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TRANSLATING WAGNER

A MULTIMODAL STYLISTIC CHALLENGE

A TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY

A practice based thesis in two volumes
Volume 1 Critical/Reflective Component

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Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my beloved father, Neville Alexander Wilson-deRoze, who passed away unexpectedly just five days after I was notified of my award. He was so pleased and proud that I would be called Dr. Wilson-deRoze and I am so proud and grateful to have had him for a father.

Karen Wilson-deRoze 2.1.2018

Abstract

The translator tasked with providing a metrical (singing) translation of an opera libretto must consider that the opera, as a *Gestalt,* is 'other' than the sum of its individual verbal, musical and mimic-scenic parts and requires the translator to consider how the 'web of relationships' (Snell-Hornby, 1995: 450) between them is affected when one part is altered through translation. Translation, in this case, must go beyond copying the original prosody and rhyme schemes, so that the new words fit the notes, and consider the relationship between musical and poetic meaning as well as the resulting dramatic action on stage.

As a composer, Richard Wagner was concerned with every thread in the semiotic web of his operas. He wrote the words and the music, provided copious stage directions, was involved with the production of his works, and went as far as building his own theatre at Bayreuth. His lengthy, and at times convoluted, theorising about the synthesis of poetry, music and the scenic-mimetic in his operas, serves as something of a functional blueprint of multimodality. In his 1851 monograph, *Oper und Drama* (1914a, 1914b), Wagner explains how musico-poetic synthesis is created through *Versmelodie* (verse-melody), from which melody grows organically, facilitated by the "direct sensory appeal" of alliteration, concision and free rhythm (Stein, 1960: 69).

This thesis examines the "nexus of foregrounding" (Peer, 1986: 16) found in Wagner's *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung* and considers how three translations used in performance (Jameson c.1899, Porter 1977, Sams 2006) and my own respond to Wagner's synthesis of verse and music. It will consider the constraints and influences which shape the translator's recreation of Wagner's musico-poetic style. My translation of these two operas from the *Ring* cycle has been produced for the aim of performance but unlike those of Jameson, Porter and Sams, they prioritize alliterative rhyme as an essential part of the musico-poetic intersemiosis.

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I would like to express my gratitude to my advisor Prof. Kirsten Malmkjaer whose inspirational teaching on the Masters in Translation course at Leicester University aroused my interest in my research area of style in translation. I thank her for her continuous support and encouragement and for giving me confidence in my endeavours.

I must also thank my singing teacher Andrew Ashwin[1] who introduced me to singing opera, which inspired my interest in opera translation. It was thanks to him introducing me to German *Lieder* that I wrote my Masters Dissertation, *Translating Schubert Lieder*, which prepared the way for discussing opera translation. Learning from Andrew how to interpret words and music has been fundamental to my approach to translation of vocal music. Andrew kindly read both operas that I translated giving me a professional singer's valuable feedback. He also cast an expert eye over the chapter in which I discuss music and its meaning to check my comparatively elementary level of music theory.

I also thank Leicester University for making my research and translation possible through a studentship.

Thanks must also go to my friend Afaneen, a fellow PhD student, for letting me share with her my worries and doubts over the years. Finally, I would like to thank my parents for their quiet support and encouragement throughout the time spent researching and writing this thesis.

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A note on the presentation of texts.

In the main body of the thesis, Acts and scenes are referred to as follows: Act II scene 4, often abbreviated to II/4. In musical examples, they are abbreviated as II/iv, for example.

Glossary translations where given are placed in parentheses ().

Throughout the thesis, quotations include bold and underlined type or both to indicate the following:

bold text indicates alliterative rhymes

underlined text indicates missing alliterative rhymes

bold/underlined incorrect rhyme (explained in the thesis)

Brackets [] which enclose a syllable indicate it is an additional one not present in the original text; where they enclose no text they indicate the omission of syllables.

Note that Wagner's orthography has been retained where the original text is given or quoted.

Tables and figures are numbered consecutively from the beginning to the end of the thesis.

ABBREVIATIONS

Das Rheingold (DR)

Die Walküre (DW)

Götterdämmerung (GD)

Source text (ST)

Target text (TT)

Source language (SL)

Target language (TL)

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1. Introduction

If translation theory describes what practioners do and suggests reasons why they do it, with perhaps the anticipation of informing and assisting future practice, then it is not perhaps surprising that studies dedicated to opera are 'scant' (Bosseaux, 2011:183); few translators work in the field because in so many countries today so little opera is performed in translation. The prominent English-speaking translators in the past have tended to be amateurs, musicologists, and music critics rather than professional translators and their contribution to theoretical knowledge has been limited and largely anecdotal. Amongst translation scholars, the relatively low interest in studying translation and music may be its multidisciplinary demands (Susam-Sarajeva, 2008:189) and the paucity of 'frameworks and tools' to explain how music and translation work together (ibid: 190).

Nevertheless, since the 1980s, translation scholars have increasingly contributed to this field of interest. Many studies tend to be functionalist (Low, 2003a, 2003b, 2005, 2008, 2017; Apter, 1985, 1989; Apter & Herman, 1995, 2000, 2011, 2016; Herman & Apter, 1991), addressing the undeniably exigent factors of fitting new words to the rhythms of existing music, retaining the rhymes (perhaps) and ensuring that the new words can be sung on the notes on which they are placed. A smaller number approach opera and song as multisemiotic (Gorlée, 1996, 1997, 2008) or multimodal texts (Kaindl, 1992, 1995, 1996) whose meaning relies on the integration of individual semiotic modes such as language and music. With the exception of Kaindl (1995), few seek to understand the semiotic relationships and functional interconnections between words and music that re-create the textual whole.

The theory of opera translation presented in this thesis has word-tone intersemiosis at its heart. Intersemiosis can, of course, refer to the transposition of one semiotic system into another such as when verbal signs are reinterpreted as music by a composer, however, it can also refer to the relationships between semiotic systems, that is, the way in which verbal signs and music, for example, create meaning together through semiotic integration or contrast. Intersemiosis is about the interplay of different modes of meaning. Word-tone intersemiosis was at the heart of Wagner's composition process when he composed *Der Ring des Nibelungen* (*The Ring of the Nibelung*,

hereafter the *Ring*) and nearly all his operas after *Lohengrin* (1848). Whilst it may be said of some operas, that the libretti were mere fodder for the composer whose words were eventually subsumed by the music (Groos & Parke, 1988: 12), this cannot be said of Wagner's *Ring*. As a composer, Richard Wagner was concerned with every thread in the semiotic web of his operas. He wrote the words and the music, provided copious stage directions, was involved with the production of his works, and went as far as building his own theatre at Bayreuth. His lengthy, and at times, convoluted theorising in the essay *Oper und Drama* (1852/1914a, 1852/1914b) about the synthesis of words, music and the scenic-mimetic in opera, serves as something of a functional blueprint of multimodality. In it, Wagner explains how musico-poetic synthesis is created through *Versmelodie* (verse-melody), a melody that grows organically from the verse of the libretto facilitated by the 'direct sensory appeal' of alliteration, concision and free rhythm (Stein, 1960: 69).

Any study of word-tone intersemiosis involves understanding how the semiotic functions of different modes, such as dramatic verse and music, are transferred from one to another creating a complex semiotic structure. This makes the somewhat esoteric study of translating opera potentially more relevant for a wider field of application, since the concepts that I explore are relevant to translators not only of opera but also of other multimodal texts. Today's multisemiotic delivery of information and entertainment, especially through digital media, makes the analysis and understanding of texts whose meaning relies on 'additional information' supplied by other 'sign system[s]' (Reiss, 1981:125) increasingly important. Whether one is considering functional texts such as those of an information based website or an aesthetic work like an opera, understanding the stylistic choices of its creator and their contribution to meaning through the convergence of semiotic modes is an integral part of the creation of its counterpart in another language, for another culture. For me, this is about understanding the regularities found in the choices made by the text's creator, which are not determined by function or content but constitute a means of self-expression. Such an approach extends Jakobson's poetic function (1960a/1981) to all semantic modalities to consider how selection is superimposed on contiguity so that a translator might re-create it in a translation.

The theoretical framework for this study combines pragmatic aspects of vocal music translation theory with multimodal translational stylistics. 'Translational Stylistics' is a form of descriptive translation studies designed to raise and answer questions about why, given the characteristics of the source text (ST), translators have made certain patterned choices in their translations (Malmkjær, 2003; 2004). The emphasis on the source text distinguishes translational stylistics from other approaches, and is particularly relevant to opera whose words can never be separated from its culturally bound music. Multimodal translational stylistics seeks to understand how the stylistic features of verbal and non-verbal semiotic modes in a multimodal source text function as an expression of its author's thoughts to affect the reader's interpretation and how this is preserved or altered by the translator's choices. Since it is not a question about the style of any one part of the operatic whole alone but about the nexus of stylistic features created by the author to foreground meaning or emotion, I have taken concepts from multimodal discourse theory, such as intersemiotic complementarity and dissimilarity, to facilitate analysis of this nexus or integration. My approach is somewhat eclectic, fusing the theories, methodologies and practices of translational stylistics and multimodal discourse analysis to consider stylistics within a multimodal context.

This research project had two aims. The first was to create a singable[2] translation of two operas from Wagner's *Ring* retaining the stylistic function of *Stabreim*[3] (alliterative verse) as found in the original libretto, something that has largely been sacrificed by translators since the 1882 translation by Frederick and Henrietta Corder. The decision to translate an opera was sparked by my interest in singing and literary translation. Having studied and worked on a number of arias (in the original language) with my singing teacher, I noted how often the English translation given in the vocal score was semantically distant from the original text and how it separated important words from important musical features and sometimes presented the singer with difficult vowels to sing at a high pitch. I was curious to see if I could do better. I chose Wagner's *Ring* because of a personal interest sparked many years ago by my studies of Thomas Mann and T.S. Eliot when I was an undergraduate student of

[2] A translation metrically aligned to music so it may be sung.

[3] Literal translation Stave-rhyme – in which stave refers to the stem of a word.

Comparative Literature. I also chose it because the libretto was written by the composer and published as a stand-alone 'poem' long before anyone heard it as opera (1872a, 1872b), giving it a rare status amongst opera libretti. It was not meant merely as fodder for the musician to be 'annihilated' once music was added (Langer, 1953: 153). Wagner's libretto had for me a literary value that made an exploration of the relationship between verbal and musical meaning in translation worthy of research. The purpose of the translation was to produce a singable translation that even if only ever used as a reading libretto, would add to the relatively few translations available to the operagoer and more particularly to students of Wagner and singing. It would provide for them a translation in which the convergence of alliterative verse and music is reproduced in a more faithful manner than any translation currently available. Only two *Ring* operas could be included for reasons of space. The second of the tetralogy, *Die Walküre* (*The Valkyrie*), was chosen because it is the most performed[4] and because in it the 'reciprocal influence' between Wagner's theory and practice of word-tone synthesis is arguably at its best (Stein, 1960: 99). I chose *Götterdämmerung* (*Twilight of the gods*), the final and longest opera of the tetralogy, because it is the climax to the *Ring*, recapitulating much of what has occurred in the earlier operas. It was also chosen because its libretto was written before Wagner's theory on word-tone synthesis was fully developed and has some clear differences to *Die Walküre* (ibid: 193) in its word-tone intersemiosis and in its structure, containing grand opera elements such as ensemble singing and a chorus.

The second aim of this thesis was to explore translation in a multimodal context through my own process of translation and through the comparative analysis of my translation with those by Jameson (published between 1899 and 1904), Porter (1977) and Sams' (2006). However, one of the limitations of this study is a consequence of the choice of an interdisciplinary subject. For reasons of space and tightness of argument, this thesis focuses mainly on the intersemiosis of words and music. Whilst the libretto and musical score contain numerous signs regarding the opera's realization on stage, which a translator will doubtless consider, a comprehensive comparison of the way the translations influence staging and performance has been omitted, as it would constitute

[4] See Royal Opera House, London website. http://www.roh.org.uk/productions/die-walkure-by-keith-warner

a thesis in its own right. Such an undertaking is, in any case, questionable. Not all the scenic-mimetic aspects of performance come from the text (sung words or stage directions) and music but arise during the staging process often based on the director's vision but also on each performer's subjective interpretation, not to mention the influence of performance history and target audience culture. There are many methodological difficulties involved in studying the scenic-mimetic mode, mainly the lack of recorded performances of opera in translation. Without the basic data of recordings of the same opera using the same and/or different translations, the multimodal elements of performance can only be studied as potentialities based on the libretto and score. Although the scenic-mimetic mode is omitted from the analytical comparison of the translations, I explore the ways in which its resources, such as deixis, may be relevant to libretto translation and discuss how the subjective interpretation of performative subtext can be problematic (Chapter 4.3).

To explore the semantic dimensions of alliterative verse and their integration with music in the translations, I looked to Wagner's own aesthetics of word and tone intersemiosis. The intention was to develop an understanding of how the relationship of music and words determines what is and what is not important in the total complex of word and tone and what is and what is not, therefore, worth the struggle to simulate in the translation. Although I have considered the technical aspects of vocal music translation, I have focussed on Wagner's musico-poetic stylistic choices (based on his theoretical works) and how the aforementioned translators chose to manage them either preserving or altering the way in which singers perceive, understand and interpret the opera and how they communicate its meaning to the audience. The number of studies that specifically focus on a systematic analysis and comparison of words and music in opera translation from the point of view of the semiotic make up and relationship of modes of meaning is limited. This study will add to that small number.

I begin the critical-reflective component of this thesis not with translation theory, as might be expected, but with Wagner's theory of opera (Chapter 2) that addresses the manner in which words, music and dramatic action are synthesised. This serves as a context for my analysis and comparison of English translations of the *Ring*. This is followed by an overview of current research in vocal music translation in general and opera in particular (3.1), a discussion of how multimodal discourse analysis

can be helpful to translators of opera (3.2) and how 'Translational Stylistics' can be extended to multimodal texts (3.3). Chapter 4 addresses the nature of the four dominant modes of opera, prosody (4.1), rhyme (4.2), the scenic-mimetic (4.3) and music (4.4) as well as briefly looking at the medium of the voice (4.5). This chapter provides the framework on which the comparative analysis of the opera translations in Chapter 6 is based. Chapter 5 gives a diachronic overview of English *Ring* translations made for reading and for singing, with particular emphasis on those by Jameson, Porter and Sams, which are the focus of the later analysis and comparison in Chapter 6. Chapter 5 also includes the aims and objectives of my translation.

Chapter 6, relating back to Chapter 4, analyses and compares the three aforementioned translations with mine, in terms of how each reproduces the modal convergences or divergences of Wagner's original score. It looks specifically at how Wagner's brand of intersemiosis, *Versmelodie*, is replicated to achieve a similar semiotic complementarity of verbal and musical meaning as in the original opera. Chapter 6.1 looks at the convergence of prosody in music, verse and dramatic speech. Chapter 6.2 looks at how the semiotic role of alliterative verse has been reproduced in the translations. In Chapter 6.3, I look at the intersemiosis of musical and verbal meaning, that is, how Wagner's verse and melody converge as modes and how music serves to multiply the meaning of the verse, corroborating, elaborating, enhancing or contradicting it, and finally, in Chapter 6.4, I briefly address the implications of vocal production on translation. Using Wagner's own aesthetics, the analysis investigates the semantic potential of music and its relationship to the libretto, and how the translators have managed the convergence of music and language in terms of the style elements used by the composer.

Volume 2 contains my translation of *Die Walküre* and *Götterdämmerung*. The translations are set to the vocal melody to be more easily appreciated in terms of their metrical fit and phrasing and to afford an appreciation of the intersemiosis of melodic and verbal meaning. It should be noted that due to word limitations, elements of the score such as dynamics and other musical markings have been omitted. Also for reasons of space, all stage directions have been reduced to the minimum required for the reader to make sense of the action. In some sections of *Die Walküre* (ensemble singing by the Valkyries in Act III) and *Götterdämmerung* (the chorus of the vassals

and the Conspiracy Trio Act II) where the same phrases are sung by different voice parts (tenor, bass, soprano, mezzo-soprano), the repetitions are omitted. The original libretto can be found set side-by-side with my translation in Appendix 8 of Volume 2. Vocal scores of both operas are also available in Appendix 9 and 10. These appendices are to be found on the CD included.

For purposes of contextualization, the appendices contain a synopsis of each *Ring* opera (Appendix 1), background information about Wagner (Appendix 2), the history of the composition of the *Ring* (Appendix 3) and information about the source texts used by Wagner when writing the libretto (Appendix 4).

2. Wagner's Theory of Opera

Wagner was one of the few composers to intellectualise his process of composition and for six years wrote no music but only theoretical works about the nature of opera and its composition. Whilst his theories do not prefigure his compositional practice in every detail, they give important insights into his concept of opera as a multimodal work. He was 'perhaps the first composer to think - and create – multimodally' (Hutcheon & Hutcheon, 2010: 65) and his theories give an understanding of the how he created meaning through the synthesis of words, music and drama. Since understanding how a text works is fundamental to the translator, if interpretation is not to remain a subjective activity, this chapter explores Wagner's theoretical thinking as background to the nature of the 'text' of *Die Walküre* (hereafter *DW*) and *Götterdämmerung* (hereafter *GD*). It highlights those elements of Wagner's aesthetic theory concerning the relationship of libretto and music, in particular, the role of *Stabreim* (alliterative verse) within *Versmelodie* that lies at the core of the creative synthesis of poetry, music and dramatic action.

2.1 *Oper und Drama*: word-tone relationship

Oper und Drama (*Opera and Drama*, hereafter *O&D*), Wagner's most influential theoretical prose work (1852),[5] was written in the immediate aftermath of his flight from Dresden after the 1848 revolution.[6] At that time, Wagner had completed the libretto for *Siegfrieds Tod*, his first version of the *Ring*[7] and what was to become *Götterdämmerung*, but had yet to write the libretti of the remaining three operas that eventually made it a tetralogy. In this sense, *O&D* can be thought of as a frame of reference for the *Ring* and many believe it to be Wagner's last word on the nature of the opera and especially the relationship between words and music.

[5] It was published again in 1872 in volumes five and six of *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen von Richard Wagner* whose sixth and last edition was published in 1914. My references are to its publication in *Sämtliche Schriften und Dichtungen von Richard Wagner* published in 1914. *O&D* is divided between two volumes (Wagner, 1914a, 1914b).

[6] See Appendix 2 Wagner Biography

[7] See Appendix 3 Composition History

O&D is the culmination of what are collectively known as the 'reform essays' (Borchmeyer, 2003: 73), the other two being *Die Kunst und die Revolution*[8] (1849/1914) and *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft*[9] (1850/1914). In these essays, Wagner developed an aesthetic theory that addressed the problems of setting words to music so that both had equal semantic and emotional weight, relating tonal modulations to changes of verbal meaning, integrating rhyme or alliteration with musical rhythm and the prosody of speech and giving the orchestra a voice like a Greek chorus (Magee, 1983a: 354).

Wagner's concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (*GKW)*[10] introduced in *Die Kunst und die Revolution* (1870/1873) was essential to his theory of word-tone synthesis. His starting point was his disappointment with opera, as he knew it, which was dominated by musical concerns whereas Wagner conceived of opera as drama and his ideal form of drama was that of classical Greece in which the arts were combined (1849/1914: 11). The unsatisfactory state in which opera found itself in the mid Nineteenth century, according to Wagner, was a result of this union having disintegrated and music having come to dominate (ibid: 28-29). According to Wagner, instrumental music ('absolute' music in *O&D* (1852/1914a: 276)), as an art of expression, had no power of denotation and although it had its own idiom, this was arbitrary and unable to communicate specific feelings, only general ones (ibid: 277). Absolute music could produce wonderful effects (ibid: 283) but Wagner decried the fact that it had imposed itself on opera becoming its main content (ibid: 291) so that what people remembered was largely its tunes and not its meaning (ibid). He described the sovereignty that had been given to music over drama as an *Irrtum* (error), and he lamented 'daß ein Mittel des Ausdrucks (die Musik) zum Zwecke, der Zweck des Ausdrucks (das Drama) aber zum Mittel gemacht war[11] (ibid: 231).

For Wagner, music that was not harnessed to the words of the drama was 'a fantastic, abstract absurdity' (ibid: 244) and the works of Rossini seemed to epitomise

[8] Art and Revolution

[9] The Artwork of the Future

[10] 'Synthesis of the arts.' The term was not invented by Wagner but coined by K. F. E. Trahndorff in an 1827 essay (Koss, 2013: 159).

[11] '…that a means of expression (Music) has been made the purpose, and that the purpose of that expression (Drama) has been made a means' (my translation - all other translations are mine unless otherwise noted).

this for him. He imagined Rossini saying to his singers 'Do what you like with the words but above all don't forget to raise some applause with your rapid runs and vocal acrobatics' (1852/1914a: 252). By contrast, Wagner regarded Mozart and Beethoven as shining examples of how dramatic poetry and music work together. In Mozart's operas, he could see 'the poet's sharp and definite pen strokes, whose lines and strokes first inspired the musical colour [of the composition]' (ibid: 288). In the choral section of Beethoven's *Ninth Symphony*, where, according to Wagner, Beethoven had 'thrown himself into the arms of the poet', he found the epitome of musical art in the fusion of symphonic music with words (ibid: 312).

In *O&D* Wagner initially talks about music as the servant of words and of music being engendered by poetry with the poet as 'der Erzeuger' (begetter) (1852/1914a: 316). Wagner's gendered metaphor explains that in the relationship of words and music, female music requires impregnation by the productive power of masculine poetic thoughts in order to have purpose and meaning (ibid). Music is female; it can bear but it cannot beget (ibid). This metaphor, more than any other, has led to the belief that in *O&D* Wagner gives precedence to poetry over music, a relationship that then appears to be overturned in later prose works, including his *Beethoven* essay of 1870 (Wagner, 1870/1873). However, it is all too easy to take this metaphor at face value and overlook the more dialectical relationship between music and poetry, on which Wagner also theorises in *O&D*, which suggests that the 'language of music is the beginning and end of the language of words' (1852/1914b: 91). The words of poetry may have been the fertilising seed from which the music was born (ibid: 102) but the poetry of which Wagner speaks has been written by the 'tonvermählten Dichter' [tone-wed-poet] (ibid: 147), that is, a poet who is also a musician and who has created in rhythm and rhyme a kind of proto-music.

2.2 The influence of Schopenhauer

When Wagner wrote *O&D*, he was writing about opera in purely theoretical terms. He had composed no music, except for some musical sketches for *Siegfried's Tod*, since completing the score of *Lohengrin* in April 1848. It was not until 1853 that he began composing again and completed the score of *Das Rheingold* (hereafter *DR*). By 1854, when he had completed all the libretti of the *Ring* and the music for *DR* and

begun composing *DW*, he was introduced to Schopenhauer's *The World as Will and Representation* (1818/1969a, 1818/1969b), which many consider a decisive moment in Wagner's life[12]. According to Magee 'Wagner's outlook and his work were never the same again' (1983: 157) and Wagner confirms as much in his autobiography, saying that Schopenhauer's ideas had exerted an extraordinary influence on his whole life (1911: 604). He read the work four times in 1854 alone and it became a constant companion throughout the rest of his life (ibid).

In an 1856 letter to Röckel, a fellow Dresden revolutionary, Wagner wrote that Schopenhauer had not so much introduced him to new ideas but had made him conscious of things he had already sensed without fully grasping (Millington & Spencer, 1987: 356-7), things he had already expressed in the *Ring* libretto. He wrote in his autobiography 'I looked at my Nibelung poem and recognised … that the theory[13] that now so preoccupied me had long before been made known to me in my own poetical conception. Now for the first time I understood my own Wotan' (Wagner, 1875/1911: 604). In the letter to Röckel, he relates how in the plot of the Nibelung poem he had intuitively 'glimpsed...the essence of the world...and...recognised its nothingness' and had conceived of a plot in which renunciation of the will (that of Wotan) was to be made the only means of redemption for the world (Millington & Spencer 1987: 357-8). He wrote to Röckel 'only now have I really understood my own works…with the help of another person who has furnished me with conceptions that are perfectly congruent with my own intuitions' (ibid: 357). Thus Wagner managed to change his interpretation of his own already completed work to conform to Schopenhauer's philosophy, without changing the plot, characters, poetry or any music.

If Wagner's encounter with Schopenhauer's philosophy did not change the libretto of the *Ring*, it is argued that with the exception of the already completed *DR* and first two acts of *DW*, it altered Wagner's approach to the composition of the music and its 'synthesis with the drama' (Magee, 1983b: 167). Wagner's theories had rested on the premise that all the arts work in union to support and amplify each other but in

[12] See Ernest Newman *The Life of Richard Wagner*, 2:431; Thomas Mann *Sufferings and Greatness of Richard Wagner* reprinted in *Essays of Three Decades* p. 330; John Chancellor *Wagner* p.132; Ronald Taylor *Richard Wagner: his Life, Art and Thought* p.111.

[13] The theory referred to is that of Schopenhauer in *WWR*

this respect, his concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* was at odds with Schopenhauer's aesthetic philosophy, which placed the various arts in a hierarchy according to how they were suited to express different 'grades' of Ideas[14] (1818/1969a: 257). Music was not part of the hierarchy because unlike the other arts, which 'objectify the will …by means of ideas'(ibid), music was a 'copy of the will itself'[15] (ibid). As a direct expression of the will it acted directly on the will, that is, on feelings and emotions (ibid: 448). According to Schopenhauer, music did not need the words of a song or the action of an opera to attain its ends (ibid). However, in order to make music more graspable, the human imagination, he argued, had given it the 'flesh and bone' of words, to act as an analogy for the music (ibid: 261).

After reading Schopenhauer, Wagner appears to change some of his ideas. In the essay *On Franz Liszt's Symphonic Poems* music is no longer the servant but the superior art: 'Hear my creed: music, regardless of with what it is combined, can never cease being the highest, the redemptive art[16]'(1857/1872: 247). Yet in *Zukunftsmusik*[17] (*ZM*) (Wagner, 1861/1898), he qualifies this by stating that the poet must be one that understands the nature and expressive possibilities of music (1861/1898: 112). This *a priori* was, however, already stated in *O&D* (1852/1914b: 159) where, long before reading Schopenhauer, Wagner effectively placed music first, if not in empirical terms, then conceptually. As Glass points out, the importance of music is clearly evident within *O&D* where sixty to seventy percent of all the ideas in the third part relate to music and composition (1983: 54). The lengths to which Wagner goes in order to explain the kind of poetry that is worthy to form a union with music, in order to produce a drama, point to the supremacy of music. It was simply Wagner's imprecise use of the word 'drama' in *O&D* that led many to incorrectly interpret his theories in terms of words having superiority over music (Dahlhaus, 1989: 4-5; Glass, 1983: 9).

In *Beethoven* (Wagner, 1870/1873), published to celebrate the centenary of the composer's birth in 1770, the overt references to Schopenhauer and a declaration that a 'union of music and poetry must … always result in the latter be diminished.

[14] I capitalise Schopenhauer's term 'Idea' (*Vorstellung*) to distinguish it from the general use of the word.
[15] Italicised in original.
[16] My translation
[17] Future Music

(1870/1873: 125-6) again seem to indicate the superiority of music over words but here he speaks of the drama engendering the music:

> We know that the verses of the poet,… cannot determine the music; only the drama can do this and not indeed the dramatic poem but the drama really taking place in front of our eyes as a visible reflection of the music where word and speech belong only to the action and no longer to the poetic thought. (ibid: 135)

Wagner explains that the reason poetry is unable to determine the music is that it is an intellect bound art, whose effect, unlike that of music, does not lie in 'the category of the sublime' (1870/1873: 97). Wagner's conception of the 'sublime' owes something to Schopenhauer, but is distinctly Wagnerian.[18] The state of the 'sublime' in which music finds itself is one that arouses an ecstatic state of heightened awareness (ibid: 97), which immediately disengages the intellect from any concern with relationships to external matters; reason and knowledge 'disintegrate and flee' (ibid: 114). Dramatic action and music operate in this category because they share the same metaphysical nature. They are both concerned not with depicting, describing, or portraying (ibid: 128), which requires intellectual mediation, but with making an immediate sensual impact. Dramatic action is, therefore, able to determine the music because its effect also lies in the 'sublime' (ibid).

Having established the idea that dramatic action generates music, Wagner complicates matters by declaring that the drama is contained within the music (1870/1873: 128). This turns the matter on its head because now the music does not express the drama, but the drama expresses the music (Dahlhaus, 1979: 5). How does one reconcile the idea of dramatic action determining the music with the idea of music containing the drama? Can priority be split in this way between music and drama where 'both determine and simultaneously both are determined'? (Dahlhaus, 1980: 24) The 'twofold truth' (ibid: 19ff) of this matter might become comprehensible if the perspective from which Wagner is speaking of the music drama at any one moment is understood. As Dahlhaus explains, there is no contradiction if one accepts that 'the priority of the mimetic and scenic "hallucination" in the genesis of a work does not rule out the aesthetic and metaphysical primacy of the music' (ibid: 28). In other words,

[18] For Schopenhauer, the 'sublime' is self-elevation beyond the Will's last tie with the object; pure contemplation (Kropfinger, 1991: 137). For Wagner it is transcendental truth, related to feeling rather than perception or cognition.

when Wagner speaks of dramatic action determining the music, he is speaking in empirical terms of the creative process, but when he is describing the nature of the music drama, as perceived by the spectator, it is perhaps understandable that he should say that the drama is in the music. Dahlhaus suggests that it should not be a struggle to accept that whilst 'text and scenario precede the music' this 'does not prevent the text and the stage action from appearing as a translation and simile of the music…when the work is completed' (ibid: 36). Seen in this light, the *Beethoven* essay does not contradict *O&D* because what was largely discussed in *O&D* was of an empirical nature addressing the process of composing a music drama, where language as verse precedes and generates the music. In *Beethoven*, Wagner has moved on to a discussion rooted in metaphysical concerns, addressing the nature of the opera as an object. One might therefore conclude that much of the detailed theory of *O&D* such as that surrounding alliteration and verse-melody remained unchanged and valid during the composition of the later works including *GD*.

2.3 Synthesis of words and music facilitated by *Stabreim*

The second part of *O&D* is devoted to the nature of drama and dramatic poetry. For the translator of the *Ring*, the most important part is in chapter six, which relates how the relationship of musical sound and spoken language hinges on *Stabreim* (alliterative verse). Wagner explains the appeal of *Stabreim* by presenting his idiosyncratic theory of the origin of language[19] in which the first human utterances were essentially musical. Vowel sounds produced the first 'human language of emotion' (Wagner, 1852/1914b: 92) before consonants developed to distinguish more clearly between the growing numbers of linguistic referents and to give them more semantic precision. Together, consonant and vowel formed the 'roots of speech'[20] (ibid: 93) and from their combinations arose language. Language was initially composed of emotionally direct root-syllables (ibid), which, Wagner noted, revealed a relationship or analogy to the objects they denoted to produce a more pronounced communicative force (ibid). Poetry, in the form of *Stabreim* arose directly from this language,

[19] Stein (1960: 70) suggests that his theory is based on Herder's *Origin of Language* (*Ueber den Ursprung der Sprache*) 1772. Wagner had a copy of Herder's *Ausgewählte Werke in Einem Bande, 1844, Cotta, Stuttgart* (Trippett, 2013: 400)

[20] Sprachwurzeln

exploiting the relationship of sound and meaning. Eventually the accentuated syllables and consonantal roots became organised and developed as poetic metre (ibid: 94).

Stabreim facilitated what Wagner called the poet's job of condensing and compressing actions and motives (1852/1914b: 118) into purely human (emotional) content dictated by Feeling (ibid). Modern language and rational understanding could only see reality in all its complexity and fragmentation but poetic understanding and language could cut to its truth through this ability to compress (*Verdichten*) and concisely communicate to the emotions in an intelligible manner (ibid: 99). This linguistic compression, which was essential to Wagner if language was to convey feelings, depended on language being intelligible without incidental words devoid of expression. In *Stabreim*, emotionless functional words such as conjunctions and prepositions are eliminated to permit a higher proportion of root syllables, which through alliteration relate objects and qualities to one another. According to Wagner, only a pared down language whose speech accents are close together can evoke emotions in a quasi-primordial sense (ibid: 119). He gives as an example the fact that in moments of heightened emotion, self-expression tends to be brief and to the point, reduced to a few syllables that are often accomplished in one breath and emphasised by the speaker by dwelling on them or raising the voice (ibid). In as much as *Stabreim* foregrounds shared emotional content through semantic as well as through the sonic aspects of related speech roots, it can be considered the 'hinge between speech and music' (Kropfinger, 1991: 143). It leads Wagner directly to the musico-poetic period or *Versmelodie* (Verse-melody) that is at the heart of the music drama. *Stabreim* will be described further in Chapter 4.2.3, which discusses rhyme as a mode of meaning.

The final part of *O&D* is devoted to the synthesis of poetry and music. It addresses how *Wortsprache* (word-speech) and *Tonsprache* (tone-speech) might be combined to generate the emotional counterpart of conceptual ideas expressed in language and communicate them to the emotions thus achieving the required poetic intent. Although end rhyme, the usual verse form of opera libretti, is very useful because it corresponds with breathing pauses and breaks lines into short, easily memorable musical phrases, Wagner found the strictures of the metrical forms in which they are set, insensitive to natural syllabic accent (1852/1914b: 109). Wagner believed end-rhyme was artificial since it simply highlighted the last word of a line rather than

the important words, drew attention to sounds but not necessarily to feelings (ibid) and as a somewhat mechanical feature, primarily appealed to the intellect by satisfying a created expectation (ibid: 110). The greatest problem with end-rhyme, for Wagner, was that it forced an arbitrary relationship between word and tone and was only appropriate to conventional closed musical structures typical of the opera style he disliked (ibid). Often the melody, attempting to bond with end- rhyme schemes would destroy natural accentuation, or if it ignored the rhyme scheme, it would effectively reduce the verse to prose (ibid: 115). Wagner found the traditional metres of operatic verse, such as the iambic foot that had been inherited from Greek and Latin verse, to be particularly foreign to the accentuations of the German language and called the iambic foot a 'fünffüßiges Ungeheuer' (five footed monster) that was offensive to feeling (1852/1914b: 106). Any melody that conformed strictly to such verse, putting incorrect accent and emphasis on words and syllables, would become ugly and unable to express true feeling, thereby hindering receptivity of the poet's meaning and intent. However, Wagner himself employed end-rhyme in operas composed before the *Ring* and again in later operas!

2.4 Versmelodie as musico-poetic synthesis

According to Wagner, the poet's ability to communicate to Feeling is limited to the kinship of *Stabreim*'s accented root words, however, the musician or 'Tone-poet', has an infinite number of ways to create kinship through tonality (1852/1914b: 140-141). Melody allows the actions, sensations, and expressions, which are condensed or concentrated in the poetry, to be expanded and broadened to rouse the emotional faculty (ibid: 138-9). Its tonal relationships operate in a similar way to the relationship of initial consonants in *Stabreim*, connecting similar or contrasting thoughts. This musical alliteration occurs both within individual verse-lines and across extended sections.

Versmelodie[21] is considered the basic formal unit of Wagner's music dramas and is at the heart of his concept of musico-poetic synthesis. It is a way of combining music and verse where the melody grows organically from the verse, facilitated by the

[21] Wagner uses the following expressions as synonyms: *Wort-Tonmelodie* (word-tone-melody) or *dichterisch-musikalische Periode* (poetico-musical 'periods')

‘intensification of [the] direct sensory appeal’ (Stein, 1960: 69), achieved through alliteration, condensation (compression, concision) and free rhythm (ibid). This basic unit is presented in detail in *O&D* with precise formulae for the use of alliterative rhyme, prosody, harmony, tonality, and the unifying ‘melodische Momente’[22] (Wagner, 1852/1914b: 114, 201) more commonly known as leitmotifs. Units of *Versmelodie*, when combined, are given cohesion by what Wagner calls the vertical dimension of harmony, and by extension, the orchestra. *Versmelodie* will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.4.4 with regard to how verbal and musical meaning converge in the *Ring.*

Whether or not one agrees with Wagner’s theories, one cannot deny or dismiss their influence on his composition of the *Ring* and that the relationship of words and music presented in them represents a clear break with tradition. Wagner’s theory of opera in *O&D* was a reaction against traditional opera where the drama served merely as a vehicle for musical entertainment, whilst Wagner wanted to set the reality of human existence before his audience and to explore what goes on in the heart and soul. Based on his understanding of Greek drama (see *O&D Part 2*), Wagner wanted his audience to understand what it was to be human through a direct appeal to the emotions, not the intellect. To this end, he chose to write his libretto for the *Ring* in *Stabreim*, which already had its own direct sensorial appeal through the similar phonology of its initial syllables and rhythmic irregularity. When he came to the musical composition, his aim was to make music the counterpart of the text, to create an intimate fusion that would emotionalise the text more completely. *Stabreim* was chosen because its irregular rhythms and alliterating root words made it musically adaptable and fertile. Wagner referred to the fusion as *Versmelodie*, the expression of verbal meaning in melody, and it is so fundamental to Wagner’s operatic composition, that I suggest acknowledgment of its purpose and function is essential for a translator of the *Ring*, whether or not he or she decides to replicate it. I go further to suggest that setting it aside can be detrimental to the translation, which I shall discuss further in Chapter 6.

