7.3)

P low-res phonology (used in these texts for alliterative correspondence)
(6.7.5)

For P, the terms A, B or C are written (6.7.5):

- A full alliterative equivalence
- B equivalent head stave, different pattern in first half
- C different head stave

Each low-res statement encountered by the Profiler is read as being being prefixed to all following normal-res plots until a new low-res statement is encountered. Thus the line

SMC sm (s) sm sm MC z /m \m1

is read

SMCsm (SMCs) SMCsm SMCsm MCz MC/m MC\m1

A.1.2 Normal-resolution plots (6.4.2, 6.6)

- s normal-res structure (correspondence of syntactic slot, case etc.)
- m normal-res meaning (correspondence of lexical meaning)
- p normal-res echo (form, reflection)

p never appears in this form in the running analysis; in its stead one of the following terms is written:

A.1.2.1 Systematic (5.1, 6.6)

- a 1st-degree systematic shift (a-sys) (5.1.1)
- b 2nd-degree systematic shift (b-sys) (5.1.2)
- c 3rd-degree (paradigmatic) sys shift (c-sys) (5.1.2)

A.1.2.2 Non-systematic coherent (5.2.1, 6.6.2)

- 5 full profile (2 and 4 may also be used)
- 3 partial profile
- 1 minimal profile

A.1.2.3 Non-systematic non-coherent (5.2.2, 6.6.3)

- j1-5 disjunction
- k1-5 discontinuity
- x1-5 transposition (metathesis)
- q1-5 cover-term for non-sys non-coh (where assigning j, k or x is

- problematic. The Profiler used in Appendix B does not distinguish between non-sys non-coh terms, but reads them all as c .)
- 0 zero p-moiré (written only if it is the only term in the plot) (6.6.3)
 - z moiré failure (6.6.3)

A.1.3 Lack of moiré

Lack of moiré is shown by omitting the term in the plot. Thus ma indicates lack of s , a indicates lack of s and m . Where all three normal-res terms, s , m , and p , are lacking, the term 0 (=zero p-moiré) is written to mark the existence of a plot.

A.1.4 Displacement (5.2.3.1, 6.4.3)

- / displaced 1 from right
- // displaced 2 from right
- /// displaced 3 from right
- \ displaced 1 from left
- \\ displaced 2 from left
- \\\ displaced 3 from left

A change of displacement within the plot is read by the program as two plots. Thus ‘SMA sm\\a’ is read ‘SMA sm SMA\\a’. Zero displacement is assumed by default at the beginning of each plot.

A.1.5 Parentheses and the notation and computation of c-moirés

In the text in this appendix, plots on structural quanta—words with grammatical or functional meaning, rather than lexical or ‘content’ words—are placed in parentheses. This has relevance for the computation of c-moirés.

As discussed in section 5.1.3, the type c was assigned to systematic p-moirés plotted on structural items, whether or not they were in fact a or b or even non-reflective. The reason for this, explained in 5.1.3.1 and 5.1.3.2, is to provide a terminology for *regular* but not *cognate* correspondences of structural words—preposition, pronouns and the like. This terminology is thus ambiguous to the extent that there are really several types of c-moiré: moirés which arise from grammatical (paradigmatic) correspondence only (*þe* \approx *er* 500), those which are fully a-sys (*æt* \approx *að* 500), those where the reflection is b-sys (*énig* \approx *öngvum* 503), and those where the reflection is variously non-systematic (*ond* \approx *og* 523). However, in the the ‘language’ of the running analysis notation used in A.2 below, this ambiguity is resolved by placing all plots on structural items in parentheses. This allows the term c to be used in A.2 only where there is no segmental echoism, i.e. where the p-moiré is purely

a result of correspondence of structural items; if a or b or some non-sys reflection is present it has been recorded in place of c.

This use of parentheses also opens up the possibility of analysing structural p-moirés in fuller detail. The Profiler can be instructed to build profiles in various ways:

- reading all p-moirés within brackets as c, thus effectively removing the bias introduced by the structural items (cf. B\1, page 274 below);
- ignoring the brackets and building a profile in which structural and lexical items are counted equally; this gives a lower value for c and a correspondingly higher value for other p-terms (cf. B\5 p. 279 below);
- ignoring bracketed plots and building a profile for lexical items only (cf. B\6 p. 280 below); or
- reading only bracketed plots and building a profile for structural items only (cf. B\7 p. 280 below).

This also opens up the possibility of testing the suggestion in 5.1 and 5.1.3.3 that the relationship between General and Local Correlation might show different values according to whether they were calculated from structural items or from the so-called lexical items (open-class items, nouns, lexical verbs, etc.). As explained in 5.1.3.3 this suggestion is not followed up in the present study. See below, B.2.

A.1.6 Further symbols

The plot *r* is shorthand for ‘repeat previous plot’. Various other symbols for types of non-sys moirés may occur in the running analysis, notably *o* (‘other non-sys’), *g* (‘graphological’) and *t* (‘trace’, see 5.2.3.2.) When they occur they are explained comments in the text below, and are all read by the Profiler as if they were ‘q’.

A.2 The text of the *Breca Episode*

This text is available at www.hi.is/~peturk/3T/breca.html.

```
[499] Unferð mapelode,      Ecgláfes bearn,
[499] Ófari tók til orða,   Eggleifsbur,
, SMB sma sm3 sm1        sma r sm3
*Un- • Ó- is sma; assuming Klæber's etymology for Unferð, un-frið,
then ferð • fari is non-sys, sm3. I have treated 'tók til orða' as a
single quantum; minimal reflection (sm1) is due to -lode • -orða. If
the phrase is taken as 3 quanta the plots would be sm z ml. For the
plot sm3 on bearn • bur, which are 2nd-degree cognates (b), see the
discussion on 5\9, page 132.
```


[500] þé æt fótum sæt fréan Scyldinga,
 [500] er að fótum sat Frey Skjöldunga,
 ,SMA (smc sma) sma r r r

[501] onband beadurúne - wæs him Béowulfes síð,
 [501] leysti málrúnir - lagði á Bjólfs för,
 , SMC sm s sma MC s (0) sma m//b

*The two genitives Béowulfes • Bjólfs have different syntactical functions in their respective sentences - this is signalled by the existence of s in a plot which lacks S.

[502] móðges merefaran, micel æþunca,
 [502] mararlangferð mikinn óþokka,
 , MB /ma z b ma m3 ma

[503] forþon þe hé ne úþe, þæt ánig óðer man
 [503] því hann unnt gat öngvum manni
 , SMA (smb r) /ma 0 MA (z mb\\m) a

[504] áfre mærdða þon má middangeardes
 [504] metorða meiri Miðgarðssona
 , z smk3 (z) ma SMA sma r 0

*metorða, gen, s without S. B-line: temporary return to S, the genitives here are Ssma

[505] gehéde under heofenum þonne hé sylfa -:
 [505] undir himni hám en hafði sjálfur -:
 , (/sma) /smb \1 (smb) MA 1\\k3 sma
 *S failure doesn't resume until after þone • en

[506] 'Eart þú sé Béowulf, sé þe við Breca wunne,
 [506] "Ert þú sá Bjólfur er við Breka reyndi
 , SMA (sma r r) sma (smc sma) sma sm

[507] on sídne sá ymb sund flite,
 [507] um svalan sæ sund að þreyta,
 , (sm3//a) s1 sma MA /sma (\0) 2

[508] ðær git for wlence wada cunnedon
 [508] veðjuðuð fíflslega um vatnskunnáttu
 , B /k2//3 m (z) 3 b 3
 *cunnian + gp.wada of wæd wadu n sea

[509] ond for dolgilpe on déop wæter
 [509] og með dáradirfsku í djúpum hafis
 ,SMA (sml smc) sml r (sml) a m

[510] aldrum néþdon? Né inc ánig mon
 [510] aldri hættuð? Né ykkur neinn
 , sma sm (sma r) smb (z)

[511] né léof né láð, beléan mihte
 [511] ljúfur né leiður letja mátti,
 , (z) sma (sma) sma sm3 sma

