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Exploring (Un)Translatability: A Practice-Based Case Study
on Translation of Norwegian Poetry

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Declaration

I declare that this thesis has been composed solely by myself and that it has not been submitted, in whole or in part, in any previous application for a degree. Except where indicated by reference or acknowledgment, the work presented is entirely my own.

Rachel Rankin

28th February 2024

Abstract

This thesis explores the feasibility of three different poetry translation approaches for two contrasting styles of Norwegian poetry using a practice-based, case-study methodology. The poetic styles in question are the rhyming, metrical poetry of Halldis Moren Vesaas (1907–95) and the hybrid, genre-transgressing poetry of Cecilie Løveid (1951–). The poetry translation approaches in question are the literal approach, as championed by Stanley Burnshaw and Vladimir Nabokov; the double-aim approach, as championed by James S. Holmes; and the poetically viable approach, as championed by Barbara Folkart. By exploring the feasibility of these approaches for these two styles of poetry, I aim to find out how effective practice-based research can be in terms of creatively illustrating scholarly debates within Translation Studies, with the debate explored in this thesis being the question of poetic (un)translatability. This debate can also be described as the tension between instrumentalist and hermeneutic approaches to translation, as outlined by Lawrence Venuti. The three poetry translation approaches explored in this thesis have therefore been chosen based on their respective positions within this debate. The literal approach is a strictly instrumentalist approach as it takes the alleged untranslatable nature of poetry as a given and dictates that a literal translation must include an extensive analytical commentary. The double-aim approach dictates that a translation must reflect enough of the source poem content and microstructures for it to be considered a translation yet still function as a poem in its own right, and this approach can, therefore, be described as hermeneutic. The poetically viable approach dictates that the translator cut ties with the source poem as ruthlessly as may be necessary in order to create an entirely new poem, and this approach can be said to contain elements of both instrumentalism and hermeneutics. By engaging with the source poems using these three approaches, I aim not only to explore the feasibility of these approaches, but also to show how practice-based

research can be used within the discipline of Translation Studies and to outline the benefits of engaging with this methodology, particularly in light of the appreciation of translation and creative writing as research in their own right.

Lay Summary

This thesis uses a practice-based, case-study methodology to explore three different approaches to poetry translation by applying them to two contrasting styles of Norwegian poetry. The styles in question are the rhyming, metrical poetry of Halldis Moren Vesaas (1907–95) and the hybrid, genre-defying poetry of Cecilie Løveid (1951–). The poetry translation approaches I have engaged with are the literal approach, as championed by Stanley Burnshaw and Vladimir Nabokov; the double-aim approach, as championed by James S. Holmes; and the poetically viable approach, as championed by Barbara Folkart. By comparing and contrasting how these approaches can be applied to two very different styles of poetry, I aim to show how practical translations can be used to illustrate academic debates within the discipline of Translation Studies, with the debate explored in this thesis being the question of whether or not poetry can be translated. The three poetry translation approaches in this thesis therefore represent different views on whether or not poetry can be translated. The literal approach takes the alleged untranslatable nature of poetry as a given and demands that the translator produce a literal translation, which includes an extensive analytical commentary. The double-aim approach assumes that poetry can be translated and aims to create a poem that reflects the original poem while reading as creative work in its own right. The poetically viable approach straddles the line between whether poetry is translatable or not and dictates that translator must use the original poem as inspiration to create a completely new work. By applying these approaches to these contrasting styles in order to illustrate this academic debate, I aim to offer an example of how practice-based research can be used within the discipline of Translation Studies and outline the benefits of using this methodology, particularly in light of the appreciation of translation and creative writing as research in their own right.

Table of Contents

Acknowledgements	xiii
1 Introduction	1
1.1 Research Aims.....	2
1.2 Instrumentalism versus Hermeneutics	4
1.3 Jones and <i>Poetry Translation as Expert Action</i>	8
1.4 Selection Criteria.....	11
1.5 Thesis Structure.....	15
2 Methodology.....	17
2.1 Defining Practice-Based Research.....	17
2.2 Practice-Based Research in Translation Studies	18
2.3 Value of the Creative Component.....	22
2.4 Value of the Reflective Component.....	23
2.5 Case-Study Methodology.....	25
3 Historical Background	27
3.1 A Brief History of the Norwegian Language Situation.....	27
3.2 Nineteenth-Century Norwegian Literature.....	30
3.3 <i>Den Store Romantikken</i> and Halldis Moren Vesaas.....	33
3.4 Modernism, Postmodernism and Cecilie Løveid.....	36
3.5 Nynorsk as a More Poetic Medium.....	40
4 The Literal Approach.....	45
4.1 Theoretical Outline.....	45
4.1.1 Burnshaw and <i>The Poem Itself</i>	46
4.1.2 Nabokovian Literalism.....	49
4.1.3 Place within the Instrumentalist/Hermeneutic Debate.....	52
4.1.4 Outline of Practical Approach	55
4.2 Literal Translations	57
4.2.1 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Bråtebrann” / “Bonfire”	58

4.2.2	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Harpe og dolk” / “Harp and Dagger”	62
4.2.3	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Septemberkveld” / “September Evening”	67
4.2.4	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Skumring” / “Twilight”	71
4.2.5	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Timane går” / “The Hours Pass”	76
4.2.6	Cecilie Løveid: “Scootermadonna” / “Scooter Madonna”	81
4.2.7	Cecilie Løveid: “Spilt vin” / “Spilled [Played/Wasted] Wine”	90
4.3	Reflective Commentary.....	98
4.3.1	Syntax	99
4.3.2	Unintended Recreation of Intrinsic Poetic Functions	104
4.3.3	Function of Analytical Commentaries	105
4.3.4	General Remarks.....	110
5	The Double-Aim Approach.....	113
5.1	Theoretical Outline.....	113
5.1.1	Holmes and the Double-Aim Approach	113
5.1.2	Translation as Metaliterature	117
5.1.3	Place within the Instrumentalist/Hermeneutic Debate.....	119
5.1.4	Outline of Practical Approach	121
5.2	Double-Aim Translations.....	124
5.2.1	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Bråtebrann” / “Bonfire”	125
5.2.2	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Harpe og dolk” / “Harp and Dagger”	126
5.2.3	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Septemberkveld” / “September Evening”	127
5.2.4	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Skumring” / “Twilight”	128
5.2.5	Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Timane går” / “The Hours Pass”	130
5.2.6	Cecilie Løveid: “Scootermadonna” / “Scooter Madonna”	131
5.2.7	Cecilie Løveid: “Spilt vin” / “Spilled Wine”	133
5.3	Reflective Commentary.....	135
5.3.1	Halldis Moren Vesaas.....	135
5.3.1.1	Creative Solutions: Metre.....	136
5.3.1.2	Creative Solutions: Rhyme.....	141
5.3.1.3	Creative Solutions: Content	146
5.3.1.4	Less-Than-Perfect Solutions: Metre.....	151
5.3.1.5	Less-Than-Perfect Solutions: Rhyme.....	155

5.3.1.6	Less-Than-Perfect Solutions: Content	157
5.3.1.7	Instances of Translational Failure	160
5.3.2	Cecilie Løveid.....	163
5.3.2.1	Source Poem Reflection	165
5.3.2.2	Creative Solutions	168
5.3.2.3	Less-Than-Perfect Solutions	171
5.3.3	General Remarks.....	175
6	The Poetically Viable Approach	180
6.1	Theoretical Outline	180
6.1.1	Folkart and the Poetically Viable Approach	180
6.1.2	Place within the Instrumentalist/Hermeneutic Debate.....	183
6.1.3	Outline of Practical Approach.....	187
6.2	Poetically Viable Translations and Commentaries.....	189
6.2.1	“Harp and Dagger”	190
6.2.2	Commentary: “Harp and Dagger”	191
6.2.3	“September Evening”.....	193
6.2.4	Commentary: “September Evening”.....	194
6.2.5	“The Bonfire”.....	197
6.2.6	Commentary: “The Bonfire”.....	198
6.2.7	“The Setting Sun Casts Shadows on the Wall”	200
6.2.8	Commentary: “The Setting Sun Casts Shadows on the Wall”	201
6.2.9	“Twilight”.....	204
6.2.10	Commentary: “Twilight”.....	205
6.2.11	“Girl with Balloon”.....	208
6.2.12	Commentary: “Girl with Balloon”	209
6.2.13	“The Ballad of Iron Lung”	213
6.2.14	Commentary: “The Ballad of Iron Lung”	216
6.3	General Remarks.....	221
7	Conclusion	226
7.1	Recap of Research Aims	226

7.2	Feasibility of Translation Approaches.....	226
7.3	Benefits of Practice-Based Research.....	231
7.4	Areas for Future Research.....	233
Works Cited.....		237

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1 Introduction

According to James S. Holmes, the question of whether or not poetry is translatable “has been argued long and furiously, but the debates have usually generated more heat than light” (“Rebuilding” 45). W.H. Auden claimed that the only difference he could perceive between poetry and prose is that “prose can be translated, but poetry cannot”, while Robert Frost famously stated that “poetry is what gets lost in translation” (Auden 333; Untermeyer 18; Venuti 109). In his article “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation”, Roman Jakobson asserts that “poetry, by definition, is untranslatable”, and the title of Peter Robinson’s 2009 book on poetry translation – *Poetry and Translation: The Art of the Impossible* – also makes reference to a commonly used way of describing the act of translating poetry (Jakobson 238). On the other hand, there are those who reject this notion of poetic untranslatability, such as Holmes, who claimed that “[no] translation of a poem is ever ‘the same as’ the poem itself. It can’t be, since everything about it is different: another language, another tradition, another author, another audience” (“On Matching” 53), and Jean Boase-Beier, who claims that those who maintain that poetry is untranslatable are “failing to understand the nature of translation” (“Theory and Practice” 9).

One of the most striking works on (un)translatability to have been published in recent years is Lawrence Venuti’s 2019 polemic *Contra Instrumentalism*, in which he implores translators to abandon instrumentalist attitudes to translation in favour of adopting a hermeneutic approach. In other words, he encourages translators to “STOP asserting that any text is untranslatable” and “START realizing that every text is translatable because every text

can be interpreted” (x). While *Contra Instrumentalism* explores untranslatability in a more general sense, the arguments Venuti puts forward are indeed applicable to the translation of poetry. The tension between instrumentalist and hermeneutic approaches to translation is therefore particularly interesting when considering the fact that “there are as many approaches [to poetry translation] as there are translators” (Weissbort xiii). As this thesis will illustrate, many approaches to poetry translation are rooted in notions of instrumentalism or hermeneutics, which therefore implies that the type of approach a translator employs will be influenced by the translator’s own views on the (un)translatability of poetry.

As both a poetry and translation practitioner, I am particularly drawn to the concept of using practice within a research context in order to engage with theory. My interests therefore lie not in polarising practice on one hand and theory on the other, but rather in bringing the two closer together in a way that can be mutually beneficial, particularly since engaging with theory as a practitioner can “[encourage] a certain amount of freedom from too narrow a view of the source text” and “give us the confidence to try out other methods” (Boase-Beier, “Who Needs Theory?” 25). Using practice to engage with theory within a poetry translation context can therefore lead to new insights on the feasibility of different poetry translation approaches as well as allowing the practitioner to engage with theoretical debates within poetry translation scholarship, such as the debate surrounding poetic (un)translatability.

1.1 Research Aims

With all of this in mind, the aim of this research is twofold. Firstly, I aim to explore the feasibility of three different poetry translation approaches for two contrasting styles of Norwegian poetry, with the approaches in question being the literal approach, the double-aim approach and the poetically viable approach, and the styles in question being the rhyming, metrical style of Halldis Moren Vesaas (1907–95) and the hybrid, genre-bending style of

Cecilie Løveid (1951–). By employing a practice-based, case-study methodology, I will compare and contrast the practical application of each approach on both styles of poetry in order to explore translational feasibility, with the overarching aim being that of the production of texts for a general reader of poetry.

The second aim of this research is to creatively illustrate the debate surrounding poetic (un)translatability. Having selected three translation approaches that can be said to adhere either to instrumentalist or hermeneutic attitudes as outlined by Venuti, I endeavour to illustrate this debate through a combination of theoretical outlines, practical translations and reflective commentaries. By carrying out a piece of practice-based research into translational feasibility with the aim of illustrating and engaging with a prominent theoretical debate within poetry translation scholarship, it is therefore my aim to show how a practice-based methodology can be used for long-form research projects within the discipline of Translation Studies.

Having established the aims of this research, I will use this introductory chapter to describe the theoretical considerations that underpin this research, namely the tension between instrumentalist and hermeneutic approaches to translation as outlined by Venuti in *Contra Instrumentalism* and the strategies, models and terminology introduced by Francis R. Jones in *Poetry Translating as Expert Action*. It should be noted that each individual chapter will feature the relevant theoretical considerations for the approach in question, and that the theory that I will discuss in this chapter is that which is overarching and subsequently applicable to the research as a whole. Following this, I will outline the selection criteria I employed when choosing the poets and poems I will engage with in this thesis. I will then conclude this introductory chapter by offering an outline of how this thesis will be structured.

1.2 Instrumentalism versus Hermeneutics

As previously mentioned, the debate surrounding poetic (un)translatability can also be described as the tension between instrumentalist and hermeneutic approaches to translation, as outlined by Lawrence Venuti in his 2019 polemic *Contra Instrumentalism*. Instrumentalism, as defined by Venuti, is a translational model that “conceives of translation as the reproduction or transfer of an invariant that is contained in or caused by the source text, an invariant form, meaning, or effect” (1). A hermeneutic model, on the other hand, is defined as “an interpretive act that inevitably varies source-text form, meaning, and effect according to intelligibilities and interests in the receiving culture” (1). Venuti argues that translators apply *interpretants* to a text: formal or thematic factors that are “often applied intuitively and without critical reflection” and that “effectively constitute interpretive moves which inform and nuance various textual structures and meanings” (2). The application of these interpretants therefore “guarantees that a translation is relatively autonomous from its source text even while establishing a variety of interpretive relations to that text” (2). As a result, Venuti claims that “no translation can be understood as providing direct or immediate access to a source text” as a single text can provide numerous translational accounts, depending on the interpretants of the translator(s) in question (3).

When considering Venuti’s proposition, it is undeniable that instrumentalist thinking is prevalent in poetry translation discourse as it is precisely this belief in invariants that leads so many to claim that poetry cannot be translated. This instrumentalist view of poetry translation derives from notions of equivalence, which was the dominant perspective within Translation Studies until the cultural turn of the 1990s (Perteghella and Loffredo 1–2). One of the most notable scholars to proclaim the untranslatability of poetry is Roman Jakobson in his paper “On Linguistic Aspects of Translation”, in which he claims that “poetry, by definition, is untranslatable” and that “only creative transposition is possible” (131). In addition, George

Steiner, whose *After Babel* is one of the most notable examples of support for a hermeneutic approach to translation, also makes claims regarding untranslatability – not of poetry outright, but of certain types of poetry or poetic effects, such as nonsense poetry (312).¹

As well as scholars, many high-profile poets have expressed scepticism at the idea that it is possible to translate poetry. W.H. Auden claimed that he perceived the main difference between poetry and prose to be that “prose can be translated into another tongue but poetry cannot” (333). Robert Frost was firm in his assertion that “no translation of poetry will do: practically any book in any but your own language is a closed book” (143). In a more contemporary context, Don Paterson – a proponent of creative imitations as opposed to translations – has suggested that poetry translators “do no more than look at the *Mona Lisa*, then make a picture of a woman smiling” (*Book of Shadows* 45).

Somewhat surprisingly, instrumentalist claims are not only limited to scholars and poets but are often made by poetry translators themselves. The pervasiveness of these beliefs is exemplified in the essay collection *Translating Poetry*, edited by Daniel Weissbort. In the preface, Weissbort claims that most of the collection’s contributors would agree with him in saying that “from an absolutist standpoint, the poetic translation of poetry is an impossible task” before going on to state that “they [nevertheless] clearly think it is worth attempting, even if crises of faith are quite frequent” (xii). If we take “absolutist” to mean a transparent and unmediated transference of a poem from source text to target text, then it cannot be denied that this is impossible; after all, the very essence of translation is change (Boase-Beier 9; Holmes 53). However, what does become evident throughout the essays in this collection is that many of the contributors do in fact subscribe to instrumentalist notions of poetic invariants. Many of these essays are punctuated with references to “loss”, “impossibility” and the “spirit of the

¹ The untranslatability of nonsense poetry can be refuted by examining, for example, the numerous translations of Lewis Carroll’s nonsense poem “Jabberwocky”.

original” (Csokits 9), “sacrifice”, “fidelity” and “true intentions” of the author (Kunitz 112, 117), “compromise” (Moffett 144) and “[letting] the foreign poet speak in his [sic] own way, with his [sic] own voice” (Kirkup 83). Though this sample is small, these views are undeniably widespread and can therefore be said to be largely representative of the type of instrumentalist thinking that dominates poetry translation discourse.

However, there are a number of scholars who challenge and oppose this view on the grounds that subjective interpretation is an inherent component of literary translation. Venuti, as we have seen, is one of them, but both James S. Holmes and Jean Boase-Beier, among others, are also strong supporters of a hermeneutic approach. Holmes claims that “[no] translation of a poem is ever ‘the same as’ the poem itself. It can’t be, since everything about it is different: another language, another tradition, another author, another audience” (“On Matching” 53). He goes on to say that the translator is “constantly faced by choices, choices he [sic] can make only on the basis of his [sic] individual grasp [...] of the two languages and cultures involved, and with the aid of his [sic] personal tastes and preferences” (54).

This idea is furthered by Boase-Beier, who suggests that “when translators rewrite a poem, they are actually writing their experience and interpretation of it, hence translations always contain something of the translator’s own subjectivity” (qtd. in Jones, *Expert Action* 32). She also challenges the notion of loss in translation, claiming that this is a result of assumptions concerning what translation ought to be and that those who perpetuate the idea of poetic untranslatability are “failing to understand the nature of translation” (“Theory and Practice” 9). The belief that translators unavoidably translate through the prism of their own experience is what characterises the hermeneutic approach as it inherently rejects the notion of a fixed essence or invariant to be reproduced; in other words, it subscribes to the idea of translational interpretants as outlined by Venuti.

Moreover, the notion of the poetic as an abstract invariant has also been debunked by various scholars, such as Peter Robinson, who highlights that poetic language is “not a special case of language” but an “ordinary case of language” (59), and Xavier Lin, who explains that the notion of inherently poetic language is not representative of all poetic traditions (101). Indeed, it is also worth noting that the “poetry” of a poem occurs as a result of the employment of poetic devices which are not unique to any one source language and can therefore be represented – or re-enacted – in translation.

Notions of poetic untranslatability are therefore rooted in instrumentalist ideas of abstract invariants, which presents problems when we consider the translation of hybrid or otherwise genre-transgressing poetic texts. If, as so many claim, poetry is untranslatable, yet other genres of writing can be translated, then what status do hybrid poetic texts hold? Why is the abstract notion of the poetic within a poem unable to be translated, yet poetic devices or otherwise poetic qualities can be, and often are, found within genres for which untranslatability is rarely claimed? If a text does not claim to be a poem, yet contains formal functions which suggest the contrary, does this text automatically become translatable as opposed to a similar text which claims to be a poem? And what does this mean for the texts of someone like Cecilie Løveid, a known genre transgressor whose work is often described as being characterised by its poetry, regardless of genre?

It is therefore evident that the tension between instrumentalist and hermeneutic approaches to translation is particularly prevalent within poetry translation scholarship and, as such, I considered that this would be a pertinent debate with which to engage throughout this thesis. As such, I have selected three approaches that correspond to varying degrees to the instrumentalist and/or hermeneutic attitudes outlined in this section, namely the literal approach, the double-aim approach and the poetically viable approach. By engaging with these approaches on both a theoretical and practical level, I aim to explore the feasibility of each

approach while creatively illustrating one of the most prominent debates within poetry translation scholarship.

1.3 Jones and *Poetry Translation as Expert Action*

According to Francis R. Jones, the scholarship surrounding poetry translation is valuable, but highly fragmented in nature (“Unlocking” 59). While the 1960s and 1970s saw an increase in the scholarship surrounding theoretical, scientific and practical considerations of poetry translation, such as Robert de Beaugrand’s *Factors in a Theory of Poetic Translating* and André Lefevere’s *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint*, it is only recently that these instances of foundational scholarship have been brought together in an attempt to form a comprehensive model of poetry translation, namely Jones’ *Poetry Translation as Expert Action*, published in 2011. Jones states that while de Beaugrand and Lefevere did attempt to set up general models of poetry translation, their work was published “before the late 1980s shift in translation studies towards viewing translations not just as a textual act, but also a psychological and social one” and that, to his knowledge, “no book length studies have attempted to give an overview of poetry translation under a single narrative arc” since then (*Expert Action* 11). As such, in *Poetry Translation as Expert Action*, Jones focuses not only on practical approaches and strategic foci such as rhythm, rhyme, intertextuality, imagery and sound features, but also the mental process, extra-textual factors which can affect the translation of a poem, and the contextualisation of poetry translations within the literary polysystem (117). By building upon, collating and synthesising much of the earlier research into poetry translation, Jones has endeavoured to lay down a solid framework which can be used in future poetry translation research.

Jones’ model is undoubtedly broad, but there are a number of specific aspects which are particularly relevant to my research, not least the terminology used to describe various

processes. For example, by breaking the poem into units of microstructures and macrostructures, Jones presents a comprehensive way of analysing the problems encountered and decisions made within a poetry translation context (34). Microstructures are defined by Jones as features of a poetic unit, such as semantics and sound for a particular line in a poem (34). These features are then “stored in long-term memory, freeing up enough working memory to tackle the next unit” (34). These units then combine over time to form “macrostructures” of “textual knowledge” in long-term memory, thus allowing the translator to consider the translation at both a micro and macro level (34). The concept of micro/macrostructures feeds into two approaches to poetry translation outlined by Jones, namely the analytic approach and the wholist approach (91). An analytic approach involves examining the features of a poem and attempting to replicate or represent each microstructure in the translation. A wholist approach, on the other hand, tackles the poem as a unit in itself, focusing not on individual microstructures but rather on the overall picture as perceived by the translator (92). These two approaches can be used interchangeably depending on the demands of the poem in question. For example, a formal poem which contains a great deal of intrinsic formal functions may benefit from an analytic approach, whereas a poem with fewer strategic foci may benefit from a wholist approach. The fact that my focus is on both formal poetry and genre-transgressing texts with varying degrees of intrinsic functions therefore means that these concepts are particularly apposite when discussing the translation strategies employed in each of the three approaches I will explore in this thesis.

Furthermore, the ability to recognise a text as a poem is largely based on what Jones terms a “social agreement”: a number of textual and extra-textual factors that signify to the reader that what they are reading is, in fact, a poem. Jones divides these factors into what he terms intrinsic and extrinsic formal functions, with intrinsic functions including factors such as rhythm and rhyme, sound features, image and metaphor, and extrinsic functions encompassing

extra-textual factors such as short, left-aligned lines or the word “poems” on the cover of a collection (29-32; de Beaugrande 16-17). According to Jones:

Extrinsic form will offer audiences a social agreement that the text they are reading or hearing is a poem. The more the text shows the intrinsic form and functions expected within the literary community, the more readily audiences will accept that agreement.
(32)

However, echoing de Beaugrande, Jones also notes that some poetry may contain very few – if any – intrinsic functions (31; de Beaugrande 16). He therefore also suggests an alternative approach to defining poetry: that is, to define it in terms of its function. Quoting Eagleton, he describes this function as “how the ‘texture, rhythm and resonance’ of poems typically go beyond ‘abstractable meaning’ or give heightened experience” (31).

The concept of intrinsic and extrinsic formal functions within a poem is relevant to my research in a number of ways. Similar to the concept of micro/macrostructures, it offers relevant terminology and vocabulary with which to discuss both the translation of formal poetry and the translation of hybrid poetic texts. Furthermore, given that the work of Cecilie Løveid is hybrid in nature and has been described as being characterised by its poetry regardless of genre, having a vocabulary with which to discuss the various functions within these poetic texts will allow me to describe my findings more clearly (Vold 295). Moreover, given the hybrid nature of Løveid’s work and the consequent potential lack of intrinsic formal features, the concept of identifying poetry through its function is also apposite.

In summary, by building on the work of earlier scholars, Jones has created a comprehensive model of poetry translation which provides a framework for the discussion of translation issues tackled and encountered within my research. Consequently, the advantages

of engaging with this model are twofold as I will be able to discuss my processes as well as using the terminology established by previous poetry translation scholars, thereby situating my research within the existing poetry translation scholarship while contributing original knowledge to the field.

1.4 Selection Criteria

My decision to focus on Halldis Moren Vesaas and Cecilie Løveid in this research is rooted in a number of factors. Having previously encountered Løveid's work during my studies, I considered that focusing on the translation of her hybrid, genre-bending poetic texts would be a fruitful and rewarding area of research. Upon deciding that a case-study methodology would be an appropriate way in which to carry out this research, I then sought to select another poet whose work served as a stylistic contrast to that of Løveid as I believed that comparing and contrasting stark stylistic differences would be an effective way of exploring the feasibility of the three poetry translation approaches in question. As such, I decided to focus on the work of Vesaas. Not only are Vesaas and Løveid both key figures of twentieth-century Norwegian literature, but their work is thematically similar in its focus on the feminine. Despite these similarities, it is clear that the work of Vesaas and Løveid is a stylistic contrast, with Vesaas' poetry largely consisting of rhyme, metre and traditional poetic forms and Løveid's poetry being largely genre-fluid and characterised by elements of the dramatic and the prosaic. As such, as well as being personally and academically interested in the works of both poets on an individual level, I believed that bringing Vesaas and Løveid together in this research would be both a stimulating and rewarding academic endeavour, with the similarities and differences between both poets and their work serving as fertile ground for a poetry translation case study.

Given the prolificacy of both Vesaas and Løveid, it is necessary to establish some boundaries in terms of the texts I will work on as part of this thesis. This is to ensure that the

project is manageable and to mitigate the risk of the project becoming sprawling and potentially incoherent. With this in mind, I have decided to focus on what can be called the debut poetry collection of each poet, namely Vesaas' *Harpe og dolk* (1929) and Løveid's *Spilt* (2001). I have chosen to focus on these two collections for a number of reasons.

Firstly, given the practice-based nature of this thesis, focusing on one collection per poet will allow the creative component of this project to not only act as a vehicle for critical engagement, but also to be fully realised as a coherent translation project in its own right. By focusing on one collection per poet, and by employing a variety of translational approaches on a number of poems within these collections, the outcome should be a rigorous investigation into the feasibility of such approaches for the poems and poetic styles in question. As such, the outcome of this practice-based research will not just be a creative illustration of and engagement with a prominent theoretical debate, but also a significant and well-considered contribution towards two fully realised translations of two key poetry collections with the aim of future publication.

Secondly, while *Harpe og dolk* and *Spilt* belong to very different stages of the authors' respective careers, I would argue that these collections are representative of Vesaas' and Løveid's respective styles. The poems within *Harpe og dolk* encompass the intimate and accessible style of Vesaas, whereas *Spilt* is representative of Løveid's allusion-dense, boundary-pushing texts. As such, these two collections can be said to encompass the idiosyncrasies of each writer's style. In light of this, I do not think it is a disadvantage to only consider poems from one collection, as opposed to disparate poems from across their entire oeuvres (though this is not to say that a wider-reaching examination of, for example, poems on a specific theme would not be an interesting and worthwhile endeavour).

It is worth noting that selecting Løveid's debut poetry collection proved to be somewhat complex. While it is true that Løveid's first poetry collection was officially published in 2001,

it is also true that Løveid was an incredibly prolific writer before the publication of *Spilt*, having published novels, plays and other texts from the end of the 1960s. Indeed, the genre-bending nature of this work means that many of these earlier texts contain significant poetic qualities, with poet Jan Erik Vold claiming that Løveid is a poet regardless of the genre she happens to be writing in (293). This poetic hybridity is illustrated most clearly by the publication of *Mykt glass* [Soft Glass], a collection of Løveid's so-called selected poems, in 1999: two years before her first poetry collection was officially published.

If I were to choose Løveid's official full-length debut, this would therefore mean choosing the novel *Most* [Must], published in 1972. As with all of Løveid's prose, *Most* is not a novel in the traditional sense; rather, it is "et sted mellom fragmentroman, prosadikt, mininoveller og linjedelt lyrikk" [somewhere between a fragmented novel, prose poetry, mini short stories and lineated poetry] (Vold 298). I have deliberately chosen not to examine *Most* in order to avoid discussions that would expand the scope of the project beyond its current parameters, thus potentially rendering it unmanageable. While the topic of genre categorisation and its effect on how audiences perceive a text is undoubtedly fascinating – and can potentially offer a further research pathway for Løveid's writing – it may prove counterproductive to choose what is ultimately categorised as a novel for research into poetry translation approaches, even if said novel is largely characterised by poetic elements. Indeed, although *Most* is highly fragmented and genre-bending, there is a narrative thread running through the text that can arguably help to categorise it as a novel, which is something that sets it apart from the distinct, yet thematically linked, poems that make up *Spilt*.

However, I would argue the decision to focus solely on *Spilt* does not mean that the hybrid and experimental nature of Løveid's work will not be at the fore. Just as Løveid's prose and dramatic works contain elements of the poetic, so too do her poetic works contain elements of the dramatic and the prosaic. As such, I believe that *Spilt* is an appropriate text to examine

as it maintains the genre-bending nature that characterises Løveid's writing while having extrinsic formal functions that mark it out as a collection of poems.

With all of this in mind, I have selected poems from Vesaas' and Løveid's debut poetry collections that I believe are representative of their respective styles. I have chosen five poems from *Harpe og dolk*, namely "Bråtebrann", "Harpe og dolk", "Septemberkveld", "Skumring" and "Timane går", and two poems from *Spilt*, namely "Scootermadonna" and "Spilt vin". The five Vesaas poems consist of 644 words over 108 lines and the two Løveid poems consist of 904 words over 75 lines, not including titles or spaces between stanzas. My aim was to strike a balance between the two poets, taking into consideration that Løveid's poems tend to be longer and more prosaic than Vesaas' poems. It would have perhaps been possible to add another Vesaas poem into the selection in order to draw the total word count closer to that of Løveid's, but I was concerned that this might result in the thesis being skewed more towards Vesaas' poetry, given that this would result in six poems by Vesaas and only two by Løveid. I therefore compromised in order to achieve what I considered to be a fair balance in terms of how both poets are represented in this thesis.

In terms of the poems themselves, I aimed to select poems that I deemed to be largely representative of the respective poetic styles of Vesaas and Løveid, hence my decision to choose a selection of rhyming, metrical poems from *Harpe og dolk* and two prose poems from *Spilt*. However, it is worth noting that there was also an element of subjectivity in my decision making. In other words, I not only chose poems that I considered to be representative of the two styles, but also those that I personally felt drawn to and that I felt I would be able to engage with in a creative way throughout this research. One final criterion I decided on was that I would not translate poems that have already been translated in a published form, such as the Vesaas poems that appear in the 1995 publication *Selected Poems*, translated by Olav Thompson and Ron Wakefield. While research into retranslations of poems by Vesaas and

Løveid could prove to be both fruitful and engaging, retranslation is not the focus of this thesis, and so I have selected poems that are hitherto untranslated in a published form.

1.5 Thesis Structure

To recap, this thesis seeks to explore the feasibility of three different poetry translation approaches for two contrasting styles of Norwegian poetry. The approaches in question are the literal approach, the double-aim approach and the poetically viable approach, and the styles in question are the rhyming, metrical poetry of Halldis Moren Vesaas and the hybrid, genre-transgressing poetry of Cecilie Løveid. By doing this, I aim not only to explore the feasibility of these approaches, but also to illustrate how practice-based research can be used to illustrate scholarly debates within the field of Translation Studies, with the debate in this case being the tension between hermeneutic and instrumentalist approaches to translation.

The structure of the thesis will therefore be as follows: after chapters in which I contextualise the work of Vesaas and Løveid and outline the reasons for my practice-based, case-study methodology, I will first examine the literal approach, as championed by Stanley Burnshaw and Vladimir Nabokov. This chapter will feature a theoretical outline section in which I discuss Burnshaw and Nabokov's literal approaches to poetry translation and situate them within the instrumentalist/hermeneutic debate. This will then be followed by a series of translations consisting of a literal rendering of the source poem, the source poem itself, and a commentary in which I describe the intrinsic and extrinsic poetic functions of the source poems. As I will go on to discuss, this commentary will form part of my literal translation and is separate from the reflective commentary in which I will discuss general remarks on the approach. The reflective commentary and general remarks will therefore follow on from the literal translations and form the third and final section of this chapter.

Following this, I will examine the double-aim approach, as championed by James S. Holmes. This chapter will consist of a theoretical outline section in which I will discuss Holmes' double-aim approach and situate it within the instrumentalist/hermeneutic debate, followed by a section that contains double-aim translations of the source poems alongside the source poems themselves. I will then conclude this chapter with a reflective commentary section in which I discuss various translational decisions, problems and solutions and offer some general remarks on the approach.

Lastly, I will examine the poetically viable approach, as championed by Barbara Folkart. This section will include a theoretical outline section in which I discuss Folkart's approach and situate it within the instrumentalist/hermeneutic debate, followed by a section that contains poetically viable translations of the source texts. These poetically viable translations will be accompanied by a reflective commentary in which I elaborate on my creative process. I will then end this chapter by offering some general remarks on the approach before concluding the thesis with reflections on the feasibility of the three approaches for the poetry of Vesaas and Løveid, the benefits of practice-based research within the discipline of Translation Studies, and potential areas for future research.

2 Methodology

This thesis will employ two main methodological approaches, namely a practice-based research methodology and a case-study methodology. In this chapter, I will outline the appropriacy and relevance of both practice-based research and case-study methodology for this particular project.

2.1 Defining Practice-Based Research

When it comes to research which uses practice as the main methodological tool, many different descriptors can be used. This approach has been described as practice-based research, practice-led research, practice as research and creative research, among others (Candy 2; Nelson 4; Smith and Dean 2). It has been noted that these terms – particularly “practice-based” and “practice-led” – are often used interchangeably, with no generally agreed conventions or definitions that cover all relevant disciplines (Candy 3). However, these terms are all used to describe a methodological approach that employs practice as the main tool to answer a research question, often within creative arts disciplines such as, but not limited to, creative writing, dance, film/video, painting and theatre (Barrett 1; Candy 1).

As far as this thesis is concerned, I will use the term “practice-based research” as defined by Candy as this offers the most suitable description for this particular project. According to Candy, practice-based research is “an original investigation undertaken in order to gain new knowledge partly by means of practice and the outcomes of that practice”, with the creative outcome forming an integral part of the research project, in this case a doctoral thesis (1). This contrasts with her definition of practice-led research, which she defines as being

“concerned with the nature of practice and [leading] to new knowledge that has operational significance for that practice” (1).² To expand on this, the outcomes of practice-based research cannot be fully understood without reference to the creative product, whereas “the results of practice-led research may be fully described in text form without the inclusion of a creative work” (1).

In light of this, I believe the term “practice-based research” to be the most appropriate for this project. The practical component of this project is designed to explore the outcomes and feasibility of different poetry translation approaches for different styles of poetry, as well as creatively illustrate a prominent theoretical debate within poetry translation. Excluding the practice outcomes – namely the poetry translations – from the body of the thesis would therefore result in diminished communication and understanding of potential findings, thus rendering the research less effective. As such, the practice outcomes of this research can be considered to “form the basis of the contribution to knowledge”, and the term “practice-based research” will therefore be used accordingly (1).

2.2 Practice-Based Research in Translation Studies

As previously noted, practice-based research is a common methodological approach used within creative arts disciplines. However, despite the fact that translation is, by nature, an act in which practice is integral, practice-based research is not a particularly prevalent methodological approach within Translation Studies, with much of the scholarship being about translation as opposed to consisting of it. Tarantini notes this dichotomy in her 2021 monograph *Theatre Translation: A Practice as Research Model*, in which she highlights the dominance of

² While this research may also produce knowledge that has “operational significance” for the practice of poetry translation, the inclusion of the practice outcomes means that it is more appropriate to use the term “practice-based” research in this instance.

theoretical writing about certain aspects of theatre translation, yet the lack of practical research which seeks to explore said theories (3).

This theoretical dominance is also prevalent within the poetry translation strand of Translation Studies. Much of the scholarship on poetry translation is largely theoretical, abstract and, at times, philosophical. Moreover, the writings that do include translations – or at least excerpts of translations – are mostly in the form of reflective essays written by practitioners who aim to document their own experiences and processes of translating the works of individual poets (Weissbort). While these writings are indeed insightful and valuable in their own right, they are not necessarily examples of practice-based research as they serve to document the “individual’s particular goals at the time [of translating]” as opposed to adding to “our shared store of knowledge in a more general sense” (Candy 2). In McNamara’s words, practice-based research should “[a]void recourse to one’s own experiences as the basis or justification of the research ambition”, which is arguably the category that self-reflective writing on the personal creative process falls into (6).

Tarantini expands on this in the context of Translation Studies by stating that translator-researchers within the discipline “[conceive] of their translation practice not as a stand-alone creative enterprise, but as a means to an end, which cannot be limited to the production of a translated text” and that they “[formulate] and [address] questions through their translation practice” (4). Since this description does not apply to much of the material authored by poetry translation practitioners on poetry translation – such as the reflective essays contained within *Translating Poetry*, edited by Daniel Weissbort – these writings cannot be considered to be examples of practice-based research as defined by Candy, but rather reflective writings on the “stand-alone creative enterprise”, or personal processes, of the translator.

That being said, there are a few notable examples of practice-based research within a Translation Studies context which serve as useful blueprints for how this approach can be

developed and carried out within the discipline. Two such examples are the articles written by Wright and Zid respectively, in which both use practice in order to illustrate a theoretical point or debate. In Zid's article, he "[attempts] to disclose two prevalent approaches to the translation of three Omani poems, with a special emphasis on a paradigm that advances the claim that language and stylistic features are not everything in a poem" (6). The approaches in question are that of domestication and foreignisation, with his translations of these poems seeking to engage with and illustrate the tension between the two.

Similarly, in Wright's article, she translates excerpts of Goethe's *Faust* in three different ways according to three different translational functions in order to "lay bare the process of translation to the reader, showing how a translation can be shaped by the translator's understanding of the function of translation" (155). In using a practice-based methodological approach, Wright creates what she refers to as "a creative illustration of the academic debates currently taking place within Translation Studies" with the aim of creating "a more critical reader of translation" as well as arguing for "the ability of translation(s) to enhance and enrich our understanding of literary texts" (149, 155). These articles, though necessarily limited in their scope, therefore offer useful insights in terms of how practice-based research can function within the context of Translation Studies, particularly in terms of engaging with theoretical debates and standpoints.

Most notable, however, is Tarantini's aforementioned monograph *Theatre Translation: A Practice as Research Model*. This is an excellent example of an extended piece of practice-based translation research. Tarantini's monograph is structured in three sections: an exegetical component, a practical component, and a section containing excerpts of the source text. It is worth noting that Tarantini works within the field of theatre translation, and so there is the added component of performance in this research which is neither present in nor relevant to

this particular project.³ Nevertheless, this monograph is a great example of how extended pieces of practice-based research can be presented and developed within Translation Studies in terms of using practice to formulate, research, and answer a research question. This, alongside the aforementioned articles by Wright and Zid, therefore means that there are a few key models and blueprints for how practice-based research can be conducted within Translation Studies, and these are therefore texts from which I draw inspiration for this thesis.

Lastly, it is worth noting that the theoretical dominance within poetry translation scholarship is not inherently negative and that this thesis does not seek to reinforce the polarised positions of theory on one hand and practice on the other (Chesterman and Wagner 136; Fawcett et al. 1–2; Weissbort ix). As Boase-Beier states, theory is not necessarily irrelevant to practical translation as engaging with it can “[encourage] a certain amount of freedom from too narrow a view of the source text” and “give us the confidence to try out other methods, explore other types of equivalence, or question degrees of closeness” (“Who Needs Theory?” 25). This is certainly the case in this thesis, whereby practical engagement and experimentation with various theoretical standpoints form the basis of the entire project.

Given that the act of translation is inherently practical, I believe that practice-based methodologies can stand to play a larger part in Translation Studies scholarship. This type of research approach can lead to novel insights and understandings that can serve to complement and challenge existing theory, as well as potentially creating a more diverse and accessible way for practitioners to engage with academia (Leavy 21). As well as this, there is a burgeoning scholarship supporting the mutual benefits of engaging with both practice and theory, both in Translation Studies and beyond in the creative arts (Nelson; Smith and Dean). As such, my aim in engaging with a practice-based methodological approach is to contribute towards balancing

³ While performance is a key element of poetic genres such as spoken-word and slam poetry, this is not a main consideration for the poetry of Vesaas and Løveid, therefore it would be irrelevant to explore the element of performance in this particular project.

out this theoretical dominance by engaging with existing theories in a practical and creative way, and not to dismiss the value of the more theoretical scholarship on poetry translation.

2.3 Value of the Creative Component

As previously mentioned, the fact that this project is focused on translational feasibility and creative illustration means that it is essential for the creative work to be included in the body of the thesis. However, another reason for including poetry translations as part of the end research product is that translations themselves are now accepted as research within the UK's Research Excellence Framework (henceforth REF). The 2021 REF Guidance on Submissions states that translations "may enhance existing understanding of the material in question, and may provide evidence of creativity in their own right" (112). The inclusion of creative work as part of the final thesis therefore serves to further my aforementioned aim of balancing out the theoretical dominance within poetry translation scholarship.

However, the nature of my project – namely the fact that I will be translating the same poems in three different ways – could arguably mean that the translations that will be included in this thesis could appear unfinished or fragmented and therefore struggle to justify themselves as creative work in their own right. However, I do not believe that this is necessarily a cause for concern. Boase-Beier has noted that, between 1997 and 2007, five new editions of Rilke's poems were published, each translated by a different translator, and that this ultimately suggests that translations represent alternatives as opposed to definitive versions ("Who Needs Theory?" 29). In light of this, the creative outcomes of this research can ultimately be described as a kind of extended translation triptych, to use Wright's term (148). In other words, the creative outcomes of this research will consist of a number of poems translated in three different ways, each of which will engage with a number of different creative and analytical strategies and

solutions. As such, it is my hope that these outcomes will be viewed as creative translational alternatives as opposed to one-dimensional attempts at a definitive version.

It is also worth noting that the double-aim approach is that which is closest to my own creative practice outwith an academic context, and that the poetically viable translation approach is a form of creative versioning advocated by poet-scholars such as Don Paterson (*Orpheus* 73). These two approaches therefore have the potential to, as the REF states, “provide evidence of creativity in their own right” (112). Creative writing is also accepted by the REF as research, which therefore serves to further justify the inclusion of poetically viable translations in particular (103, 113). In addition to this, the literal approach – which is arguably the least creative of the three – can potentially “enhance understanding of the material in question”, particularly given the annotated analysis that is generally expected of this approach (112).

With all of this in mind, I believe that the translations that will be produced in this research will not only act as a creative enquiry into and illustration of a theoretical debate, but also be justified as creative work in the form of alternative translational versions. This experimentation will therefore result in a rigorous creative exploration of the feasibility of various approaches for contrasting styles of poetry, thus contributing to the translation of two fully realised poetry collections by two canonical Norwegian poets.

2.4 Value of the Reflective Component

The exegetical, or reflective, component of practice-based research has long been considered contentious among practitioner-researchers, who have generally been reluctant to explain their creative work (Barrett 2; Robson et al. 188). However, it is generally agreed that, at least when it comes to practice-based doctoral theses, complementary reflective material is essential as it “provides the basis for a judgement of the submission as a contribution to knowledge in the

field” and shows “doctoral level powers of analysis and mastery of existing contextual knowledge, in a form that is accessible to and auditable by knowledgeable peers” (Candy 5). The reflective component is widely considered to be where the research insights lie, or at least where they can be given a discursive form outwith the creative outcomes of the research (Bolt 22, 33; Robson et al. 197; Scrivener and Chapman 4). This, however, has not stopped a sense of reluctance among practitioner-researchers in engaging with the reflective component – as Haseman states, many resent the feeling of having to “say things twice, once in the work itself and then again as an explanation or interpretation of that work” (156).

It is worth noting that, as far as translation is concerned, there is a burgeoning scholarship that supports translation as research (Aveling 9; Harrison 6; Haseman 149). However, as many scholars have noted, it is important to distinguish between practice-based research and pure practice that may be considered as research (Bolt 34; Candy 2; Harrison 8; McNamara 7). As far as this thesis is concerned, practice-based research is a methodological tool that uses practice and its outcomes in order to answer a research question and create new insights, which is not necessarily at odds with the idea of the translation product as research in its own right. It is therefore possible for both practice-based translation research – consisting of both a creative and a reflective component – and translation as research – consisting of a piece of translation work – to be considered equally valid as research. Indeed, the REF not only accepts translations as research, but also translations with accompanying complementary material, which further justifies both methods as valid research outputs (112).