[22] Melodic Moments

3. Theoretical Approaches to Opera Translation

To date, most research in the field of opera and vocal music translation has tended to focus on the 'symbiotic relationship' (Minors, 2013: 4) of music and words that makes a translation singable to the music to which the original text was set. Within this context, some studies focus on practical or technical matters and on how a translation reproduces the formal elements such as rhyme and metre. Others (fewer) focus on the intersemiosis of musical and verbal modes, codes or semiotic resources; they are concerned with how verbal and musical semantics converge. The focus of most current research, however, is surtitling for which there is growing practical demand with regard to opera and musical theatre. Although the specialist literature on vocal music translation is essential reading, it tends to be confined to the discussion of the practical choices, constraints and influences on the translator either in order to produce a singable text or to meet the technical restraints of surtitling. However, for the translator concerned with recreating the convergence of verbal and musical semantics found in the original score, theoretical elements from the fields of translational stylistics and multimodal discourse analysis can be more helpful because they focus on the relationship between different semiotic systems created by the composer's stylistic choices.

3.1 Vocal music translation theory

Interest in vocal music translation is not a recent phenomenon. Early twentieth century contributors to the subject, who were predominantly musicologists and music critics (Calvocoressi,1921; Drinker,1950; Dent,1935; Orr,1941; Peyser,1922; Spaeth,1915; Strangways,1921, 1940), wrote about the quality of translations when performance in English was the norm rather than the exception. Coming from music-centric backgrounds, they agreed, unsurprisingly, that when compromise was necessary, it would be in favour of the music. Singability and musical value were the first priority and it was felt by some that the highest duty of the translator was to avoid making the composer or singer 'ridiculous' (Strangways, 1921: 212). The claims of poetry and language and even the ability to translate were of limited importance. According to Spaeth being a linguist was the 'least important qualification' and of much greater importance was 'the ability to write well in one's own language', which

he described as having ‘poetical insight’ (1915: 291). Generally, expectations of faithfulness were low. The paraphrase, said Spaeth is perfectly acceptable (1915: 297). The priorities for these writers were the practical constraints of rhythm and vocal production.

The early literature was not really part of an academic discourse on vocal music translation but part of a critical discourse when many people were involved in producing translations and many people heard them. When, in the 1950s, English language performances of opera began to lose ground to performance in the original language, this discourse more or less vanished and until the advent of translation studies as a discipline in the 1970s and 1980s, almost nothing was published on the subject of translating opera or vocal music. Since the arrival of Translation Studies, however, research in the field of vocal music translation, which includes opera, *Lieder* (art song), musical theatre and popular music, has grown, though it remains a small field compared to others

Most research in vocal music translation has tended to be single genre (song), culturally bound (European) and focussed on performance texts. It has tended to focus on the two modalities of words and music; the visual and performance codes of opera and musical theatre, which change from one production to another, have proven more difficult to research and the literature is more limited. In the last two decades, however, there has been an increased interest in translation for surtitles, used predominantly in opera houses. This research tends to focus on the production process and technological issues, but also addresses issues related to the fact that surtitles are not autonomous and function together with other semiotic modes in the performance to create meaning. Two areas in which more research is perhaps needed are opera sub-titling and dubbing, relevant to the growing trend of cinema exhibition of live-cast opera performances from major opera houses and the global appeal of animated musical films made in English.

3.1.1 An overview of current literature

Most of the literature on vocal music translation is in the form of journal articles and collections of essays. There are three notable essay collections, the earliest of which is *Song and Significance*: *Virtues and Vices of Vocal Translation* (Gorlée ed.,

2005). It offers a survey of vocal music translation theories, which take a predominantly semiotic approach to the translation of verbal and non-verbal signs, although some essays give practical advice on the constraints of vocal translation. The book consists of eight articles dealing with topics from hymn translation, to chanting in Saami communities. Contributors are translation scholars, musicologists and applied semioticians. Some of the key writers in the field are included: Klaus Kaindl, Johann Franzon, Peter Low, Ronnie and Herman Apter. The valuable 2008 special edition of *The Translator, Translation and Music* (Susam-Sarajeva), highlights the multidisciplinary nature of the field. This volume focuses on a wide range of musical genres and languages from North African rap to Kurdish folk songs in Turkish. It offers two good bibliographies covering the literature up to 2008, one an annotated bibliography (Matamala & Orero, 2008: 427-51) the other a 'General Bibliography' (Franzon, Mateo, Orero, & Susam-Sarajeva, 2008: 453-60). A second book of essays published in 2013 and edited by Helen Julia Minors, *Music, Text and Translation*, covers opera, songs, surtitles and intersemiotic translation or transferences between art forms such as music and painting or sculpture. The book ends with another useful and comprehensive bibliography.

Two monographs have recently been published by the experienced and established opera translation team of Apter and Herman (2016) and by Peter Low (2017), which essentially gather together their output published over the last twenty years or more in journals. They are oriented predominantly towards the practical aspects of translation. Low specifically says his focus is not on 'describing and analysing…but on suggesting strategies and tactics' (ibid: 18). Apter and Herman's *Translating for Singing. The Theory, Art and Craft of Translating Lyrics* is particularly helpful thanks to its numerous examples and the authors' practical experience of translating opera. Low's *Translating Song: Lyrics and Texts* covers a variety of song genres and looks at song translation in terms of skopos theory, for the purpose of subtitles and surtitles, as a creative activity and, of course, he includes his now well-known 'Pentathlon Principle' (see below) as a guide and evaluation tool for song translation. Many of my references to these authors are to their original journal articles but the material can be found in their recent books as well.

Several other books with specific focus on opera are also available, though not easy to acquire in all cases. Gottfried Marschall's *La traduction des livrets: Aspects théoriques, historiques et pragmatiques* (2004) consists of the proceedings of an international conference at the Sorbonne University in 2000. It contains thirty-nine articles mainly about opera translation. Unfortunately, it is out of print and only available from the British Library. Three monographs on opera translation have been extremely helpful in my research. Kurt Honolka's monograph on opera translation (1978), although dated in many respects, remains useful for anyone interested in opera translation and even though it does not address the subject from a theoretical viewpoint, it contains plenty of practical insights. Micke's *La Traviata - verführt? - verirrt?* (Micke, 1998) is a comprehensive investigation of theories and practical aspects of translating Italian opera into German. The most important and relevant monograph for my study has been Kaindl's *Die Oper als Textgestalt: Perspektiven einer interdisziplinären Übersetzungswissenschaft* (1995). Nothing comparable has been written since it was published. Its starting point is the multimodal nature of the text and Kaindl is one of the very few scholars to address the issue of opera staging and translation. It is the most theoretically far-reaching of all the works on vocal music translation and omits the practical aspect that is the focus of Apter, Herman, Low and many others. Kaindl shows how translations of opera libretti have been influenced by the aesthetic, ideological, political and religious values of the society and culture in which the opera translation is performed. For those who do not speak German, there is an excellent review by Claus Clüver, which highlights the main theoretical thinking of the book (2008).

3.1.2 Vocal music translation: three areas of focus

3.1.2.1 Performance: singable translation

Much of the literature focuses on predominantly technical aspects of making a singable text for performance. This field is dominated by Low, Apter and Herman. Low has become well known for 'The Pentathlon Principle' (2003a, 2003b, 2005, 2008, 2017) that likens translation to a pentathlon event where the translator, like the athlete, must perform well in, but not necessarily win, every event in order to win overall. The events are singability (which he defines as the ease with which the text functions when

it is delivered in performance), sense (related to matters of equivalence), naturalness, rhythm and rhyme. Musico-semantic synthesis is not something that Low addresses to any great degree. For those with literary and music backgrounds Low's work might seem simplistic but it provides a good framework for analysing and undertaking vocal music translation.

Apter (1985, 1989) and Apter & Herman (1995, 2000, 2011, 2016) have also focused predominantly on the prosodic elements of translation although one or two articles or book chapters have addressed matters such as character delineation through diction (Apter & Herman, 2002) and cultural aspects of opera translation (ibid, 2005). Another article about Rachmaninoff's *Six Choral Songs* addresses how 'words are transformed by the music' and how 'translation requires careful attention to the sound and sense of the words as set by the composer', where by sound they refer to the meaning the music provides (ibid, 2011: np).

3.1.2.2 Intersemiosis of words and music

Dinda Gorlée, who has written extensively on opera, hymn music and art song is perhaps the most focused on word-tone intersemiosis and the hybrid nature of operas (1996, 1997, 2005a, 2005b, 2008, 2009). She establishes the principle that in operas, several semiotic systems and genres are interconnected, and her concern is for the creative translation between the two sign systems of music and words. She approaches vocal music translation from the point of view of Peircean semiotics and demonstrates considerable scholarship regarding signification in song and opera. However, her discussion of Peircean semiotics can often be difficult to follow and its direct application to opera translation is not always clear.

Franzon, who specialises in musical theatre translation, is also concerned with the intersemiosis of words and music and refers to this as the 'semantic-reflexive match to music' that requires the translator to observe the meaning in the music and paint an equivalent picture with words (2005, 2008). Golomb (2005), who introduces the term 'Music Linked Translation', holds that the synchronisation of music, sound, rhythm, meaning, plot development and characterisation are essential to avoid 'malpractice' in

opera translation (ibid:150-4). Tråvén (2005) also focuses on word-tone intersemiosis through examples of Mozart's musical rhetorical figures as a coded language.

Kaindl's study (1995) is the only one to look extensively at the modal interconnections that can be realized on the stage, in which language is just one of several signifiers whose meaning is a function of its relationship with others. Kaindl conceives of the totality of each operatic text as a *Gestalt* whose parts are the heterogeneous signs of libretto, music and staging. Kaindl understands opera as a complex multimodal text. Chapters focus on 'The Libretto', 'The Music', 'The Voice as a Factor in the Translation Process' and 'The Stage' (Die Szene), which Kaindl examines for their functional interrelations.

Other articles on song translation in general and opera translation specifically are Graham (1989), Irwin (1996), Kerman (1964), and Weisstein. (1990).

3.1.2.3 Translation for surtitling

Translation for surtitles is part of the growing literature on music and translation and often falls within audiovisual and theatre translation studies. Theories in this field deal with the translator's role in the production process, technological issues and constraints as well as cultural and aesthetic issues, for example, whether standard translations are adequate, or production specific translations are essential. In recent years, the development of an area of studies known as media accessibility has grown. Its focus is the difficulties experienced by visually or hearing-impaired spectators in opera houses (and theatres) and appropriate solutions. In the case of opera (or operetta), strategies include audio introduction, audio description, audio subtitling and, of course, surtitling. This field is covered by Lucille Desblache (2007, 2008, 2013), Marta Mateo (Mateo, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2014), Orero and Matamala (2007) and Virkkunen (2004). In *Music, Text and Translation* (Minors ed., 2013) the entire section on opera translation is essentially devoted to this topic.

Most current literature on translating opera and vocal music tends to focus on the interlingual transfer of content and the way in which the new words of the

translation have been made to fit the existing melody (Low, 2017: 17). As Low admits, this approach is primarily a pragmatic one (ibid: 109). It fails to consider the subtleties of the music-word relationship, which is so important in opera translation where performance relies on more than information. Concepts from multimodal discourse analysis can be more helpful in this regard, because they consider how the non-verbal text elements contribute to meaning. As Kaindl says, 'multimodal communication theory represent[s] an important basis for exploring multimodality in translation' (2013: 258).

3.2 Multimodality theories and their relevance to opera translation

If meaning in opera is the result of a multimodal process then not only must the definition of text as a basis for translation be redefined but also the analytical means by which the text is understood. There are hardly any 'translation-relevant analysis models' for multimodal texts (Kaindl, 2013: 265) and, therefore, the translator is forced to take his or her analytical methods from other disciplines, which do not relate specifically to translation across linguistic and cultural borders. In opera translation, one must analyse music, verse and drama but independent study of these modes of communication would fail to provide insight into the signification of the opera as a whole. However, by considering how different modes of meaning relate to one another a fuller understanding of the text may be reached on which to base a translation. In the following sub-chapters, I suggest that multimodal discourse analysis provides a number of concepts for describing the meaning making process in a multimodal text like opera, which are helpful for text analysis. They provide the basis for my analysis of the translations of the *Ring* in Chapter 6.

3.2.1 A problem of terminology: multimedial versus multimodal

All through his monograph on translating opera, Kaindl describes the opera text as 'multimedial' (1995), which he explains describes a text whose verbal and non-verbal sign systems are finely interwoven to create an integrated whole (ibid: 71). The concept of the 'multimedial' text as an object of translation was first identified by Reiss in her work on text typology, although she initially used the term 'audio-medial' (1971: 49ff). She identified these texts as depending on extra-linguistic technical media and

non-verbal graphic, acoustic or visual expression for their meaning (ibid: 49). Reiss had in mind texts that were disseminated over the radio or on television. She suggested that texts influenced by non-linguistic factors would require strategies that took into account the extra-linguistic elements to supplement the translation (ibid: 51). However, apart from noting that multimedial texts possess their 'own regularities' that must be taken into account in translation, she does not develop a theory for their translation (1981:125). In the 1980s and '90s, Snell-Hornby, when describing theatrical texts and their translation, also used the term 'multimedial' (unhyphenated) but acknowledged that due to the rise of multimedia technologies the terminology presented a problem (1996: 30). As Gambier and Gottlieb (2001), scholars in audio-visual translation, point out the term leads to 'a certain confusion …between media in a *stricto sensu* meaning (TV, cinema, computer) and codes such as verbal and visual codes' (ibid: xi).

In recent years, the term 'multimedial' has dropped out of usage. This is not only because it tends to suggest a focus on 'medium', but also because researchers and scholars in the growing field of multimodality studies, led by Kress and van Leeuwen (2001), tend to use the term 'multimodal' to describe texts whose meaning is constituted through more than one mode of semiosis. By 2006, Snell-Hornby was referring to drama and opera as 'multimodal' texts that 'involve different modes of verbal and nonverbal expression' (2006: 3). Likewise, Gambier, talking about audio-visual translation, was concerned with 'multimodality' and the 'integration of semiotic resources' (2006: 7), reserving the term 'multimedia' for products such as webpages (ibid). By 2004, Kaindl also adopted the term 'multimodal' in his work on the translation of humour in comics (2004: 173ff.). The concept of multimodality, which more clearly distinguishes medium from semiotic resource or mode, makes the analysis of both and their subsequent influence on the translation more transparent.

3.2.2 Opera as multimodal textual *Gestalt*

Theories on the nature of multimodal texts and the way in which they communicate tend to have at their core the principle that the text is perceived as a coherent whole comprising various semiotic resources that interact. Approaching texts as whole entities (text is not limited to written ones but refers to any combination of sensory signs carrying communicative intention' (Gottlieb, 2005: 3)), sets theories of

multimodality apart from previous semiotic theories. As Kaindl points out, the latter tended to study signs separately and then add them together to constitute meaning but failed to consider the interdependence and the effects of the relationships between modes of meaning (1995: 27). This interdependence can best be understood, Kaindl suggests, in terms of *Gestalt* theory (ibid: 35-41).

Gestalt theory can be traced back to the approach taken by Christian von Ehrenfels[23] (1859-1932) to the psychology of perception in *Über Gestaltqualitäten*[24] (1890: 258-9). According to von Ehrenfels, the perception of any phenomenon depends not on the properties of its individual parts but on their specific configuration. Ehrenfels, who had studied music with Bruckner, demonstrated his theory through the idea of melody: a melody cannot be defined strictly by its component notes (pitches, duration, etc.); there is something in the configuration of the notes, which makes it a melody. Ehrenfels' proof for this was that when a melody is transposed to a different key, all of its notes change, yet it is recognised as the same (1890: 159ff). If it were simply the sum of its notes, different notes ought to produce a different melody.

This concept of wholeness and its importance to perception and cognition was developed later by psychologists like Wertheimer, Koffka and Köhler[25] and subsequently played a significant role in the works of translation scholars like Paepcke (1986), Stolze (related mainly to hermeneutics) (1982) and Snell-Hornby (1988: 29). However, as early as 1813, Schleiermacher had insisted that the only valid approach to the translation of literary works was an holistic one, which relies on 'Nachbildung' (imitation) (1816/2004: 48). This approach recognised that any 'replica' of an original text in a translation is impossible because the 'irrationality of languages' (ibid: 48) does not allow for the 'parts' of a new language to 'correspond perfectly to those of the original'. For Schleiermacher, this left no other option than to produce an imitation, which, though composed of parts obviously different from the parts of the original,

[23] Von Ehrenfels was a great admirer of Wagner: he walked from his home in Vienna to Bayreuth for the premiere of Parsifal in 1882, gave lectures on Wagner and wrote a book to commemorate Wagner's hundredth birthday in 1913[23]. Ehrenfels, in a footnote in *Über Gestaltqualitäten* states that Wagner's works are rich sources for the comparison of *Gestalt* qualities (Ehrenfels, 1890: 280).

[24] *On Gestalt (or Form) Qualities*

[25] Max Wertheimer, *Productive thinking London*: Tavistock Publications, 1961. Kurt Koffka, *Principles of Gestalt psychology* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1935. Wolfgang Köhler, *Gestalt psychology: an introduction to new concepts in modern psychology*: New York: Liveright, 1947.

would in its ‘effect’ come ‘as close to that whole as the difference in material allows’ (ibid).

The ‘effect of the whole’ in terms of perception and meaning is central to the understanding of texts for translations scholars like Stolze, Paepke and Snell-Hornby, for whom a text is more than the ‘simple addition of words and sentences’ (Stolze, 2011: 8). The individual parts of a text, be they verbal or, as in opera, non-verbal, have, as single elements, only relative meaning; they cannot stand separately but are all interrelated. Paepcke speaks of understanding a text not as an aggregate of verbal and non-verbal elements but as a ‘suprasummative’ entity (1986: 103), a term borrowed from *Gestalt* theory often phrased as ‘the sum is greater than the parts’. In a suprasummative text the parts are not absorbed by the whole, each retains its individuality; nor are they added together to form the whole, but through reciprocal accommodation or organisation, create meaning. Paepke, therefore, advocates considering the overall structure and ideas rather than the individual parts, since for him it is not the individual elements, such as words, which are translated, but the holistic entity of the text (ibid: 159).

For the translator of a multimodal text, the concept of *Gestalt* means that despite changes to the verbal ‘parts’, the object of translation can remain unchanged in its effect as long as the same relationships, interaction and interdependence between the parts are recreated. Two principles of *Gestalt* theory are particularly helpful both in the analysis of the object of translation and in the process of translation: similarity and continuity. Similar elements are perceived as belonging together (Gibbons, 2012: 44), which means that in opera, musical melody that mirrors verbal intonation, sounds that imitate the meaning of words, or emphasis produced through rhyme are essential to its *Gestalt.* A translation that fails to recognise this or reproduce it in some way, may fail to produce the same effect as the original. The principle of continuity, which can be thought of as connection or cohesion, states that humans have a perceptual preference for continuous patterning rather than disruption (ibid). This means that a spectator’s experience of the translated opera will be closer to that experienced by a spectator of the original, if elements within it relate to each other as they did in the original. The role of similarity (imitation) and continuity (relationship) are explored in Chapter 6, especially in the section ‘Intersemiosis of music and words’ (6.3).

3.2.3 Defining multimodal semiosis

According to Kress, the digital technologies have made the concept of multimodality 'easy, usual, [and] "natural"' (Kress, 2003: 5). With the rise of the internet, signifying components other than words, such as 'graphics, color, animation, etc.' (Hayles, 2003: 267) have become essential elements of communication (ibid). As a consequence, multimodality theory has flourished in the twenty-first century with an upsurge in publications: Kress and van Leeuwen, (1996) and (2001); Ventola, Charles, and Kaltenbacher, (2004); LeVine and Scollon, (2004) (eds.); O'Halloran, (ed.), (2004); Baldry and Thibault, (2006); Royce and Bowcher, (eds.) (2007). Unsurprisingly, much of the literature focuses on the way in which electronic or digital multimodal texts are consumed.

Between the above-mentioned authors, an agreed definition of multimodal semiosis emerges along the following lines: multimodality assumes that communication relies on a number of modes or semiotic resources organised to create meaning. The key word is 'organised'; modes of meaning are orchestrated in particular ways to create specific meaning. Kress and van Leeuwen define this as 'design' (2001: 20). Multimodality, then, is concerned with the interplay between modes; modes relate to each other in different ways, complementing or contrasting meaning and even building hierarchies so that in any given text one mode may dominate. Interaction and integration are key concepts for texts in which a multiplicity of semiotic resources combine in ways defined by their author to expand or multiply meaning (O'Halloran, 2006: 225). Baldry and Thibault refer to this process of meaning-multiplication where different semiotic resource systems are integrated according to their 'relationship and affect on each other' as 'resource integration' (2006: 18).

Before further discussion about the integration of modes, it is necessary to define what is meant by 'mode' more closely and to distinguish it from its channel of perception or medium in which it is communicated.

3.2.3.1 Media and modes

Kress and van Leeuwen define medium as a material form that carries signs (1996: 7) or as the 'material articulation' of semiotic resources or modes (2001: 6). A

medium might be produced specifically by a culture, as in the case of ink and computers, or they may exist naturally, like the voice (Kress & Leeuwen, 2001: 22). Fiske, who defines a medium as a technical or physical means of 'converting' messages into transmittable signals (2011: 16) identifies three forms: (1) presentational, (2) representational and (3) mechanical. Presentational media include the voice, the body and the face and involve the use of the body's perceptual channels of seeing and hearing; they are ephemeral, only present in the here and now. Representational media include books, paintings, and architecture, where the communicator requires tools and materials to realise the message, but the receiver need only rely on his senses. They depend on cultural and aesthetic conventions. Mechanical media, such as the radio, television or computer are dependent on cables and radio waves and are transmitters of the first two types of media (Fiske, 2011: 16-17). In communication and media studies, the concept of 'media' tends to refer to the mechanical media. Using Fiske's categorisations, theatre and opera, as live performance, are not media in themselves but consist of various media: the body, face, voice, stage scenery, lights. The play text, opera libretto and musical score are written forms of media.

The opera libretto and its vocal and orchestral scores are made materially available in the print medium, although they are now also available digitally. They are used predominantly by those who will materialise the opera as a live stage performance as well as by audience members to follow the drama. Performance is often considered a medium; the opera performance does after all materialise the libretto and score, but it is not an artefact or material entity in the sense of 'medium' described above. The materialisation takes place through other media such as the singer's body, the orchestra (and its instruments), the singer's voice, scenery, costume, lighting, props and so on; perhaps the performance might be called a hyper-medium (Nelson, 2010: 19).

It is helpful to clearly distinguish media from the socio-culturally developed semiotic modes that facilitate discourse and interaction (Kress and Leeuwen, 2001: 21). As Stöckl says, 'media and modes ought not be confused but neatly kept apart' (2004:11-12). To distinguish mode from medium, it helps to think of modes as being concerned with the 'action' of semiosis rather than its material and so it helps to think of them in their relationship to the human senses, which process incoming information: seeing, hearing, touching, smelling and tasting. Sensory channels of semiosis define

modes at their broadest level (visual, auditory, etc.), but can be broken down into sub-modes or elements: for example, music and voice might be considered modalities of the auditory mode and these in turn are made up of sub-modes or elements such as pitch, durational variation, dynamic range and others.

Definitions of the term 'mode' have been widely discussed (Elleström, 2010; Jewitt, 2009; Kress, 2010) and are divergent. Kress and van Leeuwen define modes as semiotic resources (2001: 22), whilst O'Halloran (2006) and Baldry & Thibault (2006) define them as sensory channels in which semiotic activity takes place. According to this logic many texts may be multisemiotic but will not be multimodal; for example, a radio play may employ several semiotic resources such as speech and music but they are all realised in one mode of sound. A comic strip employing the semiotic resources of language and images may be multisemiotic but remain monomodal since it is only realised in the visual mode. In this case, opera as performance is both multi-semiotic (poetry, music and visual elements) and multimodal, being realised both visually and acoustically. As a score and libretto, of course, it is strictly speaking monomodal, being received only visually, though with the same semiotic resources of poetry, music and visual elements.

Stöckl suggests that there are core modes and sub-modes. Core modes are those that are 'entrenched in people's popular perceptions of codes and communication and can stand on their own' (2004: 14) such as sound, music, image, and language, which are often linked to a specific medium. Sub-modes depend on other modes and cannot stand alone; they can be likened to parts of speech and are the 'building blocks of a mode's grammar' (ibid). A mode relies on its sub-modes and their interrelations to realise a communicative event (ibid): a song relies on volume, voice quality, articulation, phonetics, rhythm, tempo, pausing; orchestral music relies on melody, harmony, rhythm, texture, and tempo.

Kress further defines mode as 'a socially and culturally given resource for making meaning' (2009: 54) so that any resource that has been 'sufficiently developed for sign-making' within a community, over time, is a mode (Kress and van Leeuwen, 2002: 346). Anything that has been organised to realize meaning, has rules and regularities (that can be thought of as a kind of 'grammar') and principles of use (ibid),

which are shared by the members of the society or culture that developed it, can be considered a mode. Since modes are shaped by socio-cultural and historic needs, they change and are displaced by others as media develop, guided by group interests and ideologies (Stöckl, 2004: 20).

According to Kress, a mode must fulfil two tests to be a mode: a social and a formal one (2010: 87-89). The social test requires that the community, which has developed the mode, have some 'metadiscursive notion' (Prior, 2014: 168) that foregrounds it and some rules or norms for its use (for example, music and poetry). The formal test requires that a mode have specific resources for meaning making, which Kress bases on Halliday's social semiotic account of communication, according to which the various elements and systems of language are organized into three metafunctional domains, 'ideational', 'interpersonal' and 'textual' (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014: 29-30). This means that a mode's resources must enable it to be representational so as to articulate ideas or refer to content (ideational), it must be rhetorical so as to construe attitudes towards the content (interpersonal) and finally it must be organizational so as to create discursive flow, cohesion and continuity (textual) (ibid: 30). Essentially, this means that if modes, like language, serve communicational purposes, like language they must also be organised for meaning and do specific semiotic work. Although Kress stresses that modes require all three metafunctions, van Leeuwen argues that in some non-verbal modes the degree to which each mode requires every metafunction may differ (2015: 107). If this were not the case, music as well as other theatrical modes such as lighting and gesture would arguably not be considered modes since their ideational function is questionable. They lack the semiotic resources that afford language the ability to represent content, experience and logic: to be denotative. Though they cannot represent people, actions and situations, in the semantically precise and logical way as language, they can, as Kant says, do so through imagination, which induces conceptual thought (1790/1987: 182 (§49)). Music can do this through acoustic analogy. It can directly imitate natural sounds with a definite pitch, such as bird song, or actions and events which have a less definite pitch, such as thunderstorms or streams, as well as culturally produced sounds such as church bells or hunting horns. In so doing, music can represent events, processes and situations as well as participants. Consider Beethoven's *Sixth Symphony* (the *Pastoral*) in which

suggestive sound analogy or 'tone painting' creates an effect on the ear that the sight of the object would have on the eyes, such as birds singing, thunder clapping and villagers dancing. However, music's representational function relies on the support of other modes. In the case of Beethoven's *Sixth Symphony*, the listener is directed towards significance by the composer's names of each movement. In opera, words, scenery or action on stage make the significance of a particular unit of music evident. The same music without these 'aids to significance' might be meaningless within a symphony of absolute music.[26]

Unsurprisingly, the interpersonal metafunction (related to affect and emotion) tends to be strong within modes used for aesthetic communication. This metafunction, which is the most developed metafunction in music (Leeuwen, 1999: 189), is concerned with the semiotics of relationships and communication for a purpose, which in opera equates largely to engendering emotion and feeling. The interpersonal metafunction of modes like music, language and stage action can construct the social roles of the characters and tell the audience how they feel about what they say (sing); the characters' and indeed the orchestra's attitudes to each other can be heard and through them the layered meanings of the composer can be experienced. Music is supreme in its ability to affect the listener, and affect is a prime aspect of the interpersonal metafunction.

According to Kress and van Leeuwen a mode must be able to 'form texts' (1996: 43). The 'textual function' requires that a text be able to cohere internally and with its context (ibid) and is about composition and the way in which meaning is constructed through the distribution of information and emphasis among elements or resources of the mode. Just as language has its theme-rheme structures for cohesion, other modes have their own systems of organisation for meaning. Music has very specific formal structures, like language, and in Wagner's case, two systems stand out: modulating tonality and leitmotif.

Each mode must have these meaning-making functions (to some degree or another) so that in the selection, organisation and arrangement of modes within a

[26] Instrumental music independent of the objective suggestion of title, text, or program and dependent on structure alone for its subjective comprehension (Merriam-Webster)

communication, the author can decide the function of each mode in the text according to the nature of the communication. Every mode represents meaning, facilitates interaction and constructs the text differently according to its own means and limitations, some semiotic and some related to its materiality. As each mode has different meaning making potential, rather than simply repeat a message they may make it richer and fuller. The expressive affordances of music make it better suited to emotional meaning than denotational meaning, to the communication of mood rather than information. The affordances of the prosodic language of dramatic verse can be both expressive and pragmatic; dramatic verse can talk to feeling as well as develop plot. In opera, the words may say 'I'm sad' but the music, the singer's gestures and the lighting will tell the audience the nature of that sadness and the degree to which it is felt. A mode's potentialities and limitations for semiosis affect the communicator's choice of modes and the way he combines them. In simplistic terms, the music and visual modes of opera can communicate emotion better than words but only the words, the poetry, can answer the question, why?

Semiotic resources have their constraints or restrictions both individually and in combination with other modes. Such constraints will be recognised by the author within the 'design' of the text. Modal constraints are of three types that relate to the material of the medium, the technology and time necessary to produce them and the manner in which they are consumed related to time, place and manner of access (Bateman, Delin, & Henschel, 2004: 74). For example, text for a web site is constrained by space, position and various technical matters and copy for a single page advertisement for a glossy magazine will be constrained by space, layout design, as well as considerations about the time, place and manner in which the advertisement is viewed. Constraints and restrictions should not, however, be thought of as negatives for they often inspire creativity. In the case of vocal music, the prosody of the lyrics is a constraint for the composer, yet the prosodic features of different verse forms, based on the prosodic features of the language in which they were formed, have created the many different musical styles enjoyed today. For example, the syllable-timed French language and the alexandrine mean French song composers have been able to place musical accent more freely than have composers working with the stress-timed language and prosody of English and German. According to Richard Strauss, this made it seem that the French

could ‘sing differently to the way they speak’ with musical accents being placed on normally mute and weak syllables[27].

All modes have some systemic structuration that produces cohesion between their parts and contributes to their coherence. Jakobson drew attention to this when he wrote ‘there is a remarkable analogy between the role of grammar in poetry and the painter’s composition’ (1959/2004: 94). Multimodal discourse analysis explores and attempts to define ‘grammars’ of non-linguistic semiotic modes in order to describe what modes can do (Stöckl, 2004: 20) and how they function. The idea of grammar implies that for each mode there is an inventory of resources and rules that govern the way they are configured, particularly the way in which parts relate to the whole to construct a coherent message. These grammars influence the structure of relationships within and between modes (Kress & van Leeuwen, 1996: 1) and govern the way in which they are understood (O’Halloran, 2006: 227). Kress and van Leeuwen think of grammar as ‘regularities of design’ (2001: 50) developed over time for specific modes in response to a particular discourse and they do not consider anything a mode that is not ‘semiotically organised’ (ibid 51).

Music has a well-defined grammar of notation (staffs, clefs, note pitch, note duration etc.), melody (intervals, tonality (key), etc.), harmony (texture, triads, dissonance, harmonic progressions, etc.) and rhythm (accent, musical feet, phrasing, periods, etc.). Though its grammar, like that of language, is flexible and its rules are often deliberately broken by composers looking to express themselves differently, nevertheless the ways in which the forms and functions of music are understood and described are well established. Grammars might be said to exist for theatrical modes also. Many studies investigate how the sign systems of, for example, gesture, costume, proxemics and lighting are structured and organised, how they are prioritised and how they interact (Alter, 1990; Kowzan, 1975; Pavis, 1978; Ubersfeld, 1999). The same can be said for poetry, described by Jakobson as ‘the most formalized manifestation of language’ (1960b/1981: 89).

[27] Letter from Strauss to Romain Rolland 1905 (1968: 35ff)

3.2.3.2 Intermodal relationships and meaning-making

Coming to terms with the features of a mode's resources and their function is a starting point for understanding why and how modes foster integration. Modal intersemiosis tends to function in two ways: through convergence of meaning (relations of parallelism) and through divergence of meaning (relations of dissonance) (O'Halloran, 2008: 452). Convergence, or what Royce calls 'intersemiotic complementarity', occurs when the respective semiotic systems of modes 'work together' (1998: 26). This can only occur where modes share at least some semiotic principles. For example, music and poetry share semiotic properties that result in both arts being characterised by indeterminacy of meaning. Both have a system of meaning that operates through the syntagmatic axis where word and note combination overrides selection; both share the semiotic mode of rhythm and, to some degree, rhyme.

Convergence or complementarity between modes can be recognised in the way modes instantiate or extend each other's meaning. This is often evident in forms of parallelism and repetition (O'Halloran, 2006: 239) where each mode repeats the content or experience through a synonym, meronym or hyponym or some other collocation (Royce, 1998: 26). This communicative correlation of modes, each conveying the same information and supporting each other's meaning can be thought of as a mode's 'illustrating function' (Kaindl, 2013: 265). Overlapping semiosis, when meaning in one mode is repeated or paralleled in another simultaneously is particularly important since whatever is being foregrounded in this way will be especially significant. There are several reasons why such co-contextualisation of meaning is designed into a text: for emphasis or focus, for elucidation, elaboration or affirmation. Modes are also used to complement each other's meaning, much as one clause may modify another in written discourse (Martinec and Salway, 2005: 343). Just as in language, a secondary clause can expand the meaning of a primary clause (Halliday & Matthiessen, 2014: 376-7), so too can one mode elaborate (restate, specify, exemplify) another, extending its meaning by adding a new element, offering an alternative or by providing some circumstantial or new information. The outcome of successful modal convergence (or divergence) is semantic expansion that occurs on both the expression and content plane. Two systems that share the same form element, the way poetry and music share rhythm will produce an expansion of feeling and meaning through the form in which they are expressed. On

the content plane, when there is a convergence of grammar, such as, for example, in Wagner's fusion of alliterative rhyme with key modulation, the relative systems co-contextualise each other to produce meaning (O'Halloran, 2006: 5).

Convergence between modes may occur in one or more of the metafunctions of the communication. Convergence of ideational meaning requires that modes be able to represent the same happenings in the real world, the same participants and processes or activities using their own semiotic resources either within the same or in different sense channels. Convergence of interpersonal meaning requires that modes reinforce interpersonal relationships and attitudes. Music, gesture and even lighting, might provide convergence of mood (statement, question, demand) and modality (possibility, probability, certainty), since music can imitate intonation and other paratextual features of speech whilst the singer's gaze, facial features, movement and lighting can express power relations and social distance between the characters. Finally, textual convergence requires coherence of the text's structural elements through 'design'. For an opera, compositional complementarity means looking at how the semiotic resources of music, scene and words are combined to produce unity and coherence and avoid cognitive overload. In the case of the *Ring*, for example, one key focus might be how alliterative rhyme complements tonality, specifically harmonic modulation.

The modes of music and verse share many resources that help facilitate their convergence. Two of these are prosody and rhyme, which create meaning at the interpersonal level through their affective use of sound. They also provide compositional cohesion. As in poetry, the affect of sound, as part of meaning, is dependent on its organisation and arrangement where the 'principle of equivalence' is projected from 'the axis of selection on to the axis of combination' (Jakobson, 1960a/1981: 27). This is Jakobson's poetic function (1960a/1981: 21ff), which concerns the foregrounding of form and according to which words or notes are not selected for their paradigmatic relationships (alternation between items) but for their syntagmatic ones. The axis of combination, or syntagmatic axis, employs equivalence in the selection of similarity or dissimilarity, which is then sequenced, based on contiguity (Jakobson, 1960a/1981: 27). Poetry, therefore, is characterised by similar or opposed (as a form of equivalence) phonological, morphological, syntactic, or semantic elements structured throughout the text, and the cohesion and intricate relationships

between these elements determine the quality of the poem (ibid). Normal language, with its denotative function is focussed on information and tends towards differentiation, whilst poetry because of its self-reflexive character, tends towards sameness (repetition, redundancy, metonymy, and synonymy). The same can be said of music whose 'syntagmatic' axis might be defined as involving 'linear distribution or ordering of elements of a paradigmatic inventory' according to 'established rules or principles' (McCreless, 1991: 149). Rhythm and rhyme are syntagmatic variables of both poetry and music, which communicate to the sense of hearing both viscerally and emotionally and whose syntagmatic relationships are the essence of the composition or structure of the opera. Linguistic changes, which alter the configuration of verbal and musical rhythm and rhyme, problematize meaning.

