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## The Many Layers of *Translatio*: AM 618 4° and the Lives of Manuscripts in Use

Medieval manuscripts are singular in their appearance, that is, no one manuscript is identical to another. At the same time no singular manuscript is static or constant in its appearance or use over time. Medieval translation provides a similar example of mobility in the way that a translation is not an absolute, but rather an entity on the move; every new re-writing represents a new reception. In modern Translation Studies not only the transfer of the text from source language to target language is treated. Rather the focus has often been on the cultural transfer that involves the re-writing of the text in a new language and cultural setting; the text is part of a larger context of cultural exchange. The translated text from this perspective constitutes in the first instance a move from a source language to a target language, but not necessarily following modern modes of translation. Scholars therefore often choose to talk about transfer or even re-writing when they discuss the movement in the Middle Ages of a text from one language to another. But the mobility of the text did not stop with its transfer into the target language. As soon as it was re-written in its new surroundings it was treated as part of the target language polysystem and could therefore be introduced into new contexts in new re-writings.<sup>1</sup> What we see in the sparse extant material from Scandinavia indicates that this was very much the situation: texts transferred from other languages, primarily Latin, French and German, interacted in compilations and collections with texts originally composed in the vernacular and contributed to the general cultural exchange. It could also be suggested that Latin texts interacted, at least in a learned context, with the vernacular texts, within the same literary polysystem.

A more unusual example of *translatio* is to be found in the manuscript AM 618 4° where the original manuscript contained Latin texts, the Psalter and Canticles from the Old Testament, with parallel Anglo-Norman French translation. This manuscript seems to have been imported from Anglo-Norman England to Iceland, or possibly Norway, during the Middle Ages. After the Reformation the French text of the Psalter was erased by a scribe who subsequently replaced it with an Icelandic translation while the French text of the Canticles was erased without being replaced. The information about the history of the manuscript, therefore, enables us to study the move

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<sup>1</sup> See e.g. Copeland (1991) on the appropriation of translated texts in the target language. For Norse texts Stefka G. Eriksen (2014) treats the text on the move from source text into various use over time in the target language.

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of manuscript, texts, and languages in a single manuscript over a time-span of about four hundred years.<sup>2</sup>

In the following I will provide an outline of the possible trajectory of the manuscript in the Middle Ages, from Anglo-Norman England in the late twelfth century to Iceland in the late sixteenth century. Unfortunately, the information is sparse for the earlier period and the results of such an investigation will therefore at this point be rather meagre. It is important to stress, however, that using the individual manuscript as a point of departure enables us to reason about the roles of individual manuscripts in the processes of modification that have implications for the general use of texts and manuscripts over time. In this chapter I present a preliminary study of the many stages or facets of *translatio* that could be argued from the artefact, the extant manuscript, and the layers of texts found incorporated in it over time.

## The polysystem, observation points and translation

Each stage of the manuscript's trajectory can be related to the contemporary polysystem. This implies that the individual stages under scrutiny are all interrelated and that changes concerning one feature inevitably have consequences for the status of features on all the subsequent stages.

The manuscript forms an *observation point*<sup>3</sup> at each stage in its trajectory which allows us to understand more general aspects of contemporary variation and change in the use and function of manuscripts at each stage of this process. The concept of observation points needs some discussion. In studies of historical processes, we generally operate with a dichotomic concept of diachrony and synchrony. On the one hand the system, as for example the linguistic system, at each point in time is synchronically observed as a fixed point. This system at every chosen point, however, is always the result of taking part in the diachronic flow of variance and change. The relation between synchrony and diachrony has been likened to a train moving along a line between stations, with passengers leaving and embarking. This model of thinking, however, can often lead to the rather simplified view of change as taking place synchronically and generally as in language. But if we stay with the train metaphor for a while it is obvious that each passenger represents not only a change in the passenger list. Two of the exiting passengers may for example meet as they disembark and decide that they should catch the next train together, or someone has by mistake embarked on the wrong train and realises that she has to take another back to the

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<sup>2</sup> Since this chapter was sent to the publisher it has come to my attention that a paper was presented by Tom Lorenz (2022) at the 18th International Saga Conference in Helsinki and Tallinn in August 2022 providing a similar approach to AM 618 4°.

<sup>3</sup> See Horn and Johansson (2021, 8) for the introduction of the concept of *observation points*.

previous station. Instead of clinging to an overly simple metaphor, however, we need to establish an understanding of how the individual event or artefact interacted with the contexts in various ways. Changes over time did not take place along a line and end up at a final station, they were rather elements of a constant exchange and negotiation where some features moved to the surface, others stayed in place, and yet others disappeared and lost their relevance. The observation point is suggested as a concept for taking events and artefacts into consideration in a systematic study where the point offers a view not only of the route passed or the path ahead, but also allows us to include the interaction of events, texts and artefacts in the contemporary landscape and relate them to this on-going process of variation.

In this study of the trajectory of AM 618 4° three observation points are chosen: 1) the point of departure when the Latin texts are translated and the *mis en page* with parallel arrangement of source and target text is formed, 2) the second stage when a calendar is added and 3) the post-Reformation stage when the French text is erased and replaced with a new translation in Icelandic. Each observation point with this approach is a stop on the trajectory of the manuscript as it moves into new contexts. From the first stage when Latin and the Latin text could have a central position in the polysystem of texts, perhaps with a focus on liturgical and other texts of the Church, and where the Anglo-Norman or *romanz* language as well as the transfer of the Latin text into this language could be expected to have a more peripheral position, the next stage would be the introduction of both texts, the *Psalterium Davidis* and the collection of biblical Canticles that follows the Psalter text, in a new context when the manuscript was moved to Norway or Iceland. The original context could be expected to relate to slightly different polysystems than the new one in the peripheral north, but we may also think that the manuscript and its form as well as content could have an impact on the new polysystem it entered.

When the manuscript under scrutiny here is preserved intact over a long period of time until after the Reformation it has had a rather different fate than most Latin manuscripts from the Norse realm; large numbers of manuscripts were destroyed and reused both before and after the Reformation.<sup>4</sup> This could indicate that this individual manuscript has been kept in a milieu where it was valued and had a central position in the local polysystem. It will therefore be relevant to establish with some certainty whether it was in Norway for a period before it was sent to Iceland or if it came directly to Iceland from England. The second observation point, when the calendar was added in the mid-twelfth century, may provide insights into the use and reuse of manuscripts in the period when the Psalter was finally transferred from England to the north.

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<sup>4</sup> The destruction of medieval manuscripts in the Early Modern period was not restricted to those written in Latin, but affected also vernacular manuscripts. In this chapter the focus, however, is on the fate of a Latin Psalter that survived the destruction of the large majority of Latin manuscripts from the Icelandic Middle Ages.

A final observation point to be considered in the following concerns the fate of the manuscript and the Anglo-Norman text in 1586 when a scribe known as Gunnlaugur Jónsson – who inserted his own name in the margin on fol. 117<sup>r</sup> – erased the Anglo-Norman text, which seems to have been by now placed at the periphery of the polysystem, and replaced it with an Icelandic translation of the Psalter. This indicates that the Psalter in Latin still had a position in the polysystem, but probably also that it was more relevant to transfer the text into Icelandic. Was the relationship between Latin and Icelandic similar to the one between Latin and Anglo-Norman from the original observation point or had the vernacular taken a different position by this time?