In light of this, I would argue that, given that this project is practice-based and not pure practice, a reflective component is essential in terms of achieving a fuller understanding of the theoretical approaches examined. Since the reflective component will largely consist of reflective and analytical commentary on various approaches and processes, this will therefore provide “an opportunity and a forum to reconfigure theoretical positions” and “give a voice to

material thinking” (Bolt 33). In light of this, I believe that this research would be poorer for not including a reflective component, just as I believe that the inclusion of the creative component is essential for findings to be communicated effectively.

2.5 Case-Study Methodology

As well as practice-based research, the second approach I will employ in this thesis is case-study methodology. According to Susam-Sarajeva, case-study methodology is the most common research approach taken by postgraduate students within Translation Studies, particularly those at doctoral level (“Case Study Research Method” 37). As Yin notes, the case-study method is an appropriate research approach when seeking to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions (4). This explains why this methodology is often used within Translation Studies, given that many research questions within the discipline are based on questions of “how” a text is translated and “why” it is translated that way (Susam-Sarajeva, “Case Study Research Method” 40). This particular research project is also built upon such questions – namely a question of “how” – and, as such, case-study methodology is an appropriate approach to employ in this instance.

In order to define case-study methodology in terms of Translation Studies, Susam-Sarajeva draws on the descriptions and approaches used within the social sciences, where the case study is a prevalent methodological approach. According to Gillham, a case is “a unit of human activity embedded in the real world; which can only be studied or understood in context; which exists in the here and now; that merges with its context so that precise boundaries are difficult to draw” (1). In light of Gillham’s definition, Susam-Sarajeva offers a description of a case within Translation Studies as being “a unit of translation or interpreting-related activity, product, person, etc. in real life, which can only be understood in the context in which it is embedded” (“Case Study Research Method” 40). She goes on to define a case in Translation

Studies research as “anything from a translated text or author, translator/interpreter, etc. to a whole translation institution or source/receiving system” (40).

In light of this definition, this project will examine two cases, namely two different writers who can be described as stylistically contrasting. The fact that I will be examining more than one case means that I will be employing a multiple case-study approach, which is commonly seen as advantageous and often preferable to a single case study approach (Gillham 2; Susam-Sarajeva, “Is One Case Always Enough?” 175; Yin 61). The multiple case study can lead to “more fruitful results” as it assists the researcher in “comparing and contrasting several units from a variety of angles, concentrating on the differences as well as the similarities, and creating patterns out of them both” (Susam-Sarajeva, “Is One Case Always Enough?” 172). This opportunity to compare and contrast is one of the key motivations behind this particular research project. As a result, this research ultimately lends itself well to a multiple case study approach as I will be able to compare and contrast works by Vesaas and Løveid from a variety of angles (translation approaches) and examine the differences and similarities that emerge from the translational experimentation upon which this project is based.

3 Historical Background

3.1 A Brief History of the Norwegian Language Situation

The fact that both Halldis Moren Vesaas (1907–95) and Cecilie Løveid (1951–) use different written standards of Norwegian means that it is important to acknowledge the uniqueness of the Norwegian language situation. As Jahr states, “it is not uncommon for a country to have more than one official written language, [but] what is unique about Norway is that this nation of just five million inhabitants maintains two different written standards *of the same language*” (2). These two official written standards consist of Nynorsk, which can be literally translated as “New Norwegian” and which is used by Halldis Moren Vesaas and approximately 12% of the Norwegian population as their main written language, and Bokmål, which can be literally translated as “Book Language” and which is used by Cecilie Løveid and the majority of the Norwegian population as their main written language (Grepstad 564). Before discussing the translation of poetry from Norwegian, it is therefore important to outline the Norwegian language situation in order to contextualise both writers not just in the literary tradition of Norway, but also in their respective standards of Norwegian.

The impact of the Black Death in Norway (1349–1350) led to a significant decline in the written language of the country, largely due to vast numbers of the learned population succumbing to the plague and a subsequent lack of financial means for cultural production. The years following the Black Death consequently saw Norway enter into the pan-Scandinavian Kalmar Union (1397–1523), in which Norway, Sweden and Denmark were united under a single monarch. Sweden then rebelled against this union and departed in 1523, while Norway, a politically much less powerful nation, was forced to remain in a union with Denmark.

Denmark thereby exerted cultural and linguistic dominance over Norway in the centuries that followed, with the lack of a written Norwegian language resulting in Danish becoming the main written language of Norway. This cultural and linguistic dominance lasted until the dissolution of the Dano-Norwegian union and the signing of the Norwegian Constitution in 1814, which saw the beginning of momentous linguistic and cultural shifts within the country. While Norway was transferred from Danish to Swedish power in 1814, the Constitution ensured that Norway had a greater level of autonomy than it had enjoyed in the Danish period. This union was eventually peacefully dissolved due to differences between the two nations, such as the Norwegian demand for foreign-based consulates, as well as nation-building endeavours that had taken place in Norway since 1814. As such, Norway became a fully independent country in 1905.

It is worth noting that the signing of the Norwegian Constitution in 1814, and the subsequent quest for an exclusively Norwegian written language, coincided with the burgeoning National Romantic movement which swept through Europe during the nineteenth century. Had the National Romantic movement not coincided with the signing of the Norwegian Constitution, it is possible that Norwegians would have continued to use Danish without any significant opposition (Jahr 23). However, given that this movement coincided with what was essentially the birth of Norway as an independent nation, a struggle for national identity ensued as Norwegians attempted to distance themselves from the Danish colonial powers. Given that German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder, a key proponent of National Romantic thinking, identified a distinct language as one of the main markers of a separate and independent nation, the subsequent quest to create a national Norwegian language during this time was therefore inevitable (Jahr 44).

The nineteenth century thereby saw great strides in terms of Norwegian language reformation and creation, with the two central figures being Knud Knudsen (1812–95) and Ivar

Aasen (1813–96). While both men were concerned with the same overall goal – that is, creating an official Norwegian alternative to written Danish – their approaches were drastically different. The contrasting approaches of Knudsen and Aasen thereby led to the creation of two different standards of the Norwegian language, which ultimately provided the foundation for today’s Bokmål and Nynorsk.

From a pedagogical point of view, Knud Knudsen believed that the written Norwegian language should reflect Norwegian pronunciation, rendering it easier to learn and thus improving literacy rates in the country. As such, he set about the process of adapting the written Danish language so that it became more Norwegian. As dialects in Norway varied greatly, with the dialects of urban areas tending to be more influenced by written Danish compared to the dialects of rural areas, Knudsen based his written standard on the spoken dialects of the Norwegian urban elites (Jahr 37). This form of the written Norwegian language subsequently underwent a number of reforms throughout the nineteenth century and beyond, with many of these reforms being influenced by Knudsen and his work. This Dano-Norwegian gradually came to be known as Riksmål [Language of the Realm], a term that was popularised by author Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson at the end of the nineteenth century and made official at the start of the twentieth century following the language reforms of 1907.

By contrast, Ivar Aasen believed that basing this new written language on Danish and Danish-influenced upper middle class dialects did nothing to free Norway from the shadow of Denmark and the Danish language (Jahr 43). By tracing a linguistic link from rural Norwegian dialects back to Old Norse, Aasen thereby established that these rural dialects constituted a purer form of Norwegian, untainted by Danish, unlike the dialects of the urban elites. As such, these rural dialects formed the basis of Aasen’s written standard, which he named Landsmål.⁴

⁴ Landsmål can be interpreted either as “language of the country [realm]” or “rural language of the countryside”, given that *land* in Norwegian can mean both country and countryside.

Aasen worked on creating and streamlining this new standard throughout the middle of the nineteenth century and, with the publication of the final version of a grammar in 1864 and a dictionary in 1873, the final version of Aasen's standard of Landsmål was then released to the public.

In the century following the birth of these two standards, both Riksmål and Landsmål underwent a number of reforms in order to reflect the language as used by the Norwegian people, as well as to bring both standards closer in line with each other. Riksmål and Landsmål were given equal status in 1885, and in 1929 their names were changed to Bokmål and Nynorsk, respectively. The language reforms of 1917 also saw the beginning of a campaign to combine both standards of Norwegian into one single standard called Samnorsk, or Common Norwegian. This was a hotly contested issue throughout the twentieth century, and the momentum behind this policy eventually lost traction in the 1960s before being officially abandoned in 2002. As such, both Bokmål and Nynorsk remain the two official written standards of the Norwegian language to the present day. Given that Bokmål and Nynorsk are continuations of Riksmål and Landsmål, I will therefore use the names Bokmål and Nynorsk to refer to these standards throughout the rest of this chapter for consistency.

3.2 Nineteenth-Century Norwegian Literature

Throughout the nineteenth century – from the signing of the Constitution in the early years of the century to the establishment of Norway as an independent country just after the *fin de siècle* – the language debate in Norway moved parallel to, and intersected with, a number of literary movements. These movements either reflected contemporaneous movements across the rest of Europe or were unique in a Scandinavian context. Although both Halldis Moren Vesaas and Cecilie Løveid are writers of the twentieth (and, in Løveid's case, also the twenty-first) century, it is first important to outline the literary movements of the preceding century in order to

contextualise both writers within their own literary timeframes and explain how the preceding literary movements influenced the movements that Vesaas and Løveid came to be a part of.

As previously mentioned, the signing of the Norwegian Constitution in 1814 coincided with the burgeoning National Romantic movement which swept through Europe in the early-to-mid nineteenth century. However, it is interesting to note that the early nineteenth century in Norway is relatively unremarkable in terms of literary output when compared with the mid-to-late nineteenth century; indeed, there are those who claim that Norwegian literature in the nineteenth century did not start until the 1830s (Naess 84). Naess states that “it has been said defensively that the country’s artistic resources all went into the making of its liberal constitution” but that in fact “many of the ideas of romanticism [...] had already been developed in the previous century” and that what was lacking was “a great poet who could bring those ideas to life” (83). In contrast to the early nineteenth century, it has been noted that in the years following the signing of the Constitution, there was a significant burst in creativity, which has been largely attributed to the nationalist sentiments within the country at the time (98).

This is not to say that elements of Norwegian nationalism did not exist in literature prior to the nineteenth century but, as Beyer notes, these works were written while the Dano-Norwegian union was still in place (153). As a result, works written by Norwegians under this union were predominantly linked to the Danish cultural environment, and thus not always considered to be Norwegian literature, but Norwegian contributions to the Dano-Norwegian *felleslitteratur*, or common literature. The dissolution of the union in 1814 thereby resulted in the establishment of a literature that was uniquely Norwegian, though the concept of *felleslitteratur* can arguably be said to have continued due to the fact that many Norwegian authors continued to be published in Denmark.

The characteristics of National Romantic literature in Norway echoed those of corresponding National Romantic movements across Europe, with its focus on the celebration and glorification of nature, history and the nation. In Norway, romanticised notions of *bondekultur*, or Norwegian farming culture, was a particularly prevalent theme, due to the National Romantic perception of the Norwegian farmer as a kind of “nobleman in miniature”, an untainted, purer kind of Norwegian (Naess 83). The National Romantic period also saw the collection and publication of *Norske Folkeeventyr* [Norwegian Folk Tales], a project undertaken by folklorists Peter Christen Asbjørnsen (1812–85) and Jørgen Moe (1813–82) in a similar vein to that of the Brothers Grimm in Germany. This work was very much rooted in National Romantic ideology: not only did Asbjørnsen and Moe aim to present the traditional folk tales of the country as works of national importance, but the written tales were also influenced by orality, with simple structures and the inclusion of many specifically Norwegian – that is, non-Danish – words.

As far as Nynorsk is concerned, the early days of this standard saw a flourishing of texts across a number of different genres. This was to ensure that Norwegians viewed this standard as a practical linguistic alternative to the dominant Dano-Norwegian, as opposed to a theoretical project with no grounding in the everyday lives of potential users. One of the genres which featured largely in the early days of Nynorsk was poetry – indeed, it is worth noting that some of the first texts Aasen wrote in this new standard were poems (*Symra*). Interestingly, Aasen was not concerned with making a name for himself as a poet; rather, his poetry served largely as a conduit through which he could display the practical uses and linguistic opportunities offered by this new standard (Beyer 227; Sørbo 21).

National Romantic sentiments eventually came to be challenged and repudiated, replaced instead by a pan-Scandinavian realist movement known as the Modern Breakthrough. The repudiation of Romanticism was spearheaded by Danish critic Georg Brandes (1842–

1927) and embraced by, among others, Henrik Ibsen (1828–1906). Broadly covering the period 1870–1890, the Modern Breakthrough was characterised by a literature of realism and naturalism which focused on the depiction of issues such as social justice for the poor and women’s emancipation. On this move to a more realism-focused literature, Ibsen, having forgone his earlier National Romantic sentiments, explained that he no longer saw the role of the poet as the lauder of a heroic national past, but rather as a “dispassionate recorder, setting out the truth with honesty and courage, however unpalatable that truth may be” (McFarlane 110). The end of the nineteenth century then saw a revival of Romanticism in Norway, which marked a significant difference to the Modernist literature that was starting to emerge in other countries at the time. It is worth noting that the end of the nineteenth century did see some of the key figures in Norwegian Modernism such as Knut Hamsun (1859–52) and Sigbjørn Obstfelder (1866–1900), however this was not a harbinger of Modernism in Norway; while some writers of the time did exhibit Modernist characteristics in their work, Modernism did not have its breakthrough in Norway until over fifty years later (Sørbø 499).

3.3 *Den Store Romantikken* and Halldis Moren Vesaas

The birth of Halldis Moren Vesaas in 1907, two years following the dissolution of the union with Sweden and the establishment of Norway as an independent country, coincided with a literary movement that has been named *Den Store Romantikken* (Sørbø 137). A uniquely Norwegian movement, *Den Store Romantikken* – loosely translated as “Grand Romanticism” – broadly stretches from 1905 until 1930 and is characterised by a literature that furthered and built upon the Romantic traditions of the nineteenth century. The fact that this movement arrived at the same time as the dissolution of the union with Sweden should not be considered coincidental, as much of the literature from 1905 onwards was concerned with writing for and about the new Norwegian nation (Sørbø 297).

It has been noted that Bokmål literature and Nynorsk literature did not always follow the same trajectory in terms of literary movements and sentiments and that both standards were often out of step with each other, with different impulses affecting the two standards at different times (Sørnbø 76). This difference is exemplified by much of the literature that characterises *Den Store Romantikken*. As Sørnbø notes, Nynorsk writers played a major role during *Den Store Romantikken*, which signified a high point in the history of Nynorsk literature (137, 167). During this time, Nynorsk poets flourished to a greater extent than Bokmål poets, with strong national Nynorsk voices being prevalent throughout the 1920s, but with few expressions for this within Bokmål poetry (137). These strong, national Nynorsk voices are exemplified by poets such as Henrik Rytter (1877-1950), Olav Aukrust (1883–1929), Olav Nygard (1884–1924) and Tore Ørjasæter (1886–1968), all of whom are considered to be the major figures within *Den Store Romantikken*. The reason for which Nynorsk poets excelled during this time has been attributed to the language movement, most notably the fact that Nynorsk writers from rural areas were more familiar with, for example, the distinctive natural landscape of Norway, compared to the urban Romantics of the previous century (153).

Some critics have placed Halldis Moren Vesaas outwith the realms of *Den Store Romantikken*, whereas others have placed her firmly within its parameters (Grønstøl 53; Sørnbø 167). In *Nynorsk litteraturhistorie* [The History of Nynorsk Literature], Sørnbø discusses Halldis Moren Vesaas in the chapter entitled “Lyrikk etter Den Store Romantikken” [Poetry Following *Den Store Romantikken*]. According to Sørnbø, the aforementioned major figures of the movement pushed the boundaries of Romanticism to the extent that poets from the 1920s onwards were unable to progress from it and instead had to develop new starting points for their writing (167). With this in mind, it is understandable why Halldis Moren Vesaas would be categorised as such. Her first collection did not appear until 1929, just as *Den Store Romantikken* was coming to an end. Furthermore, in line with Sørnbø’s analysis, she did create

new starting points for her writing which differed greatly to that which came before: that is, she used herself and her own experiences as a starting point. As such, Halldis Moren Vesaas is renowned for being a pioneer of the female first-person narrative voice in Norwegian poetry, as well as for her celebratory depictions of her experiences of womanhood, pregnancy, motherhood and female desire. This signalled a break from the general depiction of the woman as object and bearer of truth and was decidedly innovative for the time.

In contrast, Grønstøl claims that it is ideologically and historically natural to place Halldis Moren Vesaas within the movement of *Den Store Romantikken*, alongside her male counterparts from the early twentieth century (53). Grønstøl claims that Halldis Moren Vesaas' poetry is undoubtedly Romantic, given Vesaas' focus on subjective expression, traditional poetic forms and the link between (wo)man and nature (55). In contrast to the ambitious and serious poetry of some of the other figures within this movement, the poetry of Halldis Moren Vesaas encompasses this Romantic tradition while simultaneously being light and playful, not as concerned with depicting the nation as it is with depicting Vesaas' thoughts, feelings and experiences (Sørbø 169). It is indeed this intimate yet accessible style which has resulted in Halldis Moren Vesaas being considered one of Norway's most beloved – and most engaged-with – poets (Karlsen 7).

The boundaries of such literary time periods are often arbitrary, and it is therefore often difficult to categorise writers perceived to be on the fringes of any given movement. In addition, it is not uncommon for tendencies generally associated with one movement to appear in the works of writers who are not considered to be part of the movement in question. As such, the fact that Halldis Moren Vesaas has been placed both within and outwith the parameters of *Den Store Romantikken* is understandable. However, what is undeniable is that her work does feature strong impulses from the Romantic tradition, coupled with innovation in both content

and narrative voice. As such, it is possible to say that there is a duality to the poetry of Halldis Moren Vesaas, given that it is traditional in some respects and groundbreaking in others.

As Sørbø states, the boundary-pushing Romanticism of *Den Store Romantikken* resulted in an inevitable break with tradition and ultimately paved the way for Modernism, but the Modernist movement in Norway did not arrive with full force until the 1950s, although occasional elements of Modernism did appear from the late nineteenth century onwards (168, 499). It is therefore interesting to examine the output of Halldis Moren Vesaas in relation to this timeframe. Halldis Moren Vesaas wrote eight collections of poetry, with seven of them being published between 1929 and 1955. Forty years then passed before the publication of her final collection in 1995, the year of her death. As a result, there are those who have tried to explain this gap in Halldis Moren Vesaas' poetic output, with Grønstøl noting that 1955, the year of Vesaas' penultimate poetry collection, saw the Norwegian literary landscape dominated by Modernism (63). As such, Grønstøl offers that this gap in poetic output was due to the changing literary impulses of the time, namely the end of late Romanticism and the beginning of Modernism in Norwegian literature (63).

3.4 Modernism, Postmodernism and Cecilie Løveid

As mentioned earlier, the Modernist movement in Norway was a belated one; it is generally accepted that Modernism did not have its breakthrough in Norway until the 1950s (Sørbø 499). This means that the country was still fully in the grip of *Den Store Romantikken* at the time when other writers around Europe were starting to create work that made a break with traditional form and content. This can be illustrated by examining T.S. Eliot's "The Waste Land", a cornerstone of Modernist literature, in a Norwegian context. Published in 1922, Eliot's poem encompasses the alienation, disillusionment and confusion of those whose worldview had been shaken by the atrocities of the First World War. Translated into Nynorsk by Paal

Brekke (1923–93), a significant figure in Norwegian Modernist poetry, this proved to be a great inspiration for Modernist literature in Norway (Sjåvik 296). However, this translation did not appear until 1949, just short of thirty years following the initial publication of the poem. This is not to say that elements of Modernism did not appear within Norwegian literature prior to this. As previously mentioned, the works of Hamsun and Obstfelder displayed some early characteristics of Modernism. Furthermore, as Sørbo notes, the 1930s saw the publication of the first Bokmål Modernist novels in Norway, but he asserts that these were the exception to the general trends of the time (168).

The fact that the Modernist movement in Norway arrived so much later than in the rest of Europe can largely be attributed to the effects of both the First and Second World Wars. Norway stayed neutral during the First World War, during which the literature was still firmly within the parameters of *Den Store Romantikken*, and the country was under German occupation during the Second World War. As a result, while some writers did continue to write and informally disseminate their writing during this time, the years that constituted the Second World War saw a sharp decline in the production and publication of Norwegian literature, either through the censorship imposed by the occupying forces or through the self-imposed silence of many of the country's writers (Sjåvik 277). Consequently, much of the literature that was published following the end of the Second World War was either written prior to the start of the war or reflected pre-war sentiments (295).

Modernism, particularly in terms of poetry, therefore started to break through in Norway with the return of Norwegian poets who had spent time in Sweden during the Second World War, such as the aforementioned Paal Brekke. These poets returned after having been exposed to and influenced by the Swedish poetry of the 1940s, much of which encompassed and reflected contemporaneous European Modernism. However, as Sjåvik notes, "their central themes of anxiety, isolation and critical pessimism, as well as their obscure style, were poetic

values directly opposed to those called for by the people of an occupied country” (295). It therefore took some time before the characteristics of European Modernism were able to fully take root in Norwegian literature. As such, just as Halldis Moren Vesaas was born during what is considered to be a high point in Nynorsk literature, so too was Cecilie Løveid born during a period of great change and experimentation in the Norwegian literary landscape.

One of the key events in Løveid’s early career was her brief affiliation with the so-called *Profil* group. Founded in 1938, *Profil* was a journal for students of language and literature at the University of Oslo, which eventually ceased publication in 1989. A key reference point in twentieth-century Norwegian literature is the establishment of the *Profil* group: a group of politically left-wing students who took over the journal in 1966, with the express intention of advancing Norwegian literature in a more Modernist direction (Sjåvik 307). According to Sjåvik, the *Profil* group affected Norwegian literature in two ways: firstly by greatly expanding the definition of literature to include, for example, documents such as instruction manuals, and secondly by broadly dissolving the traditional boundaries between genres (307). While Løveid’s affiliation with the group was brief and passive – she is not considered to be one of the key figures, unlike other notable Norwegian writers such as Dag Solstad and Jan Erik Vold – it is undeniable that these characteristics are some of the most dominant in her writing, which implies at least some degree of influence on behalf of the journal (Garton 211). Indeed, *Profil* contributors of the time such as Jan Erik Vold and Eldrid Lunden have contributed to Løveid’s future works in the shape of, for example, afterwords to Løveid’s collected works (Lunden 345–362; Vold 293-306).

Løveid’s writing is generally characterised by genre-bending, allusion, intertextuality, ambiguity and absurdity. This has ultimately led to her being described as both Modernist and Postmodernist. As far as Modernism is concerned – in addition to the aforementioned affiliation with the *Profil* group – her work has been compared to Eliot’s “The Waste Land”

due to its abundance of allusions, which are “[often] identifiable to those who are prepared to do a little literary detective work”, but other times almost impossible to decipher, “either because they are so deeply buried in the subtext that hardly a word of the original remains, or because they are a transmutation of experience so private that it would be inaccessible to anyone but the author without her explanation” (Garton 210). However, she has also been labelled a Postmodernist due to the absurdist nature of her dramatic work in particular, which “confounds traditional expectations of rationality and logic” (210). Even though the boundaries between these categories are naturally flexible, it is true to Løveid’s form that she resists categorisation even here; as Garton states, she is a writer who “takes delight in being elusive” (209).

Despite the fact that Løveid’s work is largely characterised by genre-bending, and while there is some overlap, it is possible to divide her authorship into three broad categories: prose, namely her writing throughout the 1970s; drama, namely her writing throughout the 1980s and 1990s; and poetry, which encompasses her most recent works and can be categorised as her writing from 2000 to the present day. It is worth noting that most accounts of Norwegian literary history that include Cecilie Løveid tend to focus on her poetic prowess, even if the works in question are not generally categorised as poetry. Dahl describes Løveid’s plays as being characterised by “dramatiserte dikt eller poetiske dialoger” [dramatised poetry or poetic dialogues] (325). Garton notes that “[it] is impossible to assign her texts to any recognised genre, as she mixes prose and poetry, dramatic and epic techniques” (209). Norwegian poet Jan Erik Vold, who provides the afterword to Løveid’s collected poems *Dikt og tekster 1968–2000* [Poetry and Texts 1968–2000], states that it is her linguistic artfulness which signals her as a poet, regardless of the genre she writes in, and acknowledges that she gladly resists being categorised within any particular genre (293, 295). He then goes on to describe her early prose works as “et sted mellom fragmentroman, prosadikt, mininoveller og linjedelt lyrikk”

[somewhere between a fragmented novel, prose poetry, mini short stories and lineated poetry] (298). This difficulty in pinning down Løveid's work is apparent even within this very collection. While her earliest works are generally categorised as prose – and are indeed listed as novels in Løveid's back catalogue which appears at the end of the collection – excerpts from these very same novels are categorised under “Dikt” [Poetry] in the collection itself.

All of this speaks to a writer whose writing wholeheartedly encompasses many of the key elements of Modernist literature, a writer unafraid to push the boundaries of genre as far as they will go and embrace nonconformity. This embodiment of Modernist elements has led to the idiosyncratic hybridity and genre evasiveness which characterises Løveid's entire oeuvre, from her genre-bending debut novel *Most* [Must] in 1972 to her largely intertextual and ekphrastic hybrid poems which have appeared from the turn of the new millennium to the present day. However, the ever-changing direction and blurred boundaries of Løveid's writing means that she can be described as one of Norway's most experimental and interesting writers and that it would be wrong to confine her work solely to a single literary movement, with Vold stating that she is “mer enn en «modernistisk kvinnedikter»” [more than a “female Modernist poet”] (293).

3.5 Nynorsk as a More Poetic Medium

A claim often made about Nynorsk is that it is a more natural poetic medium than Bokmål (Garton 147). However, this claim has become almost proverbial in that it is oft cited, yet rarely scrutinised. The question of whether Nynorsk is a more poetic written standard than Bokmål is an interesting one, particularly since Nynorsk and Bokmål are mutually intelligible, and I would argue that the reasons for which Nynorsk is often cited as more poetic are a result of sociocultural and historical factors as opposed to intrinsic linguistic factors. The expansive nature of this question means that it is outwith the scope of this thesis. However, the fact that I

will be working with both Bokmål and Nynorsk poetry means that it is essential to address this claim to some extent. As such, I will present a brief outline of some of the reasons for which Nynorsk could be said to be more poetic, with a view to presenting a starting point for further research into this area.

One of the main reasons for which Nynorsk is often branded a more poetic standard could be the fact that it has an incredibly rich poetic tradition. As previously mentioned, some of the earliest texts Aasen wrote in Nynorsk were poems, and the creation of Nynorsk led to a number of writers, and poets in particular, switching their written standard from Dano-Norwegian to Nynorsk. One of the most notable figures in this respect is the poet, journalist and Nynorsk pioneer Aasmund Olavsson Vinje, whose switch from Dano-Norwegian to Nynorsk has been credited by some with unlocking his creativity and prolificity as a poet (Jahr 65). The fact that Nynorsk is a constructed language that was adopted so readily by writers who went on to become some of Norway's most notable poets can therefore give the impression that Nynorsk is a standard very much created for poets.

This idea of Nynorsk being a standard embraced by poets could also be linked to the position and uses of both Nynorsk and Dano-Norwegian in the nineteenth century. Danish, and subsequently Dano-Norwegian and Bokmål, was very much the language of the civil servants, of law and government and bureaucracy. That is to say, Danish and Dano-Norwegian were used both in bureaucratic and literary contexts, whereas Nynorsk, being a new standard, had numerous expressions within a literary context but did not have the same history of usage within governance and law. The fact that these early uses of Nynorsk were largely literary could then offer the impression that the Nynorsk standard itself is inherently more literary – in other words, this is not a language of politics, but of poetry.

Furthermore, the rich poetic history of Nynorsk arguably predates the standard itself. As previously mentioned, Aasen managed to prove a link between the rural dialects of Norway

and Old Norse, which itself had a rich poetic tradition, namely Eddaic and skaldic poetry. Although much of Old Norse encompasses the language and literature of Iceland, it is impossible to separate Norway completely from the language and literature of this time, given that cultural ties between Norway and Iceland were close and the Old Norse used by both countries was practically the same (Andersen 17). As such, there is much of Old Norse literature that cannot be characterised as specifically Norwegian or Icelandic, and it is therefore essential to include the early literature of Iceland when discussing Norwegian literary history (17). Consequently, given that Nynorsk was constructed from rural dialects with a proven link to Old Norse, the poetic tradition of Nynorsk can be said to have stemmed not from the creation of Nynorsk in the mid-nineteenth century, but from the written and oral poetic traditions of several centuries prior.

However, it is worth noting that the perception of Nynorsk as a more poetic medium is not always complimentary; indeed, it is often cited dismissively by the Bokmål-using majority, many of whom have negative attitudes towards this minority standard. A common claim is that Nynorsk is good only for poetry and nothing else, an attitude which many Nynorsk users and advocates resent (Romslo). This conflict is often played out at a national level and is frequently addressed within the Norwegian national newspapers in the form of debate and opinion pieces. One example is an article from 2012 in *Dagsavisen* entitled “Respekt for språket” [Respect for the language], which passionately challenges the dismissive claim that Nynorsk is more poetic and asserts that it can and should be considered a practical language (Myrbråten). Writing, interestingly enough, in Bokmål, Myrbråten dismisses these claims as cliché, but acknowledges that there is no doubt that Nynorsk seems unfamiliar, difficult and unnecessary to many Bokmål users. The concept of Nynorsk as a more poetic medium is therefore not a compliment in this context. Rather, it serves to highlight its supposed irrelevance and unimportance to the Bokmål-using majority. In other words, the description of Nynorsk as only good for poetry implies that

Nynorsk is difficult and irrelevant and so should only be used for similarly difficult and irrelevant endeavours.

It is also worth noting that the clichéd descriptions of Nynorsk as more poetic are not limited to opinion pieces in the national newspapers; there are also numerous expressions for this within academic writing. A prime example of this is the overly romanticised description Mishler gives of Olav Aukrust's poetry, whereby he asserts that "[m]ost of Aukrust's poems defy translation" and that they are "written in powerful [N]ynorsk, each word as if hewn from the local rock" (231). The fact that it is the use of Nynorsk that is considered to be powerful, as opposed to the style, content or construction of the poems themselves, displays a tendency to romanticise Nynorsk, resulting in uninterrogated clichés that tend to weaken discussions surrounding Nynorsk poetry.

Finally, it is worth considering whether or not there is a linguistic element to this claim. The idea of Nynorsk as inherently poetic has been suggested by, among others, Halldis Moren Vesaas, who not only wrote poetry, but also translated poetry and verse drama into Nynorsk. When discussing her translations from French and English, Vesaas claims that the short forms that characterise Nynorsk are advantageous compared to the longer forms of Bokmål as they suit the shorter word lengths of these source languages («kjøt av mitt kjøt» 86). The linguistic differences between Bokmål and Nynorsk could therefore potentially contribute to a difference in sonic patterning and rhythm between the two languages when used in the context of poetry, leading to the perception of Nynorsk as linguistically more poetic.

However, as with the rest of my hypotheses regarding this claim, the question of whether or not Nynorsk is linguistically more poetic than Bokmål is far-reaching and, as a result, outwith the scope of this thesis. Given the contentious nature of describing Nynorsk as more poetic, particularly without further research, the only poetic conclusions I will make about Nynorsk are those which can be derived from the poems themselves by examining their

intrinsic and extrinsic formal functions, as outlined by Jones (*Expert Action* 31–32). As such, I will consider both Nynorsk and Bokmål to have equal poetic status for the purposes of this thesis. However, this brief outline offers a basic insight into the possible reasons behind this claim, and further research into the historical, socio-cultural and linguistic factors which underpin this claim would undoubtedly prove to be fruitful and fascinating.

4 The Literal Approach

4.1 Theoretical Outline

In this section, I will outline what can be considered to be an instrumentalist approach to poetry translation, namely the literal approach. Proponents of the literal approach tend to take the alleged untranslatable nature of poetry as a given and consequently do not seek to reproduce the poem as an aesthetic unit in the target language. Rather, they encourage the production of a lexical translation designed to be read alongside the source text, which is then accompanied by an analytical commentary that seeks to outline and elucidate the poetic elements of the source text.

It is worth noting that the term “literal translation” is not singularly defined and that it can be used to describe both grammatically stabilised and grammatically destabilised texts. For instance, according to Hervey et al., a literal translation means that “the literal meaning of words is taken as if straight from the dictionary, out of context, but TL [target language] grammar is respected” (16). On the other hand, Baker highlights that literal translations can also pay no heed to grammaticality, stating that “how literally [the examples are translated] depends on the point being illustrated, whether it is morphological, syntactical, or lexical, for instance” (7). As such, the concept of literal translation cannot be singularly defined and “the literalness of a translation is a relative rather than absolute notion and depends on the purpose of the translator” (Lakhtikova 229). It is therefore important both to discuss different approaches to literal translation in light of this fluid definition and to explicitly outline the type of literal approach I will undertake in the practical translation section of this chapter.

With this in mind, I will explore the attitudes of two key proponents of the literal approach to poetry translation, namely Stanley Burnshaw and Vladimir Nabokov. I will then situate the literal approach to poetry translation within the instrumentalist/hermeneutic debate as outlined by Venuti before explicitly outlining the type of literal approach I will employ in this chapter. It is worth noting that the fact that the literal approaches championed by Burnshaw and Nabokov appear to be confined to the twentieth-century writings on poetry translation is perhaps an indication that the literal approaches outlined in this chapter are not considered to be particularly fashionable in terms of modern-day poetry translation practice. Despite this, and as Venuti's *Contra Instrumentalism* outlines, instrumentalist attitudes to poetry translation still abound and poetry is still largely considered by many to be untranslatable. This means that, despite the fact that the literal approach may not be a particularly popular method of translating, the attitudes that underpin this approach are still prevalent. It is also worth noting that the scholarship on literal translation is extensive and that not all proponents of a literal approach champion this as a result of instrumentalist attitudes. For instance, Kwame Anthony Appiah's 1993 essay "Thick Translation" offers postcolonial reasons for championing literalness in translation. However, my decision to focus solely on Burnshaw and Nabokov is based on the fact that much of the scholarship of literal translation deals with translation regardless of genre, whereas I am keen to focus solely on the scholarship that deals specifically with literal translation within the context of poetry translation.

4.1.1 Burnshaw and *The Poem Itself*

A key example of the literal approach to poetry translation is Stanley Burnshaw's *The Poem Itself*, an edited anthology of 150 poems translated from French, German, Italian, Portuguese and Spanish, all of which have been translated according to Burnshaw's literal approach

(though not all by Burnshaw himself). Burnshaw advocates a method whereby a lexical translation containing options and alternatives is provided alongside both the source poem and a commentary that seeks to contextualise, analyse and explain the various poetic and linguistic characteristics of the source poem. In doing this, Burnshaw argues that the reader will be able to both “see *what* the poem is saying and *how*” and “*understand* the poem and [...] begin to *experience it as a poem*” – in other words, to “experience the source text as it was written” (xii, xiv).

One of the most striking characteristics of *The Poem Itself* is the way in which the poems are set out on the page: the source poem is presented as the main poetic text, with the lexical translation dispersed throughout the commentary as explanatory lines and not, as one might expect, laid out as a poem itself. By only including literal translations of lines to explain or expand on points within the commentary, the translation becomes an explanation of the source poem as opposed to a re-enactment of it. In other words, the translation is embedded in the commentary as a tool to understand the mechanics of how the source poem operates in the source language. Indeed, in his championing of a literal approach to poetry translation, it becomes clear that Burnshaw views more creative approaches as untrustworthy at best and damaging at worst as he scorns translators from the mid-twentieth century who “felt free to do anything: they were ‘re-creating originals!’” (xi).

This disdain for creative verse translation is further illustrated by the fact that *The Poem Itself* was only published after an abandoned first attempt, during which the editor tried to persuade Burnshaw to include verse translations (xi). This resulted in Burnshaw initially abandoning the project due to his belief that verse translation ran the risk of “confusing and distracting the reader”(xi). This gives the impression of verse translation – and creative translation more generally – as a dishonest approximation of a source text, useless in terms of understanding the mechanics of the original and confusing to potential readers. Indeed,

Burnshaw highlights that a large proportion of non-English-language poetry has been published as verse translations and queries whether verse translations can be trusted (xiv).

This is not to say that Burnshaw believes that the literal method of translating poetry is the only valid one. He states that there are “various ways of approaching foreign poetry; when a writer uses one, he [sic] does not thereby surrender his right to use others” (xii). He also acknowledges that creative verse translation is indeed a widespread practice and that he applauds the “occasional achievements”, which implies that he does see at least some value in the potential of creative translation as a vehicle for producing aesthetic target texts (xii). Despite this, he claims that “readers who want to experience the poetry of other literatures must look elsewhere [because] the vast stock of verse translations provides no answer” (xii). This attitude is largely rooted in the fact that, according to Burnshaw, an English translation “is always an *English* poem” and that, no matter how aesthetically effective that translation may be, it is always “an experience in *English* poetry”, far removed from the poetry of the original (xiii). This view is also highlighted through the question Burnshaw poses: “[h]ow could one possibly experience a Spanish poem in anything but Spanish, a French poem in anything but French?” (xi).

With this in mind, it becomes clear that Burnshaw’s approach is not directed at those who want to read an aesthetic reproduction of a source poem, but rather those who wish to understand how the poem functions in the source language and who do not have the linguistic knowledge required to read the source poem. As such, any claims regarding the misgivings of verse translation can be said to be less about the failure of that particular approach and more about the contrasting audiences and functions for which the translator in question is translating. In other words, a reader hoping to understand how a poem functions in the source language would find Burnshaw’s approach more useful than a more creative interpretation,

whereas a reader searching for an aesthetic reading experience of a poem in translation might consider this approach to be somewhat mechanical and unpoetic.

4.1.2 Nabokovian Literalism

One of the most striking examples of a boundary-pushing literal approach to poetry translation is Vladimir Nabokov's English translation of Alexander Pushkin's Russian verse novel *Eugene Onegin*, first published in 1964 and revised in 1975. Pushkin's *Eugene Onegin* is characterised by stanzas of fourteen lines written in iambic tetrameter and features a complex rhyme scheme comprising of both masculine and feminine rhymes. In other words, it features a skilful execution of metrical and rhyming poetic functions and is considered to be a classic work of Russian literature. By contrast, Nabokov's translation of *Eugene Onegin* deliberately forsakes any attempt to recreate these poetic and aesthetic elements – with the exception of the iambic rhythm – and instead produces an “austerely unpoetic” work comprising of approximately 240 pages of “literal” translation and over 1200 pages of commentary and extensive contextual elucidation (Boyd 215). Nabokov states that, in this translation, he has “sacrificed everything (elegance, euphony, clarity, good taste, modern usage, and even grammar) that the dainty mimic prizes higher than the truth” (Nabokov, Foreword x). This approach ultimately results in a translation that Trubikhina describes as “an unyielding behemoth [that is] fascinating to study but barely possible to read” (88).

Nabokov was famously critical of other existing translations of *Eugene Onegin*. He claimed that the work had been “mistranslated into many languages” and indeed uses large sections of the Commentary to highlight “the inadequacies and instances of incompetence in other translations, *all* other translations” (Conley 91; Nabokov, “Problems of Translation” 120). This criticism is largely a result of attempts by other translators to retain a sense of poetic or aesthetic quality in the translation, which was at odds with Nabokov's own

translation philosophy at the time of translating *Eugene Onegin*. According to Nabokov, literalism was “the only honest translation” and he indeed claimed that the phrase “literal translation” is tautological “since anything but that is not truly a translation but an imitation, an adaptation or a parody” (“Problems of Translation” 119; “The Nabokov-Wilson Letters” 234).

This championing of his literal philosophy, coupled with his disdain for those who attempted to recreate aesthetic elements in the translation, is made evident in a number of essays he published on his translation of *Eugene Onegin*. In his essay “Problems of Translation: *Onegin* in English”, he claims

I want translations with copious footnotes, footnotes reaching up like skyscrapers to the top of this or that page so as to leave only the gleam of one textual line between commentary and eternity. I want such footnotes and the absolute literal sense, with no emasculation and no padding – I want such sense and such notes for all the poetry in other tongues that still languishes in “poetical” variants, begrimed and beslimed with rhyme. (125)

This disdain for more creative attempts at translation is arguably the result of what Nabokov aimed to be as the function of his translation. He did not intend for his translation to function as a literary work, but rather as a crib that could be used as a tool to fully understand and gain access to the original Russian. Indeed, he claimed that the greatest reward would be for his students to use his translation as a “pony” (Foreword x).

Nabokov’s approach to poetry translation did not garner many followers. It has been noted that Nabokov’s literalist theory requires “more literary skill and scholarly insight than most translators are capable of providing” (Rosengrant 25). Furthermore, as previously

mentioned, this approach resulted in Nabokov producing a translation that was fascinating to study but more or less unreadable (Trubikhina 88). In addition to this, despite championing literal accuracy and aiming to provide unmediated access to and understanding of the original Russian, Nabokov's translation and commentary are not free from his own subjective motivations and prejudices. As Trubikhina states, Nabokov's commentary "serves too many purposes at once", noting in particular that he uses it to "[settle] scores with critics, literary enemies – past and present – and former friends" and, as such, it cannot be trusted (120). Furthermore, literal translation as defined by Nabokov can be said to be somewhat problematic. According to Nabokov, literalism meant "absolute accuracy", with the translator aiming to convey implied contextual meaning as opposed to providing a lexical interpretation (Nabokov "Problems of Translation" 123; Rosengrant 14). As Lakhtikova highlights, Nabokov's definition of literal translation is of his own devising and is therefore "largely removed both from the broad and specialised understanding of what a literal translation is", and even a bilingual reader would struggle to comprehend his translation of *Eugene Onegin* as a literal translation (225, 228).

It is therefore evident that the attitudes that underpin the approaches taken by Burnshaw and Nabokov are very similar, even if the approaches themselves result in different types of texts; indeed, Weissbort links the two together when briefly discussing the literal approach in the introduction to *Translating Poetry* (xii). It is clear that both Burnshaw and Nabokov – at least, Nabokov at the time of translating *Eugene Onegin* – view translation as a way of explaining how the source text functions as a poem in the source language and, as such, translate accordingly. Any attempts at recreating a sense of poetic or aesthetic quality in these translations are seen as detrimental to the function of the target text, and both use the translation as a tool to understand the mechanics of the original, either by embedding it within a commentary or by using the commentary to carry out the supposed function of the

source text. This rejection of aesthetic reproduction is therefore characteristic of these literal approaches due to the focus on understanding how the source poem itself functions in the source language. In the words of Nabokov, “[t]he clumsiest literal translation is a thousand times more useful than the prettiest paraphrase” (“Problems of Translation” 113).

4.1.3 Place within the Instrumentalist/Hermeneutic Debate

When situating the literal approach within the instrumentalist/hermeneutic debate, it is clear that the attitudes exhibited in the aforementioned sections reflect the instrumentalism outlined and defined by Venuti. In other words, it is clear that Burnshaw and Nabokov view creative translation largely as an untrustworthy exercise and that the idea of loss is implicit. This idea of deceit, particularly when linked to the translation of poetry, echoes the famous *traduttore-traditore* aphorism: the translator as traitor. The idea of translation as betrayal is undoubtedly rooted in instrumentalist attitudes to translation and is indeed heavily criticised by Venuti in *Contra Instrumentalism* (83).

As far as Burnshaw is concerned, there is undoubtedly an element of instrumentalist thinking in this approach to poetry translation. Interestingly, as Boll highlights, the attitudes of Burnshaw do in fact echo the attitudes of some of Venuti’s writings in their reverence of maintaining the “foreignness” of a translation – in Burnshaw’s case, by giving a blow-by-blow account of how the foreign poem functions as a poem in the source language (75). However, as mentioned earlier, Burnshaw is sceptical of translators who embark upon the task of “recreating originals” (xi). This is at odds with other methods of poetry translation – such as the approaches outlined in chapters 5 and 6 – whereby creativity is not only encouraged but viewed as an essential and inherent aspect of the practice. In addition to this, Burnshaw also refers to any given poem in any given language as an “unparaphrasable totality”: a term that both speaks to the apparent untranslatable nature of poetry and

highlights the idea of loss within a translation (xiv). Both of these associations are instrumentalist by nature and, as such, it is clear that Burnshaw's approach can be described as being instrumentalist.