Part of understanding how modes complement one another to produce a single phenomenon must lie in being able to distinguish how different modes (visual, auditory, etc.) change the way information is perceived and understood. This 'orchestration of semiotic flow within and across semiotic resources' (O'Halloran, 2008: 447) is part of the text's *Gestalt* and a significant means by which meaning is made. Language, for example, is a linear, time-bound mode that delivers meaning through the 'successive integration of signs' (Stöckl, 2004: 17) whilst images are perceived holistically and simultaneously (ibid) thanks to what Stöckl calls their 'analogue code characteristics' (ibid) by which he means that their sign qualities closely resemble what they signify and require less parsing than symbolic codes like language. Although music, like language, also unfolds in linear time, it is not perceived note by note but as an holistic relationship of notes that like an image can also be immediately understood when its signs resemble those from life and nature. In other words, when a mode's sign qualities are iconic or indexical[28] it provides immediate sensory input producing an immediacy of meaning (Stöckl, 2004: 17). Music tends to operate mainly as an indexical sign, pointing to or indicating emotions and feelings. Tarasti argues that indexical signs also serve a conative function (2002: 134), in other

[28] In Peircean semiotics, the iconic sign signifies by means of resemblance or imitation, its meaning is immediately comprehensible and does not have to be learned. The indexical sign does not resemble the signified object but is directly connected to it either physically or by inference. Smoke is an indexical sign of fire. Symbols are a matter of convention and arbitrary; they must be learned. (Peirce, 1895/2001: 13ff)

words, music engages or acts on the listener asking him not only to perceive something but to react to it. For example, dissonance as unresolved, pervasive tension might be experienced as disturbing and a modulation to consonance might lead to feelings of happiness. Music, however, can be both iconic and indexical at the same time, for example, bird song may on the one hand represent the presence of a bird or on the other, indicate spring or joy. Iconic and indexical sign qualities in music are often referred to as word or tone painting.

When modes are deliberately combined such that they do not converge in one or all of the metafunctions then divergence, dissonance or contradiction is the result. Different messages or attitudes can thus be conveyed simultaneously, which will challenge perceptions and introduce uncertainty and irony. Dissonance between modes in text types that require clarity of communication would, of course, be undesirable, however, in aesthetic texts where ambiguity, paradox or irony are essential to the aesthetic experience, use of modes to create divergent meaning become important. Certainly, Wagner's *Ring* is replete with examples of modal incongruence: words or actions 'say' one thing and the music 'says' something different.

Texts or events that comprise a number of modes in their communication are inevitably semantically richer or stronger as a result of their integration, whether through overlapping semiosis or combinations of complementary meaning (Stöckl, 2004: 18). The above concepts of integration, derived from theories concerning the nature of multimodal discourse, enable the translator of opera to move beyond the isolated technical problems of opera translation concerned primarily with how the libretto must remain singable and continue to make 'sense' after the exchange of linguistic resources (Low, 2003: 94). Multimodality addresses the more important matter of musico-semantic alignment, which asks how a translation, despite a change of linguistic resources, creates the wholeness constituted of linguistic and musical meaning that might be deemed equivalent to the original opera *Gestalt*.

Stated in other terms, the arrangement and relationship of parts within a whole is about design and this can be thought of as style. Style, in multimodal terms, is about choosing, forming and combining modes of meaning for aesthetic purposes. The intermodal relationships that the author creates are part of the rhetorical structure that

contributes to text cohesion; they are choices (albeit with certain restraints) that are not function or content bound. When analysing the multiple modes of meaning in an object of translation, the multimodal approach offers a means by which to consider how, in the case of opera, for example, the visual and auditory modes have been arranged to interact and condition each other. The translator who is aware of the stylistic choices made by the author of the original work, and why, will be in a good position to recognise how a change to one mode, through translation, alters modal relationships, potentially changing the nature of the work and the effect it is able to produce on the reader or spectator. The stylistic choices of the composer that unite music, words and action, have created signposts to meaning, which translators, who wish to avoid altering the original coherence and cohesion of a work and its potential meaning, might do well to consider.

Concepts from multimodality provide ways of approaching the various challenges of translating language when other modalities simultaneously construct meaning alongside it. The concepts of convergence and divergence, of multiplication and enhancement, elaboration and elucidation focus the translator on the role of each mode in context with the others, so that translation decisions can be reached that best serve the text and its anticipated reader. In Chapter 4, I shall explore the nature of the verbal (verse), musical and theatrical modes of opera and in Chapter 6, the convergence and divergence of musical and poetic modes in singable translations of Wagner's *Ring*.

3.3 Translational stylistics

The way in which modes are 'designed' to integrate and co-make meaning is a question of style, which is choice-related and not determined by function or content. In literature, the study of 'design' or style has traditionally been termed stylistics, defined as the study of 'the use of language in literature' (Leech, 2014: 1) and concerned with how authors express their meaning and affect the reader through the structure of their texts. Studies of translated texts recognise, however, that their writer is the translator, whose own aims may differ from those of the original author given the change of culture, time, and target audience and so on. This may have implications for the translation. The author of the original text made free and unconstrained choices but the translator 'in taking the decision to translate…commits to a willing suspension of

freedom to invent…creating a text that stands to its source text in a relationship of direct mediation' (Malmkjaer, 2004: 15). In analysing a translation for its stylistic elements, one is therefore concerned with the relationship between the stylistic choices of the translator and those of the original author. So, whilst stylistics asks why a text has been made to mean what is does, translational stylistics seeks to explain 'why, *given the source text*, the translation has been shaped in such a way that it comes to mean what it does (Malmkjaer, 2003: 39 [italics are author's own]). The source text orientation of translational stylistics is ideally suited to opera translation where the more usual prospective, target text orientation of translation practice is inadequate, since the music, which does not change and is embedded in its source culture, requires that any critique consider its relationship to the target text (Kaindl, 1995: 184). In this thesis, the concept of translational stylistics is extended to multimodal texts where the evaluation of the translator's stylistic choices, as regards the words, is not only considered in terms of target culture reception, but with regard to the translation's coherence with a network of multimodal relationships between text, music and staging in the ST (ibid).

Often the explanation for the differences in stylistic choices can be accounted for by socio-cultural differences between the translator and author and their intended reader or audience. Whilst these concerns apply to opera translation as well, they are not the focus of this thesis though sometimes they enter into the argument. The focus here is whether or not, and how and why the translators of Wagner's *Ring* have chosen to recreate the stylistic elements that created the intersemiosis of text and music in the original score and preserved or lost the potentialities of meaning created by Wagner.

4. Modes, Sub-modes and Media of Opera

In this chapter, I examine the nature of the opera as a text, looking at its main modes, sub-modes and the medium of the voice. With the exception of the scenic-mimetic mode, for reasons explained below, these elements, which are fixed in the medium of the score, will form the basis of my examination of the translations of *DW* and *GD* in Chapter 6.

Opera as performance communicates through the auditory modes of music and language and through the visual modes of staging and performance (see Fig. 1a). Music and language are presented in different media. The conductor's score combines the music of every instrumental part with the music and words of the singer's voice parts as well as any stage directions. Individual members of the orchestra have instrument parts, which include some of the vocal text as cues. A vocal score containing all the vocal parts with piano accompaniment, a reduction of the orchestral score, is used by the singers and chorus. Vocal scores also include stage directions. The libretto, which contains the text and stage directions, is the starting point for the director, the set, costume and lighting designers and all others involved in the visualisation of the opera on stage. The performance is materialised in three media: the singer's body and voice, the orchestra and the staging, which includes the movement of performers and the stage décor. In practical terms, translating an opera for performance requires the production of a new libretto, which does not alter its materialisation as music, voice and performance from that of the original libretto.

To change the text mode without altering the *Gestalt* of the opera requires that the translator understand how each mode of signification interacts with and affects the others and how they generate vocal sound, stage action, and stage décor. The diagrams below (Figs.1b and 1c) show the primary modes (verse, music, performance) and sub-modes that make up the opera as a multimodal text. Many of the visual modes are only developed during the mise-en-scène and whilst they may be based on the libretto and score, they are often inspired by the history of performance, the director's interpretation and the socio-cultural environment.

Fig. 1a

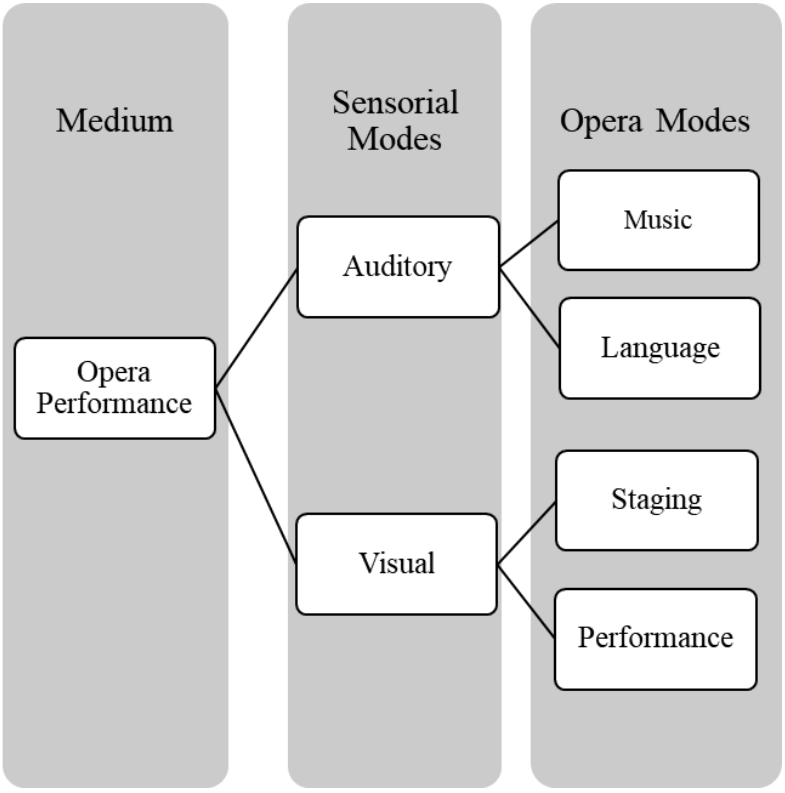

Medium
Sensorial Modes
Opera Modes
Opera Performance
Auditory
Visual
Music
Language
Staging
Performance

Fig. 1b

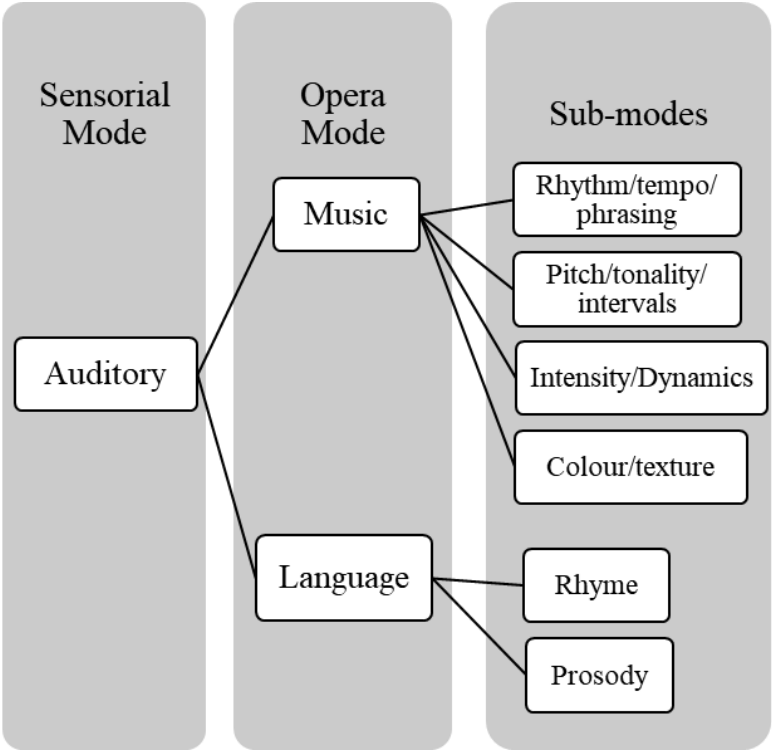
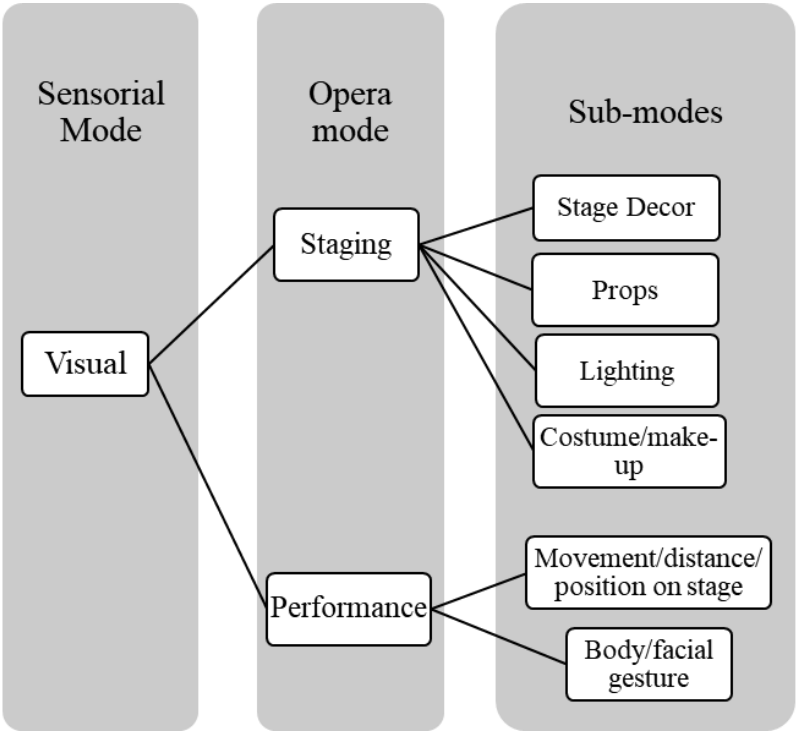

Sensorial Mode
Opera Mode
Sub-modes
Auditory
Music
Language
Rhythm/tempo/ phrasing
Pitch/tonality/ intervals
Intensity/Dynamics
Colour/texture
Rhyme
Prosody

Fig. 1c



Music and verse share many resources that facilitate their convergence in opera. Two of these elements are prosody and rhyme that create meaning at the interpersonal level through their affective use of sound and provide compositional cohesion (textual metafunction). The first and perhaps most basic requirement of a translated libretto is that it can be sung. Therefore, the convergence of the prosody of the verse with that of the music is of primary importance and is the subject of Chapter 4.1. The quality of the poetry, the effectiveness of dialogue, semantic interpretation of the source libretto and its relationship to the finer details of musical meaning are as nothing if the translation is not 'singable'. This means that the translation must achieve the mechanical or technical fit of words and music: essentially rhythm and phrasing. Dürr summed it up when he said that a singable translation means that the text must be metrically the same as the original in terms of cadences, syllables and accents; and respect the internal caesuras and rhetorical accents as well as the phrasing of the melody (2004: 1036).

Verse can affect its reader or listener especially through its use of rhyme where sound, as part of meaning, is dependent on its organisation and arrangement. In Chapter 4.2, the alliterative verse form used by Wagner is explored and the relationship between

rhyme and musical accent, which directly influences Wagner's melodic composition, is investigated.

Although I do not include the visual mode in my analysis and commentary of the translations in Chapter 6, I take the opportunity in Chapter 4.3 to draw attention to the performative aspects of the libretto that the translator might consider. My focus is on the way in which music and text create subtext that influences the performance, whether that be in terms of scenery, props, lighting, movement or gesture, and the consequences of omitting the author's deictic markers or inadvertently adding the translator's own performative markers.

After a brief overview of the resources and 'grammar' of music, Chapter 4.4 examines how music can resemiotize the meaning of words through imitation and its own musical lexis before looking at the ways in which music multiplies the meaning of the words, elaborating or contradicting them. Wagner's theory of musico-poetic synthesis is then explained in more detail, which sheds light on how the semiotic resources of *Stabreim* integrate with melody, particularly how through key relationships and modulation the semantic and sensual effect of alliteration is extended. It finally looks at how the leitmotif, as symbol and subtext, contributes to verbal meaning. Finally in this chapter, the voice, the primary medium through which the music and words are made available to the audience, is examined in terms of how the translator's choices can favour vocal production and comprehension or hinder it.

4.1 Prosody: sub-mode of verse and music

Both verse and music utilise rhythm, or prosody, to connect sound and sense, although music has a number of other means by which to do the same: note duration, intensity, dynamics[29], melodic contour[30], modulation and more. It is, nevertheless, in their shared prosody that possibly the greatest constraint in opera translation lies.

In everyday speech, prosody provides listeners with contextual cues to the speaker's meaning through its use of pitch, loudness (intensity), tempo and rhythm

[29] Musical Dynamics indicate the loudness or change in loudness of music.

[30] Variations of pitch

(stress as well as syllable duration). Variation in any of these aspects can have the effect of changing the meaning of a sentence or a word. The word ‘desert’ when accented on the first syllable is a barren area of land with little precipitation, but when accented on the final syllable can become a verb or sound like the word ‘dessert’ referring to the sweet course after dinner! Prosodic intonation (pitch) and intensity can change the meaning of a sentence by indicating a speaker's attitude to what is being said (for example, it can indicate irony, sarcasm, etc.). Pitch can function grammatically at the end of a sentence to form questions, declarations or interruptions. Prosody indicates finality or continuity and turn-taking in conversation, gives prominence, makes contrastive emphasis, conveys attitudes of friendliness or hostility, and enables inference about the speaker’s state: happy, sad, tired and so on. Prosody determines the way in which an utterance is understood.

The language of the opera libretto relies partly on the prosody of everyday speech but mostly on the prosody of verse that aims to make words count both sensorially and intellectually; it functions as an aspect of rhetoric and form to produce a literary effect. Verse prosody is about poetic metre and versification (Leech, 2014: 103ff). Poetic metre organises the rhythmical course of a poem and is based on syllabic quantity (count), the number of stressed syllables (weight), the duration of the syllables (length) and combinations of these. The alternation of two or three stressed or long syllables and unstressed or short syllables constitute different poetic feet, which are further classified by their quantity in the verse line. In English and German poetry accentual-syllabic metres like the iamb dominate, in French poetry, syllabic prosody is most common and quantitative prosody dominates Latin poetry.

Composers of opera have tended to imitate musically the prosody of the libretto’s verse, fixing it in a rigid musical system. The assertiveness of the musical prosody becomes psychologically greater than any exerted by the verse (Stein, 1971: 12) and demands that note values be observed by the translator over and above the prosody of the verse. Although musical prosody is very similar to verbal prosody, music can play with time in a way that is quite different to speech; consider how a line of verse takes much longer to sing than to speak. This is because music is ‘both quantitative, like Latin verse, and accentual like English and German’ (Auden & Kallman, 1948: 485). In other words, music takes into account both the length of the

syllables as well as the heavy or light stress placed on them. This can have the effect of changing the verse rhythm: for example, 'Now thank we all our God' changes from iambic feet when spoken to spondees when sung (ibid: 486)[31]. In other words, the prosody of speech and verse often disappears to be replaced by that of the music and it would be false, therefore, to think that musical and poetic metre are identical and that adherence to the poetic metre will mean the translated verse automatically fits the music.

The problems of prosodic match between music and words have been central to the literature on opera translation since the early twentieth century (see for example Hart, 1917, 1918; Peyser, 1922; Dent, 1935; Auden & Kallman, 1948; Honolka, 1978; Apter, 1985; Apter & Herman, 1995; Low, 2005, 2008). However, Kaindl dismisses prosody as a technical translation problem (1995: 3) and does not address its formal or semiotic role in opera *per se*. I agree that it is a technical matter because the translator, whose aim is a singable translation, has no choice but to tailor the translation to fit the prosody of the music and this leaves little to discuss in terms of the translator's choices and decisions. However, the constraints of prosody influence the translator's choices in all other matters. In Wagner's *Ring,* prosodic match has the added complication of being closely bound to the semiotics of alliterative rhyme and this makes prosody more than a purely technical matter.

It has long been considered a *sine qua non* of opera translation that the words of the translation fit the music as if they had been those for which the music had first been composed (Dent, 1935: 83). Without the mechanical fit of words and music, which is dependent on the interplay of language, verse and music's shared semiotic resource of prosody, the quality of the translation's verse, the effectiveness of its dialogue, its semantic interpretation of the source libretto and its relationship to the finer details of musical meaning are as nothing. Some would call preservation of the rhythmical relationship between text and music a 'basic norm or binding requirement' (Golomb, 2005: 122), making the chief aim of the translator to avoid wrongly placing accented words against unaccented notes. False accents make the text difficult and awkward to sing, which can undermine the sincerity of the text's meaning or its emotion, as well as

[31] Based on the standard hymn tune by Johann Crüger, harmonised by Mendelssohn.

potentially bringing about a loss of comprehension. At the technical level, a prosodic match between a translated libretto and the music requires translators to 'render note for note, stress for stress, and burden for burden' (Hermann & Apter, 1991: 102), that is to say, syllabic count, weight and length in the verse must be matched to those of the musical score. In addition to this, phrasing, which is often ignored, must be considered.

Although I focus primarily on musical prosody as a technical constraint in this chapter, it is a semiotic resource in its own right and it is used together with other resources, like tonality, to pictorialize words or to enhance or elaborate them. In later chapters, the semantic role of rhythm will become clear.

4.1.1 Syllable count

When a composer sets music to verse, he decides whether to set a single syllable to a single note or to spread it over a number of notes and thus creates the rhythm of the music. Any change to the number of syllables in the verse of the translated libretto will alter the rhythm and this might be considered tantamount to changing the music. There is, therefore, some agreement that the number of syllables of the original libretto text should be identical with those of the translation (Hart, 1918: 21; Volbach, 1951: 216; Noske, 1970: 30; Honolka, 1978: 31). When this is achieved, no change is made to the rhythm of the musical phrase. However, there is an audible change to the musical rhythm if, for example, two notes that each had one syllable attached to them are joined to accommodate one syllable in the translation, or a note against which one syllable was placed is split to accommodate two. When syllables are added, not only does this alter the music but it may also upset the flow of enunciation and spoil the *legato*[32] line, especially important in *Bel Canto*[33] singing. The opposite is of course also problematic: if the sense of the words calls for a *staccato* effect and syllables are removed thus generating melismas[34], the smoother legato effect may contradict the sense of the

[32] A smooth, even style without noticeable breaks between the notes. It is an essential element of the professional singing voice as it provides the basis of rounded, focused, expressive and sophisticated sound.

[33] *Bel Canto* refers to the Italian vocal style that developed in the 18th and early 19th centuries, whose specific techniques produced resonance and purity of tone, consistency of tone across the registers of the voice, a high degree of breath control, excellent projection, and longevity of the voice.

[34] A melisma is a group of notes sung to one syllable of text. Melismatic is the opposite of syllabic, meaning that each note is sung to a different syllable.

words. According to Apter and Hermann, opera producers and publishers are ‘terrified’ of such ‘desecration’ because it destroys the ‘composer’s conception, his or her intention, and possibly the entire opera’ (1995: n.p.).

However, recent scholarship on opera and vocal music translation suggests that whilst identical syllabic count is desirable, it is not essential (Low, 2003: 97). According to Low’s 'Pentathlon Principle', changes that are ‘judiciously’ executed so as to avoid ‘destroying the melody’ may be preferable to loss of meaning or naturalness (ibid). Apter and Hermann also believe strict syllable count is unnecessary (2016: 17) and have no hesitation in making small changes to the music. They suggest that where a translation produces more syllables than the ST, they can often be accommodated by splitting or adding a note, or where the composer may have set one word to two notes the translator may remove the melisma and set a syllable to each note (ibid). Should a translation produce too few syllables, then the reverse actions are possible: combine notes, delete notes or create melismas (ibid). The degree to which this is done may change the sound of the music and its overall effect; more syllables will sound less smooth and more staccato and vice versa. Therefore, musical meaning must be considered together with verbal meaning before any decision is made to alter the music.

4.1.2 Syllable weight

Weight, stress or accent refer to the degree of prominence given to individual syllables in a word; this can be lexical, sentential or rhetorical. Lexical prosody, which is at the core of metrical verse forms, accounts for the variation in poetic metres from language to language. Stress-timed languages like English and German produce mainly accentual verse whilst syllable- timed languages like French and Italian produce syllabic verse.

Musical metrics, based on patterns of stressed and unstressed beats, share similar features with poetic metrics such as their division into categories of duple and triple metres. In poetry, the duple category includes the pyrrhic, iambic, trochaic and spondaic foot; in the triple category the most common feet are the anapaest and dactyl. Tetrasyllables also exist that correspond with quadruple time, but are rarely found in western European verse. Musical metres are indicated by time signatures and are the

basis of all musical rhythm and accent. In all cases, the strongest beat or accent is the first one in each bar, known as the downbeat. There are also secondary accents, for example, the third beat of a bar in 4/4 time or the second beat in a bar of 3/4 time or the second beat in a bar of 6/8 time (the fourth quaver). These are simple metres. Compound metres (6/8, 9/8, 12/8) introduce more complexity, which produces greater nuance in terms of organisation and stress.

Although the composer takes the prosody of the verse as his starting point, the rhythms that result in the music are not the same as the original spoken rhythm. This is because, as already mentioned, whilst poetry is either accentual or quantitative, music is both. A trochaic line such as 'Tyger, tiger burning bright', (Blake, from Songs of Experience, 1794), which in accentual terms might sound like a march time (2/4 or 4/4), could in quantitative terms, where the first syllable is long and twice the length of the short syllables, easily be heard as waltz (3/4) time (Auden & Kallman, 1948: 485). Music has the effect of elongating speech; it always takes longer to sing a word than to say it. This distortion explains how the trochees of 'Tyger, tyger' become spondees. Matching the translation to the prosody of the verse, therefore, might result in false accents when sung and since the prosody of the music subsumes that of the verse, the translator must seek to replicate the former for a singable translation (ibid).

False accentuation caused by incorrectly placing a stressed syllable on an unstressed note, and vice versa, produces unnatural declamation and potentially makes comprehension difficult. In opera, clarity is essential if the listener is to grasp meaning in the great flood of stimuli and inputs that assault the ear, when there is no opportunity to ask for the words to be repeated. In order to achieve a correct match between verbal and musical accentuation translators have often resorted to abnormal syntax or awkward language and for a long time this was deemed acceptable since, according to Orr, music can mitigate what would sound unnatural when spoken (1941: 325). More recently, it has even been suggested that deliberate deviation from the semantic component of the text is preferable to incorrect accentuation of the words (Golomb, 2005: 133). Golomb caveats this point by saying that 'macro-semantic and thematic content' cannot be sacrificed but 'local semantic elements can' (ibid) such as changing words or even phrase order and 'ignoring semantic detail' (ibid).

4.1.3 Syllable length

The linguistic prosody of English and German is not only concerned with stressed and unstressed syllables but also with long and short syllables. In syllable-timed languages (French) and quantitative verse (Alexandrine), a long syllable equates to a stressed one but even in stress-timed languages (English and German), some stressed syllables take longer to say than others. In order to achieve natural speech rhythms and to avoid any change to the musical rhythm, it is necessary to look beyond the musical synchronisation of syllabic stress and consider the natural length of vowels within words. Vowel length depends on a number of elements: its inherent length (the difference between ɪ as in 'ship' and i: as in 'sheep'), whether it is stressed (compare 'personal' and 'personify'), how many consonants are in the word ('wit' and 'witty') and how it ends: voiced consonants produce a longer vowel than unvoiced ones (compare 'bad' and 'bat').

Retaining the correct length of the vowel in a translation is not only important semantically but makes a difference to the singer and his or her ability to produce good tone. Vowels are the lifeblood of singing and according to Wagner, the primitive expression of pure emotion (1852/1914b: 92). Ensuring the singer has the right vowels for singing long notes and melismas is as important as ensuring that he or she is not squeezing a naturally long vowel onto a short semi - or demisemiquaver. A single syllable word such as 'it', for example, would sound unnatural on a long or heavily emphasised note. Not only is the vowel problematic but its consonant has no resonance with which it might extend the vowel sound. Short vowels can be lengthened by a 'resonant succeeding consonant, or even, less obviously, by a preceding one' (Irwin, 1996: 97), which makes words like 'can' and 'mat' more 'vocally promising' than 'cat' (ibid). Low draws attention to the fact that short vowels are included in many common words like 'it' or 'the', which will certainly be distorted if set to long note values such as minims (2003: 93). When faced with long notes or legato phrases, the need for long vowels will, for example, favour 'tiny' rather than 'little' (ibid). For a short note, a translation for *Schiff* might be fine as 'ship' but a longer note might require the use of a metonym such as 'sail'. The reverse is also true, long vowels on short notes can be difficult to sing and hear. Replacing long vowels in English translations is the greatest challenge as they are much rarer than in Italian or German and any artificial

lengthening of a syllable to fit a long note can result in a 'disparity of accentuation' (Peyser, 1922: 365). Note length can often determine the translator's choice of words and appropriate vowel lengths can prevail over semantic equivalence.

4.1.4 Melodic phrasing

Prosody is not only about accented and unaccented syllabic patterns but also about how they have been grouped. Over and above the linguistic prosody of individual words or the metre of poetry, comes the prosody of the phrase, what Stein calls 'sentence accent' (1971: 71). Music, having usually been composed to reflect the natural spoken declamation of a phrase, has in its melodic design climaxes and caesuras that reflect speech intonation and emphasise key words with correspondingly important notes within the structure of the musical phrase (Gorlée, 1997: 247). Translators who do not write to the prosody of the musical phrase risk estranging the melody from the verbal content or even making the text incomprehensible.

The musical phrase is a structure similar to the verbal phrase and like the verbal phrase builds into sentence, paragraph, chapter and so on. Like grammatical and rhetorical units in language, musical phrases and periods, provide structure. A musical phrase, whether in traditionally structured music or in Wagner's *Ring*, can be thought of as any group of notes performed together as one musical thought[35], regardless of the structure of the bars, and just as verbal phrases are demarcated by punctuation, so musical phrases are separated through pause and cadence. Some cadences are strong and feel like a full stop, and some are weak and want to go on further to finish the thought, acting like commas or semi-colons. When two phrases are joined and the first ends on a weak cadence, and the second ends on a strong cadence, it is called a period. In a period, the first phrase is called an antecedent phrase, and the second phrase is called a consequent phrase. Musical phrases are traditionally of two, four and eight bar lengths; this is the so-called foursquare phrasing that Wagner decried in *O&D* for its rigidity that caused composers to set unaccented syllables to strong beats of a bar thus harming the natural melody of speech and undermining any organic union of melody

[35] 'Musical thought' is a metaphor commonly used to denote 'rhythmically organised sequences of tensions and resolutions' (Fónagy, 2001: 133)

and verse (1852/1914a: 238-239). Apart from cadence, phrasing relies on rhythm, dynamics, articulation, melody, and the interplay of musical ideas.

In vocal music, phrase structure is generally derived from that of the words, the problem for the translator is that the translated phrase, because of the differences in linguistic structures, will often no longer fit the musical phrasing in the same way. If the translator ignores the phrasing fixed by the music, for example by splitting a verbal phrase into two or continuing it over onto the next musical phrase, the musical logic, which shapes and orders musical events so that they grow out of and point to one another, may be disturbed (Micke, 1998: 74). This means that the translator cannot easily ignore the musical caesuras between phrases or alter the relationship between word and tone found in the original phrasing (Honolka, 1978: 32). Ignoring the musical phrasing can make nonsense of the words and render the language difficult to comprehend, destroy any musicality and cause problems for the singer who uses the ends of phrases as opportunities to breathe.

Wagner rejected regular phrasing, which had characterised the music of the classical and much of the Romantic period. For Wagner, the constraints of traditional musical syntax restricted the expression of true feeling and real drama and he dispensed with them in the *Ring*, thanks to the use of *Stabreim*, which facilitated a more flexible musical structure that served dramatic needs. His phrases do not neatly following cadential norms of earlier compositions and this avoidance of harmonic and melodic closure is what is described as Wagner's endless melody (Grey, 2006: 288). In the *Ring*, instead of foursquare phrasing punctuated with cadences, there are irregular phrase structures in which the text is projected in a vocal line that faithfully reflects its verbal accentuations, poetic meaning and emotional content. The phrases of Wagner's poetry determine the phrasing of the music in term of organisation and intonation and shape such elements as pitch movement (high/ low), intervallic distance, dynamics, articulation and interplay of musical ideas. Most specifically, Wagner's alliterative rhyme and its associated accents, governed by what could be said in one breath, form the basis of phrase structures.

Matching verbal and musical phrases requires not only that there is a match in metrical terms between words and music but that important words appear on notes that

indicate their importance and that the effect of commas and colons be recognised (Low, 2003: 94). Like punctuation, musical phrasing is essential to meaning and any alteration must be carefully considered if the translator is to avoid undermining prosody as a meaning-making mode that is able to represent ideas, affect the listener or function as a cohesive textual element that binds music and words aurally and semantically.

To achieve prosodic match calls for an excellent understanding of musical form and a sound knowledge and experience of vocal technique so that in studying the musical phrase, the translator is able to find an arrangement of words that most closely fits the arrangement of the music.

4.2 Rhyme: sub-mode of verse

It would probably be true to say that most operas performed in the major opera houses around the world today have libretti that rhyme, Italian opera, in particular, because most libretti from the inception of opera (around 1600) until the late nineteenth century were written in rhyming verse.[36] In opera's first two hundred years, the verse-writers, the librettists, dominated the librettist- composer partnership (Beeson, 1988: 3), determining the subject matter and the form of the opera (ibid) and music had the function of serving the libretto (Kaindl 1995: 44). Mozart considered the verse of a libretto as 'the most indispensable element for music' (1781/2006), for it supplied text structured appropriately for balanced musical phrases. Rhymes, stanzaic structure and metre, what one might call the music of poetry, had strong influence on melodic pattern and phrase structure and the poetic metre chosen by the poet influenced the underlying musical rhythm.

In seventeenth century Italy, where opera began, 'versi sciolti', eleven and seven syllable (hendecasyllabic and settenario) lines with irregular end rhymes became conventional for recitative[37] because their loose form suited dramatic dialogue and

[36] Prose libretti were not used in any significant way until the 1890s (Massenet's *Thais* (1896) and Debussy's *Pelleas et Melisande* (1902)). Prose gained ground as musical developments introduced more inclination towards flexible phrase lengths and free rhythms. As opera moved into the twentieth century prose libretti were often set by composers like Schoenberg (*Moses und Aron*), Webern (*Wozzeck*) and Britten (*Billy Budd*).

[37] A rhythmically free vocal style that imitates the natural inflections of speech and that is used for dialogue and narrative in operas and oratorio. 'Recitativo secco' a distinct feature of baroque and classical

narrative. However, for arias and ensembles, shorter poetic lines with clear-cut patterns and regular rhyme schemes were favoured because the uneven ‘versi sciolti’ were difficult to fit to the conventions of regular balanced musical phrasing that dominated composition at that time. The librettist effectively decided the parts of the story that would be communicated through recitative or aria through his choice of rhyme. By the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, a convention was established that arias (at least in opera seria) would be written as two strophes with an identical number of lines, usually four, and the same metre and rhyme scheme. Eventually, the librettist’s standardised stanzaic forms and rhyme schemes led to established 'fixed musical forms' (Groos & Parke, 1988: 5) by which future librettists were constrained and until well into the nineteenth century, the librettist served the music by delivering verse in predictable patterns ready for the composer.

The verse of an opera libretto serves many purposes and is more than poetry on the page. Poems are written in one voice, that of the poet, who addresses an imagined world of readers and the reader’s understanding and judgement of the poem are secondary to the writer’s sense of self-expression. The purpose of his writing is not communication but expression, so non-dramatic poetry tends to focus on language and imagery, to be preoccupied with itself as content and form. The dramatic verse of opera, however, must drive narrative function, provide character and determine the order and intensity of the action. It must approximate, on some level, real conversation and speech. It is mediated by voices other than the poet or reader. It is perhaps more appropriately to be compared with verse-drama than poetry. The librettist is as much a dramatist as a poet.

Opera libretti are written to be set to music and to tell a story on stage in a limited time. The libretto is created in the first instance for the composer. It is essentially a provisional text (Roccatagliati, 1995: 84), which the composer’s music makes fixed. Libretti were often altered by composers who changed the number of characters, acts or scenes and even words, such that differences between libretto and

opera is accompanied only by the harpsichord (or piano or cello in Mozart). For moments of heightened emotion, a more musical type of recitative was used known as *recitativo accompagnato.*

score were not unusual. Even in composing the *Ring*, Wagner changed his own words for musical purposes (Bribitzer-Stull, 2015: 53) .

4.2.1 Rhyme in opera libretti compared to poetry

Rhyme is an important element in poetry fusing sense and sound (Jakobson, 1960a/1981: 39). As a pattern of 'foregrounded features' that are 'related to one another and to the text in its entirety' (Verdonk, 2013: 62) rhyme is, therefore, one of the chief factors of poetic cohesion. Rhymes are able to create semantic relationships (Jakobson, 1960a/1981: 38) through conspicuous similarity in sound in respect to similarity and/or dissimilarity in meaning (ibid: 44) such that rhymes act as 'sense binders' or 'semantic couplers' (Wellek & Warren, 1956: 199). Jakobson called rhyme, the sound-meaning nexus (1960a/1981: 44), in which a 'phonological sequence' and a 'sequence of semantic units…build an equation' (ibid: 42). In poetry, rhyme is also a punctuating device relating to form and structure and its metrical function signals the conclusion of lines and verses and organises stanzaic patterns (Wellek & Warren, 1956: 161). Rhyme structure is usually responsible for the dynamic movement of the poem with the first rhyme word creating anticipation and forward momentum whilst the second creates satisfaction or closure. Together with metre, rhyme creates both an aural and emotional feeling of flow, which is the reason why rhyme is so often referred to as the musical part of poetry. In poetry, which was an oral art long before it was a written one, rhythm, parallel structures and rhyme were also essential for their mnemonic qualities that helped its reciters to organise and remember their material.