The observation points are chosen in order to elucidate important stages in the trajectory of the manuscript and the contexts in which it was used. An interesting aspect of this trajectory concerns the changes, material, functional, or in relation to the polysystem, that may be gathered under the concept of *translatio*. I suggest that we may discern various types of *translatio* in the interrelations of the texts in the three languages represented as well as in the trajectory of the manuscript itself and its transfer in time and space. It is relevant here to consider at least three different layers or types of *translatio* that are at play and open to scrutiny from each observation point.

The most obvious type and also the one referred to most often would be the very *translatio* or transfer of a text from a source language to a target language, in this case taking place at least twice in the example treated here. But the languages themselves change their status over time and are placed in different positions in the polysystem. Here I refer to both translation proper, the intra-linguistic re-writing of texts as well as the status of source and target languages as they move in time and space as “linguistic *translatio*”. This type of *translatio* is rather similar to the concept of *translatio studii* which was used in medieval discourse with regard to the geographical dissemination of erudition and knowledge. The important difference between the medieval concept and the one suggested here is that the latter is related to a wider kind of *translatio* including for example transfer and legitimisation of languages themselves and that the use of the concept is directly connected to the thinking of polysystems and observation points, as for example when Latin is introduced in Scandinavia with high status as the language of the Church. The linguistic *translatio* as defined here concerns the movement of languages and texts within the polysystem and the various domains where they could occur rather than the more one-way focus of the medieval concept.

A second type of *translatio* is the transfer of texts, manuscripts, and material and intellectual culture at various stages from one geographical context to another. This moveability of both texts, ideas, languages, and artefacts is here referred to as “geographical *translatio*”. Distinguishing this as a separate type enables us to relate the French, or possibly in this case Anglo Norman French, status in the receiving culture, in this case the Norse culture of Iceland and Norway. This geographical aspect has therefore a political or sociological aspect and the observation points it offers provide broad insights into the interaction and negotiation between cultures at any given

time. Again, as with *translatio studii* mentioned above, this concept is closely related to the medieval concept of *translatio imperii*, the transfer of power. There is, yet again, a difference in perspective, however, as the suggested concept allows us to study transfer in space not only from the point of appropriation and political dominance; it also reflects more subtle movements of individual texts and artefacts in closed networks relevant for changes in the regional polysystem. Whereas the medieval concept is concerned with the transfer of power from the centre to the periphery, the concept of geographic *translatio* has a broader perspective on the interaction of cultures and exchanges between polysystems with implications for both.

A last type of *translatio* suggested here concerns the treatment and changes of material objects and the position of these objects in the polysystem. This obviously relates closely to a central understanding of *translatio* in the Middle Ages, that of the transfer of relics related to the saints of the Church. The relics were not only physically moved, but they were also displayed in adorned crucifixes or other forms of repositories for worship and contemplation. In a similar way the display of a manuscript in its *mise en livre*, *mise en page* and *mise en texte* can be interpreted as part of the reception of the physical object.<sup>5</sup> This type of *translatio* is here referred to as “material *translatio*”. The treatment over time of manuscripts as artefacts would then be of interest in itself in relation to the polysystem, primarily in the evaluation of imported manuscripts, but also in the status of manuscripts in general over time, depending on use, dissemination and access to the materials and skills necessary to produce (and import) manuscripts. Material *translatio* focus on the physical changes in the appearance of the object under study. This could include the original production of the manuscript concerning layout and composition etc., additions of paratexts and marginalia at later stages, as well as erasure of older text and its replacement with new text, whether as a way of adapting the manuscript to new situations or establishing a completely new communication.

## The manuscript AM 618 4° and its texts

First the extant manuscript needs to be examined. At the outset, we can say that the series of production units forming new usage units are not made at the same stage.<sup>6</sup> The first production unit is formed by the Psalter, the *Psalterium Davidis*, and the biblical hymns in Latin and Anglo-Saxon French, all written in the same hand and with

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<sup>5</sup> A recent approach using the concepts of *mise en livre*, *mise en page* and *mise en texte* in order to illuminate the transfer of texts from one language to another as well as from one manuscript context to another is found in Eriksen (2014).

<sup>6</sup> For the terminology of *production units* and *usage units*, see Kwakkel (2002) with further references to the discussion of codicological description. For a recent application of this terminology in the description of a Swedish manuscript see Johansson (2022).

illuminated initials formed as part of the original production. The *calendarium* has been written and added at a later stage, and it cannot be asserted that this addition was made as a production unit intended for the present manuscript. The fragment seems rather to have been added somewhere along the trajectory of the manuscript, but most likely before it arrived in the north. When it was bound into the book as it exists today, however, it formed a new usage unit together with the originally produced unit. A third and last production unit is added in the sixteenth century when the French text is erased and replaced by a new Icelandic translation, in Kwakkel's terminology this last production unit should be regarded as secondary. At this point the manuscript again changes its nature as a usage unit, which is treated in some detail below.

The manuscript AM 618 4° is rather large, 25,5 x 18 centimetres. The first leaf carries the calendar. This leaf is not part of the original manuscript and was added considerably later. It is followed by 117 pages (one paper leaf replacing a lost parchment leaf, fol. 72). Note that the foliation made in the manuscript does not include the initial folio containing the calendar.<sup>7</sup> Skårup (1977, 91) states that there were originally 15 quires of 8 leaves, which would mean 120 leaves; two parchment leaves are missing at the end of the manuscript and subsequently replaced by paper leaves. Michael Gullick (2013b, 151) states that several leaves are missing without considering the matter further. The Psalter text is, however, with the exception of the lacuna today partly covered by the paper leaf added in connection with the replacement of the French text in the late sixteenth century.

The manuscript was written in two columns with the Latin texts in the left column and the Anglo Norman French translation in the right column. The Psalter text was written on fols 2–117<sup>r</sup>. This part of the manuscript is generally considered to have been written in the late twelfth century, a dating recently supported by Gullick (2013b, 151). In the second half of the sixteenth century the French text was erased and a contemporary Icelandic translation of the Psalter was added in its place. The French text is still visible and to some extent readable as a palimpsest (see e.g. Skårup 1977). It is possible to establish with some certainty that the scribe of the sixteenth century Icelandic text also was responsible for the erasure of the original Anglo-Norman text.

The originally formed manuscript also contains the *Hymni et cantica ex testamento veteri*, referred to here as *Canticles* on fols 117<sup>v</sup>–119. It is generally accepted as the work of the same scribe who produced the bilingual Psalter in the late twelfth century.