Instrumentalist attitudes are also present in much of Nabokov's writings, particularly those which deal with translating *Eugene Onegin*. Nabokov states that "[t]he person who desires to turn a literary masterpiece into another language, has only one duty to perform, and that is to reproduce with absolute exactitude the whole text, and nothing but the text" ("Problems of Translation" 119). Such a view is undoubtedly instrumentalist as it implies the existence of invariants and suggests that the task of the translator is to completely reproduce a text in a target language so that it remains the same as the original: a task that some scholars of translation have outlined as quite simply impossible (Boase-Beier, "Theory and Practice" 8; Holmes 53).

Another example of instrumentalism within Nabokov's translation practice and philosophy is his poem "On Translating *Eugene Onegin*". This poem is written in the same poetic form and style as Pushkin's distinctive stanzas and is designed to illustrate the style of the Russian original without necessarily re-enacting the source text. The fact that Nabokov has chosen to recreate Pushkin's verse form in order to outline the impossibility of verse translation is an interesting and elegant way of creatively illustrating his instrumentalist beliefs. By recreating the stanza form employed by Pushkin, he is able to illustrate to the reader how the stanzas within *Eugene Onegin* function in terms of rhythm, rhyme and form, while simultaneously explaining how recreating this form in the translation itself would detract from the original, comparing the act of translation to that of murder and cheap mimicry. This reflects the attitude that translation of poetry in particular results in loss – in this case, loss of life reflecting loss of poetic spirit or soul – and can therefore be viewed as

an example of the instrumentalist attitudes held by Nabokov at the time of translation *Eugene Onegin*.

As such, it is clear that both Burnshaw and Nabokov do hold instrumentalist views when it comes to poetry translation. Despite this, however, it is worth considering whether the type of literal approach championed by Burnshaw and Nabokov can be deemed as instrumentalist given that it generally does not aim to recreate a poem as an aesthetic unit. This is particularly true when considering that both Burnshaw and Nabokov have in fact both shown some level of acceptance for more creative approaches to poetry translation. As we have seen, Burnshaw is uninterested in recreating a poem in translation and is instead more concerned with embedding the translation within the commentary as a means to understanding how the source text functions. However, Burnshaw does state that he applauds the occasional achievements of verse translators, and acknowledges both that his method is not the only one and that translators are able to use any method available to them (xii). In a similar vein, Nabokov himself produced several creative translations of other texts before his work on *Eugene Onegin* and did not revise them in accordance with this extreme translation philosophy, and in fact even expressed interest in collecting his verse translations for publication many years after his translation of *Eugene Onegin* had been published (Boyd 215).

With this in mind, one must ask whether or not the literal approach can be viewed as wholly instrumentalist when considering the function of the translations. I would argue that it depends on the function of the translation and the reasons for which the translator has chosen to follow a literal approach. In other words, a literal translation and commentary that is designed to explain the mechanics of how a poem functions in its source language is not overly concerned with producing an aesthetic target text. It does not exclude the possibility of creative translation, but it is unconcerned with the production of such. Any claims of

“untranslatability” here are therefore arguably correct, as a more creative translation will provide one translator’s interpretation of how aesthetic elements of a poem can be recreated, but not a direct explanation of the poem’s original mechanics. However, a literal translation that follows this structure can be said to be instrumentalist if it exists as a replacement for a creative translation as it does not aim to help the reader understand a poem in the linguistic sense, but rather to offer an explanation instead of a translation due to the supposed untranslatability of the poem and, by extension, poetry itself.

4.1.4 Outline of Practical Approach

As this section illustrates, the idea of a “literal” translation is not singularly defined, therefore it is important to outline the type of literal approach I will employ in the following section of this chapter. To expand on this, my approach will be a combination of the approaches taken by both Burnshaw and Nabokov. By combining these two approaches, I aim to follow a method that is both achievable within the scope of this thesis and also centres the translation of a poem as opposed to the source text. In other words, I would argue that the extensive and unwieldy nature of Nabokov’s approach is not achievable within the parameters of this particular project and, given that this thesis follows a practice-based methodology, I believe it would be inappropriate to include the source text as the main poetic text to be examined in the body of the thesis, as Burnshaw does.

Instead, I aim to translate these poems in a grammatically stabilised way in order to communicate content and meaning at the level of the line as I believe that this will efficiently allow for direct comparison between source and target texts. As such, instead of following Burnshaw’s method of presenting the source text as the main poetic text, I will include both the source text and the literal target text side by side on the page in order to facilitate a line-by-line comparison. Where there are instances of multiple word definitions, I will include

alternatives in square brackets, as per Burnshaw's approach, and in specific instances of ambiguous meaning, I will include both options within square brackets. Each of these literal translations will include an analytical commentary, after Burnshaw's approach. These commentaries will seek to outline and expand upon what I deem to be the most important or significant intrinsic and extrinsic poetic functions within the source texts. They will offer a brief summary of the content of the poem, followed by an in-depth exploration of these intrinsic and/or extrinsic functions, explaining how they serve to contribute to and enhance the poetic nature of the text in question. By doing this, I aim to create a translation that offers insight into the content of the poem without recreating any aesthetic or poetic elements, thus combining the replicative literal nature of Nabokov's approach with the concise, focused commentary of Burnshaw's approach.

Lastly, it is worth noting that both Burnshaw and Nabokov are proponents of offering an objective and unbiased account of the source poem through the commentary. While this reflects their instrumentalist attitudes, I would argue that offering a wholly objective account of a poem is an impossible task. In other words, while certain poetic functions such as metre and rhyme scheme can be described with a degree of certainty, expanding upon other functions such as metaphor and allusion can be very much influenced by the translator's own interpretation of the poem in question. As such, while I will aim to offer an explanation of "how the poem functions" in the source language, it is worth noting that these explanations will undoubtedly be influenced by my own subjective interpretation and should therefore not be seen as strictly objective or definitive (Burnshaw xii).

4.2 Literal Translations

4.2.1 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Bråtebrann” / “Bonfire”

Bråtebrann	Bonfire
<p>Vi går her i den våte kveld og sankar kvist og kvas og ber i hop til bråte-eld og får eit veldig bras.</p>	<p>We walk here on the wet evening and gather twigs and brushwood and carry them together to the pile of flaming grass and leaves and get a crackling fire.</p>
<p>No blømer opp i blodraud brann kvar rot vi reiv av jord, kvar tåg, kvart kjørr vi overvann med striden stod i fjor.</p>	<p>Now blossoming in blood-red fire is every root we tore from earth [soil], every root fibre, every thicket we conquered during the battle that took place last year.</p>
<p>To stridsmenn rudde mål på mål i fjor med stål og krutt. To sigerherrar kveikjer bål – i kveld er striden slutt!</p>	<p>Two warriors cleared decare upon decare last year with steel and gunpowder Two conquerors revive the fire – this evening [tonight] the battle is over!</p>
<p>Kvar overvunnen står i brann, – sjå, vi og bålet rår! – Og rundt oss svartnar rikt det land vi vann, og angar vår.</p>	<p>Everything conquered is on fire – look, we and the bonfire reign! – And darkening richly around us is the land we won, and smells of spring.</p>
<p>Det angar ramt og sterkt av vår frå skog og jord og eld, og du – ditt kinn, ditt våte hår – du angar vår i kveld –</p>	<p>It smells pungently and strongly of spring from forest [wood] and earth [soil] and fire, and you – your cheek, your wet hair – you smell of spring this evening [tonight] –</p>

“Bråtebrann” is a poem that explores themes of rebirth and the triumph of life over death. The word *bråtebrann* refers to a specific kind of bonfire that uses, for example, garden waste such as dead grass and leaves as kindling. In this poem, the speaker, alongside an unnamed second person, gathers brushwood, dead leaves, twigs and grass with the intention of building such a bonfire. The speaker likens them both to warriors who have won a battle, having conquered the surrounding landscape and used the decaying matter as kindling for their bonfire. While the two figures watch the bonfire, they note that they can smell the arrival of spring. The final two lines of the poem are addressed to the unnamed figure who accompanies the speaker, with the speaker telling them that they also smell like spring.

This poem is strophic and consists of five quatrains, each of which follows an ABAB rhyme scheme. All of the end rhymes in this poem are full rhymes, and all of them are masculine. This poem is metrical, with the first and third lines of each stanza consisting of iambic tetrameter and the second and fourth lines of each stanza consisting of iambic trimeter. Furthermore, this poem features a number of both extrinsic and intrinsic poetic functions. As far as extrinsic poetic functions are concerned, “Bråtebrann” is not only included in a collection of poetry, but also features short, left-aligned lines on the page and a stanzaic appearance of the text in the white space. In terms of intrinsic poetic functions, this poem contains rhythm, rhyme, imagery, association and sound devices such as alliteration and assonance.

One of the most notable aspects of this poem is the sound devices employed, more specifically alliteration, assonance and internal rhyme. There are numerous examples of this throughout the poem, with one of the most striking examples of this being found in the very first stanza. The first two lines of this stanza feature the words “kveld” [evening], “sankar” [gather], “kvist” [twigs] and “kvas” [brushwood]. This alliteration – and, in the case of “sankar”, assonance – serves to highlight the “K” consonant, which is a hard consonant and, as such, creates a harsh, dry, almost crackling sound. This is appropriate for this stanza as it

can reflect both the hard twigs that the two figures are collecting, with all the dry snapping, cracking and rustling that entails, as well as reflecting the sound of the “bras” [crackling fire] of the fourth line of this stanza.

The imagery employed by Vesaas in this piece is also very striking and, as such, forms one of the most notable intrinsic poetic functions of this poem. Throughout the entire poem, there are images of and allusions to war and battle. The fire is “blodraud” [blood-red]. They refer to their landscape-clearing endeavours as “striden” [the battle] and to themselves as “stridsmenn” [warriors] and “sigerherrar” [conquerors]. They clear acres of land using “stål og krutt” [steel and gunpowder] which most likely refers to the tools and means of moving large objects, but could also have connotations of, for example, swords and cannons. Lastly, as they stand watching their bonfire burn, the speaker of the poem claims that “vi og bålet rår” [we and the bonfire reign] and states that “vi vann” [we won]”.

The fact that this war and battle imagery exists in terms of clearing the landscape of dead leaves, twigs, grass and brushwood is significant in terms of the connotation of death. Just like a battle, autumn and winter have left a trail of death and decay in their wake. However, it is worth noting that this battle imagery is not used to describe the death brought about by autumn and winter, but rather to describe the attempts of these two figures to clear these manifestations of death and decay from the landscape. In other words, this is a battle against death itself – the two figures refuse to be overwhelmed by it, but rather take control of it, destroy it, and in destroying it, give death a new lease of life as a bright, hot fire. This idea is further emphasised by the fact that the fire is “blodraud” [blood-red]. While blood, especially in the context of war, can be interpreted as an image of death, the image of red blood can also be a sign of life, of a heart still beating. This is encompassed by the fact that the fire “blømar opp” [blossoms], thereby implying that, in spite of everything, life can emerge from death. There is a sense of defiance in this imagery – the speakers are not just waiting for the darkness

and decay of the winter to pass them by, but they are actively bringing about the change they wish to see. They are proactive, not simply waiting for the light to arrive but creating a bonfire and, as such, forcing a light in the darkness, as well as preparing the soil for new growth. This imagery therefore creates a sense of joyful defiance and celebrates the idea of being an active, as opposed to passive, actor in one's own life.

The poem ends with the speaker addressing the person she is with, which is marked by a change from first person plural to second person singular. After remarking how strongly the air around them smells like spring in light of the bonfire, the speaker then states "og du – ditt kinn, ditt våte hår –/du angar vår i kveld" [and you – your cheek, your wet hair –/you smell of spring this evening [tonight]]. This serves to further emphasise the poem's theme of rebirth and life emerging from death. Just as the figures in this poem have gathered the physical manifestations of death and decay and given them new life as part of a bright, hot bonfire, so too has this act of gathering kindled new life in them. They have cleared away the decay of winter and, in turn, have welcomed in the springtime. They are reborn, aware that they can find light in the darkness and, if no light is to be found, then they can create it.

4.2.2 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Harpe og dolk” / “Harp and Dagger”

Harpe og dolk	Harp and Dagger
<p>Øyret til harpa mi legg du og stryk over strengene bjarte og smiler til klangen du høyrer – harpa som tolkar mitt hjarte.</p>	<p>You place your ear against my harp and stroke the shining strings and smile at the sound you hear – the harp that interprets my heart.</p>
<p>Men dreg du ut dolken i beltet, brått blir du bleik og alvorleg, spør meg: Kva vil du med dolken? Han er både kvass og fårleg.</p>	<p>But if you draw out the dagger from the belt, you will suddenly become pale and serious, asking me: what do you want with the dagger? It is both sharp and dangerous.</p>
<p>– Dagen kan koma du leiest mitt hjarte og trøytnar av tolken. Da bannar eg harpa og hjartet, men takkar min Gud for dolken!</p>	<p>– The day can [may] come when you grow bored of my heart and grow tired of its interpreter. Then I will curse the harp and the heart, but thank my God for the dagger!</p>
<p>Takkar fordi han er kvass nok. Trengst det at meir eg seier? – Du kan ikkje møte mitt auge, du bøyer ditt hovud og teier.</p>	<p>Thank because it is sharp enough. Do I need to say more? – You cannot meet my eye, you bow your head and keep silent.</p>

“Harpe og dolk” is not only the title of this poem, but also the title given to this collection as a whole. As such, “Harpe og dolk” is an important poem as it serves to encompass the thematic threads that tie this collection together. Indeed, the themes explored within this poem are those of love and of woman as active, rather than passive, actor in both her relationships and in her own destiny. It is worth noting that the genders of the two figures in the poem are not explicitly stated, though the fact that Vesaas is known for writing about women and from a woman’s point of view could therefore imply that the speaker of the poem is female and the love interest is male. In this poem, the speaker watches her love interest glide his hands along the strings of her harp – a harp that she claims interprets her heart. However, he then finds a dagger that is implied to belong to the speaker and becomes serious, questioning her on why she needs such a dangerous item. The speaker informs him that if the day ever comes that he grows tired of her love, then she will curse her harp and her heart, but thank God for the sharpness of her dagger. The poem ends with her asking him if she needs to explain further and with him unable to say anything or look her in the eye.

This poem is strophic and consists of four quatrains, each of which follows an ABCB rhyme scheme. The end rhymes in this poem are all feminine and are all comprised of full rhymes. This poem is written in mixed meter and consists of both amphibrachic and dactylic trimeter. Lines one and four of the first stanza are written in catalectic dactylic trimeter, with the dactyl in the final foot of each line becoming a trochee, and lines two and three in this stanza are written in amphibrachic trimeter. In stanza two, lines one and four are written in amphibrachic trimeter, with metrical substitution in the form of a trochee in the second foot,, and lines two and three are written in catalectic dactylic trimeter. In stanza three, the first line is written in catalectic dactylic trimeter and lines two, three and four are written in amphibrachic trimeter, with the second amphibrachic foot of the fourth line being replaced by an iamb. Lastly, in the fourth stanza, the first two lines are written in dactylic trimeter, with the

second line being both catalectic and featuring a trochee instead of a dactyl in the second foot, and the last two lines are written in amphibrachic trimeter.

“Harp og dolk” is signalled as a poem through extrinsic poetic functions such as its inclusion in a collection of poetry, the presence of short, left-aligned lines and the stanzaic appearance of the piece on the white space. As far as intrinsic poetic functions are concerned, it contains many of the functions present in most of Vesaas’ poetry, namely rhythm, rhyme, imagery and association, as well as non-standard poetic syntax which serves the metrical rhythm and rhyme of lines, such as the first line of the first stanza.

The most striking intrinsic poetic function within this poem is undoubtedly the imagery of the harp and dagger of the poem’s title. As previously mentioned, these images not only serve as the title of this poem, but as a representation of the collection as a whole. The image of the harp is the first that is introduced in this poem. In the first stanza, the speaker’s love interest places his ear against her harp and runs his hands along the strings, listening to the pleasant sound it creates. We know from the fourth line of the first stanza that this harp acts as a kind of interpreter for the speaker’s heart and, as such, this action can be seen as a form of intimacy. Given that the sound of a harp is generally pleasant and since harps are instruments normally depicted as being played by angels, this gives the impression that the speaker feels content and blessed.

However, it is also possible to interpret the handling of the harp as an act of intrusion. We do not know if this love interest has been invited to play the harp, or if he has simply chosen to touch it without warning or consent. If we follow this interpretation, this could imply that the speaker has fallen in love with this person in spite of herself. Indeed, the love interest seems pleased that the speaker is in love with him, but this is not explicitly reciprocated in the poem. This could potentially explain why the image of the dagger is present within this poem

alongside the image of the harp: the speaker's heart is a double-edged sword, softened by love, but also in need of protection.

The image of the dagger is undoubtedly one of violence and pain; indeed, the love interest in this poem describes it as both “kvass og fårleg” [sharp and dangerous]. This could be interpreted as a method of self-defence on behalf of the speaker; if she has her heart broken, then she will be able to guard herself with her dagger, thus saving her from the possibility of more pain. There is also a veiled threat of violence evident in her explanation of why she needs the dagger. The speaker states that she will “takkar min Gud for dolken!/Takkar fordi han er kvass nok./Trengr det at meir eg seier? [thank my God for my dagger!/Thank Him because it [he] is sharp enough./Do I need to say more?]”. It is, however, not evident at whom this threat is directed. Does the speaker imply that she will use the dagger against her love interest if he breaks her heart? Or does she imply that she will turn the dagger on herself if he grows tired of her love?

The answer to this is unclear, but what is clear is that this has a silencing effect on her love interest. By the end of the poem, he is no longer grasping at her harp, but has distanced himself. He is unable to say anything and cannot even bear to look her in the eye. This is a marked difference from the intimate, overly familiar actions depicted at the start of the poem, which therefore implies that something has changed – he no longer sees her as a plaything, but rather as a person with agency capable of defending herself.

The harp and the dagger can therefore be interpreted as two sides of the same personality. The harp, with all its pleasant melodies and angelic connotations, represents the soft and tender side, the side that is open to love and vulnerability. The dagger, on the other hand, represents strength, a sense of female agency and power that allows her not to be a passive actor in this relationship, but rather an active one. These two images are highly representative of the themes that are threaded throughout Vesaas' poetry: her poems explore

love and hope against all odds, but were also ground-breaking at the time of publication due to the fact that they centred and gave agency and power to the female voice and allowed the female perspective to shine through. As such, it is clear to see why this poem was chosen to encompass the collection as a whole: it is a celebration of love and agency and is an excellent representation of Vespaas' style and themes.

4.2.3 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Septemberkveld” / “September Evening”

Septemberkveld	September Evening
<p>Ein still og sval septemberdag går under i sitt blod. No står i loge ås og li og bjart brenn myr og mo. Og vinden rør i gullskirt lauv og varslar kjøld og snø. Så er alt vår og sommar slutt. No ventar haust og død.</p>	<p>A quiet and cool September day goes under in its blood. Now hills and mountainsides stand ablaze and marshes and heaths burn brightly. And the wind rows through pure gold leaves and warns of cold and snow. So [then] spring and summer are already over. Now autumn and death await.</p>
<p>Det susar smått om stille tun der osper står og blør og bjørker over bleikna hå sin visne rikdom strør. Men åkren løfter korn på staur mot dagsens siste eld. Så sloknar himmel, folnar jord, og kveld og mørker fell.</p>	<p>There are whispers [rustles] on quiet yards [farmyards] where aspen stand and bleed and birches over faded hay scatter their wilted riches. But the field lifts poles of grain towards the day's last flame. Then the sky turns dark, the earth [soil] fades, and evening and darkness fall.</p>
<p>Og lysa døyr i alle hus med stjerner stilt blir kveikt, og natta rår om all vår jord, og hjartet slår så veikt som var alt vår og sommar slutt meir vonlaust slutt enn no, som skulle hausten svale snart mitt eige heite blod.</p>	<p>And lights [candles] die in every house while stars are quietly ignited and the night reigns over all our earth and the heart beats so weakly as though spring and summer were already over more hopelessly over than now, as though autumn would soon cool my own hot blood.</p>

“Septemberkveld” is one of the most descriptive poems in *Harpe og dolk*. The poem is a meditation on autumn and is made up of rich descriptions of autumnal scenes, all of which serves to further the main theme within the poem, namely the theme of death. One day in September, the speaker meditates on how the hills and marshes will be ablaze: an image of autumnal colours replacing the brightness of spring. The wind rustles through golden leaves, warning of the end of summer and the arrival of autumn and death. Aspen and birches shed their leaves while the field holds poles of grain up to the final glimmers of daylight. Darkness falls, and the lights in the houses go out, but the stars silently light up. The night prevails, and the speaker reflects on how it is as though the environment around her is threatening to cool her own hot blood, thus representing a turn in the poem from topography into subjectivity.

The poem is strophic and is comprised of three stanzas of eight lines, each of which follows an ABCBDEFE rhyme scheme. The end rhymes in this poem are all full rhymes. All of the end rhymes in this poem are masculine. This poem is metrical, consisting of alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter. This poem also features some examples of non-standard poetic syntax, namely the third and fourth lines of the second stanza. Furthermore, this text is signalled as a poem through extrinsic functions such as its inclusion in a collection of poetry, the short, left-aligned lines and the stanzaic appearance of the text in the white space. In terms of intrinsic functions, this poem features rhythm, rhyme, imagery, metaphor and sound devices such as assonance, alliteration and sibilance.

Indeed, the sound devices employed in this poem are particularly striking and arguably one of the most important intrinsic poetic functions. This poem is starkly descriptive and, as such, the sound devices employed within this poem serve to enhance and reflect the richness of the autumnal imagery being described. There is much alliteration to be found throughout this poem, such as the lines “og bjart brenn myr og mo” [and marshes and heaths burn brightly] – where the alliteration serves to highlight the idea of burning brightly, as well as linking the

two natural environments – and “og bjørker over bleikna hå” [and birches over faded hay], where the alliteration serves to highlight the idea of the natural world fading as autumn closes in. Such sound devices are found throughout this poem, and I would argue that among the most important of these is the sibilance which is found throughout the entire text. For example, in the very first stanza, the first two lines contain the words “still” [quiet], “sval” [cool], “septemberdag” [September day] and “sitt” [its]. This is then reflected in the first two lines of the second stanza, which contain the words “susar” [rustle], “smått” [a little], “stille” [quiet], “osper” [aspen] and “står” [stand]. This concentration of sibilance serves to create a softness that reflects the contents of the lines in which it appears. In the second stanza, for example, the sibilance serves to portray the rustling of the wind through the yards where the aspen stand, and the sibilance in the first stanza serves to create a soft tone that reflects the coolness and quietness of the day.

Another striking example of sibilance can be found in the final lines of the poem. Throughout these lines, the speaker describes how her heart beats weakly, signalling how summer is ending and how autumn is arriving and threatening to cool her own hot blood. These lines feature the words “slår” [beats], “så” [so], “som” [as], “sommar” [summer], “slutt” [over], “vonlaust” [hopelessly], “skulle” [would; should; was going to], “hausten” [autumn], “svale” [cool] and “snart” [soon], with “som” and “slutt” appearing twice. Just as the sibilance in the previous two stanzas serves to reflect the wind and the coolness of the autumn air, so too is this the case in this stanza, with the almost overwhelming presence of the sibilance serving as a reflection of how autumn – and all it entails – has very much taken over.

However, despite the fact that sibilance is present throughout this entire stanza, it is absent from the final line: “mitt eige heite blod” [my own hot blood]. Instead, there is a repetition of “t” in this line between “mitt” and “heite”. This creates a stronger, harsher sound than that which was created as a result of the preceding sibilance and consequently creates a

contrast between hot and cold, between life and death. The image of blood in this final line also reflects the image of blood that appears in the first two lines of the first stanza. We are told that the cool, still September day in question “går under i sitt blod” [goes under in its blood], which depicts the death brought about by autumn (“comes bleedingly to an end” could also function as an alternative translation of this line). By bringing the image of hot blood – and particularly hot blood that is threatened with being cooled – at the end of the final stanza, the poem comes full circle, both signifying the circularity of the seasons and emphasising the coldness and death that autumn will bring.

4.2.4 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Skumring” / “Twilight”

Skumring	Twilight
<p>Dagen var så blank, venninne, at eg såg det, sårt og brått: Du er bleik om blomekinnet, og ditt hår er rettno grått.</p>	<p>The day was so bright, friend [female friend], that I saw it, painfully [tenderly] and suddenly: Your rosy cheeks are pale and your hair is almost [has recently turned] grey.</p>
<p>Og med ein gang var vi skilde, og eg visste inga bru over til deg, alt eg ville. – Eg er ung, og aldri du!</p>	<p>And immediately we were separated and I knew of no bridge over to you, all that I wanted. – I am young, and you are ageing!</p>
<p>– Tvilen kom, kan du forstå meg? Alt eg eig er rart og ungt. – Du vart bleik. Du såg det på meg, og eg trur det kjendest tungt.</p>	<p>– The doubt came, can you understand me? All I own is strange and young. – You turned pale. You saw it on me, and I think it felt heavy.</p>
<p>Dagen sloknar. Sola kveldar. Gjennom ruta siste skimt lyser inn av dagens eldar. Så fell mørkret, blått og dimt.</p>	<p>The day fades. The sun darkens [it becomes evening]. Through the windowpane, the final flash of the day’s flames shines in. Then darkness falls, blue and dim.</p>
<p>Mørkret når din stol, venninne, sveiper miskunnsame slør over panna di og kinnet. Og du er meg nær som før.</p>	<p>The darkness reaches your chair, friend [female friend], wrapping merciful veils over your forehead and cheek. And you are close to me like you were before.</p>
<p>År som skilde oss er døde og din alder nådig dult.</p>	<p>The years that separated us are dead and your age mercifully concealed.</p>

Atter kjem eg deg i møte
med eit hjarte ungt og fullt.

Alt eg eig må eg få skifte
med deg, røynt så vel som drøymt,
spørje, sanne, klage, skrifte,
– sjå, for deg er inkje gøymt!

Once again I come to meet you
with a young and full heart.

All I own I must exchange
with you, experienced as well as dreamt,
ask, confirm, complain, confess
– see, from you, nothing is hidden!

“Skumring” is a poem that explores the themes of youth and ageing. In this poem, the speaker – whose gender is not stated – sits with an older female friend on a sunny day. In the light, they look at their friend and are struck by how old she looks, remarking on her pale skin and grey hair. This realisation creates a gulf between the speaker and their friend as the speaker tries to come to terms with both the nature of ageing and the fact that they are so much younger than their friend. However, as the sun sets and twilight falls, the face of their friend is concealed in darkness and the speaker once again feels closer to her. The poem then ends with the speaker celebrating the nature of ageing, claiming that their friend has not just dreamt of things but has actually experienced them, and that her eyes are open to the ways of the world as a result.

This poem is strophic and consists of seven quatrains, each of which follows an ABAB rhyme scheme. All of the end rhymes in this poem are full rhymes and consist of a mix of masculine and feminine rhymes. The one exception to this can be found in the first and third lines of the third stanza, whereby the end rhymes are not rhymes at all but rather a repetition of the word “meg” [me]. This poem is written in trochaic tetrameter, with the second and third lines of each stanza being catalectic, thus transforming the trochee of the final foot into a brach. There is also one instance of substitution in this poem, namely in the first line of the second stanza, whereby the trochaic tetrameter is transformed into two iambic feet followed by a pyrrhic third foot and a trochaic fourth foot. This substitution appears as the speaker notices the age difference between themselves and their friend, thus the disruption of the meter serves to reflect the disruption of the speaker’s thoughts and perceptions.

The extrinsic poetic functions that signal this text as a poem include its inclusion in a collection of poetry, the short, left-aligned lines and the stanzaic appearance of the text in the white space. In terms of intrinsic poetic functions, this poem contains rhythm, rhyme, imagery, metaphor and sound devices such as alliteration and assonance.

One of the key elements of this poem is the juxtaposition of light and dark and the subverted connotations of the same. The start of this poem occurs in the middle of a bright, sunny day, but instead of the speaker being buoyed by the good weather, they become crestfallen as they notice that they are markedly different from their friend. In the sunlight, they can see how much their friend has aged and becomes self-conscious of their own youth. They worry that their friend does not understand them, and that the gulf between them is uncrossable. It is only when the sun sets and darkness starts to fall that the speaker becomes more positive, stating that the darkness places “miskunnsame slør” [merciful veils] across the face of their friend, thus shielding her ageing features and closing the gap between them.

An interesting aspect of this imagery – and one that is present in other Vesaas poems throughout this collection – is that light is not seen as inherently positive and darkness is not seen as inherently negative. Indeed, the link between light and pain is made evident as early as the first two lines of the poem: “Dagen var så blank, venninne/at eg såg det, sårt og brått” [The day was so bright, friend [female friend]/that I saw it painfully [tenderly] and suddenly]. Daylight in this poem is also described as “eldar” [flames], which further emphasises the painful and potentially dangerous nature of the light. This image is then followed by a description of the darkness as “blått og dimt” [blue and dim/hazy], which creates a cooling, almost neutralising image to that of the fierce flames of daylight. This image of relief reflects the attitude of the speaker as it is only when darkness falls that the speaker relaxes, their earlier worries now extinguished.

The fact that light is not seen as positive and darkness is not seen as negative in this poem also reflects the idea that youth is not necessarily desirable and old age is not necessarily undesirable. Just as the day has reached its twilight, so too has the friend of the speaker reached the twilight of her life. As previously mentioned, the twilight imagery in this poem serves to act as a kind of cooling agent against the fierce, harsh images of the light, thus implying that

this ageing is not negative but rather a pleasant change from the tumultuousness of youth. This is further emphasised by the self-consciousness and uncertainty the speaker feels about their own youth. The speaker states that “Alt eg eig er rart og ungt [All I own is strange and young]. Despite the speaker still harbouring a sense of joy in being young – as evidenced by the fact that they later state that their heart is once again “ungt og fullt” [young and full] – it becomes clear that seeing the age and experience of their friend has changed their perspective. After the initial shock, the speaker goes on to celebrate the fact that their friend has not only dreamt of life, but lived it to the fullest.

Furthermore, this poem is cyclical in its light/dark imagery. As previously mentioned, the poem starts off in the middle of a sunny day before darkness falls and the figures are reconciled in the twilight. Although the sun does not come back up again at the end of this poem in a physical sense, the image of light does still feature at the end of this poem in the form of the enlightenment of the speaker. Far from their earlier concern about ageing, they now look forward to it, wishing that they could change their life for that of their friend as they crave knowledge and experience of that which they have only dreamt until that point. The poem therefore starts off in the light, then moves into the darkness and, while still physically being dark, moves once again into the light in the form of realisation, acceptance and enlightenment.

4.2.5 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Timane går” / “The Hours Pass”

Timane går	The Hours Pass
<p>Du veit ikkje av at du snart skal døy. Vi skulle fortalt deg det, vi. Det fell oss så tungt. Vi sit ved di seng og teier. Og timane lid.</p>	<p>You do not know that you soon will die. We should have told you, we. It hits us so hard. We sit by your bed and keep silent. And the hours wear on.</p>
<p>Vi kjøpte litt lauv i en blomsterbutikk, d'er ynkeleg pjusket og grått. Du ligg der og ser ifrå det til oss: Å venner, eg har det så godt!</p>	<p>We bought some leaves in a flower shop, they are pitifully straggly and grey. You lie there and look from them to us: Oh friends, I have it so good!</p>
<p>Du tøyer ei blåbleik og blodlaus hand og tek om buketter og legg han ned mot ditt andlet: Det angar så <i>vår</i>, så rart de, det angar av hegg!</p>	<p>You extend a pale blue and bloodless hand and take the bouquet and place it down against your face: it smells so <i>spring</i>, so strange you [plural], it smells like bird cherry!</p>
<p>Eg gler meg til våren. Her er han alt, kjenn! Vi drikk av dei fattige blad litt støvlukt, litt tev frå ein dårleg tobakk. Kjenn, det er våren! – Ja.</p>	<p>I look forward to spring. It is already here, feel [smell]! We drink in from the poor leaves some dust smell, some stink from a bad tobacco. Feel [smell], it is spring! – Yes.</p>
<p>Det mørknar. Du ligg der og smiler sæl i draum om den kommande vår. Vi skulle ha sagt det! Men kven av oss kan? Vi teier. Og timane går.</p>	<p>It gets dark. You lie there and smile happily dreaming of the coming spring. We should have said it! But who of us can? We keep silent. And the hours pass.</p>

“Timane går” explores themes of grief, death, and the unspeakable nature of the same. In this poem, the speaker sits at the bedside of a friend who is dying. The speaker and the other visitors know this, but the friend is unaware of the fact. The speaker laments the fact that none of them have told their friend that they will soon die, but reflects on how difficult it is to put such a tragic situation into words. As they sit by the bedside, the friend is filled with boundless joy and optimism, relishing the smell of the cheap flowers the speaker has brought them and announcing that they cannot wait until springtime. As night falls, the person in the bed is still smiling and dreaming of spring, while the speaker both wishes that they had told them of their fate and wonders how it is possible to impart such information. As they sit, torn by the decision to say nothing, the hours pass.

This poem is strophic and consists of five quatrains, each of which follows an ABCB rhyme scheme. All of the end rhymes in this poem are masculine and consist of full rhymes. The lines in this poem are characterised by indentation which is not consistent from stanza to stanza; rather, the indentation changes according to the content of each stanza and the progression of the poem itself. This poem is metrical, consisting of alternating lines of catalectic amphibrachic tetrameter and catalectic amphibrachic trimeter. These catalectic lines transform the amphibrach of the final foot into an iamb, with the exception of the first line of the third stanza and the first line of the fifth stanza, where the amphibrach is transformed into a brach. In addition, there are several instances of substitution throughout the poem. The third foot of the first line of the first stanza consists of an iamb, as does the second foot of the third line of the first stanza, the third foot of the third line of the second stanza, the third foot of the first line of the third stanza, and the third foot of the first line of the fifth stanza. Furthermore, the final line of the fourth stanza consists of mixed meter, with the catalectic amphibrachic trimeter being replaced by catalectic dactylic trimeter, resulting in the dactyl of the final foot being transformed into a brach. A notable feature of this line is that, in the second foot, the

second unstressed syllable of the dactyl falls upon a dash and is therefore not spoken, but rather represents an unstressed syllable of silence and thus creates a caesura before the speaker of the poem says “Ja” [Yes], thus depicting the speaker’s hesitation.

The extrinsic functions that signal this text as a poem include its inclusion in a collection of poems, the short, left-aligned lines on the page and the stanzaic appearance of the text in the white space, as well as the innovative use of the white space in the form of indentation. In terms of intrinsic poetic functions, this poem features rhythm, rhyme, imagery, association and sound devices such as alliteration and assonance.

The most striking aspect of this poem is undoubtedly the use of white space, namely the indentation of the lines. This indentation varies from stanza to stanza and serves to reflect both the content of the stanza itself as well as the overall progression of the poem as a whole. The first two stanzas have identical indentation; the first and third lines of each stanza are not indented, while the second and fourth lines of each stanza are indented. This creates a rhythmic, forward-and-back motion on the page that can be likened to the swinging of a pendulum. This is appropriate for these stanzas for a number of reasons. Firstly, the first stanza ends with the words “Og timane lid” [And the hours wear on]. This rhythmic, almost pendulum-like motion created by this indentation therefore reflects constant movement and, as such, the passing of time is implied. This back-and-forth movement also reflects the contents of the second stanza, whereby the dying friend looks from the straggly flowers to the bedside visitors and back again. This indentation therefore not only reflects the movement of this person’s eyes, or perhaps their head, as they look between the flowers and their friends, but also serves to highlight the passing of time and therefore implies that this person is moving towards death. The passing of time conveyed in this particular indentation pattern has already been established in the first stanza, and this carries on into the second. However, the fact that this person is looking from their healthy friends to a bouquet of flowers which the speaker describes as “pjusket og grått”

[straggly and grey] and as smelling of “støvlukt” [dust smell] and “dårleg tobakk” [bad tobacco] implies that this passage of time will not be kind to them – in other words, they are moving from life to death.

The indentation then transforms in the third stanza. The first line of this stanza is not indented, but the following three lines are indented. These indented lines occur as the bedridden friend reaches out for the bouquet of flowers and holds it against their face, relishing the smell of what they believe to be spring. The fact that three of these lines are indented therefore creates a pushing-forward motion within the stanza, which reflects the fact that the dying friend is looking forward to the springtime and is almost wishing that time would move faster so that the season would arrive sooner.

The indentation changes again in the fourth stanza. In this stanza, only the second line is indented, with the first, third and fourth remaining firmly on the left hand side of the page. It is this stanza that begins the process of depicting the deterioration of the bedridden friend, as the non-indented lines signify a pulling back, a cessation of forward movement. The non-indented lines feature both exclamations about how excited the dying friend is about spring and descriptions of the flowers, which stink of dust and tobacco. By contrast, the only indented line in this stanza features the healthy visitors, who are smelling the flowers at the request of their friend. This implies that time will continue to move on for the visitors, but that it is slowly grinding to a halt for their bedridden friend.

The indentation then changes again in the fifth and final stanza. In this stanza, there is no indentation at all – the lines do not disrupt the white space in the same way as previous stanzas, instead remaining firmly on the left hand side of the page. This is the most sombre stanza of the poem as time has stopped moving forwards. There is no indentation that creates back-and-forth motion, no indication that time is moving onwards, with the implication being that time – more specifically, the time of the person in the bed – is drawing to a close and will

soon halt completely. This interpretation reflects the content of this stanza – indeed, the first words of this stanza are “Det mørknar” [It gets dark]. Given the content of the poem, and the implications presented by the lineation and indentation, this can be said to have a double meaning – the sun is not only setting on the day, but also on the life of the speaker’s dying friend.

4.2.6 Cecilie Løveid: “Scootermadonna” / “Scooter Madonna”

Scootermadonna	Scooter Madonna
<p>I Barn skal ha eventyr og kjærlighet. Derfor var det mange eventyrbilder på poliomyelittavdelingen. En legestudent var innkalt for å hjelpe den lamme lille piken. Han håndpumpet luft direkte inn i svelget hennes. De hadde laget et hull og satt inn en slange. Han pumpet hele tiden mens han leste eventyr. Mor kjøpte en ny pixibok eller en ny dukke hver gang hun kom, men det var ikke så ofte, hun var jo på sjøen. Et sykehus er like vanskelig å akseptere for en dukke som for et barn. Visste du det? Vi vet det har hendt, men vi husker ingenting.</p>	<p>I Children shall [will] have [adventures/fairy tales] and love. That is why there were lots of [adventure/fairy-tale] pictures in the polio ward. A student doctor was called in to help the lame little girl [maiden]. He hand-pumped air directly into her throat. They had made a hole and put in a tube. He pumped the whole time while he read [adventures/fairy tales]. Mother bought a new pixie book or a new doll every time she came, but that was not so often, she was, of course, at sea. A hospital is just as difficult to accept for a doll as it is for a child. Did you know that? We know it has happened, but we remember nothing.</p>
<p>II Hun måtte være alene da hun kom hjem for godt. Moren jobbet på båten fremdeles, de skulle jo leve på sekstitallet også. Nesten alle dagene i uken var barnet stort nok, og det er uenighet om hvor mye nærhet og omsorg et så stort barn trenger. Det er fortsatt stor enighet om at barn skal ha kjærlighet og eventyr, men vi er ikke sikker på hvor mye av hver sort.</p>	<p>II She had to be alone when she came home for good. The [Her] mother still worked on the boat, they did have to live in the sixties as well. Almost every day of the week the child was big [old] enough, and there is disagreement over how much closeness and care a child as big [old] as that needs. There is still much agreement that children shall [will] have love and [adventures/fairy tales], but we are not sure how much of each kind.</p>
<p>III Ungdommer skal ha kjærestere og eventyr i uendelige mengder. Derfor satte hun seg bakpå scooteren noen operasjoner senere, uten hjelm, og lot underskjørtet</p>	<p>III Young people shall [will] have [boy/girlfriends] and [adventures/fairy tales/love affairs] in unending amounts. That is why she sat on the back of the scooter some operations later, without a helmet, and let her underskirt</p>

selge fleisk. Hun ville heller være pen. Hun haltet ikke på scooter og unge piker vil jo gjerne være pene.

Den unge scooterridderen i lærjakke holdt fast om den tynne piken i skjev strikkejakke og raste oppover veien med henne. Han bet seg fast i nakken og pustet hett og hardt mot hennes grop, han trakk skjørtet lenger opp, han fikk hånden full av villighet. Den var søtere enn cola. Maven hennes var kaldere enn softis. Leppene hennes var mørkere enn krabbeklør.

De kjørte utfor sammen og ble borte. Et telegram ble nok sendt til båten, til moren. Vi vet det har hendt, men vi husker det ikke.

Protesene, skinnene, skruene, gipsen, tengene, krykkene, og navnet hennes.

sell flesh. She would rather be pretty. She did not limp on the scooter and of course young girls really want to be pretty.

The young scooter rider in the leather jacket held tightly around the thin girl in the lopsided cardigan and raced up the road with her. He bit tightly onto her neck and breathed hot and hard against her hollow, he pulled her skirt further up, he got a handful of willingness. It was sweeter than cola. Her stomach was colder than soft-serve ice cream. Her lips were darker than crab claws.

They drove off the road together and were gone. A telegram was probably sent to the boat, to the [her] mother. We know it has happened, but we don't remember it.

The prosthesis, the splints, the screws, the cast, the pliers, the crutches, and her name.

“Scootermadonna” is a prose poem made up of three distinct, numbered sections, with each section appearing on a separate page in the original collection. The events of the poem take place around the 1960s and outline the early life of a girl who is suffering with polio. Across the three sections of this poem, the reader is informed that the young girl spends time on a polio ward and, as a result, undergoes a number of frightening and traumatising medical procedures. During her hospital stay and in the time following her discharge, the girl spends time largely alone, due to the fact that her mother has a demanding job at sea (with the absence of any mention of a father implying the case of a single mother having to work hard to provide for a sick daughter). Some years later, as a teenager, the girl rides on the back of her lover’s scooter, enjoying the fact that the side effects of the polio, such as her limp, are hidden when she is on the scooter. They speed along the road, being amorous and reckless, and a road accident is implied. The poem ends with the speaker informing the reader that a telegram was presumably sent to her mother at sea to inform her of the accident and the loss of her daughter.

Given the prosaic nature of this poem, it is difficult to describe it as either strophic or stichic, particularly since the poem is split into three numbered sections, with each section featuring on a separate page. Furthermore, these sections almost seem to be laid out in the form of paragraphs as opposed to stanzas, with the strong narrative drive and use of complete prosaic sentences throughout the text contributing to this overall impression. With this in mind, it is perhaps more fitting to use the word “section” as opposed to “stanza” when discussing this poem. Indeed, this poem could almost be described as a short sequence of interlinking flash fiction pieces, with the narrative, prosaic style challenging the idea of the text as poem. As such, this poem is a typical example of the genre-bending style that Løveid is known for. There are, however, a number of elements in this poem that, while not unique to poetry, are present in a high enough concentration so as to provide what Eagleton terms “heightened experience”, which can therefore classify this text as a poem – or at least, as “poetic” (qtd. in Jones 31).

These intrinsic poetic functions include repetition, association, variation, imagery (with a particular emphasis on the Madonna/whore dichotomy), metaphor and simile, with the most notable extrinsic function being the text's inclusion in a collection of poetry.

One of the most notable elements in this poem is the recurring use of the indefinite plural form of the neuter plural “eventyr”, which appears in all three of the sections of the poem. “Eventyr” is an ambiguous word; it can mean both “adventures” and “fairy tales”, as well as “love affairs”.⁵ As such, the use of the word creates a multiplicity throughout the poem, with a reader with knowledge of Norwegian being able to hold the concept “adventures”, “fairy tales” and “love affairs” in their mind while reading. This multiplicity is important as it serves to both highlight and conflate the main themes within the poem, namely danger, fantasy, escapism and (the loss of) childhood. The ambiguity of “eventyr” therefore serves as a kind of anchor for each section of the poem, with the word offering multiple layers of meaning and creating a sense of poetic richness that permeates the entire text – indeed, the word “eventyr” defined as “love affair” offers an additional layer of meaning to the third section, which is characterised by sexual desire.

If we examine the first line of the first section – and consequently the first line of the poem itself – then we see that the multiplicity of this word immediately becomes evident. This first line of the poem reads: “Children should have [eventyr] and love”. When considering this line in English, questions arise: what interpretation of “eventyr” do children need? If one examines this statement out of context, one can argue that children need both fairy tales and adventures; in other words, they need to feed their imaginations with fairy tales, and they need to experience excitement and wonder in the form of adventures (concocted out of imaginative

⁵ My decision to include “love affairs” as an option only in the third stanza as opposed to the first and second stanzas was based on perceived appropriacy, namely that “love affairs” is an unlikely and inappropriate interpretation of “eventyr” when used in the context of “barn” [children].

play, for example). Indeed, the Norwegian does not make any distinction between the two, therefore the idea of children needing both fairy tales and adventures is implied.