Rhyme's structural, sonic and semantic functions, present in poetry, might be important to the composer's work and for the singer in memorising the material, but for communication with the audience, once it converges with music, its function and effect are questionable. As Noske points out, 'rhyme has an important auditory function in recited poetry, [but] its value, unless reinforced by a musical rhyme, is much more restricted in music' (1970: 31). This is largely because its acoustic parallelisms are difficult to hear over the music during an opera's performance and because there is a greater amount of time between rhymes once set to music. Wagner had said as much in *Oper und Drama* when he complained that translators distorted word order to the point of incomprehension when they attempted to make rhymes that in any case were made

inaudible by the music (1852/1914b: 213-214). Music tends to slow down the momentum of language and sung phrasing alters how rhymes are heard, often dissipating their semantic relationship. This is not to mention the practice of repetition, where a phrase is sung more than once, often to different music, which distances rhymes even further. Once set to music, rhyme's structural function of signalling phrase endings is replaced by musical cadence. Cadence functions, like rhyme, as punctuation, defining verse lines and stanzas and like rhyme, it can connect and contrast meaning. Cadences of different kinds function like commas, semi-colons, question marks and full stops. A perfect cadence, for example, can indicate closure or finality by returning to the tonic (the key in which the piece or phrase began). An imperfect cadence, which sounds incomplete or suspended, functions somewhat like a question mark as it waits for an answer or resolution that usually follows as a perfect cadence. An interrupted cadence, when it starts, gives the impression that there will be some closure but deceives the listener by not returning to the tonic and instead may move to any chord evoking a sensation of 'hanging' or a pregnant pause before there is a final resolution perhaps in the next phrase. Just as rhymes do not always form closures but push on to the next phrase in enjambment, this sense of 'overlapping' can also occur in musical cadence when a cadence ends one phrase and begins the next; where one melody seems to end but another begins.

If in opera, the semantic and structural role of rhyme is subsumed by music and its only remaining function is to serve as a mnemonic for the singer, the necessity to preserve it in a translation seems doubtful.

4.2.2 Rhyme translation theories for poetry and opera

Translation Studies scholars like Lefevere have suggested that despite its importance in the ST poem, imitating rhyme in poetry translation is a 'bondage' that produces a 'caricature of the original' (1975: 61). His concern is that when translators force themselves to rhyme, they exacerbate infidelity to the ST and produce a translation of questionable artistic appeal. For Lefevere, blank verse would be preferable, producing greater accuracy (ibid). The unavoidable 'looser association with the poem's semantic composition' (Levy, 2011: 192) is inevitable because finding rhyme words that correspond semantically to those in the SL, reinforcing and linking

the same meanings, is not an easy task and is limited to translation between closely related languages. More often than not, rhymes, if found, link and emphasise different meanings. Lefevere considers rhyme a constraint that may doom a translation to failure and describes it as a generator of 'aberrations' (ibid: 56). Unsurprisingly, most English - language translators do not 'automatically decide to "retain" the rhyme scheme' (Holmes, 1988: 83).

Just as scholars of poetry translation argue that rhyme is an aspect of form that can be altered or ignored, so too do many vocal music translation scholars. However, there have been a few, like Dent (1876 – 1957), for example, who have disagreed and been persuaded that if the libretto rhymes, so should the translation because of its relationship with the music (1935: 85). According to Dent, the absence of rhyme would jar with the musical rhyme evident in phrasing and cadences, composed in response to the rhymes in the original libretto (ibid), yet even he took pains to caveat his view, saying there need not be as many rhymes (ibid) and that the decisive factor should be the rhyme's 'literary value' (ibid: 86). Drinker (1880 -1965), like Dent, also believed rhyme in opera translation was necessary but for a less objective reason; for him avoidance would be a translator's 'acknowledgement of defeat' (1950: 232). Most who wrote on the subject in the first half of the twentieth century, however, rejected the necessity to rhyme if as a result semantic fidelity and natural or serious poetic language was to be sacrificed. They held rhyme responsible for 'absurdities' and the 'grossest gibberish' (Peyser, 1922: 360), for the sacrifice of sense, accent, and dramatic emphasis (Spaeth, 1915: 296) and for the writing of meaningless lines (Volbach, 1951: 216). Calvocoressi (1877 – 1944) claimed that nearly all the 'solecisms, malapropisms, vulgarities and other faults' of opera translation can be attributed to the desire to preserve rhyme (1921: 320). Some believed that if rhyme did not present itself, there was 'a good deal to be said for doing without it' (Fox-Strangways 1921: 216) and that rhyme was only necessary when the musical treatment of the rhyme made all other factors of translation less necessary (Hart, 1917: 458). The effort to rhyme often produced not only unnatural language but also comic effects akin to those of Gilbert and Sullivan's libretti (Auden & Kallman, 1948: 488).

Current scholarship in vocal music translation also tends to dismiss the necessity for rhyme in a successful translation (see Low 2008, 5-6; Apter, 1985: 309ff).

According to Apter and Herman, rather than producing 'tortured English syntax' that sounds 'like a foreign language' (1995: 29) only the rhyme scheme 'demanded (or allowed) by the music, rather than the rhyme scheme of the original verse … should dictate the rhyme scheme of the translation' (2016: 188). For example, where music makes a rhyme inaudible or gives it low prominence, the translation can dispense with or have fewer rhymes. Alternatively, rhyme alternatives, such as 'assonance' and 'off-rhyme' could be used instead (Apter, 1985: 189). Low calls for rhyme to be treated with a 'margin of flexibility' (2008: 6), stating that it is not 'a priori…sacrosanct and to be rendered to perfection' (2003: 101). Choosing not to rhyme at all, to limit rhymes or to be flexible about the quality of rhyme may mean that rhyme, as a feature of the translation is judged less than perfect, but this may avoid serious translation loss in other areas (Low, 2008: 7). Franzon, who considers rhyme part of the 'poetic match' necessary for successful vocal music translation, together with 'prosodic match' and 'semantic-reflexive match' (2008: 390), is also flexible about the degree to which rhyme quantity and quality may vary from the original text or even be omitted. Like Low and Apter, Franzon essentially advises the translator to take a balanced approach using compromise where necessary (ibid: 391) since observing the 'workings' of rhyme's structuring effect is more important than 'counting rhymes and copying rhyme schemes' (2015: 339).

The foregoing would suggest that the semantic, organizational and rhetorical functions of linguistic rhyme are unnecessary in the convergence of verse and music. As music takes on the role of rhyme, rhyme becomes a matter of choice according to any number of variables rather than a necessity. The poetic function of language is not deemed essential to make a translation work when set to music and so the audience of the translation must make do with a partial rendition of the original, without the nuances of meaning made possible by the interplay of form and meaning. Yet, translators continue to produce rhyming libretti. The decision to do so depends, of course, on the nature of the opera being translated and whether the rhymes are composed into the music and clearly audible. Mozart's operas, for example, appear to exert a demand for rhyming translations more than late nineteenth century through composed operas. Some rhyme schemes (*aabb*) assert their need to be replicated in the translation more than others do (*abab*). Perhaps the traditional 'square cut melodic

design' of classical *opera seria*, which makes rhyme so evident and assertive (Peyser, 1922: 360) is another reason, or perhaps a sense of fidelity to the original score, or a recognition that music and rhyme are intimately tied together. Whilst many translation scholars have written about the disadvantages of insisting on a rhyming libretto translation, few opera translators, unfortunately, have written about why they prioritise rhyme in their translations.

Although the loss of rhyme may be acceptable, even desirable, in translations of traditional operas, in the case of Wagner's *Ring*, rhyme, which is inseparable from rhythm, must be considered differently. The alliterative rhymes of Wagner's *Stabreim* play an essential role in compositional structure and are fundamental to the semantic intent of each verse line. This will be explored at length in Chapter 6.2. Meanwhile, what follows is an explanation of *Stabreim* as a poetic form, its origins and Wagner's adaptation of it for use in the *Ring*.

4.2.3 Wagner's verse mode: *Stabreim*

The *Nibelungenlied*, thought to have been written around 1200, may have been Wagner's initial inspiration for his *Ring* opera and may have provided its climax[38], however, the *Poetic Edda*[39] (*PE*) provides most of the plot elements, characters, psychological motivation, locations, atmosphere, and philosophy (see Appendix 4). More importantly, the *PE*'s *Stabreim* (alliterative verse) inspired the verse form of Wagner's opera, which subsequently influenced its musical structure.

It is believed that *Stabreim* developed in places with Germanic language roots because in those languages it is common for stress to be placed on the first syllable of each word (Aðalsteinsson, 2014: 51). These stresses were the most prominent ones when spoken and when Germanic peoples 'began playing with language' (ibid: 54), repeating words that shared the same initial sound began the tradition of *Stabreim*. It is the oldest verse form in German, Norse and English and found, for example, in

[38] *Götterdämmerung* is based mainly on the *Nibelungenlied*.

[39] The *Poetic Edda*, also known as the *Elder Edda*, is an anonymous thirteenth century collection of Icelandic poems (interspersed with prose passages, which have been added to compensate for lost sections of the poetry). Mythological and heroic stories told in verse, embody the ethics and culture of 'the North' in late heathen and early Christian times (Hollander, 1962: ix).There is no continuous narrative; the stories sometimes overlap or are repeated and the poems may be short or very long.

Beowulf[40] and the *Hildebrandslied*[41]. These poems and the *PE* were probably composed for oral recitation around the late eighth or ninth centuries but there is no definitive evidence for this as the earliest manuscripts only date from the Middle Ages.

Stabreim is more than ornamental or rhetorical alliteration. Ornamental alliteration has no structural function being unrelated to stress patterns and is purely decorative. Rhetorical alliteration, like ornamental alliteration has no structural function but simply uses similar sounds at the beginning of repeated words to elevate, emphasise or lend power to speech. *Stabreim*, however, uses alliteration in a structured way, the alliterative rhymes follow a pattern that is regular and systematic (Aðalsteinsson, 2014: 18). Stress (metre) and alliteration are combined for semantic effect. The earliest alliterative verse arose from an oral tradition in which it was memorised and recited on public occasions (ibid: 50). The alliterative rhymes, associated with metrical rhythms and poetic phrasing, were necessary aids to facilitate memorisation and storytelling.

4.2.3.1 Principles of 'Stabreim'

Stabreim is based on sounds that can be heard by the ear as the same or similar so that the word 'one' alliterates with 'win'. Certain consonant clusters (st, sch, sp, sc[sk]) can only alliterate with each other so that 'strong' cannot alliterate with 'spell' nor with syllables beginning with the sound [s]. Vowels can alliterate with each other as one class. The alliterative sounds must be at the beginning of a word or on its first stressed syllable. The latter point is especially relevant to medieval Germanic *Stabreim* as Old High German employs many prefixes and compounds; however, it is irrelevant to Old Norse verse in whose language prefixes are rare. The number of alliterations in a verse line follows various rules. The basic rule is that three alliterative sounds link two half lines of a long line thus:

meiri ok **min**ni // **mög**u Heimdallar *Völuspa* (anon.)[42]

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[40] Epic poem in Old English by an anonymous poet. The oldest manuscript dates to late 10th/early 11th Century.

[41] The Hildebrandslied (song of Hildebrand) is an heroic epic poem by an anonymous poet in Old High German alliterative verse first written down around 830.

[42] Translation: the higher and lower kin of Heimdall; (Anon. & Scudder, 2001)

Alliteration and rhythm are as one; however, not all stressed syllables carry the same weight, but vary depending on their position in the line and on the meaning of the word carrying the alliteration. Alliteration may be borne only by words of syntactic importance (content words like verbs, nouns, adjectives, pronouns and not function words like articles and conjunctions) and each half line usually contains a complete syntactic phrase or breath-group, but enjambment is common and counters the tendency towards a singsong sound.

Two metres are dominant: *fornyrðislag* and *ljóðaháttur*. *Fornyrðislag*, 'old story/old poetry/epic' metre, is the metre found most in the *PE* (Dodds, 2014: 9) where it is used in narrative sections, especially in the heroic poems. *Ljóðaháttur*, 'song or chant metre', is used mainly in wisdom (sayings offering common-sense principles for living) and dialogue (usually verbal contest) poems. Two other metres are occasionally used: *galdralag*, or 'spell metre' and *málaháttr* or 'speech metre'.

In f*ornyrðislag*, a stanza or strophe normally consists of eight short half lines or verses, (which may be presented as four pairs on four lines). There are two stressed syllables (lifts or rises) per half line and the sixteen stressed syllables stand as piers around which the unstressed syllables flow. The first stressed syllable of the second half line is called the head stave (stave comes from Old Norse *Stafir* meaning alliterating sound (Hollander, 1962: xxiv)) and it must alliterate with one or both stressed syllables in the first half line. The fourth stressed syllable is not part of the scheme. In other words, the first half line (verse) can have one or two alliterating syllables but the second half line is limited to one alliteration. This is the base unit of the metrical structure. Each half line has between four and six syllables. There are no rules governing the number or distribution of unstressed syllables although there are usually two or three for each line. This is an example of four long lines (each made of two half lines); the double oblique marks the division of the half lines and bold text highlights the alliterating syllables:

(First stanza of the *Völuspa*. (Cited in Aðalsteinsson, 2014: 41))	Rhyming translation (Hollander, 1962: 2)
Hljóðs bið ek allar // **hel**gar kindir **mei**ri ok **minn**i // **mög**u Heimdallar **Vil**du at ek **Val**föðr // **vel** fyr telja	**Hear** me, all // ye **hall**owed beings, Both **high** and low // of **Heim**dall's children: Thou **wilt**, Valfather, //that I **well** set forth

forn spjöll **fir**a // þau **fremst** um man	The **fates** of the world // which as **first** I recall.

The practice of adding one or two syllables to a short line of this metre is called *málaháttr* or ‘speech metre’ and produces a looser, more relaxed style of narration.

In *ljóðaháttur*, paired alliterating lines are capped by a third and self-alliterating line, which creates a six-line stanza. It is used only for direct speech of characters with a stanza usually allotted to each speaker. As the name of the metre implies it was probably meant to be sung or chanted as opposed to told in the voice of ordinary speech and it is usually used for recounting magical powers and spells and in poems devoted to didactic or gnomic verse as in *Hávamál*[43] (Phillpotts, 1920: 55-56). The first two lines have at least two stressed syllables between them and two to three alliterations; the third line has three stresses and alliterates within itself only. The following from *Hávamál* shows the six-line stanza form of the chant metre:

Hávamál - Gestaþáttur	Havamal – Guest's Chapter Non-rhyming translation (Aðalsteinsson, 2014)
Óminnishegri heitir	The name of the one who reigns
sá er yfir **öld**rum þrumir;	he who hovers over ale-feasts
hann stelur **geð**i **gum**a**.**	he steals the mind of men.
Þess **fugls fjö**ðrum	The feathers of this bird
eg **fjö**traður vark	captured me
í **gar**ði **Gunn**laðar**.**	in the garden of Gunnlod

The variation and distribution of stresses and alliteration make Eddic poetry sound very different to most verse, instead of regularising spoken language it exaggerates it and gives it a staccato effect (Neijmann, 2006: 5).

The *PE* is characterised by its emphasis on action and the narrative moves at a quick pace that does not stop for incidental description or the elaboration of ideas. Feelings are expressed in actions; ‘states of mind’ unfold in the drama (Phillpotts, 1920: 31). Character and situation are the chief concern of the poems and there is little description and comment about locations or events except as narrated by a character. The terseness, incessant movement and absence of reflection, which characterise the poems, differentiates Eddic poetry from other Germanic alliterative long line verse and to a large degree reflects the linguistic differences between Old Norse and other

[43] The High One’s Speech

Germanic languages in which the loss of unstressed sounds, especially vowels in the former, reduced the number of syllables in a line.

4.2.3.2 Wagner's adaptation of Stabreim

It will be clear, to anyone comparing the *Ring* to the *PE*, that Wagner did not strictly imitate Eddic verse form and that his errors may have been deliberate choices[44]. Whilst using many of the same elements of Eddic verse, Wagner created his own verse form suited to drama rather than epic story telling in lyric form. He did not adhere strictly to the rules of *fornyrðislag* or *ljóðaháttu*r concerning the quantity of stresses and alliterating syllables or their patterning. He employed 'indiscriminately the two-stress half- lines of *fornyrðislag* and the three-stress lines of *ljóðaháttu*r without regard to their distinctive use in Old Norse' (Hauer, 1991: 54). He also disregarded the strophic nature of the *PE* and 'the primacy of the *höfðstafr*, the head-stave that determines the alliteration of the entire long line' (ibid).

Wagner sometimes closely followed the 'rules' as in the following lines so that the word *liebte* functions as the head-stave and determines the alliterative pattern of the line: 'die so **lei**dig **los** dir beschied //nicht **lieb**te dich die Norn' (*DW* I/2). The head-stave rule was followed again in the couplet 'Der Minner **Sip**pe / **saß** hier im Saal', but in the line, '**Trau**rig saß ich / während sie **trank**en', the head-stave rule was ignored in making the first and final words rhyme. Wagner made his own rules. In an in-depth analysis of alliterative rhyme the *Ring*, Schuler explores the dozens of variations of rhyme patterns that Wagner created to turn a form that had been used as lyric poetry into dramatic verse (1909). The sheer number of such patterns and the dozens of exceptions to the rules that he reveals indicate the complexity of Wagner's verse compared to traditional *Stabreim* and shows clearly how he appropriated the form for his musical purposes more than for the sake of the poetic form itself.

[44] It is suggested (C. von Westernhagen, 1981: 94-95) that Wagner may have had a rudimentary grasp of old Icelandic based on his use of certain archaic words that could only have arisen based on his reading the Poetic Edda in the original language (ibid: 94). However, it is thought, based on evidence of Wagner's personal library contents (Westernhagen, 1966) that during the initial writing of the *Ring* he would have relied on the translations of von der Hagen, Ettmüller and the Grimm brothers, for the heroic poems and Majer for the mythological ones.

The following examples show the basic *fornyrðislag* rhyme patterns being used by Wagner: (the translations are mine)

> Wess' **Herd** dies auch sei, // **hier** muss ich rasten. (1:1) (*DW* I/1)
> A **hearth** and a fire, // **here** I can shelter.

> Der **Fluch**, den ich **floh, //** nicht **flieht** er nun mich: (2:1) (*DW* II/2)
> The **curse** I in**curred**, // still **clutch**es at me:

This example, from *DW* II/1, shows Wagner's use of *ljóðaháttu*r:

> Zu seiner **Schwes**ter // **schwang** er sich her; // die **Lieb**e **lock**te den **Lenz**:
> To find his **sis**ter // **swift**ly he came; // for <u>love</u> had **summ**oned the **spring**:

Such simple patterns (although not simple in terms of finding alliterating syllables) are less frequent in the *Ring* than more complex ones. I shall list just a few to demonstrate the variety found, but dozens more can be found in Schuler's extensive study (1909). There are no translations of these examples, as the purpose is only to show the patterns of alliterating consonants or vowels.

Table 1

Couplets:	*Die Walküre* (*DW*) *Götterdämmerung* (*GD*)
Double couplets in each half line with the same alliterating consonants or vowels	in **Höf**en reich **haus**en dort Sippen, die **Hun**ding's Ehre be**hüt**en. (*DW* I/2)
Double couplets in each half line with different alliterating consonants or vowels	tief in des **Bu**sens **Ber**ge **glimmt** nur noch lichtlose **Glut** (*DW* I/3)
Extended couplets: two alliterating consonants or vowels but one or both are repeated a third time	**fänd'** ich den **heil**igen **Freund**, um**fing**' den **Held**en mein Arm! (*DW* I/3)
Triplets following couplets similar to *ljóðaháttur*	**mich mußt**e der **Rein**ste ver**rat**en daß **wiss**end **würd**e ein **Weib**. (*GD* III/3)
Four half lines are connected by alliteration but are not double couplets, being bound together only grammatically: same alliteration	Den **Ring,** den er schuf, ent**riss** ich ihm listig; doch nicht dem **Rhein** gab ich ihn zu**rück**: (*DW* II/1)

As above but with different alliterating syllables	Der, ent**geg**en dem **Gott**, für mich **föch**te, den **freund**lichen **Feind**, wie **fän**de ich ihn? (*DW* II/2)
Six lines are bound together semantically and grammatically with alliteration	im **kühl**en Schatten **rauscht** ein **Quell** **Weis**heit **raun**end **rann** sein Ge**well** da **sang** ich heiligen **Sinn.** (*GD* Prologue)

Occasionally transverse and cross alliteration occur in the *PE* but there they are incidental and a transgression of the rules of alliteration. In Wagner's *Ring*, they are common:

Transverse (AB // BA)

Ein **frem**der **Mann**? // Ihn **muss** ich **frag**en. **(***DW* I/1).

Cross (AB // AB)

doch **schnell**er, als ich der **Meu**te, // **schwand** die **Müd**igkeit mir: **(***DW* I/1).

More than this, Wagner links verse lines whose alliterating rhyme schemes are different but which share one linking alliteration (bold underlined):

Wagner *DW* II/2	My translation
Der, ent**geg**en dem **Gott**,	One who **gain**says his **god,**
für mich f**öch**te,	yet de**fends** me,
den **freund**lichen **Feind,**	this **friend**liest **foe**,
wie **fän**de ich ihn?	who'll **find** him for me?
Wie **schüf**' ich den **<u>Frei</u>**en,	Who'll **show** me a **<u>free</u>** man
den nie ich s**chirm**te,	whom I've not **shield**ed,
der im eignem **Trot**ze der **Traut**este mir?	who in his de**fi**ance is **faith**ful to me?

In this case, *Freien*, the summative word for the hero described in the previous verse-lines (*föchte, freundlichen Feind* and *fände*), who is the friendly foe Wotan wishes he could find to win back the ring, end the curse and save Valhalla, links both verses. The translation replicates Wagner's rhyme scheme (except for repeating the same consonant F for the last rhyme pair of the second group) and, therefore, achieves the same effect as Wagner.

Wagner's verse has a greater quantity of alliterative rhymes than the *PE*. His excessive alliteration seems to achieve a particular affect or highlights a particular emotion. In this example, the alliteration paints in words the confusing, frightening noises that Sieglinde hears as Hunding and his men come close to where she and Siegmund have stopped:

Wagner *DW* II/2	My translation
Horch! Die **Hörn**er,	**Hark**! The **horn-** calls!
hörst du den **Ruf**?	**Hear** how they **roar**!
Ringsher **tönt wüt**end Ge**tös**':	**Round** us **swirl wild** angry **sounds**:
aus **Wald** und **Gau**	from **wood** and **vale**
gellt es herauf.	**voic**es arise.

Wagner allowed himself such flexibility and freedom for the sake of drama and music; he used what suited his theories about opera and music and ignored what was not pertinent. The rhythm, alliterating consonants connecting ideas and concise diction of *Stabreim* were made part of his verse style, whilst details and rules that made little difference to his ends were ignored.

4.3 Scenic-mimetic mode

Whilst the libretto and musical score contain numerous signs regarding the opera's realization on stage, which a translator will doubtless consider, for reasons of space and tightness of argument I have chosen to omit any discussion of this in the comparative analysis in Chapter 6. A comprehensive comparison of how the numerous signs in Wagner's *Ring* libretto and musical score facilitate the opera's realization on stage and how they have been treated by the different translators would constitute a thesis in its own right. Such an undertaking is, in any case, questionable. Not all the scenic-mimetic aspects of performance come from the text (sung words or stage directions) and music but arise during the staging process often based on the director's vision but also on each performer's subjective interpretation, not to mention the influence of performance history and target audience culture. There are many methodological difficulties involved in studying the scenic-mimetic mode, mainly the lack of recorded performances of opera in translation. Without the basic data of recordings of the same opera using the same and/or different translations, the multimodal elements of performance can only be studied as potentialities based on the

libretto and score. For this reason, this sub-chapter addresses only the importance of performative considerations in the process of translation, and briefly highlights how a translation can engender different subtexts that alter the staging by comparison to that potentially engendered by the original text.

4.3.1 The importance of stage action in opera

Opera is a formal theatrical medium and expresses its drama through many of the same modes as any stage play: costume, movement, scenery etc. Like a play, it relies on language for communication but the combination of words with music alters some functions of language, as does the physical nature of voice production for singing. Opera, however, differs from the stage play in a number of ways. Firstly, time is treated differently in opera. It has been estimated that words, when set to music, take three times longer to say than when spoken, which means that generally an opera text must be three times shorter than a theatre text if it is to take a similar time to perform (Busoni, 1922: 329). This would make opera akin to pantomime rather than stage plays unless opera's resources had other means with which to compensate for the lack of dialogue or narrative. Secondly, plays use the information bearing function of language to relate events that are not represented on stage so that a coherent relationship between past and future can generate a present moment, but music is always of the moment, so that what Dahlhaus calls the 'scenic present' dominates opera (2003: 102). If actions in an opera are 'to strike home' (ibid) they need to be seen as well as heard, so opera prefers it when the action all takes place on stage and does not need to be related in dialogue or narrative. The communicative role of action explains why so many spectators can watch an opera and derive meaning from it even when not every word can be heard, or when heard in a language the spectator does not understand. Music and visual signs can tell a spectator what is happening, even if they fail to explain why. Thirdly, dialogue, which is central to spoken drama, is peripheral to traditional opera. The main discursive form in traditional opera is not recitative, which corresponds to dialogue, but the aria. Plays express conflict (the essence of drama) in rational argument delivered through speech, whereas opera presents conflict in arias that deal not with logic but with emotion. The dominance of what Dahlhaus calls the 'sensuous present' (1971/2004: 48) accounts for why the most significant moments in opera occur when the action has stopped, in an aria. The aria comprises largely expressive

rather than rational language as it relates to the audience the nature and motivations of a character. Even in Wagner's long narratives of past events in the *Ring*, the focus is the present emotional or psychological meaning of the music, which cannot be other than present (with the exception of leitmotifs that can refer to something in the past).

Although Wagner dispensed with the traditional operatic discourse of recitative and aria in the *Ring* and made dialogue and narrative as important as they are in stage plays, action remains essential. According to Wagner, the visible drama, which he refers to as dramatic action, shares the same metaphysical nature as music and their synthesis in opera immediately communicates at an emotional level that in turn produces understanding (see Chapter 2). In Wagner's theory of opera, 'words and speech' are meant to produce not poetic thought but action that would be the visible reflection of the music (1870/1873: 125-6). Stage action would communicate to the eye what the orchestra imparts to the ear. Wagner's goal of a synthesis of words, music and stage action to transform opera into sung drama differentiates his concept of dramatic action from anything that had gone before.

The director and singers look to the stage directions, the sung words and the music for their cues for dramatic action. Action also relies for its meaning on its context, that is on the other visual signs of the stage presentation that include make-up, hairstyle, costume, props, set décor and lighting and these can also be derived from text and music. Of course, the way in which stage directions, sung words and music are interpreted differs from one person to another and even from one reading to another. Interpretation also depends on the cultural provenance of the opera, the time it was written, the time in which it is set and the type (comic/serious) and style of opera (verismo/baroque/classical etc.). In addition to this, a director's or performer's interpretation will often go beyond the text and music to other cultural and contextual references (Kaindl, 1995: 160-1) not to mention the influence of conventions and norms of performance in their country.

4.3.2 Performative considerations in translating opera

Opera relies on its words and music to generate what happens on stage. There is, of course, no one-to one relationship between words, music and staging, they merely

provide potentialities. The words generate scenic-mimetic effects primarily through deictic markers; deixis makes the language situational, visual, aural and corporal. Other performative markers are the illocutionary (informing, warning, ordering etc.) and perlocutionary speech acts that bring something about through words. Music generates scenic-mimetic effects in three distinct ways. Firstly, tempo, dynamics, volume, pitch and rhythm can infer information about a character's shape and size, status, gait and gestures. Secondly, the same resources can be used to describe the scenic space and suggest the atmosphere of a place or situation. Thirdly, iconic musical sounds and musical symbols, like leitmotifs, which refer to ideas and concepts, can generate objects and events on stage. Sounds associated with war or thunder will contribute to specific actions and scenic effects and in Wagner's case, leitmotifs can effectively generate objects on stage; the 'sword' leitmotif in the *Ring* always requires its presence.

For the translator of opera, who wishes to transfer the performative qualities of the ST to the TT, the meaning of the words is less important than what the words make happen on stage, what they do, what actions they perform and to whom. This includes many aspects of production from how the singer delivers the lines to stage design, movement and so on. Theatre translation theorists suggest one way of doing this is to study the semiotics of performance to be found in the text and aim to reproduce them in the translation. This approach emerged in the 1980s as a direct consequence of theoretical work in the field of theatre studies when performance became the main object of study with the focus on the non-verbal semiotic modes used to construct meaning (Elam, 1977: 141). The semiotic approach involves looking at the properties and mechanisms of the text that preside over performance, relating, for example, to use of space and movement as well as paralinguistic features such as intonation, pitch, and timbre. Snell-Hornby suggests that the semiotics of performance rest in: (1) language of 'deictic interaction'; (2) language of 'multiple perspectives', for example, irony and paradox; (3) language of 'potential action'; (4) language that expresses emotion and (5) language that together with action is experienced 'sensuously' by the audience (2007: 110-111). Consider Shakespeare's Macbeth, who hallucinates a dagger that seems to hover in mid-air. In the monologue that begins 'Is this a dagger which I see before me…', Shakespeare's text suggests to the producers of the play what is visible as scenery and props and gives the actor directions for gesture and movement, even where

his eyes should focus. If in plays, performativity has its source in the text, then in opera one must also consider that semiotics of performance lie in the music. The composer's interpretation of the libretto may contain performative information that is not in the text or that alters a purely text-bound reading. A translator looking at the text alone may interpret its performativity in a way that does not reflect the music's interpretation of it. In opera, music becomes another subtext, duplicating or adding to the verbal subtext; it may even afford the translator the flexibility to leave out of the written text what is clear from the music.

Another way to consider the performative element of translation in opera is to look at how non-verbal signs are generated by the 'gestural' (Bassnett 1991: 134) or 'gestic' (1998: 92) text, borrowing from the Stanislavskian concept of subtext by which is meant, indicators to performance. The notion that the translator of drama must access a performative subtext led Bassnett to suggest that the translator locate in the text 'distinguishable structural features that make it performable, beyond the stage directions themselves' (1980/2002: 126). However, after years of research, Bassnett concluded that it is impossible for the translator to be expected to translate the 'concealed gestic text' (1991: 99-100) because it is unreasonable to assume that during the translation process the translator decodes and recodes it whilst sitting at a desk and imagining the performance dimension (ibid: 100). Bassnett's return to a more logocentric theory called for translators to deal with the text and concern themselves with, for example, 'differences in register', 'deictic units' and 'consistency' (ibid: 111). I agree with Bassnett that it is unrealistic for translators to assume the role of actor or director and to work out the mise-en-scène of the opera as they translate. However, it is not unreasonable for translators to consider the performative potential of the translation, that is, the non-verbal signs generated by the text or music and to assess whether his/her choices are coherent within the opera's text world and in relation to the ST, even if this is subjective and depends on the translator's interpretation. It is often impossible for the opera translator to avoid reading between the lines of the ST to discern the subtext that generates gesture and movement and transferring it to the translation.

4.3.3 How translation can alter stage action

It is well known that directors of opera (in the original language), in their desire to break new ground and provide new interpretations, often ignore the stage directions of the libretto and any performative subtext. Despite this, if like me, the translator aims to give the director and singers using the translation the same starting point as those using the original libretto, then it is desirable for it to generate the same or similar visual and gestural stage codes that provide the spectator with semantic contexts similar to those of the original libretto. The translator's choices can predominantly affect the way in which the intersemiosis of words and music integrate with the signs produced by the singer's facial and bodily gestures, position on stage and in relations to other singers, movement around the stage in relation to other singers, scenery or props and interactions with other singers, scenery and props. It may also be advisable not to force on the singer some movement or gesture that would interfere with their ability to sing, although directors often do so.

Below are examples of three ways in which translations might potentially alter the performative subtext and, therefore, the action or gesture of the singer on stage as well as influence scenery, lighting and props. The first concerns deictic markers in the text that affect the singer's gestures and movements and influence decisions on scenery. The second concerns the subjective interpretation of stage directions that can lead the translator to include performative cues that were not in the ST and constrain a director's staging options in a way that the ST did not. The third concerns how the words of the translation do not translate the words of the ST but the action contained within them.

4.3.3.1 Ignoring deictic markers

In *GD* (III/1), when Siegfried appears on stage, the stage directions and his words imply that he is searching on the ground for a small creature to whom he refers as a *Schelm* ('rogue'). He blames him for having scared away the game that he was hunting. When the Rhinemaidens see Siegfried, one asks what he is doing: 'Was schiltst du so in den Grund?' The question implies that Siegfried is scolding or rebuking someone who is in the ground. The visual image that this generates is coherent with the fact that in the *Ring*, dwarves (the Nibelungs), who are associated

with wicked and magical crafts, live under the ground and that Siegfried assumes that the *Schelm* is a dwarf or gnome. The words tell the singer where to look and what bodily movement he might make. However, Jameson's 'Why grumblest thou to thyself?', Porter's 'You're grumbling there on the land!', and Sams' 'It doesn't do to be cross', remove the gestural subtext and the link between the act of grumbling and the reason for doing so. They no longer indicate to the singer that he might be searching for the creature he is scolding or addressing his words into the ground. In my translation, 'Why chide and curse at the rocks?', I give the singer and director similar information to the ST in order to generate similar gestures and movement. Since one of my translation aims (see Chapter 5.4) was to retain Wagner's alliterative verse, I changed *Grund* (ground) to 'rock' so that the rhymes *Grund/Gram* (ground/rage) could be reproduced through 'rock/rage'. Based on Wagner's description of the stage set, this would seem justifiable, but by referring to rocks in the sung text, my translation constrains the director and scenery designer to provide rocks on stage or settle for incoherence between verbal and visual signs. The translation would not work well in a production that is not set according to Wagner's scenic directions, such as the current Frank Castorf production at Bayreuth where the Rhinemaidens in their black evening gowns are in a vintage black Mercedes car in front of the New York Stock Exchange! Of course, if as Kaindl recommends, the translator is always involved in the production (1995 164-8), then perhaps rhyme's priority might be reconsidered in favour of cohesion between visual and verbal signs.

In *DW* II/4, when Siegmund defies Brünnhilde's summons to Valhalla, he refers to his sword as the reason why he will not be killed in battle saying 'Kennst du dies Schwert? Der mir es schuf, beschied mir Sieg: deinem Drohen trotz' ich mit ihm!' (Know you this sword? He who made it for me, chose victory for me: your threats I will thwart with it.) Porter translates this verse line as 'I have a sword! My father's sword will serve me well: I defy your threats with the sword!' and in omitting the deictic text fails to give the singer playing Siegmund the same opportunity to brandish his sword as the singer working with the ST libretto or the translations of Jameson, Sams and myself:

Jameson	Sams	My translation
Know'st thou this sword?	D'you know this sword?	See here my sword.

From him it came who holds me safe:	It was forged to save my life:	It has been sent, to save my life;
through his sword thy threats I defy!	he who made it made it for me!	I shall thwart all threats with this sword!

4.3.3.2 Adding performative markers

In *DW* (I /1) when Sieglinde responds to Siegmund's request for something to drink with 'Erquickung schaff' ich' ('I'll provide some refreshment'), Wagner's stage directions say that Sieglinde takes a drinking horn and goes out of the house. The most likely implication, given the setting of the opera in Wagner's stage directions, is that she goes to a well. Based on this interpretation and because I wanted a word that would rhyme with 'drink' in the preceding line (**Quell**/Er**quick**ung in the ST), I chose to translate her words as follows: 'I'll draw some water'. My translation forces the director to have Sieglinde leave the stage to 'draw' the water, whereas, the original words are in themselves much less specific. They would allow a director to have Sieglinde stay in the room and obtain the refreshment from some other source. Boulez, for example, in the *Bayreuth Festival* in 1980 (Moura, 2014) had a pool of water on stage and Kasper Holten in the *Copenhagen Ring* of 2006 (Dandolo, 2013) set this scene in a mid-twentieth century dining room where Sieglinde pours Siegmund a glass of water from a crystal jug taken from a drinks trolley!

4.3.3.3 Translation of action not words

In *DW* (II/5), Siegmund meets Hunding for their fight to the death. Upon hearing Hunding calling his name but yet unable to see him clearly, according to Wagner's stage directions, he asks a question: 'Wo birgst du dich, dass ich vorbei dir schoss?' (Where are you hiding, that I have passed you by?). The implication of these words in terms of Siegmund's actions and gestures is that he is searching for Hunding. Jameson's translation 'Where hidest thou, that I can find thee not?' would doubtless produce the same actions from Siegmund as did the original text but my translation as well as those of Porter and Sams imply a different action:

Porter:	Then show yourself; I've come in search of you!
Sams:	Don't hide yourself. Why don't you show yourself?

My translation: Well show yourself, what are you hiding from?

These translations would suggest that Siegmund is taking a stand and waiting for Hunding to show himself. The meaning is almost identical with the ST, but the actions or gestures could be very different.