The manuscript is rich in illuminated enlarged initials for the psalms traditionally marked. The organisation follows the combined tradition with ten psalms indicated, psalms 1, 26, 38, 51, 52, 68, 80, 97, 101, 109 and 150, that is, the psalms are organised both in the tradition of 1, 51 and 101 in three parts of fifty and the first psalm of Matins

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<sup>7</sup> Here and in the following I operate with the calendar leaf as fol. 1 of the codex in order to use the same foliation for all leaves of the codex. In Kålund (1889–1894) and handrit.is the foliation starts with the first leaf of the Psalter.

(1, 26, 38, 52, 68, 80 and 97) and Vespers on Sundays (109).<sup>8</sup> The enlarged initials are placed parallel in the two columns, one for the Latin and one for the Anglo-Norman text respectively. Some of the enlarged initials were not finished in the first production and are still left as sketches in the extant manuscript (see psalms 52, 68, 80 and 97). It is interesting to note that the one who erased the original Anglo-Norman text left the larger initials untouched and wherever the Icelandic text allowed him to re-use them he did so. In some cases this was not possible which forced the scribe to ignore the initial, but even in these cases the initial is left un-touched. In psalm 26 the initial was painted in the original production phase. The later scribe of the Icelandic text replacing the French text is most likely the agent who filled the initial using colours that the original scribe did not have at his disposal. The psalms spanning between the highlighted psalms are all marked with enlarged initials of two lines in red and blue and sometimes adorned.

The initials for each verse of the psalms were originally painted in red and blue for both texts. In some cases the scribe of the Icelandic translation could reuse the original initial which was then kept intact, but in most cases they were either erased and replaced in a similar colour or altered in relation to the Icelandic text. In the latter instances the scribe re-adjusted the original initial so that it formed a part of the new Icelandic text. The use of original initials and replacement of them when necessary in relation to the Icelandic text provides strong indications that the one responsible for the erasure of the Anglo-Norman text was either the scribe or someone in collaboration with him.

The manuscript contains a number of names in the margin added by later owners or people who have had access to the book. On fol. 34<sup>r</sup> we find the name Jón Eyólfsson, part of a statement that he has written his own name. On fol. 42<sup>r</sup> there is a similar note by someone called Eyólfur Oddsson. In one instance (fol. 56<sup>v</sup>) three names are written stapled vertically below the text, Qgmundur, Guðmundur and Hallmundur, perhaps a reflection of the naming tradition of a family, using the same second element for all three names. On fol. 69<sup>r</sup> Hrafnkell Eyólfsson has written his name. Another similar note is found on fol. 99<sup>v</sup> where Gunnlaugur Narfason is named as the owner of the book. The most often mentioned name found in the manuscript is that of the scribe identifying himself as Gunnlaugur Jónsson on fol. 117<sup>f</sup>:

Endadur j hruna af gunnla(u)gi ionssyne þann 5 dag martij. ann do: 1586 (fol. 117<sup>f</sup>)

This identification has been generally accepted in previous scholarship and there is no reason to question it here.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> For a discussion of the various ways of organizing the psalms of the Psalter see e.g. Panayotova (2011, 250).

<sup>9</sup> Gunnlaugur Jónsson was a priest at Hrúni from 1583. A couple of generations later the priest of this church was Daði Halldórsson (who was the son of Halldór Daðason, priest at Hrúni directly after

## Observation points: the manuscript trajectory

In this first step of my discussion the physical manuscript is treated from three chosen observation points. To understand the trajectory of the manuscript we need to treat the production and usage units separately, from 1) the original manuscript of the Psalter and the Canticles as a point of departure, through 2) the stage when the calendar is added in the mid-twelfth century (or was it a replacement of an earlier calendar?) to the last stage 3) when the manuscript is appropriated by a scribe in the time of the early reformed Church in Iceland in 1586. From its first production unit in the late twelfth century until the replacement of the French text by an Icelandic translation in 1586 the manuscript underwent changes in its physical appearance. It also moved geographically and was used in various contexts over the centuries. This means that both aspects of geographical and material *translatio* are relevant from the three chosen observation points.

The parallel organisation of the Psalter with the Latin text in the left column and the Anglo-Norman French text in the right is not unique for AM 618 4°. This arrangement is found in a number of contemporary manuscripts, primarily from Anglo-Norman England, the most well-known probably the Winchester Psalter (Cotton MS Nero C IV; see e.g. Rector 2009: 203–204).<sup>10</sup> There are obvious parallels between the Winchester Psalter and AM 618 4° in the *mis en page* as can be seen for example in the illuminations for the first psalm, *Beatus vir* (Figs. 1a and 1b).

The parallel layout of source and target language text, representing the vernacular text on an equal level with the Latin, seems to be an innovation perhaps initiated as a modification of the glosses that are found in many earlier re-writings of the Psalter. It could possibly also reflect the tradition of presenting the two Latin Psalters, the *psalterium gallicanum* and the *psalterium hebraicum*, in parallel columns as for example in the Winchcombe Psalter (Trinity College Library MS 53; see e.g. Cleaver 2015, 23–24), the synoptic presentation of two Latin versions of the Psalter being the incitement for placing the translation in a parallel column. The tradition of glossing a text in between the lines was then replaced by a translated vernacular text that was presented as more equal to the Latin text, as suggested by Rector (2009, 203–204; see also below on the role of languages in the polysystem).

In the Scandinavian material very few Psalter manuscripts have been preserved from the Middle Ages. Most of them are imported from England or the continent (see Gad 1968, 583–595). In the Norse material the extant evidence of what used to be a

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Gunnlaugur from 1624). He went to school at Skálholt with the later manuscript collector Þórmóður Torfason (or Torfeus) who was the owner of the manuscript before it finally ended up in Árni Magnússon's collection. It could be suggested that Þórmóður Torfason acquired the manuscript from Hrúni. I thank Bergur Þorgeirsson at Snorrastofa in Reykholt for sending all this information in reply to a question about the church at Hrúni.

<sup>10</sup> For an overview of manuscripts in Anglo-Norman French see Dean (1999).



large number of Psalter manuscripts is today scant to say the least. AM 618 4° is in fact the only surviving manuscript containing an almost complete Psalter. From the twelfth century there is a fragment of a Psalter, the so-called Kvikne Psalter considered to be originally produced in Norway (see e.g. Kleivane 2021) and there are fragments found in archives such as for example the National Archives in Stockholm and Oslo (Gjerløw 1980). Generally speaking, the Scandinavian production of Psalter manuscripts is rather later. One example of a Psalter fragment obviously written in Iceland is dated to c. 1350, considerably later, and regarded as a product of the Benedictine milieu of the monastery at Þingeyrar (Guðbjörg Kristjánsdóttir 1983; 2016, 257–274; Stefán Karlsson 1982). The so-called *Vatnsfjörður Psalter* is an example of a Psalter from the fourteenth century with a possible provenance in Iceland or Norway (AM 241 a fol; Louis-Jensen 2006; 2015). This manuscript is today fragmentary, but it provides evidence for a tradition of Psalters with rich illustrations from the Passion of Christ (Louis-Jensen 2006; Liepe 2009). From church inventories it is clear, however, that manuscripts of the Psalter were expected to be found in more or less every church at this later stage. Most of these, whether imported or produced in Scandinavia are now lost.