- [512] sorhfullne síð, þá git on sund rêon.
 [512] heimskulegrar hleypifarar.
 , MC 0 z 0 \\m C (z) z
- [513] Þær git éagorstréam earmum þehton,
 [513] Ægisröst þið reynduð örmum þöndum
 ,SMB z /sma /sm (smb) //s sma kh3
- [514] máton merestráta, mundum brugdon,
 [514] og í mararstraum mundum brugðuð,
 ,MB (0) ma m1\\ma SMB sma r
- [515] glidon ofer gársecg; geofon ýpum wéol,
 [515] runnuð útá rúmsjó. Risu öldur,
 , SMC sm (s1) sm sm MC z /m \m1
- [516] wintrys wylmum. Git on wæteres áht
 [516] vetrarbrimgarður; á valdi hafróts
 , MB sma 0 SMB (z sma) 2/sm \sm
- [517] seofon niht swuncon; hé þe æt sunde oferflát,
 [517] sjö nætur svámuð. Hann þig á sundi vann,
 , SMA sma sma s1 (smb sma sml) sma sm
- [518] hæfde máre mægen. Þá hine on morgentíd
 [518] hafði meira megin. Þá að morgni hann
 , sma r r MA (sma /smc) sma (\ma)
- [519] on Heapo-Rámes holm up ætbær;
 [519] að Höð-Rauma hafströnd barst,
 , (smc) sma r sml 0 z ma
- [520] ðonon hé gesóhte swæ sne éþel,
 [520] þaðan fór hann til feðra óðala,
 ,MC (sma) /sm (\smb z) 0 ma
- [521] léof his léodum, lond Brondinga,
 [521] ljúfra ættmenna í landi Bröndunga,
 , B ma z m MB (z) ma sma
 *Sudden lack of M as well as S means that the m of ljúfra ættmenna is unsupported. Compare unsupported s in line 501
- [522] freoðoburh fægere, þær hé fólca áhte
 [522] heimakastala hvar hetjum réði,
 , MC m m z SMC(smc z) sm sm
- [523] burh ond béagas. Béot eal wið þé
 [523] óðali og eignum. Orð sín og heit
 , SMC sm (sml) sm sm (0 0) \sm
- [524] sunu Béanstánes sóðe gelæste.
 [524] sonur Beinsteins sannlega efndi.
 ,SMA sma r r r sm
- [525] Ðonne wéne ic to þé wyrsan geþingea,
 [525] Þó vænti eg þér verri þrauta,

, (s2) smb (sma z sma) sma sml

[526] óéah þú heaðorása gehwær dohte,

[526] þótt þú harðræði þylðir mikil,

, MC (smb sma) kx3 /sm 0

[527] grimre gúðe, gif þú Grendles dearst

[527] í grimmri gunni, ef þú Grendils dirfist

,SMA(z) sma r (sma r) sma smk4

*dearst • dirfist: no apparent cognation, but H would hardly have checked this.

[528] nihtlongne fyrst nêan bíðan.'

[528] næturlangt nærri bíða."

,SMA ma r z smb sma

[529] Béowulf maþelode, bearn Ecgpéowes:

[529] Bjólfur ansaði, borinn Eggþjófi:

, sma sm smk5 sma sm3

*On bearn • borinn see 499.

[530] 'Hwæt, þú worn fela, wine mín Unferð,

[530] "Ofmargt hefir þú, Ófari vinur,

, SMC z /m (0) (\sma) /sma /sm3 (z) \sma

[531] béore druncen ymb Breca spráce,

[531] bjóri drukkinn um Breka talað,

,SMA sma r (sma) sma m

[532] sægdest from his síðe! Sóð ic talige,

[532] sagt frá sæför hans! Satt eg mæli,

, MA ma (sma) /sm (\smb) SMA sma (sma) sm

[533] þæt ic merestrengo máran áhte,

[533] að eg megins meira í mari átti,

,SMB(sma r) MB /mx3 /ma\5 (z) 5\\sma sma

* þæt • að conj is a; ætað prep is also a (different word)

[534] earfeþo on ýpum, ðonne ánig óþer man.

[534] við unnar erfiði tek eg öllum fram.

, MA (/smc) /ma \ma 0 (0) ml 0

[535] Wit þæt gecwædon cnihtwesende

[535] Við það sögðum á sveinaaldri

,SMC (sma r) sm (z) m m

[536] ond gebéotedon - wæron bégen þá git

[536] og bundum heitum - meðan báðir værum

,SMA (sml) s2 m (/sm) smb \sma

[537] on geogoðféore - þæt wit on gársecg út

[537] í æskufjöri - á úfnu hafi

,SMC(smc) sm sma MC (z z) /1 \sm

[538] aldrum néðdon, ond þæt geæfndon swá.

- [538] aldri að hætta, og það efndum við.
 , MA sma (z) sm SMA (sml sma) r 0
- [539] Hæfdon swurd nacod, þá wit on sund rêon,
 [539] Höfðum sverð nakin, er við á sæ runnum
 ,SMA sma r r (smc sma r) sml smk3
- [540] heard on handa; wit unc wið hronfixas
 [540] í hörðum höndum, því við hvalfiskum
 , SA (/smc) \ma sma SMA(0 \sma/5) sm2 sma
- [541] werian þóhton. Nó hé wiht fram mé
 [541] verjast vildum. Var hann eivít mér
 ,SMB sma sm MB 0 (smb) \sm sma (sma)
- [542] flódyþum feor fléotan meahte,
 [542] um flóðöldu frammar né fljóta mátti
 ,MA (z) sma smk1 smk3 (z) sma r
- [543] hraþor on holme, nó ic fram him wolde.
 [543] hraðar um sæ; en honum frá né vék.
 ,SMB sma (sml) sm 0 (/sma) z (sma \sma) sml
- [544] Þá wit ætsomne on sá wæron
 [544] Þá við til samans í sæ vorum
 ,SMA(sma r smc r) (smc) sma r
- [545] fíf nihta fyrst, oppæt unc flód tódráf,
 [545] fimm nætur fullar uns flóð okkur skildi,
 ,SMA sma ma 2 (sms/4) /sma (\sma) sm
- [546] wado weallende, wedera cealdost,
 [546] röst vallandi, veðra kaldast,
 ,SMB sm sma r r
- [547] nípende niht, ond norþanwind
 [547] nótt niðdimm og norðanvindur
 ,SMA /sma \smg4 (sml) sma r
- [548] heaðogrim ondhwearf; hréo wæron ýþa.
 [548] helkaldur móti blés; háar risu unnir.
 ,SMB sm2 m m sm sx5 sm sma
- [549] Wæs merefixa mód onhréred;
 [549] Voru lagardýr lostin undrum.
 , MC ma m m /m m
- [550] þær mé wið láðum lícsyrce mín
 [550] Leik við þau háði lífsserkur minn
 , MC /1 (z sma 0) 3 sm3 sma (sma)
- [551] heard hondlocen, helpe gefremede,
 [551] hörð handasmíð hjálp veitti,
 ,SMA sma ma 0 sma sm
- [552] beadohrægl bróden on bréostum læg