The word “eventyr” therefore has connotations of excitement and fantasy and, as such, is not necessarily viewed as something negative. This therefore makes the second and third lines of this section even more effective as they serve to undercut this image of innocence and excitement. After stating that children should have “eventyr”, the poem goes on to say that this is why there were so many “eventyr” pictures on the walls of the polio ward in which the first section takes place. Although “eventyr” is ambiguous, I would argue that the most natural interpretation in this instance is “fairy tale”, since fairy-tale pictures would offer comfort, escapism and familiarity to the children on the polio ward. This interpretation is corroborated by the actions of the medical student later in this section. As he pumps air into the little girl’s throat, he reads “eventyr” to her. In this context, “fairy tales” makes much more sense than “adventures” and can therefore be said to be a less ambiguous use of the word “eventyr” than other instances of it throughout the rest of the poem. The use of the word “eventyr” in this section therefore serves to introduce the innocence of childhood, which then makes the loss of this childhood innocence at the hands of the polio ward even more striking and shocking.

In section one, we are told that the young girl is often alone due to her mother’s demanding job at sea. This isolation is furthered and continued in the second section of the poem. In this section we are told that after being discharged from the hospital, the little girl often has to stay home alone – again, because of her mother’s work. This is the shortest of the three sections, with the larger volume of white space on the page serving to highlight the emptiness and loneliness of the little girl who has nothing – no mother, no love and no care – with which to fill her days. This section ends with the lines “There is still much agreement that children should have/love and [eventyr], but we are not sure/how much of each kind.” Once again, the word “eventyr” lends an ambiguity to this section. If we interpret “eventyr” in this

instance as “fairy tales”, then these lines could be read as a kind of indication that the child, while still a child, is getting older and has to learn how to live in the real world as opposed to a world of make-believe and escapism. This can be corroborated by the earlier lines “Almost every day of the week/the child was big [old] enough”, which implies that the girl is still young, though able – or at least expected to be able – to look after herself. As such, she does still need fairy tales and other elements of childhood, but the extent to which she should have unmediated access to this is called into question. The fairy tales of this interpretation are therefore a metaphor for childhood, with the extent to which the girl is allowed to act like a child being called into question given her age and situation.

However, if we read “eventyr” as “adventures” in this case, then these lines – and consequently the section as a whole – can be interpreted differently. One is tempted to ask: to what does the “adventure” in these lines refer? To the poorly child left to her own devices after a traumatising medical experience? To the medical trauma itself, as potentially implied in the previous section? When viewed in this light, the “adventures” here can be interpreted as a euphemism for neglect and trauma, thereby adding another potential layer of meaning. By saying that children do need adventures, but that we are unsure of how much of them they need, this could be a commentary on childhood resilience. In other words, we are all agreed that children need to build resilience, but we are not sure how much difficulty and hardship can be considered overwhelming for them. In the context of this section, therefore, the adventure interpretation could be viewed as a meditation on whether or not the young girl – though seemingly able to take care of herself – is able to endure the suffering and hardship she has experienced and is continuing to experience.

The third and final section of this poem features a variation on the first lines of the first section, with this variation creating a number of interesting points for discussion. Where the first line of the first section reads “Children should have [eventyr] and love”, the first lines of

the third section read “Young people should have boy/girlfriends and [eventyr] in/unending amounts”. There is a significant leap forward in time between the first/second and third sections, with this being indicated by the replacement of the word “barn” [children] with “ungdommer” [young people]. There is also an interesting variation on the word “kjærlighet” [love] in this section. In this section, the “kjærlighet” [love] that appears in the previous two sections is replaced by the word “kjærester”, a plural, gender-neutral term for a romantic partner that stems from the same root as “kjærlighet” and can be rendered in English as partner, boyfriend or girlfriend (with a literal translation at the level of the word being “dearest one” or “one I hold dearest”).⁶ To expand on this, both “kjærlighet” and “kjærester” come from the adjective “kjær”, with the single indefinite noun “kjæreste” being formed directly from the definite superlative form of the adjective.

When specifically examining the use of “eventyr” in this section, it once again becomes clear that this serves to highlight a multiplicity. As previously mentioned, if “eventyr” is interpreted in this section as “love affairs”, then this offers a rather straightforward reading, given that this particular section is characterised by sexual desire. However, if we interpret this first line as “Young people should have boy/girlfriends and adventures in/unending amounts”, then this serves as a precursor to the adventurous behaviour carried out by the presumably now teenage girl and her lover. The section describes the girl – now the eponymous Scooter Madonna – riding on the back of her lover’s scooter. He is speeding, and they are acting recklessly and amorously. This is a distinct contrast to the tone and content of the previous two sections. As previously mentioned, the second section is characterised by a sense of stillness, isolation and inaction, while the first section is characterised by the immobility caused by the polio and consequent hospital stay. Indeed, the girl is not even able to breathe for herself in the

⁶ While “kjæreste” is gender-neutral in that it does not specify a specific gender in the way that boyfriend/girlfriend does, the word “kjæreste” is grammatically masculine.

first section, instead relying on a medical student to manually pump air into a hole in her throat. As such, the third section signifies a distinct shift in tone. This section is one of motion, exhilaration and joy – a stark contrast to the stillness, fear and isolation of the previous two sections. As such, by interpreting “eventyr” as “adventures”, and given the context of this section, “eventyr” in this instance could potentially serve as a positive contrast to the otherwise negative implications of “eventyr” in the previous sections of the poem, i.e. neglect, loneliness and complex medical procedures.

However, if we interpret the first line as “Young people should have boy/girlfriends and fairy tales in/unending amounts”, then we are offered a different perspective. Given the traumatic events that this girl has suffered through in early life, it is possible that the speaker of this poem is essentially saying that she has the right to fantasise, dream, and indulge in escapism. Indeed, there is an air of princess-being-saved evident in this section: she has been saved from her tortured reality by the young man and is being whisked away. The fact that she is not being whisked away on horseback by a knight in shining armour, but rather driven away recklessly on a scooter by a leather-clad young man, serves to both modernise the fairy tale trope and introduce an edge and a sense of danger to it. The fact that this fairy tale trope is subverted is important in terms of the poem’s ending: the Scooter Madonna does not live happily ever after, but rather is killed in a road accident. This subversion serves to render the final events of the poem all the more shocking, as well as once again casting the idea of “eventyr” in a negative light. This means that, when examining the potential for “eventyr” to mean both “adventures” and “fairy tales”, there is a duality present here in that the word can be considered to have both positive and negative implications.

It is therefore evident that the ambiguity of the word “eventyr” plays an incredibly important role in this poem, with each section being altered according to whether or not one interprets “eventyr” as “adventures” or “fairy tales”. Although this ambiguity is undoubtedly

the most involved aspect of this poem, it is also worth briefly outlining one of the main tropes in this poem, which is the Madonna/whore dichotomy. The image and contrast of the Madonna/whore complex is one that Løveid returns to again and again within *Spilt*, and it is highlighted very effectively in this poem. The first two sections depict a quiet, uncomplaining, well-behaved girl, coping valiantly with her illness and isolation. There is a sense of innocence here: an innocence that is threatened by the fact that independence has been thrust upon her, but an innocence nevertheless. This innocence is then challenged and subverted in the final section of the poem. Between the second and third sections of the poem, the girl moves from being a child to being a teenager – in other words, there is a loss of innocence in the form of the girl undergoing sexual maturity. This loss of innocence is compounded by the fact that she lets her underskirt “selge flek” [sell flesh/skin] and allows herself to be groped and fondled by her lover. Various parts of her body are described as cola, soft-serve ice cream and crab claws, which all imply a sense of indulgence. This erotic behaviour stands in contrast to the quiet innocence of the previous two sections and therefore serves to establish the Madonna/whore dichotomy as one of the most striking images of the poem.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this dichotomy is present in the title of the poem itself. Although the poem is called “Scootermadonna”, the scooter is only present in one section – that is, the final one. Interestingly, it is this section that exhibits the least Madonna-esque properties; this is a section characterised by eroticism, indulgence and recklessness and not by purity and innocence. This then serves to subvert the traditional image of the Madonna – a theme and image that recurs in many of the poems throughout *Spilt*. Given that Løveid’s work is characterised by both linguistic and genre playfulness as well as by a focus on centring the female and the feminine, this poem therefore serves as a good example of the type of work Løveid is known for – an actively feminine text underpinned by ambiguity, playfulness and subversion.

4.2.7 Cecilie Løveid: “Spilt vin” / “Spilled [Played/Wasted] Wine”

Spilt vin	Spilled [Played/Wasted] Wine
<p>Jeg gikk gjennom utstillingen og likte alle bildene. Hvilket skulle jeg kjøpe? Jeg valgte det som het Spilt vin, og sa det til kunsthandlersken.</p> <p>Jeg hadde sett henne den samme morgenen i regnet. Ved bussen nedenfor studentbyen. Kanskje det var derfor jeg hadde akutt behov for et bilde. Vi visste hun hadde elskeren sin der på en hybel, en legestudent. Og vi beundret henne for hennes frigjorthet. Hun var tross alt gift med en professor i musikk? Nå hadde hun slått ut det lange grå håret. Jeg liker dette, sa jeg til kunsthandlersken. Ja, man velger bilder etter sin tilstand og sin alder, sa hun, kanskje skjebne også?</p> <p>Jeg følte meg avslørt og litt fornærmet. Bli med meg ut på bakrommet, så skal jeg vise deg et som jeg ikke fikk plass til, sa hun. Så ser du hva jeg mener.</p> <p>Vi sto på bakrommet og formet en mosaikk sammen foran et enormt sort bilde. Jeg hadde mer lyst på det. Kanskje fordi det står på bakrommet lent mot en vask. Dette har jeg reservert til meg selv, sa hun. Men jeg kommer aldri til å ta det hjem.</p> <p>Den unge elskeren sto midt på gulvet ute i utstillingen. Jeg liker rytmen her, sa han og grep rundt hennes vide sorte skjørt og svingte. Sortere skjørt har vel aldri vært sett i noe galleri. Denne vil jeg ha, sa han og slo opp operasjonsbordet sitt. Det er jeg som skal gjøre</p>	<p>I walked through the exhibition and liked all the pictures. Which should I buy? I chose the one that was called Spilled [Played/Wasted] Wine, and said that to the art dealer.</p> <p>I had seen her that same morning in the rain. By the bus below the student residences. Maybe that was why I had an acute need for a picture. We knew she had her lover there in a bedsit, a medical student. And we admired her for her liberation. She was after all married to a professor of music? Now she had let down her long grey hair. I like this, I said to the art dealer. Yes, one chooses pictures according to one's state and one's age, she said, perhaps destiny too?</p> <p>I felt exposed and a little insulted. Come with me to the back room, and I'll show you one that I didn't have space for, she said. Then you'll see what I mean.</p> <p>We stood in the back room and formed a mosaic together in front of an enormous black picture. I wanted this one more. Perhaps because it was standing in the back room leaning against a sink. I have reserved this one for myself, she said. But I am never going to take it home.</p> <p>The young lover stood in the middle of the exhibition. I like the rhythm here, he said and grabbed around her wide black skirt and swung. Blacker skirts have surely never been seen in any gallery. She is the one I want, he said and set up his operating table. I am the one who will make</p>

henne frisk.
Frykt, kjærlighet, tristhet, glede, utslått hår er brudehår
og dødssengsfrisyre.
Jeg kjøpte et bilde og gikk hjem og åpnet en flaske.
Og hver gang jeg ser på den Spilte vin tenker jeg på
mitt sorte bilde og hennes reservasjon. Hvor er det
nå?

her well [healthy].
Fear, love, sadness, joy, loose hair is bridal hair
and deathbed hairstyle.
I bought a picture and went home and opened a bottle.
And every time I look at that Spilled [Played/Wasted] Wine I think of
my black picture and her reservation. Where is it
now?

“Spilt vin” is a prose poem that explores the themes of youth, ageing and liberation. In this poem, the speaker – whose gender is not stated – reflects upon a time when they are compelled to visit an art gallery and buy a painting after seeing the art dealer earlier that day. The speaker walks around the exhibition, reflecting on the art dealer and how it is known that she is having an affair with a young medical student. When they finally choose a painting – the titular “Spilt vin” – the art dealer informs them that people are attracted to paintings that reflect themselves before taking them into a back room and showing them an entirely black painting. The speaker is unable to purchase this painting because the art dealer has reserved it for herself. When they return to the gallery, the medical student is there. He dances with the art dealer before setting up his operating table and claiming that he is the one who will make her healthy and well. Later, the speaker of the poem is at home, drinking a bottle of wine after having purchased the painting. They state that every time they look at the painting, all they can think about is the black painting and the art dealer’s reservation. The poem ends with the speaker pondering the current whereabouts of this black painting.

Much like “Scootermadonna”, this is a typical example of Løveid’s genre-bending style. This poem is largely characterised by prosaic elements, namely long lines consisting of full sentences, apparent paragraphs as signified by blocky sections of text, and a strong narrative drive throughout. Just as “Scootermadonna” could be viewed as a sequence of interlinking flash fiction pieces, so too can “Spilt vin” be interpreted as a piece of flash fiction or a micro short story. However, much like “Scootermadonna”, we can identify this as a poem due to the concentration of intrinsic and extrinsic poetic functions throughout the text. As well as being signalled as a poem due to its inclusion in a collection of poetry, “Spilt vin” features intrinsic poetic functions such as allusion, imagery and symbolism. Arguably the most important feature of this poem, however, is the associative potential present in the title of the

poem itself, with these associations and allusions serving to highlight and further the poem's themes of youth, ageing and the subversion of expectation.

As Garton states, Løveid's texts are often rich with allusion and often feature multiple layers of possible meaning (210). "Spilt vin" is a good example of this, with the title itself offering multiple interpretations and allusions. At a first glance, the phrase "spilt vin" appears to be a relatively simple one, with "spilled wine" being the most obvious translation. However, upon further examination, it becomes clear that this is only one of several possible interpretations which can be derived either from the ambiguity of the word "spilt" or by the associations and connotations of the phrase "spilt vin".

Firstly, the word *spilt* – also the title of the collection itself – is somewhat ambiguous. As previously mentioned, within the context of wine, "spilt" can be interpreted as the past tense of the verb *å spille*, "to spill". However, *å spille* is ambiguous as it has multiple meanings in Bokmål. As well as "to spill", this infinitive can also mean "to play", though it is worth noting that these two definitions of *å spille* have different etymological origins, with *å spille* [to spill] coming from Old Norse and *å spille* [to play] coming from Low German. Furthermore, the word *spilt* is also a participle that derives from *å spille* [to spill] and means "wasted". This means that there are a number of possible translations and interpretations of this poem's title. As previously mentioned, it would make contextual sense to translate the title to "Spilled Wine". However, one cannot exclude the options "Played Wine" and "Wasted Wine" as possibilities, particularly given Løveid's penchant for ambiguity and *ordkunst*, or linguistic playfulness (Vold 295). This multiplicity can therefore lend itself to various interpretations, particularly when considering the themes of youth and ageing that are explored throughout this poem. It is worth noting that the art dealer tells the speaker that people are drawn to paintings that reflect their current age, state and destiny. As such, it can be fruitful to explore the various

interpretations of the word “spilt” in light of the fact that the speaker of the poem has chosen to purchase this particular painting.

By interpreting *spilt* as “spilled”, for example, this implies a sense of upheaval. As such, a possible reason for the speaker being attracted to this painting could be that it reflects a possible upheaval or tumultuousness in their life. If we interpret *spilt* as “wasted”, however, then this implication is made more serious: the speaker of the poem could be attracted to an image of wasted refinement due to a belief that they have wasted something good in their life. There is a sense of wistfulness, unfulfillment and regret in this interpretation, which can be corroborated by the longing and wistfulness felt by the speaker in this poem; indeed, the speaker does not judge the art dealer for having an affair with a younger man, but rather admires and envies her for her liberation, which implies that these are traits they lack, but would like to have. Finally, as previously mentioned, it is also possible to translate the title as “Played Wine”. This is probably the least likely translation for this phrase due to the fact that it seems at first to be rather nonsensical. However, it is possible to link this interpretation to the content of the poem, most notably the fact that the verb *å spille* [to play] is the verb used in terms of playing musical instruments, and the art dealer in the poem is married to a professor of music. This therefore links the images of music and wine, which creates a sense of classiness and indulgence, which serves to reflect the figure of the art dealer. While presumably not the intended interpretation of the word *spilt* in this context, it is nevertheless possible to hold this interpretation – alongside those aforementioned – in one’s mind and subsequently acknowledge that the phrase “spilt vin” contains linguistic multitudes that in turn create rich, multi-layered interpretive possibilities.

As well as a semantic multiplicity, there is also an associative multiplicity present in this phrase. The poem itself explores themes of youth, ageing and the subversion of expectations, and these themes are arguably present in Løveid’s choice of title. In her 2002

review of *Spilt*, Borge states that, in “Spilt vin”, Løveid is playing with the expression “Den nye vin” [the new wine] and its subsequent connotations and associations (“På tur i bilder”). The phrase “Den nye vin” originally comes from the title of the 1909 play “Når den ny Vin blomstrer” [When the new wine blossoms] written by canonical Norwegian writer Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson and has subsequently become a fixed phrase in Norwegian, often used to refer to the younger generations, but also to refer to something brand new and popular. An example of this can be found in a 2017 article in *Tidsskrift for Den norske legeförening* [Journal of the Norwegian Medical Association], in which regenerative medicine was described as “den nye vinen i medisin” [the new wine in medicine] (Brean). This allusion is therefore interesting given the poem’s thematic focus on youth and ageing, with the most obvious manifestation of this being the love affair between the art dealer and the medical student. The art dealer is described as having grey hair – a traditional sign of ageing – while students are generally, though not always, young adults. What is most interesting about Løveid’s variation on the phrase, however, is that, as Borge states, she creates a false dichotomy (“På tur i bilder”). In other words, the concept of “spilled wine” does not necessarily have implications of age and experience in the same way that “new wine” contains associations to youth and vitality. Despite this, the concept of “spilt vin” can potentially imply the loss of youth – in other words, the disappearance of “Den nye vin” – which can also serve as a further explanation as to why the speaker is drawn to the painting. It is possible, according to this interpretation, that they feel their youth has been wasted, which can further explain their envy when seeing the youthful liberation of the art dealer. The phrase can also potentially be interpreted as youth being led astray, which can perhaps be a reference to the young medical student being drawn into an affair with a married woman.

In addition to this, it is also worth noting that “Den nye vinen” is the name of an anarchist art collective established in Oslo in 1993, consisting of writers Ari Behn and Bertrand

Besigye, photographer Per Heimly and student Henning Braathen. Described as “something of a rebel group in Norway’s artistic and literary world”, the group presented themselves as “new visionary bohemians” who called for a “much needed cultural renaissance” and who challenged “the Norwegian cultural elite and its middle-class values” (Karlsson 162). Given that this group was operating at the same time *Spilt* was written and published, and given that Løveid operates within both artistic and literary circles, it is undeniable that she would have been aware of this collective. It is therefore possible that the anarchist rebel ideals of the art collective “Den nye vinen” are also being alluded to in this poem. These ideals manifest themselves most clearly in the figure of the art dealer, who exudes a kind of bohemian brazenness and who seems to shun societal expectations in order to pursue a very open love affair with a student. The fact that the speaker of the poem purchases a painting called “Spilt vin” can therefore imply that they are not the brazen young bohemian they wish to be and that they have failed to live the life they desired – a life that is manifested in the figure of the art dealer.

This idea is furthered by one of the most striking images in the poem: the image of the huge, entirely black painting in the back room of the gallery. As the art dealer states, people are drawn to the paintings that depict their state, age, and destiny. The speaker of the poem is immediately drawn to the black painting, though it is worth noting that this is not because of the painting itself: rather, they consider that they probably want it “because it was standing in the back room leaning/against a sink”. There is therefore a sense of inauthenticity here, which is underlined by the reasons for which the speaker arrives in the gallery in the first place: they only want to buy a painting due to the fact that they caught sight of the art dealer, whom they evidently admire, earlier on in the day. This all suggests that the bold life they crave is not authentic but rather a reaction to the lives of those around them. This stands in stark contrast to the art dealer, who has reserved the black painting for herself. Given the art dealer’s reasoning on why people choose certain paintings, we must assume that there is a darkness to

her age, state and destiny. The blackness of the painting can potentially signify death, which would reflect the ageing state of the grey-haired art dealer (and subsequently her decision to keep the painting hidden from sight while she pursues a young lover, and her decision never to take the painting home). The blackness of the painting could also signify dark desire, which is again reflective of the art dealer's affair. Once again, the fact that this painting is hidden in the back room signifies the art dealer's rebellious streak: she is aware of the immorality of her actions but does not wish to be confronted by it while she enjoys herself. The actions of the art dealer are therefore deliberate, whereas the actions of the speaker of the poem are reactive. As such, the idea of "spilt vin" in the context of failing to live up to the ideals posed by the rebel art group is made evident.

By considering all of these interpretations and their contextual corroborations, it is clear that there is both a linguistic and an associative multiplicity – and a consequent playfulness – in the phrase "Spilt vin", and that this multiplicity is indeed what contributes a significant degree of poetic richness to the text, particularly when examined in conjunction with the content and themes of the poem itself. As such, it is evident that association/allusion is one of the most significant functions within this poem, with much "literary detective work" needed in order to unpack and unravel the dense layers of allusions present within the text – a particularly idiosyncratic feature of Løveid's work (Garton 209).

4.3 Reflective Commentary

The literal approach to poetry translation that I have chosen to follow in this chapter is a relatively uncreative one, where “creative” means the production of novel and appropriate solutions (Jones 38). Building on the methods and approaches of Burnshaw and Nabokov as outlined in section one, this approach does not attempt to recreate the source texts as aesthetic units, but rather to convey content and meaning while using an analytical commentary to expand upon the key functions that allow the text to function as a poem in the source language. As such, the extent to which my translation choices can be discussed is naturally limited, given the strict and uncreative limits demanded by this approach.

Despite this, it is still possible to outline some general translation choices made at the outset of this chapter. For instance, the only intrinsic poetic functions that have been recreated in these translations are those that are linked to the content of the poem in question, such as imagery, metaphor and simile. Due to the close linguistic proximity of Norwegian and English, it was possible in most cases to transpose these devices more or less in their entirety without exercising any significant creative intervention. In terms of extrinsic poetic functions, I deemed it necessary to maintain the lineated and stanzaic appearance of the poems on the page in order to allow a side-by-side comparison of the source and target texts.

Furthermore, despite the fact that this approach does not necessarily lend itself well to in-depth exploration of translation choices, there are nevertheless some interesting observations to be made. With this in mind, I will reflect on three main points in this commentary, namely syntax, instances of the target text unintentionally mirroring the intrinsic poetic functions of the source text, and the function of the analytical commentaries. I will examine each of these points in turn, comparing and contrasting these two very different poetic styles in light of the literal approach in question, before summarising my observations and outlining the feasibility of each approach for both styles of poetry.

4.3.1 Syntax

One of the most significant issues that occurred when translating both Vesaas and Løveid's poems was that of syntax, more specifically that of inverted or otherwise non-standard syntax. These instances of non-standard syntax – which could also be termed poetic syntax – often serve a poetic function, such as creating a line that adheres to the metre of the source poem or arriving at an appropriate end rhyme. This non-standard poetic syntax also features in English-language poetry, though as Jones has claimed, this is now considered to be a somewhat old-fashioned poetic device and is not widely used in contemporary poetry (“Rhyme and Reason”). It is therefore worth noting that the poems selected for this thesis reflect the fact that Vesaas uses non-standard poetic syntax in her poems, whereas Løveid does not. This therefore serves to indicate that Vesaas' poetry belongs to an earlier period than that of Løveid.

As far as the syntactical rules of the Norwegian language are concerned, word order is generally similar to English in that it usually follows the following structure:

Subject + Verb [+ Object]

However, an aspect of syntax that differs between Norwegian (and indeed the majority of modern Germanic languages) and English is that, in most cases, the Norwegian finite verb has to appear in the second position in the main clause. This means that when, for example, adverbs or prepositional phrases appear at the beginning of the sentence, the usual word order is inverted in order to keep the verb in the second position:

Adverb/Prepositional Phrase + Verb + Subject [+ Object]

An example of this can be found in Vesaas' "Harpe og dolk". The third line of the third stanza reads "Da bannar eg harpa og hjartet" [Then I will curse my harp and my heart]. This sentence can be deconstructed as follows:

Da (adverb) + bannar (verb) + eg (subject) + harpa og hjartet (direct object)

As is evidenced here, the word order is inverted as a result of the adverb "da" which appears at the beginning of the sentence. As such, this is an example of inverted syntax being a characteristic of the Norwegian language as opposed to a poetic device created by non-standard poetic syntax. We can once again look to "Harpe og dolk" for an example of this, more specifically the first line of the first stanza: "Øyret til harpa mi legg du" [You place your ear against my harp]. This line can be deconstructed as follows:

Øyret [direct object] + til [preposition] + harpa mi [indirect object] + legg [verb] + du
[subject]

However, a syntactically standard rendering of this line would read:

Du [subject] + legg [verb] + øyret [direct object] + til [preposition] + harpa mi [indirect
object]

This is therefore an example of emphatic front-loading, which renders the syntax and inversion of the line somewhat unusual when compared to lines where the inversion exists as a standard characteristic of the Norwegian language, such as the aforementioned "Da bannar eg harpa og hjartet". Consequently, I would argue that this is an example of non-standard, poetic syntax

that exists in order to enhance, in this case, the metrical rhythm of the line – indeed, “Du legg øyret til harpa mi” is much more rhythmically flat than the dactylic “Øyret til harpa mi legg du”. This non-standard poetic syntax also serves to emphasise “Øyret” [the/your ear] and “du” [you], with “harpa mi” [my harp] also standing out somewhat due to the unusual word order.

When it came to the various instances of standard inverted syntax, it seemed clear to me that, given that my approach aimed to communicate the content of the poem in the most efficient manner, these lines should be translated in accordance with target language grammar. In other words, the syntax in these lines is not non-standard in Norwegian, thus it would not make sense to render them as non-standard in English.

Where problems did arise, however, was in tackling the various instances of non-standard, poetic syntax throughout Vesaas’ poems, particularly given that the inversion within these lines is deliberately unusual in order to achieve a poetic effect. However, after some consideration, I decided that it would be most appropriate to translate these lines as standard syntax and not attempt to recreate the unusual syntax in English. This decision was largely rooted in the fact that these instances of non-standard poetic syntax exist in order to serve and elevate poetic elements within the poems, such as rhyme and metre. Since my literal approach is unconcerned with recreating poetic and aesthetic elements, I decided that any attempt to mirror these instances of non-standard poetic syntax would represent an attempt to recreate a poetic element and, as such, would go against my aim of translating these poems solely according to the semantic meaning of the line. Since non-standard poetic syntax is a key element of many of Vesaas’ poems, it could seem wrongheaded to render these lines as syntactically standard. However, it is true that metrical lines and rhyme schemes also play a significant role in the creation of Vesaas’ idiosyncratic style, and these poetic functions are also not replicated in the literal translations. As such, I believe that my decision to translate this non-standard poetic syntax as standard syntax is justified in light of the literal approach I have

chosen to follow, and that it would have been inappropriate to reflect this in the translation while ignoring other elements such as rhyme, sound devices and metre.

In the Løveid poems that I explore in this thesis, there are no instances of non-standard poetic syntax and, as such, this was not a decision I had to make when translating “Scootermadonna” and “Spilt vin”. This is not to say, however, that translating the instances of standard inverted syntax was straightforward. Indeed, in both Vesaas’ and Løveid’s poems, standard inverted syntax posed problems when translating at the level of the line, particularly whenever the lines in question were enjambed. An example of this can be found in “Spilt vin”, more specifically the lines “Jeg liker dette, sa/jeg til kunsthandlersken”, where the speaker of the poem is pointing out their desired painting to the art dealer. I have translated this as “I like this, I said/to the art dealer”, but this is not entirely accurate. This is not to say that this is not an accurate translation, but when dealing at the level of the line, the Norwegian syntax poses issues particularly at the line break – namely, the phrase “sa jeg” [I said]. Norwegian grammatical conventions dictate that this be constructed as verb [sa] followed by subject [jeg], unlike the English where the subject [I] is followed by the verb [said]. This means that a syntactically literal translation of these lines would be “I like this, said/I to the art dealer”. However, this does not represent standard syntax in English but rather non-standard syntax that can be seen as poetic or otherwise elevated. As such, it was necessary to make a choice regarding where to start the enjambement in this line that allowed for a line by line comparison between the source and target texts. After some consideration, I settled on two possible options – “I like this, I/said to the art dealer” and “I like this, I said/to the art dealer”. In the first option, the phrase “I said” is split over two lines in the same way that “sa jeg” is split over two lines in the source text. In the second option, the English line ends with “said” in the same way that the Norwegian line ends with “sa”. Both options make syntactical sense in English, and so I decided to choose the second option in order to reflect the Norwegian end word. However, it

is worth noting that, despite the close linguistic proximity of Norwegian and English, neither option is fully able to provide an equal reflection of the source text line, particularly when compared with other lines in which inverted syntax does not pose issues.

An example of standard syntax – as opposed to non-standard, poetic syntax – posing issues in Vesaas’ poems can be found in the first two lines of the second stanza of “Bråtebrann”. These lines read “No blømer opp i blodraud brann/kvar rot vi reiv av jord”. This is an instance of inverted syntax as a result of the inclusion of an adverb, as outlined previously by the example “Da bannar eg harpa og hjartet”. Without the adverb “no” [now], the Norwegian (without line breaks) would read: “Kvar rot vi reiv av jord, blømer opp i blodraud brann” [Every root we tore from the earth [soil] blossoms in blood-red fire]. However, the inclusion of the adverb at the start of the sentence, coupled with the fact that the verb must be in the second place in the sentence, means that the sentence structure is inverted, with a syntactically literal translation being “Now blossoms in blood-red fire/every root we tore from the earth [soil]”. This presents issues when translating in order to convey meaning at the level of the line and in accordance with standard source-language syntax. In this case, I have changed “blossoms” to “blossoming” – which I consider to be an appropriate change since the Norwegian present tense can correspond to both the English present simple and the English present continuous – and added the word “is” at the beginning of the second line, thus translating these lines as “Now blossoming in blood-red fire/is every root we tore from the earth [soil]”. This, like the earlier example within “Spilt vin”, is less than ideal, and perhaps even less so, considering the fact that these lines feature non-standard English syntax, even with these changes. However, given that I wish to translate at the level of the line in order to facilitate a line-by-line comparison between the source and target texts, this is one instance where the line cannot be rendered as syntactically sound in English without inverting the lines

within the target text and, as such, must be rendered as accurately as possible at the level of the line while lacking in standard target language syntactical conventions.

4.3.2 Unintended Recreation of Intrinsic Poetic Functions

One interesting observation I made when comparing the source and target texts is that there were occasional instances of the target text recreating some of the intrinsic poetic functions of the source text. In some cases, this recreation was unavoidable, given that some intrinsic poetic functions – such as imagery and metaphor – are present in the content of the lines themselves and, as such, could be carried from source to target text without any significant creative intervention on behalf of the translator. This was true in the case of both Vesaas and Løveid. Many of Vesaas' poems contain nature imagery, as can be seen in, for example, “Septemberkveld” and “Bråtebrann” (with the latter also containing battle imagery) and many of the symbols within Løveid's poems, such as the large black painting in “Spilt vin” and the comparisons to cola, soft-serve ice cream and crab claws in “Scootermadonna” are easily recreated in English. While it is true that other intrinsic poetic functions serve to highlight and elevate such imagery, the imagery itself is easily recreated in a literal translation due to the close linguistic proximity of Norwegian and English.

However, there were also some instances of other intrinsic poetic functions being recreated in the literal translation without any deliberate attempt to do so. An example of this can be found in my literal translation of Vesaas' “Harpe og dolk”. In the second stanza of the source text, there is a rhyme in the second and fourth lines, namely “alvorleg/fårleg”. This rhyme is reflected and recreated in my literal translation, with “alvorleg/fårleg” becoming “serious/dangerous” in English. While “serious/dangerous” can be considered to be more of a half-rhyme than “alvorleg/fårleg”, there is nonetheless a resonance here that was not intended when I was carrying out the literal translation. Another example can be found in my translation

of Vesaas' "Septemberkveld", more specifically my translation of the fourth line of the first stanza. This line reads "og bjart brenn myr og mo", with my literal translation being "and marshes and heaths burn brightly". The alliteration of "bjart brenn" is therefore recreated in my translation "burn brightly". In both cases, this mirroring of the source text poetic functions was unintentional.

It would be wrong, however, to suggest that these instances of unintentional recreation constitute a pattern. While it is true that, for example, the recreated alliteration and half rhyme are both found in my literal translations of Vesaas' poems, it is worth remembering that these are only two small instances. Vesaas' poems are densely packed with intrinsic poetic functions, with rhyme and sound devices being some of the most idiosyncratic. When comparing Vesaas' original poems with my literal translations, it is evident that these two instances of unintentional recreation are very much the exception, with most of the rhythm, rhyme and sound devices of the Norwegian originals not being recreated in my literal translations. With this in mind, it is possible to conclude that – at least in these instances – the unintentional recreation of concrete poetic functions is purely coincidental, and that these coincidences can potentially be used as a starting point if going on to translate these poems in a more creative way.

4.3.3 Function of Analytical Commentaries

In accordance with the approach taken by both Burnshaw and Nabokov, a main element of my literal approach is the inclusion of analytical commentaries which serve to highlight and explain the key poetic elements of the source text. In light of this, an interesting observation is that, when comparing the analytical commentaries of Vesaas' poems with the analytical commentaries of Løveid's poems, these commentaries appear to serve very different functions. While it is true that both do serve to outline how the text functions as a poem in the source language, it is also true that the intrinsic poetic functions that characterise each style of poetry

are very different. As such, the commentaries that accompany each style of poetry have a distinctly different focus, which ultimately leads to the respective commentaries performing two very different functions.

In terms of the commentaries that accompany the Vesaas literal translations, these serve largely to outline more obvious – as opposed to more abstract – poetic functions and analyse how they function in terms of the content of the poem in question, thus providing a close-reading analysis of each poem in accordance with what is considered to be their most significant poetic elements. These functions are largely rhythm, rhyme, sound devices and, in the case of “Timane går”, the use of the white space. What is interesting to note here is that these are all poetic functions that could be recreated in a more creative English translation. Where the commentary outlines that, for example, “Septemberkveld” is written in alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter, a more creative approach to poetry translation would perhaps aim to write an English poem written in this type of mixed meter. Where the commentary outlines that “Bråtebrann” has an ABAB rhyme scheme, a more creative approach could attempt to recreate this rhyme scheme in the English translation. In other words, these poetic functions are not unique to Norwegian poetry and, as such, there is a possibility of recreating them in a more creative English translation. The Vesaas commentaries therefore serve to explain exactly how and why the poetic elements of these poems function in the way that they do in the source language, as well as potentially serving as a sort of blueprint for how to approach a more creative translation of the poems in question.

When examining the commentaries that accompany the Løveid literal translations, however, it becomes clear that this is an altogether different kind of commentary. As previously mentioned, Løveid’s poems are not characterised by the same kinds of poetic functions as Vesaas’ poems, but rather rely more on poetic functions such as allusion and association. Furthermore, as Garton states, Løveid’s work is often so densely packed with allusions and

references that they are more often than not known only to Løveid herself, with Løveid being unwilling to provide explanations of her work (210). As such, a significant proportion of the commentaries that accompany the Løveid literals seeks not to explain more immediately obvious poetic functions such as rhyme schemes, but rather to offer an interpretation of the dense allusions and associations contained within the poem in question. This is particularly evident in the commentary to “Spilt vin”, with much of it being dedicated to unpacking all the cultural and linguistic implications contained within this deceptively simple phrase and relating all of these implications back to the content of the poem itself.

Given that these allusions are not particularly obvious, and given that they relate to very specific Norwegian figures and movements, it is therefore unrealistic to assume that a general English reader would understand all the implications of this phrase. Indeed, considering Løveid’s reputation as a “difficult” writer, it is not necessarily a given that even a Norwegian reader would make the connection between the phrase “Spilt vin” and, for example, the artistic rebel group of 1990s Oslo or the Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson play of 1909 (Garton 210). As such, this is not necessarily something that can be recreated in English with the same level of awareness and effectiveness as, say, recreating the rhyme scheme of one of Vesaas’ poems. This is particularly true when considering that, when translating “spilt vin” to “spilled wine”, the cultural echoes and associations of this Norwegian phrase disappear, thus obscuring the allusions and associations even further.

In light of this, the commentaries on Løveid take on a different function to the commentaries on Vesaas. Where the Vesaas commentaries seek to explain more obvious poetic functions such as metrical rhythm and rhyme, the Løveid commentaries seek to outline and explain at length the associative potential of the poem in question and provide the English reader with the tools needed to understand these wider implications. As such, the Løveid commentaries are much closer to the kind of commentary championed by Nabokov. Indeed,

Nabokov demanded of literal translations footnotes and extensive contextual elucidation, and it would be difficult to imagine how a poem such as “Spilt vin”, with all its linguistic and contextual implications, could be rendered in English without some kind of translator’s note. This is arguably not the case in Vesaas’ poems. While Vesaas does use, for example, association, the instances in which this is employed are not intertextually based but rather based in traditional poetic imagery such as, for example, nature, and therefore require less in-depth unpacking than the densely layered intertextual allusions of Løveid.

Interestingly, although Burnshaw and Nabokov differ when it comes to the commentary section of their respective literal approaches, both of them focus their attention on rhyming metrical poetry, or poetry that adheres to otherwise traditional conventions. It is therefore interesting that, in this research, the commentaries that seek to explain the rhyming metrical poetry of Vesaas fall into Burnshaw’s category (namely concise explorations of concrete devices such as metre and rhyme) whereas the commentaries that seek to explain the genre-bending, allusion-dense work of Løveid fall into Nabokov’s category (namely extensive contextual and associative elucidation). It is worth noting that allusion and association is not the absolute preserve of Løveid’s poetry and that Vesaas’ poetry could also be contextualised, but the contextualisation of Løveid’s poems include associations such as dense intertexts that are not necessarily a feature of Vesaas’ poetry, or at least not to the same extent. As such, this could perhaps point to a distinct divide in the use of each type of commentary; namely, poetry with a high concentration of intrinsic and extrinsic poetic functions (such as rhyming metrical poetry) could lend itself well to the commentary style of Burnshaw, whereas poetry that features fewer intrinsic and extrinsic poetic functions, or poetry that uses a significant degree of allusion and association, could lend itself well to the commentary style of Nabokov. Indeed, although Nabokov was working on *Eugene Onegin*, which is a piece of rhyming metrical poetry, it is evident that he was greatly focused on associative power and contextualisation and,

while the Commentary to his translation can be said to be flawed for the reasons outlined in section one of this chapter, it is perhaps not unsurprising that Løveid's work, which both demands and evades contextual elucidation, seems to fit neatly into this approach.

However, one thing that is worth noting is that both Burnshaw and Nabokov employ their respective approaches with a reader with no knowledge of the source language in mind – namely, they seek to provide a reader with no knowledge of the language in question with the means of understanding and experiencing the text as a poem in the source language. With this in mind, the commentaries that form part of the Vesaas and Løveid literal translations aim to fulfil this role by acting as a kind of explanatory tool for those who do not have knowledge of Norwegian, expanding on key poetic functions and explaining how these create and enhance the poetic nature of the text in question.

Where these commentaries differ, however, is when we examine them through the lens of a reader who does have knowledge of Norwegian. In this instance, the Vesaas commentaries serve to highlight some specific technical information, such as the type of poetic feet and meter used, but generally do not provide information that cannot already be gleaned by reading the original. For example, one does not necessarily need to be told that “Timane går” has an ABCB rhyme scheme in order to understand where the rhymes in the poem lie, and one does not need to know that “Bråtebrann” is written in alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter in order to understand that the poem is metrical and has a strong rhythmic drive throughout.

However, this is not necessarily the case with the Løveid commentaries. While there are some elements of Løveid's poems that do not necessarily need explaining to a reader with knowledge of Norwegian – such as, for example, the ambiguity of the word “eventyr” in “Scootermadonna” – it is worth remembering that the dense layers of allusions that are often present in Løveid's work are not necessarily obvious even to a Norwegian reader and that some

“literary detective work” is more often than not required to understand her texts (Garton 209). It is therefore not a given that a reader with knowledge of Norwegian will understand the allusions present in Løveid’s poems and, as such, an analytical commentary is a useful tool in this instance. Indeed, one could argue that, in this case, the commentary transforms into a kind of translator’s note that serves to offer essential contextual information that will allow the reader to fully appreciate the underpinnings of the poem in question, regardless of whether or not they are familiar with the source text. In other words, where the commentaries to Vesaas’ poems can seem extraneous to a reader with knowledge of Norwegian, the commentaries to Løveid’s poems can assist both readers who have knowledge of Norwegian and readers who do not in reaching a fuller understanding and appreciation of Løveid’s work.

4.3.4 General Remarks

Although the literal approach to poetry translation is a relatively uncreative one, this commentary shows that there are still a number of observations that can be made in terms of translation decisions and translation outcomes. Despite limitations on the kinds of translation decisions that could be made, it is evident that syntax posed one of the most significant issues when translating these poems, specifically the non-standard poetic syntax that appears in Vesaas’ poems. Furthermore, although there were instances of the literal translation reflecting certain poetic functions of the source text, such as rhyme, alliteration and assonance, these were concluded to be nothing more than coincidences that could perhaps serve to inform a more creative approach to translating these particular poems.

Arguably the most interesting observation made regarding this literal approach is how the commentaries attached to the respective Vesaas and Løveid literals played a different function depending on the poetic style in question. When accompanying the Vesaas translations, the commentaries sought to outline what I deemed to be the key poetic functions

within these poems, which were largely those of rhythm, rhyme and sound devices; in other words, concrete and obvious devices that can potentially be recreated in a more creative translation. By contrast, Løveid's commentaries sought to unpack the dense allusions and ambiguous meanings that characterise her work – allusions and meanings that are not immediately obvious even to a Norwegian reader. As such, the Vesaas commentaries corresponded more to Burnshaw's style of commentary, whereas the Løveid commentaries corresponded more to Nabokov's style. I also concluded that the Løveid commentaries serve as a kind of contextual translator's note and were therefore potentially useful for both linguistic and non-linguistic readers alike. By contrast, the Vesaas commentaries could prove to be a useful explanatory tool for those with no knowledge of Norwegian, but could seem extraneous to readers with some knowledge of Norwegian.

In terms of feasibility, it is safe to say that the feasibility of the literal approach ultimately depends on the function the translator wishes the translation to serve. As previously mentioned, this is a relatively uncreative approach to poetry translation and, as such, this approach is feasible for both styles of poetry if the aim is to communicate meaning and content without recreating the poems themselves as aesthetic units, such as allowing a reader with no knowledge of the language in question to understand the content of a given poem. The commentaries that accompany each style of poetry can, in this case, prove useful in terms of serving as a useful explanatory tool for those who do not have knowledge of Norwegian, or who do have knowledge but who wish to understand the poems on a deeper, more technical level.

In terms of recreating these poems as poems in their own right, however, the feasibility of the literal approach diverges between the two styles. It is safe to say that the literal approach is not feasible when recreating rhyming metrical poetry, although those who use the literal approach to poetry translation are generally not trying to recreate this in the first place.

However, the close proximity of Norwegian and English means that the literal approach can be feasible – or at least more feasible – for Norwegian free verse or prose poetry compared to rhyming metrical poetry. As previously mentioned, the intrinsic poetic functions contained in Løveid's poetry are largely those that can be carried over to English without any significant creative intervention on behalf of the translator, and the close link between Norwegian and English means that the English literal translations largely mirror the Norwegian originals. It can therefore be said that the literal approach to translation is feasible for Norwegian poetry that does not contain a high concentration of concrete intrinsic poetic functions, is not written in a strict poetic form, and is characterised largely by allusion and association. In these cases, the analytical commentary can serve as a translator's note that explains context and allusion, particularly if these functions are deemed to be too obscure without an accompanying explanation.

Lastly, it is worth noting that some of the translational issues and characteristics outlined within this chapter, such as the different kinds of syntax and close proximity of source and target language, are specific to the language pairing of Norwegian and English. In light of this, it would be interesting to examine how other, less linguistically related language pairings fare when this translation approach is applied to them, making this a potential area for future poetry translation research.