From the scant material we do have at our disposal there are clear indications that the paralleled vernacular transfer found in AM 618 4° had no counterpart in the earliest material from Scandinavia. Further, there is no example of glosses in any of the earlier fragments. In a later Psalter manuscript, the so-called *Wiener Psalter*, most likely produced by an Icelandic scribe, there are examples of glosses in what appears to be in two considerably later hands (Cod Vind 2713; Uecker 1980). This manuscript would be slightly later than the calendar found in AM 618 4° and therefore could be seen in relation to the second observation point, while the glosses – or interlinear translation – seem to be added after the Reformation and may be related to the Icelandic translation discussed as a third observation point (Uecker 1980; Louis-Jensen 1984). I return to this regarding the discussion on the position in the polysystem of texts and languages in late sixteenth century Iceland. Here it suffices to conclude that the parallel presentation of a translated vernacular text like the one in AM 618 4° is not to be found in the later material; this *mise en page* initiated in Anglo-Norman England never seems to have been adapted to the Norse tradition.

Viewed from the third observation point, however, it appears as if the idea of parallel translation was adopted as a one-time event by the scribe who erased the French text when he replaced it with the Icelandic translation. He also applied this innovation when he replaced a missing parchment leaf. On fol. 71<sup>v</sup> the word *dextrum* appears in the lower margin written in the sixteenth century hand of the Icelandic translator. This folio is followed by a singular paper leaf (fol. 72) where the Latin text starts with the word *dextrum* (see Fig. 2). The paper leaf is obviously replacing a now lost parchment leaf from the original codex. The scribe has either re-written the Latin text from the original leaf or found another exemplar to replace the lost text. The page is laid out in a similar way as the original parchment leaves with the Icelandic





**Fig. 1a:** The illuminated initial for the first Psalm of the Winchester Psalter (Cotton MS Nero C IV, fol. 046r, © British Library Board).



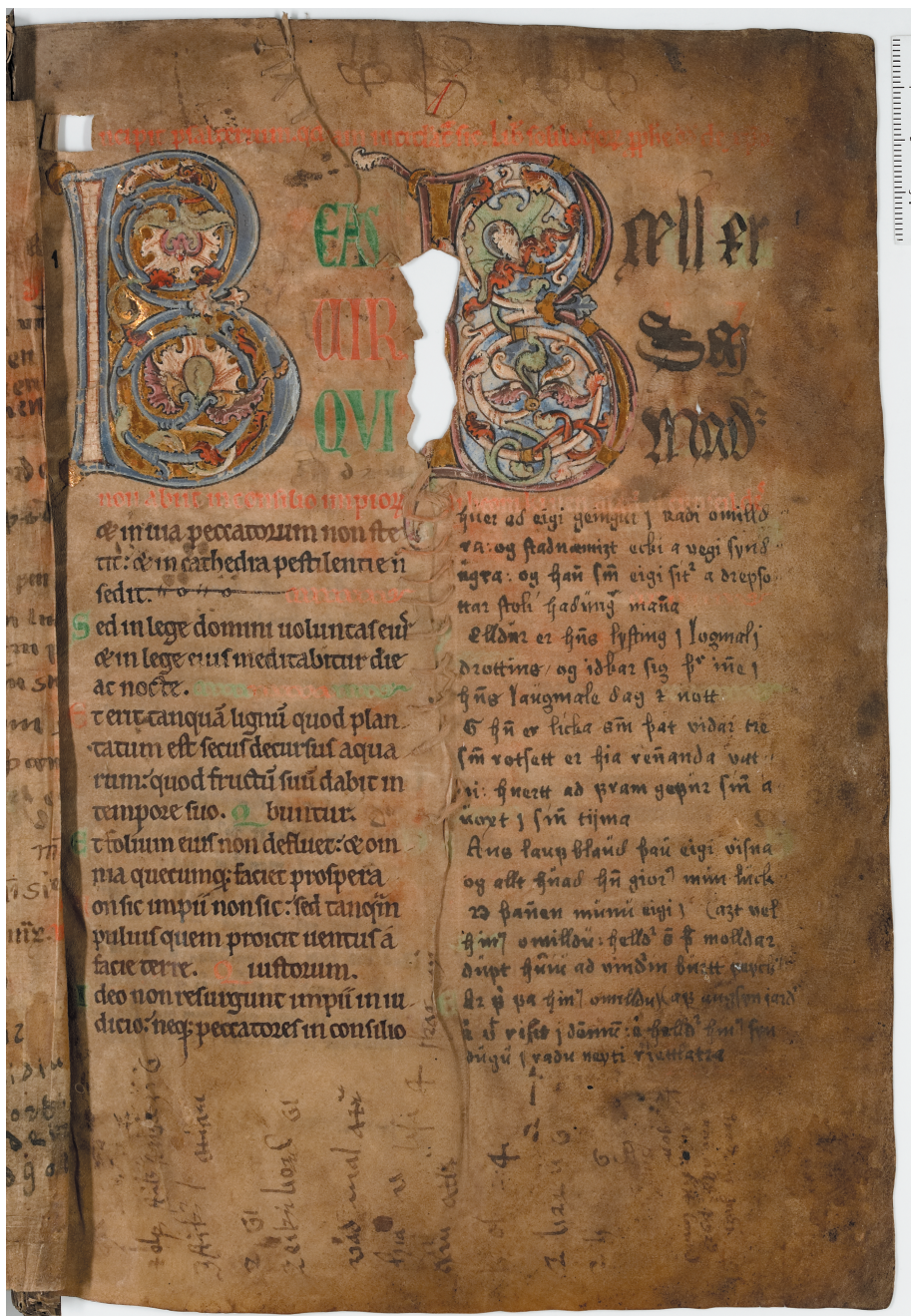


Fig. 1b: The illuminated initial for the first Psalm of AM 618 4°, fol. 1r (Copenhagen, The Arnamagnæan Collection. Photo: Suzanne Reitz).