- [552] böðhregla brugðin á brjósti lá,
 ,SMA sma smb sma (sma) sma r
- [553] golde gegyrwed. Mé tó grunde téah
 [553] glituð gulli. Mig til grunna dró
 ,SMA /sm2 \sma (sma smb) sma sm
- [554] fáh féondscaða, fæste hæfde
 [554] feigur fjandskaði, er fest hafði
 , SMA sma r r MA (z) mb sma
- [555] grim on grápe; hwæpre mé gyfepe wearð
 [555] í grimmum greipum. En mér gefið var
 , A (/smc) ma sma SMA (sm sma) mb sm5
- [556] þæt ic áglácan orde geráhte,
 [556] ógnarlegum oddi að rjóða
 ,A (z z) mb m3 ma (z) 2
- [557] hildebille; heaþorás fornam
 [557] hildibílds, í heitu stríði
 , A sma smb (z) 2 \m
- [558] mihtig meredéor þurh míne hand.
 [558] máttugt marardýr minni hendi.
 ,SMA sma r r (z) sma sma
- [559] Swá mec gelóme láðgetéonan
 [559] Að mér oftlega illdýr krepptu
 , MC (0 ma) sm sm sm //m
- [560] þréatedon þearle. Ic him þénode
 [560] þjökuðu þunglega. Þau eg hæfði
 , SMA sm3 r (/smc \sma) s
- [561] déoran sweorde, swá hit gedéfe wæs.
 [561] dýru vopni svo sem vera ber.
 ,SMC sma sm (sma 0) /b 0
- [562] Næs hie ðære fylle geféan hæfdon,
 [562] Varð þeim eigi sú veislugleði
 , MC 0 (mb \m \\mc) \\m \m
- [563] manfordáðlan, þæt hie mé þégon,
 [563] mannaætum mig að gleypa,
 , MA 5 1 (/sma 0) m
- [564] symbel ymsáton ságrunde néah;
 [564] setjast að krás fyrir sæ neðan,
 , MB /ma m \m 0 sma sk3
- [565] ac on mergenne mécum wunde
 [565] en að morgni mæki undaðir
 ,SMA (sml r) sma r r
 *The difference of number between mécum(dp)mæki(ds) does not
 constitute a lack of s, which indicates grammatical slot within a

syntactic grid

- [566] be ýðláfe uppe lægon,
 [566] við útfiri uppi lágu
 ,SMA (smc) sm3 1 (sma) sma
- [567] sweordum áswefede, þæt syðþan ná
 [567] sverðum svæfðir, síðan aldregi
 ,SMA sma r (z sma) sm
- [568] ymb brontne ford brimliðende
 [568] um brattan sæ brimfara
 ,SMA(sma) sma sm sma sm
- [569] láde ne letton. Léoht éastan cóm,
 [569] leiðum loka. Ljós skein í austri
 ,SMA sma (z) m smb /sm (z) \sma
- [570] beorht béacen godes; brimu swaþredon,
 [570] björt guðs birta, brim lægði
 ,SMA sma /sma \sm2 sma sm
- [571] þæt ic sánæssas geséon mihte,
 [571] að eg sævarströnd sjá mætti,
 ,SMA (sma r) sma sm sma sma
- [572] windige weallas. Wyrð oft nereð
 [572] vindi veðraða. Verður oft þannig
 ,SMA ma 1 MA 5 (sma) 0
- [573] unfægne eorl, þonne his ellen déah!
 [573] ófeigum forðað fyrir eigin dáð!
 ,MC ma 0\\m 0 z 3\\m 3\\m
- [574] Hwæþere mé gesælde, þæt ic mid sweorde ofslóh
 [574] Svona mér lánaðist með sverði að slá
 , SMB sm (sma) sm MA (z z sma) sma 0 ma
- [575] niceras nigene. Nó ic on niht gefrægn
 [575] níu nikra. Um nótt fréttist eigi
 ,SMA /sma \sma MA (z sm1) sma /mb \m
- [576] under heofones hwealf heardran feohtan,
 [576] undir himinhvolfi um harðari mannraun,
 ,SMA (sma) smb sma MA (z) sma sm
- [577] né on égstréamum earmran mannon;
 [577] né í öldum hafs annríki meira.
 ,SMA (sma smc) /sm \sm x2/s3 1\\m
- [578] hwæþere ic fára feng féore gedíge,
 [578] Ennþá mér lánaðist lífi að bjarga
 ,C sm (mc) 0 sm (z) m
- [579] síþes wérig. Ðá mec sá oþbær,
 [579] af sundi móður. Þá mig sárinna bar

,SMA (z) sm1 sm (sma r) sma t sma

[580] flód æfter faroðe on Finna land,

[580] flæðarstraumur að Finnalandi,

,SMB mb (z) \sm (sm1) sma r

[581] wadu weallendu. Nó ic wiht fram þé

[581] ylgja ólgandi. Aldrei af þér

,SMC smo3 smo3 sm (smc sma)

*This notation cannot show parallelism: there is an internal interference pattern in wadu weallendu (partial coherent) paralleled by ylgja ólgandi. The symbol o is used for a moire not otherwise defined.

*ic does not produce z, but occurs as \\sma in next line.

[582] swylcra searoníða secgan hýrde,

[582] afrek slík innt eg heyrði,

,SMC /sm \sma sm (\\sma) sma

[583] billa brogan. Breca náfre git

[583] bíldarbrögð. Breki hefir eigi

,SMA smb sm3 sma g3////s \m

*The displaced s on hefir is gefremede 585, cf.591

[584] æt heaðóláce, ne gehwæper incer,

[584] í hjörvaleik, né hinir þið,

,SMA(sm1) sm3 sma (sma) m (mc)

[585] swá déorlice dæd gefremede

[585] svona djarflega dáð unnið

,SMA (sma) sm3 sma sm

[586] fágum sweordum - nó ic þæs fela gylpe -,

[586] hvössum sverðum - hæli eg því eigi -

,SMC sm sma /sm (sma smb) z \sm

[587] þeah ðú þínum bróðrum tó banan wurde,

[587] þótt bræðrum þínum að bana yrðir,

,SMB (smb z) /sma (\sma smc) sma r

[588] héafodmægum; þæs þú in helle scealt

[588] höfuðættingjum. Í helvíti muntu

,SMA sma sm (z sma) sma z sm0 (\sma)

[589] werhðo dréogan, þeah þín wit duge.

[589] fordæming líða vegna lymsku þinnar.

,SMC sm sm C (s) m (\ma) z

[590] Secge ic þé tó sóðe, sunu Ecgláfes,

[590] Segi eg þér að sönnu sonur Eggleifs,

,SMA sma (sma r smc) sma r r r

[591] þæt náfre Grendel swá fela gryra gefremede,
 [591] aldregi hefði Grendill svo grátt leikið
 ,SMB(z) sm gx3//s sma z (\\sma) ml sm
 *The displaced s of hefði is gefremede cf. 583

[592] atol ágláca, ealdre þínum,
 [592] ófreskja ill öðling þinn
 ,SMA /sm2 \sm1 smx3 (sma)

[593] hýnðo on Heorote, gif þín hige wære,
 [593] og hraksmánað Hjörtinn, væri hugur þinn
 ,MA (/0) ml sma SMA (z /sma) sma (\sma)

[594] sefa swá searogrim, swá þú self talast;
 [594] sinni þitt svalt eins og sjálfur telur.
 ,SMA sm3 (0) sm1\2 (sm 0) sma smb

[595] ac hé hafað onfunden, þæt hé þá fáhðe ne þearf,
 [595] það hefir hann fundið að ei fælast þurfti
 ,SMA z (0//sma /sma \sma) sma (sma /smc) z 3////m sma
 *The displacd m of fælast is onsittan, 579

[596] atole ecgþræce éower leode
 [596] atalt eggjapras jöfurs liða,
 , sma sma sm3 5 sm5

[597] swíðe onsittan, Sige-Scyldinga;
 [597] svinnra sáta sigur-Skjöldunga;
 , 5 b sma r

[598] nyneð nýdbáde, nánegum árað
 [598] velur það er vill og vægir engum
 , SC sm (0 0) 0 SMC (z) /sm \smb

[599] léode Deniga, ac hé lust wigeð,
 [599] af Dana lýði, drepur að vild,
 ,SMC (z) /sma \smb (z z) /sm (z) 3

[600] swefeð ond snedþ, secce ne wéneþ
 [600] svæfir svefnþorni, sóknar ei væntir
 , MA smb (z) 1\b 0 SMA smb (smc) smb

[601] tó Gár-Denum. Ac ic him Géata sceal
 [601] af geir-Dönum. En Gauta mun eg honum
 ,SMA (smc) sma r (smc) /sma /sm (\sma r)

[602] eafoð ond ellen ungeára nú,
 [602] afl og áræði áður en varir
 ,SMA sm3 (sm1) sm1 m (z) 0\m

[603] gúþe gebéodan. Gáþ eft sé þe mót
 [603] að gunnverkum sýna. Gangi hver sem má
 , (z) sma 0 sm smb z (smc r) smb

[604] tó medo módig, sibþan morgenléoht
 [604] hraustur til mjaðar, þegar morgunljómi

,SMB /sm (\smb) \sma sm sma smb

[605] ofer ylða bearn óþres dogores,

[605] yfir aldabörn á öðru dægri,

,SMA (sma) sma r (z) sma smb

[606] sunne sweglwered súþan scíneð!