5 The Double-Aim Approach

5.1 Theoretical Outline

5.1.1 Holmes and the Double-Aim Approach

The literal approach outlined in the previous chapter can undoubtedly be described as a somewhat uncreative approach to poetry translation, but there are a number of other approaches that are significantly more creative, where “creative” is defined as producing solutions that are both novel and appropriate (Jones, *Expert Action* 38). One such approach is what I will term the *double-aim* approach, which is championed by, among others, James S. Holmes, who is widely considered to be the founder of Translation Studies as an academic discipline. Holmes has written extensively about what Francis R. Jones terms a “double goal” among poetry translators, namely the idea of “producing a text which is a translation of the original poem and is at the same time a poem in its own right within the target language” (Holmes, “Rebuilding” 50; Jones, *Expert Action* 10). In other words, the double-aim approach aims to reflect enough of the source poem that it can be considered a translation while still reading as an aesthetic, poetic piece of work in the target language.

A key characteristic of the double-aim approach is that it is somewhat less prescriptive than, for example, the literal approach. Proponents of the literal approach, such as Burnshaw and Nabokov, take a somewhat absolutist stance; that is, they position their approach as the only way to achieve an appropriate translation, with little to no deviation permitted. The double-aim approach, on the other hand, allows a degree of flexibility and therefore permits the translator to make creative – that is, novel and appropriate – translation decisions. A key example of this type of flexibility is the question of form in verse

translation: a question that has stoked much debate among poetry translation scholars. As Holmes outlines:

What should the verse of the [translated poem] be? There is, surely, no other problem of translation that has generated so much heat, and so little light, among normative critics. Poetry, says one, should be translated into prose. No, says a second, it should be translated into verse, for in prose its very essence is lost. By all means into verse, and into the form of the original, argues a third. Verse into verse, fair enough, says a fourth, but God save us from Homer in English hexameters. (“Forms of Verse Translation” 25)

While humorously phrased, this debate is still illuminating as it outlines various approaches that one can take when translating a poem. It is worth noting that translating into prose, while arguably “unpoetic” in the sense that it does not recreate a poem, does not necessarily mean that the target text will be less aesthetic; therefore it would be wrong to compare translating into prose with translating according to the relatively uncreative literal approaches outlined in the previous chapter. As such, it is evident that, when translating a poem according to a more creative approach, there is room for more agency on the part of the translator.

When it comes to verse form in particular, Holmes states that there have traditionally been four key forms that the translator can choose to employ when translating a poem, namely mimetic form, analogical form, organic form, and extraneous form (“Forms of Verse Translation” 26–27). To expand on this, mimetic form is the exact recreation of the source text form, whereas analogical form is the translation of a source text form into a form that performs the same function within the poetic tradition of the receiving culture. Organic form is when the translator allows the content of the poem to dictate the form of the translation (in

other words, by translating the content and shaping the form from the result), and extraneous form – also known as deviant form – is a form which “does not derive from the original poem at all”, with the translator employing a form “that is in no way implicit in either the form or the content of the original” (27). It is also worth noting that, in general terms, most poetry translators will employ a mix of forms depending on the demands of poem in question (Jones, *Expert Action* 39). It is therefore evident that the double-aim approach offers the translator a greater degree of choice than is afforded by more rigid approaches, such as the literal approach, and consequently offers the translator more agency as it requires the translator to “make a choice” (Holmes, “The Cross-Temporal Factor” 37). These choices will then inevitably lead to further choices where creative solutions are required; for example, the decision to translate a rhyming, metrical poem mimetically will then require creative solutions to be made in terms of, for example, rhyme finding and word choice in order to fulfil the (self-)imposed constraints of the target text.

Despite the flexibility afforded by the double-aim approach, it has also been noted that there are some potential limitations. In particular, Jones notes that the flexibility of this approach might not necessarily result in freer, more creative solutions. He states that

[k]eeping source-text microstructures in working memory while translating and revising is essential for original matching. But it can hinder poem-making, because it risks priming (that is, cognitively speaking) translators towards choosing direct equivalents for source microstructures, thus blocking more open ended searches that might yield more effective solutions. (*Expert Action* 101)

As well as this, Holmes has noted that choosing any given approach “opens up certain possibilities [and] at the same time closes others” (“Forms of Verse Translation” 27). In other

words, the type of approach chosen may allow, for example, content to be communicated clearly in a double-aim fashion, but prove more challenging in terms of the recreation of rhyming or metrical elements, and vice versa. Interestingly, Holmes has also discussed the double-aim approach in terms of both rhyming, metrical poetry and poetry that contains fewer intrinsic poetic functions, which is particularly pertinent in terms of translating Løveid and Vesaas. Holmes outlines the distinction – and consequent difficulties – between these two styles, stating that

[a] poem that leans very close to prose, with no strict metre, no complex development of imagery, no highly connotative use of language at various levels, may present few problems, and the translator will perhaps feel confident that he [sic] has succeeded in finding satisfactory matchings for every major aspect of the poem. But if the original is a highly complex structure exploiting a wide variety of possibilities in regard to metre, music, imagery, and idiom, together with a richness in ambiguities and tonalities, the translator can hardly avoid concluding that somewhere something has to yield. (“On Matching” 54)

While it would be wrong to claim that Løveid’s poetry features “no complex development of imagery” or “no highly connotative use of language”, it is true that Løveid’s poems – at least, the poems selected for the purposes of this thesis – do lean “very close to prose”, which ultimately presents fewer formal challenges compared to the concentrated rhyming and metrical poetic functions of Vesaas’ poetry.

With all of this in mind, it is evident that there are a few limitations and potentially problematic aspects of the double-aim approach. These limitations are largely related to translators attempting to stay too close to the source text, as well as a high concentration of

poetic functions resulting in constraints that, while largely producing creative solutions, can result in the translator having to abandon one or more aspects of source text reflection. Despite these limitations, however, it is clear that the double-aim approach is a popular approach to poetry translation, with many poetry translators expressing the desire to strike a balance between reflecting the source text and creating an aesthetic target text (Jones, *Expert Action* 10). The double-aim approach is therefore characterised by its emphasis on duality. This is not only evident in the balance-striking between source text and target text, but it is also evident in what Holmes claims to be the function of the translation itself: a balance between literary criticism and creativity.

5.1.2 Translation as Metaliterature

In his essay “Poem and Metapoem: Poetry from Dutch to English”, Holmes outlines the concept of “metaliterature”, which he describes as “writing which makes use of language to communicate something about literature itself” (10). He notes that commentary, literary criticism and explication can be considered obvious examples of metaliterature, but he also makes a case for literary translation to be considered as metaliterature, introducing the terms “metapoem” to refer to a translated poem and “metapoet” to refer to the poetry translator (10–11). In other words, where Burnshaw and Nabokov encourage the use of metaliterature in the form of commentaries – that is, writing that communicates something about a piece of literature in the form of critical, analytical prose – Holmes views translation itself as a form of metaliterature, namely a critical reading of a source text presented creatively in the form of the source text itself. According to Holmes,

[t]he critic interprets by analysis, and can allow himself [sic], if he [sic] wishes, many times the length of the original poem in order to make his [sic] analytic interpretation

as explicit and complete as his [sic] limitations will allow. The metapoem, on the other hand, interprets [...] not by analysis, but by enactment. (11)

This notion of translation as criticism is something that is echoed by a number of other scholars. Holman and Boase-Beier, for instance, have described translation as “a concrete realisation of a critical reading”, while Gaddis Rose has compared translation to criticism by saying that neither a translation nor a piece of criticism would exist without the initial presence of a source text to analyse (Gaddis Rose 12; Holman and Boase-Beier 14). To summarise this, Holmes states that “all translation is an act of critical interpretation, but there are some translations of poetry which differ from all other interpretive forms in that they also have the aim of being acts of poetry” (“Forms of Verse Translation” 24).

With this in mind, it becomes clear that, according to Holmes, the role of the poetry translator is a dual one: one must be both poet and critic. As Holmes states, in order to create a successful metapoem, “one must perform some (but not all) of the functions of a critic, some (but not all) of the functions of a poet, and some functions not normally required of either critic or poet” (“Poem and Metapoem” 11). In other words, the poetry translator must not only strike a balance between source and target text, but also strike a balance between creativity and criticism. This is a unique position, as Holmes states: “[the poetry translator differs] from the critic in what he [sic] does with the results of his [sic] critical analysis and with the poet in where he [sic] derives the material for his [sic] verse,” with the end result being both primary and secondary literature (“Poem and Metapoem” 11; “Forms of Verse Translation” 24). In light of this, the concept of translation as metaliterature is particularly pertinent when considering translation as research in its own right.

5.1.3 Place within the Instrumentalist/Hermeneutic Debate

In terms of placing the double-aim approach within the instrumentalist/hermeneutic debate as outlined by Venuti, it is undeniable that this approach is much more hermeneutic than the literal approach outlined in the previous chapter. Indeed, Holmes states that it would be “worth our while to consider [an approach to verse translation] which steers midway between the unattainable ideal of equivalence and the desperate counsel of impossibility”: an attitude that is both hermeneutic and illustrative of the dual nature of the double-aim approach (“Poem and Metapoem” 10). As I have previously mentioned, the double-aim approach is characterised by creative choices and translator agency, which is something that more rigid, instrumentalist approaches do not afford. Holmes has spoken out against the idea of equivalence in poetry translation, saying that no translation of a poem is ever equivalent to the source poem “in any strict sense” and instead expresses preference for “counterparts” or “matchings” that “[fulfil] functions in the language of the translation and the culture of the reader that [...] are closely akin (though never truly equivalent) to [...] the original” (“On Matching” 53–54). This is furthered by Jones in *Poetry Translation as Expert Action*, in which he states that poetry translation is a complex endeavour and that “[r]ecreating a poem [...] is not point-for-point remapping” (32). This rejection of equivalence in terms of poetry translation parallels Venuti’s rejection of translational invariants – fixed aspects of a text for which equivalence must be sought – in *Contra Instrumentalism* (1).

Indeed, Holmes places the subjectivity of the translator at the forefront of his writings about poetry translation, thus displaying the kind of hermeneutic attitude to translation championed by Venuti. Holmes has asserted that “[n]o translation of a poem is ever ‘the same as’ the poem itself. It can’t be, since everything about it is different: another language, another tradition, another author, another audience” (“On Matching” 53). Holmes then goes on to state that “the translator is constantly faced by choices, choices he [sic] can make only

on the basis of his [sic] individual grasp (knowledge, sensibility, experience...) of the two languages and cultures involved, and with the aid of his [sic] personal tastes and preferences” (54). These attitudes are very much in line with Venuti’s definition of hermeneutic translation approaches as Holmes claims that each metapoem “can never be more than a single interpretation out of the many of the original whose image it darkly mirrors” and that the poetry translator “presents one possible interpretation (out of many) of the original poem, re-emphasizing certain aspects at the cost of others” (“Forms of Verse Translation” 30; “Rebuilding” 50). Because of the limits imposed on such choice-making – for example, one translator may choose not to translate the metrical, rhyming elements of a poem in favour of communicating content, whereas another translator may be freer with content in order to retain metrical, rhyming elements – Holmes has stated that “there will always be need of more than one translation of any poem of importance, since several translations present more facets of the original than any one can do” (“Rebuilding” 51). The question of what distinguishes a poem of importance from a poem of lesser importance is not explained, and I would therefore argue that this attitude can apply to all poems and not just those which have been arbitrarily deemed “important”. Despite this, however, it is possible to interpret this need for several translations not as examples of instrumentalist invariants as outlined by Venuti, but rather as an acknowledgement of the translator’s own subjective interpretation of a text.

It is therefore clear that nuance and translational subjectivity characterise much of Holmes’ scholarly writings on poetry translation. It is worth noting, however, that Holmes, while rejecting notions of equivalence, does not consequently abandon the source poem and its poetic functions in favour of a translational free-for-all, which is something that characterises the poetically viable approach that I will discuss in the next chapter. Rather, Holmes acknowledges that “translation, of poetry at any rate, is sometimes possible,

sometimes impossible; sometimes easy, sometimes difficult; sometimes a failure, sometimes an amazing success” (“Rebuilding” 45). This is in line with the nuance and duality that characterises the double-aim approach, though it is worth noting that the words “failure” and “impossible” here can be seen to correspond to instrumentalist attitudes to translation, as does Holmes’ claim that translation of poetry is largely “a matter of making choices between less-than-perfect possibilities” (“On Matching” 60). However, I would argue against this interpretation and instead refer back to Holmes’ claim that poetry translation is sometimes possible and consequently successful, and other times impossible and consequently a failure. In stating this, Holmes is not making absolutist claims about the impossibility of translating poetry, nor is he claiming that “failure” is an inherent part of translating poetry, which would be more in line with instrumentalist attitudes to poetry translation. Rather, he is offering a nuanced description of the difficulties of translating poetry. In other words, and to use some of Holmes’ own formal examples, a mimetic translation of a rhyming metrical poem might fail in the target language or be characterised by less-than-perfect solutions, while an analogical translation of the same poem might prove to be a great success. With this in mind, I would argue that despite the use of the terms such as “impossible” and “failure”, the double-aim approach can still be considered to be a hermeneutic approach as Holmes does not use these terms in an absolutist sense, but rather to highlight the complex nature of poetry translation.

5.1.4 Outline of Practical Approach

Given that the double-aim approach contains an inherent degree of flexibility, it is important to outline the exact type of double-aim approach I will employ when translating the poems by Løveid and Vesaas. It is worth noting that this approach will differ between the two poetic styles as both styles make different demands of the translator; that is, the type and

concentration of intrinsic poetic functions differs between the poetry of Vesaas and the poetry of Løveid, therefore a one-size-fits-all approach is neither possible nor appropriate in this particular instance.

With Vesaas, I have chosen to employ a mimetic double-aim approach: that is, an approach that aims to recreate the exact metre and rhyme scheme of the source texts. I have several reasons for choosing this approach. Firstly, given that the rhyming and metrical elements of Vesaas' poems are particularly idiosyncratic, I believe it is important to recreate metre and rhyme in the metapoems. The reason for choosing a mimetic approach – as opposed to any other approach that would allow for metrical and rhyming elements to be upheld – is that I am keen to reflect the exact metre and rhyme scheme of the source texts as closely as possible, and the close linguistic proximity of Norwegian and English could potentially result in a mimetic translation being possible. Secondly, Vesaas herself has expressed dissatisfaction over the only approved translations of her poems into English due to the fact that no rhyming or metrical elements have been retained in these translations (Vesaas, «kjøt av mitt kjøt» 92). As such, I am keen to employ an approach that will result in mimetically rhyming, metrical translations in order to produce texts that are not only a close reflection of the metre and rhyme scheme of the source poems, but that are also more in line with what Vesaas herself wanted in translations of her work.

As for Løveid, the hybrid nature of her work and its relative lack of concentrated poetic functions compared to Vesaas' work means that it is not appropriate to use one of the four forms outlined by Holmes when translating these, given that these four forms are solely applicable to poetry in verse. As such, I decided to employ the double-aim approach at its most basic in this instance; in other words, to reflect enough of the source text poems that they can be considered translations, but also to ensure that the translations read as poems in their own right. As outlined earlier, Holmes has noted the distinction in difficulty between

translating rhyming, metrical poetry and poetry that has fewer intrinsic poetic functions. The close linguistic proximity between Norwegian and English therefore means that these double-aim translations might potentially have a lot in common with the literal translations of the same and, as such, this will be an interesting aspect to focus on in terms of translating Løveid's poems specifically.

Lastly, in the reflective commentary section to this chapter, I will use Holmes' term "metapoem" to refer to the poem in translation. I will do this in order to reflect the dual, multilayered nature of the double-aim approach. It is my aim that these translations will read both as a balance between source and target text and as a creative result of a critical reading, and so I will employ Holmes' terminology regarding metaliterature and metapoetry in order to reflect this balance between creativity and criticism. It is worth noting that the reflective commentary section of this chapter also functions as a form of metaliterature, but I believe that this can be considered to be complementary metaliterature as opposed to a piece of analysis required to appreciate the metapoems in question. As such, I do not believe that it is problematic or contradictory to consider both the metapoems and the reflective commentary as metaliterature for the purposes of this chapter.

5.2 Double-Aim Translations

5.2.1 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Bråtebrann” / “Bonfire”

Bråtebrann	Bonfire
<p>Vi går her i den våte kveld og sankar kvist og kvas og ber i hop til bråte-eld og får eit veldig bras.</p>	<p>We walk as one on this wet night and gather branch and brush and set a bonfire burning bright – a hot and crackling rush.</p>
<p>No blømer opp i blodraud brann kvar rot vi reiv av jord, kvar tåg, kvart kjørr vi overvann med striden stod i fjor.</p>	<p>Now flames as red as blood surround each root and thicket torn from last year’s conquered battlegrounds – each weed and scrub and thorn.</p>
<p>To stridsmenn rudde mål på mål i fjor med stål og krutt. To sigerherrar kveikjer bål —i kveld er striden slutt!</p>	<p>Two soldiers fought and overcame the land in last year’s fight. Two victors now ignite the flames – the battle ends tonight!</p>
<p>Kvar overvunnen står i brann, —sjå, vi og bålet rår! —Og rundt oss svartnar rikt det land vi vann, og angar vår.</p>	<p>All we overcame now burns – the fire and we are king, and all the land we won now turns to black and smells of spring.</p>
<p>Det angar ramt og sterkt av vår frå skog og jord og eld, og du – ditt kinn, ditt våte hår – du angar vår i kveld —</p>	<p>The smell of spring is everywhere – in earth and flames so bright, and like the trees, your cheek, your hair – you smell of spring tonight.</p>

5.2.2 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Harpe og dolk” / “Harp and Dagger”

Harpe og dolk

Øyret til harpa mi legg du
og stryk over strengene bjarte
og smiler til klangen du høyrer
—harpa som tolkar mitt hjarte.

Men dreg du ut dolken i beltet,
brått blir du bleik og alvorleg,
spør meg: Kva vil du med dolken?
Han er både kvass og fårleg.

—Dagen kan koma du leiest
mitt hjarte og trøytmar av tolken.
Da bannar eg harpa og hjartet,
men takkar min Gud for dolken!

Takkar fordi han er kvass nok.
Trengst det at meir eg seier?
—Du kan ikkje møte mitt auge,
du bøyer ditt hovud og teier.

Harp and Dagger

You place your ear against my harp
and stroke it and smile and rejoice
at the sound you hear from its shining strings –
the harp that gives my heart voice.

But when you uncover this dagger of mine
your face becomes pale and serious.
What do you want with this dagger? you say –
so sharp it is, look, and so dangerous.

Perhaps one day the love that you feel
for my heart and its speaker will stagger.
And then I will curse my harp and my heart,
but thank my God for my dagger!

Thank Him because it is sharp enough.
Do I need to say anything more?
You cannot look me in the eye –
you say nothing and stare at the floor.

5.2.3 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Septemberkveld” / “September Evening”

Septemberkveld	September Evening
<p>Ein still og sval septemberdag går under i sitt blod. No står i loge ås og li og bjart brenn myr og mo. Og vinden rør i gullskirt lauv og varslar kjøld og snø. Så er alt vår og sommar slutt. No ventar haust og død.</p>	<p>A quiet, cool September day bleeds out its dying light. Now hill and dale both stand ablaze while bog and swamp ignite. And leaves of gold are told of snow upon the wind's cold breath. Then spring and summer give themselves to autumn and to death.</p>
<p>Det susar smått om stille tun der osper står og blør og bjørker over bleikna hå sin visne rikdom strør. Men åkren løfter korn på staur mot dagsens siste eld. Så sloknar himmel, folnar jord, og kveld og mørker fell.</p>	<p>Whispers sweep through silent yards of aspen bare and bled and birches over faded hay their wilted riches spread. But poles of grain are raised by fields towards the day's last light. Then earth and sky are swallowed by the darkness and the night.</p>
<p>Og lysa døyr i alle hus med stjerner stilt blir kveikt, og natta rår om all vår jord, og hjartet slår så veikt som var alt vår og sommar slutt meir vonlaust slutt enn no, som skulle hausten svale snart mitt eige heite blod.</p>	<p>And candles die in every house while silent stars are lit and night rules over all our earth and fragile hearts submit, more hopeless than the end of spring, the end of summer's shine, as though the autumn soon will cool this red-hot blood of mine.</p>

5.2.4 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Skumring” / “Twilight”

Skumring	Twilight
<p>Dagen var så blank, venninne, at eg såg det, sårt og brått: Du er bleik om blomemkinnet, og ditt hår er rettno grått.</p>	<p>So bright shone the sun, my dear friend, that I saw it, clear as day – pale and pallid are your features and your hair has faded grey.</p>
<p>Og med ein gang var vi skilde, og eg visste inga bru over til deg, alt eg ville. —Eg er ung, og aldri du!</p>	<p>And with that our lives were separate and no bridge of which I knew could join us once again. How desperate – I am young and old are you!</p>
<p>—Tvilen kom, kan du forstå meg? Alt eg eig er rart og ungt. —Du vart bleik. Du såg det på meg, og eg trur det kjendest tungt.</p>	<p>Doubt came. Do you see and know me? Strange and young is all I own. You turned pale, as if to show me that within you pain has grown.</p>
<p>Dagen sloknar. Sola kveldar. Gjennom ruta siste skint lyser inn av dagens eldar. Så fell mørkret, blått og dimt.</p>	<p>As the day draws to its close, daylight’s final flames shine through the pane. The sun sets as it rose. Then darkness falls, a hazy blue.</p>
<p>Mørkret når din stol, venninne, sveiper miskunnsame slør over panna di og kinnet. Og du er meg nær som før.</p>	<p>My friend, the darkness reaches you and swaddles you until no more your cheek and forehead come to view. And we are close, just as before.</p>
<p>År som skilde oss er døde og din alder nådig dult.</p>	<p>The years that kept us both apart are dead, your age concealed with grace</p>

Atter kjem eg deg i møte
med eit hjarte ungt og fullt.

Alt eg eig må eg få skifte
med deg, røynt så vel som drøymt,
spørje, sanne, klage, skrifte,
—sjå, for deg er inkje gøymt!

and young and bursting is my heart
as I once more meet you halfway.

All I own I must exchange
with you who lived as well as dreamt –
ask, confirm, confess, complain –
a life uncovered and well spent!

5.2.5 Halldis Moren Vesaas: “Timane går” / “The Hours Pass”

Timane går	The Hours Wear On
<p>Du veit ikkje av at du snart skal døy. Vi skulle fortalt deg det, vi. Det fell oss så tungt. Vi sit ved di seng og teier. Og timane lid.</p>	<p>You do not know it. We should have said it – the fact that you soon will die. Weighed down by the news, we sit by your bed in silence. The hours go by.</p>
<p>Vi kjøpte litt lauv i en blomsterbutikk, d’er ynkeleg pjusket og grått. Du ligg der og ser ifrå det til oss: Å venner, eg har det så godt!</p>	<p>We stopped at a florist and bought a few leaves – so pitiful, straggly and grey. You lie there and look from them to us: <i>My friends, oh what can I say!</i></p>
<p>Du tøyer ei blåbleik og blodlaus hand og tek om buketter og legg han ned mot ditt andlet: Det angar så vår, så rart de, det angar av hegg!</p>	<p>You reach out a pale-blue and bloodless hand, take hold of the bouquet and bury your face in its leaves and exclaim <i>how strange,</i> <i>it smells just like spring, like bird cherry!</i></p>
<p>Eg gler meg til våren. Her er han alt, kjenn! Vi drikk av dei fattige blad litt støvlukt, litt tev frå ein dårleg tobakk. Kjenn, det er våren! — Ja.</p>	<p><i>Can you smell spring? It is already here!</i> We drink in the stench of tobacco and dust from the leaves so meagre and poor. <i>It smells just like spring! – Yes, I know.</i></p>
<p>Det mørknar. Du ligg der og smiler sæl i draum om den kommande vår. Vi skulle ha sagt det! Men kven av oss kan? Vi teier. Og timane går.</p>	<p>You lie there and smile and dream of the spring till sunshine and daylight are gone. We should have said something! But who of us could? In silence, the hours wear on.</p>

5.2.6 Cecilie Løveid: “Scootermadonna” / “Scooter Madonna”

Scootermadonna	Scooter Madonna
<p>I Barn skal ha eventyr og kjærlighet. Derfor var det mange eventyrbilder på poliomyelittavdelingen. En legestudent var innkalt for å hjelpe den lamme lille piken. Han håndpumpet luft direkte inn i svelget hennes. De hadde laget et hull og satt inn en slange. Han pumpet hele tiden mens han leste eventyr. Mor kjøpte en ny pixibok eller en ny dukke hver gang hun kom, men det var ikke så ofte, hun var jo på sjøen. Et sykehus er like vanskelig å akseptere for en dukke som for et barn. Visste du det? Vi vet det har hendt, men vi husker ingenting.</p>	<p>I Children should have fairy tales and love. That’s why there were lots of fairy-tale pictures in the poliomyelitis ward. A student doctor was summoned to help the lame little girl. He pumped air by hand directly into her throat. A tube snaked out of the hole they’d made. He pumped air, all the while reading fairy tales. Her mother bought a new pixie book or a new doll every time she came, but that wasn’t so often, she was at sea, after all. A hospital is just as hard to accept for a doll as it is for a child. Did you know that? We know it has happened, but we remember nothing.</p>
<p>II Hun måtte være alene da hun kom hjem for godt. Moren jobbet på båten fremdeles, de skulle jo leve på sekstitallet også. Nesten alle dagene i uken var barnet stort nok, og det er uenighet om hvor mye nærhet og omsorg et så stort barn trenger. Det er fortsatt stor enighet om at barn skal ha kjærlighet og eventyr, men vi er ikke sikker på hvor mye av hver sort.</p>	<p>II She had to be alone when she came home for good. Her mother still worked on the boat, they did have to get by in the sixties as well. Almost every day of the week the child was old enough, and there is disagreement over how much closeness and compassion a child that old needs. There is still great agreement that children should have love and fairy tales, but we aren’t sure of how much of which kind.</p>
<p>III Ungdommer skal ha kjærestere og eventyr i uendelige mengder. Derfor satte hun seg bakpå scooteren noen operasjoner senere, uten hjelm, og lot underskjørtet</p>	<p>III Young people should have lovers and fairy tales in endless supply. That’s why she sat on the back of the scooter some operations later, no helmet, and let her underskirt</p>

selge flekk. Hun ville heller være pen. Hun haltet ikke på scooter og unge piker vil jo gjerne være pene.

Den unge scooterridderen i lærjakke holdt fast om den tynne piken i skjev strikkejakke og raste oppover veien med henne. Han bet seg fast i nakken og pustet hett og hardt mot hennes grop, han trakk skjørtet lenger opp, han fikk hånden full av villighet. Den var søtere enn cola. Maven hennes var kaldere enn softis. Leppene hennes var mørkere enn krabbeklør.

De kjørte utfor sammen og ble borte. Et telegram ble nok sendt til båten, til moren. Vi vet det har hendt, men vi husker det ikke.

Protesene, skinnene, skruene, gipsen, tengene, krykkene, og navnet hennes.

sell skin. She would rather be pretty. She did not limp on the scooter and of course young ladies would rather be pretty.

The young driver in the leather jacket held tightly around the thin girl in the crooked cardigan and raced up the road with her. He bit her neck and breathed hot and hard against the hollow, he pulled her skirt further up, he got a handful of willingness. It was sweeter than cola. Her stomach was colder than soft serve. Her lips were darker than crab claws.

They drove off the road and were gone. A telegram was probably sent to the boat, to her mother. We know it has happened, but we do not remember it.

The prosthesis, the splints, the screws, the cast, the pliers, the crutches, and her name.

5.2.7 Cecilie Løveid: “Spilt vin” / “Spilled Wine”

Spilt vin

Jeg gikk gjennom utstillingen og likte alle bildene. Hvilket skulle jeg kjøpe? Jeg valgte det som het Spilt vin, og sa det til kunsthandlersken. Jeg hadde sett henne den samme morgenen i regnet. Ved bussen nedenfor studentbyen. Kanskje det var derfor jeg hadde akutt behov for et bilde. Vi visste hun hadde elskeren sin der på en hybel, en legestudent. Og vi beundret henne for hennes frigjorthet. Hun var tross alt gift med en professor i musikk? Nå hadde hun slått ut det lange grå håret. Jeg liker dette, sa jeg til kunsthandlersken. Ja, man velger bilder etter sin tilstand og sin alder, sa hun, kanskje skjebne også? Jeg følte meg avslørt og litt fornærmet. Bli med meg ut på bakrommet, så skal jeg vise deg et som jeg ikke fikk plass til, sa hun. Så ser du hva jeg mener. Vi sto på bakrommet og formet en mosaikk sammen foran et enormt sort bilde. Jeg hadde mer lyst på det. Kanskje fordi det står på bakrommet lent mot en vask. Dette har jeg reservert til meg selv, sa hun. Men jeg kommer aldri til å ta det hjem. Den unge elskeren sto midt på gulvet ute i utstillingen. Jeg liker rytmen her, sa han og grep rundt hennes vide sorte skjørt og svingte. Sortere skjørt har vel aldri vært sett i noe galleri. Denne vil jeg ha, sa han og slo opp operasjonsbordet sitt. Det er jeg som skal gjøre

Spilled Wine

I walked through the exhibition and liked all the pictures. Which should I buy? I chose the one that was called Spilled Wine and mentioned this to the art dealer. I had seen her that same morning in the rain. By the bus down from the student flats. Perhaps that was why I had such an acute desire for a picture. We knew her lover lived there in a bedsit, a medical student. And we envied her for her liberation. She was after all married to a professor of music? Now she had let down her long grey hair. I like this, I said to the art dealer. Yes, we choose pictures in accordance with our condition and our age, she said, perhaps destiny as well? I felt exposed and a little insulted. Come with me to the back room and I'll show you one that I didn't have space for, she said. Then you will see what I mean. We stood in the back room and formed a mosaic together in front of a massive black picture. I felt more drawn to this one. Perhaps since it was in the back room leaning against a sink. This I've reserved for myself, she said. But I'm never going to take it home. The young lover stood in the middle of the exhibition. I like the rhythm here, he said and grabbed around her wide black skirt and swung. Blacker skirts have surely never been seen in any gallery. She is the one I will have, he said and set up his operating table. I am the one who will make

henne frisk.

Frykt, kjærlighet, tristhet, glede, utslått hår er brudehår
og dødssengsfrisyre.

Jeg kjøpte et bilde og gikk hjem og åpnet en flaske.

Og hver gang jeg ser på den Spilte vin tenker jeg på
mitt sorte bilde og hennes reservasjon. Hvor er det
nå?

her well.

Fear, love, sadness, joy, loose hair is bridal hair
and deathbed hairstyle.

I bought a picture and went home and opened a bottle.

And every time I look at that Spilled Wine I think of
my black picture and her reservation. Where is it
now?

5.3 Reflective Commentary

5.3.1 Halldis Moren Vesaas

When applying the double-aim approach to Vesaas' poems, it became clear that there were decisions regarding poetic form that I had to make which were not relevant when translating Løveid's less formal poems. As outlined in the theoretical section of this chapter, Holmes outlined four distinct types of form that one can use when translating poetry: mimetic form; analogical form; organic form; and extraneous form ("Forms of Verse Translation" 26–27). As Holmes also outlines, the question of what type of form to use when translating a poem is a contentious one, with different scholars and poetry translators convinced of the merits of any given form and the shortcomings of all of the others (27). With this in mind, it was essential not just to choose a form into which my Vesaas metapoems would be written, but also to outline the benefits of using this particular form when compared with other options – options that may indeed carry their own, different advantages. As such, and for the reasons outlined in the theoretical outline section of this chapter, I decided to use mimetic form when translating Vesaas' poems, thereby attempting to recreate the exact rhyme scheme and metre/metrical elements that are found within the source poems themselves. In other words, if the source poem features an ABAB rhyme scheme and alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter (as is the case in "Bråtebrann"), then this is the exact metre and rhyme scheme I aimed to recreate when writing my metapoems.

Given the creative nature of recreating rhyming metrical poetry, it is not possible within the constraints of this thesis to offer an in-depth analysis of every creative choice made in every single metapoem. As such, I will offer a general overview of the challenges and approaches that characterised each aspect of the translation before offering a few examples to illustrate the challenge and approaches outlined. These examples have been selected due to their relevance to the subsection in question and their significance within the

context of the double-aim approach. In other words, while there may be countless instances of, for example, lines being rearranged to adhere to rhyming or metrical constraints, I will illustrate this with examples which I believe to be most representative of the type of translation decision in question.

It is worth noting that, due to the different demands posed by translating hybrid genre poetry and rhyming metrical poetry, the subsections I will include in this commentary will differ from the subsections that appear in the double-aim commentary to Løveid's poems. This is due to the different issues and translational solutions demanded by two very different types of poetry. With this in mind, this commentary on Vesaas' poems will consist of seven subsections. Three subsections will outline creative translation solutions in terms of metre, rhyme and content, respectively. Three subsections will outline so-called less-than-perfect translation solutions in terms of metre, rhyme and content, respectively. The final subsection will outline two examples where the translation has failed to comply with the (self-)imposed demands of the mimetic double-aim approach.

5.3.1.1 Creative Solutions: Metre

My decision to follow mimetic form resulted in varying degrees of success depending on the metapoem – and the poetic function – in question. In terms of using creative solutions in order to adhere to the metrical demands of the line in question, two main solutions were employed: inclusion of additional words on one hand, and rearrangement of the stanza lines on the other. It is worth noting that in some instances it was necessary to omit words and ideas in order to achieve metrical harmony. While this can be considered to be a creative decision in its own right, I will outline these instances in more detail when discussing less-than-perfect metrical solutions as this often affected the tone and content of the metapoetic lines when compared with the corresponding source text lines.

An example of including words in order to adhere to the desired metre can be found in the very first line of “Bonfire”. The source poem, “Bråtebrann”, features alternating lines of iambic tetrameter and iambic trimeter as well as an ABAB rhyme scheme, and so this is what I attempted to recreate in my metapoem. The source poem line reads “Vi går her i den våte kveld”, which I have rendered literally as “We walk here on the wet evening”. My metapoetic translation of this line, however, reads “We walk as one on this wet night”. In other words, I have introduced a sense of camaraderie and togetherness through inclusion of the phrase “as one”. If the literal translation of this line is tightened in order to read smoothly in English, the line would be rendered “we walk here on this wet evening”, which remains flat and metrically inappropriate. It was therefore necessary to change this line somewhat in order to make it adhere to the metre I wanted to replicate. The fact that the first word of this poem is “we” led me to seek out possibilities for further enhancing this sense of togetherness. However the most obvious examples – such as “we walk together” – resulted in too many syllables, thus the problem of metre remained unresolved. I considered removing the word “wet” from the metapoem, which would in turn have allowed me to write, for example, “we walk together through the night”, which adheres to the iambic tetrameter. However, I felt that “wet” was an important image to retain as it is a contrast to the bonfire which is the subject of the poem. Eventually, I decided to use the phrase “as one” in order to emphasise this togetherness and meet the syllabic count necessary for the iambic tetrameter of this line, thereby rendering the line “we walk as one on this wet night.”

Another example of inclusion as a creative metrical solution can be found in the fourth line of the second stanza of “Harp and Dagger”, namely the inclusion of the imperative “look”. This imperative is present in the metapoetic line, which reads “so sharp it is, look, and so dangerous”, but is not present in the source poem line, which I have rendered literally as “it is both sharp and dangerous”. The inclusion of this imperative, along with the change

from a literal “it is sharp and dangerous” to “so sharp it is [...] and so dangerous” was done in order to create a more metrically sound line, namely a line of catalectic amphibrachic trimeter, with the final foot of the line consisting of a single macer. It is worth noting that, as I will discuss later in this section, recreating the metre of “Harpe og dolk” in the metapoem proved to be one of the least successful attempts of all the Vesaas metapoems due to the diversity of metre that appears in the metapoem. However, in this particular instance, the metapoetic line is one of amphibrachic trimeter, which is in line with the alternating lines of amphibrachic and dactylic trimeter of the source poem. I would also argue that the inclusion of the imperative is not detrimental to the general tone, since the speaker of these lines is appealing to the speaker of the poem. The inclusion of the imperative in this poem is also interesting as there were several instances throughout these poems where an imperative did appear in the source poem, but was removed in the metapoem for metrical consistency. This type of omission is something I will address when discussing less-than-perfect metrical solutions.

Furthermore, another key example of inclusion for metrical compliance can be found in the final line of “September Evening”. The final line of the source poem reads “mitt eige heite blod”, which, in my literal translation, reads “my own hot blood”. One of the first things I did when examining this line was rearrange it so that it read “this hot blood of mine” as I believed that “mine” would provide better opportunities for finding a corresponding rhyming word while also maintaining the emphasis present in “eige” [own]. It then became apparent that this line was one syllable short of the iambic trimeter needed to fulfil the metrical demands of this particular line. As such, it was necessary to add one additional syllable in order to make the line adhere to the metre. I decided to insert the word “red” in front of the word “blood” so that the line would read “this red-hot blood of mine” as I believed that this would function on a number of levels. Firstly, it emphasises the hotness of the speaker’s

blood, which serves as a contrast to the coldness and darkness of the autumn and winter that will soon descend. Secondly, this functions in the metapoem as a callback to the start of the poem, namely “bleeds out its dying light”, as well as the image of the “aspen bare and bled” of the second stanza. This therefore serves to recall the imagery of the sunset, the end of summer and the trees shedding their leaves in a way that implies a sense of life and vibrancy: while the aspen are bare and the darkness has descended, the speaker of the poem is still very much alive. This image therefore ties many of the images of this poem together while resulting in a somewhat optimistic ending: the autumn is threatening to cool her blood, but for the time being, it is still red and hot and flowing. This creative metrical solution therefore initially served as a way to adhere to the line’s metre, but resulted in the metapoem coming full circle and tying many of the metapoetic images together.

In terms of rearranging stanza lines and/or altering the content in order to fulfil metrical demands, a key example can be found in the first two lines of “The Hours Wear On”. The Norwegian lines read “Du veit ikkje av at du snart skal døy”, which I have rendered literally as “You do not know that you soon will die”. However, this line in the metapoem reads “You do not know it. We should have said it”, with “we should have said it” being a translation of the second line in the source poem “Vi skulle fortalt deg det, vi” [literal: We should have told you it, we]. The source poem features alternating lines of catalectic amphibrachic tetrameter and catalectic amphibrachic trimeter, with a few instances of metrical substitution throughout. With this in mind, it was indeed possible to render the first line of the metapoem in such a way that it reflected the metre of the source text line, such as, for example, “you are not aware that you soon will die”. What posed problems in this section, however, was the need to reconcile the content not only with the metre, but also with the ABCB rhyme scheme. When examining the end rhymes of the source poem, namely “vi” [we] and “lid” [pass] and subsequently exploring suitable potential end rhymes for the

metapoem, I realised that “die” – the end word of the first line – could prove to be an appropriate rhyme for “go by”, which is a synonym for “pass” in a temporal sense. With this in mind, I decided that it would be necessary to swap the two first lines in the metapoem in order to achieve this rhyme. It is worth noting, however, that my metapoetic lines do not in fact adhere to the metre of the source poem, which can potentially be considered as a less-than-perfect solution in terms of translating mimetically. However, it is also possible to see this as an example of a creative metrical solution as there is still very much a strong metrical element within these lines, and the source poem itself does feature a significant degree of metrical diversity throughout, therefore the metapoetic lines, while featuring a slightly different metre, are still in keeping with the metre and drive that is evident in the source poem.

One final example of an instance in which creative changes to the content or line order were made in to adhere to metrical constraints can be found in “September Evening”, namely the way in which I have translated the phrases “ås og li” and “myr og mo” in the third and fourth lines of the first stanza. While these phrases can be literally rendered as “hills and mountainsides” and “marshes and heaths” respectively, and are indeed how I translated these phrases in my literal translation of the same, the metapoem changes “hills and mountainsides” to “hill and dale” and “marshes and heaths” to “bog and swamp”. I chose these phrases for the metapoem based on a number of factors. Firstly, I deemed it important to use monosyllabic words as this would not only allow me to reflect the monosyllabic nature of the source poem, but it would also allow me more flexibility when adhering to the metre. It should be noted that “hill and dale” is slightly different to “hills and mountainsides” – namely, “hill and dale” implies an incline and a decline, whereas “hills and mountainsides” imply only an incline. My reasoning for using the set phrase “hill and dale” here was to reflect the use of the set phrase “myr og mo” in the source poem. Although “hill and dale”

does not correspond to “myr og mo”, since “myr og mo” means “marshes and heaths”, “myr og mo” can be considered to be a set phrase in Norwegian. I was unable to think of a set phrase in English to describe this exact element of nature, and so I decided to substitute this by using “hill and dale” in the previous line. By using “hill and dale”, I was therefore able to introduce a set phrase to these lines, as well as conveying the image of the hills and mountains. As far as translating “myr og mo” itself is concerned, I decided once again to use monosyllabic words in order to maintain the metre of the line as well as reflect the line that came before, and so I decided on “bog and swamp”. Not only are these monosyllabic words, but they also introduce an element of sound patterning in the form of assonance, which thereby functions as a substitution of the alliteration present in the Norwegian “myr og mo”.

5.3.1.2 *Creative Solutions: Rhyme*

In a similar manner to the recreation of metre, the recreation of rhyme in these poems often required a significant degree of creativity in order to adhere to the rhyme scheme. The fact that all of the Vesaas poems that I selected feature end rhymes consequently meant that a significant proportion of translation time was focused on rhyme-searching and finding creative solutions to rhyming difficulties. My general approach to finding rhymes and recreating the rhyme scheme in these poems was to examine the end rhymes of the source poem in order to discover if they rhymed or had any sonic patterning in English. This proved to be enough in a few isolated instances, such as the feminine end rhymes “alvorleg” and “fårleg” in the second and fourth lines of the second stanza of “Harpe og dolk”. When examining these words in what I considered to be their most straightforward English translation, I found that end rhymes for the metapoem presented themselves without issue; namely, the “alvorleg/fårleg” of the source poem became “serious/dangerous” in the metapoem.

However, this type of straightforward solution was not the case for the majority of the end rhymes in these poems, and so creative solutions had to be sought. As such, if the end rhymes in Norwegian did not present any obvious rhyming solutions for the metapoem, I would then examine synonyms and any other related words or concepts, both in terms of the end rhyme and in terms of the content of the line as a whole. This often led to appropriate end rhymes being discovered, which then led me to work backwards from the end rhymes in order to reconcile the metre and content of the lines with the rhyme scheme. This, when successful, would therefore allow me to create a piece of rhyming metrical poetry that could be considered an appropriately mimetic double-aim translation.

An example of such a creative rhyming solution can be found in the first line of the third stanza of “Twilight”, more specifically my translation of the word “forstå” [understand]. In the metapoetic line, I have translated “forstå” as “see and know”, thus rendering the line “Doubt came. Do you see and know me?”. At a first glance, the decision to use “see and know” and not the more straightforward “understand” may seem unnecessary – after all, “understand” would also function metrically in this line, were it to be rendered “Doubt came. Do you understand me?”. However, my decision to use “see and know” instead of “understand” was rooted in the constraints of the ABAB rhyme scheme as the phrase “see and know me” serves as an appropriate corresponding rhyme to the phrase “as if to show me” in the third line of this stanza. Not only do the feminine rhymes of the metapoem reflect the feminine rhymes of the source poem, but the metapoetic end words also reflect the end words in the source poem: namely, “meg” [me] is repeated in the first and third lines of the source poem, and this is reflected through the repetition of “me” at the end of the first and third lines of the metapoem. With all of this in mind, I believe that this functions as a key example of a creative rhyming solution.

“Twilight” contains another significant example of a creative rhyming solution, namely the third line of the second stanza. In this stanza, the speaker of the poem laments the fact that age has created a distance between them and their friend and claims that “alt eg ville” [all I wanted] is to make a connection with their friend again. I have changed this in the metapoem to the phrase “how desperate” – a phrase that is markedly different to “alt eg ville”. After having examined the first end rhyme in the stanza, namely “skille” [separated], my aim was to find either a word that rhymed with “separated” or an alternative for “separated” that would convey the same message as the source poem line. One of the first options I thought of was to use the word “separate” instead of “separated” which, when exploring potential rhymes for “separate”, led me to the word “desperate”. I decided that these two words would function as appropriate half rhymes for this stanza, both in terms of the metapoem and in terms of reflecting the source poem. Not only does this decision allow for appropriate half rhymes in the metapoem, but it also conveys the tone and sense of despair felt by the speaker of the poem as they reflect upon their relationship with their ageing friend. In other words, although the speaker of the source poem does not outright state that they feel desperate, this is the general tone conveyed throughout the first few stanzas of this poem, which I therefore believe renders this set of end rhymes as an appropriate and creative rhyming solution.