The literature on opera translation in terms of performance is limited. Performance matters are limited to vocal performance rather than stage performance and how the theatrical codes of opera affect translation is hardly discussed with the exception of Kaindl (1995: 143ff). Even he concludes that unless the translator is working as part of the production team of an opera, staging considerations and the non-verbal signs perceived by the audience cannot be taken into account in the translation process (ibid: 173). According to Kaindl, only when the audience and its cultural references and needs are known can a translator take into account the requirements of the TT's reception, and base the translation on future performance-led expectations rather than on the ST (ibid). Nothing suggests that the translations that I analyse in this study were written to meet the performance requirements of a specific production, with the possible exception of Sams' translation (see Chapter 5), which remains unpublished. Arguably, tailoring a translation to a specific production would limit its use elsewhere and at other times.

4.4 Music as mode

The translator of opera is not free to consider words in isolation; they are not open to interpretation without taking account of the meaning of the music. Therefore, any translator of opera, eager to preserve the original *Gestalt*, might seek to understand how in the process of composition the verbal text gains a new semantic dimension (Kaindl, 1995: 115), how the composer's music modifies the possible meanings of the text (and drama). This means looking at how music can express meaning and considering that, like language, it has its own semiotic. This goes beyond the 'tautological duplication of the spoken message' by the music (ibid: 114) to considering how music can augment, explain, emphasize, rebut or contradict verbal meaning (ibid).

Comprehension of musical meaning requires an understanding of the resources of music, their function and the way in which they integrate with verbal meaning. This

chapter describes how the mode of music operates semantically in conjunction with words. It is not a comprehensive study of what is a vast field of knowledge and research, but highlights certain concepts that I have found relevant for a translator of opera, that have formed part of my analysis of Wagner's *Ring* operas and that have influenced my translation (see Chapter 6.3). It is essential to understand how music contributes to the 'design' of opera as a multimodal text for without recognising how text and music converge or diverge, how each co-contextualises, elucidates, elaborates or affirms the other, the translator risks creating a translation that does not speak what the music speaks.

In this chapter, I provide an insight into the different ways that music integrates with words and elaborates or contradicts their meaning and I address Wagner's very specific theories about the integration of words and music in opera, some of which I have already described in Chapter 2. In this chapter, I shall look in more detail at his concepts of *Versmelodie* and leitmotif, which are the basis of his approach to word-tone synthesis and essential to my analysis and translation process.

4.4.1 Resources and grammar of the music mode

Music has resources similar to those of verse, related to time (rhythm, tempo, emphasis (agogic accent[45]), articulation[46] and phrasing), intensity (dynamics (volume) and accentuation), colour (timbre) and pitch (register, intervallic relationships, tonality, key relationships, chord progressions, harmonics and polyphony[47]). The table below (Table 2), based on a schemata by Czech music semiotician Jiranek (1980: 197), shows the chief acoustic resources of music, whose dynamic relationships can be said to constitute the initial units of musical meaning[48]. These individual elements of musical sound combine to form larger semantic units, which eventually build the musical *Gestalt*. They are the building blocks of music and used by composers of vocal music like speakers use intonation, accent and timbre to contribute to meaning. They provide translators with factors to be considered in their interpretation of meaning with regard

[45] Stress perceived solely through prolongation of duration, not increased volume or pitch variation

[46] Articulation: the way in which the sound is controlled for expressive effect, for example, *legato.*

[47] Two or more simultaneous lines of independent melody.

[48] See Appendix 5

to both the vocal and orchestral music in the opera (Kaindl, 1995: 109). The resources listed below are not exhaustive, others need to be considered depending on the nature of the music being analysed. One note of caution is necessary, a musical meaning attributed to any of the resources below and defined in one context (related to specific words, to a specific period, musical style etc.,) cannot be assumed to mean the same in other contexts since music lacks the arbitrary symbolic values of language that carry precise semantics.

Table 2

	Duration (time)	**Intensity**	**Colour**	**Pitch**
formal-expressive	**Rhythm** Tempo Agogic accent Flow/fluctuation	Dynamics (articulation) Accent Gradation of sound intensity	Timbre (voice /instrument type) Quality of sound (dark/light)	Register **Melody** **Intervals** **Key**
formal-intellectual-expressive	Time signature Organisation **Phrasing**		**chromatic key relationships**	Harmony Polyphony Scoring
Resources marked in bold are those that feature in the analysis in Chapter 6				

In Chapter 3.2, I spoke of how modes, in order to create meaning, must display regularities for their use (even if these are ignored or broken), which in theories of multimodal discourse analysis are often referred to as a mode's grammar. Both poetry and music have their own distinct grammars (Davies, 1994: 1) with notes and chords, like words and sentences, combining according to various conventions (ibid). Both can be organised into closed texts with a beginning, middle and end. Musical grammar is essentially music theory, which seeks to explain musical structure through a system of relatively stable constructive principles, despite all its stylistic heterogeneity. This grammar is tied to the repertoire to which it refers, but at a more fundamental level the grammar of music can be thought of in terms of 'rhythmic and pitch organisation, dynamic and timbral differentiation, and motivic-thematic processes' (Lerdahl & Jackendoff, 1983: 6)

Whilst an advanced understanding of music theory may not be required for the translation of opera, some musical knowledge is necessary in order to be able to analyse and relate the acoustic resources of time (duration), intensity, colour (emotion) and

pitch to words. A translator must be able to appreciate the setting of each syllable of the text in terms of its horizontal relation to preceding and succeeding sounds as well as its position in the scale (pitch) and its rhythmical value (duration and accent). There are also vertical implications of harmony that demand attention, for music operates on both a plane of succession (melody) and simultaneity (harmony) that allows for multiple signification (Shenton, 2008: 10).

4.4.2 How music and words integrate meaning

There has been much written and great debate about whether music has meaning or not, and if so, the nature of that meaning. Before the Renaissance, there was no question that music had meaning; music was not an art for its own sake but served a role in religious rituals, ceremonies and storytelling or provided the accompaniment to dance and poetry and its meaning was clear, given to it from outside (H. Spencer, 2015: 99). With the development of instrumental music, however, came a break between music and meaning and music began to be defined in terms of itself, through theories of harmony, counterpoint (musical lines that sound different, move independently from each other but sound harmonious) and other structural elements. Those who support the view that the meaning of music resides in its own structure and is essentially intramusical (non-referential), are often referred to as formalists. Opponents of this view, often called ‘referentialists’, insist that musical meaning is derived from extra - musical and contextual associations. Somewhere in between is the theory that musical structure and relationships excite feelings, which in turn produce meaning (see Meyer, 1956: 1ff.). Musical meaning is explained in a number of different ways because music is a complex phenomenon involving many cultural, cognitive and artistic factors. However, unlike instrumental music, the musical meaning in opera and vocal music is, in most cases, intrinsically related to the meaning of the words to which the music is set and music is invariably described as a musical expression of textual affect (referential) or as a musical transformation, assimilation or appropriation of textual affect (analogy).

The focus of this chapter, therefore, is the intermodal relationship between music and language, specifically verse. The way that music denotes, embodies, expresses, represents or symbolizes the meaning of words, is a vast and complex field of study within musicology, in which there seems to be no consensus. However, based

on the ideas of musicologists and music semioticians like Cooke (1959/1990), Jiranek (1980), Monelle (2006, 2010), Zbikowski (2016), Tarasti (2012) and Noske (1977), I have drawn together the following concepts and combined them with Wagner's very specific theory of word-tone synthesis, in order to explain how music either co-contextualises the text or contradicts it. This provides the framework for the comparative analysis in Chapter 6.3.

4.4.2.1 Imitation

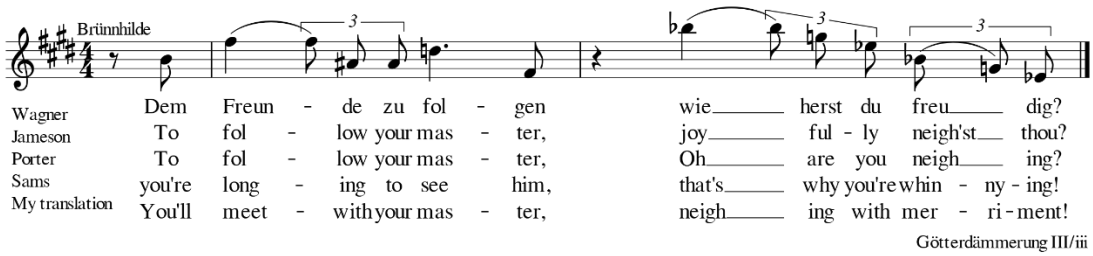
Music can suggest an event, action or object through sonic resemblance or imitation. The sounds of musical instruments can resemble natural phenomena; flutes sound like birdsong, whilst voice types (bass, soprano etc.) characterise people. Using pitch, volume, intensity, tempo and timbre, musical notes can mimic sounds and movements from nature and daily life such as laughter, crying, thunder, rain, water and so on. In this capacity, music can make extrinsic reference. The semiotic resources of music facilitate its ability to resemble sounds, objects, situations and events through 'analogue code characteristics' (Stöckl, 2004: 17) by which is meant that their sign qualities closely resemble what they signify. Ascending note patterns pictorialize ascent, and slow music in a minor key indicates death, high pitch imitates lightness or height and low pitch, resonating in the body, depth and darkness. Tempo expresses movement with some tempo markings such as *andante* (from *andare* meaning to walk) or *adagio* (from *ad agio* meaning at ease) referring to a specific movement. Analogy is possible because the human mind is able to draw 'correlations between elements' from two different domains as part of a 'process of reasoning' about the features of one of them (Zbikowski, 2017: 501). The mind can apprehend similarities (or differences) between two domains of knowledge (ibid: 502), for example, images conjured by words and musical elements arranged to imitate them.

Imitation of sound, movement or emotion associated with the meaning of a word is often referred to as word painting (also, text painting, tone painting and even mood painting), such imitation is ubiquitous from renaissance polyphony to contemporary popular songs. Whilst some composers, especially those of the Baroque era (Bach, Handel) often painted individual words, others were less focussed and practiced 'dramatic text setting' (Brown, 1948: 65) that goes beyond depicting

individual words to suggesting and reinforcing the dramatic elements of a situation (ibid: 62). Rather than serve the words mimetically, music considers the context, so that whilst a musically imitated shout will be recognised as such, dramatic setting will indicate whether it is a shout of joy or pain, who is shouting to whom, where the shout is taking place and so on (ibid: 62).

Word painting is not common in Wagner's *Ring*. At least, he rarely pictorialises individual words but tends rather to work on a broader scale. This broader scale of text painting includes, for example, the hammers and anvils of the Nibelungs, the storm in *DW* (I/1), the ride of the Valkyries, and the sounds of the Rhine. Yet imitation of actual realism is rare and by preference, Wagner's pictorialisation is subtler in as much as he bathes whole scenes in a light and atmosphere of their own and characters are described with vivid aural images. When he does paint an individual word musically, it is generally for special effect as when Brünnhilde, in *GD* (III/ 3), is about to leap into Siegfried's funeral pyre saying to Grane, her horse: 'Dem Freunde zu folgen wieherst du freudig' (are you neighing for joy to follow your friend?):

Fig. 2



Both pitch movement and rhythm imitate iconically the sound of a horse whinnying. This is word-painting bordering on verbal and musical onomatopoeia, which the translations, in sound and sense, have more or less retained.

Musical compositions can also include imitations of sounds that have meaning through their association with human social activities and practices (Jiranek, 1980: 195). Established sounds, associated with cultural activities (ceremonies, rites, dances, marches, religion, lullaby), have been used by composers knowing they will be instantly recognised and their significance understood. Church bells, hunting calls, military signals or the sound of hammers on anvils immediately bring associations to the mind. Words in opera, therefore, can be portrayed or realized through the

associative power of sounds related to specific activities or events. These musical imitations not only serve an iconic function but also an indexical one: a trumpet call might relate to moral character, virility, adventurousness etc. (Monelle, 2006: 28).

Jiranek also includes under the heading of 'association', speech intonations that express attitudes and sentiments, which are readily imitated by music (1980: 195). The paralinguistic use of pitch for emotional expression is of particular interest to Wagner and a central tenet of his theory of word-tone synthesis in which music mimetically follows declamatory patterns so that the meaning and emotions of the words are made available to the listener with greater immediacy. For Wagner, music, in its rhythm and intonation, shared expressiveness with speech.

Musical imitation is not only iconic in nature but also indexical, for example, bird song may represent the presence of a bird as an iconic sign or indicate spring as an indexical one; a glissando on a harp might represent a sigh or indicate grief. Indexical meaning does not refer to something inherent in the sign itself (Koelsch, 2012: 159) but emerges through imitation of expressions that signal psychological states, moods or intentions (ibid). They tend to be action related through sound or movement.

Music is able to imitate psychological or emotional states because 'melodic contour or harmonic progression, and …tonality and meter, … produce an equivalent of embodied gesture that we can recognize as expressive of an imagined agent…' (Hatten, 2004: 132). Gesture indicates what someone is thinking or feeling without words and as Jackendoff and Lerdahl explain, we are 'immediately sensitive, for example, to a person in the room having a slumping, depressed posture or making a joyful gesture' (2006: 65). As Bierwisch puts it, music shows things acoustically through 'analogous encoding' (1979: 59), which works at a metaphoric level (Zbikowski, 2016: 83-84). Thanks to patterns of notes, dynamics, tonality and rhythm, music can 'have the same character as a bodily movement' (Budd, 2002: 46), so that, for example, temporal elements of musical succession can be experienced as physical motion: the lowering of pitch in descending melodic patterns coupled with loudness can depict descent. Certain emotions can be identified with specific movements, for example, sadness and happiness are understood through concepts of verticality: sad is down and happy is up (Lakoff and Johnson, 1980: 462). Therefore, musical gestures are heard as happy if the

music is upward moving, high in the orchestral or vocal range or at high volume (ibid: 91) whilst sadness is expressed through minor keys, slow tempo, low pitch, narrow melodic range, soft timbre, and legato articulation. Empirical studies support the notion that certain musical features are related to different emotions (Gabrielsson, 2011: 422ff; Juslin, Liljeström, Västfjäll, & Lundqvist, 2010: chapter 22). Music can even evoke a physical response, related to an emotion and ultimately to meaning. The sensorial response is 'cognitively unmediated' (Levinson, 1997: 28) and induced by the basic properties of music such as timbre, rhythm, pitch variation, dynamics and tempi (ibid) and might be a raised heartbeat or increased breathing to which the imagination constructs imagined emotions of a corresponding sort (ibid: 29).

4.4.2.2 Conventionalized musical meaning

Some musical patterns have become so culturally entrenched that they have taken on meaning in a symbolic sense to become a store of 'codified, … ideas…and topics.' (Tarasti, 2012: 21) Through historical usage, anything from an interval, chord progression, rhythm, motif, theme or specific musical form, such as the march, have become embedded in musical culture with a specific meaning. By the early eighteenth century, many codified musical ideas had become a formal rhetoric, known as the 'doctrine of affections'[49], which composers shared, adapted, rejected or developed. A composer wishing to convey grief and mourning could reach for the rhetorical figure of the *lamento*[50] knowing that its association with sadness in death would be instantly understood. These musical figures, for example, the imitation of a sigh as a descending minor second (*pianto*) that was first used to signal a madrigal section beginning with the word 'pianto' [I wept]), came to be indexical of emotions associated with them and developed into fixed 'lexical unit[s]' (Monelle, 2010: 67), which always have the same meaning.

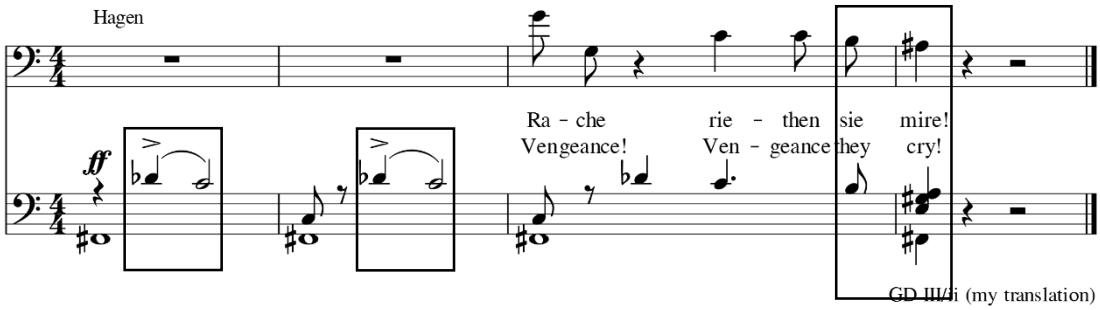
Whilst the doctrine of affections was mainly a phenomenon of the Baroque period (1600-1750), their use as codified musical conventions providing a short cut to a

[49] *Affektenlehre* - compiled by Johann Mattheson (1681-1764) in *Der volkommene Capellmeister* (1739) [The perfect conductor].

[50] Slow, often ¾ time stepwise descent in the bass line from tonic to dominant in a minor key. Dido's Lament is a well-known example of a chromatic version of this figure.

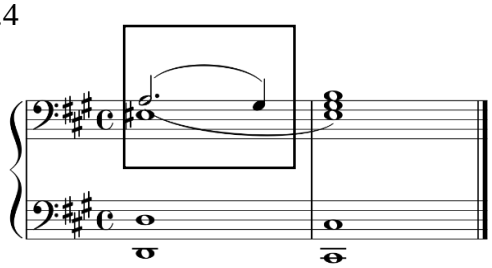
given conventional meaning has been evident in later times (Monelle, 2006: 4). The *pianto*, for example, is evident in Mozart's *Don Giovanni* (1787) to signify Donna Anna's sadness at the murder of her father and despite all his musical innovations, it can be found in Wagner's *Ring* where it is not used iconically (to mean weeping) but to point to what is lamentable (Monelle, 2010: 71). It is in the cry of the ravens, which causes Siegfried to turn his back so that Hagen is able to strike him with his spear:

Fig. 3



and it is the basis of the 'Fate' motif:

Fig.4



The *pianto* is also in evidence in Mahler's *Fifth Symphony* (*Adagietto*) and more recently in Ligeti's *Automne à Varsovie* (Etudes Book 1 No. 6 1985) and John Adam's *Doctor Atomic* (2005) during Oppenheimer's aria at the close of Act 1.

Other conventionalised musical figures known as topics, suggest that semantic units of socially objectified stable musical forms or motifs, which have evolved over generations, are immediately understood having become a 'common musical language existing in the collective mind' (Grabocz, 1996: 203). Topics, often described as styles and genres used out of their original context, are appropriations of musical expression from simple music written to accompany daily activities and include dance measures

like the 'pastorale'[51] or minuet and music associated with the military or the hunt (Monelle, 2006). They have expressive connotations that were common knowledge at the time of composition and thanks to their associations they summon up emotions; the horn call of the hunt is associated with such things as the outdoors, the excitement of the chase, etc. Having been established by convention, topics are, therefore, time and culture bound. Listeners today, for example, may not notice Mozart's references to different social states through different minuets (Noske, 1977: 32ff). Modern-day listeners would have to learn the iconic association of a minuet or the indexical association of a horn call during a hunt. In opera, the use of topics can afford the composer the opportunity to do more than corroborate the words, they can also be used to signify wit, irony or ambiguity or add complexity and multivalent meaning through a collision of signifying systems. One example in the *Ring* is Hagen's mock sounding of the war alarm in *GD* Act II; the horn sounds evoke battle but Hagen is calling the men to gather for the wedding feast of Gunther and Brünnhilde. However, as with Baroque rhetoric, one finds topics being used to cement the meaning of some leitmotifs (Bribitzer-Stull, 2015: 123). The leitmotif of the Valkyries looks to the standard evocation of a horse, a topic that can be found in Schubert's *Erlkönig* (Elf king 1815) and Schumann's *Wilde Reiter* (Wild rider 1848), where a dotted 9/8 time imitates the hooves of a galloping horse (Monelle, 2010: 46). In the *Ring*, topics are seldom employed to iterate or emphasise verbal meaning because Wagner had his own intertextual semantic musical figures, leitmotifs, to draw on, to which I return below. They are more often to be found in the orchestral accompaniment where they may function as commentary to the text as suggested above with regard to Hagen's war alarm.

In the mid twentieth century, Cooke proposed that Western European composers share another vocabulary of musical figures, particularly intervals, that have also been handed down unconsciously over centuries 'as elements of musical heritage' (1959/1990: 174). This vocabulary is based on the three fundamental dimensions of musical expression: pitch-tensions (intervals), time-tensions (rhythmic accent and note duration) and volume (ibid: 34ff). According to Cooke, certain tonal patterns are

[51] Dance melody in duple time (sometimes 6/8) with a melody in thirds over a drone bass (where a chord is continuously sounded throughout).

invested with meaning through persistent use in a particular context, for example, a descent from the fifth note of a minor scale through the first, expresses ‘acceptance of, or yielding to grief, discouragement and depression; passive suffering, and the despair connected with death’ (1959/1990: 133). Cooke identifies sixteen such sequences of intervals that make up this vocabulary of affect, and provides examples from music across the centuries to demonstrate their use (ibid: 115-167). Wagner’s Wälsung leitmotif, an ascending 5 -1- (2) -3 minor sequence, is exactly the same configuration of sounds used in works by Purcell, Bach, Handel, Schubert, Verdi and others (ibid: 125-6) to express tragedy ‘by aiming at the minor third’ (ibid: 125). According to Cooke, composers have recognised in this configuration of sound ‘from the lower dominant, via the tonic, to the minor third…a strong feeling of courage…that…acknowledges the existence of tragedy and springs onward (upward) into the thick of it’ (ibid: 125). Although Cooke’s ideas have been criticised as relying too much on lyrics and other programmatic elements, as erroneously equating unstable, context-dependent musical units to the arbitrary signs of words and of limiting musical meaning to the communication of emotions (Davies, 1994: 26), his argument that in the western tradition certain meanings have been conferred on certain sound patterns is compelling. Cooke, therefore, provides a useful means with which to analyse the meaning of music in conjunction with the words it accompanies and even though Wagner was musically unconventional, many of his musical configurations can be explained thanks to Cooke’s identification of established musical semantic units.

Leitmotifs are also conventionalised musical structures, albeit specific to a particular work. They operate in a symbolic fashion with the relationship between sounds and meaning (signifier and signified) being mainly arbitrary, although some may begin as imitations or analogies. I shall return to this subject in the discussion of Wagner’s theories of word-tone synthesis in Chapter 4.4.4.

4.4.3 How musical meaning elaborates and contradicts verbal meaning

As Kaindl rightly points out, music does not simply pictorialize words just to repeat them in musical terms (1995: 114). In opera, two sign systems, music and words, exist simultaneously and interact together to create layers of meaning (Bribitzer-Stull, 2015: 120-1). Through imitation and music’s own conventions or language, music can

integrate with words with four possible outcomes: it can paraphrase, emphasise, contradict or supplement the text. A musical paraphrase will see the words iterated or corroborated, emphasis is made when musical form and structure underline and highlight the important words in any phrase, contradiction, ambiguity and irony occur through musical dissonance whether in terms of tonality, rhythm, dynamics, tone colour or musical style, and supplementation occurs when music adds meaning for elucidation and elaboration. Descent, for example, can be imitated by descending notes but these could be in even intervals descending in a scalar fashion, which could sound stately, or one large interval descent, which sounds like a fall, or a chromatic descending scale implying some tortuous or painful form of descent. Each says something different about the process of descent and therefore about its meaning.

Musical signs that function as 'corroborative' signs (Noske, 1977:319) and converge in a supportive way with the verbal signs of the text, not only iterate the text but may serve to emphasise, elucidate or enrich elements that might be overlooked if only communicated by the words. For example, physiognomic signs in the music may provide more information about the way a character sounds or moves over and above those in the dramatic text or the stage directions (ibid). An understanding of the level of corroboration might offer the translator options for dealing with problems related to the quantity of information that must be fitted to a limited quantity of notes. It may be possible to leave the music to carry some information alone when the verbal element is restricted.

Musical signs might equally serve to contradict or invalidate the text so that words say one thing whilst music says another. Where the music sounds unrelated or antithetical to the words, it may be to introduce ambiguity for dramatic effect or to expose the multi-faceted aspects of a character or situation. In the *Ring*, the sound of a leitmotif appearing unexpectedly often introduces questions about what the character is doing or saying. Dissonance between music and words can also introduce irony. In and of itself music, it is argued, cannot be ironic, it has no 'capacity for the semantic double-take of irony' (Johnson, 2014: 239), of saying one thing and meaning another. The interpretation of irony, which is not formally in the music, belongs to the realm of hermeneutics; it relies on the way in which the audience member hears the incongruities and their possible ironic effects. In Wagner's *Ring*, the leitmotifs are the

prime source of ironic statement: the motifs connect what is unseen with what is seen, what is unheard (verbally) with what is heard (sung) (Deathridge & Dahlhaus, 1984: 146). Understanding the juxtaposition of incongruous musical, verbal or dramatic meaning is essential if a translation is to maintain the coherence between music and words and generate the same semantic input for the audience as that produced by the opera performed with the original text.

The emphasis or polarization of one thought against many is achieved in music through any number of its resources, particularly, through volume, duration of notes and tonality or pitch. As my commentary in Chapter 6 will reveal, not only was Wagner's choice of *Stabreim* essential to meaning through its related rhymes but key and modulation, pitch and intervallic tensions are frequently used to highlight them and, therefore, the ideas, thoughts, concepts, actions and so on to which they allude. In the case of Wagner's *Ring*, emphasis is also achieved through the sudden appearance of a leitmotif that in some way draws the listener's attention to a particular thought, idea or action through its previous connections and associations.

Music often supplements the text and, therefore, the drama through creating a subtext. It is often the orchestra or the harmonic contours of the music that can tell the listener something in addition to what the words communicate. In opera, the singer's melodic line will normally portray the emotions that go with the text whilst the orchestra portrays inner thoughts or feelings. In Wagner's *Ring*, leitmotif is largely responsible for providing a subtext that can elaborate or elucidate the meaning of the words. For example, Act II scene 2 of *DW* sees Wotan working through his dilemmas towards a decision in which he bequests the ring, in despair, to Hagen, the son of his enemy Alberich, and orders Brünnhilde, to allow Hagen to kill Siegmund, his son. Amidst musical sounds of despair and anguish, Wotan sings the words:

Was ich Liebe, muss ich verlassen,	[What I love, I must forsake,
morden, wen je ich minne	murder he whom I love,
trügend verraten, wer mir traut!	deceive and betray the one who trusts me!]

At the same time, the leitmotif associated with Sieglinde and Siegmund's love is heard, which was also used earlier in the scene to express the love Brünnhilde has for her father, Wotan. However, it is now distorted and dissonant. The *Ring's* central idea

might be said to be the struggle between power and love and here in the convergence of words and music can be found that struggle as Wotan chooses to uphold the glory of the gods at the expense of the life of his son. The torment of the dilemma Wotan faces is only half developed by the words of the libretto; the music is needed to fill in the underlying drama.

So far, in this chapter, I have discussed at a generic level how words and music interrelate to create meaning and many of these ideas will be found in my analysis and discussion of Wagner's word-music intersemiosis in Chapter 6.3. However, since the *Ring* is an example of Wagner's own theory of how musical signification combines with words, about which he theorised at some length, especially in *O&D* (see Chapter 2), the following section recapitulates and expands on his theory of *Versmelodie* and leitmotif as the building blocks of musical and verbal intersemiosis in the *Ring*.

4.4.4 Wagner's theory of word-tone intersemiosis

The theory of *Versmelodie*, the basic formal unit of Wagner's music dramas, which is presented in detail in part three of *O&D* (1914b: 103ff), asserts that the resources of music would complete the emotionalisation of the poetry begun by *Stabreim*. According to Wagner, the poet arranges his words with their repeated sounds, the shared relationships of alliterating rhymes and accents, in order to communicate a specific emotion. Just as the alliterating root syllables appeal to both feeling and intellect through their specific arrangement and relationship, so too would the tones of melody be arranged with relationships that communicate those same feelings. For Wagner, a 'seamless union of the linguistic and musical elements' (Kropfinger, 1991: 143) where tones would synthesise with words, and the rhythms of the music be solely dependent on the arrangement of accents in the poetry, was what he called *Versmelodie* (see Chapter 2). In *Versmelodie*, the nexus of rhyme, accent and melody would make the articulation of emotional subtleties possible (Stein 71-72).

4.4.4.1 'Stabreim' – the verse of 'Versmelodie'

Wagner considered *Stabreim* to be the most suitable verse form for opera due to its ability to exploit the relationship of sound and meaning and provide poetic compression, whilst its loose arrangement of stresses freed the musician from having to

bend the music to the regulated metrical arrangement of standard metric forms normally used in opera libretti. *Stabreim* did not limit musical phrasing like strict end-rhyming metrical verse, but offered a freedom that enabled Wagner to break with the prevailing conventions of operatic music, particularly the traditional periodic structure of music[52] (Dahlhaus, 1979: 105). Wagner's musical periods are instead dictated by the sense and expression of the poetry so that the strong beats of a bar and the strong bars of a period relate to natural accent and foreground what is emotionally and semantically important to the drama. Wagner used musical tone and rhythm to resonate with the words and reinforce their conceptual meaning. Although *Stabreim* speaks to both the intellect and the emotion through the relationship of sounds and their accentuation, its expression is limited, according to Wagner, by the linguistic availability of alliterating consonants and vowels and accents, that when spoken, cannot be markedly differentiated from each other (1852/1914b: 123-124, 140). Music, however, can provide a greater level of semantic nuance, varying the accentuation of accented rhyme words as well as non-rhymes in various ways through musical features such as tonality (key relationships and modulation), intervallic tensions, note duration, pitch and so on as well as through Wagner's own musical language of leitmotif.

4.4.4.2 The melody of 'Versmelodie'

According to Wagner's theory, the melodic line was to be the musical counterpart of the words (Stein, 1960: 84), interpreting the content of the verse and its dramatic action and emotions. Melody would not force the verse into any unnaturalness, nor would it take attention away from it but by mirroring declamation, through which emotion is expressed in speech, it would communicate more than the sense of the words alone. Like other composers, Wagner expressed the text using music's ability to imitate and represent tangible and intangible objects, events and actions as well as feelings, concepts and invisible ideas. Sometimes, Wagner's imitation is of an iconic nature but most often it goes beyond this to indicate emotions. Wagner also expressed the text through conventional musical rhetoric, topics and a

[52] In traditional musical structure, themes were made up of sixteen measures (bars) that could be divided into two halves each of four measure phrases; this is referred to as foursquare periodic structure or phrasing.

vocabulary of musical figures, particularly intervals, handed down unconsciously over centuries 'as elements of musical heritage' (Cooke, 1959/1990: 174).

Musical intervals, either ascending, descending, or wandering, can pictorialize individual words and phrases or accommodate themselves to the varying moods expressed by the poetic verse through imitation of gesture. Wagner's *Ring* is less concerned with pictorialisation of individual words and the imitation of external reality than with the elaborate parallelism in music of emotional states or even of the mind in thought. In *DW*, for example, Wagner makes frequent use of wide intervals and exaggerated rhythms to express emotions from agitation to sarcasm, he shapes the music to the poetic verse and interprets it, 'intensifying its inherent emotions' (Stein 122). Wagner's entire *Ring* can be said to be characterised by the way in which expression is 'etched into intervallic shape' (Trippett, 2013: 11) and melodic sequential intervals[53], which as the constituent parts of melody have a meaningful function and emotive qualities dependent on their span (Rieger, 2011: 11). A repeated small interval with a fast tempo can convey violence and anger but if repeated at a slow tempo it can mean suffering. Although in opera, musical intervals derive meaning from the words to which they are set (in terms of pictorialisation of objects and emotions), some intervals, over time, they have developed into finite entities (Trippett, 2013: 59). Wagner would have been familiar with musical theory that suggested all intervals have a specific meaning. Their symbolic properties have been investigated by several theoreticians[54] such as Marx (1826: 258-9) who ascribed specific emotions to them. A minor second might be described as calm but powerless, the minor seventh as hopeless yearning and the major third as decisive (Marx, 1826: 259). In the twentieth century, Cooke's *Language of Music* (1959.1990), which also ascribes meaning to intervals and groups of interval sequences, describes the same intervals as expressions of anguish (minor second), mournfulness (minor seventh) and pleasure (major third) (ibid: 78, 90, 51). Wagner's *Ring* is not only characterised by its wide intervals but also its chromatic ones and it seems clear that in both the sonic visualisation of objects, events, situations and characters as well as in the imitation of utterances that reveal emotions, intervallic

[53] Sequential intervals consist of a succession of two tones. Simultaneous intervals a pitch combinations occurring simultaneously.

[54] Nicola Vicentino, 1555, *L'antica Musica ridotto all moderna Practicca*, Vincenzo Galilei, 1581, *Dialogo*, Marin Mersenne, 1636, *Harmonie Universelle*

tensions are essential to any understanding and consequent translation of the *Ring*. Intervals are also used by Wagner as symmetrical constructs to connect ideas rhythmically and tonally, to reinforce alliterative parallelisms as well to convey meaning through the distance in pitch, their rise or fall, tempo and so on. This can be essential information when choosing words for the translation.

In addition to conventional ways of expressing words through imitation or conventionalised musical language, Wagner created his own symbolic lexicon of leitmotifs and used tonality as an expressive and associative resource. Both are discussed in the following sub-chapters.

4.4.4.3 Extension of alliteration through key relationships and modulation

Tonality binds notes together by giving them a common centre and a sense of reason. It is, therefore, an essential structural element of music. Wagner, however, departed from traditional approaches to tonality in which the unity of a work relied on a central tonality from which departures to related keys might be made before returning to the home key for a sense of completion. For Wagner, keys were to the musician what alliteration was to the poet, a means to communicate affinity and contrast of emotion. He refused to be limited by how tonality had been used hitherto and declared that his melodies would combine any and all keys revealing the 'Urverwandtschaft aller Tonarten' [primitive kinship of all keys] (1852/1914b: 149). The cornerstone of *Versmelodie* is the relationship of tonality and alliteration.

Whilst the effect of *Stabreim* is to create a homogeneity through related sound and meaning, the needs of language preclude a totally homogenous effect, but a melody in which the tones are all related, can achieve this. Alliterative rhymes might unify individual verse-lines, even groups of verses, but harmonic modulation unites larger units with successive modulations to distant keys until the furthest point is reached before returning by degrees to the original key (Stein, 1960: 74). Musical modulation creates harmonic relationships, expectations and tensions between different keys that can be related to the feelings expressed by means of alliterative rhyme in the verse. Musical keys always stand in relation to one another and some have an instinctive inclination towards others (Wagner, 1852/1914b: 148) and often seek union with them.

Wagner uses tonality in the *Ring* as an expressive and associative resource (Bailey, 1977: 51). The expressive use of tonality involves the ascending and descending progression of keys by a semitone or a tone to emphasise emotionally charged events. The upward movement suggests increasing intensity, the downward movement often points to tragedy. The associative, or lexical use of keys, through their consistent association with specific themes, objects, events, people, places and so on, provides 'tonal lexemes' or 'units of meaning' (Petty, 2005: 2). This often accounts for Wagner's wild modulations to distant, unrelated keys. The associative use of tonality is an essential structuring element in as much as tonalities related to characters or events control the melodic and harmonic design of whole acts and more (ibid). Most importantly, the sameness, similarity and dissimilarity between the sounds and meaning of initial rhymes are reinforced by the relationships of musical keys.

Stabreim, according to Wagner's theory, was supposed to unify intellectual and emotional understanding through the semantic and sonic relationship of initial rhymes. Musical tonality would reinforce that relationship with the move from one key to another relating similarity and antithesis in the ideas and emotions of the poem's words. Wagner illustrates this with the following examples: a musician composing a melody to a verse of like emotional content, such as 'die Liebe gibt Lust zum Leben'[55], would not change key, there being no reason to do so. However, if presented with a verse of mixed emotion, such as 'die Liebe bringt Lust und Leid'[56], he would feel compelled to modulate from the key found suitable for the first emotion to another key in keeping with the second. The word *Lust* ('pleasure') would be the pivot into the new key, part of both the original and new key. The same cohesive force of tonality can be used to return to the first emotion. In the verse line: 'Doch in ihr Weh auch webt sie Wonnen'[57], the key would modulate back to the original key on *webt* that would then clearly relate *Wonnen* (delight) with *Lust* (pleasure) whilst *Weh* (woe) and *Leid* (sorrow) were related through sharing the new key (ibid: 152-53).

[55] Literally: Love gives pleasure to life.

[56] Literally: Love brings pleasure and sorrow

[57] Literally: But in her woe she weaves delight

Once an emotion has been characterised by one key, modulations can express any number of variations, alternatives and tangential emotions (Glass, 1983: 44). Wagner uses small scale modulation to create 'harmonic allegories of meaning' (Abbate, 1989a: 41), symbolising his poetic images. Thus, tonal relationships would operate in a similar way to the relationship of initial consonants in *Stabreim* (Wagner, 1852/1914b: 141): just as words with shared initial consonants or vowels revealed an affinity, whether positive or negative, so would musical keys. A scene might be primarily associated with a particular key that relates to the basic emotional mood of the scene (perhaps based on character, event, object) but the interrelationships constructed in the verse (alliterative rhymes) will find musical expression as the music 'modulates…through multifarious and remote keys' (Magee, 1968: 11).

In this way, rhythm, rhyme and tonality meet in a nexus of potential meaning. Alterations to this nexus through a change of language can potentially rupture Wagner's carefully constructed modal convergence and attenuate the emotional or semantic force of its communication. Any wholesale neglect of the cohesion between musical key, meaning and emotion might put the *Gestalt* of the entire opera at risk.