[606] sunna svásleg úr suðri skín!"

, sma smx3 (z) sma r

Appendix B: profile analysis

This appendix gives a selection of profiles from the text above as printed out by the Profiler. The full text of the program and a description of its use are available at www.hi.is/~peturk/3T/breca.html.

The tables below are printouts produced by the Profiler. The abbreviations are explained after the first profile.

B.1 Basic profile for *Breca*

For the first profile, the program is set to read all p-terms within parentheses as c; see A.1.5 above.

```
B\1  Parentheses used to process both structural and lexical
      Parenthesized p-terms interpreted as c
      profile for lines 499 to 606: plot total 708
      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8
      type line plot weight displ res-ph plot-ph smp-ph
      s      4.24  65%      0.20  86%   4.80  2.78
      m      4.91  75%      0.24  96%   4.48  2.61
      a      1.82  28%      0.15
      b      0.29   4%      0.26
      c      1.34  20%      0.28
      sys    3.45  53%      0.21      2.89  2.83
      coh    0.67  10%  2.33  0.19
      ncoh   0.19   3%  3.10  0.24
      nsys   0.86  13%  2.51  0.20      1.32  2.08
```

0	1.58	24%	0.34	1.50
z	0.66	10%	0.00	1.23
Lowres plot percentages:			S 70%	M 94%
			A 63%	B 16% C 21%

Abbreviations: headings

line: mean frequency per line

plot: mean frequency per plot, expressed in percentages

weight: mean weight of non-sys terms, 1-5

displ: mean displacement

res-ph: resolution-phasing for s and m: mean S or M support (percentages)

plot-ph: plot-phasing for p-moirés: mean lateral support (mean number of adjacent participating plots)

smp-ph: co-occurrence of smp within the plot, 1-3

Column 1, type

a: a-sys, **b:** b-sys, **c:** c-sys

sys: total values for all sys

coh: coherent non-sys, 1-5

ncoh: non-coherent non-sys, k, j, x, q

nsys: total values for all non-sys

0: zero p-reflection. This counts 0 and all non-occurrences of any p-term

z: moiré failure

S, M percentages by plot

A, B, C percentages by line

Columns 2 and 3, line and plot profiles

Column 2 expresses the simple frequency of the various moiré types by line, and column 3 gives frequency as a percentage of the total number of plots encountered. The difference between these two methods of expressing frequency is discussed in 6.5.2; here we shall confine ourselves to the percentages in column 3. This shows s-moirés as running at 65%, m-moirés at 75%, total systematic reflection at 53%, and total non-systematic reflection at 13%. The last two figures can be added together to give 66% for total p-reflection. The remaining 34% of non-reflection is represented by the combined figure for 0 and z, $24 + 10 = 34\%$.¹

As we have seen these figures are surprisingly high, given the fact that the two languages concerned, Old English and Icelandic, are not (as far as

¹ Figures to 2 decimal places are: sys = 52.54%, nsys = 13.28%, 0 = 24.15%, and z = 10.03%.

modern Icelanders are concerned) mutually comprehensible. Some two thirds of the translation (measured in plots) strike up formal reflection with words in the original. 53% (the figure for sys) are recognisably cognate words or closely corresponding structural items (c-moirés); while another 13% (non-sys) are recognisable non-cognate echoes of the source text. Of these, 3%² are non-coherent echoes; that is, of the 708 plots in this passage, complex echoes involving transposition of material occur 21 times:

B\2	mærða≈metorða	smk3	'fame'≈'fame'	[504]
	gehéde≈hafði	\\k3	'achieve'≈'had'	[505]
	wlence≈veðjuðuð	/k2	'pride'≈'wagered' (also wada≈veðjuðuð //3, coherent)	[508]
	þehton≈þöndum	kh3	'covered'≈'taut'	[513]
	heaðorása≈harðræði	kx3	'battle-surges'≈'hardships'	[526]
	dearst≈dirfist	smk4	'dare'≈'dare'	[527]
	bearn≈borinn	smk5	'child'≈'born'	[529]
	merestrengo≈megins	/mx3	'sea-currents'≈'might'	[533]
	rêon≈runnum	smk3	'row'(with oars)≈'ran'	[539]
	-ýpum≈-öldu	sm1	'waves'≈'waves'	[542]
	feor≈frammar	smk3	'further'≈'further'	[542]
	nípende≈niðdimm	\smg4	"darkening"≈"pitch darkness"	[547]
	néah≈neðan	sk3	'near'≈'from beneath'	[564]
	earmran≈annríki	x2	'wretched'≈'activity'	[577]
	wadu≈ylgja	smo3	"sea"≈"turbulent water"	[581]
	weallendu≈ólgandi	smo3	"surging"≈"surging"	[581]
	náfre≈hefði	gx3 // s	'never'≈'had'	[591]
	ealdre≈öðling	smx3	'elder'≈'prince'	[592]
	sweglwered≈svásleg	smx3	'bright-clothed'≈'dear, beloved' (of the sun)	[606]

The plots for line 581 in A.2 may need explanation: the term o is defined as 'other moiré, not otherwise defined'. In this case it marks parallelism of internal reflection. The phrases *wadu weallende* and *ylgja ólgandi* are both reflective within their own texts: *wadu* and *weallende* have similar onsets and vowels, and partake in the alliteration of their lines; while *ylg-* and *ólg-* also carry the alliteration of their lines and are the same time half-rhymes (Icelandic *skothenda* 'assonance' is a standard feature in certain Icelandic metres, especially the medieval *dróttkvætt*).

Column 4, non-sys weight

This is fully explained in section 6.6.5, p. 205: *weight* refers to the average strength (1-5) of non-sys p-moirés. Column 4 gives the average weight of nonsys p-moirés as 2.51. Interestingly, non-coherent p-moirés have a higher average weighting at 3.10 than coherent at 2.33: in other words there seems to

² More precisely 2.97%.

be a tendency for non-coherent echoes in Björnsson's text to be closer to than coherent ones. This may be seen as an indication of Björnsson's commitment to echoism and her willingness to use it independently of word-profile.

Here are the 8 examples of full-profile (weight 5) coherent non-systematic moirés in *Breca*:

!coh5ex

B\3	mere≈meira	\5	'sea'≈'more'	[533]
	máran≈mari	5	'more'≈'sea'	[533]
	wit≈við	\5	'we'≈'with'	[540]
	wearð≈var	sm5	'became'≈'was'	[555]
	Wýrd≈Verður	5	'fate'≈'will be'	[572]
	éower≈jöfurs	5	'your'≈'king's'	[596]
	léode≈liða	sm5	'people'≈'retainers'	[596]
	swíðe≈svinnra	5	'very'≈'close, dear (comrades)'	[597]

Noticeably, 6 of these 8 occurrences do not have supporting s- or m-moirés—we shall return to this point shortly in our discussion of the data in column 8.

The examples from line 533 have a striking cross-sm-displacement of s- and m-moirés, while the p-moirés are uncrossed and almost undisplaced (see line 533 in A.2).

Column 5, displacement

Column 5 shows average displacement, ranging from 0 upwards—the highest reading in *Breca* is 4 in line 583. Of interest in column 5 are the similar displacement values for all the moiré types, with only z standing out—by definition, moiré failure is not displaced. The striking displacement difference between 0 (which has the highest displacement value) and z supports the decision taken in 6.5.2.2 for retaining the distinction between o and z interference; but again we need comparisons with other texts before we can say whether this is generally significant. The lower value for a suggests that close cognate reflexes in the translation are less likely to be displaced than less close cognates (b-moirés). This may indicate a trend worth following up, and it may be paralleled by the higher value for ncoh as against co, but it should be noted that when we ignore parentheses and analyze c-moirés as they are written, the a-moirés in structural items are also recorded and the value for a goes up to 39% (discussed further as B\5).