Another significant example of a creative rhyming solution – and indeed, a creative content solution – can be found in the first stanza of “September Evening”, namely my translation of the line “går under i sitt blod”. My literal translation of this line reads “goes under in its blood”, with the phrase “går under” implying at its least extreme a sense of something ending and at its most extreme a sense of destruction. My starting point for translating this line was the content, particularly the image of blood. This image struck me as significant for a number of reasons. Firstly, it serves to further emphasise the idea of

something coming to an end. Secondly, the colour of blood can be said to reflect the colours of a sunset, which makes sense in this context as these lines are about the end of the day.

Thirdly, the colour of blood can also be said to reflect the colours of autumn leaves, which is also appropriate given the fact that this poem is about the move from spring and summer into autumn and winter. As such, I was keen to retain the image of blood in these lines.

My initial instinct was to keep blood at the end of the line and try to find a rhyme that could be used in the fourth line of this stanza in keeping with the rhyme scheme. However, this soon revealed itself to be somewhat challenging, as it was difficult to find a word that rhymed with “blood” and that was also appropriate for the content of the poem. After some difficulties, I decided to test out transforming the noun “blood” into the verb “bleeds” and placing it at the start of the line. Not only did this allow me to retain the idea of blood, but it also allowed me freedom in terms of end rhymes. After deciding to use the verb “bleeds”, I re-examined the original line as well as the fourth line, namely the line which would have a corresponding end rhyme with the line in question. I examined both the line in the original poem and the line in my literal translation, the latter of which ended with the phrase “burn brightly”. This led me to explore synonyms relating to this phrase, which ultimately resulted in the word “ignite”. This seemed like an ideal word as it was immediately clear that this would rhyme well with light. The line I eventually settled on then allowed me to convey both the sense of blood and destruction (in the phrase “bleeds out”) and the idea of the sunset and the end of the summer months (in the phrase “dying light”). “Dying light” also allowed me to further incorporate the idea of death into these lines as this can be linked to, for example, the light at the end of the tunnel, or the light going out in someone’s eyes. As such, I would say that this is a significant example of a creative solution that serves to reconcile the content of the poem with the rhyming and metrical elements of the imposed mimetic constraints.

Another example of creative intervention in this poem can be found in the final line of the fourth and final stanza of “Harp and Dagger”. The source poem line reads “du bøyer ditt hovud og teier”, which I have rendered literally as “you bow your head and keep silent”. My metapoetic line differs somewhat, reading “you say nothing and stare at the floor”. This was largely a result of trying to find an appropriate end rhyme for the “more” of the second line. The second metapoetic line “Do I need to say anything more” is a fairly close translation of the Norwegian “Trenst det at meir eg seier?” Although the Norwegian line ends with “seier” [say] and not “meir” [more], I decided that “more” would be an appropriate end rhyme to attempt, given that it can offer a wide range of possible corresponding end rhymes. When examining the final line in light of this, one of the first possibilities that became clear to me was to transform “bow your head” into “stare at the floor” in the metapoem. Not only would this convey a largely similar image to that which is conveyed in the source poem, but it also allowed me to use “floor” as the end rhyme, which would therefore correspond to the “more” of the second line. As such, I would argue that this can be considered to be an appropriate instance of creative intervention.

One final example of a creative rhyming solution can be found in “The Hours Wear On”, more specifically my translation of the line “Å venner, eg har det så godt!”, which can be literally rendered as “Oh friends, I have it so good!”. My decision to trial “grey” as the rhyme word for this stanza – in order to reflect the Norwegian “grått” of the second line – therefore led me to consider different ways in which one could express a sense of overwhelming joy and contentment. I deemed it important to keep the “Å” [oh] in the metapoetic line as this very much conveys the sense of breathless joy the sick friend is feeling. With this and the “grey” end rhyme in mind, I settled on the phrase “My friends, oh what can I say!” This is somewhat different to the “I have it so good” of the Norwegian line as “what can I say?” is much more ambiguous as it does not necessarily denote joy or

positivity, whereas “I have it so good!” is unmistakably joyful. However, there were some decisions I made when choosing this line that I hoped would convey this sense of joy despite the English phrase being less obviously joyful than the Norwegian. As previously mentioned, I decided to keep the “oh” in the metapoetic line, and the fact that this comes after the phrase “my friends” means that this hopefully conveys a sense of joy and positivity. Furthermore, despite this metapoetic line ending on a question, I decided to end this line with an exclamation mark instead of a question mark. By doing this, I aimed to lift the line somewhat and bring it more in line with the joy and optimism conveyed in the Norwegian line, while allowing this line to conform to the imposed rhyme scheme of this poem.

5.3.1.3 *Creative Solutions: Content*

Another aspect of the Vesaas metapoems is that, when translating, it was often necessary to come up with creative solutions regarding the content of a line or stanza. This was often the result of attempts to reconcile content with metre and rhyme. The main types of creative content solutions involved the introduction and extension of personification in the metapoem, as well as the use of synonyms or otherwise related words.

The introduction of personification in “September Evening” is undoubtedly one of the most significant examples of creative content throughout all of the Vesaas metapoems. This personification occurred as a result of attempts to reconcile metre, rhyme and content in this poem, and is indeed not something that is present to the same extent in the source poem. An example of this can be found in the very first stanza of this poem, namely my translation of the lines “Og vinden ror i gullskirt lauv/og varslar kjøld og snø”. My literal translation of these lines read “and the wind rows through pure gold leaves/and warns of cold and snow”. However, the metapoetic line is rendered in such a way that personification comes to fore, reading “and leaves of gold are told of snow/upon the wind’s cold breath”. One of the first

things I did when trying to solve these lines was think of potential words that would function as an end rhyme. By doing this, I examined the last line of the stanza, namely the line that would contain the corresponding rhyme, and worked backwards. In the source text, the final word of this stanza is “død”, which means “dead” or, in this case, “death”. When contemplating using “death” as an end rhyme, one of the first rhymes I thought of was “breath”, which I thought might potentially work due to the fact that the lines for which I was seeking an end rhyme described the wind blowing through the trees. With this in mind, I settled on “and leaves of gold are told of snow/upon the wind’s cold breath”. Here, I translated the phrase “gullskirt lauv” [pure gold leaves] to “leaves of gold”. which I believe functions well sonically within the rest of the metapoetic line – namely, “gold” rhymes with “told” and also with “cold” which appears in the following line. The personification of the wind therefore allowed me to convey the content of the source poem line while creating lines that functioned in a poetic sense, both in terms of imagery and sonic patterning. There is already a degree of personification in the source poem through the use of the word “varslar” [warns], so I have not introduced an element that is not present in the source poem; rather, I have leaned into this personification and enhanced it in the metapoem, which I believe has allowed me to convey the content of the source poem lines while simultaneously creating lines of a metapoetic quality.

The final lines of the metapoem also continue this personification, though this is something that is not present in the final lines of the source poem. My literal translation of these lines reads “So [then] spring and summer are already over/now autumn and death await”, whereas my metapoetic lines read “then spring and summer give themselves/to autumn and to death”. As previously mentioned, I decided that “death” would function as an effective end rhyme here as it would allow me to use the word “breath” to describe the wind. The main issue I faced when translating these lines was the word “alt”, namely “already”.

This presented metrical issues, namely proving to be at odds with the iambs that constituted the iambic tetrameter/trimeter of this poem. It was therefore difficult to incorporate the word “already” into these lines without the metre sounding clumsy or without including too many syllables. In the end, I decided to drop the word “already” from the metapoem and instead extend the personification of the previous lines. This can arguably be characterised as a less-than-perfect solution as the immediacy that is present in the word “already” disappears, thus not conveying the fact that spring and summer were perceived as having passed very quickly. However, the omission of “already” does not necessarily impede general understanding of the lines or stanza in question and can therefore be considered to be somewhat imperfect, but still metapoetically effective.

An example of creative content solutions linked to the use of synonyms can be found in the second line of the fourth stanza of “Bonfire”. The Norwegian line reads “sjå, vi og bålet rår”, which I have rendered literally as “look, we and the bonfire reign”. However, my metapoem employs slightly different phrasing in this line, reading as “the fire and we are king”. This solution was born out of a need to find an end rhyme. When examining the final line of this stanza, I decided that “spring” was a good starting point for the end rhymes of these lines as it would provide a number of rhyming opportunities. I did consider keeping “reign” as the end word of the second stanza as it does create a half rhyme with spring, but I decided that this would be inappropriate and should only be used as a last resort, given that all of the rhymes in the source poem are full rhymes and that I had decided to recreate this as much as possible. When examining synonyms and other words related to “reign”, I settled on “king”, which I thought could function in terms of substituting the verb for a noun. The line thus became “The fire and we are king”, which both adhered to the iambic tetrameter and also provided a full rhyme with “spring” in the fourth line. An issue with this, and therefore something that can potentially be considered less-than-perfect, is undoubtedly the gendered

nature of the word “king”, given that the gender of the two figures in this poem is not explicitly stated, and while Vesaas is known for writing from the perspective of a female voice, it cannot be said with any certainty that the figures in this poem are female. The ambiguity of this can therefore potentially result in “king” being considered to be a less-than-perfect solution, though I would argue that it is this very ambiguity that can allow “king” to function. In other words, even though the figures in this poem are not explicitly marked out as male, they are not explicitly marked out as female either. As such, I believe that “king” can be considered to be an example of a creative translational solution and that it functions well as a translation of “rår” in this instance.

A further example of a creative content solution linked to synonym and association can be found in the final line of the first stanza of “Harp and Dagger”, namely the way in which I have translated the present tense verb “tolker”. The word “tolker” can be translated as “interpret” in English, but it proved difficult to incorporate the word “interpret” into the metapoem in a way that both adhered to the imposed rhyming and metrical constraints and did not seem awkward or inelegant. After considering different ways in which the word “interpret” could be conveyed, namely after exploring synonyms and related words, I settled on the phrase “give voice”. As such, my metapoetic line reads as “the harp that gives my heart voice”. Not only did this allow the content of this line to be conveyed, but it also adhered to the metre as well as resulting in an end word that I believed would provide a number of options for the end rhyme of the second line. As previously mentioned, I used the word “rejoice” instead of “smile” as an end rhyme for the second line, which was largely settled on due to the decision to use “give my heart voice” as the final phrase of the fourth line. “Rejoice” does convey a more ecstatic and exhilarated tone than that of the Norwegian present tense verb “smiler”, but the idea of happiness and contentment is still present, which I believe makes it an appropriate solution.

It is also worth noting that the idea of “tolke” comes back in the third stanza of this poem, where the speaker of the poem states that “Dagen kan koma du leiest/mitt hjarte og trøytnar av tolken”, which I have rendered literally as “The day can [may] come where you grow bored of/ my heart and grow tired of its interpreter”. In this instance, I have chosen to translate “tolken” as “speaker”, thus rendering my metapoetic lines as “Perhaps one day the love that you feel/for my heart and its speaker will stagger”. This is grounded largely in the metrical and rhyming constraints as previously outlined, but also functions as a link to the “give voice” of the first stanza.

A final example of a creative content solution can be found in the first stanza of “Twilight”, namely the line “Du er bleik om blomekinnet”, which I have rendered literally as “Your rosy cheeks are pale”. In other words, this image is used to convey how the rosy cheeks of the speaker’s friend have now turned pale. My metapoetic line unfortunately did not manage to maintain the floral imagery present in the source poem and instead focused largely on the paleness of the friend’s skin: “pale and pallid are your features”. Despite the fact that the floral imagery does not appear in the metapoem, which can arguably render this a less-than-perfect solution, I still believe that this functions metapoetically. Not only does it fulfil the metrical demands of the line, but I have also managed to recreate the alliteration in this line. Where the source poem features alliteration between “bleik” and “blomekinnet”, my metapoem features alliteration between “pale” and “pallid”, which therefore serves to reflect this sonic patterning. This, as well as the various other instances of sonic patterning recreation throughout the Vesaas metapoems, can therefore be considered to be an example of creatively recreating source poem content in the metapoem.

5.3.1.4 *Less-Than-Perfect Solutions: Metre*

As I have detailed in the theoretical outline section of this chapter, Holmes, while championing a hermeneutic approach to poetry translation, states that translating poetry is “a matter of making choices between less-than-perfect possibilities” (“On Matching” 60). This is arguably even more pertinent when translating rhyming metrical poetry, whose metrical and rhyming constraints can sometimes create binds that cause a significant degree of translational difficulty. This is particularly the case when translating according to the form I have chosen, namely mimetic form; in other words, it is perfectly possible to translate a poem metrically without great difficulty if one uses a freer, mixed approach and is not bound to a very specific metre, which is something I decided against in favour of a mimetic approach for the reasons outlined in the theoretical outline section of this chapter. As Holman and Boase-Beier state, the presence of constraints can often result in creative solutions, and I believe this has proven to be the case with a number of creative rhyming and metrical solutions that I have employed while translating Vesaas’ poems (6). At the same time, the adherence to strict mimetic form did in some instances pose problems, resulting in a metre that was not the metre of the source poem, a metre that proved somewhat clunky, or a metre that did adhere to the imposed metrical constraints, but did so at the expense of other aspects of the poem.

An example of a less-than-perfect metrical solution can be found in the fourth stanza of “The Hours Wear On”, namely the second and fourth lines. This is an example of the metre of the poem being affected by attempts to find an appropriate end rhyme. Where the Norwegian rhyme is “blad/ja”, my metapoetic line reads “tobacco/yes I know”. In order to fulfil the metrical demands of the metapoem, I rearranged the second and third lines of this stanza. My literal translation of the source poem lines reads “We drink of the poor leaves/some dust smell, some stink from a bad tobacco”, whereas my metapoetic lines read “We drink in the stench of tobacco/and dust from the leaves so meagre and poor”. It is worth noting that there is also an example of a creative metrical solution in these lines, namely the

fact that I have extended the description of the pitiful leaves to include “meagre” in order to fulfil the metrical demands of the line. Where flaws become apparent, however, is in my choice of rhyme for “tobacco”. My decision to use “yes, I know” was largely due to the fact that the speaker in question is gently agreeing with, and indeed humouring, the sick friend about how the bouquet smells of spring, despite the bouquet itself being cheap and foul-smelling. “Yes, I know” does indeed contain three syllables and does function as a loose rhyme for tobacco, but it is worth noting that “yes I know” is not an amphibrach, catalectic or otherwise, but rather an anapest. This therefore results in the rhyme sounding slightly inelegant due to the fact that the preceding metre builds an expectation which forces the reader to read “yes I know” as an amphibrach. This is undoubtedly imperfect, and although the metre is disrupted in the corresponding source poem line, it does not result in a similarly inelegant line. As such, this is arguably the most imperfect metrical solution within this poem.

In terms of instances where the metre adheres to the imposed constraints of the metapoem, but does so at the expense of other aspects of the poem, an example can be found in “Bonfire” with the removal of the imperative ‘sjå’ in the metapoem. In the source poem, the second line of the fourth stanza reads “sjå, vi og bålet rår!”, which I have translated literally as “look, we and the bonfire reign!”. However, my metapoetic line does not include this imperative, instead reading “the fire and we are king”. I would argue that this is still passable as this metapoetic line still functions as a grand statement to the reader, thus the removal of the imperative does not impact the content of the line being conveyed in English. However, it cannot be denied that the imperative is a key aspect of this line and thus its removal can be said to be an example of a less-than-perfect solution, even though the metrical elements of the line can be considered to be sound.

Another striking example of significant source poem elements being transformed in order to aid the poem's metre can be found in "Harp and Dagger", namely the disappearance in the metapoem of the poetic front-loading present in the source poem. As I outlined in the literal commentary to this poem in the previous chapter, Vesaas often employs poetic front-loading, namely non-standard poetic syntax, in order to arrive at an end rhyme or perform a metrical function. One of the most obvious examples of this is the first line of the first stanza, "Øyret til harpa mi legg du", which can be rendered in English as the syntactically literal "The ear to my harp place you". The Norwegian line creates catalectic dactylic trimeter and thus results in more rhythmically dynamic line than the more rhythmically flat but syntactically standard "du legg øyret til harpa mi". This instance of poetic front-loading disappears in my metapoem, with my metapoetic line being a line of iambic tetrameter: "You placed your ear against my harp". This disappearance of poetic front-loading is also present in the second line of this stanza, where the inverted "strengene bjarte" [the strings shining] is reverted to the syntactically standard "shining strings" in the metapoem.

The decision to remove these instances of poetic front-loading can be justified, but I do not believe that these justifications mean that these decisions cannot be considered to be less-than-perfect solutions. My decision to remove the poetic front-loading is largely based in the desire to create a metrical line that did not sound awkward or clumsy: a decision that is somewhat ironic, given that the poetic front-loading exists in the original in order to render the line more metrically dynamic. The fact that iambic metre tends to reflect the stress and cadences of English – in a similar way to how alexandrines reflect the stress and cadences of French – means that rendering the first line as syntactically standard actually created a more rhythmically elegant line than if I were to invert the syntax in order to reflect the poetic front-loading of the source poem. It is worth noting that inverting the syntax of this line in English could result in a line that featured a different metre and was therefore closer to the source

poem line, such as “Your ear to my harp you placed”, which becomes a line of mixed poetic feet featuring an amphibrach followed by two iambs. This, however, is less elegant than the catalectic dactylic trimeter of “Øyret til harpa mi legg du”, and is indeed less elegant than other instances of poetic front-loading in some of the other Vesaas metapoems, such as the lines “and birches over faded hay/their wilted riches spread” in “September Evening”.

Similarly, I removed the inversion of “strengene bjarte” because, in the source poem, these words are inverted in order to move “bjarte” [shining] to the end of the line and create an end rhyme with “hjarte” [heart] in the fourth line. This proved not to be as pertinent an issue in the metapoem as I decided to move the image of “shining strings” to the end of the third line, thus removing the need for this image to conform to the imposed rhyme scheme. Rather, I took the “smiler” [smile] that appears in the third line of the source poem and rendered it in the metapoem as “rejoice”, using this as an end rhyme of the second line. This was in order to create a rhyme for the “voice”, which I had settled on as an appropriate end rhyme for the fourth line of this stanza. As such, it was not necessary to invert the image of shining strings in order to achieve a rhyme in the metapoem. However, much like the decision not to invert the syntax of the first line, this is arguably an imperfect solution due to the fact that inverted syntax is very much a part of Vesaas’ poetic style. However, I did not want to invert the syntax here as I did not want to disrupt the metrical element of the line in a way that read as clunky or awkward. With all of this in mind, I decided that, in a purely rhythmical sense, it would make sense to remove the non-standard poetic syntax for the metapoem and render these lines/phrases as syntactically standard. This is, however, not a perfect solution since non-standard poetic syntax is a striking characteristic of Vesaas’ work. As such, it is possible to try and recreate this syntax in future versions of this poem, even though the standard syntax does fulfil the metrical demands of the line.

Lastly, one final example of a less-than-perfect metrical solution can be found in “Twilight”. As with the other Vesaas poems, my aim in writing this metapoem was to employ mimetic form, namely recreating the alternating lines of acatalectic and catalectic trochaic tetrameter that characterise the source poem. This metapoem, however, can be considered to be one of the least successful attempts in terms of using mimetic form, given that the metre is inconsistent and often variable, with iambic tetrameter being largely prevalent throughout. This is perhaps a result of the iambic metre more closely reflecting the stress and cadence of English than the trochee – a reverse iamb – which results in a top-heavy, and thus awkward-sounding, English. While I attempted to recreate the trochaic metre throughout this poem, there were instances where the iambic metre was the most natural solution, and so the iambic metre features throughout the metapoem in order to create a metrical flow, despite not being present in the source poem.

5.3.1.5 *Less-Than-Perfect Solutions: Rhyme*

When examining my Vesaas metapoems, I believe that I have largely managed to find successful, or at least appropriate, end rhymes for the metapoems in question. However, it is worth noting that there are a few instances where imperfect solutions had to be employed either unintentionally or as a result of constraints regarding the reconciliation of content, metre and rhyme.

A significant example of a less-than-perfect rhyming solution can be found in the second stanza of “September Evening”, more specifically in the use of repeating rhymes in the metapoetic rhyme scheme where the rhymes do not repeat in the source poem rhyme scheme. If we examine the first two stanzas of the source poem, the rhyme scheme is ABCBDEFE GHIHJKLK. However, if we examine the rhyme scheme as it is presented in the metapoem, it becomes ABCBDEFE GHIHJBLB. In other words, the K rhymes in the

source poem (eld/fell) become B rhymes (light/night), namely corresponding to the rhymes which appear in the second and fourth lines of the first stanza (light/ignite). The fact that these lines appear somewhat far apart from each other in the poem – namely in different stanzas – means that this is perhaps not as serious an issue as if they had appeared in close succession, but I would argue that this is still an example of a less-than-perfect solution and one which could potentially be avoided if following a less mimetic approach than the one I have chosen for this research.

Another example of a less-than-perfect rhyming solution can be found in “The Hours Pass”, namely the fact that the end rhymes in the third and fourth stanzas become both feminine rhymes and half rhymes, which is at odds with the masculine rhymes and full rhymes of the source poem. In stanza three the “legg/hegg” end rhyme becomes “bury/cherry” in the metapoem, and in the fourth stanza, the “blad/ja” end rhyme becomes “tobacco/yes, I know”. I have previously outlined how the “yes I know” rhyme is not only a loose rhyme, but also serves to impact the metre of this line, thus rendering it an imperfect solution both in terms of rhyme and metre. With this in mind, it is therefore worth noting that the imperfect nature of the third stanza perhaps presents fewer problems than that which occurs within the fourth stanza. In the third stanza, the second line in both the source poem and the metapoem ends with a verb and is enjambed. Despite this, the inclusion of the feminine end rhyme means that this line goes from catalectic amphibrachic trimeter to acatalectic amphibrachic trimeter. This, though imperfect, does not impact the metre of the poem in a way that renders it clunky or inelegant, therefore I would argue that, while imperfect in a mimetic sense, this remains an appropriate solution in a metapoetic sense within the metrical constraints imposed. Similarly, the fact that this stanza features half rhyme as opposed to full rhyme is a less-than-perfect solution, but it is arguably appropriate enough, given that it reflects the content of the source poem rather closely. As such, some

rhyming solutions can be considered to be less-than-perfect in a purely mimetic sense, though when examining the metapoem outwith the context of the source poem, these solutions do not pose any significant issues in terms of the metapoem as an aesthetic unit in its own right.

5.3.1.6 *Less-Than-Perfect Solutions: Content*

When translating these poems according to the mimetic double-aim approach, there were some instances where it was difficult to reconcile metre, rhyme and content and where the fulfilment of rhyming and/or metrical demands sometimes came at the expenses of the content of the line or stanza in question. This tended to manifest as inconsistencies in content throughout the same poem, or as omissions that ultimately lessened or otherwise affected the tone, intensity or impact of a source poem image. It is worth noting that several instances of this can be viewed as imperfect only when considering them from a mimetic double-aim perspective and that, outwith the context of the source poem, the metapoem does continue to function as an aesthetic unit in its own right.

In terms of inconsistencies in content, one of the most significant examples can be found in “Twilight”, namely the fact that “venninne” has been translated two different ways in the metapoem. It is worth noting that “venninne” means “female friend” in Norwegian, but I have chosen not to include the gendered aspect in the metapoem for a number of reasons. Firstly “female friend” not only features too many syllables to function metrically within the lines in question, but it also reads as awkward in English, where the gender neutral “friend” is most commonly used. “Girlfriend” was also a possibility, but I decided that this was too modern and therefore tonally inappropriate for the metapoem. I therefore deemed it appropriate to remove the gendered aspect from the metapoem, but I would argue that the translation of “venninne” remains imperfect due to the fact that I have translated it two different ways in the metapoem. In the first line of the first stanza, my attempt to recreate the

trochaic tetrameter resulted in “venninne” being translated as “my dear friend”, with the inclusion of “dear” making up the syllables needed for the metre in question. In the first line of the fifth stanza, however, I have translated “venninne” simply as “My friend”, with the metapoetic line being an example of the trochaic tetrameter of the source poem becoming iambic pentameter in the metapoem. This is therefore inconsistent and, as such, can be said to be a less-than-perfect solution, if not an example of translational failure when following the mimetic double-aim approach. It is worth noting that this inconsistency is largely a result of metrical constraints. As such, it is possible that future versions of this poem might perhaps be more consistent if not attempting to maintain the strict metre of the original.

Furthermore, in terms of content being affected by omission, some examples of this can be found in “Bonfire”. This first line of the final source poem stanza, for instance, reads “Det angar ramt og sterkt av vår”, which I have translated literally as “It smells pungently and strongly of spring”. However, this line in my metapoem has been rendered as “The smell of spring is everywhere”. This was largely the result of difficulties in reconciling the content of these lines with the strict rhyming and metrical constraints I had imposed upon the metapoem. As I have previously outlined, my first port of call was to examine potential end rhymes by examining the end words, and synonyms and other related words, and then expanding on this by finding rhyming words for each potential end rhyme. The final word of the third line in the Norwegian is “hår”, and I decided that “hair” would be an appropriate end word due to its rhyming possibilities. However, it was challenging to find a word that would allow me to rhyme with “hair” and maintain the iambic tetrameter while retaining the content of the line itself. There was a significant concentration of images and ideas in these lines: the pungent smell, the arrival of spring, the forest, the earth, the bonfire flames, and the description of the second figure’s cheek, wet hair and smell. This meant that it was more difficult to rearrange the lines and content in this stanza to achieve the desired effect than it

would have been in stanzas with a lower concentration of images to convey in the metapoem. As such, the idea of the smell of spring being all-encompassing remains in the metapoem, but not with the same degree of intensity as the source poem. This is therefore an example of a creative solution functioning to some extent, but ultimately being somewhat imperfect.

One final example of this can be found in the fifth and sixth lines of third stanza of “September Evening”, namely my translation of the lines “som var alt vår og sommar slutt/meir vonlaust slutt enn no” [literal: as though spring and summer were already over/more hopelessly over than now]. The word that posed significant issues here was “alt” [already] due to the fact that the trisyllabic word “already” proved difficult to include in terms of metre, and consequently in terms of reconciling metre with content and rhyme. As such, my metapoem does not include the word “already” and instead offers the creative solution “more hopeless than the end of spring/the end of summer’s shine”. A key element of the source poem line that I wanted to retain in the metapoem was the repetition of “slutt” [end], which I maintained in the metapoem by saying “the end of spring/the end of summer’s shine”. “Summer’s shine” is a key example of a bold content solution here as the source poem does not explicitly make reference to this, but again, I believe that introducing the idea of sunshine into these lines is in keeping with the content, which is describing the end of the bright, warm months and the descent into the cold darkness of autumn and winter. As such, these lines can be considered to be an example of a creative solution in terms of metre and rhyme, but less perfect in terms of content: the omission of “already” means that the sense of immediacy and shortness of time that is present in the source poem is not present in the metapoem, which therefore affects the tone of the metapoem when comparing it with the tone of the source poem.

Lastly, it is worth noting that the translations of Vesaas’ poems in particular often feature a more elevated, loaded or emotive register than that which is found in the source

poems themselves. Examples of this include the aforementioned “rejoice” as a translation of “smiler” [smile] (“Harp and Dagger”), “fragile hearts submit” as a translation of “hjartet slår så veikt” [the heart beats so weakly] (“September Evening”), “my dear friend” as a translation of “venninne” [friend] (“Twilight”) and “How desperate” as a translation of “alt eg ville” [all I wanted] (“Twilight”). I would argue that this does not necessarily render the translations unsuccessful, and I have indeed included such instances in previous discussions of creative translation solutions. However, the fact that there is a consistent pattern of translations which have a more elevated register than the source poems can potentially be seen as less-than-perfect, particularly when considering that many of these instances of elevated register occur as a result of attempts to adhere to a strict metre or rhyme scheme. As such, this can perhaps be considered a justification for using a more mixed approach as opposed to strict adherence to one particular form, metre or rhyme scheme.

5.3.1.7 *Instances of Translational Failure*

Despite the fact that constraints, particularly rhyming and metrical constraints, can often result in creative translation solutions, it is undeniable that, when translating these Vesaas poems, there were occasional instances of such constraints resulting in translational failures, namely the failure of the metapoem to adhere to the imposed rhyming and metrical constraints of the mimetic double-aim approach. It is worth noting that this does not necessarily mean that the mimetic double-aim approach fails as a potential poetry translation approach, but that it may sometimes require the translator to be somewhat flexible in terms of rhyme, metre, content, or indeed a combination of the three; in other words, a strict adherence to one type of approach can result in “blocking more open-ended searches that might yield more effective solutions” (Jones, *Expert Action* 101) The following instances of translational failure are therefore examples of the mimetic double-aim form not working in particular

instances, but this is not to say that these could not be rectified if the rigid adherence to mimetic form is relaxed in favour of a more mixed approach: something Jones outlines as a common approach for poetry translators (*Expert Action* 39). However, for the purposes of this thesis, and as a result of the necessary time constraints, these examples can be considered to be examples of translational failure in this specific instance.

One of the most significant examples of translational failure in these poems can be found in the first stanza of “Twilight”, namely the complete lack of end rhyme. As I have previously outlined, rhyme scheme and end rhyme are key characteristics of Vesaas’ poems. I have managed to retain the rhyme scheme to a certain extent throughout the rest of the Vesaas metapoems, and indeed throughout the rest of the stanzas in “Twilight”. However, it is obvious that the A-rhyme in the first stanza – that is, the rhyme between the first and third lines – is missing in my metapoem. The end rhymes in the source poem are “venninne” [female friend] and the “kinnet” [cheek] of the compound word “blomekinnet” [blossom cheek; rosy cheek]. This rhyme is very much missing from my metapoem, as the two end words of these lines are “friend” and “features”. This particular stanza proved to be the trickiest stanza to translate for precisely this reason; namely, the rhyming and metrical constraints proved difficult to reconcile with the content of the lines themselves. This was the case even after a “drawer time” period of several months; namely, a period of distance and reflection from the translation. This is perhaps an example – and indeed, the only example – of the rhyming and metrical constraints of this double-aim, mimetically formal approach not providing the possibility of creative solutions but rather restricting potential solutions instead. Eventually, as an interim solution, I chose to use the phrase “my dear friend” at the end of the first line and “features” at the end of the third line. Not only does “my dear friend” adhere to the acatalectic trochaic tetrameter of the first line, but there are also some sonic reflections between “my dear friend” and “features” – namely assonance between “dear” and features”

and alliteration between “friend” and “features”. This is, however, undoubtedly an example of an imperfect solution, and one in which the attempt of the translator can be said to have failed. However, given that this is simply one version of the poem, it is possible that, with time, an appropriate end rhyme can and will reveal itself, thus aligning the rhyme scheme of this stanza with the rhyme scheme of both the source poem and the rest of the metapoem. However, for the purposes of this particular project, and given the necessary time constraints thereof, this can be characterised as a failure of the metapoem to adhere to the imposed translational constraints.

In terms of metre, a significant instance of translational failure can be found in “Harp and Dagger”. As with all of the selected Vesaas poems, I attempted to follow mimetic form, namely recreating the source poem’s ABCB rhyme scheme and mixed metre, namely the alternating lines of amphibrachic and dactylic trimeter. However, in this particular instance, the metapoem was unable to fulfil the metrical demands imposed by the choice to employ mimetic form. While the rhyme scheme is moderately successful, with only a few instances of masculine end rhyme as opposed to the feminine end rhyme of the source poem, the metapoem fails to recreate the mixed metre of the source poem in a way that reflects how this metre is employed in the source poem. It is worth noting that the source poem does not feature a regular metre; namely, it consists of both amphibrachic and dactylic trimeter, but it also features a significant degree of metrical substitution within this metre. My metapoem, on the other hand, employs, in order of appearance in the metapoem, iambic metre, amphibrachic metre, anapestic metre and dactylic metre, as well as several instances of mixed metre consisting of different poetic feet. These are found in both trimetrical and tetrametrical forms, as well as both catalectic and acatalectic forms. There is also a significant degree of metrical substitution within the lines of the metapoem. My metapoem is therefore a lot more metrically varied than the source poem, which can mark the metapoem out as an example of

metrical failure as I have not managed to enact mimetic form and replicate the amphibrachic and dactylic trimeter of the source poem. However, in a purely metapoetic sense – that is, considering the metapoem outwith the context of the source poem – it is clear that the metapoem does still have a strong metrical drive throughout and does reflect the several instances of mixed metre within the source poem, albeit not in an exact way. As such, I would say that this particular metapoem is one of the least perfect examples of all the Vesaas poems of translating mimetically according to the double-aim approach, though it does still function – albeit not as elegantly as some others – as a metrical rhyming poem in its own right.

5.3.2 Cecilie Løveid

When applying the double-aim approach to Løveid's poems, it is clear that the style of these poems has inevitably resulted in distinctly different translation choices when compared to Vesaas' rhyming metrical poetry. One of the most significant differences between my Vesaas metapoems and my Løveid metapoems is that my Vesaas metapoems differ in many respects from my Vesaas literal translations, whereas my Løveid metapoems are remarkably similar to my Løveid literal translations, at places more or less identical. The similarity between the Løveid metapoems and the Løveid literals can potentially be attributed to a number of factors. Firstly, it is possible that this is largely to do with the fact that Løveid's poems contain many fewer intrinsic poetic functions than those of Vesaas: as I have previously outlined, Løveid's work is not characterised by more obvious poetic devices such as metre and rhyme but rather by subtler devices such as connotation and association. Indeed, even the sonic elements within Løveid's poems can be considered to be more subtle than those of Vesaas as they largely feature, for example, assonance and alliteration as opposed to less subtle functions such as poetic end rhyme, which is a significant element of Vesaas' poetry.

This relative lack of obvious intrinsic poetic functions can also be attributed to the hybrid, genre-bending nature of these poems; since they are prosaic in their style, many of the more obvious intrinsic poetic functions that apply to the likes of Vesaas do not apply.

Furthermore, as I have mentioned in previous sections, Norwegian and English are both Germanic languages that follow subject-verb-object syntactical conventions and thus have a close linguistic proximity. As such, it is possible to assume that a literal translation between two linguistically close languages of a hybrid text that does not contain a high concentration of intrinsic poetic functions can – and indeed, in this instance, does – produce a translation that is largely indistinguishable from that which is produced through the more creative double-aim approach. In other words, the prosaic style coupled with a low concentration of intrinsic poetic functions offers fewer imperatives to be creative, thus producing a metapoem that is largely similar to a literal translation.

The fact that my Løveid metapoems and my Løveid literals are so similar means that it would not make sense to reflect upon my double-aim translation choices without making reference to the literal translations outlined in the previous chapter. While both the “Scootermadonna” and “Spilt vin” metapoems are largely similar to the literal translations of the same, the double-aim approach afforded a degree of flexibility that the literal approach did not. This therefore led to translation decisions, creative or otherwise, which would not have been possible if following a more rigid approach, such as the literal approach.

This section will therefore focus on examples where the double-aim metapoems diverge from the literal translations of the same. I will focus on three main points. Firstly, I will outline the instances in which the metapoem differs from the literal translation in terms of closely resembling source-poem elements such as word placement. Secondly, I will describe how the double-aim approach allowed me to come up with more creative solutions which allowed me to solve translation problems, therefore marking a significant difference

between the metapoem and the literal translation of the same. Lastly, I will outline examples of so-called “less-than-perfect” solutions within the metapoems – namely, instances in which translation decisions can be considered to fall short of an ideal solution in accordance with the approach I have chosen (Holmes, “Making Maps” 60).

Lastly, it is worth noting that I will not reflect on every single decision and difference between the literal translation and the metapoem. Many of the differences between the two versions are minor and are largely related to ensuring that the metapoem does not read as awkward or clunky. While it might be considered worthwhile to examine every minor detail, this is not possible within the parameters of this thesis. Instead, I will focus on the more significant changes and choices made in accordance with the double-aim approach; in other words, changes that are born out of the double-aim approach and its subsequent metapoetic criteria.

5.3.2.1 *Source Poem Reflection*

One noteworthy aspect of my Løveid metapoems was the decision to change certain lines, words or aspects of syntax in order to better reflect these elements as they appear in the source poems. These were elements which were perhaps not reflected in the literal translation as a result of attempts to, for example, convey meaning at the level of the line, or convey what I interpreted as the most straightforward translation of a word or phrase. However, when translating these poems according to the double-aim approach, there inherently arose a number of instances where it made sense to try and reflect the source text to a greater extent than in the literal translation of the same, or to maintain the literal translation of a phrase or line despite the initial instinct to transform it in the metapoem.

An example of the latter can be found within “Scooter Madonna”, more specifically in the translation of the word “poliomyelitt” within the first section. In terms of translating the

name of the disease itself, I decided to use the full scientific name “poliomyelitis” in the metapoem – which was also used in my literal translation – instead of translating it to the more commonly used “polio”. There were two main reasons for this decision. The first reason is that, when considering that the double-aim approach attempts to recreate as much as possible from the original poem while still appearing as a poem in its own right, it seemed natural to use “poliomyelitis” considering it is very close to the Norwegian “poliomyelitt”. The second reason is largely concerned with reflecting the general content of the first section of “Scootermadonna”. This entire section is characterised by a kind of clinical horror, which is most evident in the descriptions of, for example, a hole being made in the little girl’s throat and the doctor manually having to help her breathe. By including the full scientific name, I felt that this would help to create and reflect the sense of horror and fear that characterise this section, which is subsequently emphasised by the juxtaposition of the clinical term with fairy-tale imagery.

An example of source-text reflection within “Spilled Wine” can be found in the way in which I translated the phrase “akutt behov”. While “acute need” was what I interpreted as the most straightforward literal translation of the phrase “akutt behov”, it is, of course, possible to explore synonyms and alternative ways of expression in order to convey this term in a way that is suitable within the context of the poem. While it is true that the noun “behov” means “need”, it can also be interpreted as the noun “want” or “desire”. As such, my initial instinct was to change the phrase “acute need” to “sudden desire”. I felt that this was perhaps appropriate in light of the erotic elements of the poem, more specifically the references to the art dealer’s lover and the speaker’s envy of the art dealer’s sexual liberation, given that “desire” can be said to have more of a sexual connotation than “need”.

Upon reflection, however, I decided that it was more appropriate to revert back to the use of the word “acute” while retaining the word “desire”. Not only does “acute” share the

same Latin etymological root as the Norwegian “akutt”, but “acute” can also be used within a medical context, which can therefore be seen as an appropriate choice of word given the fact that the art dealer’s lover is a medical student. In other words, the fact that “acute” can be used both within a medical context – and particularly when discussing emergency medicine in Norwegian – and to describe a sudden occurrence means that the ambiguity of the word was therefore suitable both for the content of the poem and for the recreation of a text by Løveid specifically.

In some instances, my literal translation of “Spilt vin” resulted in lines which were further from the source poem in terms of word placement, and this was something that I attempted to rectify in the metapoems. An example of this can be found when the speaker of the poem sees the enormous black painting in the back room of the gallery. Upon seeing this painting, the speaker tells us “jeg hadde mer/lyst på det” [my literal translation: I wanted this one/more]. A literal translation at the level of the word would render this line “I had more/desire for it”, thereby placing the word “more” at the end of the sentence. The fact that my literal translation was at the level of the line – that is, creating the most straightforward, syntactically standard translation in order to aid understanding – meant that this was a difficult line to translate while retaining a similar word placement to the source poem. In my literal rendering, the word “more” appears as the first word after the enjambed line, whereas in the Norwegian original, the word “mer” [more] appears as the final word of the enjambed line. While this is not necessarily an issue in terms of general understanding of the poem – particularly considering the fact that the poem is prosaic – I felt that maintaining as much of the original word and line placement as possible was a particular priority, especially since this poem contains many fewer intrinsic poetic functions than the work of Vesaas. As such, the literal line “I wanted this one/more” became “I felt more/drawn to this one” in the double-aim metapoem. Not only does this allow the word “more” to appear at the end of the line,

thus reflecting the word placement in the original, but the word “drawn” also has an ambiguity in that it can refer to feeling pulled towards something while also having artistic connotations. Given that ambiguity is a key characteristic of Løveid’s poetry, and given that the poem takes place in an art gallery, I therefore felt that “drawn” was an appropriate word to use in this instance.

Another example of reflecting word placement in the original can be found in the same section of the poem. In this section, the art dealer says of the black painting: “Dette har jeg reservert til meg selv” [literal: I’ve reserved this one for myself]. A literal translation at the level of the word would render this phrase “this have I reserved to myself”. In other words, this is a fronted line in Norwegian, with the word “dette” [this] being placed at the start of the line in order to serve as emphasis. This fronting creates a more emphatic tone that serves to highlight the art dealer’s choice of painting, and so I decided that it would be important to reflect this fronting in the metapoem. With this in mind, I changed the literal “I’ve reserved this one for myself” to “This I’ve reserved for myself” in the double-aim metapoem, thus creating a fronted English version of the line in order to convey the same emphasis as the source poem.

5.3.2.2 *Creative Solutions*

While one of the most notable aspects of my Løveid metapoems is their similarity to the corresponding literal translations, it would be wrong to say that the double-aim approach did not result in any creative solutions whatsoever. While these instances of creative intervention are undoubtedly more prevalent in the rhyming, metrical style of Vesaas, it is undeniable that there were individual instances within both “Scooter Madonna” and “Spilled Wine” that allowed for a degree of creativity which was neither possible nor permitted within the literal approach.

One significant instance of creative intervention in “Scooter Madonna” can be found in the first section, namely my translation of the line “De hadde laget en hull og satt/inn en slange”. In my literal translation of this poem, I translated this line as “they had made a hole and put/in a tube”. This is transformed somewhat significantly in the metapoem, with my double-aim translation being “A tube snaked out of the hole they’d/made”. The decision to translate the line in this way was informed by a number of factors, with the main factor being the use of the word “slange” in the original poem. The word “slange” does mean “tube”, as per my literal translation, but it is also the main Norwegian word for “snake”. While it is most likely that the use of “slange” in the source poem refers only to the tube implanted into the little girl’s throat, one cannot discount the possibility of ambiguity here, particularly since ambiguity is an idiosyncratic element of Løveid’s writing style. For this reason, I decided that it could serve the metapoem well to incorporate the snake element into this particular line. I decided very quickly that this could not be achieved by staying close to the original line, as this would have read “they’d made a hole and put in/a snake” which, while possibly in line with the horror and fear the little girl is feeling, is inappropriate as it both removes the clinical context and results in a sense of absurdity that is not present in the source poem. It was therefore necessary to readjust the line to try and accommodate both the clinical “slange” and the reptilian “slange”. The solution I settled on was to change the subject of the sentence from the doctors to the tube, and to use a verb instead of a noun in order to incorporate the snake imagery. Not only does this solution allow both interpretations of “slange” to appear in the translation in close succession (tube/snaked), but by changing the subject of the sentence, there is an emphasis on the medical apparatus as opposed to the medical staff. This consequently feeds into the general sense of clinical horror that is apparent throughout this section, particularly when coupled with the snake imagery.

In terms of creative solutions within the “Spilled Wine” metapoem, there were a few instances of words being changed in the double-aim approach which did not significantly alter the meaning of the line, but rather were changed in order to create a more sonically resonant line in the metapoem. One example of this can be found in my different translations of the description of the picture in the back room. In the Norwegian, this is described as “et enormt sort bilde”, which I translated in my literal version as “an enormous black picture”. This was largely due to the fact that I considered this to be the most straightforward translation in this instance, particularly since “enormt” and “enormous” have the same Latin etymological root. However, unlike my decision to keep the word “akutt” as “acute” in the metapoem, I decided to stray from the pure etymological root of this word and find a word that would allow for some degree of sonic patterning within this phrase in order to reflect the assonance that is found within the words “enormt” and “sort”. With this in mind, I settled on the phrase “massive black picture” in the metapoem. This phrase creates assonance in the form of the repetition of the “a” sound “massive” and “black”, as well as the repetition of the hard consonants in “black” and “picture”. This decision, though small, therefore allowed me to retain some of the resonance that is present in the original Norwegian while at the same time not transforming the meaning of the line in the metapoem.

Lastly, it is worth noting that there were a few instances of unintentional sonic patterning which occurred in the literal translation and which, although unintentional, created effective and appropriate aesthetic units which were also suitable for the double-aim metapoem. This differs from the instances of unintentional recreation in the Halldis Moren Vesaas literal translations; while there were some instances of unintentional recreation of aesthetic elements, this was not always appropriate or feasible for the metapoem since words, phrases and syntax often had to be changed or rearranged in an attempt to retain the metre and rhyme. Examples of this appropriate yet unintentional sonic patterning in “Spilled Wine”

include the internal rhyming and assonance in the words “bedsit” and “medical”, and the sibilance present in the lines “grabbed around her wide/black skirt and swung. Blacker skirts have surely never/been seen in any gallery”. As far as “Scooter Madonna” is concerned, the third section of the source poem features the phrase “mørkere enn krabbeklør”, which appears in both the literal translation and the metapoem as “darker than crab claws”. This phrase therefore retains the assonance of the source poem phrase, thereby creating an unintentional, yet appropriate, instance of sonic patterning. In short, these were instances of unintentional sonic recreation that could be transferred from literal to double-aim without having an adverse effect on meaning, content or form.