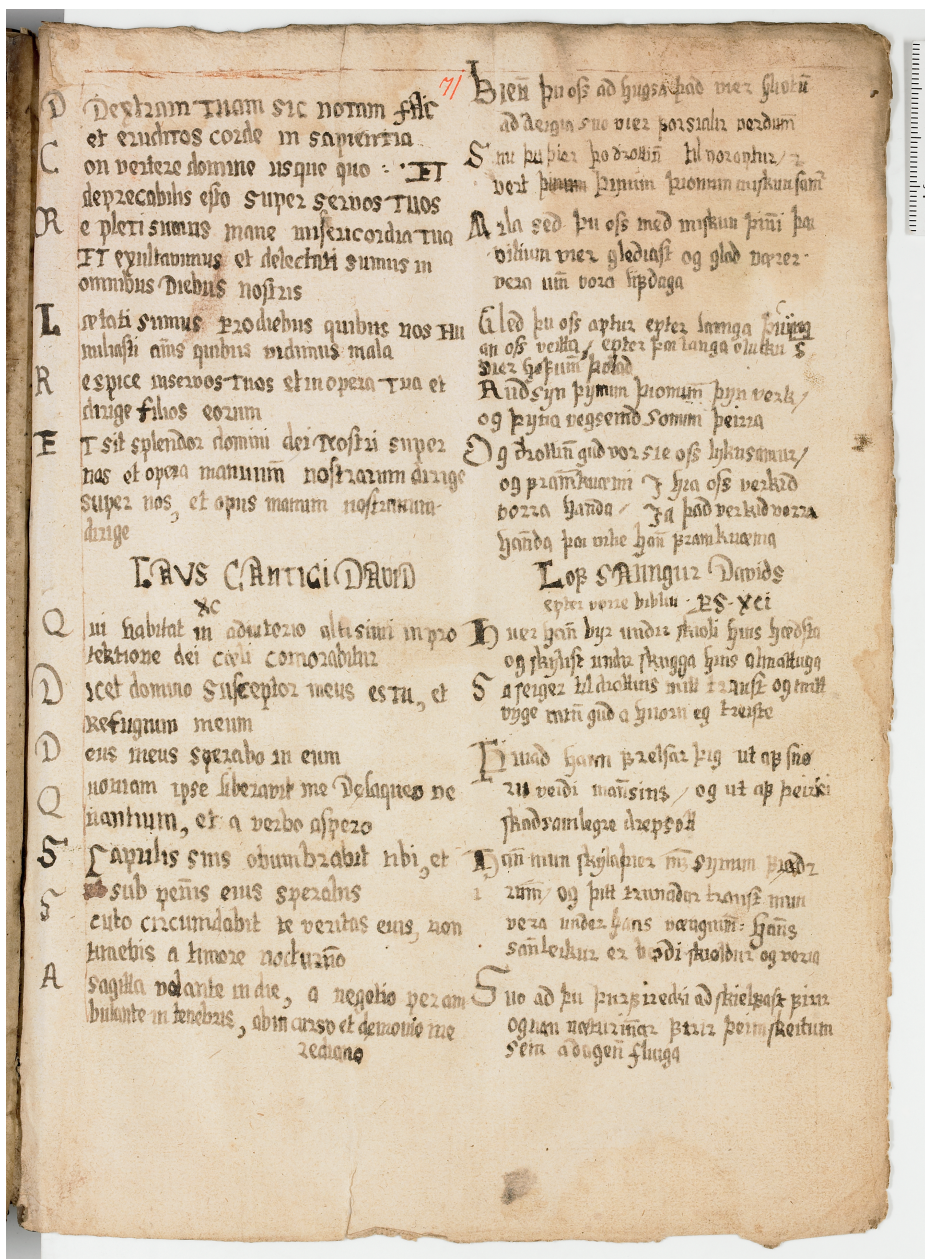


Fig. 2: The paper leaf replacing a lost parchment leaf (Copenhagen, The Arnarnagnæan Collection, AM 618 4°, fol. 72r. Photo: Suzanne Reitz).



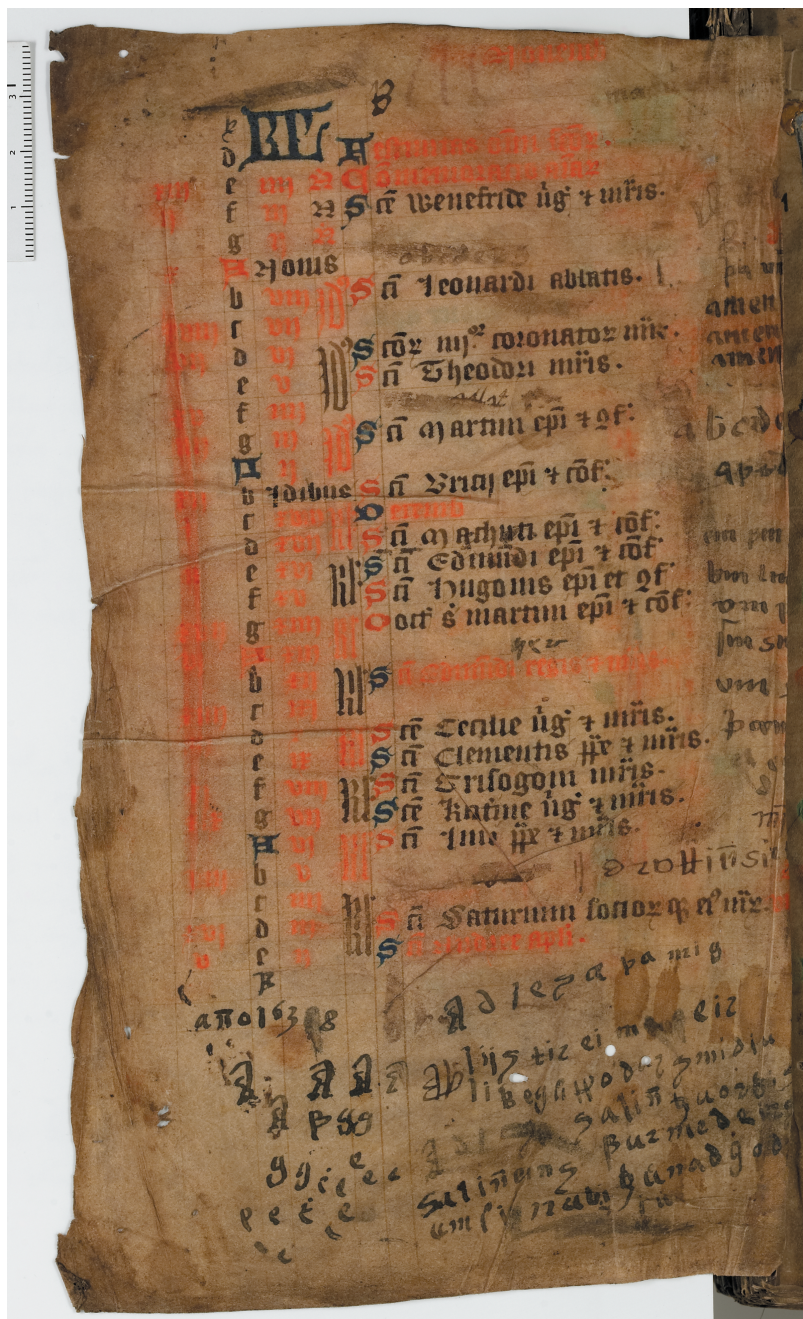


Fig. 3: Verso page of the fragmentary calendar found in AM 618 4° (Copenhagen, The Arnamagnæan Collection. Photo: Suzanne Reitz).

translation in the right column. It is noteworthy, however, that only the recto page is used while the verso page is left blank. This could possibly be due to the scribe lacking the time to finish the replacement of the parchment leaf. Another explanation could be that the scribe had at his disposal the Icelandic text, while the Latin text was too damaged to read in the re-writing process; the scribe re-wrote what he could read from the damaged parchment but did not continue his work when the text became unreadable.

The paper leaf in itself then becomes a material *translatio* of the twelfth century text in a sixteenth century transfer or re-writing at the same time as the re-writing of the Icelandic text continues. The twelfth century Latin text is partly transferred into a new century and incorporated in the context in a confirmative sense, that is, its value is ascertained by the scribe.