Column 6, resolution phasing (depth)

The figures in column 6 give information on resolution phasing, discussed in section 6.7.4: the extent to which the normal-resolution moirés s and m are *reinforced* or supported by low-resolution S and M. The values are

the percentages of *s* and *m* occurring in plots where *S* and *M* are in force respectively. These figures give the percentages *of the percentages in column 3*: thus the value for *s* is 86% of the 65% in column 3. Note the high 96% for *m*: this is perhaps to be anticipated, for it simply shows that semantic correspondences at word-level occur for most of the time where there is also low-resolution semantic correspondence—where there is *narrative* or *discourse* correspondence between the two texts.

The figure in column 6 are in fact most interesting for what they do not say: they indicate that 14% of *s* and 4% of *m* are *unsupported* by their overall syntactic and semantic environments: in section 6.7.4 I called these *rogue moirés*: they are occurrences of syntactic or semantic correspondence at word-level in spite of a larger lack of syntactic or semantic correspondence at sentence-level.

B\4 Rogue (unsupported) *s* occurs in 65 plots (14%) in 32 lines in *Breca*: in lines 501, 504, 505, 507, 516, 518, 519, 520, 521, 526, 532, 533, 534, 537, 538, 541, 542, 550, 554, 555, 557, 559, 563, 564, 572, 574, 575, 576, 578, 589, 593 and 600.

Rogue (unsupported) *m* occurs in 22 plots (4%) in 8 lines in *Breca*: in lines 508, 521, 540, 555, 557, 578, 589 and 598.

Column 7: plot-phasing (width)

Column 7 expresses the average lateral plot-phasing of the types, discussed in section 6.8.1; it refers to the number of successive plots in which a certain moiré reoccurs. This should not be thought of as a sequential feature of the text, but rather as a reinforcement of a certain feature of interference. It is useful to think of plot phasing as occurring in *pools*—the greater the extent of the pool, the stronger the effect.

Simple computation of average pool size tends to give low values, since there are large numbers of small and single pools: if the Profiler merely divides the sum of the width of all pools by the number of pools, this allows single plots to count as pools of one and weigh too heavily against sporadic occurrences of larger pools. In order to favour larger pools the values in column 7 are obtained by squaring the values for each pool before adding them together, and then dividing by the number of occurrences of the moiré in question. For example, data which includes one pool of 4 and two of one is calculated as $6^2+1^2+1^2 / 6+1+1 = 38/8 = 4.75$ (instead of $6+1+1 = 8/3 = 0.75$).

As we saw in 6.8.1., there are slight inaccuracies in these figures due to

parallax and to the notation which does not unambiguously vectorize the displacement.

Column 8, smp-phasing

Column 8 shows the rate of coincidence of the three types, s, m and p (see section 6.8.2) within the plot. The figures range from 1 (indicating that the moiré always occurs alone in the plot) to 3 (indicating that it always occurs in company with two others). The high values for s, m and sys, all approaching the maximum 3, are striking. The significantly lower lower value for non-sys (2.09) is indicative of the fact that non-systematic reflection is more likely to occur without syntactic or semantic support; and interestingly this coincides with a higher value for non-coherent non-sys (3.10 in column 4). This can be seen in the list of full-profile non-sys plots in B\3, where 6 of the 8 have a peer support value of 1, the minimum.

In section 6.8.3 we defined *quasi-cognition* as the occurrence of a non-systematic moiré in association with either or preferably both s and m. If we look again at the two examples in B\3 with sm support, *wearð=var* [555] and *léode=liða* [596], we see that they are both typical examples of quasi-cognition.

B.2 Alternative profiles

B.2.1 c-terms expressed verbatim

Table B\1 showed a computation made by construing all p-moirés in parentheses (structural items) as c-sys, in accordance with section 5.1.3. Table B\5 below shows the same computation, this time made by reading all p-moirés as they appear. Changes from B\1 are emphasized:

B\5 Parentheses used to process both structural and lexical
 Parenthesized p-terms interpreted verbatim
 profile for lines 499 to 606: plot total 708

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
type	line	plot	weight	displ	res-ph	plot-ph	smp-ph
s	4.24	65%		0.20	86%	4.80	2.78
m	4.91	75%		0.24	96%	4.48	2.61
a	2.58	39%		0.20			
b	0.43	6%		0.24			
c	0.27	4%		0.28			
sys	3.28	50%		0.21		2.81	2.84
coh	0.84	13%	2.16	0.18			
ncoh	0.19	3%	3.10	0.24			
nsys	1.04	16%	2.34	0.19		1.43	2.18
0	1.58	24%		0.34		1.50	
z	0.66	10%		0.00		1.23	

Lowres plot percentages: S 70% M 94%
A 63% B 16% C 21%

As is to be expected, these figures show a dramatically lower c-count (4% instead of 26% in B\1), with a taking most of the slack (39% instead of 20%), and b and coh gaining a few percent. None of the structural c's move to ncoh. For a 'pure' p-interference figure which does not include the trace effect of paradigmatic correspondence we must subtract the 4% given here for c to give an overall total of 62% instead of the 66% of B\1.

B.2.2 Lexical and structural profiles

In section 5.1.3.3 I suggested that the variable LC (Local Correlation) would take on different values according to whether it were calculated from structural or lexical moirés, and made the tentative suggestion that stylistic variation make itself shown primarily in the 'content' lexis of the text, while the 'structural' lexis would conform to the General Correlation (p. 151). We are now in a position to examine the different levels of p-interference in lexical as against structural moirés:

B\6 Parentheses used to process only lexical
profile for lines 499 to 606: plot total 487

type	line	plot	weight	displ	res-ph	plot-ph	smp-ph
s	2.95	65%		0.18	86%	5.14	2.71
m	3.56	79%		0.22	95%	5.04	2.50
a	1.82	40%		0.15			
b	0.29	6%		0.26			
c	0.00	0%		0.00			
sys	2.12	47%		0.16		2.69	2.79
coh	0.67	15%	2.33	0.19			
ncoh	0.19	4%	3.10	0.24			
nsys	0.86	19%	2.51	0.20		1.43	2.08
0	1.35	30%		0.36		1.67	
z	0.19	4%		0.00		1.10	

Lowres plot percentages: S 69% M 94%
A 63% B 16% C 21%

B\7 Parentheses used to process only structural
Parenthesized p-terms interpreted verbatim
profile for lines 499 to 606: plot total 221

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
type	line	plot	weight	displ	res-ph	plot-ph	smp-ph
s	1.29	63%		0.24	86%	2.66	2.93
m	1.34	66%		0.28	97%	2.81	2.89
a	0.76	37%		0.33			
b	0.14	7%		0.20			
c	0.26	13%		0.29			
sys	1.16	57%		0.30		2.38	2.92
coh	0.18	9%	1.53	0.11			
ncoh	0.00	0%	0.00	0.00			

nsys	0.18	9%	1.53	0.11	1.11	2.68
0	0.23	11%		0.24	1.64	
z	0.47	23%		0.00	2.41	
Lowres plot percentages:			S	72%	M	94%
			A	63%	B	16%
					C	21%

The significant distinctions between these two profiles are :

B\8	lexical	structural
s	65%	63%
m	79%	66%
a	40%	37%
b	6%	7%
c	0%	13%
sys	47%	57%
coh	15%	9%
ncoh	4%	0%
nsys	19%	9%
0	30%	11%
z	4%	23%

Note however that the p-terms in B\7 are read verbatim, that is not merged into c as in B\1; this of course means that there are no *lexical* c-terms. On the other hand the *structural* c-terms remain as merely paradigmatic correspondences (see 5.1.3). But when limiting the analysis to structural items we have no need for the concept of c-interference, since structural items are all by definition paradigmatically correspondent. Thus a truer picture of the interference pattern as it occurs on structural items only would count the paradigmatic c's as 0's. This has been done in the following table, with changes in the figures for c, sys and 0:

B\9	lexical	structural
s	65%	63%
m	79%	66%
a	40%	37%
b	6%	7%
c	0%	0%
sys	47%	44%
coh	15%	9%
ncoh	4%	0%
nsys	19%	9%
0	30%	24%
z	4%	23%

The only significant differences here are the lower structural value for m, the lower nsys value (both coh and ncoh), the lower 0 value, and the considerably higher z value. None of these is particularly surprising.