It is not easy to find examples in the *Ring* that are as simple as Wagner's *Liebe/Lus*t example above, but Figure 5 shows Wagner's theory in practice even if tonality is not word specific but at the level of phrases or parts thereof. The example is from *DW* II/ 2 when Wotan is explaining to his wife Fricka why Siegmund should not die in battle for having contravened her marriage laws, as she demands. It begins and ends in A minor with a reference to Alberich destroying the gods and Valhalla (see Table 3). As Wotan tells of Alberich's envy, there is a modulation to the dominant key of E minor, and then rather than a conventional modulation to G major (the relative major of E minor) Wagner makes a more dramatic modulation to G minor, a more distantly related key, as Wotan describes Alberich's angry resentfulness. After this, Wagner modulates not to the dominant key of D minor as might be expected but to its parallel key, D major, as he speaks of his own courage in facing Alberich's army, before arriving at C major as he speaks of victory (*Sieg*). The return to A minor for the final statement 'dann wäre Walhall verloren' (then would Valhalla be lost) is via the relative key of C minor as Wotan speaks of his anxiety about Alberich winning back the ring.

Table 3

A minor	Alberich’s threat to Valhalla	
E minor (dominant)	Alberich’s envy	
G minor (parallel key of G major)	Alberich’s resentfulness	
D major	Wotan’s courage	Keys associated with the Sword - Notung
C major	Victory over Alberich	
A minor	Fear of Alberich’s threat	

Where Wagner has so closely matched tonality and verbal meaning, any alteration of the ordering of the lines or departure from a close semantic translation would produce a glaring mismatch between words and music for those for whom the music speaks as loudly as the words. In the translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams as well as in my own, this was not the case.

Fig. 5

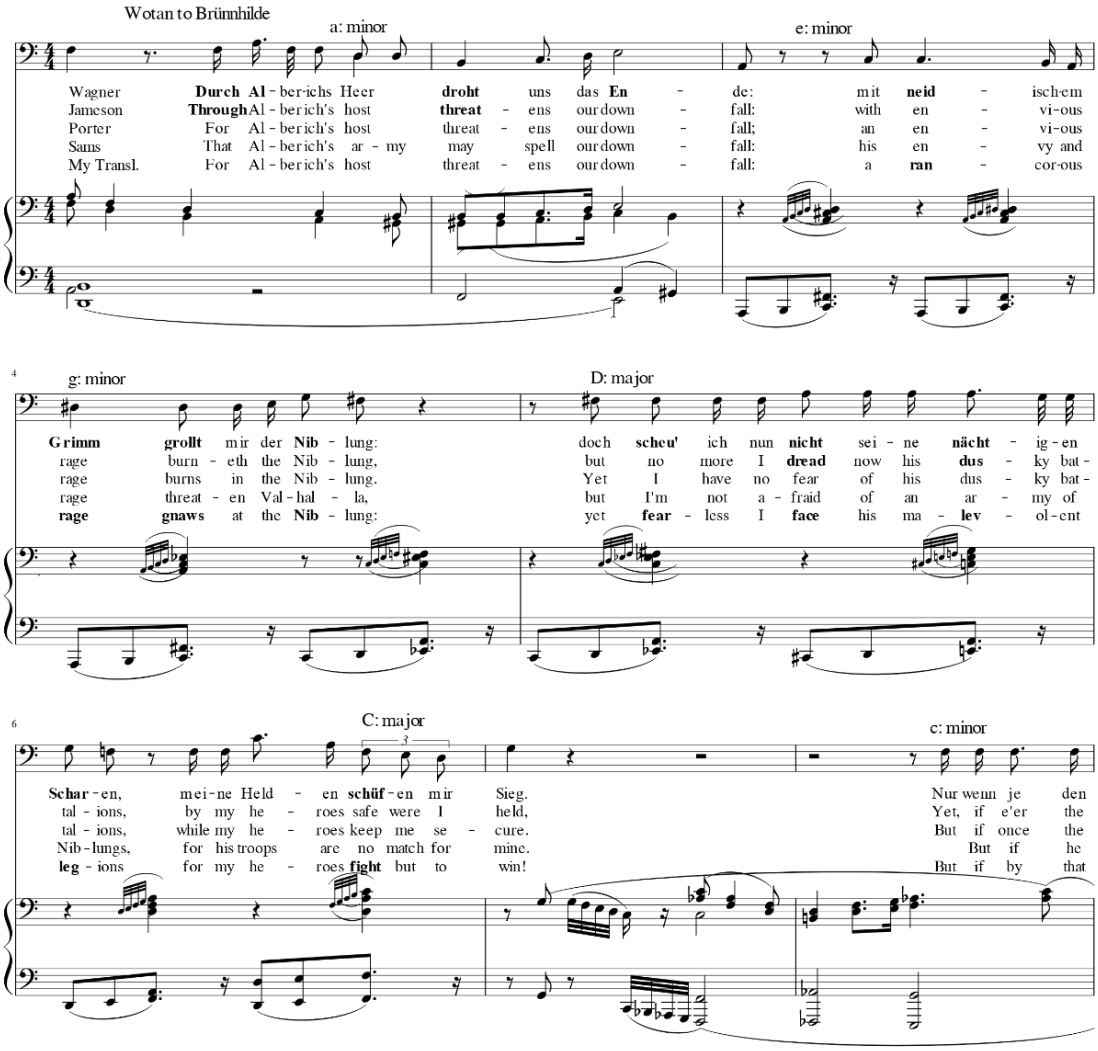
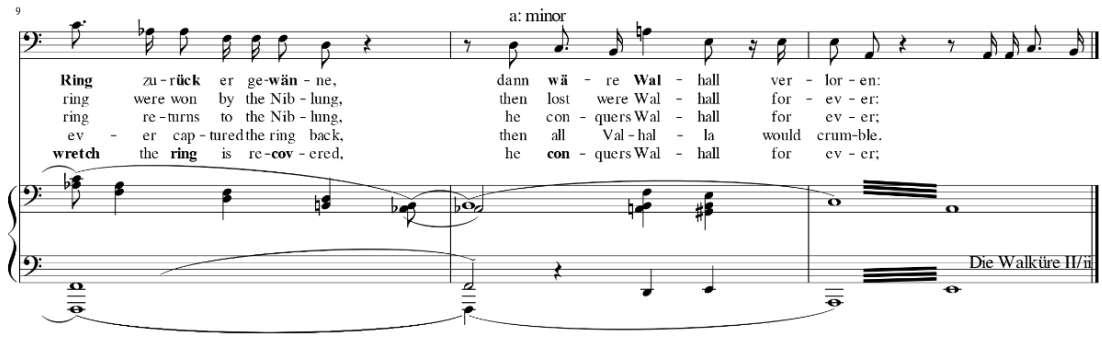


Fig. 5 cont.



Wagner goes beyond the small scale simultaneity of key association with alliteration to associating certain musical keys with events, characters and ideas (Bailey, 1977: 53). For example, the Nibelungs are associated with Bb minor and Valhalla with Db major. This has a unifying function and offers the sort of cohesion found in symphonic music. Associative tonality was not something new for Wagner, composers had attributed characteristics[58] to keys during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (see for example Schubart, 1806: 377ff.) and by Wagner's time 'most tonalities carried some sort of extra-musical association' (Bribitzer-Stull, 2015: 197), what is unusual is that associative tonality in Wagner's *Ring* works at both the thematic and structural level (ibid: 198). If the translator wishes to align the words of the meaning of the words of the translation with the meaning of the music he would do well to attend to the implications of associative keys at both the small-scale structural level and the thematic level, where a key refers to characters, objects, events, emotions, and underlying dramatic motives. An understanding of the main key associations can be important when deciding whether a specific word must be connected with a specific note or notes or whether altering the word order of a verse-line should be resisted because of the carefully designed tonal associations with verbal meaning.

4.4.4.4 Leitmotif as symbolic sign and subtext

The leitmotif (guiding motif), with which Wagner is so closely associated, was not 'invented' by him[59] nor did he ever refer to it as such. The term became 'naturalized

[58] Schubart, for example, characterises C major as innocence, simplicity, naivety; Eb major as the key of love, of devotion, of intimate conversation with God, associations not far from those, which Wagner gives them.

[59] See page 8

in the wake of the first Bayreuth festivals', when Hans von Wolzogen's 'explanatory guides…popularized the concept.' (Grey, 2008: 87) A leitmotif is a musical idea that is used to symbolize an extra-musical idea and the *Ring* contains between sixty and seventy, and perhaps more than a hundred, if one includes variants and transformations[60] (Grey, 2008: 88). These small melodic units, which Wagner referred to as 'melodische Momente'[61] (1852/1914b: 200), grew out of *Versmelodie* but belong primarily to the orchestra that expresses shades of emotion that are 'unspeakable' (ibid).

According to Wagner, music can materialise thought (ibid: 184); it can recall an emotion in the memory and make it present. Thought and remembering are the same, Wagner says (ibid: 182), so that through the orchestra the audience can hear what a character is thinking when the character cannot put it into words. *Versmelodie* materializes the thought but the leitmotif is a kindred embodiment of it (ibid: 183). In its suggestiveness and repetition, it is analogous to *Stabreim* (ibid: 202) and preserves the unity of expression (ibid: 199), when characters, for dramatic needs, must speak with the language of everyday life (ibid). This can only happen when the leitmotif has first been associated, through *Versmelodie*, with a particular character and his or her thoughts or emotions in a particular situation related to a particular dramatic moment (ibid:185). However, they do not all originate in the vocal line as prescribed by Wagner, fewer than half the motifs in the *Ring* are associated with words (Stein, 1960: 110) but gain meaning through association with characters, events, object and actions. Though they can be said to function like lexical units, Wagner went 'beyond their exact or varied repetition at textually appropriate moments' (Whitall, n.d.: 3-4) transforming, evolving and altering their associations and meaning by small nuances. This he did through changing the key (major/minor), the tempo, instrumentation, and even the melodic line.

Although most leitmotifs refer to a person, object, event or action this does not mean that they act as 'placards' (Grey, 2008: 93) to simply announce a character or

[60] Wolzogen's original *Leitfaden* for the *Ring* gave ninety leitmotifs. Ernest Newman's commentaries supply nearly 200 examples. J. K. Holman's more recent *guide* to the *Ring* gives as many as 145 (Grey, 2008: 300)

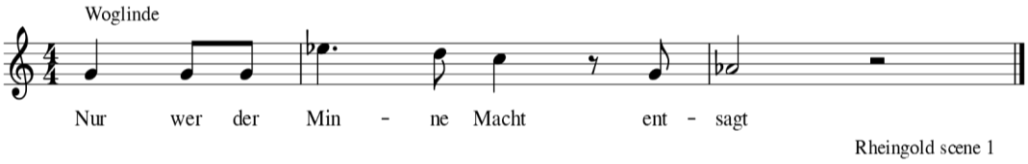
[61] 'Melodic moments'

object's presence (ibid). Their initial 'indexical nature' is gradually lost and the leitmotif becomes a 'symbol' (Tarasti, 2012: 226) to be used in any number of contexts. For example, when the motif called the *Todesverkündigungmotif* ('annunciation of death'*)* is first heard in *DW* II/4, it denotes that Siegmund must soon die, but eventually it comes to symbolise 'something threatening' (ibid).

Dramatically, leitmotifs function on three levels: as prophecy (usually in monologues), as action (dialogue) and as 'epic recapitulation' (Grey, 2008: 109). As they recall something from the past or point to something to come, each new context in which they are heard casts their meaning in new directions. In their suggestiveness and repetition, leitmotifs function like alliterative rhymes but on a grander scale to preserve dramatic and musical cohesion through reminiscence and premonition. Reminiscence motifs, link the dramaturgical present with past events or ideas. Anticipation motifs are repeated melodic units heard in the orchestra not yet associated with any text (Millington, 2006:171), they are more vague and difficult to grasp as a concept. Their repetition suggests they have some important meaning yet the spectator must wait for them to be finally associated with text, object, character or action before the nature of the presentiment becomes clear. According to Stein, Wagner conceived them as psychological and emotional preparation for things to come (1960: 77).

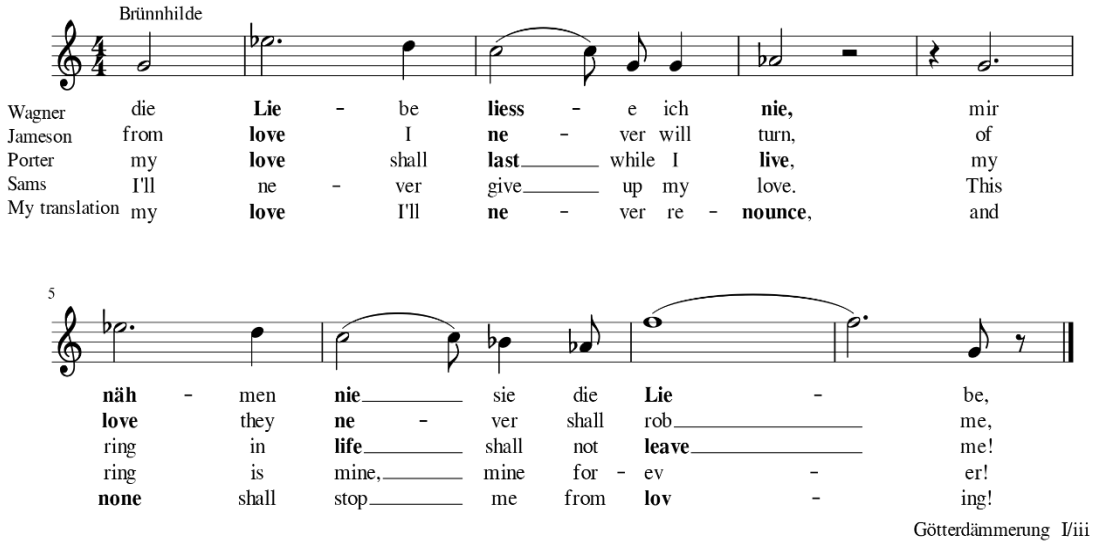
The significance of the leitmotif for the translator lies primarily in its function as commentator or subtext, so to ignore the leitmotif when translating would be problematic. Through the leitmotif, the music is able to say something different simultaneously with the words of the singer, and what it says may colour any interpretation of the actual words being sung. In this context it is essential to take care with the interpretation of the words in order to avoid any contradiction of musical and verbal thought, particularly in *GD* where leitmotifs occur over a thousand times (in *DW* it was 405) (Stein, 1960: 190). For example, when Waltraute (I/3) asks Brünnhilde to return the ring to the Rhine to end the curse, Brünnhilde replies that she will never give up the ring that Siegfried gave her as a token of his love. She sings her reply to the leitmotif melody known as the 'renunciation of love', first sung by Woglinde to Alberich when explaining that only those willing to renounce love might release the power of the ring, and subsequently heard in the context of doom:

Fig. 6



The semantics of the leitmotif directly contradict Brünnhilde's reply to Waltraute and foreshadow her betrayal of Siegfried. She says she will never renounce love but the orchestra, in playing the 'renunciation of love' motif, is casting doubt on her statement. Ironically, giving away the ring would save Siegfried, but when Brünnhilde refuses to do so, she unknowingly sets in motion the downfall of both Siegfried and the world:

Fig. 7



It is interesting that although Wagner does not mention the ring, Porter and Sams choose to replace the repetition of *Liebe* in the second phrase with 'ring'. In some ways, this makes the irony clearer because it creates a closer association with the motif in *DR*.

4.5 The medium of the voice

The physical medium of the voice materialises the verbal and musical signs on the page as performance. The composer and librettist rely on the singer's voice to make what they have created available to an audience, and have chosen words to be easily articulated and understood (Kaindl, 1995: 119). The singability of a translation relies on its rhythmic match with the music but also on the translator having given attention to

the physical aspects of the vocal apparatus with regard to the exchange of vowels and consonants from one language to another. If a translation is to be well received by a singer, who will interpret it to the audience, the translator will need to find words that can be physically produced by the voice on the stage, and heard over an orchestra, whilst acting.

4.5.1 The voice as instrument

Sound production in singing is a complex physiological process in which the whole body is involved. The voice organ comprises a 'power supply' in the lungs, an oscillator in the vocal folds[62] and a resonator in the vocal tract (Sundberg, 1977: 106). When a person sings, the lungs produce an excess of air pressure that passes through the glottis at the base of the larynx between the vocal folds. These are attached to the thyroid cartilage on one side and to one of the arytenoid cartilages on the other that move to operate, bring together and stretch the vocal folds. The larynx, pharynx and mouth form the vocal tract, which is a resonant chamber like the tube of a horn. Its shape is determined by the position of the articulators: the lips, jaw, and tongue. Diaphragm action pushes air from the lungs through the vocal folds causing them to vibrate, producing sound that is then shaped by the resonances of the vocal tract, giving each sound its characteristic shape and timbre. The pitch of the sound is determined by the number of times the vocal folds close and open per second. The body is automatically able to achieve the required pitch of note by the brain simply imagining it and issuing orders to produce it. The ability to do this is closely related to the ability to change the intonation of ordinary speech.

The sound produced by the air pressure flowing over the vocal folds is not a single tone, but in a series of simultaneously occurring interrelated frequencies at different amplitudes (Hoch, 2014: 78). As the shape of the vocal tract is altered, it stops some frequencies and transmits others to a greater or lesser degree. This is resonance. Certain frequencies or pitches that can be varied by a change in the position of the tongue, lips, jaw, palate and larynx, are known as formants, which amplify the buzzing sound produced by the vocal folds into speech and singing. In trained singers, who can

[62] These are often called the vocal cords but are actually elastic infoldings of the mucous membrane lining the larynx.

control their vocal tract shape, the formants three to five are clustered together to produce a strong boost in amplitude in frequencies of about 2600 to 3200 Hz, which enables their voices to be heard above the orchestra without electronic amplification[63].

4.5.2 Production and comprehensibility of vowels

The shape of the vocal tract directly affects the quality of the tone produced by the singer and although trained singers are able to shape their vocal tracts and adjust their vowel formants for better resonance and projection, the translator's choice of vowel at a particular pitch can either aid or hinder. Each vowel sound has its own set of distinguishing formants produced by its own particular laryngeal configuration, which determine the phonetic differentiation between vowels. Each vowel's first formant resonates best within a specific frequency band so for example [i] (as in 'see') is best within a minor third above or below E_4. Beyond this, the vowel sound changes. When a soprano, for example, sings high notes, their fundamental frequency will be higher than the first formant of most vowel sounds[64], which has the effect of distorting the vowel sound and potentially making it unrecognisable to the ear.

Trained classical singers move the first formant of the vowel up in frequency to match the fundamental frequency of the note being sung. The two lowest formant frequencies can be moved by two octaves or more by changing the position of the articulators. Therefore, a soprano required to sing [u] (as in 'you') on a Bb^4 (494 hertz) when the first formant of [u] is approximately 350 hertz will alter her tongue, lips and jaw positions to raise the first formant of the vowel to match the fundamental frequency she is singing. During a singer's training, he or she discovers through experimentation with the shape of the vocal tract and position of the tongue where in the mouth cavity 'resonance formants are tuned' that 'enhance both the clarity of the vowel and its resonance' (Chapman, 2012: 91). However, the physical changes to the vocal tract when singing in the very high range, the lowered larynx and raised soft palate, makes it almost impossible to pronounce some vowels in the same way as is possible in a lower

[63] When an orchestra plays, all the instruments create sounds that have frequencies within a certain range. Most lie below the 800-hertz range.

[64] I refer to vowel sounds rather than vowels since the latter will tend to intimate the five primary vowels as opposed to the numerous phonetic vowels used in speech – see below.

register, and the sound of some vowels is altered compared to normal speech, which threatens comprehension. When singing high notes a soprano might raise the formants of vowels by widening the vocal tract but in the process, all start to sound like [a:] (as in ‘father’).

Recent research has indicated that opera composers and librettists have rarely matched vowels and pitch (Smith & Wolfe, 2009: 200). In ‘numbers’[65] operas the recitative is usually responsible for information, and the arias, ensembles and choruses are highly music-centric so that there is less need for intelligibility at high pitch. If, however, a composer did require the words sung on high notes and coloraturas to be understood, he ensured that they had first been sung at a pitch level where the vowels would be intelligible. However, in the case of Wagner, researchers found significant use of open vowels at high pitch, which corresponds to Wagner’s requirements of intelligibility, vocal power (Wagner’s orchestra was much larger than those used by earlier composers[66]), and easier singing of difficult parts (ibid: 200). Their research indicates that suitable matching of vowels with pitch increased systematically as Wagner's experience as a composer increased (ibid). The researchers of the above-mentioned study suggest that ‘those translating a libretto for performance in another language might occasionally consider vowel-pitch matching - among all of the other constraints’ (ibid).

Vowels are responsible for what is known as colouring the voice or tone. Some vowels produce bright sounds and others darker ones, although the vowels also rely to some degree on the consonants surrounding them to create the effect. Words, therefore, determine tone colour. The frontal vowels [i] (see) and [e] (as in chaotic) are bright and vowels formed nearer the back of the mouth like [u] (you) and [o] (as in pillow) are dark. However, singers develop their technique so that they are able to adapt vowel sound and tone colour both for interpretation and for physical reasons. Bright or frontal

[65] Opera consisting of individual pieces of music ('numbers') interspersed with recitative.

[66] The orchestra for the *Ring* is made up of about 100 players whereas at the Leipzig premiere in 1788 of Don Giovanni (Mozart) the orchestra was 29 –see Ian Woodfield, 2012, *Performing Operas for Mozart* p.126).

vowels like [u/] and [i] tend to be modified by singers in the high range because their brightness can become shrill.

When Wagner wrote verse lines with words like *Blut* and *Tod* he was able to combine the dark sound of their vowels and music to convey ominous and portentous emotions and significance. However, a translator using the obvious English translations, 'blood' and 'death', changes the vowel colour and its relationship with the music and makes it more difficult for the singer to communicate the same emotions. The low, long, closed back vowels [u] (as in true) of *Blut* and [o] (as in the French word 'eau') of *Tod* are altered on 'blood' to [ə], the short neutral schwa, and in 'death' to the short [e]. What was dark becomes bright. There is usually no way to avoid such changes if semantic equivalence is part of the translator's aims. Wagner's *Ring* is a drama with a story that needs to be told and vowel sounds that correspond with feelings may have to rank below many other factors, even if it means altering the relationship of verbal and musical meaning.

Changing open for closed vowels not only changes their colour in relation to verbal meaning but at certain pitches can affect the singer's ability to produce good tone and the audience's ability to hear the vowel correctly. Therefore, pure closed vowels sung on high notes are usually modified to make them more comfortable to sing, which rarely has a detrimental effect on comprehension. According to Sundberg, it is 'a classical problem in... singing… that there is no simple relationship between acoustic data and what we perceive' (1970: 22). Even though an isolated vowel may not be identifiable at a very high pitch, other factors, especially context, will compensate, with the listener's brain supplying the lacking identifying features of the vowel.

4.5.3 Consonants

There are two parts to the sound of singing, not only the musical element comprising accurate, sustained vowels, but also expressive communication, which needs well-defined consonants. Although consonants either fully or partially stop the flow of air that is the life of the voice, they are not only essential to create meaningful language but also to shape the vowel creating balanced phonation for good tone. Like vowels, there are different kinds of consonants. They are categorised by whether they

are voiced or unvoiced and by where and how the breath is impeded. Voiced consonants involve the vibration of the vocal chords in order to produce them. Unvoiced consonants do not; only the release of air produces the sound. Voiced consonants can therefore be sung on a pitch and help to maintain the legato line of a phrase whilst unvoiced ones cannot. Unvoiced consonants cause a break; this can affect breath support and even lead to cracks or shrill sounds. Professional singers let the tongue and lips do most of the work in singing consonants to avoid too much change of jaw position and avoid altering the formants of the vocal tract, which results in the effect of poor diction.

Consonant clusters, especially when they feature in fast passages can become tongue twisters for singers. Consonant clusters exist within the phonemes of many German and English words. They are also created when one words ends and the next one begins with a consonant. Consonant clusters in English can be problematic for pronunciation and may easily be misheard, often producing what sounds like nonsense. Sometimes, as the singer strives for legato, the listener cannot hear where one word ends and another begins. Since consonants might potentially spoil the *legato* sound, the translator might make every effort to find words that have as few consonants as possible (Anheisser, 1938: 91). However, as Anheisser goes on to say, unnatural expressions and word order that may result from such endeavours can be more hindrance to a singer than consonants (ibid: 92).

On very high notes, it is almost impossible to sing certain consonants. This is because it is difficult to coordinate glottal closure and airflow simultaneously at a high pitch (Davids & LaTour, 2012: 120). There is often a choice between being understood and making a beautiful sound. However, where comprehension is essential, singers can employ techniques to facilitate vocal ease and projection of the vowel. For example, there might be the opportunity of placing the consonant on the preceding note leaving the vowel to itself on the high note. In some cases, this even improves intelligibility. Instead of a voiced consonant, an unvoiced one can help when entering on to a high pitch because the unvoiced consonant starts the airflow so that the breath is already moving when the high note must be sung (Davids & LaTour, 2012: 120).

Rossini wrote to Marchesi[67], that in order to compose for the voice, one must either sing or have sung to know from experience the capabilities of the vocal folds and larynx (Marchesi, 2013: 110). It might be said that translating for singing requires similar experience to avoid some of the most demanding phonetic problems and thereby ensure clarity and intelligibility; yet trained professional singers have learned and practised techniques that equip them to handle the most demanding phonetic requirements.

In the foregoing chapters, I have described the main modes, sub-modes and medium of opera in order to define opera and Wagner's *Ring* in particular, as a text or *Gestalt*. The multimodal text of opera requires its translator to understand how the composer has designed the composition, integrating the meaning potentialities of each mode to complement each other and create the cohesion necessary for the *Gestalt* of the opera to remain intact.

Prosodic fit between the translation and music is a non-negotiable factor in opera translation. Syllabic stress, weight and length, and a verbal match to musical intonation are all necessary to make the translation fit for singing. In many respects, this is a solely pragmatic concern, yet unless it is done well, comprehension can be made difficult and meaning distorted. Everything else in the translation is dependent on prosodic fit. The relationship of prosody and alliterative verse lies at the heart of Wagner's *Ring*, where alliterative rhymes are synchronous with musical prosody and musical meaning is related at a micro-level to rhyme through the resources of melody, especially key relationships (modulation) and pitch relationships (intervallic tension). The division of rhyme from music can lead to the collapse of Wagner's carefully crafted intersemiosis between words and music. This will be the focus of Chapter 6.2.

The theatrical staging and performance of opera and its implications for translation is an enormous subject and its study is fraught with methodological difficulties. For reasons already explained (see Chapters 1 and 4.4), the scenic-mimetic

[67] Mathilde Marchesi (1821 – 1913) was a German mezzo-soprano and renowned teacher of the bel canto vocal method, whose vocalises are still used today.

mode is not included in my comparative analysis of *Ring* translations in Chapter 6, however, this chapter highlighted how performative aspects combined with the constraints of prosodic fit can inadvertently lead to alterations of the sub-text and the dramatic action it engenders.

There are a number of ways of thinking about the convergence of verbal and musical meaning in generic terms and according to Wagner's theory of *Versmelodie*. I have suggested that music imitates the meaning of words through similarity or analogy. At its simplest, this is word painting but it also includes pictorialisation of overall mood and emotions related to a given dramatic situation. Imitation extends to musical analogy of actions and gestures that indicate an emotional state such that music acts as an indexical sign. There are also conventionalised musical forms that have developed over time (and in a given culture) that refer to extra-musical ideas and concepts as well as emotions and these are used by composers as shorthand codes to infer meaning. Through different means of musical and verbal parallelisms, the composer can paraphrase, emphasise, contradict or supplement the text. Musical signs might equally serve to contradict or invalidate the text so that words say one thing whilst music says another. Any incongruity of musical and textual meaning is often used for dramatic irony.

Wagner's *Ring* contains not only these generic approaches to word-tone synthesis, but also those of *Versmelodie*, where the melodic vocal line uses the semiotic resources of music to iterate, corroborate or contradict the semiotics of the verse. Leitmotifs are fixed references and a sort of musical language that through repetition and context acquire a symbolic value, which spectators learn through the performance of the opera. Often the leitmotif is assigned to the orchestra to use in the style of a Greek chorus thus reducing the potential multiplicity of meanings of the melody and words, directing and willing the listener to one interpretation.

The opera is made available to performers and audience through a number of media but the one that affects the translator most is that of the human voice. The translator has no specific duty to facilitate vocal production as singers are trained to manage difficult vowels and consonants on difficult pitches. Even composers like Monteverdi, Mozart, Bellini, and Puccini, whose works indicate that they knew about

the breathing requirements of the singer and how the choice of vowel or consonant make a difference to vocal production in relation to pitch or duration, sometimes provide challenges to the singer. Yet, if the translator wants to facilitate beautiful singing that will best serve to tell the story of the opera, he or she might want to consider the impact of their vowel and consonant choices and indeed phrasing in the translation.

With the exception of the scenic-mimetic mode, the above modes of meaning are the focus of Chapter 6 where I compare my translation, and those of Jameson, Porter and Sams, to Wagner's original libretto. In conjunction with the score, I examine how music integrates with verse to affect translator interpretation and decision-making concerning preservation of the original score's cohesion between words and music.

5. Translations and Translators of Wagner's *Ring*

In order to situate the three translations at the centre of the analytical comparison in Chapter 6, this chapter gives a diachronic overview of reading and singing translations of the *Ring* published in the UK or USA. It explores the three translations in terms of their translation aims and circumstances and describes some of their key features. At the end of the chapter, I set out the aims and objectives of my translation in Volume 2.

5.1 Reading translations

Frederick Jameson, Reginald Rankin and Randle Fynes made the earliest non-metrical reading translations of Wagner's *Ring* libretto. Jameson's (1896) took over twenty years to complete and was a line by line quasi-literal translation in 'Wardour Street Early English', a pseudo - archaic diction (shops in Wardour Street in the late 19th century when the term was coined sold antique and reproduction furniture) based on Shakespeare's English. It was probably written for those attending the Bayreuth festival. Sir Reginald Rankin (1871-1931), published a two volume translation in blank verse a few years later (1899) as did Randle Fynes (1864-1957) in 1899 and 1901 (followed by a single volume in 1913). In America, Oliver Huckel (1864- 1940), a Congregationalist minister who wrote nine books about Wagner's operas, also published a blank verse translation between 1907 and 1911 (1907).

Around this time, another verse translation was published in England by Margaret Armour (1860-1943) with illustrations by Arthur Rackham (1910, 1911). Her verse form shares a syllabic equivalence with Wagner's and she reproduces alliterative rhymes, albeit they are ornamental rather than structural. Her translation owes much to Jameson's singable translations, published between 1901 and 1905, of which more below. With the exception of two American prose translations (Henderson, 1932; Le Massena, 1930), there appear to have been no new reading translations until the 1960s, apart from a few abridged versions or what Porter refers to as 'paraphrases' (1977: x).

In the 1960s translations by William Mann (1964) and Lionel Salter (1983) were published. Both were used to accompany recordings of the *Ring* and as reading

libretti offered by opera houses to their audiences. Mann's (1924-1989) translation was initially for the *Friends of Covent Garden* (available from the British Library). This comparative, line-by-line translation in modern prose accompanied the 1994 *Deutsche Grammophon* recording of the Metropolitan Opera and orchestra, conducted by James Levine, and the 2005 Barenboim *Ring*, which features the 1992 Bayreuth Festival production. Lionel Salter's (1914-2000) translation of *GD* appears with the recording of Solti's 1968 *Ring* (Barnett, 2016) and the 1990 EMI remastered release of Furtwängler's 1953 *Ring* Cycle (Wagner & Porter, 1977: xix). Salter's translations of *Das Rheingold*, *Siegfried* and *GD* were used for the release of the Karajan *Ring*, recorded between 1966 and 1970 (Skramstad, 2016). Both Mann's and Salter's translations (Salter: *RG/SF* and Mann: *WK/GD*) were published as reading libretti for the 1983 Bayreuth Festival (Salter et al., 1983) in the centenary year of the composer's death.

It was not until around the turn of the Millennium that new reading libretti were published: a verse translation by Rudolph Sabor (1997a, 1997b) and a prose translation by Stewart Spencer (2000). Spencer (1949 -) is a translator of more than three dozen books mainly on music and art history. His translation is essentially in prose but seeks to imitate the style of the poetry in terms of stress 'to give a flavour of the metrical flow of Wagner's German' (ibid: 2). Sabor (1914 -2013), a writer and expert on Wagner, whose books include *The Real Wagner*, undertook a new translation because he felt that none of the existing translations convey the *Ring* as a 'literary masterpiece' (1997c: 8). Sabor avoided transposing lines, ensured that the location of key words remained as in the original and avoided obscurity and ambiguity by clarifying difficult passages. However, his translation is marked by curious choices of register and vocabulary and some banality: 'Sad I sat there while they were swilling' (*DW* Act I); 'two hearts are beating as one' (*DW* Act 1); 'Are you demented?' (*DW* Act 3/1).

The first translation of the twenty-first century was published as an e-book. Written in prose and accompanied by Arthur Rackham's drawings, Dan McGlaun's translation (2011a, 2011b) was published on Kindle with no publisher credited.

5.2 Singing translations

Alfred Forman (1840–1925)

The first metrical (or singable) translation in English was by Alfred Forman (1877), who had no particular credentials in music or literature, but in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* his profession is recorded as a translator (Collins, 2004). Forman translated the *Ring* after hearing one of Edward Dannreuther's Wagner concerts in 1873. He privately printed his translation of *DW* and sent a copy to Wagner, who encouraged him to complete the rest. By 1876, his translation of the *Ring* had been printed and Forman went to Bayreuth to present it to Wagner. Thereafter, Forman was closely associated with Wagner and the *Ring*. He met Wagner in London in 1877 (Sessa, 1979: 159), was a leading member of the Wagner Society (ibid), and responsible for procuring certain props for the Bayreuth production in 1876. Forman states that his translation is in 'the alliterative verse of the original', that 'it is the only version known to have been approved by Wagner' and 'the first translation of the work into any language.' (1877: title page). This translation was never published with a score and there is no evidence that it was ever performed. Although Spencer considers Forman's translation 'an heroic stab' (2006: 221) at alliterative verse, his attempt, strictly speaking, fails. His English is often incomprehensible[68] and sometimes comical:

> Where men from warfare have weaned their mind
> where wealth is walled that chaselessly weathers the withering
> storm of change, I lurk and lightly watch.
> The wielding cord of a wounded wont I bind again to a band; (*DW* II/1)
>
> Was there a Nodder at work? (*GD* III/1)

Frederick and Henrietta Corder (hereafter 'the Corders')

Frederick Corder (1852- 1932), a composer and teacher (Principal of the Royal Academy of Music), and his wife, Henrietta (1876- 1922) provided the translation for the first *Ring* vocal score published in English in the early 1880s by Schott[69] (Porter &

[68] For example, 'Own, it irks me the worst – that ill the sleight I worked; the helm, it seems almost, but half withheld my mien'. (from *Götterdämmerung*)

[69] The music publisher B. Schott's Söhne, in Mainz, were the first printers of Wagner's *Ring* in the 1860s and 70s.

Wagner, 1977: x-xi). Reading versions were published at around the same time: the copy I found of *GD* is dated to 1882. Copies of all the *Ring* libretti dating from circa 1900 are kept at the British library. They are all freely available on-line. The Corders' translation of *DW* was the first translation to be used in performance in 1895 at Covent Garden ("The Opera," 1895) and then again in 1902 and 1903.

The Corders' translations reproduce the alliterative rhymes (structurally, not ornamentally) and the language is archaic with strange syntax and unusual vocabulary. The result is sometimes humorous to a contemporary ear: 'Ein **frem**der Mann! Ihn muss ich **fra**gen' becomes 'Whence **came** this man? I must ac**cost** him.' However, compared to Forman's, the translations are more fluent and lucid:

Wagner:

> **Stark**e[70] **Scheit**e **schich**tet mir dort
> am **Rand**e des **Rhein's** zu **Häuf: hoch** und **hell lod'**re die Gluth,
> die den edlen **Leib** des **hehr**sten **Held**en verzehrt!

Forman:

> **Build** me [with][71] **logs** a**loft** on this brim
> a **heap** for the Rhine to **heed; fast** and **far** tower the flame**,**
> as it licks the **limbs** the **high**est **her**o has left**!**

The Corders:

> **Friends,** let **fitt**ing **fun**eral pyre
> be **reared** by the **riv**er **here. Hot** and **high kin**dle the flames,
> to consume the **corse**[72] of **him** who was **he**ro o'er all!

However, there are many examples where their language becomes difficult to comprehend or sounds unnatural (even for audiences of the late 19th century) such as 'To blame is my wit that bad is thy weal; //for rarer goods I wot of than the Gibichung yet ever won' or 'He in woods has mightily waxed, and well with Gudrun might mate.'

When Schott published new bilingual scores of the *Ring* at the end of the 19th century they abandoned the Corder translation and used Jameson's new metrical translation (see below) that has remained in the Schott editions ever since. Today it is

[70] Wagner was incorrect here in making this rhyme with *Scheite schichtet*

[71] Square brackets denote a missing or added syllable; this means that alterations are necessary to the music.

[72] Middle English: body

available from Schirmer, New York, the official publishers of Wagner's works in the USA.