The dating of the calendar (see Fig. 3) on the first folio to the mid-thirteenth century leads Michael Gullick (2013b, 151) to suggest that the manuscript was moved from England at a point after this date. This sounds plausible as the calendar is in itself a product of Anglo-Norman provenance. Povl Skårup (1977, 91) states that the fragment is not only younger than the main part of the manuscript, but the single extant leaf is also rather smaller than the leaves of the twelfth century part of the manuscript. It could be argued that the original manuscript had been in use over a couple of generations when this calendar was added to the book and that it was only after this addition that it was transferred in a geographical *translatio* to Scandinavia or directly to Iceland. However, the calendar fragment provides primarily information about the trajectory of the Psalter manuscript after 1250 rather than that of the initial production. The calendar could also possibly be a separate import to Iceland and only much later incorporated in the extant manuscript. This hypothesis could be sustained by the evidence of the import of calendars from the continent and England contemporary to the second observation point, that is the late thirteenth century and throughout the fourteenth century.

Michael Gullick (2013a; 2013b) has treated the fragments found in Norway that are either of English origin, made by English scribes in Norway, or made by Norwegian scribes with English training. He thoroughly discusses the problems involved in distinguishing an English hand from a Norwegian, but despite the caveats he is able to establish groups of hands that can either be referred to as English or Norwegian with English training (Gullick 2013a). In the case of the hand responsible for the main part, the first production unit, there has never been any real doubt about the Anglo-Norman provenance (see Skårup 1977, 91). Gullick (2013b, 151) narrows the provenance down to being from Canterbury.

During the Reformation period the manuscript was obviously in Iceland. Here the French translations were more or less eliminated and replaced partly by the Icelandic translation. This later stage in the trajectory of the manuscript could then be seen as a new stage of *translatio*, in a new context and related to a period when the Church in Iceland was in the process of reformation. This exchange of the target languages con-

siderably alters the usage unit, and it will also have implications for the status of the physical manuscript.

The Icelandic scribe identified as the one responsible for the sixteenth century changes to the manuscript, Gunnlaugur Jónsson, is not known from other sources. It can be stated with relative certainty, however, that he had a personal interest in the transfer he made of the Icelandic Psalter text as replacement for the Anglo-Norman. He is most likely responsible for the erasure of the French text and is also the one who has taken active decisions concerning the incorporation of the Icelandic text in the *mise en page*, with modifications made to align this new text in a similar way as the erased text and using the twelfth century initials as often as possible instead of erasing them. In his work he displays some knowledge of Latin, but first and foremost he is consciously forming a new usage unit from the old manuscript.

## Observation points: the texts

The dissemination of individual texts, often incorporated in contexts with other texts and perhaps also with changes in function and use, offers relevant observation points in this process. The individual text, whether as part of the first production unit or added as a secondary production unit, was at one point created with intention perhaps on the initiative of its creator or on order from a patron. In the dissemination the text is often found incorporated in manuscripts in interaction with other texts. These interrelations may provide new insights into the position of the text in the polysystem at various times. Here I focus on the Psalter text and only discuss the other texts found in interaction with it in the manuscript and forming its context at various stages; this interaction, however, does provide information about the trajectory of the texts and their intended functions even at this early stage of analysis. The Psalter text could at the various points of dissemination have various functions; the status of the text is also relevant for our understanding.<sup>11</sup> Psalter texts were read in the liturgy and are found not only in separate manuscripts, but also in multi-text liturgical manuscripts. It was, however, in itself a biblical text that would be re-written separately for individual reading and contemplation, and it was frequently used as a suitable text for learning Latin. In the following the Psalter is tentatively related to the other texts of the manuscript as it developed over time as well as the contexts where it interacted with other texts within the polysystem. The material aspects of this transmission con-

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<sup>11</sup> For a general introduction to the use of the Psalter and the Hymnal in medieval liturgy see e.g. Palazzo (1998, esp. 129–144). A recent discussion of the various contexts of the Psalter and its dissemination in illuminated manuscripts see Panayotova (2011). For the place of the Psalter in intellectual culture in the Middle Ages see Van Deusen (1999).

cerning the manuscript as an artefact were treated above from three separate observation points. These three points are here revisited from the perspective of texts.

The main and original text of AM 618 4° is the Psalter and its transfer to Anglo-Norman French running parallel on fols 2–117<sup>r</sup>. The Latin Psalter was frequently rewritten in new manuscripts throughout the Middle Ages. It was an important text in the liturgy and therefore was often interrelated to other liturgical texts in manuscripts designed for use in the church and monastery. However, the biblical text is also often found in manuscripts of which it forms the very core. The present context seems to be of a more secular and private nature, where the text could have been used for individual contemplation, representing a later development in the use of the text.

The original Hebraic text was throughout the Middle Ages distributed in two main transfers into Latin, one attributed to Hieronymus and labelled *psalterium gallicanum* and one based on the Hebraic text and referred to as *psalterium hebraicum*. In some contexts these two versions were placed parallel in the same manuscript as pointed out above.<sup>12</sup> The re-writing found in the present manuscript is the one referred to as *psalterium gallicanum*.

There are many examples of transfers of the Psalter into the vernacular in the twelfth century and the present (erased) parallel text in Anglo-Norman French is not unusual. There are a number of Anglo-Norman transfers extant, with some examples of glossed Latin text, and at least one manuscript where the translated text is placed parallel to the Latin in two columns. This arrangement represents a new stage in the trajectory of the originally Hebraic text which had been transferred through Greek into Latin and now also began to be incorporated in the European vernaculars of the Middle Ages.

The Latin translation was central in the medieval polysystem of texts throughout Europe. It was glossed or transferred into vernacular languages as early as the Middle Ages, but these transferred texts seem mostly to have functioned as tools in the process of learning Latin; they were, as far as we can judge from the extant material, never seen as replacements for the Latin text. The Anglo-Norman French re-writing therefore seems to be an innovation which in itself formed a readable text (see Rector 2009, 200). This presents an early example of the transfer of biblical texts from the Old Testament into the vernacular in the twelfth century. From a continental perspective this observation point from the view of the manuscript text highlights the early vernacularisation of central texts in the polysystem, what was definitely an innovation.