The lower structural m value is predictable. To understand this, we must consider that when two texts which generally 'mean the same' (one is a

translation of the other) are in word-for-word syntactic correspondence, there is likely to be semantic correspondence between the individual words, with lower levels of syntactic correspondence; however the lexical words will retain semantic correspondence better than the structural words. Consider for instance the two sentences 'The quality of mercy is not strained' and 'To forgive is characteristically spontaneous', which are syntactically different but semantically similar: however only the lexical words have semantic similarities. The 63-65% of syntactic correspondence given in B\9 means that the two texts of *Breca* are syntactically non-correspondent for 35-37% of the time, which is enough to explain the lower m-values for structural terms.³

By the same token, the 35-37% of syntactic non-correspondence should also explain the difference in the figures for z (moiré failure): the majority of the occurrences of z in *Breca* are structural items (51 of 71 = 72%). Conversely, however, 0 has dropped; of the 171 occurrences of 0 only 25 (15%) are structural.

Finally, the fact that there are fewer non-systematic echoes in the structural items, and no non-coherent items, should come as no surprise, since structural terms form a small set with few opportunities for non-systematic correspondences.

These data suggest, then, that Björnsson's translation technique as evinced in *Breca* shows a higher non-systematic count in lexical items than in structural items. Insofar as this agrees with the impression we have been given in chapters 5 and 6 of Björnsson's penchant for echoic translation, this supports the suggestion made in 5.1.3.3 that the General Correlation appears in structural items, and the Local Correlation appears in lexical items. What is wanting, however, is comparison with other texts.

³ Were the opposite to hold, and the translation 'mean' something quite different (if we can envisage such a translation) but have the same syntactic form, we would have the opposite effect. For example 'The quality of mercy is not strained' and 'The colour of melancholy is not green', are syntactically equivalent, but semantic equivalence is confined to their structural items, *the, of, is* and *not*.

Synopsis

General statement

This study proposes a conceptual and terminological framework for the analysis of translation between closely related languages, using as its central text Halldóra B. Björnsson's (1983) translation of the Old English poem *Béowulf* into modern Icelandic.

It begins by juxtaposing two modes of textual transmission: manuscript copying, often with dialectal adjustment, and translation between dissimilar languages. It then focuses on the intermediate mode: translation between closely related languages, here termed *intimate translation*. This is traditionally seen as having marginal status both in translation studies and in literary theory; but its study reveals a range of spectacular and surprising phenomena which, although particularly conspicuous in intimate translation, turn out to occur throughout the spectrum of textual transmission, however close or distant the languages concerned.

These phenomena cannot be fully accounted for without assuming non-directionality in three domains where directionality and chronological sequence are traditionally assumed. In (1) the intertextual domain, we must reject the concept of filiation, which sees influences as migrating from earlier texts to later texts; in (2) the intratextual, we must ignore the linear disposition of textual strings, and in (3) the grammatical, the data can in no way be

reconciled with concepts of sequential grammatical derivation.

With (3), the search for a linguistic account of these phenomena thus runs up against deep-seated flaws in mainstream twentieth-century linguistic theory. Instead, the outline of a theory of *implicate interference* is proposed; this in turn implies the existence of a third text which quickens as any two texts come together. The third text turns out to be the real domain of textuality, since the 'simple' texts which go into its making are unfounded abstractions: all textuality is already tertiary.

The study ends with a discussion of extratextualities, the inscrutable variables which appear in the interference pattern and point to influence from beyond the textual horizon, grounding the text in a wider reality.

Synopsis of Chapter 1, Textual intimacy

Textual transmission, the dissemination of texts, is a constitutive movement of textuality, the movement without which textuality cannot survive. But in our times this movement is embarrassed by a fragmented linguistic terrain: the dominance of centralized, written standards of language has cleared the forests of dialectal variation that lay between the nascent centres of medieval textuality, and texts can no longer saunter through dappled landscapes, gathering layers of new sound and reference as they progress. Before the advent of the printing press and the establishment of prescriptive norms of language, there was a busy textual traffic between related dialects; but today we distinguish between only two modes of textual transmission: publication, the broadcasting of almost identical copies of the text, and translation, the movement between national languages. The intervening cline of movement between closer varieties has disappeared: the transmission of manuscripts which involved a mixture of automatic dialectal adjustment interwoven with the variously radical restructuring which we now call translation.

This study suggests that textual transmission between closely related varieties of language throws into relief a range of phenomena which is generally overlooked or suppressed in translation studies. The omission goes back to the beginnings: the early languages of Western translation, Hebrew, Greek and Latin, were very different from each other, and the business of translation has ever since been the negotiation of decisive language barriers. In becoming written standards, modern national languages have withdrawn into their proud and dissimilar identities, and now confront each other as aliens. They have lost the habit of intimate cross-dialectal intercourse. Such movements may seem small and naked in comparison with fully orchestrated translations between dissimilar languages, but their study lays bare an intimate landscape which encompasses all translation and informs all textuality.

Synopsis of Chapter 2, The scribe and the translator

We start (2.0) with the silence of the pilgrim; his/her inexorable movement into language, into poetry, and into misrepresentation; —the inexorable movement of language away from the centre. The poet who succeeds the pilgrim is an articulate adventurer: he cannot other than misrepresent the pilgrim, whose true domain is silence. Finally, the scribe records and inevitably rewrites the poet, and so further misrepresents the pilgrim. The interaction between these modes constitutes the first movements in the text, and so initiates textuality.

Section 2.1 argues that levels of linguistic diversity in the Germanic language area were not significantly greater or less in the Middle Ages than now; we cannot for example assume a uniform ‘proto-Norse’ which later fragmented into the national standards of modern Scandinavia. The relative silence of the sources regarding linguistic diversity is because this diversity was too commonplace for comment.

Scholars are divided as to the level of mutual comprehension between Old English and Old Norse, some finding it difficult to accept the 12th-century Icelandic First Grammarian’s statement that ‘we are of one tongue with the English’. In section 2.2 this is seen as a result of mistaking the First Grammarian’s term ‘tongue’ for the modern standardized concept, a mistake encouraged by the fact that the languages we now know as ‘Anglo-Saxon’ and ‘Old Norse’ have come down to us in relatively standardized forms which had already largely silenced the underlying dialects. I suggest instead that the level of mutual comprehension between different Anglo-Saxon dialects was of the same order as between those dialects of English and Norse which rubbed shoulders in the Danelaw and in the streets of eleventh-century London. Speakers of medieval Germanic dialects must have been far more accustomed to, and thus more tolerant of, different ways of speaking than we are today, and aware of an underlying common identity. It is this identity which the First Grammarian invokes.

Isidor of Seville uses the term *solecismus* to refer to debasement of the classical Latin norms in the developing Romance vernaculars of Southern Europe. The Germanic dialects however had no classical norm to fall back on, no correct usage to transgress, and so their people are *linguis dissonae*, ‘inconsistent in their forms of language’. Section 2.2 discusses the *First Grammatical Treatise* and other medieval Icelandic works as representative of the medieval Icelandic response to this lack of grounding, a desire to establish a linguistic norm.

The question of language seems to surface in the Icelandic Sagas only when it is indispensable to the progress of the narrative (2.3). No problems of communication are recorded between English and Norse: the Icelandic sagas

depict Icelandic poets and adventurers reciting their poetry in the courts of English kings without mentioning language difficulties, and this is consistent with an awareness of underlying identity. Indications of different dialects of Old Norse are sparse, seldom explicit, and often open to other interpretations. Problems of communication involve only Irish and Latin, and occasionally the continental German dialects. This section also touches upon the question of Irish intertextualities in the sagas, and proposes an Irish source for Guðrún Ósvífrsdóttir's famous last words, *To him was I worst whom I loved best*.