5.3.2.3 *Less-Than-Perfect Solutions*

One main example of a less-than-perfect solution within “Scooter Madonna” is the way in which I have chosen to translate the word “eventyr”. As I outlined in the previous chapter, the word “eventyr” is ambiguous, meaning “adventures”, “fairy tales” and “love affairs”. In my literal translation of this poem, I engaged with Burnshaw’s approach in order to convey this ambiguity, namely by providing options and alternative meanings within square brackets. By doing this, I was able to convey to the reader the multiplicity of meaning present within this word and therefore offer multiple lenses through which to engage with the poem. However, given that the double-aim approach is a more creative approach, it was obviously not possible to include multiple options and alternatives within the metapoem. As such, it was necessary to make a decision regarding the most appropriate way to translate this word in the metapoem.

One option I considered was to use several interpretations of the word “eventyr”: in other words, to use “adventures” where appropriate, “fairy tales” where appropriate and “love affairs” when appropriate. This would have allowed me to include multiple interpretations of

the word “eventyr”, therefore introducing a hint of the multiplicity present in the source poem. However, I soon decided that this was not an appropriate translation choice when considering the poem overall. The use of the word “eventyr” is not only part of the poem’s refrain – which is repeated across the three sections – but it is also used frequently throughout the three sections, particularly the first one, usually referring back to the refrain of the first line. As such, I decided that the repetition of this word was an essential and integral part of the poem and it would therefore be most appropriate to settle on one word that could be repeated throughout the metapoem in order to reflect this.

Having discounted the possibility of using “adventures”, “fairy tales” and “love affairs”, I subsequently had to make a decision regarding which of these three options would be the best counterpart for “eventyr” in the metapoem. I therefore decided that “fairy tales” was the most appropriate choice as it made sense in every single instance, as opposed to “adventures” or “love affairs”, which made sense only some of the time. With this in mind, I decided that “fairy tales” was the most appropriate translation of “eventyr” when following the double-aim approach. However, this solution can be considered to be less-than-perfect as “fairy tales” does not encompass the ambiguity that is present in the Norwegian “eventyr”. One possible way of presenting this ambiguity would be to provide two translations of this poem with “eventyr” translated in different ways in order to convey the multiplicity of meaning. This is reminiscent of what Holmes states about the need for multiple translations, “since several translations present more facets of the original than any one can do” (“Rebuilding” 50). As such, it is possible, and perhaps even preferable, to provide multiple translations of “Scootermadoona” in order to convey this ambiguity in a way that does not impact the creative integrity of the metapoem. However, for the sake of this research, it is possible to conclude that the translation of “eventyr” necessarily forces the translator’s hand

and that the only acceptable and appropriate translation of this word can unavoidably be characterised as less than perfect.

A similar issue also presents itself through the use of the word “kjærester” in the third section of the same poem. This occurs in the first line of the third section, which is a variation on the refrain used throughout the poem. The first line of both the first and second sections reads “Barn skal ha eventyr og kjærlighet” [literal: Children shall [will] have [adventures/fairy tales] and love], while the first line of the third section reads “Ungdommer skal ha eventyr og kjærester” [literal: Young people shall [will] have [boy/girlfriends] and [adventures/fairy tales/love affairs]]. As I outlined in the commentary section of my literal translation of this poem, this line replaces “barn” [children] with “ungdommer” [young people] and “kjærlighet” [love] with “kjærester” [boy/girlfriends]. When translating this line according to the double-aim approach, I therefore had to consider how best to translate “kjærester” in a way that would both convey the meaning of the word and have an etymological link to the kjærlighet/love that appears in the refrains of the preceding sections.

As my literal translation shows, one of the more straightforward translations of “kjærester” (plural) is “boy/girlfriends”. It is, however, worth noting that this Norwegian word is a gender-neutral term that describes a significant other – indeed, the word “kjæreste” (singular) literally means “dearest one” – so the gendered aspect that comes to the fore in this English literal translation is not apparent in the original Norwegian.⁷ An issue with translating “kjærester” in this way is that gender-neutral English words for boy/girlfriends tend to come with connotations that alter the tone, register and meaning of the word or line. Words such as “suitor”, “sweetheart” or “companion” are dated in a way “kjæreste” is not, and words such as “admirer” suggest admiration from afar as opposed to the intimacy of a relationship. The

⁷ While “kjæreste” is gender neutral in terms of not referring to any specific gender, it is not grammatically gender neutral – rather, it is grammatically masculine.

most appropriate English word can possibly be considered to be “partner”, but this is also not ideal as “partner” can also be used within different contexts, such as, for example, a business partner, in a way that “kjæreste” cannot. In addition, none of these words share an etymological root with the word “love”, which I deemed to be an important aspect when creating the metapoem as the refrain/variation is one of the most significant characteristics of this poem in Norwegian.

As such, I decided to search for a word that shared an etymological root with the word “love”, just as “kjærester” shares an etymological root with the word “kjærlighet”. The most obvious choice according to this criteria is “lovers”, and this is the word that I eventually settled on in the metapoem. I decided on “lovers” because love/lovers is an effective reflection of the Norwegian kjærlighet/kjærester and because “lovers” implies a sense of intimacy and cannot usually be used in other contexts, unlike, for example the word “partner”. However, I would argue that “lovers” is an example of a less-than-perfect solution due to the connotative differences between “lovers” and “kjærester”. To expand on this, I would argue that “lovers” is a decidedly more erotic term than “kjærester”; indeed, the Norwegian word “elskere” would be closer to the English “lovers” due to its erotic implications.⁸

Despite this, the word “lovers” can be considered if not a perfect solution, then a passable one, not only in terms of the etymology and refrain, but also in terms of describing the relationship between the Scooter Madonna and the driver of the scooter. There are references to the Scooter Madonna showing off her skin and harbouring a desire to be pretty, while the driver of the scooter bites her neck and grabs at her. There is therefore a sense of the erotic and the carnal in this section: something that is encapsulated by the use of the word

⁸ It is worth noting that the Norwegian verb for “to love” (å elske) has no relation to “kjærlighet” or “kjærester”, which come from the adjective “kjær” (dear). As such, while the Norwegian word for lovers (elskere) comes from the verb “å elske”, the Norwegian word for boyfriends/girlfriends (kjærester) comes from the adjective “kjær”. There is therefore a multiplicity here that does not exist in English.

“lovers”. In other words, while “lovers” is somewhat less innocent than “kjærester” and can therefore be considered to be a less-than-perfect solution, the use of the word “lovers” is both justified through the erotic actions of the titular Scooter Madonna and the driver and, when considered alongside the word “love”, serves to reflect the etymological link between “kjærlighet” and “kjærester” in the source poem.

5.3.3 General Remarks

As mentioned earlier in this chapter, the double-aim approach is an approach that allows for a greater degree of flexibility and creativity, thus offering the translator more agency and the ability to make choices based on their own vision of how a given poem should be translated. The nuance and flexibility inherent in this approach means that there are a number of different ways to translate according to this approach, as has been evidenced by my Vesaas and Løveid metapoems. While I decided to follow a mimetic approach when translating Vesaas’ poems, recreating the rhyming, metrical elements as closely as possible, this type of approach was not possible when translating Løveid’s work as Løveid’s poetry is not written in verse. As such, I was required to employ two different double-aim approaches, namely a mimetically formal approach in terms of Vesaas and a general double-aim approach – that is, a balance between reflecting the source text and creating an aesthetic target text – in terms of Løveid, due to the lack of concentrated rhyming, metrical and formal elements in the two selected Løveid poems. As such, there are some interesting observations that can be made when comparing the employment of the double-aim approach on these two contrasting poetic styles.

Firstly, one of the most interesting observations when comparing these two approaches is that the double-aim approach resulted in Vesaas metapoems that were vastly different from the Vesaas literal translations of the previous chapter, whereas the Løveid metapoems were largely indistinguishable from the Løveid literal translations, with a few

notable exceptions. It is worth noting that I did not use my literal translations as tools to assist with the metapoems; rather, I translated from the source poem before comparing the metapoems with the literal translations of the same. This difference between the literals and the metapoems of each poetic style is therefore largely a result of the different types of poetic functions that characterise each style. The selection of poems by Vesaas are, as outlined in the commentary section to the literal translations of these poems, characterised most significantly by their rhyming and metrical elements. Given that the recreation of rhyming, metrical elements requires a significant degree of translational creativity, these elements are not present in the literal translations as the literal approach does not prioritise creative solutions. This naturally means that double-aim metapoems, which are characterised by creativity and translator agency, are notably different from the literal translations, particularly since the recreation of rhyming and metrical functions was a particular priority for me when creating the Vesaas metapoems. This stands in stark contrast to the Løveid metapoems, which were often so similar to the literal translations of the same that I was unable to comment on the metapoems without making reference and comparing them to the literal translations. Indeed, the majority of the Løveid reflective commentary is focused on elements that were significant precisely because they deviated from the literal translations of the same. This echoes Holmes' assertion that poetry that leans "very close to prose" may result in the translator finding "satisfactory matchings" for each element, particularly compared to poetry with a higher concentration of intrinsic poetic functions ("On Matching" 54). This extreme similarity between the literal translations and the metapoems is also partly due to the close linguistic proximity between Norwegian and English: something that becomes particularly evident when elements such as rhyme and metre do not have to be taken into consideration.

It also became clear that the double-aim approach demanded different translational focuses depending on the poetic style in question, which can be evidenced by the difference

in reflective commentary subheadings. These subheadings were chosen according to what I considered to be some of the most significant aspects of the metapoems, and it is clear that, while there is some overlap between the two, different elements of the two different poetic styles demanded more attention than others. When examining the Vesaas commentary, for example, this is largely separated into two distinct categories: creative solutions and less-than-perfect solutions, with sub-categories focusing on metre, rhyme and content. This systematic approach to the Vesaas commentary is something that is not evident in the Løveid reflective commentary; rather, while creative solutions and less-than-perfect solutions do also feature in this commentary, these cover only a few individual instances within the Løveid metapoems, thus rendering a systematic grouping more akin to the Vesaas commentary irrelevant and unnecessary. Indeed, the Løveid commentary is largely focused on more abstract and ambiguous elements such as double meaning and tone, whereas the Vesaas commentary is very much focused on immediately obvious poetic functions such as metre and rhyme. This is further reflected in both the creative solutions and the less-than-perfect solutions outlined for each style: where the Løveid solutions were linked to functions such as ambiguity and imagery (such as, for example, the translation of “slange”), the Vesaas solutions were largely focused on the reconciliation of metre, rhyme and content. This therefore highlights the flexibility afforded by the double-aim approach as there is a significant degree of difference between the way in which both styles have been translated, which is dictated both by the poetic style in question and by the decisions and constraints I chose to place upon the poems in question in order to translate them in what I considered to be the most effective and appropriate way.

One observation that is particularly interesting is that the double-aim approach actually results in a more obscure translation of Løveid’s poems when compared with the literal translations of the same. As I have previously mentioned, the Løveid metapoems and

the Løveid literals are largely identical, with a few small exceptions. However, the lack of clarity in the double-aim approach comes from the fact that explication is not included as part of the translation, unlike the literal approach, in which an explanatory commentary is a necessary part of the translation. This therefore results in the Løveid metapoems being somewhat more obscure when translated according to the double-aim approach because the dense layers of intertextuality and association are not explained, unlike in the literal commentaries in the previous chapter. As such, it is possible to conclude that poems which feature dense layers of intertexts may require explication in the form of, for example, a translator's note, even when the translator follows a double-aim approach: something that is not as essential for poems that are not as densely intertextual.

In summary, the double-aim approach is a more hermeneutic approach to poetry translation that allows for a greater degree of flexibility and creativity: something that is particularly evident when considering the rhyming, metrical Vesaas metapoems. The Vesaas metapoems function as creative expressions of a critical reading, with many of the points raised in the Vesaas literal commentaries being displayed practically as opposed to explained didactically. By contrast, the double-aim approach did not lead to significantly different results in terms of Løveid's work, with the Løveid metapoems being very close to the Løveid literal translations. I would also argue that the double-aim approach also resulted in a more obscure version of Løveid's poems due to the lack of explanation which is present in the literal translations of the same. As such, it is clear that the type and concentration of poetic function is instrumental in terms of deciding whether or not a translated poem requires a translator's note. In other words, the dense allusions of Løveid's work require further explanation regardless of approach, whereas the rhyming, metrical poetry of Vesaas can be communicated without an explanatory note outlining, for example, the type of metre (though a contextualising translator's note would be appropriate in terms of, for example, introducing

a collection of translated poems). Despite this, however, it is clear that the double-aim approach did result in some instances of creative solutions in Løveid's poems that would not have been possible in a more prescriptive, less creative approach such as the literal approach, which shows that the double-aim approach can perhaps be utilised alongside other approaches in order to create an effective, appropriate and aesthetic translation. Lastly, despite the focus on less-than-perfect solutions (and, in the case of Vesaas, instances of translational failure), it is worth noting that this is not necessarily a shortcoming of the double-aim approach itself, but rather the type of double-aim approach utilised by the translator. Given that the double-aim approach is not one prescriptive approach but rather an umbrella term for a number of different ways in which translators can approach a translation, it would be wrong to dismiss this approach as a result of perceived instances of failure or imperfections in these poems in question. Rather, it should be noted that the metapoems in the chapter represent just one of many possible translations and interpretations of these poems, and that different translational angles within the double-aim approach could potentially offer solutions to these particular imperfections. With this in mind, these metapoems should not be viewed as the final product, but rather one of many potential final products, all of which have room for edits, improvements and changes.

6 The Poetically Viable Approach

6.1 Theoretical Outline

6.1.1 Folkart and the Poetically Viable Approach

The third and final approach I will examine in this thesis is the poetically viable approach, also known as the writerly approach. This approach is championed by Barbara Folkart in her 2007 book *Second Finding* and is undoubtedly the most radical of the three I have explored in this thesis. Where the literal approach and the double-aim approach centre the source poem – whether that be in the form of commentary and literal rendering, as in the former, or creative reflection, as in the latter – the poetically viable approach does not centre the source poem at all, but rather encourages the translator to “[cut] the ties with the source text as ruthlessly as may be necessary” in order to “produce a free-standing text, to make a poem at all costs” (Folkart 122). In other words, Folkart encourages us to view the translation as a “unit of invention” and the source poem as a creative springboard that will allow the translator to create a free-standing piece of poetry without being bound to the poetic functions of the source poem (122).

This creative focus is a recurring theme throughout Folkart’s writing on the poetically viable translation. Folkart describes her approach as “writerly” translation and states that it is “radically different to repetitive, readerly translation” (22–23). This rejection of “readerly” translation – which can be used to describe approaches that focus on reflection of source-text elements, such as the double-aim approach – is largely based on Folkart’s rejection of what she terms the “already-said”, which is a term that can be used not only to describe a text that

has quite literally already been written, but also to describe, for example, poetic clichés (5). According to Folkart, poetry is “hugely intolerant of the already-said” and “fixating on the already-said is no way to produce a translation that will in itself have value as a piece of writing” (5, 7). Indeed, Folkart claims that “deriving a poem in the target language can never be a matter of finding words to squeeze pre-existing structures and contents into” and instead champions “an increasingly less mimetic stance” than that of, for example, the double-aim approach (29, 123).

This “increasingly less mimetic stance” is ultimately the focus on creative response: that is, the poetically viable approach is more concerned with responding to the source poem as opposed to trying to recreate the source poem and its elements in another language. It is worth noting that Folkart tends not to refer to the “translator”, but rather to the “target-language writer” (116), which serves to further emphasise the role of the translator in this approach: that is, not to reflect, but to create an original text not bound by the source poem. “Put crassly,” Folkart states, “when the focus is on writing in the target language, the source text is of interest only to the extent that a target poem can be birthed out of it” (240). However, it is also true that Folkart does not fully discount the possibility of creating a poetically viable translation that does reflect the source poem:

[if] the target-language writer can make an authentic poem that happens to be quite representative of the original, so much the better. If not, she goes as far as she has to in order to make a poem of her own. (129)

It is clear from this, however, that creating a poem that is considered “representative” of the original is of secondary importance to Folkart; indeed, Folkart states that “nothing less than a poem will do as a translation, nothing less than a beauty of equal intensity made with the

resources of the target language” (116). Folkart even goes as far as to say that she is not concerned with producing works that can even be evaluated as translations:

I intend my derived poems to be judged by the much harsher criterion of how well they work as poetry. The notion of “mistranslation” becomes irrelevant: what counts is the poems themselves, not their fit with the source text. (124)

With all of this in mind, it is clear that the poetically viable approach is based not on replicating the already-said – namely, the source poem and its poetic functions and elements – but instead on using the source poem as inspiration in order to create an original, creative response. In other words, the poetically viable approach demands that the translator “[do] *as* (not *what*) the source language author did” (8).

Another key characteristic of Folkart’s poetically viable approach is the reluctance to translate intertextuality, which is particularly interesting in the case of Løveid, whose poems are often densely layered with allusions and intertexts. To return to the concept of the “already-said”, Folkart claims that intertextuality within a given text can be described as “the already-said of the already-said” and that it can be “thoroughly unproductive” to find and represent the exact intertexts (83). Folkart also outlines the difficulties of transferring intertexts from one polysystem to another, claiming that “they can get lost crossing borders or generations” and that they can end up being “colonised by their new setting” (84, 104). With this in mind, Folkart asserts that intertextuality is often irrelevant to the poetically viable translation as “[s]imply knowing that such and such a line was inspired by such and such a fragment of such and such a text may do little or nothing for the reader unfamiliar with the source” and that it “adds nothing more than a little insipid fun” to a text (91, 104). Instead, Folkart claims that it is sometimes best to “turn one’s back on the intertextual potential of the

piece” and speaks out against the notion of translator’s notes or other explanatory material (85, 155). As mentioned in chapter 5, should the intertexts and allusions present in Løveid’s poems be understood fully, they would need to be further expanded upon in a translator’s note as the intertexts are often so layered and obscure that it would be impossible for a general reader to tease them out. This is something that Folkart strongly opposes, stating that “a translation that cannot stand free of its author’s glossings is an unmitigated failure” and that “[c]ommentary is never a substitute for poetically viable translation” (155). This all serves to further emphasise the rejection of the already-said, as well as the demand that the translator “cut the ties with the source text as ruthlessly as may be necessary” (122).

Lastly, it is worth noting that Folkart’s attitude to translation underpins the majority of non-Western forms of poetry translation. While Western attitudes are characterised by concepts such as fidelity and equivalence, other, non-Western attitudes – such as translation within Arabic, Chinese, Igbo and Sanskrit traditions – adopt a more fluid and flexible approach (Tymoczko 67–77). As such, while Folkart’s approach may be seen as pushing the boundaries of what can and cannot be considered a translation according to Western attitudes, it is evident that the definition of what can be considered to be a translation is expansive when examining attitudes and approaches outwith the Western tradition. For this reason, I believe the inclusion of the poetically viable approach to be fruitful, particularly when compared to the previous two approaches explored in this thesis.

6.1.2 Place within the Instrumentalist/Hermeneutic Debate

In terms of the instrumentalist/hermeneutic debate as outlined by Venuti, the case of the poetically viable approach is an interesting one as it encompasses elements of both instrumentalism and hermeneutics. At a first glance, the creativity and translator agency afforded by this approach would imply that Folkart embraces a hermeneutic approach to

translation. This is furthered by her focus on creating a translation that functions as a poem in its own right: something that is also the focus of Holmes' hermeneutic double-aim approach. This apparent hermeneutic attitude is outlined by Folkart's claim that "there is no such thing as 'plain' or 'non-interventionalist' translation, from which the translator could be totally absent" and that "translation is always a matter of doing, of writing out of your own understanding of the text" (8, 121). This is clearly in line with the hermeneutic attitudes expressed both by Venuti and by many other translation scholars who reject the concept of an objective translation and instead support the idea of translation being a subjective act influenced by the interpretation of the translator (Boase-Beier 9; Lin 101; Robinson 59).

However, it would be wrong to suggest that Folkart's approach is a clear-cut example of a hermeneutic approach to translation. This is particularly evident when considering Folkart's attitude to translational invariants as outlined by Venuti (1). At a first glance, it seems that Folkart rejects this idea of invariants, as she states that the aim of translation "is to create *an* image, *a* tone, *an* impact, rather than to recreate *the* image, *the* tone, *the* impact of the source text" and that the translator must not aim to produce "*the* music of the original but rather to create *a* music out of the resources of the target language" (122, 191). This therefore appears to reject the idea of fixed aspects of a text that must be transported from one language to another, thus implying a hermeneutic approach to translation.

Despite this, it becomes clear that Folkart holds these attitudes not as the result of a rejection of perceived translational invariants, but rather as a response to them. According to Folkart, "[i]t's no good peeling away the music and teasing out denotations, then bemoaning the magic that has slipped through your fingers" (61). This leans close to the idea of poetry being a kind of abstract magic that is impossible to translate, which in turn reflects the instrumentalist attitude to poetry translation that has been expressed by a number of scholars and poets (Csokits 9; Kirkup 83; Kunitz 112, 117). This is furthered by Folkart's claim that

readerly approaches to translation are characterised by “trade-offs that drain all the poetry away” and that “the melodic component of a poem’s music [...] is generally reputed to be untranslatable” (191). This can therefore be said to reflect an instrumentalist attitude to translation as the idea of loss is implicit, which is indeed something that Venuti rallies against in *Contra Instrumentalism* (109).

Indeed, Folkart goes as far as to explicitly outline the shortcomings of a hermeneutic approach when creating a poetically viable translation. She states that a hermeneutic interpretation “is a necessary but utterly insufficient part of the process” and that it “stops short of the degree and quality of appropriation required to produce a writerly translation” (231). In other words, Folkart agrees that personal, subjective interpretation is a necessary part of the process, but that it is not enough to simply engage with a hermeneutic approach that can be described as “readerly”; rather, the translator must “inhabit [the poem’s] world” in order for “the real, the writerly, business of appropriation [to] begin” (231).

In other words, Folkart acknowledges the benefit of adopting a hermeneutic attitude, but many of her claims regarding poetry translation are undoubtedly rooted in instrumentalism. It is therefore possible to claim that the literal approach as outlined in chapter 4 and the poetically viable approach outlined in this chapter can be seen as two sides of the same coin: where the former asserts that translating a poem is impossible so it is best not to translate it at all, the latter asserts that poetry translation is impossible, therefore it is best to simply write a creative response to the source poem in order to create a text that, unlike a readerly translation, “really is a poem” (231). By creating a poetically viable translation, Folkart states that there will be “no asymptotic bundles of unattainable features [...] No apologies for the target text and its inadequacies. No reverences, no grovellings” (240). As my commentary to the double-aim approach showed, there were a number of instances that can be described as “asymptotic bundles of unattainable features”, though it is

worth reiterating that Holmes claims that there will always be a need for more than one definitive translation of a poem in order to capture and communicate the nuances and characteristics of the source poem. Despite this, it is clear that Folkart rejects this attitude and instead uses the common need for glosses or multiple translations as proof that translation – or readerly translation, at least – is often primed for failure.

With all of this in mind, it is clear that the poetically viable approach presents an interesting case when viewed in relation to the instrumentalist/hermeneutic debate as outlined by Venuti. While it is true that Venuti encourages us to “stop evaluating translations merely by comparing them to the source text” – something that is very much at the forefront of the poetically viable approach – it is clear that the source text is of no concern to Folkart and that, as previously mentioned, poetically viable translations should be able to shed the skin of the source poem and exist independently, often with no relation to the source poem itself (x). Furthermore, while Folkart does adopt the flexible attitude that underpins most non-Western approaches to poetry translation, it is clear that she holds this attitude due to a belief in translational invariants and the impossibility of creating a successful “readerly” translation, thus still operating within the parameters of Western traditions. This attitude can therefore be said to be rooted in instrumentalism as it takes poetry translation (in the general sense) to be impossible, thus requiring a radical “writerly” approach in order to create a text that functions as a poem in its own right. As such, despite hermeneutic attitudes being apparent to some degree, it is clear that this functions solely as a way to encourage the translator to produce a poem of their own out of the source text; that is, one must interpret and embody the poem to such an extent that one will be able to respond creatively, since a readerly approach will rarely, if ever, produce a text that functions as an act of poetry. To conclude, this straddling of instrumentalist and hermeneutic attitudes within the poetically viable approach is perhaps most evident in the claim Folkart makes about the majority of poetry translators: “Most

practitioners [...] conceive of translation as a way of replicating (their own limited version of) what's already there. The result is seldom, if ever, poetry" (429).

6.1.3 Outline of Practical Approach

As this section has outlined in detail, the poetically viable approach is largely concerned with creating a poem regardless of its connection to the source poem from which it is birthed. In other words, it is "a matter of responding – affectively, intellectually and artistically – to the music, the imagery, the verbal play of the original" and, as such, can perhaps be more described as an act of creative writing as opposed to an act of translation (Folkart 231). This is not to say that translation, particularly poetry translation, is not an act of creative writing; rather, the poetically viable approach encourages the creation of a new original as opposed to the creative reflection of the source poem that characterises other, less radical approaches.

As such, my engagement with this approach will reflect Folkart's demands of the translator – or target-language writer – when creating a poetically viable translation. While approaches such as the double-aim approach allow the translator to make translational decisions regarding the kind of approach they will employ – such as, for example, the choice between using a mimetic, analogical, organic or extraneous form – there is no such flexibility in the poetically viable approach. Rather, the ultimate aim is to create a poem, regardless of how little of the source text is reflected. With this in mind, I will aim to create poems out of the chosen source poems, making a concentrated effort to approach them in a more creatively flexible manner and not to focus on microstructural details. As such, my overall aim is to create poetically viable translations that respond creatively to the source poems, reject the microstructural approach that is commonly used within more readerly translation approaches, and employ a radical, writerly approach that stands in stark contrast to the other approaches engaged with in this thesis.

Lastly, in terms of the reflective commentary section of this chapter, the nature of the poetically viable approach means that it will be difficult to group translation decisions into corresponding subheadings, as is the case in the reflective commentary sections of the previous chapters. This is because the poetically viable approach aims to create a new poem out of the source poem and so the usual translational considerations – such as how to translate rhyme or metre – do not apply. As such, in lieu of subheadings that explore a common translational theme, I will write a short commentary on each poetically viable translation, outlining the ways in which I have created “*an image, a tone, an impact*” and “*a music out of the resources of the target language*” (Folkart 122, 191). These commentaries will appear after the corresponding translations in the following section. I will then conclude this chapter by offering some general remarks on themes, patterns and considerations of this approach.

6.2 Poetically Viable Translations and Commentaries

6.2.1 “Harp and Dagger”

Harp and Dagger

A poetically viable translation of “Harpe og dolk” by Halldis Moren Vesaas

What do you hear with your ear to my chest?

A harp-string glissando, a song in your breast.

And what do you think when you take in this song?

I think it's been waiting for ears for so long.

And why do you think that it's playing for you?

The same way I know that the ocean is blue.

And what do you see when I open my mouth?

A tongue like a dagger, so sharp and uncouth.

And what do you think of this dagger of mine?

I think of my body, my blood spilled like wine.

And why do you think that your blood will be spilled?

I fear that revenge is a dream unfulfilled.

And why does the thought of revenge come to mind?

My ears were too greedy, my eyes were too blind.

And why are you wiping the sweat from your brow?

I know what your melody really means now.

And why have you lowered your gaze to the floor?

Your eyes are like flames. I can take it no more.

6.2.2 Commentary: “Harp and Dagger”

When creating the poetically viable translation of “Harpe og dolk”, the key content element I used as inspiration was the conversation about openness, love, vulnerability and defensiveness between two people, alongside the striking images of the harp and dagger. This focus subsequently led to a number of rewarding choices from a writing practitioner point of view as I was able to experiment with the use of white space and incorporate musical elements that I felt reflected the content of the target language poem.

I would say that the most significant characteristic of the target language poem – and the one on which I would like to focus most in this commentary – is the call-and-response, question-and-answer form that the poem takes. Given that the source poem is written in the second person, with the words of the addressee also being uttered by the poem’s speaker, I was interested in writing a poem that reflected and gave further prominence to this idea of conversation. As such, I decided that a call-and-response, question-and-answer form could prove to be a creatively rewarding decision. This takes the form of a question posed by the speaker of the source poem, followed by an answer given by the addressee. This format, and the idea of conversation, or even interrogation, is illustrated further by the use of the white space. For the question, or call, sections, I have aligned the lines on the left hand side of the page. For the answer, or response, sections, I have aligned the lines on the right hand side of the page. This therefore provides a visual back-and-forth which serves to illustrate the conversational aspects of the poem, namely that this poem contains two distinct voices. I have further emphasised the existence of two voices by setting the lines of the addressee – namely the answer/response lines – in italics, thus distinguishing it from the non-italicised voice. By formatting the poem in this way, I have therefore aimed to show a conversational back-and-forth while highlighting that there are two distinct voices within the poem itself.

Furthermore, the decision to implement a call-and-response within this poem also provided creative possibilities in terms of reflecting the images I aimed to include. As previously mentioned, my poetically viable translations take the content, or rather specific images or ideas, from the source poems as their inspiration, and my inspiration for this poetically viable translation was not only the conversation, but also the title images of the harp and the dagger. “Call-and-response” is a musical term, defined by the Oxford English Dictionary as “[the] performance of musical phrases in alternation by different individuals or groups (esp. vocalists), in such a way that the second phrase seems to answer the first” (“Call and response”). I therefore decided that the call-and-response format would function well not only in terms of depicting a conversation, but also in terms of reflecting the musical imagery brought to the poem by the symbol of the harp. With this in mind, I aimed to lean into the musicality of the poem and include a number of poetic functions that would allow the poem to be richly sonorous. Not only did I include musical words such as “harp-string”, “glissando”, “song” and “melody”, but I also decided to write the question and corresponding answer as rhyming couplets. The inclusion of end-rhymes was something I felt would enhance the musicality of the piece, which I attempted to further enhance by writing the poem in catalectic dactylic tetrameter. This particular metre, combined with the end rhymes that are, for the most part, full and masculine, offers a singsong tone to the piece, which I felt was appropriate in terms of centring musicality. I also aimed to further this singsong tone through the repetition found within the question/call lines, namely the repetition of “and” followed by a variety of question words such as “how”, “what”, “why”, etc. Lastly, I attempted to further enhance this musicality with poetic functions such as assonance and internal rhyme, such as “hear/ear” in the first line, “greedy/melody” in lines fourteen and sixteen, and “lowered/floor/more” in lines seventeen and eighteen.

6.2.3 “September Evening”

September Evening

A poetically viable translation of “Septemberkveld” by Halldis Moren Vesaas

And so the world is set alight again,
each tree a flame, each blade of grass a wick.
See how the golden leaves release their grip,
the birches stripped by the cold breath of death,
while whispers sweep like ghosts across the fields
and up above, the yawning mouth of sky
turns black. A sluggish heart of cooling blood
beats weak against the clock, a hungry swamp,
and candles die while icy stars watch on
as summer’s final embers turn to ash.
What blood is shed when darkness steals the crown,
when life lies cold and curling on the ground?
This is the violence of those autumn months –
a slash of red before the bones are bared.

6.3.4 Commentary: “September Evening”

My poetically viable translation of “Septemberkveld” takes the form of a sonnet written in blank verse, or unrhymed iambic pentameter. Unlike the formal decisions made in some of my other poetically viable translations, I did not make a deliberate attempt to use the sonnet form after considering it in relation to the source poem’s content. Rather, I started off by free-writing some images inspired by the images of the source poem and allowed the free-writing process to guide my decision regarding form. After some free-writing, I noted that I was naturally turning towards blank verse and that the poetically viable translation was proving to be shorter than the strophic source poem. As such, I decided that a sonnet could prove to be appropriate for this poetically viable translation, given the lyrical nature of the content and the use of blank verse that emerged from the free-writing process.

In terms of the metre, this sonnet adheres to a strict iambic pentameter throughout, with two key exceptions, namely the fourth line “the birches stripped by the cold breath of death” and the seventh line “turns black. A sluggish heart of cooling blood”. These lines feature metrical interruptions in the form of mixed metre in the fourth line, which features not clean iambic pentameter but rather two iambs, an anapest and an amphimacer, and a caesura following the “turns black” of the seventh line, which forces the reader to pause before continuing. The mixed metre of the fourth line creates a kind of juddering interruption of the metre, which I included with the aim of illustrating the uneven, irregular motions of the trees being pulled – and subsequently stripped – by a blustery autumn wind. In the seventh line, the caesura comes after an instance of enjambement, with the enjambement serving to highlight the image of the sky turning black. The slight metrical interruption introduced by the caesura therefore serves to create an abrupt pause after the phrase “turns black”, which I included with the aim of further highlighting the darkening of the skies, and subsequently the abrupt nature of death, with images of death being a recurring theme throughout this poem.

Furthermore, I have included intrinsic poetic functions such as imagery, metaphor, internal rhyme and assonance throughout in order to reflect the content of the poem, namely the beginning of autumn and the resulting death and darkness. In the first two lines, I used the image of fire in order to portray the colours of both autumn and sunset, using images such as the trees as flames and the blades of grass as candle wicks. This is continued by my description of the leaves as “golden”, which forms an internal rhyme with the “cold” of the following line. This internal rhyme therefore allows me to link these two words, thus further portraying the colours and temperatures often associated with autumn.

Following this, in the fifth line, I employed alliteration, assonance and sibilance in order to portray the wind blowing across the landscape. The repetition of “W” in this line serves to create an almost whooshing sound which I hoped would reflect the sound of the wind, and the sibilance present in “whispers”, “sweep”, “silent” and yards” was employed in an attempt to mimic the sound of, for example, leaves rustling in the wind. This is followed by images such as the sky as a “yawning mouth”, as well as a “sluggish heart of cooling blood”. The use of “yawning” and “sluggish” in these lines was an attempt at portraying night and darkness, since the poem portrays not just the end of the day but the beginning of the darker months, which are often synonymous with tiredness and sleep in the form of, for example, hibernation. I used the image of “cooling blood” in order to further highlight the theme of death that is present throughout this poem, and my decision to describe the sky as a mouth was also born out of the idea of death – that is, these autumn evenings will consume all light and life, leaving nothing but darkness in its wake.

The final four lines of the poem serve to introduce more explicitly violent imagery than the preceding lines and images. For instance, the phrase “blood is shed” immediately conjures images of violence, as does the final image of “a slash of red before the bones are bared”. I also used internal rhyme in these lines to connect the words “shed” and “red”, thus

highlighting these violent images. I also used the phrase “when darkness steals the crown” in order to portray a sense of mutiny and therefore depict the changing of the seasons – in this case, summer to autumn – as a violent act. Lastly, I chose to explicitly use the word “violence” in the thirteenth line, namely “This is the violence of those autumn months”, which I aimed to serve as a frank underpinning of the poem’s themes.

6.2.5 “The Bonfire”

The Bonfire

A poetically viable translation of “Bråtebrann” by Halldis Moren Vesaas

Poised above us both:
the hard dagger glint of moon,
the dark sheath of sky.

*

Hands splintered, we clutch
bark and brush and twig and scrub –
dry artillery.

*

A greedy beacon,
flames like hot sharp tongues
scolding the darkness.

*

Like victors we stand,
land cleared, conquered battleground –
spring envelops us.

*

A new beginning,
your damp hair, your smiling face
illuminated.

6.2.6 Commentary: “The Bonfire”

When creating the poetically viable translation of “Bråtebrann”, my initial instinct was to write a poem in the form of a haiku sequence. This decision was based on a number of factors. Firstly, the action of the poem takes place outdoors in a natural setting, with two figures gathering branches and brush in order to create a bonfire and with images such as rain and the season of spring being present throughout. This therefore made me consider writing a sequence of haikus, since the haiku is a form that is traditionally written with reference to the natural world (“Haiku”). As well as this, it has been noted that haikus often contain two distinct images or ideas (“Haiku (or hokku)”). This is very much the case in ‘Bråtebrann’, where the images of the natural world are juxtaposed with war and battle imagery. With this in mind, I felt that a haiku sequence could prove to be an interesting and fruitful form for the poetically viable translation, and I consequently attempted to include both war and nature imagery in each of the five haikus that make up the sequence.

To expand upon this, the first haiku in the sequence features the images of a dagger and sheath, but also the image of the moon. It was my aim in this haiku to introduce the nature imagery by making it clear that the figures in the poem are outside – since the moon is “poised above” them – as well as introducing the war/battle imagery by likening the moon and sky to a dagger and sheath. This juxtaposition is continued by the depiction of the firewood as “dry artillery” in the following haiku, and by the use of violent words such as “hot”, “sharp” and “scolding” in the third haiku. The fourth haiku uses the images of “victors” and a “conquered battleground”, which are images that are present in the source poem, as well as introducing the concept of spring, thus offering another juxtaposition of nature and war. The fifth and final haiku in the sequence does not include any explicit war imagery, but rather offers “a new beginning”, thus following on from the “conquered battleground” of the previous haiku. The “damp hair” could imply toil, but also rain, thus

subtly upholding the nature imagery, and “illuminated” is used not only to refer to the light from the bonfire, but also to suggest an improvement in circumstances following the metaphorical war that has taken place throughout the sequence.

As well as this, I also aimed to include a number of intrinsic poetic functions throughout. For instance, I employed assonance and alliteration in the first haiku in the words “hard”, “dagger” and “dark” in order to link these words and create a sense of violence that would serve to introduce the war/battle imagery that would be continued throughout the sequence. Furthermore, in the third haiku, I intentionally used monosyllabic words in the line “flames like hot sharp tongues” in order to create a hard, staccato effect. By doing this, I aimed to illustrate and reflect the angry, scolding image portrayed in my description of the bonfire. Lastly, I made a deliberate decision to only include the word “illuminated” in the last line of the final haiku. This was not only because “illuminated” consists of five syllables, thus conforming to the syllabic conventions of the western haiku, but also because isolating this word would make it stand out, thus drawing attention to the word “illuminated” and consequently to the image of light and optimism with which I chose to end this sequence of haikus.

6.2.7 “The Setting Sun Casts Shadows on the Wall”

The Setting Sun Casts Shadows on the Wall

A poetically viable translation of “Timane går” by Halldis Moren Vesaas

The setting sun casts shadows on the wall.
The wind exhales, a gust, a long-held sigh.
Clouds overflow. The rain begins to fall.

You lie there in your bed, smiling and small
with paper skin and pale lips, cracked and dry.
The setting sun casts shadows on the wall.

We bring you flowers, smile as you recall
the scent and light and warmth of springs gone by.
The sky turns dark. The rain begins to fall.

Your time is near. The bells begin to toll.
We cannot speak. Our silence is a lie.
The clock continues ticking on the wall.

Your breathing slows. Your bedsheet is a pall.
We wish we could but cannot tell you why.
The heavens split and rain begins to fall.

How hard it is to know once and for all
that this will be the last of our goodbyes.
The setting sun casts shadows on the wall.
Tears overflow. The leaves begin to fall.

6.2.8 Commentary: “The Setting Sun Casts Shadows on the Wall”

When creating a poetically viable translation of “Timane går”, my first instinct was to use the form of the villanelle in order to reflect the passing of time, as is evident in the source poem. The tight, strict, repetitive rhyming nature of the villanelle form seemed like a natural choice when writing a poem about the passing of time, with the refrains and rhyming creating a rhythmic, steady nature that serves to correspond to the onward marching of time. As such, I decided to use the form of a villanelle in order to tell the same story that is described in the source poem – namely, the deteriorating health of a person and the silent despair of their friends.

In terms of the two refrain lines – namely “The setting sun casts shadows on the wall” and “Clouds overflow. The rain begins to fall” – I chose these not only because they would allow me to portray images that correspond to the passing of time and subsequently to death, but also because it would allow me to produce subsequent lines that would adhere to the rhyme scheme as well as create variations throughout the tercets and final two lines. The figure in the source poem lies in bed, close to death, yet dreams of the coming spring. I therefore tried to encompass this in my choice of refrain lines. The image of the setting sun casting shadows serves not only to portray the end of the day, but also serves as a metaphor – that is, the sun is setting on their life, and their world will soon be engulfed by the shadow of death. The second refrain line features natural images like rain and the falling of the leaves from the trees. This can also be read metaphorically, with the rain portraying tears and also functioning as pathetic fallacy, and the leaves falling from the trees serving as another metaphor for death. These images therefore allowed me to poetically convey the conceit of the poem, while allowing for a degree of flexibility and variation as the poem moves through the villanelle tercets.

The end words I chose for these refrain lines – namely “wall” and “fall” – were also chosen due to their monosyllabic nature, which would in turn result in more choice in terms of identifying corresponding end rhymes throughout the villanelle. Choosing these words also allowed me to use end rhymes that not only rhymed with the refrain end words, but that were also thematically appropriate. For example, the word “toll” is used in the context of a bell tolling, which is often carried out in order to signify the death of a person, but “toll” can also allude to the situation taking its toll on the weary friends, or the illness of the dying person taking a toll on their body. Similarly, the word “pall” as it is used in this poem refers to the heavy cloth that is draped over a coffin, thus alluding to death, but “pall” can also refer to the idea of losing strength, as well as the idea of gloom, which can therefore reflect the weakness of the dying person and the sadness their friends are experiencing, respectively.

In terms of the imagery used throughout this poem, I was keen to include the themes of nature and death, which are present in the original Norwegian poem. In order to do this, I employed pathetic fallacy throughout: namely death, grief and despair being depicted by the falling rain, the wind (which I have described as a sigh), the setting sun and, at the end of the poem, the falling leaves. The image of the falling leaves is the last one in the poem, and I would argue that it is a key image as it consists of a variation on “the rain begins to fall”, which is used throughout the rest of the poem. By using this final image, I aimed to create a distinct difference in image, namely that the sadness and despair depicted by the rain is now conflated with the falling of dead autumn leaves. The use of autumnal imagery – such as rain and falling leaves – is therefore juxtaposed with the reminiscence of “springs gone by” outlined earlier in the poem, thus portraying that the hope for life will ultimately be overtaken by the unavailability of death. The use of nature imagery to depict death and grief is also present in the second to last stanza, or the final tercet, in which the “pall” – an explicit reference to death – appears in the same stanza as the line “the heavens split”. Although this

phrase is used to denote the rain, the use of the word “heavens” also functions as an allusion to death, thus highlighting that the sick friend will soon pass away.

While the refrains are a key component of a villanelle, it is also common to create variations of the refrain and avoid word-for-word repetition in favour of variations that serve the poem’s content. Two examples of a variation on the refrain in this poem are “The clock continues ticking on the wall” and the final line of the poem “Clouds overflow. The leaves begin to fall.” In terms of the former, this marks a distinct variation as this line does not make reference to the sun casting shadows, but rather the clock continuing to tick. I felt that this was an appropriate variation as it not only continues to portray the passing of time, but also serves to contrast the onward marching of time with the slowing down of the dying friend’s life, which is highlighted by the first line of the following tercet “Your breathing slows”. In terms of the final line, “Tears overflow” is a variation on the “Clouds overflow” of the final line of the first tercet. While “Clouds overflow” is a metaphor and part of the pathetic fallacy previously outlined, “Tears overflow” is more direct, removing the metaphor in favour of an explicit description. The aim of this was to highlight the grief and despair of the dying person’s friends in a more explicit way, since the person in the bed moves slowly closer to death as the poem progresses. Lastly, “the leaves begin to fall” is a variation on the rain beginning to fall throughout the rest of the poem. This is done in order to create one final nature allusion to death – that is, just as the leaves die and fall from the trees in the autumn, so too does the person in the bed move away from their reminiscing of spring, instead moving closer to death.

6.2.9 “Twilight”

Twilight

A poetically viable translation of “Skumring” by Halldis Moren Vesaas

The day was [redacted]
 [redacted] painful [redacted] and [redacted]
 [redacted] pale
 [redacted] grey.