A text of particular interest here is the Icelandic translation replacing the erased Anglo-Norman text. It provides an important observation point for the Psalter in post-Reformation Iceland: how the translated text on the one hand related to the Latin and on the other how the printed translation of the Psalter was disseminated and evaluated. To start with the latter the translated text has its own story. This re-writing of a

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<sup>12</sup> See e.g. the Winchcombe Psalter (Trinity College Library MS 53; Cleaver 2015, 23–24).



translation which had recently been printed in the Icelandic Bible, the so-called *Guðbrandsbiblíja* (1584), based on an earlier translation by the Icelandic priest Oddur Gottskálksson, adds a new dimension to the trajectory of transfer of the Psalter (see e.g. Skårup 1977, 93). It represents a stage where the vernacular has moved closer to the centre of the polysystem, its status improved by the new ideas of not only translating biblical texts, but also of the vernacular as equal to Latin as a written language. The parallel Icelandic text is with this in mind a more central entity in the dissemination than was the earlier Anglo-Norman text. At the same time the Icelandic text is still related to the parallel Latin text, a text that has lost some, but obviously not all, of its status. A more or less contemporary transfer to Icelandic in what is more reminiscent of the glosses, placed interlinear to the medieval Latin text, is found in the Wiener Psalter, Cod Vind 2713 (Uecker 1980). The Icelandic glosses are here written by two scribes some time after 1550. It is not the scribes themselves who translated the text, rather they copied an earlier translation which is dated by Jonna Louis-Jensen (1984, 236) to the second half of the fifteenth century. Even if the translation is thereby dated to before the Reformation, the re-writing by the post-Reformation scribes indicates that the Icelandic text had emerged as more central in the polysystem, in much the same way as the translation in AM 618 4°. This should obviously be seen in relation also to the position of the languages in the polysystem which is treated in the following subchapter.

In front of the first folio there is a leaf added later that holds a calendar dated to the mid-thirteenth century. The calendar was central in liturgical life and in the Church to control the holidays of the year. It was often also inserted in front of the Psalter text in manuscripts for individual use. It would therefore not have been surprising to find it added to a Psalter manuscript. The fragmentary calendar placed as the first leaf of AM 618 4° complies with this general tendency of interacting with the Psalter. As this particular calendar is dated to the mid-thirteenth century, however, it is clearly a later addition (see the discussion of the manuscript above) and not part of the originally planned manuscript. Was this new production unit, produced about a half century after the Psalter and Canticles, intended for the present manuscript? This is obviously a difficult, if not impossible question to answer with any certainty. The leaf contains just a fragment of a complete calendar. Skårup (1977, 91) concludes that “Rien n’indique que le calendrier entier ait jamais été attaché au psautier, ni que le feuillet conservé lui ait été avant le moment de la reliure”. He is convinced, however, that the calendar was produced in England and points out that this is not the only example of a calendar from England ending up in Iceland (Skårup 1977, 91). This is confirmed further by the mention in inventories from churches in Iceland, the so-called *máldagar*, where there are examples of notes about both *irskar bækr* ‘Irish books’ and *enskar bækr* ‘English books’ referring not to the language but rather the style and layout of the manuscripts. A late example of a calendar imported from England is provided by the manuscript AM 249 a fol, probably produced in Norfolk c. 1300, but only arriving in Iceland after the Reformation (Gjerløw 1980, 99; Love 2015, 144–145).



When the calendar was produced in the mid-thirteenth century it was a central text in the polysystem. It was disseminated not only within the Church and monasteries but was also available to lay people. What makes the calendar in AM 618 4° interesting in relation to the Psalter is that it was produced in a similar environment in England, but not necessarily planned as a part of the present manuscript. It could be that the calendar was already planned, and while in England, added to the Psalter, but the likelihood is that it was imported separately and only later incorporated in the older manuscript. From the observation point of this calendar in connection to the Psalter we therefore have two possible views, the one of Anglo-Norman England in the late thirteenth century or Iceland (or possibly Norway) with a *post quem* in the late thirteenth century. It's important to note here, however, that the combination of Psalter and calendar is not unusual and that the binding of the fragment of the calendar in this context would have been common throughout the period.

On the remaining leaves, 117<sup>v</sup>–119, we find what is characterised as the *Hymni et cantica ex testamento veteri*, or Canticles, various Latin excerpts with what Kålund considers a contemporary parallel transfer into Anglo-Norman French. This combination of Psalter and Canticles would have been most common at the time of the manuscript's production. As with the Psalter text the French text on these leaves has also been erased, but it has not been replaced by Icelandic text. It does appear, however, as if the scribe has initiated the process of translation but never concluded the work. This would also indicate that the Old Testament texts presented on these leaves were still valuable for a learned scribe in the late sixteenth century.

## Observation points: the languages

From the above presentation of the transfer of texts in translations from Latin to Anglo-Norman French and subsequently to post-Reformation Icelandic, three languages and their status need to be further investigated. In a timespan of almost four hundred years it could be expected that these languages would have moved in the polysystem of languages. This is related to what I have argued for above as geographical *translatio* and linguistic *translatio*. In the earlier stages of the processes of *translatio* the first mentioned is likely more dominant, when texts and culture are transferred from a continental or Anglo-Norman centre to a more peripheral region. At the same time a linguistic *translatio* involves the introduction and use of the *Lingua franca*, Latin, as a dominating source for the learned elite (which obviously goes hand in hand with another and more general geographical *translatio*).

As mentioned above the Psalter was central throughout the Middle Ages, both as part of the liturgy, for private contemplation and as a primer for learning Latin. In Anglo-Norman England the French language, or *romanz*, was frequently used for glossing the Latin text and soon also for re-writings in the vernacular (see e.g. Rector

2009; Cleaver 2015). These translations are regarded as the earliest literary achievements in Anglo-Norman French and therefore have been central in the emergence of this vernacular (Rector 2009, 201). Geoff Rector argues that the *romanz* language, from being a recently established written vernacular with low status, is soon presented in a way that indicates its move to a position where its status is more or less equal to the Latin. He states:

Yet, *romanz*'s second dynamic, the refining movement up from a more demotic and regional vernacular, throws into relief one of the hallmarks of the twelfth-century renaissance: the vernacularization of the texts and resources of literary education. It is in the context of this dynamic that we can best locate the history of the *romanz* Psalter, vernacular translations of the pre-eminent text of Christian spiritual, ethical and even discursive formation. (Rector 2009, 200)

The Latin of the text is obviously unproblematic as a central language throughout the Middle Ages and after the Reformation even as the vernacular is expanding its role at the centre of the polysystem. Latin was the *lingua franca* of the period and was written more or less identically all over Europe. The most interesting thing here is rather that the Latin text has been transferred into Anglo-Norman placed in parallel columns throughout fols 2–117. This would indicate that the manuscript at the outset was directed towards an audience that could read the Latin text, but at the same time it also offered an Anglo-Norman text which could be thought of as a support for the reading of the Latin or where the vernacular text was possibly intended to be read in public to a listening audience with references to the Latin text which retained its status of holy text (see e.g. Coleman 1996).

After the Norman invasion of England in 1066 the old language, Anglo-Saxon, was to a large extent soon reduced to a written language in rather limited contexts in monastic and Church milieux (see e.g. Clanchy 1993). Anglo-Norman, the French spoken and written in the Norman parts of France became the language of power and learning in England for the next few centuries and kept its position in for example legal language during the Middle Ages as a parallel language to Middle English.<sup>13</sup>

When continental literature as well as liturgical texts were introduced in Norway and Iceland in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, one central route of dissemination was through the Anglo-Norman region in England. It has for example been suggested that some, if not all, of the Romanesque literature which was transferred into Norse in this period had its sources in Anglo-Norman texts and may even have been translated in Anglo-Norman England by a visiting Norwegian (see e.g. Budal 2009). There is also some consensus among scholars regarding liturgical texts being imported from England in Anglo-Norman manuscripts or as re-writings of manuscripts from this region (see e.g. Gullick 2013b). In our context it is relevant to consider the status of Anglo-Norman French in the polysystem. Would the parallel texts, the Latin and the French, influence the status of the manuscript in any way? Or could the status of the Latin text uphold

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<sup>13</sup> See various articles in Wogan-Browne (2009).

the importance of the manuscript through the centuries while many other similar manuscripts perished? It is interesting, as discussed in the section on the manuscript, that the two texts seem to have survived until the French text was erased late in the sixteenth century to provide room for the inserted Icelandic text.