Newman

In anticipation of the centenary celebrations of Wagner's birth, a translation by the well-known Wagner expert Ernest Newman was published as a vocal score by Breitkopf and Härtel between 1910 and 1914 with a piano reduction by Otto Singer (1910, 1914). Newman (1868 -1959) was a music scholar and critic. His *Life of Richard Wagner*, in four volumes (published between 1933 and 1947) is still considered 'one of the finest Wagner studies ever written' (Saffle, 2010: 118). Similar in style to Jameson's translation, it was praised for its faithfulness to the original, but criticised for its 'strangeness of phrase which comes from following the meaning too precisely' and for faults in metrical fit ("New Books: Mr. Newman's Translations of Wagner," 1910). I have found no mention of Newman's translation being performed.

Stewart Robb

Robb's was the first metrical translation (1960) to be published since the Great War (1914-18). Robb (1913-2006) was a musician and translator but little has been written about him. He claims he aimed for 'clear, understandable modern English' (cited in Porter, 1977: xii) but sometimes the contemporaneity and Americanness of his language is questionable, for example, 'Have you gone crazy' or 'we'll rest right here and fix up a meal'. He mixes this with slightly archaic diction such as 'he'll nevermore hie to the hunt!' creating inconsistency. Robb provides some amusing translations of some of the proper nouns: *Wehwalt* becomes 'Woeking' and *Notung*, 'Needful'. As with Newman, I have found no reference to this translation ever being used in performance.

5.3 Singing translations included in this study

Frederick Jameson (1839 – 1916)

Jameson, an architect, was considered an accomplished amateur musician ("Obituary: Frederick Jameson," 1916) and attended every festival at Bayreuth for over a quarter of a century. It was said that 'there was very little he did not know about the

music, stage-directions, and the special orchestral arrangements' (ibid). He was also personally acquainted with Wagner ("A Champion of Wagner" 1916).

Jameson's singing translation[73] was used for the first English language *Ring* cycle at Covent Garden in 1908, conducted by Wagner's friend and colleague Hans Richter. Ironically, German singers sang some of the lead roles and had to be taught English ("The 'Ring' in English," 1908). The translations were used for another *Ring* cycle the following year before Covent Garden returned to performances in German until the outbreak of war in 1914 when all productions were halted (Snelson, 2006: 166-167). Between 1921 and 1924, following the end of the Great War, the *Ring* was again performed at Covent Garden in English using Jameson's translation (ibid: 167-168) just as it was in 1948 after the Second World War. Whilst Covent Garden returned in the intervening years to productions in German, Sadler's Wells opera (now the English National Opera) used Jameson's translation in the late 1930s for its production in English of *The Valkyrie* ("The Valkyrie at the Wells," 1938).

The reviews of the 1908 *Ring* performances give an insight into the reception of Jameson's translation. *The Observer* welcomed it as an improvement on the alliterating translation of Foreman and the Corders calling it 'the first real poetical translation' ("The 'Ring' in English," 1908). *The Times* said it 'sings well and it sounds well; alliteration is preserved as far as possible, but not so far that sense has to be sacrificed to it' ("A Retrospect of 'The Ring'", 1909). *The Times* also liked its 'refreshing absence of archaism in the use of words' such as weal (happiness) and ween (to think or know) that had so marked the translations of the Corders and Forman (ibid). An earlier article in the *Times* praised its 'directness and fitness for singing' as well as its 'closeness to the original text', which the reviewer believed elucidated the German ("The 'Nibelung's Ring' in English," 1908).

The reason Jameson's translation was seen as a refreshing improvement was probably because of his approach to alliterative verse and its rhymes. He avoided the pitfalls of convoluted word order, which marked the translations of the Corders and

[73] These were included in Schott's bilingual German-English and trilingual German-English-French vocal scores between 1899 and 1904 – information from Catalogues of British Library holdings. These are now published by Schirmer (Jameson, Wagner, & Klindworth, n.d.-a, n.d.-b)

Forman, by removing the burden of rhyme. The best way to see this is to compare the line '**Zau**berfest be**zähmt** ein **Schlaf** // der **Hold**en **Schmerz** und **Harm**:- da die **Wal**küre zu mir **trat**, //**schuf** sie ihr den **wonn**igen **Trost**?' (Wagner *DW* II/5).

Forman	**Sleep** its spell has **sweet**ly **spread**, // her **heart** to **soothe** from **harm**; // when the Valkyrie came to my **side**, // **was** the kindly **slum**ber her **work**?
Corders	**Slum**ber's charm has **soothed** my **fair** // one's **wild** and **fren**zied **woe**. // Did the **Val**kyrie's heedful **care** // this **qui**et di**vine** o'er her **cast**?
Jameson	**Slum**ber charms with **sooth**ing spell // the fair one's pain and grief. // When the Valkyrie hither came, // **brought** she then this **bliss**ful repose?

It is evident that there is less rhyme in Jameson's version and that the English is slightly more natural. Jameson's translation, like those of Forman and the Corders is in so-called 'Wardour Street Early English'. This late-Victorian/Edwardian pseudo-archaic diction was common in historical romances of the time and it would not have struck the singer or listener as unusual. In fact Jameson's archaic language was deemed poetical and to reflect the 'grandeur' of the original ("The 'Ring' in English," 1908). Archaic English is much closer to German than modern English, therefore, the use of the familiar second person singular pronoun 'thou' and its possessive 'thine' with their related verb inflections (art, hath, dost) as well as subject-verb inversion and the use of archaic lexis make it easier to match the stress patterns of the source text and to find rhymes:

Wagner:	Ihm müsst' ich den **Reif** ent**ring**en, den selbst als **Zoll** ich ihm **zahlt**e.
Jameson:	From him must I **wrest** the **ring,** that myself I **gave** him as **guer**don.

Jameson's archaisms include the use of reflexive verbs 'Whoe'er own this hearth, here must I rest me.' (*DW* I/1); archaic lexis such as 'Far, I trow, led thee thy way; (*DW* I/2) (trow meaning believe) or 'Still ween'st thou me weaponless, craven wight?' (*DW* IIv) (ween meaning to believe); inversion such as *'Whither it led me, also I know not: fain would I learn it from thee*' (*DW* I/2) and second-person verb inflection, inversion and use of the subjunctive as in '*wendest thou hence to the west thy way'* (*DW* I/2).

Nevertheless, unlike its predecessors, Jameson's translation has stood the test of time and performance. Despite its outdated language, it remains the only translation available as a vocal score, though I doubt anyone has used in recent times in a production.

Andrew Porter (1928-2015)

Porter was a successful music critic writing for various London newspapers and *The New Yorker*. Opera and vocal music were his primary interest, and he was involved with *Opera* magazine from 1953 until his death. He translated thirty-seven operas, and his English translations of the *Ring* and *The Magic Flute* have been widely performed. He also directed several operas.

Porter's translation (Porter & Wagner, 1977) was commissioned by the then Sadler's Wells Opera company (now ENO[74]), which staged *The Valkyrie* in January 1970 (1977: xix) and the full cycle in 1973 (ibid). It was recorded live and originally published by EMI (Wagner & Goodall, 1972). Porter thought of his translation as a refinement of his predecessors' work; in the introduction to his translation he acknowledges his 'indebtedness' to the Corders, Jameson, Newman and Robb (1977: xiii). As part of the team for the Sadler's Wells production, his translation was able to benefit from revisions suggested by the performers (Holoman, 1977: 63) and a comparison of the libretto in the sleeve note for the Goodall recording of the *Ring* between 1973 and 1977 reveals the variations between the published translation and what was actually sung. Porter writes in the introduction to his published translation that he had been guided by six goals summarised below:

(1) to provide a translation that is close to the original and makes audible sense at first hearing
(2) to keep 'important' words and proper names where Wagner placed them
(3) to preserve at least some of the *Stabreim*, as an essential part of the patterning in the score's structure
(4) to echoe the sound of the German words
(5) to reflect the idioms of distinct classes of characters

[74] English National Opera

(6) to have words that fit the music closely, not simply rhythmically but also in phrasing and declamation. (1977: xvi-xvii)

Porter chose not to reflect Wagner's archaic style; he felt that it would leave the translation obscure and believed that if the aim of the translation was not to make what is being sung clearer, then the audience may as well hear it in German (1977: xvii). Grammatical inversion such as 'I know not the way that I took' (*DW* I/2) and '*So the god has pardoned me not?'* (*GD* I/3) occur on rare occasions when 'unnatural indirect English, was the only answer' (Porter, 1978:401) in order to fit the rhythm and phrasing of the music or to keep words in the position in which Wagner placed them in the music. His language is direct and modern and critics welcomed its 'ease of first-time comprehension' (Holoman, 1977: 64) and 'simple, straightforward renderings' of the German vocabulary (ibid). The absence of archaic diction was considered a 'blessed relief' (ibid).

Sometimes, Porter's preference for natural word order necessitates the sacrifice of another of his main aims, keeping important words in the same position in the music. For example:

Wagner *GD* I/3:

Zur **Schan**de zwingst du mich nicht, solang' der Ring mich be**schützt**.

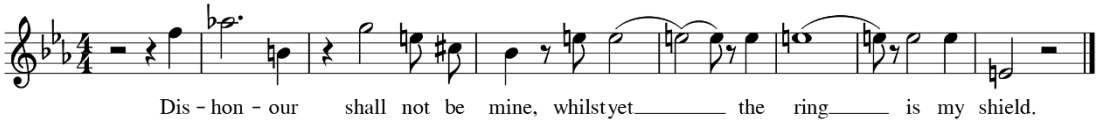
Gloss: Into disgrace you shall not force me, as long as the ring protects me.

Porter: No **man** can force me to shame, so long as this ring is my **guard**.

Schande (shame) is a central theme throughout the *Ring.* At this moment, when Brünnhilde fears she is about to be dishonoured by Siegfried, disguised as Gunther, the word 'shame' comes on the primary beat of the bar, its first syllable is placed on a long (dotted minim), high note (A flat) and, sung in C minor, the word comes out as a shriek. The remainder of the sentence after the word *Schande* is in C major, a key associated with 'simplicity and integrity' (Cicora, 1998: 21) and which, in the *Ring*, has been related to the purity of the Rhine's gold and the ring before it was cursed by Alberich. Here the C major tonality highlights the irony of the situation in which the ring fails to save Brünnhilde from potential shame. This would suggest it is quite important to place any translation of the word *Schande* on the same notes. Porter's decision to alter the theme -rheme patterning undermines the convergence of verbal and musical meaning,

something that will be discussed in Chapter 7.2. My solution keeps the idea of shame on the same notes as *Schande* even though it requires language that is not normal everyday English:

Fig. 8



In order for Porter to achieve his goal of 'audible sense at first hearing' (1977: xv) for which 'natural words in a natural order' are required (ibid) and to avoid 'affected or tortuous English' (1978: 400) he also sacrificed rhyme. Porter's translation is marked by an even lower level of rhyme than Jameson's is. As a result, it fails to 'exalt the spirits by its sonic qualities' (Holoman, 1977: 66). Porter's clear, everyday English loses some of the mysticism of Wagner's word-music intersemiosis; without the 'density' that Wagner's nexus of rhyme and musical stress provides (Robert Anderson, 1976: 1002) Porter's translation loses its 'Wagnerian' colour (ibid).

Jeremy Sams (1957-)

The most recent translation of the *Ring*, for the ENO's latest production staged in 2001-2005, is by Jeremy Sams. *Siegfried* is available to those with access to Cambridge University library, otherwise, the dramatic licensing agency, Josef Weinberger[75], will loan the entire opera tetralogy (Sams & Wagner, 2002), for a fee, to groups and societies for performance[76]. Sams, who studied music, French, and German at Magdalene College in Cambridge as well as piano at the Guildhall School of Music, is a theatre director, lyricist and translator of plays and several opera libretti, a composer, orchestrator, and musical director. Sams has won BAFTA and Ivor Novello awards and been nominated twice for a Tony Award.

The *Ring* production, for which Sams' translation was used, opened at the Coliseum in London in 2004. The production was described as 'a cross between TV

[75] https://www.josef-weinberger.com/

[76] The format is a photocopy of the Schirmer (Jameson) vocal score with Jameson's text replaced with the hand-written translation by Sams. It includes hand written musical changes as well.

soap opera and West End musical' where the gods were brought 'down to earth by installing a bath-towelled Wotan and his large, dysfunctional family in a cramped DIY council flat' (Holden, 2005). According to one critic, the production was 'clinically precise' … but it did not 'cohere logically'(Christiansen, 2005). The more the director, Phyllida Lloyd, tried to clarify and simplify, the more muddled it became because the supernatural plot elements could not be reconciled to it (ibid). One critic described it as attempting to 'hook Wagner's elemental fable to every available geopolitical issue' (Holden, 2005). Other critics were more positive, describing it as having 'perception, lucidity, and passion'(Seckerson, 2005).

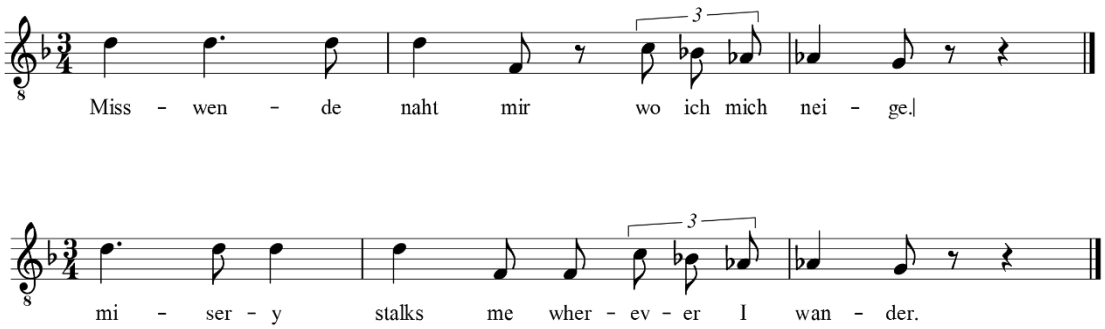
In reviews, the translation was described as 'direct, unfussy and not too colloquial' (Clements, 2001), although another reviewer disliked it colloquial language: 'What does not work is the occasional colloquialism, which will quickly date. Wagner, for instance, does not have Woglinde describe Alberich as a "horny old goat". Jeremy Sams does' (Ball, 2002). Its language was considered 'fruity', yet the reviewer concluded that this went some way to making the opera accessible and entertaining (Richardson, 2001). It was considered more idiomatic than Porter's translation, but thought to make 'less effort to mimic the sound of the German, and this matters given that Wagner took such care to fit the line of the music to the sound of the words' (Everson, 2004).

Sam's language is clear, being predominantly prose. He avoids archaic words like 'maid', preferring instead 'girl', although he uses the words 'twain', 'cleave', 'woo' and 'asunder' leading to inconsistency of register. He veers from a modern idiom to a more archaic one within a verse-line: 'My mind's in a daze, my brain's in a whirl: husband and wife from sister and brother? When was it known that siblings should cleave to each other?' (*DW* II/1). In *Twilight of the Gods*, Gunther answers Siegfried's colloquially phrased question 'd'you have a wife?' with 'I've yet to woo', which has the additional misfortune of making him sound like an owl. Sams' 'fruity' language (Richardson, 2001) also adds to the inconsistency of register; the Rhine maidens wonder in *Twilight of the Gods* (I/3), 'Is she (referring to Siegfried's wife) a scold…who'd shout at you? Would the hero get a spanking?' Another key feature of Sams' language is his use of clichés like 'I'm sound as a bell', 'many wanted him dead', 'the song in my heart', you…my beloved…my sun, and my moon and my

starlight’ and ‘now I’m wise to the ways of the world’. These set him apart from Porter and Jameson, undermine the mythic nature of the opera and seem out of place given the serious themes and ideas explored by Wagner.

Sams’ translation differs most from Jameson’s and Porter’s in its looser adherence to Wagner’s music; he makes frequent and sometimes significant alterations to the configuration and values of the notes to suit his words. Sams explains this in the following terms: ‘taboos’ about the sacrosanctity of the music ‘are being shifted’ and since ‘the shape of the music is predicted by the words’, changes to the words make changes to the notes ‘justified’ (Sams & Johnston, 1996: 178). Sams’ musical alterations go beyond the discreet splitting or tying of notes, breaking or forming melismas or omission or addition of notes. He alters note values and regularly ignores rests using them for additional syllables in his translation:

Fig. 9



Sams goes much farther with adaptation than Porter or Jameson. According to him, the translator of operas cannot mirror the original text in a different language; this he calls a ‘fool’s paradise’, instead he must take a ‘more creative view of translation’ (Sams & Johnston, 1996: 176) and ‘take the back-bone’ of the original libretto and ‘translate not the words but what caused the words to be written’. The translator may have to ‘re-invent entirely’ (ibid 176-177). This is what Sams does in this example, abandoning cryptic references to snake eyes and instead going to what he thinks the metaphor really means:

Wagner (*DW* I/2)

Wie **gleicht** er dem **Weib**e!
Der **gleiss**ende **Wurm**
glänzt auch ihm aus dem Auge.

Jameson	Porter
How like to the woman!	He looks like my wife there!
The **ser**pent's de**ceit**	A glittering **snake**
glistens, too, in his glances.	**seems** to shine in their glances.

Sams	My translation
He's her spitting **im**age	How **great** is their **like**ness!
the **same** cunning **eyes**,	A **glist**ening snake
[the] **same** shifty expression.	**glimm**ers bright in his glances.

Sams and Jameson are over-interpreting Wagner by associating deceit with snakes. The association between the snake and deception comes from Christian beliefs and symbolism whereas in Norse mythology the reference to snakes in the eyes refers to dragon slayers, in other words the Volsung family (Siegmund and Sieglinde) that engendered Siegfried the dragon-slayer (Sabor, 1997: 32).

I chose to only analyse and compare the singing translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams for several reasons. Firstly, there seemed little point in comparing reading translations since the subject of my thesis is singable translation. Secondly, to analyse and compare more than three would soon have become unwieldy. One of the chief reasons for choosing these translations, however, is that they offer a diachronic view of *Ring* translations since Wagner's time to the present. Another reason is that they are all still currently in use in some way. Jameson's translation is the only one still in print as a vocal score and very likely used as a starting place for understanding the German by English-speaking singers studying the *Ring* for a performance in German. Porter's translation is still in print, has been used extensively in performance both in the UK and abroad, and is frequently used by many Wagner scholars who quote from it. Sams translation is of interest for its relative newness (2002), its lack of deference to Wagner's original and because it could potentially be used at any time in a future production.

5.4 The aims and objectives of my translation

Unlike Jameson, Porter and Sams, I did not translate the *Ring* for a specific production and my translation brief was my own, for the purpose of this thesis. My primary aim was to create a translation that could be sung in performance. I knew at the

outset that the likelihood of it ever being sung was remote, but I relished the challenge. My second major objective was to create a translation that could be described as imitative of Wagner's alliterative verse but not so much as to be awkward and unintelligible. Even if only ever used as a reading libretto, my translation could serve the needs of Wagnerian or translation scholars and be an aid to non-German speaking singers preparing for performance. Unlike many poetic translations of opera, my translation is not a paraphrase, but a close translation keeping words and lines largely in the same position as the original.

The audience for whom the translation is intended comprises firstly, singers, conductors and stage directors involved in the performance of opera in English translation and secondly, an English speaking audience. I place the production team above the eventual public simply because they are the people who will study it and provide the audience with their interpretation of Wagner's opera. In writing initially for singers and the director, I assume a certain knowledge of Wagner's work and appreciation of his style, even if their production departs, as many original language productions do, from an historical interpretation. As far as an eventual public audience is concerned, I had in mind the heterogeneous audiences that attend festival productions and performances by provincial professional companies. I did not wish to narrow the translation's appeal and possible application by tailoring it to a more narrow audience, such as amateur operatic companies, performing for audiences with little experience or knowledge of Wagner or the *Ring*. Had I done so, however, I would have had different objectives and produced a very different translation focussed primarily on the story and its emotions rather than being concerned about its style and use of language. Entertainment would rank above artistic value.

In addition to my primary aim of producing a singable translation, the following specific translation aims guided my work:

1. To provide a modern English translation that is as close to the original as possible with no thoughts of adapting the text or tailoring it to a specific audience or any other production goals. Closeness and accuracy are subjective criteria, dependent on understanding and interpretation, therefore, I relied on close study of the operas and

the comparison of translations and performances[77]. I judged equivalence in terms of the combined semantics of music and verse in relation to the dramatic action on stage.

2. To closely fit the prosody of the words to the prosody of the music and match phrasing and declamation.
3. To preserve the convergence of musical and verbal meaning in content and form. This means that, unlike all translations since that of the Corders (1882), my translation sought to preserve the alliterative verse, not as decoration but as a structural component both in musical and semantic terms. Chapter 6.2 provides more detail with regard to my decision to prioritize alliterative rhyme.
4. To preserve the idiom of the characters and the overall diction and style of the original whose basis is in Old Norse poetry (*The Eddas*). This would mean making the language as fluent and natural as possible without making it the easy idiom of everyday speech. Wagner's language requires work to comprehend at times, even for a native speaker. As one German singer who played one of the Rhinemaidens admitted, one has to effectively translate Wagner's German into ordinary language to find out what it means (Prüwer, 2014). Whilst my general aim was to avoid unnatural and awkward syntax, the temptations of archaic inversion and difficult or obsolete vocabulary, I did not rule them out if the requirements of the music or musico-poetic convergence provided a greater imperative and if the music or the dramatic action served to mitigate any potential denseness. I did not rule out the use of unusual vocabulary where the character's idiom warranted it and where some hermeneutic endeavour would be a lesser evil than compromising musical meaning and dramatic interpretation. I did not set out to avoid ambiguity if I felt it was part of the intention of the original and I generally planned to avoid explicitation. If a meaning was cryptic in Wagner's libretto, I intended to leave it that way, on the basis that just as performers and directors would work at the German text, so too would they work at the English. This is not to say that I intended to create comprehension difficulties for the audience, but the translator, like the librettist, has

[77] Centenary Bayreuth *Ring* directed by Patrice Chereau, musical director Pierre Boulez (1976). Barenboim Bayreuth *Ring* directed by Harry Kupfer, musical director Daniel Barenboim (1992). Copenhagen *Ring* directed by Kasper Bech Holten, musical director, Michael Schonwandt (2006). Lepage *Ring* staged at the Met in New York, directed by Robert Lepage with musical director James Levine (2012). Opera North semi-staged concert version (2013).

to rely on the singer working out the verbal meaning in order to communicate it to the audience using tone colour, gesture, facial expression and movement.

5. To avoid altering the arrangement of the lines of verse, not only to preserve the convergence of musical and verbal meaning but also to assist those using the translation for purposes of comprehending the original text, for example, singers singing the original text but needing to know the meaning of every word.

My translation, though markedly different to those of Jameson, Porter and Sams with regard to retaining the alliterative verse (the subject of Chapter 6.2) and the intersemiosis between words and music (as will be shown in Chapter 6.3), nevertheless, owes them a debt of gratitude.

6. Analysis and Comparison: Modal Integration

This chapter examines my translation and those of Jameson, Porter and Sams within the framework of modes and sub-modes described in Chapter 4. Through comparative analysis it seeks to explain how Wagner's stylistic choices produced a convergence of musical and poetic prosody, alliterative verse and verbal and musical meaning and how the translators have chosen to preserve it or not. It focusses first on the sub-modes prosody and rhyme, and then, using Wagner's own aesthetics, considers the semantic potential of music and its relationship to the libretto. Finally, it looks at some examples of the sort of vocal production challenges that can arise during translation. Although it is artificial to single out and discuss each mode or sub-mode separately, since the meaning of the opera relies on the integration of all its parts, doing so facilitates the heuristic purpose of this thesis.

6.1 Modal convergence: poetic and musical prosody

In Chapter 4.1, I discussed how most translators of vocal music consider it a basic norm that the words of a translation intended for singing should create for the singer and audience the illusion that the words are those that the composer set (Kerman, 1964: 152). According to this requirement, linguistic stress and musical stress must be synchronised to preserve the rhythm of the music and unity of the musical phrase. This is essential at a pragmatic level for without it the translation could not be sung to the music but more than this, rhythm is intrinsic to meaning making in words and music: short, fast notes speak of something different to long, slow ones. In what follows the focus is the pragmatic necessity for prosodic convergence but the way in which musical rhythm contributes to the meaning of words will be part of the discussion in Chapter 6.3.

At the technical level, prosodic match between music and words requires that translators avoid 'false stresses' (Low, 2008: 14) that risk destroying both obvious and subtle meanings. The primary demand on the translator is 'to find words that fit the music closely' (Porter, 1977: xvi). The quantity, weight and length of syllables must fit the quantity, accent and duration of the notes. It is not simply the stress patterns of individual words that matter, as Gorlée says, the correspondence of melodic design,

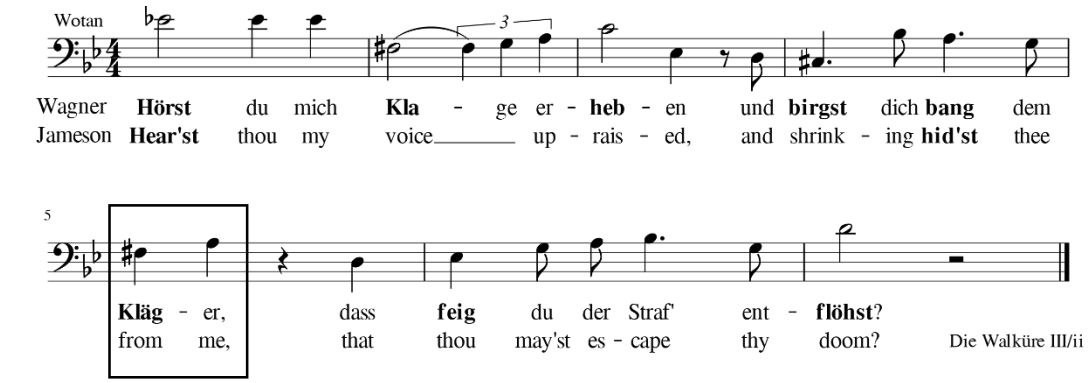
climaxes, and caesuras with natural declamation and key words cannot be ignored (1997: 247) and the prosody of the musical phrase, which concerns how musical accents have been grouped, also requires attention (Stein, 1971: 71). In order to achieve this criterion, Porter at least, was ready to admit that he was prepared to ignore 'all other imperatives' (ibid).

Although prosodic fit between words and music is a technical or mechanistic aspect of vocal translation, it affects every other translation decision and so it earns a place in the analysis and comparison of the *Ring* translations. The choices made by the translators demonstrate the overwhelming imperative of prosodic match between words and music and reveal what the translators were willing to sacrifice for its sake. They also reveal why, in some cases, they were willing to settle for a less than perfect match.

6.1.1 Problems of syllabic weight

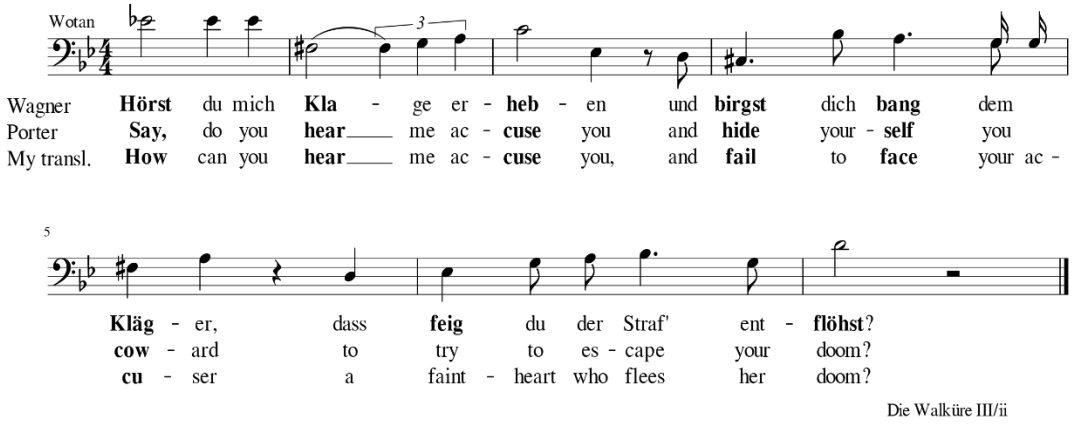
Incorrect weight or stress within words or phrases in the translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams is very rare; they were musicians and experienced opera translators, who undoubtedly had feedback from the performers and production teams for whom they produced the translations that helped to identify and resolve issues. However, some questionable prosodic matches arise because Jameson, Porter and Sams, in choosing not to reproduce alliterative rhymes, sometimes either fail to note or choose to ignore the convergence of a rhyme word with a musical accent. Wagner's rhyme words, following the rules of alliterative verse, are mainly content words, such as verbs, nouns, adjectives and adverbs, which in a phrase carry the main stresses and have, therefore, determined the musical accents. When Jameson, Porter and Sams ignore the structural role of rhyme and replace content words with function words such as pronouns, auxiliary verbs or prepositions, which are normally unstressed elements of speech, unless stressed for rhetorical emphasis, they create prosodic anomalies. In the following example, the first beat of a bar is too strong, accentually speaking, to carry the functional word 'from' and it is difficult to believe that Jameson was accentuating the preposition for rhetorical purposes:

Fig. 10



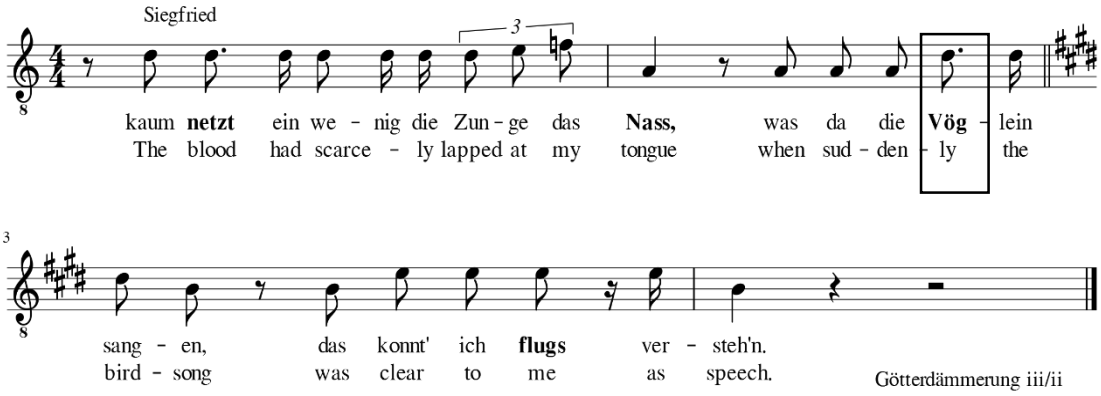
Had rhyme been his priority, a content word appropriate to the musical stress would have more likely been chosen, as in Porter's and my translation (though both of us alter the rhyme scheme):

Fig. 11



Some false accentuations, however, seem only explicable as oversights. In this example from Sams' translation, the final unstressed syllable of 'suddenly' is falsely stressed not only by the rhythm but also by its pitch:

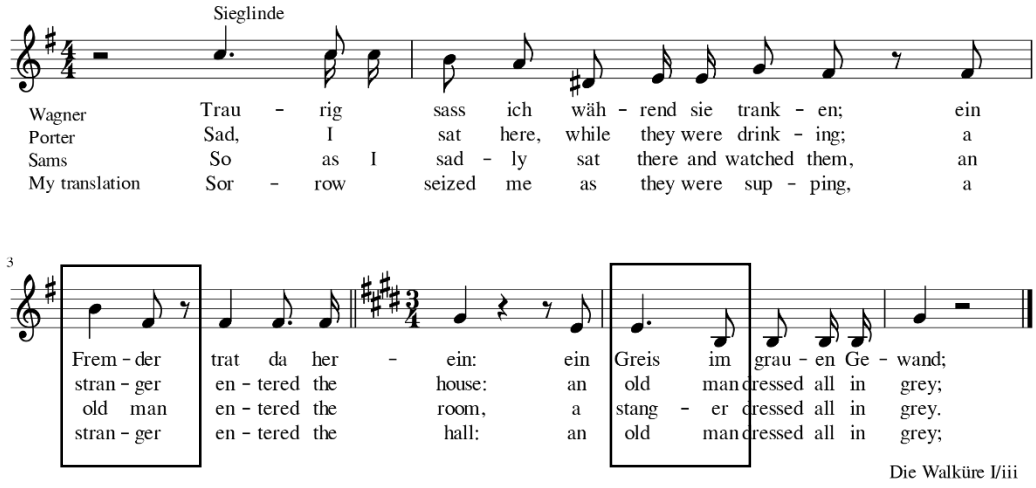
Fig. 12



6.1.2 Problems of syllabic length

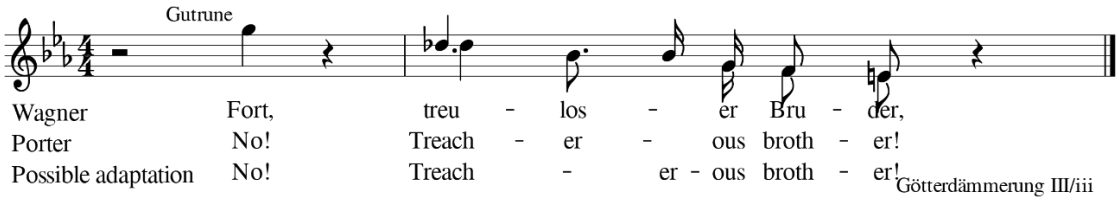
Syllable length or burden concerns the length of the syllable and how much time it takes to enunciate. The length of the vowel must match the length of the note (s) on which it is set if the text is to be singable, natural sounding and comprehensible. Again, mismatches are rare in the translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams and where they do occur, it is seldom through oversight but because the alternatives are worse. For example, in *DW* (I/3), Sieglinde describes how an unknown, old man dressed in grey came to her wedding and left a sword in the tree. The translators could have omitted the information about his age or about his grey clothing and achieved a good fit between syllabic weight and note duration. However, the significance of the man being a stranger, old and dressed in grey has been deemed so important by all the translators (and rightly so) that an incorrect syllable weight has been accepted for the sake of their inclusion. Faced with few other ways of translating *Greis* other than with two monosyllabic words, ‘old man’, they had the problem that the words 'old man' require equal stress and that the music does not offer this. When Jameson, Porter and I translate ‘ein Greis im grauen Gewand’ as ‘an old man dressed all in grey’, the word ‘man’ falls on a quaver, the weakest accent in this particular bar, which in the original score accommodates the lightly accented and short preposition *im* (in). As the word ‘old’ is set on a dotted crochet, it makes ‘man’ sound unnaturally short and lightly stressed, although the slow tempo mitigates the problem slightly allowing ‘man’ to be sung for just long enough to sound acceptable. Sams’ use of ‘stranger’ is a better fit for the accentual pattern of the music, but this means that Sams’ moves the location of *Greis* /‘old man’ to the notes in the previous musical phrase occupied originally by *Fremde* (stranger). However, the rhythm and musical intonation do not match ‘old man’ as it is spoken for both words of ‘old man’ are intoned at the same pitch with either an equal accent on both words or on ‘man’ only. The descending perfect fourth interval emphasises ‘old’ more than ‘man’:

Fig. 13



In the following example, semantic accuracy and syllabic quantity probably account for Porter's choice of 'treacherous' with its incorrect weight on the middle syllable. In normal speech, the second syllable is very quick and light, but if sung to the music to which Wagner set *treuloser,* it becomes abnormally lengthened. It is likely that the singer would adjust the rhythm to fit the English word since nothing in the accompaniment prohibits this:

Fig.14



Sams made a similar choice with 'murderous brother', whilst Jameson overcame the problem through repetition: 'Hence, hence faithless brother'. I solved the problem with 'Go, base-hearted brother' that provides two equally weighted syllables for the first two notes followed by a third stressed syllable for the dotted quaver.

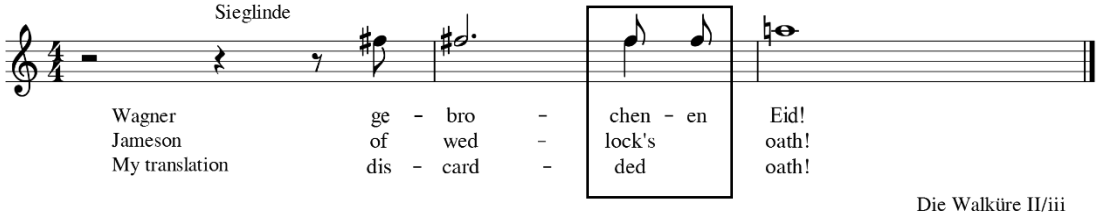
6.1.3 Changes to syllabic quantity and alterations to the score

In order to create a semantically close translation in English, the translator sometimes finds it necessary to use more or fewer syllables than the ST. This is particularly necessitated when translating from German to English because German as

an inflected language has many more words of multiple syllables. To accommodate an additional syllable or its absence, minor adjustments can be made to the music that are usually acceptable to the singer, musical director, or publisher.[78] All the translations take advantage of such alterations, though one might argue that Sams' translation goes beyond the relatively unnoticeable splitting or tying of a note here and there and has by far the most alterations.