[redacted] we were separated
 and I knew [redacted]
 [redacted] that I wanted
 [redacted] you [redacted]

The doubt [redacted]
 [redacted] is strange and young.
 [redacted] You saw [redacted] me
 [redacted] a great [redacted]

[redacted] dark [redacted] sun [redacted]
 [redacted] the last glimmer
 of [redacted] a [redacted] flame [redacted]
 Then darkness [redacted]

[redacted] aches [redacted]
 [redacted] veil [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted] me [redacted]

[redacted] that [redacted] dead
 [redacted] age [redacted]
 Once again, I meet you [redacted]
 [redacted] and [redacted]

[redacted] I must [redacted] change
 [redacted]
 [redacted]
 [redacted] nothing [redacted]

6.2.10 Commentary: “Twilight”

When creating the poetically viable translation of “Skumring”, my first instinct was to create an erasure poem, also known as a blackout poem or a found poem. According to Poets.org, a website produced by the Academy of American Poets, found poems:

take existing texts and refashion them, reorder them, and present them as poems. The literary equivalent of a collage, found poetry is often made from newspaper articles, street signs, graffiti, speeches, letters, or even other poems. (“Found Poem”)

My decision to produce an erasure, or found, poem out of “Skumring” was inspired by the content of the source poem itself. In the source poem, the speaker is shocked by how, on a clear day, they can see how old their friend has become. However, when the sun goes down, the darkness covers their friend in shadow, thus concealing her face and therefore her age, which makes the speaker feel closer to their friend again. The fact that darkness and shadows play a significant role in this poem, as well as the fact that words such as “mørkret” [the darkness], “dult” [concealed] and “gøymt” [hidden] appear throughout, meant that I felt an erasure poem could be an appropriate way in which to approach this poetically viable translation, given that erasure poetry plays with the tension between concealment and revelation in order to create new meanings within already-existing texts.

In terms of creating a baseline English text with which to carry out the erasure, I decided to use a literal translation of the source text. My decision to use a literal translation was based on my desire to have an English text that was as similar to the source text as possible in order to stay close to the concept of creating new work out of an already-existing text. Creating a literal translation of a text does, of course, produce a new text, so it would be wrong to say that this baseline poem can be considered to be an already-existing text.

However, given that the literal translation creates a text that offers a direct portrayal of the content as well as the lines and stanzas in which this content appears, I would argue that this can be considered to be an appropriate baseline text for which to carry out this erasure.

However, it is worth noting that I did not use the exact same literal translation as the one found in chapter 4. While the literal translation in chapter 4 contained, for example, options and alternatives and made no attempt to come across as an aesthetic piece of work, the literal translation I used for this erasure poem did not include options and alternatives and differed slightly in its phrasing. For example, the literal translation in chapter 4 features “final flash” as a translation of “siste glimt”, whereas I have translated it as the slightly more poetic “last glimmer” in the baseline translation (though it is worth noting that both alternatives are still more or less equally literal). In general, however, both literal translations are very similar and can be differentiated by only a few small changes.

In terms of producing the erasure poem itself, this was created through a process of trial-and-error, in which I experimented with erasing different words, phrases and lines until an intelligible piece was created. Most of the words that appear in the erasure poem are made up of full words that appear in the source poem. However, there are a few instances in which I have partially erased a word in order to create a semantically different word. An example of this can be found in the word “aches”, which I created by erasing the “re” from the word “reaches” (a translation of the present tense verb “når”). Another example of this can be found in the word “change”, which I created by erasing “ex” from the word “exchange” (a translation of the base infinitive “bytte”). Lastly, in the phrase “the last glimmer of a flame”, I created the words “of a flame” by erasing the “d” and “y’s” from “day’s” (a translation of the definite noun “dagens”) in order to create the word “a” and by erasing the “s” from “flames” (a translation of the plural noun “eldar”) to create the singular “flame”.

Furthermore, despite the fact that this erasure poem was created from a literal translation – that is, a relatively uncreative translation approach – there were a number of surprising intrinsic poetic functions that arose as a result of employing this form, thus creating several instances of happy poetic coincidences. For instance, “painful and pale grey” contains both alliteration and assonance. As well as this, there is a half-rhyme between “young” and “sun”, which form end rhymes, and there are metaphorical elements when the poem’s speaker describes him/herself as “a great dark sun/the last glimmer of a flame”. There is also imagery and allusion present through the words “darkness”, “veils” and “death”, all of which either implicitly or explicitly speak to the idea of death: in this case, a dramatic way of describing the end of a relationship.

6.2.11 “Girl with Balloon”

Girl with Balloon

A poetically viable translation of “Spilt vin” by Cecilie Løveid

I stood in the gift shop and admired all the prints. Which should I buy? I spun the white ribs of the plastic rack and pondered the rotation, colours quivering like leaves in the breeze. Then a girl, shadowed and empty as a ghost. An ascending heart on an unheld string. I felt a pull in the solid hollow of my chest. Why did I want this one? I kept rotating, waiting for a new revelation, but her gaping body latched onto me like a bear trap. Okay, I said, I’ll take you. I’ll take this, I said to the sales assistant. Yes, she said, most people do, it reminds them of what they have lost. I felt exposed and slightly offended. This assistant with the sleek blonde hair and clock-watching eyes swaddled the girl in lilac paper, secured her with a small white sticker. Don’t think too much about it, she said.

I cradled the girl in her lilac blanket, took her home and unwrapped her, fixed her to my fridge with a tacky magnet. I wanted to grab a pen, extend the string back to her little hand, but I resisted. This is not the way of things. Lonely exhibition, sauce-spattered, kettle-curved, I no longer see her when I reach for milk, when I heave crusted plates into the sink. But outside, beneath the tight lid of summer, whenever I see the chubby knees of children, hear their scream-laughter piercing the clear sky, watch them thunder by with pink shoes and hungry eyes, I think of her arm outstretched, her red hope untethered. Where is she now?

6.2.12 Commentary: “Girl with Balloon”

One of the most noteworthy elements of my poetically viable translation of “Spilt vin” is the decision to focus on a completely different artwork to the one described in the source poem, namely Banksy’s “Girl with Balloon”. My decision to use this image was inspired by one of the many allusions contained within the source poem, namely the titular allusion to Den nye vinen, the Oslo-based rebel art group that I discussed in greater detail in the literal commentary to “Spilt vin” in chapter 4. By taking the concept of rebel art as a starting point, my initial instinct was to write a poem inspired by Banksy, whose graffiti-stencil artworks can be described as a form of rebel art and have indeed been used to convey political or otherwise socially critical messages. The decision to use “Girl with Balloon” was rooted in the fact that it is one of Banksy’s most famous and iconic pieces, with the interpretation of loss of innocence and childhood providing rich poetic potential. Indeed, the use of this image serves to reflect and convey the wistful loss of childhood as experienced by the poem’s subject. She becomes inexplicably drawn to this image, and even wants to connect the balloon back to the girl’s hand with a pen, but knows that she cannot do this. She then hangs the print on her fridge, where it becomes stained and damaged by the day-to-day activities within the kitchen, and slowly becomes blind to it, only remembering it whenever she sees and hears children playing outside in the summer. It was therefore my aim to use this particular image as a representation of lost childhood for a woman who is now caught up in the domestic, as represented by the fact that the print is displayed in (and sullied by) a kitchen.

It is worth noting that my decision to focus on Banksy was based on previous research into the allusions within “Spilt vin” and not on any specific aspect that appears explicitly in the content of the source poem itself. This poetically viable translation can therefore perhaps be described as acknowledging the allusions that are so often present in Løveid’s work. This

is particularly the case when considering that I simply name the artwork without explicitly stating that it refers to Banksy, thus requiring the reader to “do a little [...] detective work”, as Løveid so often requires of her readers (Garton 210). However, it is important to state that this was not a deliberate attempt to translate intertextuality in a systematic way, as criticised by Folkart, nor was it an attempt to create something representative of Løveid’s voice and style. Rather, this was an instance in which the poetically viable translation simply happened to contain ekphrastic allusions as a result of using the source text as poetic inspiration.

While the main focus of the poetically viable translation can be said to differ greatly from the source poem, it is worth noting that numerous elements of the source poem, such as aspects of the general narrative, are present within the poetically viable translation. To expand on this, the source poem “Spilt vin” features a person walking through an art gallery wondering which painting to buy. The art dealer – a woman who is having an affair with a medical student – takes her to a back room and shows her an entirely black picture, but tells her that she cannot buy it since she has reserved it for herself. When they return to the main gallery, the medical student has arrived to see the art dealer, and the poem’s subject buys a painting called “Spilt vin”, which makes her think of the black painting every time she looks at it.

In comparison, my poetically viable translation still takes place in the art world, but this time in the gift shop of a museum or gallery. The speaker of the poem ponders which print she should buy from a rack in the gift shop, eventually settling on a print of Banksy’s “Girl with Balloon”. The young sales assistant tells her that this is a commonly bought print as it reminds people of what they have lost, something that strikes the speaker of the poem as forward and slightly insulting. She takes the print home and hangs it on her fridge and soon becomes blind to it, only thinking about it whenever she sees and hears children outside enjoying themselves during the summer.

It is therefore evident that I have taken some inspiration from the content of the source poem, namely the decision to buy a piece of art and the wistfulness that comes with it, as well as the words of an enigmatic salesperson. It is also evident, however, that the narrative within the poetically viable translation is not as close to the source poem as, for example, my poetically viable translation of “Scootermadonna”. In other words, my translation of “Spilt vin” tells a different story to that of the source poem, whereas my translation of “Scootermadonna” tells the exact same story as the source poem. In this sense, the poetically viable translation can be said to be further away in terms of content than the others that appear within this chapter.

Despite this, it is worth noting that there are some elements in the translation that lean very close to the source text. The first example of this is that the form of the translation is largely reminiscent of the form of the source poem, namely a prose poem. The decision to stay with the prose poem form was not a deliberate attempt to stay close to the form of the source poem, however; rather, it seemed like an obvious choice when considering the largely narrative nature of the story I wished to convey.

As well as this, there are three key lines within the poetically viable translation that are taken directly from the source poem, all of which served as particular moments of inspiration and which appear at similar points in my translation. The first of these is the first lines of the source poem, which read “Jeg gikk gjennom utstillingen og likte alle bildene./Hvilket skulle jeg kjøpe?” [literal: I walked through the exhibition and liked all the pictures./Which should I buy?]. This is reflected very closely in the first line of my poetically viable translation, which reads “I stood in the gift shop and admired all the prints. Which should I buy?” The second line I took from the source poem is “Jeg følte meg avslørt og litt fornærmet” [literal: I felt exposed and a little insulted], which follows the enigmatic comment made by the art dealer to the figure in the poem. This is something I have recreated in the

poetically viable translation by using the fairly literal translation of “I felt exposed and slightly offended” following the comment made by the sales assistant to the speaker of the poem. Lastly, I took inspiration from the final line of the source poem, namely “Hvor er det/nå?” [literal: Where is it/now?], in which the figure in the poem ponders the whereabouts of the black painting she wanted, but was not allowed, to buy. I have echoed this in the poetically viable translation by using the line “Where is she now?”, with the “she” of this line referring both to the girl in the print and to the speaker’s own inner child.

Lastly, although this is a prose poem and therefore does not feature extrinsic poetic functions such as short, left-aligned lines on the page, I have employed a number of intrinsic poetic functions throughout the poetically viable translation. For example, I have included a high concentration of assonance and internal rhyme throughout the piece. An example of this can be found in the line “whenever I see the chubby knees of children, hear their scream-laughter piercing the clear sky, watch them thunder by with pink shoes and hungry eyes...”. In this line, I used alliteration (chubby/children), sibilance (knees/scream/piercing/sky), internal rhyme (hear/clear; sky/by) and assonance (thunder by/hungry eyes). Finally, in terms of imagery, I have included similes such as “like leaves in the breeze”, “empty as a ghost” and “body latched onto my like a bear trap”, and I have also used words such as “swaddled” and “cradled” to emphasise the sense of childhood innocence that this print evokes.

6.2.13 “The Ballad of Iron Lung”

The Ballad of Iron Lung

A poetically viable translation of “Scootermadonna” by Cecilie Løveid

Once upon a time there was a girl called Iron Lung
 whose bitter melody has, until now, remained unsung,
 for I have tried to keep it to myself to no avail,
 so gather round and listen as I tell her tragic tale.

When Iron Lung was little, she was stricken by a curse
 that trapped her in a cold room with a doctor and a nurse,
 a curse that slowly turned her little frame from flesh to stone
 until she couldn’t move or walk or breathe all on her own.

And so, to help dear Iron Lung, they placed her in a box
 that helped her breathe as evenly as pendulums of clocks
 and as the bellows worked away, she lay there like a doll
 and used her mind to paint fantastic pictures on the wall:

wizards donning pointed hats and dragons guarding treasure,
 elves and pixies living lives of mischief and of pleasure,
 knights on glossy horses winning love and admiration,
 princesses rejoicing after years of isolation.

For isolated was dear Iron Lung, and lonely too –
 her mother had to work all day out on the ocean blue
 and even though she tried her best to put on a brave face
 the only thing she longed for was her mother’s warm embrace.

And so the seasons came and went, and Iron Lung grew stronger
 until the curse was broken – yes! – and she was trapped no longer!
 (Those ties must have been severed by a special kind of magic,
 though what it was I do not know – it surely was fantastic.)

So off she went, dear Iron Lung, back to her childhood home
 limping, yes, but walking still, and breathing on her own!
 (Though let us not forget that Iron Lung is still a child
 and children should not live a life so frightening and so wild.)

And as she came in through the door she called out for her mother
 (it had, of course, been ages since they’d last seen one another)
 but oh, distress! Her heart grew cold and sadness pierced her bones
 for once again, her mother wasn’t there. She was alone.

She walked throughout the house and wept and cried her mother's name
and even though she knew she only had herself to blame
(for Mother needed money for the both of them to live)
this strange display of love was getting harder to forgive.

And so the seasons came and went and Iron Lung grew older
and longed for someone dear to rest her head upon his shoulder,
someone who would care for her and champion her cause,
someone who would be there like her mother never was.

And even if you don't believe that wishes can come true
what happened next to Iron Lung might make a fool of you,
for one fine day she saw him and her heart began to bleed:
a knight in battered leather on a rumbling metal steed.

Was he the one she'd dreamt about throughout those lonely years?
Was he the one to care for her and quell her many fears?
Was he the one to fill her lonely life with joy and laughter?
Was now the time she'd finally get her happy ever after?

The answer is that after years of being cursed and haunted
this boy was everything that Iron Lung had ever wanted
and he would place her on his steed and drive into the night
with Iron Lung clutching his waist, and not a limp in sight.

No, not a limp, and not a drag, and not a trip or stumble!
She glided down the road and felt her sadness start to crumble.
Now everyone would look at her in awe instead of pity
(for Iron Lung is young, and all she wants is to feel pretty).

But please let me remind you that this tale is one of woe
and even though this happened far away and long ago
I cannot tell a falsehood. There is no use pretending
that the tragic tale of Iron Lung will have a happy ending.

It happened on one fateful night with sky as dark as sin,
a winter windstorm tearing at their hair and clothes and skin.
They sped along and held each other tight throughout the drive
and Iron Lung felt overjoyed and never more alive.

But unbeknownst to Iron Lung, she'd cast a secret spell
upon her knight and lover who had treated her so well.
Yes, so besotted was he that his feelings overflowed –
he turned his head and looked at her instead of at the road.

What happened next, I'm sad to say, is just what you have feared:
they swerved and veered and hurtled off the road and disappeared.
(a telegram was sent out to her mother, still away,
but did she ever get it? I'm afraid I cannot say).

And so the seasons come and go and Iron Lung is gone.
She never saw another winter sky bleed into dawn.
She never felt another ray of sunshine on her skin.
She never felt another pang of love from deep within.

So now you know the story of our dearest Iron Lung,
the story of a lonely girl taken far too young.
I hope you take her story forth and share it far and wide
so everyone will know just how she lived and how she died.

So please remember Iron Lung and how she found her knight
and please remember how her joy shone like the stars at night
and please remember everything she fought and overcame
and please remember these: her life. Her love. Her death. Her name.

6.2.14 Commentary: “The Ballad of Iron Lung”

When considering how to approach the poetically viable translation of “Scootermadonna”, my initial instinct was to rewrite the source poem in the form of a ballad. This was based on two key elements: the abundance of fairy tale imagery throughout the three sections of the source poem, and the fact that the source poem is a narrative piece that centres around a tragic tale of a key figure, namely the Scooter Madonna. According to the Poetry Foundation, a ballad can be defined as

a popular narrative song passed down orally. In the English tradition, it usually follows a form of rhymed (abcb) quatrains alternating four-stress and three-stress lines. Folk (or traditional) ballads are anonymous and recount tragic, comic or heroic stories with emphasis on a single dramatic event. (“Ballad”)

The fact that ballads are traditionally connected with oral storytelling, as well as with recounting “tragic, comic or heroic stories”, was therefore a key factor in my decision to rewrite “Scootermadonna” in this form. Since the source poem is narrative in nature, with the story being recounted by an omniscient narrator, I decided that a ballad would be appropriate, given the strong narrative tradition that characterises the form. This decision was strengthened by the prevalence of the fairy tale imagery, since stories of, for example, knights and princesses can be seen to be “heroic” and are therefore examples of typical stories recounted in traditional ballads. In terms of the content of the poetically viable translation itself, my aim was to recount the exact same story outlined in the source poem: the story of a young girl with polio, isolated from her hardworking mother, who spends too much time alone after getting out of hospital, and who eventually meets a boy and falls in love before being fatally injured in a road accident.

In terms of the rhyming and metrical elements of my poetically viable translation, my ballad differs slightly from the above definition of a traditional ballad. As previously mentioned, a traditional ballad consists of quatrains with alternating four-stress and three-stress lines. My ballad, however, is written in iambic heptameter, namely in lines consisting of seven iambs, though there are occasional instances of metrical substitution and mixed metre throughout. Despite this, I would argue that this does still adhere to the general metre of the traditional ballad, since a four-stress line followed by a three-stress line in a traditional ballad would ultimately consist of seven stresses in total, which is the pattern my iambic heptametric lines adhere to. As far as the rhyme scheme is concerned, my rhyme scheme does not follow the traditional ABCB rhyme scheme, but rather an AABB rhyme scheme. The ballad is, however, written in quatrains, so while there are some aspects that differentiate my ballad from a traditional folk ballad, I would argue that it remains a ballad nonetheless.

Furthermore, I attempted to maintain a sense of orality throughout the poetically viable translation in order to honour the oral storytelling traditions of the ballad form. Some examples of this orality can be found in the first stanza, in which I write “for I have tried to keep it to myself to no avail/so gather round and listen as I tell this tragic tale”. In these lines, I have both referred to an “I” narrator and made reference to the fact that this narrator is introducing the story – that is, the poem – that they are about to tell. I have also directly appealed to the reader(s) – or listener(s) – of the poem by using the phrase “gather round and listen”, which I used with the aim of furthering this sense of oral storytelling. This direct address is something I have used throughout the piece, such as in the lines “Though let us not forget that Iron Lung is still a child” in the seventh stanza, “And even if you don’t believe that wishes can come true” in the eleventh stanza, and “But please let me remind you that this tale is one of woe” in the fifteenth stanza, as well as the direct appeals to the reader to remember and carry on this story in the final two stanzas of the piece.

Another way in which I attempted to convey a sense of orality was through the numerous asides that appear in parentheses throughout the poem. Examples of this include “(Though let us not forget that Iron Lung is still a child/and children should not live a life so frightening and so wild)” in the seventh stanza and “(for Iron Lung is young, and all she wants is to feel pretty)” in the fourteenth stanza, among others. The aim in including such asides was to create a sense of the narrator interjecting or interrupting the flow of the story in order to remind the listener of something, or in order to include some information that may not be entirely relevant but which serves to illustrate a point more clearly. As such, I felt that the sense of interjection offered by these asides contributed to the orality of the piece and was therefore appropriate in terms of the oral tradition of the ballad form.

Furthermore, and as previously mentioned, fairy tale imagery is something I was particularly keen to draw on when creating this poetically viable translation due to the relationship between ballads and traditional tales of heroism and tragedy. The allusions to fairy tales are present in the source text through the use of the word “eventyr” and the appearance of the boy on the scooter, which can be seen as an allusion to a knight in shining armour, as well as the common fairy tale trope of the absent mother. In my poetically viable translation, however, I have made the fairy tale imagery more explicit. For example, I have started the ballad with the typical fairy tale opening line “Once upon a time”. I have also included a stanza in which I depict the types of fairy tale figures Iron Lung imagines while she lies in the hospital, such as pixies, dragons, knights and princesses. As well as this, I have made explicit reference to the lover as a knight by describing him as “a knight in battered leather”, which is a play on “knight in shining armour”, as well as describing the scooter as a “steed”. Lastly, I have included references to curses, magic and spells throughout, which serve as metaphors for polio, curative treatments and love, respectively.

Another interesting point to note is that of allusion. As I outlined in the theoretical outline section to this chapter, Folkart does not believe in translating intertextuality, and this is not something I did purposefully when creating this poetically viable translation. However, there are a few instances throughout this ballad which could be interpreted as examples of intertextuality or allusion. Apart from the obvious allusions to fairy tales and fairy-tale tropes, the concept of a curse that turns flesh to stone (a metaphor for polio-induced paralysis) can potentially be seen as an allusion to the Greek myth of Medusa. Furthermore, the image of the boy turning around to look at Iron Lung, thus causing her death, could be seen as an allusion to the Greek myth of Orpheus and Eurydice, in which Orpheus accidentally condemns Eurydice to life in the underworld by turning around and looking at her as he attempts to save her from the underworld. By turning around too early, Orpheus breaks the conditions of Eurydice's freedom, namely that he should only turn back and look at her when they are both back in the land of the living. As such, turning back condemns Eurydice to the land of the dead, just as Iron Lung's lover condemns her to death by turning to look at her as they drive. It is worth noting that these allusions were not a deliberate creative choice and can instead be viewed as possible reader interpretations as opposed to a deliberate creative decision. Despite this, I found these interpretations to be interesting particularly in light of Løveid's work, which is characterised by dense allusions and intertextuality. As such, this can be said to unintentionally reflect the intertextual potential of Løveid's work without recreating the exact same intertexts – intertexts that more often than not are “inaccessible to anyone but the author without her explanation” (Garton 210).

Lastly, I believe it is worth noting the use of the word “fantastic” in the poetically viable translation, which appears twice. Although the recreation of microstructural elements was not my priority when creating poetically viable translations, I was keen to use the word “fantastic” as this serves to reflect the ambiguity of “eventyr” in the source poem. Just as

“eventyr” means both “adventures” and “folktales/fairy tales”, so too does fantastic mean both “excellent, good beyond expectation” and “fabulous, imaginary, unreal” (“Fantastic”). I therefore felt that this would be an appropriate word to use in this poetically viable translation both because the double-meaning serves to further emphasise the fairy tale elements of the piece and because this would offer a neat reflection of the ambiguity of “eventyr” within and throughout the source poem. An issue I would highlight here, however, is that I was originally keen to use the word “fantastic” three times in order to incorporate the “rule of three” fairy tale trope, but I unfortunately found myself unable to include it more than twice in a way that would not seem forced or shoehorned. As such, the word “fantastic” only appears twice, but I still believe that this is appropriate both in terms of content and as a nod to the ambiguity present within the source poem.

6.3 General Remarks

This chapter has shown that the poetically viable approach can be considered to be one of the more radical approaches to poetry translation, particularly when compared to the literal and the double-aim approaches also explored in this thesis. By using an approach that demands that the translator “cut ties” with the source poem “as ruthlessly as may be necessary”, the translator is required to view the production of a new text in a looser, more creative way as opposed to the usual microstructural considerations that characterise a more “readerly” approach to translation (Folkart 22–23, 122). As mentioned in the theoretical outline section to this chapter, this lack of microstructural considerations renders the grouping of different translational decisions irrelevant to this particular approach. However, I will use this section to offer a few general comments and reflections on this approach that became apparent when creating these poetically viable translations.

Firstly, it is evident that there was a definite pattern in terms of how I used the source poem as inspiration for the poetically viable translations in this chapter. In five out of the seven poems in this chapter, I used the content of the source poem as inspiration for the form of the poetically viable translation, such as writing “Scootermadonna” as a ballad due to the narrative and fairy tale elements of the source poem and creating an erasure poem out of “Skumring” due to the source poem’s focus on darkness and concealment. This pattern therefore resulted in an interesting observation in terms of overlap of approach, namely that there can be said to be some overlap between the way in which I used the source poem as a creative springboard and Holmes’ organic approach to translating form, as outlined in chapter 5 (Holmes, “Forms of Verse Translation” 26–27). Holmes states that organic form is when content of the poem dictates the form the translation will take, which is very much aligned with the way in which I approached the majority of these poetically viable translations. However, it is worth noting that I did not intentionally choose to employ organic form; rather,

this can be considered to be an interesting and unintentional overlap between a “readerly” approach and a “writerly” approach to poetry translation.

Secondly, although microstructural considerations were not my priority within this approach, it is worth noting that this relates to the microstructures of the source poem and not the microstructures of the poetically viable translation. In other words, while I was not concerned with recreating the exact form or metre or rhyme scheme of any given source poem, it was essential to take microstructures such as metre and rhyme into consideration depending on the form of the poetically viable translation in question. For example, the fact that I decided to create a villanelle out of “Timane går” meant that it was essential to bear in mind villanelle-related microstructures such as the complex rhyme scheme, metre and refrain/variation that characterises this form. As such, it would be wrong to say that microstructural considerations play no role in the poetically viable approach; rather, it is the microstructures of the source poem that are irrelevant, while the microstructural considerations of the poetically viable translation can be said to be an essential factor in creating a poem that “really is a poem” (Folkart 231). This is the case regardless of whether or not the poetically viable translation is written in a specific poetic form, as intrinsic poetic functions such as assonance and other sonic elements are microstructures that can exist outwith poems written in a specific poetic form.

Furthermore, although my intention was to use the source poems as inspirations for new work, it is worth noting that some elements of the source poems did appear in some of the poetically viable translations. In some instances, this was intentional, such as lifting lines directly from the literal translation of “Spilt vin” and placing them at the same points in the poetically viable translation, since these lines – coupled with the general narrative of the source poem – served as a kind of inspirational framework with which to write “Girl with Balloon”. In other instances, however, these repetitions or reflections of the source text

appeared not as intentional creative decisions, but rather as a kind of translational hangover from the translations that appear in chapters 4 and 5. An example of this is the phrase “conquered battleground” in “The Bonfire”, my poetically viable translation of “Bråtebrann”, with this phrase also appearing in my double-aim translation of the same, albeit as the plural “conquered battlegrounds”.

Another, more widespread example of this can be found in the titles of the poetically viable translations, as many of these are the same, if not very similar, to the literal and double-aim titles which appear in chapters 4 and 5. There are three exceptions to this: “Timane gâr” as “The Setting Sun Casts Shadows on the Wall” [Literal: “The Hours Pass”; Double Aim: “The Hours Wear On”], “Scootermadonna” as “The Ballad of Iron Lung” [Literal: “Scooter Madonna”; Double Aim: “Scooter Madonna”] and “Spilt vin” as “Girl with Balloon” [Literal: “Spilled Wine”; Double Aim: “Spilled Wine”]. The other four poetically viable translations that appear in this chapter all have titles that are either identical or lean very close to the literal and/or double-aim titles of the same.

In terms of title replication, I decided to drastically alter the title if it made sense in terms of the poetically viable translation being produced. Otherwise, I decided to retain the title if the poetically viable translation provided to be somewhat representative of the content of the source poem in question. In other words, the titles of the poetically viable translations were determined by how straightforward the titles of the source poems are in terms of their relationship to the content and the subsequent similarity – or lack thereof – of the poetically viable translation. In terms of individual words and phrases that appear both in previous translations of a given poem and in the poetically viable translation of the same, this was not an intentional choice – rather, this can be attributed to the fact that this approach is chronologically the last approach I have worked with in this research and, as such, I have already carried out in-depth translation work on these poems across the different approaches

before reaching this point, which has potentially resulted in occasional instances of the aforementioned translational hangover. However, I do not believe that these instances prove detrimental to the poetically viable translations in question. For instance, the phrase “conquered battleground” conveys the desired imagery as well as contributing to the overall syllable requirement of the haiku line of the poetically viable translation. This is not to suggest that translators who wish to achieve a successful poetically viable translation must go through the literal and double-aim approach in order to do so, but it is worth noting that carrying out a preliminary literal translation could prove to be fruitful in the creation of a poetically viable translation as it can allow the translator to explore aspects such as poetic coincidences that may inform and inspire the creative response.

Lastly, it is worth briefly considering an issue that can be said to run parallel to the poetically viable approach, namely the practice of monolingual poets using bridge translations to create their own versions of poems from languages they do not speak. This practice can be said to run parallel to the poetically viable approach due to the nature of using the source poem as creative inspiration. The practice of poetry translators providing bridge translations for monolingual poets has been criticised by poetry translators such as Jen Calleja and Sophie Collins, who claim in their article “She knows too much: ‘Bridge Translations’, ‘Literal Translations’ and Long-Term Harm” that this practice can ultimately lead to the devaluation of the work of the poetry translator. Calleja and Collins also suggest that the practice of, for example, monolingual poets using existing translations to create their own “translations” without crediting the original translators should be considered plagiarism, citing Don Paterson’s award-winning versions of Rilke’s poems as an example of this. Paterson, on the other hand, firmly believes in the untranslatable nature of poetry and has claimed that poetry translators do nothing more than “look at the Mona Lisa, then make a picture of a woman smiling” (*Book of Shadows* 45). The practice of versioning, also known

as renditioning, has also been criticised by Mona Kareem in her essay “Western Poets Kidnap Your Poems and Call Them Translations”, in which she expresses her bafflement over monolingual western poets claiming to have translated from languages they do not speak and labels the phenomenon of renditioning as translation as a colonial practice. The phenomenon of versioning and the practice of monolingual translation are fascinating areas within poetry translation and, I would argue, are very much linked to the poetically viable approach, though an in-depth exploration of this is unfortunately outwith the scope of this thesis. However, I would suggest that this could provide a rich area for future research, particularly with regards to (de)colonial translation practices within poetry translation, as well as the overall (de)valuing of the poetry translator when compared to monolingual poets.

7 Conclusion

7.1 Recap of Research Aims

This thesis has aimed to explore the feasibility of the literal approach, the double-aim approach and the poetically viable approach to poetry translation for two contrasting styles of Norwegian poetry, namely the rhyming metrical poetry of Halldis Moren Vesaas and the hybrid, genre-bending poetry of Cecilie Løveid. By choosing three approaches that encompass to varying degrees an instrumentalist or a hermeneutic approach to translation as outlined by Venuti, this thesis has also aimed to creatively illustrate the academic debate surrounding poetic (un)translatability and consequently show how practice-based research can be used to engage with translation theory within the discipline of Translation Studies. In this concluding section, I will reflect on the feasibility of each of these three approaches on the two poetic styles in question before reflecting on the benefits and possibilities of using a practice-based methodology within Translation Studies. I will then outline areas that I touched upon throughout the course of this thesis but which I could not develop or explore fully due to their being outwith the scope of the research, thus offering potential areas for future research.

7.2 Feasibility of Translation Approaches

When considering translational feasibility, it is true that the extent to which an approach can be considered feasible depends on the aim of the translation, e.g. whether the aim is to create an aesthetic piece of literature or whether the aim is to create, for example, a gloss or crib. Given that I have approached this research from the point of view of a literary practitioner –

namely a practising literary translator and a poet in my own right – my general aim throughout this research has been to explore the feasibility of these approaches in terms of creating poems that can stand as literary objects within the approach in question. As such, when I discuss the feasibility of each approach, I refer to their feasibility in terms of aesthetic poem-creation for a general reader of poetry.

First of all, it is worth noting that the literal approach to poetry translation, in which I translated in a grammatically stabilised way at the level of the line, produced vastly different results between the two styles when comparing the literal translations to the source poems. The literal translations of Vesaas' rhyming, metrical poetry unsurprisingly did not retain any of these rhyming and metrical elements and was perhaps the clearest indicator of the relative lack of creativity that underpins the literal approach when compared to the other two approaches explored in this thesis. By contrast, the literal approach as applied to Løveid's prosaic poems produced translations that were largely representative of the source poems. These instances of close source-poem representation can be attributed to the close linguistic proximity between Norwegian and English, with both languages following subject-verb-object syntactical formulations. As such, it is possible to conclude that the literal approach can be a feasible translation approach for poems that do not contain a high concentration of intrinsic poetic functions and where the translation occurs between languages with similar syntactical and otherwise grammatical conventions, and that it is a less feasible approach when translating poems with a high concentration of intrinsic poetic functions. Løveid's poems are, as mentioned throughout this thesis, densely layered with allusions and intertexts, and this is something that would not have come to the fore in a literal translation that did not also consist of an explanatory commentary. However, the fact that these allusions are often "inaccessible to anyone but the author without her explanation", thus not necessarily being immediately evident to a Norwegian reader of the source poem, means that the literal

approach can still be considered to be a feasible approach for this style of Norwegian poetry, with the addition of commentaries – or, in the case of full translations, translator’s notes – serving to enhance and explain the literal content (Garton 210).

It is also worth mentioning that there were occasional instances of unplanned aesthetic elements arising in the literal translations of both Vesaas and Løveid, despite the literal approach being less feasible for poems containing a high concentration of intrinsic poetic functions. Given that my aim in this approach was to translate literally at the level of the line and not recreate any poetic or aesthetic elements, these instances can be described as aesthetic coincidences and therefore considered to be an unintentional, yet poetically pleasing, side-effect of the literal translation. As such, while the literal approach can be described as one of the least creative approaches to poetry translation, I would argue that carrying out a literal draft can still prove to be a fruitful endeavour as these aesthetic coincidences can potentially be used, either directly or as inspiration, in a freer, more poetically creative translation.

The double-aim approach also produced some striking differences between the translations of Vesaas’ poems and the translations of Løveid’s poems. The fact that this approach allows for, and even encourages, translational creativity therefore meant that it was possible to write target poems that were characterised by rhyming and metrical elements, with my translations aiming to adhere to the same rhyming and metrical elements contained in the source poems. As such, I was able to reflect a number of the intrinsic poetic functions contained within the Vesaas source poems, meaning that I was able to fulfil the demands of the double-aim approach; that is, that it should reflect enough of the source poem that it can be considered to be a translation, but that it should still read as a poem in its own right. The Vesaas translations in this approach therefore exist as aesthetic pieces of writing characterised

by a number of intrinsic poetic functions, which is a stark contrast to the less creative translations produced when following the literal approach.

It is this comparison between the literal approach and the double-aim approach that provides one of the most interesting observations between the two poetic styles in question. The double-aim approach resulted in translations of Vesaas' poems that reflected the high concentration of intrinsic poetic functions present in the source poem and therefore resulted in more creative, aesthetic pieces of work when compared to the literal translations of the same. The double-aim translations of Løveid's work, on the other hand, did not produce translations that were vastly different from the translations produced in the literal approach, to the extent that my reflective commentary on Løveid's double-aim translations was largely focused on exploring the instances where the double-aim approach resulted in deviations from the literal approach of the same. These deviations largely consisted of instances in which the double-aim approach allowed for a more creative translation of specific lines or phrases. As such, in terms of translational feasibility, the double-aim approach can be said to be a feasible approach for both rhyming, metrical poetic styles and the hybrid, genre-bending poetic styles. However, it is worth noting that this approach can be viewed as a more feasible approach in terms of poetry with a high concentration of intrinsic poetic functions and that while it is also feasible in terms of translating poetry between linguistically similar languages and which has a low concentration of intrinsic poetic functions, there is not much difference – with the exception of minor aesthetic elements – between the double-aim approach and the literal approach when it comes to this particular poetic style.

In addition, in terms of Vesaas' poems, it is worth noting that I chose a very specific form of the double-aim approach for the purposes of this thesis, namely that I would attempt to recreate the exact metre and rhyme scheme of the source poem. As outlined in chapter 5, this strict adherence resulted in various degrees of success, with some elements being

translated very effectively and others falling short of what I aimed the double-aim translation to be. However, it is essential to note that this was due to the specific, self-imposed restraints I chose to adhere to for the purposes of this research and not due to any perceived failure of the double-aim approach to produce an aesthetic translation. As I outlined in chapter 5, the double-aim approach allows for a significant degree of translator agency, with the translator choosing the type of double-aim approach they wish to engage with, such as whether to employ an analogical, mimetic, organic or extraneous approach to translating form (Holmes, “Forms of Verse Translation” 26–27). As such, the double-aim approach is not a prescriptive approach; as Jones states, it is a common approach for poetry translators to use a mix of approaches within the double-aim approach to arrive at a final translation (*Expert Action* 39). With this in mind, the double-aim approach can be considered to be one of the more flexible and creative approaches to poetry translation, thus being one of the more feasible approaches in terms of creating an aesthetic translation of a poem.

Lastly, the poetically viable approach makes for an interesting case in terms of translational feasibility as this approach is largely unconcerned with the source poem beyond its function as inspiration for a new poem. As outlined in chapter 6, many of the intrinsic poetic functions contained within the source poems could also be found in the poetically viable translations of the same. However, this was not an attempt at recreating source-poem microstructures; rather, these intrinsic poetic functions occurred as a result of using the source poems as creative springboards for new work. As such, the success of this approach in terms of freeing the translator from source-poem considerations in favour of creative writing inspiration is indisputable. To explore this further, it is worth noting that the poetically viable approach’s insistence on encouraging the translator to move away from strict adherence to the source text is something that Jones – a proponent of the double-aim approach – notes can occasionally be a useful method, since strict adherence can limit translators due to the focus

on specific microstructures as opposed to utilising a wholist approach to translation (*Expert Action* 101). With this in mind, the poetically viable approach can therefore be feasible in terms of freeing the translator from source-text microstructures and allowing for more creative translation decisions, particularly when the constraints of the source-text microstructures are limiting as opposed to conducive to creative solutions.

7.3 Benefits of Practice-Based Research

I believe that the use of practice-based research, as opposed to practice-led research, has proven to be necessary for this particular project as the inclusion of the results of the translation practice – namely the translations – are essential in order to fully understand the insights and findings produced by this research (Candy 1). In other words, the illustrative nature of the thesis, coupled with the desire to engage with the idea of practical translation as research in its own right, means that practice-based research was the necessary methodological approach for this particular project. Engaging with this specific methodology proved to be richly rewarding in terms of both translation insights and the production of the translations themselves and, as such, it is my hope that this thesis has outlined the various benefits of engaging with practice-based methodologies within the field of Translation Studies.

One key benefit of utilising this type of methodology within Translation Studies is that it can serve to help narrow the gap between theory and practice. As mentioned in chapter 2, much has been written about the perceived polarity between theory and practice (Chesterman and Wagner 136; Fawcett et al. 1–2; Weissbort ix). This polarity has, however, been challenged by the likes of Boase-Beier, who states that engaging with theory can “[encourage] a certain amount of freedom from too narrow a view of the source text” and “give us the confidence to try out other methods, explore other types of equivalence, or

question degrees of closeness” (“Who Needs Theory?” 25). This has indisputably been the case throughout this particular research project. Speaking from the point of view of a practitioner, I found that the approaches I chose to explore in this thesis – and theory I engaged with while researching these approaches – required me to expand my poetry translation practice beyond what I would otherwise have done and contemplate new ways in which to engage with a text. For instance, the aesthetic coincidences that arose during the literal approach revealed there to be some potential value in carrying out a literal translation, while the radically creative poetically viable approach demanded that boundaries be tested, thus forcing me to consider a wholist approach to the target poem without getting entangled in source-poem microstructures. It is therefore my hope that this thesis offers a worthy contribution to the burgeoning scholarship that supports the mutual benefits of engaging with both theory and practice (Nelson; Smith and Dean).

It is also my hope that this thesis provides an example of how practice-based methodologies can produce work that adheres to the REF’s guidelines on practice as research in terms of translations and other forms of creative writing. As previously mentioned, the practice-based nature of this research requires that the practical translations be included in order for the insights and findings to be fully understood. The REF guidelines state that translations “may enhance existing understanding of the material in question, and may provide evidence of creativity in its own right” (112). I would argue that the evidence of creativity is indisputable, particularly when considering the creative decisions outlined and discussed in depth within the reflective commentary sections of each chapter. These discussions not only outline the translation thought process, but also the creative – namely “novel and appropriate” – solutions that occurred when solving a variety of complex translation problems related to source-poem microstructures (Jones, *Expert Action* 38). This creativity is perhaps most evident in the double-aim and poetically viable approaches, with

the analytical commentary that forms part of the literal translations being undoubtedly less creative, but still displaying a high level of analysis and “mastery of existing contextual knowledge” – something that can also be said of the reflective commentary sections of each chapter, which offer this research a discursive form outwith the practice itself (Candy 5). As such, this thesis has aimed to show the ways in which poetry translation in particular requires high levels of creativity and analysis, both through the inclusion of the practical translations and through the reflective commentaries. This not only shows how practice-based methodologies can be valid and rewarding in terms of translation research, but also outlines the reasons – namely the complex creative and analytical solutions – that can lead to translations being considered research in their own right, as outlined by the REF.

Lastly, I hope that this thesis can serve both as an example of how practitioners can use practice in order to engage with theoretical debates and as an example of how long-form, practice-based projects within the field of Translation Studies can be carried out. As well as this, I hope that the creative and critical insights produced as a result of this research prove to be a worthy addition to the burgeoning scholarship outlining the benefits of practice-based methodologies across a variety of academic and creative disciplines (Bolt 22, 33; Robson et al. 197; Scrivener and Chapman 4). Finally, I hope that this thesis illustrates how practice-based research can be a more diverse and accessible way for translation practitioners to engage with academia, and that this methodology can therefore be viewed as a valid and rewarding way in which to engage with and carry out research within the field of Translation Studies (Leavy 21).

7.4 Areas for Future Research

There are a number of areas I have touched upon throughout this thesis that, due to their being outwith the scope of this particular project, I have been unable to expand upon or

explore in greater detail. However, these are areas that I believe could prove to be fruitful in terms of future research within the disciplines of Scandinavian Studies and Translation Studies and, as such, I will outline these areas in this section.

Firstly, this thesis explores three translation approaches as applied to two contrasting styles of Norwegian poetry, with the target language being British English; in other words, this scope of this thesis is necessarily limited. I therefore believe it could be fruitful to expand upon this and explore how these approaches fare when applied to different language combinations, particularly language combinations that are not as linguistically close as Norwegian and English. This could therefore provide a more detailed insight into the feasibility of these approaches when applied to various styles of poetry across a variety of language combinations. However, as Weissbort states in the introduction to *Translating Poetry*, “there are as many approaches to poetry translation as there are poetry translators” (xiii). As such, future research into poetry translation approaches need not be limited to the approaches explored in this thesis and can instead explore a variety of different approaches depending on the research topic in question.

Secondly, in terms of the standards of the Norwegian language explored in this thesis, it is worth noting that Nynorsk – the standard used by Vesaas – is often purported to be a more poetic standard of Norwegian than Bokmål, the standard used by the majority of the Norwegian population (Garton 147). This notion of Nynorsk as a more poetic standard of the Norwegian language is often claimed, yet the reasons for this assertion are rarely expanded upon. I briefly touched upon the various sociolinguistic factors that could potentially contribute to this assertion in chapter 3, but I would suggest that a more in-depth exploration of the poetics of Nynorsk could be a fascinating area of study, specifically within the discipline of Scandinavian Studies.

In terms of Løveid in particular, I believe that further research into the poetics of her authorship could also prove to be a fascinating area for research within the discipline of Scandinavian Studies, as well as within disciplines such as Comparative Literature. As mentioned throughout this thesis, Løveid is a prolific author across many genres, but there is a significant degree of overlap in that it can often be difficult to distinguish her poetry from her prose and vice versa without the genre labels attached to the works in question upon publication. As there has been some scholarship in English on Løveid's dramatic works, but not as much on her poetry and prose, I therefore believe that a more in-depth exploration into the similarities and differences of Løveid's poetry and prose could prove to be a fruitful area of research.

In addition to this, I touched briefly upon the concepts of monolingual translation, versioning and renditioning – and the problematic elements associated with these – in chapter 6. While it was not appropriate to expand on these concepts in this particular thesis, I would argue that the phenomenon of monolingual translation is something that could be explored in greater detail, particularly when considering power imbalances and (de)colonial attitudes within poetry translation and the perception – and devaluation – of the poetry translator when compared to monolingual poets.

Lastly, this thesis has provided an example of how practice-based research can be used within the discipline of Translation Studies to explore theoretical debates and considerations related to the translation of poetry. This research has built upon a small, but growing, foundation of work by translation scholars and practitioners who are engaging with practice in their scholarly writing, such as the poetry translation articles by Wright and Zid and Tarantini's practice-based monograph on theatre translation, as outlined in chapter 2. It is therefore my hope that this thesis has contributed to illustrating the value of using a practice-based methodology within the field of Translation Studies and that other researchers may

consequently be encouraged to engage with practice-based methodologies in their future translation research, both within and outwith the specific subsection of poetry translation.

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