As mentioned above there is another example of a medieval manuscript of the Psalter where an Icelandic translation (or glosses) has been added in the time after the Reformation. In the so-called *Wiener Psalter* two Icelandic scribes have added the translated text between the lines of the medieval text reminiscent of the way medieval scribes glossed their Latin texts. It is interesting here, however, that these post-reformatory scribes have chosen to re-write a text that is dated to the second half of the fifteenth century (Louis-Jensen 1984, 236). This use of the Icelandic language corroborates the impression of the translated text found in AM 618 4° of a vernacular that has moved closer to the centre of the polysystem and at this point can interact with the Latin text.

## Conclusion

Any individual book has a life of its own. This is true also for modern printed books, often thought of as unchangeable from the time they leave the printer. Readers mark, comment in the margin and underline the text itself, sometimes producing drawings and even scribbles indicating absent-mindedness or boredom. The printed text stays the same throughout its lifetime (except for books being harvested by ruthless readers for passages, leaves of particular interest or pictures), but the comments and underlining do add dimensions to our reading of it. A copy of a book found in the library of a celebrity with comments (or scribbles!) in this person's hand intrigues us and alters the way we approach even the stable printed text.

In medieval manuscript culture the very text of the manuscript is singular to the degree that it could be questioned whether the concept of *copy* applies to it. In the above I have rather chosen to use the concept *re-writing* for the individual text, thereby marking the agency of the responsible scribe. Any re-writing is seen with this approach as an active and conscientious transfer of the exemplar, reflecting the reception of its text by the scribe and the intended audience. But the medieval manuscript is not as fixed as the printed book. As soon as the manuscript is handled by the intended audience and subsequent generations of users it is the object of changes. New leaves or quires may be added, and old ones disappear, glosses are made to the text or longer additions made in the margins. In many instances we also see the result of absent-mindedness and boredom that reminds us of what can occur in printed books, including names and short phrases with little consequence for the texts. All these later additions have influenced the appearance of the manuscript, its use and how it was evaluated and read. An addition made many generations after the main body of the manuscript text is in this

view always relevant for the contemporary audience and therefore offers a challenge for the philologist trying to get to grips with the manuscript as a communicative act.

In this chapter I have tentatively approached the trajectory of the manuscript AM 618 4° from its earliest stage in the late twelfth century until its latest larger alteration in the late sixteenth century. The aim has been twofold. First, the manuscript itself offers an interesting object of study with relevance to our understanding of the dissemination of texts as well as the distribution, handling, and use of manuscripts. And secondly, it has been my intention to sketch an approach to the description and analysis of a manuscript on the move though time and space over four centuries. The presentation has therefore been more detailed than was strictly needed in order to demonstrate the model. I have chosen three *observation points* in the trajectory of the extant manuscript and argued that these provide us with views of both tradition, contemporary status and innovations related to the manuscript on three points in time and space, the late twelfth century in an Anglo-Norman context, the second half of the thirteenth century in an Anglo-Norman context, but also the possible move of the manuscript to a Scandinavian context and finally the late sixteenth century and a post-Reformation context.

From each of these observation points three aspects have been in focus, the material artefact, the texts, and finally the languages involved. These three aspects have been seen from the perspective of *translatio* on three different levels, geographical *translatio*, linguistic *translatio* and material *translatio*, representing a wider concept of *translatio* than the medieval *translatio studii* and *translatio imperii* and the ideas of *translatio* of relics.

At each observation point the material artefact, the texts (as they are successively added or erased) and the languages can be connected to the contemporary polysystem, allowing us to investigate the movements from periphery to centre and the reverse.

It has been problematic to keep the variables distinct in the previous discussion. Obviously they are constantly interacting and cannot be separated in a definite manner; the presentation is rather intended to present a way to approach the manifold study of a single manuscript's trajectory and how its form, content and subsequent status are constantly in interaction with the contemporary polysystem.

It is now time to sum up the results from the above discussion and form some kind of synthesis where the various aspects are interrelated. The first observation point placed the Psalter and Canticles in the Anglo-Norman context. The manuscript does seem to have been part of an innovative stage in how the Latin texts are positioned in the left column and providing room in the right column for the Anglo-Norman French translation, where earlier glosses and transfers of the texts are usually placed interlinear to the source language text. The status of the manuscript as central in the polysystem is supported by a number of similar manuscripts with elaborate illuminations found in the extant material. This is obviously corroborated by the place of the Psalter at the very centre of a polysystem where liturgical texts in general had central positions. The language, Anglo-Norman French or *romanz*, is here placed in parallel columns which has

been understood as if the *romanz* text at this early stage aspires to a status closer to the central position of Latin in the polysystem.

The second observation point is more uncertain. The calendar added to the manuscript is definitely an Anglo-Norman product and could have been bound with the present manuscript while in England and conformant with the tradition of placing calendars in front of Psalters. At the same time the two parts of the manuscript could have been separate in the Anglo-Norman context and only later bound together, and now in a Scandinavian context. The geographical move of the two parts, however, corroborates what can be seen in contemporary Scandinavia (including Iceland) of the import of both Psalter and calendar manuscripts from England and the continent in the later part of the Middle Ages. There is still some uncertainty about the status of *romanz* in Scandinavia at this point, but there are indications in the romance material translated from the thirteenth century and later that manuscripts written in *romanz* were imported and valued in Scandinavia.

The third observation point places the manuscript and its texts in post-Reformation Iceland. The manuscript still seems to have some status as it has actually survived while so many manuscripts containing Psalters have been lost. But the scribe who erased the *romanz* text did not necessarily show great piety as his action indicates that the central intention was to provide an Icelandic parallel text to the Latin one. The contemporary scribbles in various hands corroborate this observation. But the fact that the Latin text was kept intact indicates that this text was still valued and kept a central place in the polysystem at a time when the text of the Psalter, translated into Icelandic and printed in the *Guðbrandsbiblíja* in 1584, became the version that was read. Needless to say, the *romanz* text had by now lost all its status and was moved out of the polysystem (to be revived only in the twentieth century by modern scholars studying the palimpsest). It is finally interesting to note that Árni Magnússon kept this Psalter manuscript intact even as he tore up many other similar manuscripts to reuse the parchment. Most likely this can be explained by the presence of the Icelandic text which made the manuscript more valuable to him. It took another three hundred years before Scandinavian scholars realised how valuable the Latin fragments of the Middle Ages actually were and started to organise, scrutinise and publish their content.

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