After a brief appraisal (2.4) of the birth of literacy in Old English and the subsequent suppression of the dialects in the written form, section 2.5 turns to three examples of parallel texts in different dialects, and notes the similarity of transmission technique in all three. They are the Old English 'translation' of the Continental Saxon *Genesis*, usually regarded as a translation in spite of the closeness of the dialects concerned; parallel texts of *Cædmon's Hymn* in Northumbrian and West Saxon versions of Old English, universally regarded as cross-dialectal transmission; and a Faeroese translation of modern Icelandic poetry, seen a translation between independent national languages. In all three cases the same techniques of transliteration and—crucially—non-cognate echoic substitution are involved.

Sections 2.6 and 2.7 reiterate the linguistic unity of translation on the one hand and cross-dialectal transliteration on the other: their common identity is obscured by our terminological polarization. In the same way we cannot draw a distinction between the author and the scribe (2.8); the fundamental machinery of *écriture* informs the work of both.

Synopsis of Chapter 3, *Béowulf* ≈ *Bjólfskviða*

This chapter deals with the first of three domains of non-direction addressed in this study: that of intertextual non-direction, the lack of filiation between texts. It begins (3.1) with the background to Björnsson's translation, touching briefly on her status as a twentieth-century Icelandic poet and examining (3.2) the viability of locating the translation within the corpus of Germanic verse. Björnsson runs the whole gamut of the spectrum of transmission described in chapter 2, constantly shifting back and forth between word-for-word cognate translation, non-cognate word-for-word translation, and full syntactically restructured translation. Throughout, wherever non-cognition cannot be achieved, and also frequently where it might have been achieved, Björnsson shows a persistent tendency to use similar, but non-cognate, phonological and graphological forms. This is termed quasi-cognition (3.3).

Section 3.4 focuses on three such echoic phenomena: her translation of the Old English words *hláford* 'lord', *ellor* 'elsewhither' and *ellen* 'deeds of valour'. Björnsson's solutions can be fully described only by locating them

within an intertextual network which covers a wide range of poetic formulae in Old Icelandic poetry (with which she was well acquainted) and Old English poetry (of which she knew little). The web of intertextualities which relate her translation to the original poem is to a significant extent the same as that which group the various Old English poems together in a corpus: a common pool of formulaic apparatus.

Section 3.5 suggest that it is possible to isolate local, small-scale manifestations of the wider domain of (inter)textuality, and that these manifestations are conspicuous in Björnsson's translation. They are signalled in the discussion by the sign “≈” which links two *quanta*, one in each text, and represents the mechanism by which they exist as intertextualities; these, in turn, are the particles which sanction the existence of the texts themselves.

The chapter ends (3.6) with a call for a model of translation which ‘seeks to delineate a synchronic, non-hierarchic matrix of interacting quanta, accounting for the phenomena as interference patterns elicited by the reading.’

Synopsis of Chapter 4, The translator and the linguist

From the theme of *intertextual* non-direction in chapter 3, this chapter turns to *intralinguistic* non-direction, challenging the concept of grammatical derivation. It begins (4.1) by questioning the reliance shown by 20th-century linguistics on the concept of the linguistic model. Three representative pieces of data from Björnsson's translation are analysed (4.2), and the first part of the chapter is devoted to showing that the prevailing linguistic models cannot account for them. Section 4.3 deals with the tension between *form* and *meaning* in translation theory from Cicero and Horace, through Jerome to Alfred, and suggests that Alfred inherits the classical distinction between *vertere/convertere* (OE *áwendan*) for translation between dissimilar languages and *interpretari* (OE *áreccan*) for metaphrastic or word-for-word interpretation, which might also apply to interpretation of close dialects. Following Cicero, these writers see a quantitative but no qualitative distinction between the two modes. Dryden sees them as two extremes and advises a middle road; Shelley and Rossetti would synthesize them into a singularity in both time and space, and a similar seminal connection of form and meaning is expressed by Benjamin. The unity of the Saussurean sign is one of the major tenets of the twentieth century; and yet (section 4.4) at the height of the structuralist synthesis of meaning and form, the advent of early generative-transformational grammar marks a decisive affirmation of the duality of form and meaning, and this duality is prevalent in translation studies in the third quarter of the century as a blatantly prescriptive translation model (Nida and Taber) which still demands respect in the discipline.

The following subsections of section 4 deal with the debilitating dualism

of generative grammar and its constant struggle to reconcile the dichotomy of fundamental and derived form with the realities of language. Section 4.4.4 suggests that our understanding of language has always been informed by our current technology, and relates the development of generative grammar to developments in the technology of the computer. Section 4.4.5 continues this theme and discusses Jackendoff's attempts to escape from generative constraints. Section 4.4.6 discusses Roger Penrose's views of the workings of the human brain and suggests that the advent of quantum computation will render derivational linguistic theories obsolete.

Section 4.5 outlines an interference theory of language which draws a distinction between the two current meanings of the term 'interference': *simple interference* implying disruptive intervention, which is filiatory, directional, and hierarchical; and *implicate interference*, the constructive interaction of peer systems. This formulation is initially still filiatory and directional, assuming primitive fields of phenomena which come together to create derived fields. Finally, the ground is cleared for a neutralization of the distinction between primitive and derived fields by affirming that 'a field of interference has equal status to each of its components'; this understanding will become the mainstay of chapters 6 and 7.

Synopsis of Chapter 5, Reflection: a filiatory analysis

This chapter consists of an initial analysis of Björnsson's translation of the so-called *Breca Episode* in *Béowulf*. It is a firmly filiatory analysis, classifying the transformations observed as various types of material which migrate from the 'original' Old English text to the 'derived' Icelandic translation. This retrogressive perspective enables us to simplify the data enough to achieve an initial classification and provide material for the non-filiatory account to be proposed in chapter 6.

The process of transfer is termed *reflection*, using terminology inherited from 19th-century diachronic linguistics which enables us to refer to *original* forms in the source text and *reflexes* in the translation. Three types of reflection are envisaged: phonological, syntactic and semantic. Most of this chapter deals with the first type, phonological; the other two are introduced towards the end of the chapter in preparation for a discussion of their mutual interaction in chapter 6.

The classification begins with the distinction between systematic and non-systematic reflection, where the concept of systematicity corresponds closely, but not exactly, to the etymological concept of cognation. Section 5.1.0 traces our understanding of the concept of *etymology* from classical times to the 19th-century appropriation of the term to mean only the diachronic development of phonetic form along insulated genealogical channels, while

lateral (cross-nodal) movements came to be known as popular—or even false—etymology. However, both these types of diachronic development reflect the same organizational principles, and in fact it is by no means always possible to distinguish between them.

The distinction between systematic and non-systematic reflection hinges on the cognate etymological relationship of phonological segments within the word. Three formal conditions of systematicity are set up (5.1.5); when they are all met the reflex in the translation is systematic (and cognate on the word-level); when any condition fails in is non-systematic (and non-cognate), built up of phonologically similar segments some of which may be cognate. Non-systematic reflection is either coherent or non-coherent (5.2), depending on whether the original segmental sequence is maintained or reflected in a discontinuous, disjunct or transposed manner. Non-systematic reflection is not necessarily less distinctive than systematic, for it often produces echoic reflexes which are more similar to the original than systematic ones.

The final section (5.3) of the chapter discusses the reflection of syntactic and semantic material from the source to the translation. These types of reflection occur independently of each other and of phonological reflection. This involves the linear *displacement* of these three elements in the source and translation, since the sequential order of segments within the word, and of words within the sentence, varies between the texts. Crucially, the three types may undergo displacement as a team, moving together between the texts, so that words in the source reappear in a phonetically similar form and with the same structure and meaning in the translation; or the elements may move independently, parting company in the transfer and striking up new relationships in the translation.

Synopsis of Chapter 6, Interference: a non-filiatory analysis

Displacement as introduced in the previous chapter concerns the linear sequence (word- and segment-order) within the text, the *intratextual* domain; in the case of translation this is also closely interrelated with *intertextual* directionality in that the direction of displacement depends on the intertextual perspective: if we write the lines of the source and the translation in tandem, a reflective phenomenon which refers forwards (or rightwards) from the source will refer backwards (or leftwards) from the translation. Since therefore we have adopted a non-directional intertextual perspective we must also reject directionality in displacement, and other means must be found to describe the vector relations involved.

The solution is to invoke an implicate interference effect; our first step is to regard the two texts (the original and translation of the *Breca Episode* in *Béowulf*) as two fields of data which are both positioned in the same

conceptual space so that they interact there with each other (6.3). This interaction is quantifiable in that the quanta involved (chapter 3, section 5) strike up discrete *moirés* (the word is used here as a countable noun, cf. 6.3.1) which can be analyzed to provide a statistical profile of the combined text-and-translation or any distinct section of it.

Sections 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 deal with the details of the analysis. A series of *plots*, recording the state of the interference pattern at separate positions, is extracted from the combined text-and-translation; they encode the combinations of phonological, syntactic and semantic *moirés* and the levels of displacement involved for each position. But the analysis is still partly filiiary, for the plots are initially drawn up from the perspective of the translated text, one plot for each lexical item in the translation. This is treated as a problem of *parallax*, and is largely resolved by ensuring that statistical profiles do not cut across spreads of displacement: they must observe *displacement closure* (6.5.1).

Section 6.7 introduces the concept of *resolution* to combine predictive and recapitulatory quanta without recourse to a linear timescale, and to deal with the co-occurrence of smaller and larger structures without recourse to a hierarchically layered system. The analysis relies on three workable levels of resolution : *high*, at which the phonological segments are in focus; *normal* or *normal-plot* resolution for the lexical strings (or words), and *low* resolution for syntactical structures at clause-level. *Resolution phasing* occurs when the same structures remain in focus in spite of shifts of resolution.

There are two coexistent modes in which the reader moves through the text: the lateral, spreading backwards and forwards through the lineal order of the text, and the resolatory, focusing in and out. Section 7.8 discusses further modes of interference in the text: *lateral phasing*, where the same configurations are repeated over strings of text, and *smf phasing*, the co-occurrence of the three types of reflective material in the same plot. Finally the concept of *quasi-cognition* from section 3.3 is redefined as a distinct configuration of different types of phasing.

The last section of this chapter, 6.9, examines the status of the analysis as a rudimentary third text.

Synopsis of Chapter 7, The third text

The chapter begins (7.1) with a provisional dualistic concept of textuality, whereby Centre and Horizon complementarily define each other. The movement of the text is always away from the centre, which in time must be weakened by this continual diastasis. Horizons break free and establish new centres. One of the more painful movements in this process is the act of opening horizons to incoming texts: translation is invasive.

In this connection, Lotman's 'semiospheres' are briefly discussed, and Ricoeur's rejection of closed horizons (7.2). It is always within our power to pass horizons and look back on them as local boundaries. Staking out centres and horizons leads to paradoxes of the sort which afflict Set Theory, but these paradoxes evaporate if we apply an interference theory of textuality which insists on the equal status of all constitutive fields (cf. section 4.5): thus all horizons, including a universal horizon, are ultimately coextensive.

This strategy leads, in section 7.3, to an advance from the duality of Centre and Horizon to a third term, a concept which establishes the coextension of constituents and thus denies the existence of primary and secondary terms. This section examines the Pythagorean triad (noting in passing Einar Pálsson's insistence on the Pythagorean presence in medieval Iceland), and traces the third term and its relation to linguistic form down to the 20th century. Various attempts to establish a non-linguistic understanding of the third term are examined and rejected.

Section 7.4 moves from the third term to the third text, examining Eysteinnsson's concept of a third text and suggesting it be applied to all textuality. However, if all texts are third texts, is there any significance in the idea of *third*? In order to answer this question, section 7.5 turns to Ricoeur's question *What is a text?* and looks back to the prior question: *Where is the text?* Attempts to locate it on the page, in acoustic form or in neural configurations in the brain, are examined and found to be vacant. However the suggestion that the text resides in memory re-introduces the element of non-seriality: texts in memory may be fragmentary, may even completely lack textual detail, and their serial order may be disturbed or non-existent. Seriality is a subsequent, and not essential, feature of language.

Section 7.6 enlists St. Augustine, Owen Barfield and Ray Jackendoff to demarcate consciousness as a small segment of the continuum between the unconscious outside world and the equally unconscious inner mental world: Barfield contributing the continuum between mind and matter, Jackendoff the intermediate conscious shell, and Augustine mapping out the inner landscape and supplying the connecting sounds of language.

Section 7.7 places the third text within this conscious shell, and examines its threads of connection with the rest of reality. These are the extratextual traces which have repeatedly cropped up in this study. We return to the concept of the *moiré* and its anchorage in not only textual but also extratextual quanta, which reside in the unknown, the unperceived, the beyond-the-horizon. Some examples from *Béowulf* \approx *Bjólfskviða* are discussed. The anomaly of parallax that we encountered in chapter 6 now acquires a further dimension: the misbalance in the intensity of Bakhtinian dialogic between the two texts. Björnsson's text is rich in the 'unspeakable intonation' of explicit

self-conscious intertextualities, while the Old English original is muted, its intonation lost, a threadbare record of a recitation. But this does not reduce the essential equality of the texts as tertiary bodies, reacting fully with each other, but looking to no certain centre: even the universal text is open-ended. For Rosenzweig, Scripture is constituted by its essential extratextuality; I submit that this is the normal textual condition, for analysis of the interference pattern will always uncover inscrutable variables which originate from outside. It is not enough to say that the third text is located in the conscious shell between the 'inside' and the 'outside' (7.8): it creates and maintains that shell.

Resumé på dansk

Denne afhandling fremstiller en konceptuel og terminologisk ramme for analysen af oversættelse mellem nært beslægtede sprog. Afhandlingens centrale tekst er Halldóra B. Björnssons oversættelse af det oldengelske digt *Beowulf* til moderne islandsk.

Indledningsvis modstilles to typer af tekstuel transmission: Manuskriptkopiering, ofte dialektelt justeret, og oversættelse mellem forskelligartede sprog. Derefter fokuserer afhandlingen på den intermediære type: Oversættelse mellem nært beslægtede sprog, her benævnt *intim oversættelse*. Både inden for oversættelsesvidenskaben og litteraturteorien har intim oversættelse traditionelt haft en marginal status, men studiet af den afslører imidlertid også en række bemærkelsesværdige og overraskende fænomener som, selvom de især er fremtrædende i intim oversættelse, viser sig at forekomme igennem hele det tekstuelle overførselsspektrum, hvor nært eller fjernt beslægtede sprogene er.

Disse fænomener kan ikke beskrives fuldstændig uden at antage ikke-direktionalitet inden for tre domæner, hvor direktionalitet og kronologisk rækkefølge traditionelt bliver hævdet. På (1) det intertekstuelle domæne må nedstammingskonceptet afvises, da dette koncept betragter påvirkninger som migrerende fra tidligere forekommede til senere forekommende tekster; på (2) det intratekstuelle domæne må den lineære tekstuelle orden ignoreres, og på (3) det grammatiske domæne kan tekstdataene på ingen måde forenes med koncepter om lineær grammatisk afledning.

Med (3) støder en søgen efter en lingvistisk redegørelse for disse

fænomener således sammen med rodfæstede strømninger inden for det 20. århundredes etablerede lingvistik. I stedet bliver en skitse til en teori om interferens fremstillet, som til gengæld implicerer eksistensen af en tredje tekst, som opstår, når to tilfældige tekster møder hinanden. Den tredje tekst viser sig at være tekstualitetens egentlige domæne, siden de simple tekster, som er involveret i skabelsen af den, er ugrundede abstraktioner: Al tekstualitet er essentielt tertiær.

Afhandlingen afsluttes med en diskussion af ekstratekstualiteter, de uransagelige variabler, som optræder i interferensmønstret og som henviser til indflydelse hinsides den tekstuelle horisont, hvorved de forankrer teksten i en videre realitet.

Translated by Jens Lohfert

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