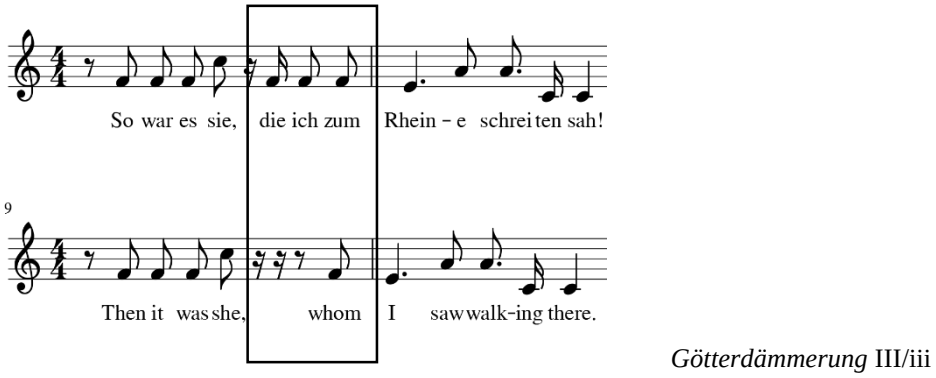
When there are fewer syllables in the translation than the ST, in order to maintain a rhythmic fit to the music, something has to be done with the surplus notes, so they are often combined, omitted or a syllable is spread across two or more notes in a melisma. As this example shows, the deficit of one syllable in the translation can be dealt with by combing two quavers to form a crochet:

Fig. 15



It is sometimes possible to omit a note or notes discreetly, as Porter does when his translation has a deficit of two syllables compared to the ST:

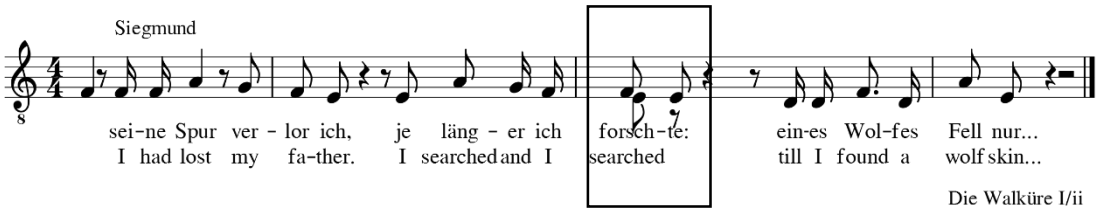
Fig. 16



or as Sams does here:

[78] Some publishers, like Ricordi, do not allow this because they use the same music template setting for all translations (Apter & Herman, 2016: 22).

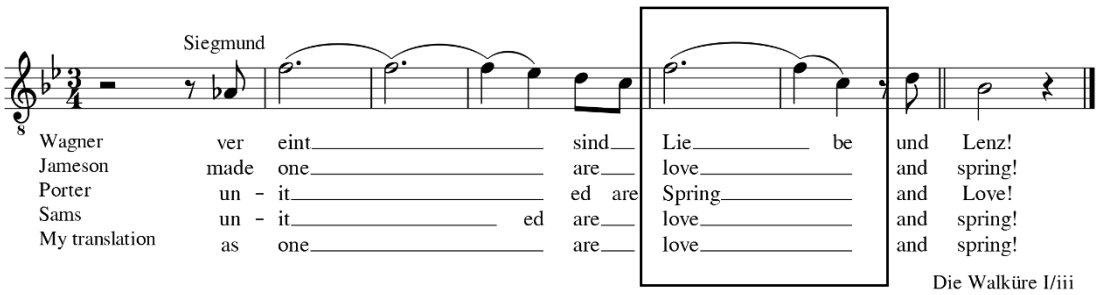
Fig. 17



Creating melismatic phrases to accommodate fewer syllables than the ST is the most common alteration to the music in all the translations. Melismatic is the opposite of syllabic, where each note is sung to a different syllable, instead one syllable of text is sung to a group of notes. Melismatic phrasing can be a hindrance to comprehension because melisma seamlessly joins each constituent note to the preceding and/or subsequent one, producing a legato sound, so that within the duration of one spoken syllable a change in pitch occurs. The most melismatic music appears in *GD*, which Wagner wrote before he had fully developed his theory of word-tone synthesis, whilst *Rheingold*, written at the point when he had completed *O&D*, is characterised by a declamatory style in which syllable and note are matched one to one. In much of Wagner's *Ring*, the syllabic setting of the vocal lines is part of his effort to ensure the audibility of the words and other than in *GD*, long melismas are rare.

Changes within melismatic phrases (especially two note melismas) are the least noticeable changes to the music because the listener still hears the same notes, only the 'verbal underlay' is changed (Apter & Herman, 2016: 17). In the following example the word 'love' (or 'Spring' in Porter's case) has been extended over an additional note in all the translations:

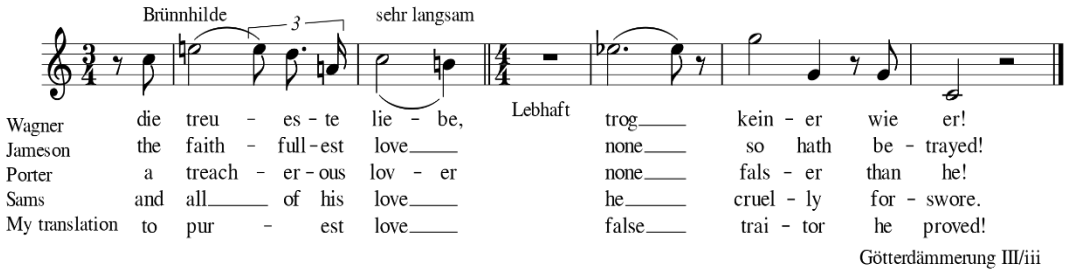
Fig. 18



Certain key words in the *Ring*, such as *Liebe*, are di-syllabic and their direct and sometimes only appropriate equivalent in English is a monosyllabic word such as

‘love’. In some cases, the translator can find a synonym to fit the syllabic requirements or move the word to a different position in the musical phrase, but sometimes, for musical or dramatic reasons, the music demands that the word be located in the same place as the original and so a melismatic setting is the only option. In the following example, all the translators made a melisma out of the two notes to which *Liebe* is set with the exception of Porter who chose not to translate the source text but replace Wagner’s meaning with something different, though coherent with the rest of the text:

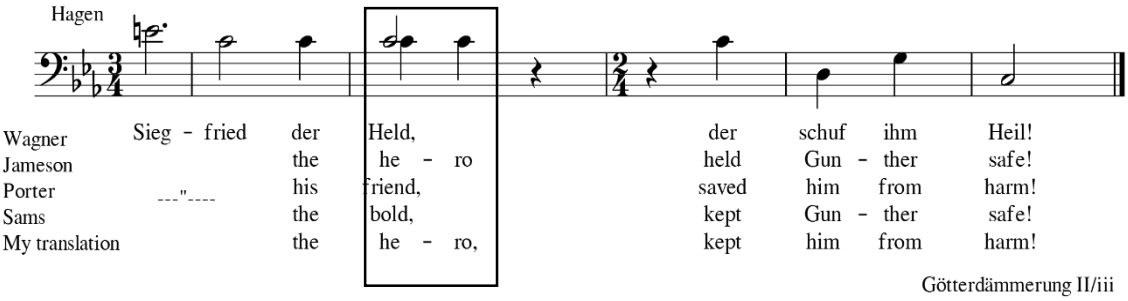
Fig. 19



When the translation has more syllables than the source text, then notes must be added in some way and this can be achieved by dividing notes, adding notes (replacing rests with notes) and using the notes of a melisma to which Wagner set no syllables. There are certain key monosyllabic words in the *Ring* like *Held* whose only translation, ‘hero’, has more than one syllable. When *Held* must be translated because alternatives such as changing the word order or choosing as synonym like ‘man’ or ‘friend’ are not appropriate, the translator may be able to split the note on which the monosyllabic word is set.

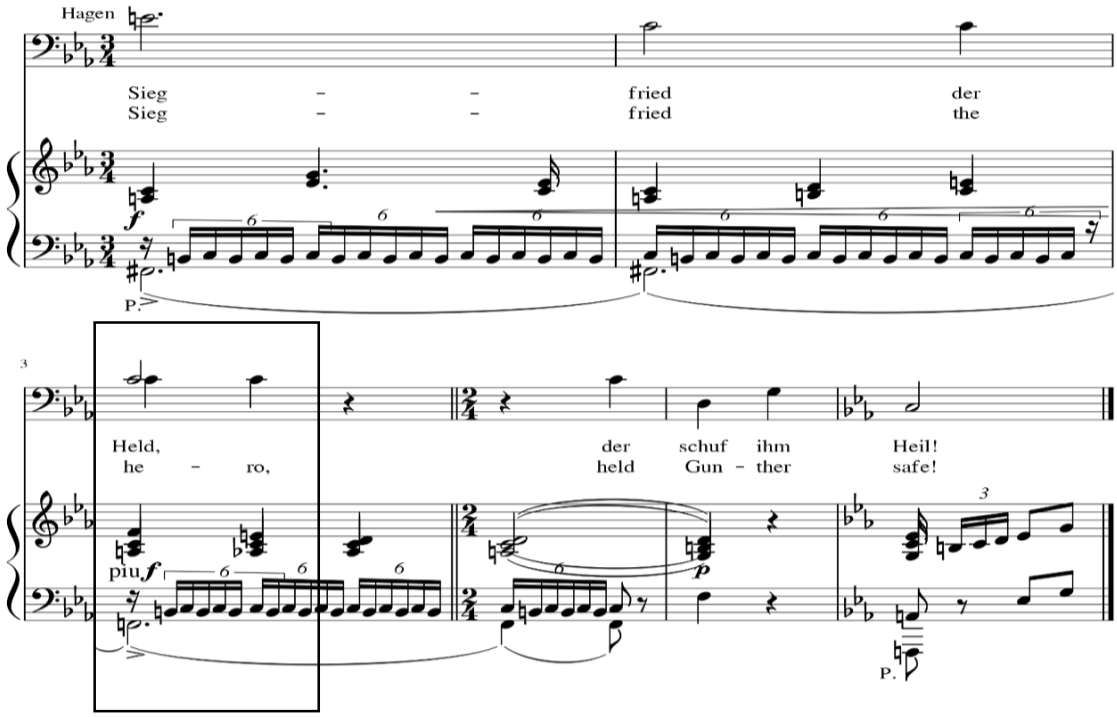
In the following example from *GD* II/3 (Fig. 20), Jameson and I take this approach because of the importance of the word in this specific context. This is the only mention of Siegfried as a ‘hero’, and this nomenclature is given to him with great irony: the audience knows from previous information that whilst Hagen is praising Siegfried he is also planning to kill him to retrieve the ring for himself:

Fig. 20



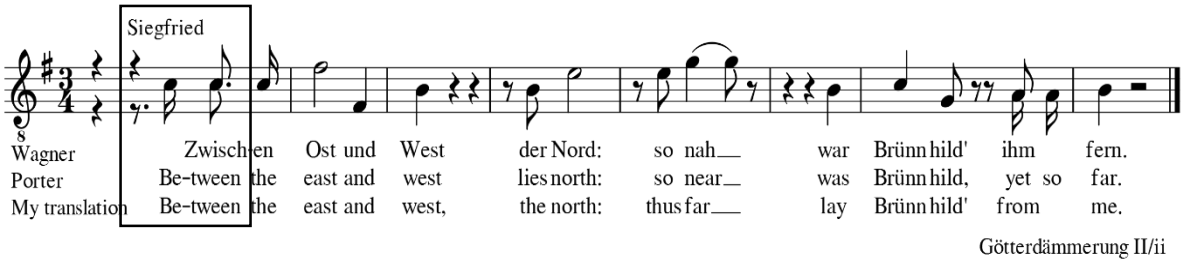
When undertaking such musical alterations, however, it is always well to check what the orchestra is doing; nothing in the accompaniment of this section contradicts changing the minim to two crochets, in fact, it supports doing so:

Fig. 21



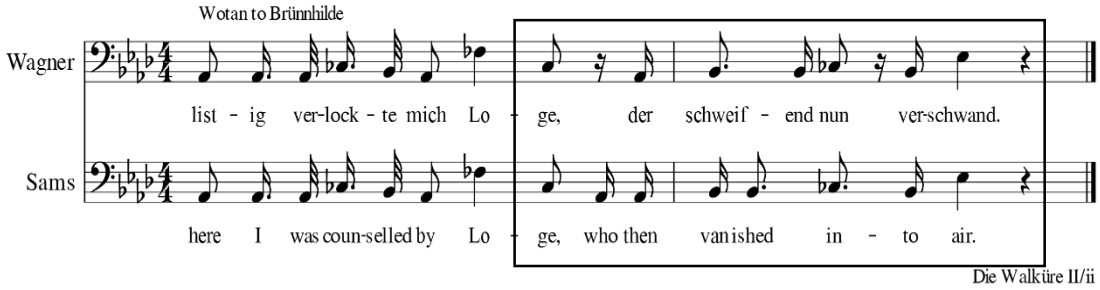
In order to add notes, rests can be used; in doing so, one has to consider the loss of breathing points and the alteration to phrasing. Composers do not include rests for no reason but their loss can often be imperceptible to the audience and tolerable for the performer. In *GD* II/2, Porter and I chose to add a note by stealing the value of a semi-quaver from the preceding crochet rest, which makes little perceptible change to the music:

Fig. 22



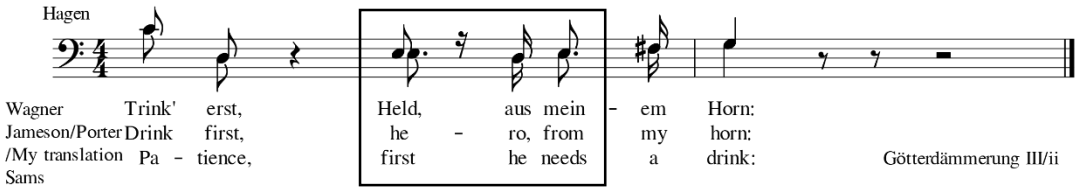
Whilst the use of rests for additional notes is very judiciously used by Jameson, Porter and myself, Sams has few qualms about effectively changing Wagner's melody and altering nuances of meaning, which the use of rests afforded Wagner's original score. In this example, Wotan's halting declamation is replaced by smooth declamation:

Fig. 23



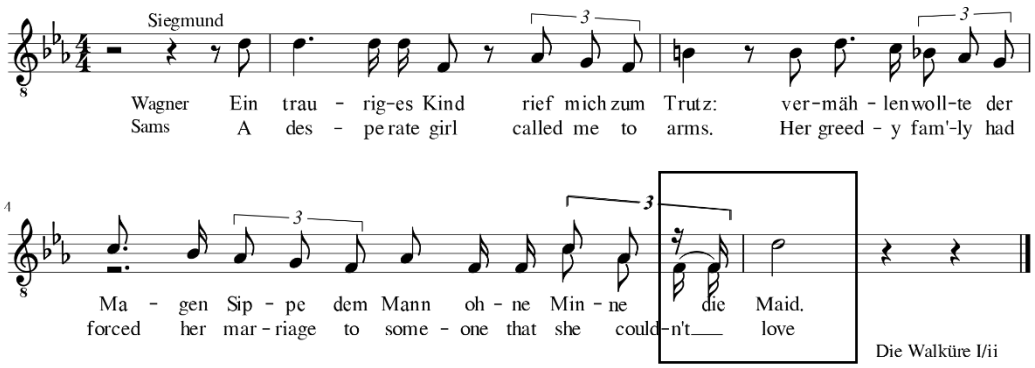
In the next example, Hagen's emphatic tone as he offers Siegfried a drink is lost when Sams removes the rests in order to facilitate the use of the disyllabic 'hero':

Fig. 24



Sometimes, the rests are required by Wagner's word order, so a translation that alters this loses nothing by losing the rest. The semi-quaver rest at the end of the phrase in the following example serves to emphasise 'die Maid', the object of the phrase, but Sams' translation replaces this with a verb and because the rest is so short and almost imperceptible to the ear, its loss is hardly noticeable:

Fig. 25



Adding words by using the notes of a melisma can alter the sound of the melody. A *legato* phrase, full of emotion and passion, may be made to sound short and sharp by the translation and the compromise between syllable count and notes may affect the meaning achieved through musical and textual convergence. The translator has to weigh up any loss in musical terms against the possible gains in clarity of meaning or naturalness of speech. Whether a change is considered unnoticeable is somewhat subjective; the translator and musical director may not agree on this point. The following are examples of the sort of small changes to two note melismas that might go unnoticed:

Fig. 26

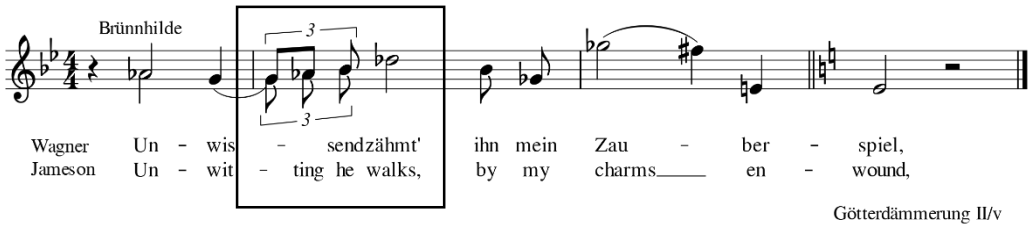


Fig. 27

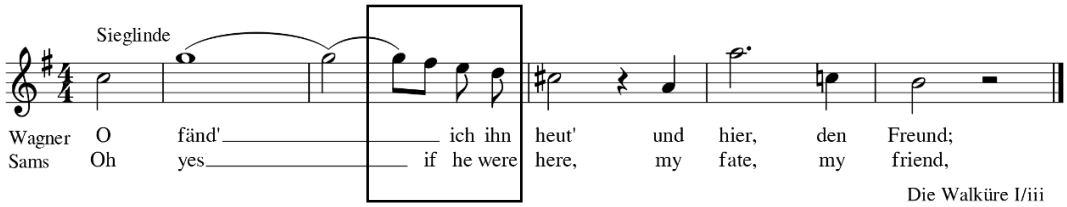
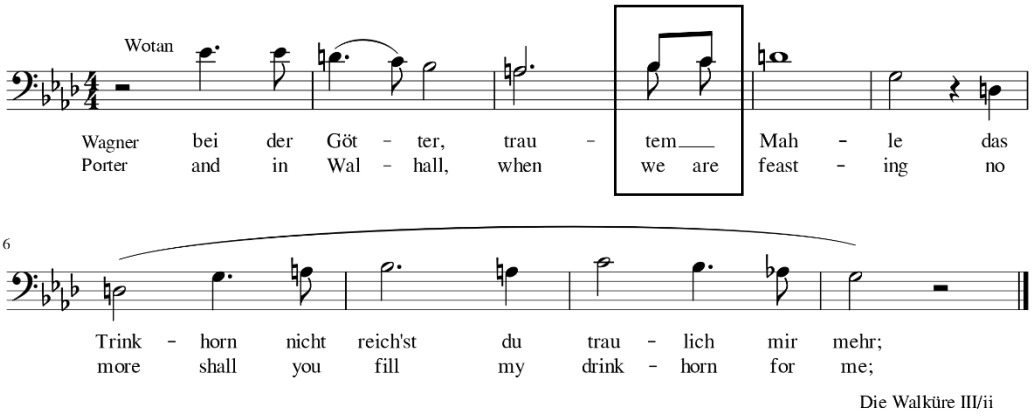
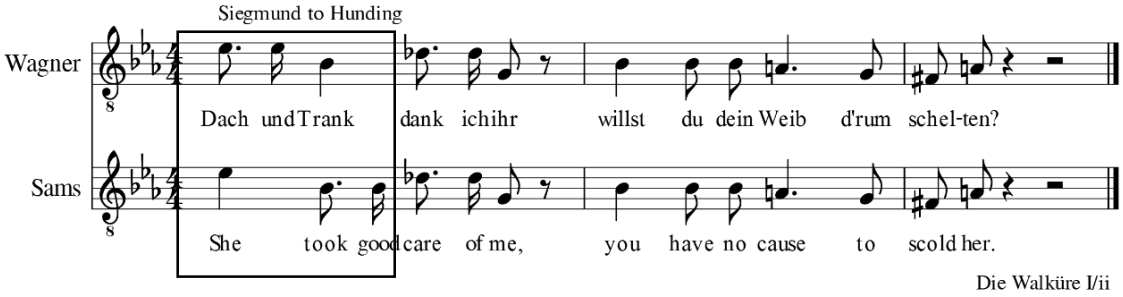


Fig. 28



Sams translation could be said to be the least faithful to Wagner's score, which is not surprising given that Sams believes that opera should be translated into 'a living language' and that the translator should 'cut back into the tree and re-graft' (Sams & Johnston, 1996: 177). According to Sams, the translator is justified in changing the music because the music of an opera is 'predicted by the words' such that a change to the words justifies a change to the notes (ibid: 178). The following example shows the way in which he is willing to make changes over and above those outlined above:

Fig. 29



in a single half bar, he both joins two notes when he replaces 'Dach und' with 'she' and splits another note to replace 'Trank' with 'took good'.

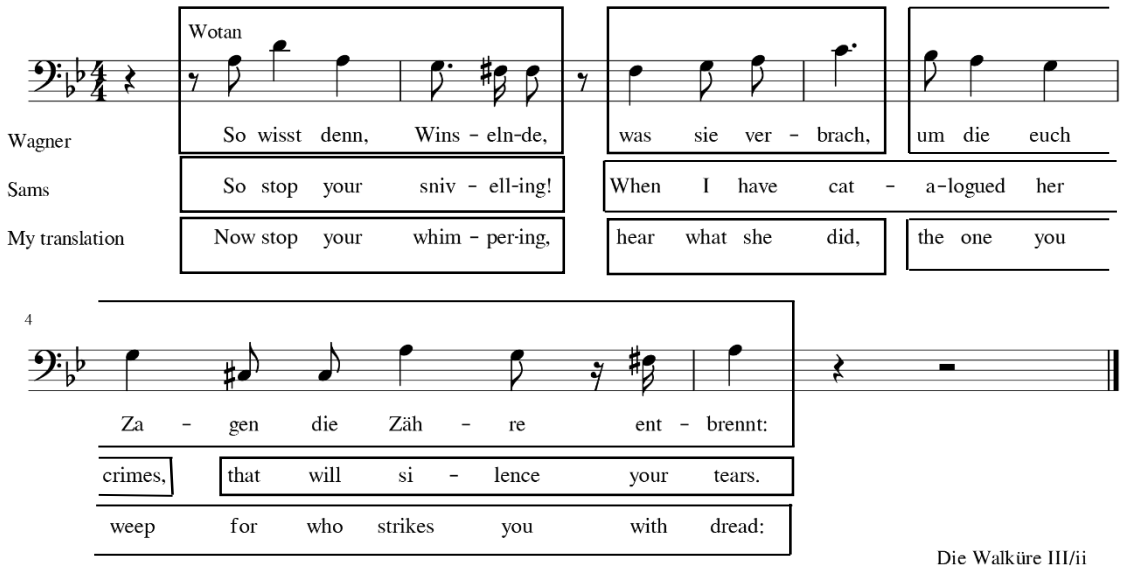
6.1.4 Phrasing

When musical phrasing is closely knit with verbal phrasing, as it is in the *Ring*, a special onus is placed on the translator to avoid any violation of the phrase when changing the language. Aberrations against phrasing displace the 'natural breaks' in the music (Porter, 1978: 401) that contribute towards the sense of the words and destroy the correspondence between verbal and musical 'sentence accent' (Stein, 1971: 71). In

Porter's opinion, the translator who serves the singer best is one who adheres to the same phrasing as in the original score and thereby avoids the 're-breathing, re-phrasing, remoulding of Wagner's music' (1978: 401). Reproducing the same speech intonation and emphasis of key words as the ST within the structure of the phrase is the most assured way of avoiding any disturbance of musical logic and preserving the relationship between word and tone found in the original phrasing (Honolka, 1978: 32). Since phrasing is more than rests, pauses and cadences and includes pitch movement (high/ low), intervallic distance, and dynamics the intonation and shape of the translated verbal phrase must be governed by these as well. In the case of Wagner's *Ring*, the basis of phrase structure is alliterative verse and its associated accents, governed by what could be said in one breath.

Jameson and Porter's translations indicate a strong adherence to Wagner's original phrasing. Mine also closely follows Wagner's phrasing, partly because reproducing the alliterative verse naturally dovetails with it but also because it became evident quite early in my translation process that doing so would avoid mismatches between verbal and musical intonation and, therefore, meaning. In all three translations, there are only a few minor digressions, which seem to make no discernible difference to the meaning of the phrase. In Sams' translation, however, though still rare, alteration to the phrasing is more discernible.

Fig. 30

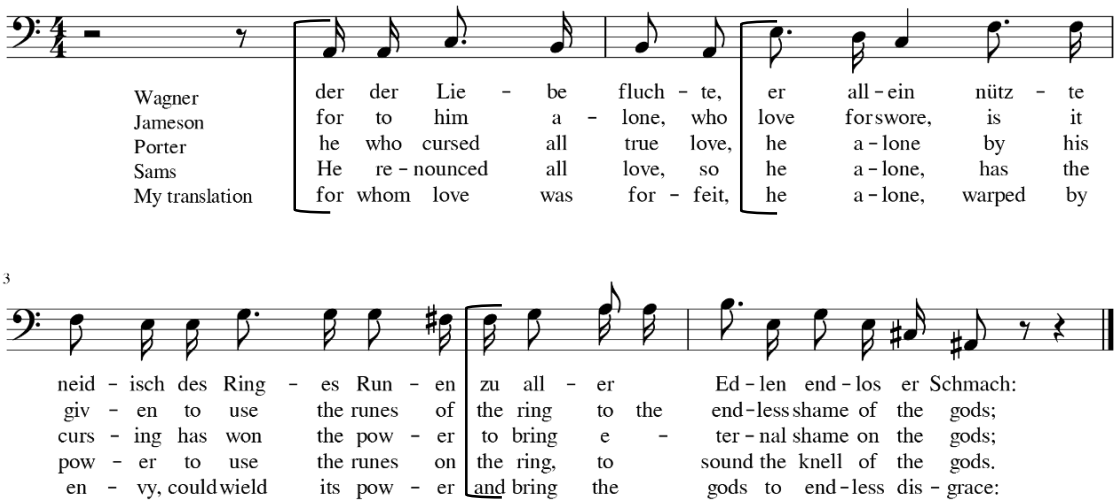


In the Figure 31, Sams' decision to ignore Wagner's phrasing can be clearly seen in the second and third phrase (each phrase is indicated by the boxes). The organisation of Wagner's verbal phrase highlights the word *verbrach* (committed) and is matched by a musical phrase whose steady scalar rise to the high pitch of A and setting of the root syllable *-brach* on the downbeat of the bar suggest anger. The phrasing emphasises Wotan's anger at Brünnhilde's disobedience; she tried to save Siegmund against Wotan's express orders, an act that lies at the heart of the tragedy of the *Ring*, as her punishment leads to her meeting Siegfried and their relationship eventually brings about Siegfried's death followed by the downfall of the gods.

The sentiment of the word 'catalogued' seems neither appropriate to the rising anger of the music nor deserving of the emphasis given by the shape of the music. More than this, Sams ignores the absence of a cadence when he makes of Wagner's phrase a sentence with a full stop, whilst Wagner seems to suggest that Wotan is in the grip of an uncontrollable anger that knows no end.

In the following example, both Jameson and Sams ignore Wagner's musical punctuation, rise and fall of intonation and natural breathing points, which leads to a divergence between the emotional intent of the music and the sense of the words. The alteration, albeit slight, to the phrasing undermines the smooth rising intensity suggested by the musical patterning and its natural association with the meaning and emotion of the text:

Fig. 31



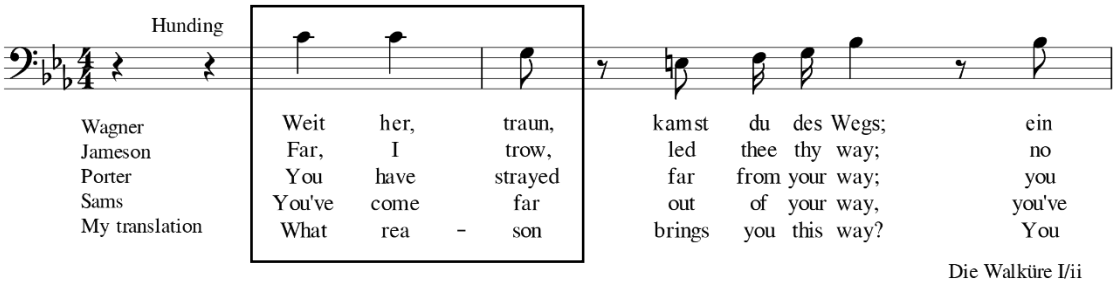
Jameson and Sams may have altered the phrasing because of the difficulties the English translator always has with words that end in a light final syllable (*fluchte, Runen*). It was easier to alter the phrasing than find a two-syllable word with a light second syllable.

6.1.5 Intonation

For a translation to be truly singable, it must go beyond the rhythmic elements of syllable count and stress and their relationship to musical phrasing and include some attention to matching the intonation of the phrase as it is spoken. Wagner transferred spoken and poetic intonation to the music, making intonation far more expansive than in normal speech. He wanted his singers to use the music, just as one would use the inflections of the voice in speaking, to bring out the meaning of the words. The intonation within alliterative verse is determined by word and sentence accent as opposed to poetic metre. Different word types have different weights within a sentence; verbs and nouns carry more accent than pronouns, for example. Whilst the level of stress given to a word can vary in intonation from reader to reader when read, there is no such latitude for variation once set to music. Music fixes the relative intonations of each word. Wagner fixes the declamation he intended for his words in such aspects of the music as tempo, articulation, dynamics, phrasing, intervallic tension and pitch.

The use of varying pitch is the most noticeable way in which intonation is fixed by the music. The following example shows how difficult it is to a find a semantic equivalent to the text as well as juggle with prosody, phrasing and intonation when the phrase is extremely short, as in ‘Weit her traun’:

Fig. 32



Wagner's music emphasises the equal accent of the two words, 'Weit her' (a long way) and this combination of words and music says much about the character of Hunding who has just made his entrance for the first time. It is heavy, bombastic and a little threatening, just like him. It is difficult to replicate in English where consecutive stresses are unusual; more common are alternating stress patterns. The translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams do not fit the music accentually, they sound unnatural; the second word does not carry the same weight as the music but more importantly, the three words of each translation do not have the same intonation as the music. What are needed are two syllables of equal pitch followed by one on a falling pitch. Sams found two words that have equal accent in 'You've come', but the falling intonation on 'far' is not natural and it would be better if 'far' were on a longer note at a higher pitch than the first two words. My translation provides two equal stressed syllables and a light one to follow that has the falling intonation of the augmented fourth interval in the music. The sacrifice I had to make was semantic; my words do not translate the original although they are coherent with what has been said and what will be said next.

Jameson, Porter and Sams' translations show very few mismatches of verbal and musical accent or discrepancies between syllabic weight and note duration. The most frequent challenge has been matching syllabic count and the necessity to add or subtract a syllable for semantic reasons or to create a natural sounding translation. They also show a strong adherence to Wagner's original phrasing and take care to imitate the declamatory force of the verbal phrase as expressed in the music. My translation also follows the phrasing closely and avoids mismatches between verbal and musical intonation, which I attribute in some part to the reproduction of alliterative verse. This sub-chapter also demonstrates how when translating Wagner's libretto, the mechanical fit between verbal and musical prosody is not the only concern of the translator but also the intrinsic meaning associated with the prosody of the phrase, what Stein calls 'sentence accent' (1971: 71), which raises the importance of phrasing and intonation.

6.2 *Stabreim*: convergence of rhyme and prosody

Any attempt to reproduce the convergence of rhyme, verbal intonation and musical stress in a libretto translation imposes constraints on the syntax and other linguistic patterns that can endanger its fluency and produce a 'clumsiness and klunkiness' (Low, 2017: 88) that potentially alienates contemporary ears. Based on contemporary reviews, in the case of Jameson, and on Porter and Sams' own writings or interviews, it appears to be the case that these translators abandoned any emulation of Wagner's alliterative verse for these reasons, settling for alliteration only where it might naturally be worked into the translation: ornamentally rather than structurally.

In my translation, the structural replication of alliterative verse (where rhymes coincide with the accents and relate to one another semantically) was prioritised for reasons I shall come to later in this chapter, but inevitably, it was not always possible to marry modern English to Wagner's alliterative verse form if the translation was to read fluently. Many verse-lines in my translation have no alliteration at all because musical needs (rhythmic fit and phrasing), semantic demands or ease of comprehension took precedence. The translation process was a continual struggle between content and form, between translating words and preserving the style of the original text that had contributed to their meaning. In this chapter, I explore the challenges of reproducing alliterative rhyme, how the translators, including myself, negotiated them and whether altering Wagner's poetic expression negatively influences the effect on the mind and on the senses.

6.2.1 *Stabreim's stylistic importance to Wagner*

The irregularity of accented and unaccented syllables in *Stabreim* compared to the regular metrics of traditional libretto verse, the semantic relationship between alliterating words and the concision of *Stabreim* were essential to Wagner's creative method and the source of an important change in his style. It led him to suspend the classical norms of musical syntax and develop motivic form as the musical framework of his operas (Dahlhaus, 1979: 107-108). In sub-chapters 2.3 and 2.4, I highlighted Wagner's theory regarding his choice of *Stabreim* as a verse form whose sound relationships carry immanent meaning (Trippett, 2013: 328), which when combined

with melody, produces a sensually perceptible expression of feeling that Wagner considered to be the basis of understanding (1852/1914b: 118). In this convergence or synthesis of alliterative verse and music, which Wagner called *Versmelodie*, musical and verbal meaning unite and elucidate one another and speak to emotion and thought at the same time (ibid). However, *Stabreim* was not just a structural device that united word and tone. It served three other purposes. Firstly, it was an expressive device (ibid), which according to Wagner had the power to create immediacy of communication and understanding (1852/1914b: 131-132). Secondly, it produced a diction that was ideal for the mythic world of the *Ring.* Thirdly, it played into Wagner's desire to assert German cultural values by linking them to the distant past as well as to claim validity for German opera with German themes and language.

The expressive role of *Stabreim* was bound to its 'authentic' tone as 'an expression of "purely human" emotions' (Spencer, 2006a: 217). As Trippett puts it, the 'inherent phonemic similitude' transforms the words 'from signifiers to emotion' (2013: 198). This was not only attributable to alliteration, but to the inherent stylistic concision of the verse form. Its succinct verse-lines, with relatively few syllables, produced a terse and concentrated style (Hallberg, 1993: 150) that Wagner believed (at the time of writing the *Ring*) would communicate to the emotions rather than the intellect (1852/1914b: 117). The focus on content words and the paratactic effect produced by the omission of conjunctions and other connectives provided dramatic force and intensity. Such concision emphasised what was important: as Wagner put it, in moments of high emotion the force of intonation increases, accents are closer together and the voice is raised as it pauses on those accents that will impress most the feelings of others (1852/1914b: 119). Although the concision of Wagner's syntax in the *Ring* seems complex, for him it was more direct than the everyday language of the time with its main and relative clauses, conditionals and hypothetical constructions.

According to Wagner, he might have had to abandon his *Ring* project had he not discovered *Stabreim* in which he found the sensually perfect diction in which Siegfried could make himself known [79] (1851/1872: 400). As *O&D* explains, *Stabreim* captured a more 'natural' or primitive form of speech (Wagner, 1914b: 128) than the 'corrupted'

[79] 'sinnlich vollendeten Sprachausdruck, in dem einzig dieser Mensch sich kundgeben konnte'

speech of modern civilisation, which could express concepts but not emotions (ibid: 97). Wagner borrowed its stark brevity achieved through its allusive and elliptical style (Hofmann, 1971: 76), which not only produced a particularly heightened form of language, but also, with its monosyllabic words and absence of detail or discursive elements, an archaic sound with which to evoke the mythic world of the legendary Siegfried found in the Old Norse poems (the *Eddas*).

Wagner's choice of *Stabreim* was also related to his Romantic nationalist interests, shared by many in mid-nineteenth century Germany with serious interest in discovering the origins of their culture in order to know themselves better (Lindenberger, 1998: 141). Wagner's choice of *Stabreim* was an assertion of Germanness and a critique of nineteenth century philology and scholarship that had hitherto suppressed early Germanic subjects (Geck, 2013: 156). It was Wagner's contribution to creating a national past and ancestry, to defining German cultural identity and sharing it widely. It was thus closely linked to Wagner's desire to bring about a new German opera (set forth in *O&D*), not subject to Italian and French rules of libretto writing or musical composition.

Any decision to reproduce Wagners' alliterative verse may depend on whether or not the translator believes in the sensory effects of alliterating root syllables or in the idea that the compressed, concentrated expression of *Stabreim* can turn ideas into emotions to be better understood by the intellect. Important detractors have questioned Wagner's claims. Hanslick[80] argued that without the music, *Stabreim* would excite general irritation and mirth (1876a: 3) and according to Dahlhaus, nobody could 'claim that alliteration is a means of stressing semantic associations' (1979: 106). Contemporary writers like Spencer think it 'a hindrance…to our understanding of the text' (2006: 217) and Trippett suggests its use was driven by Wagner's desire to reform opera and justify his approach to composition in the *Ring* rather than any 'transcendental' (2013: 301) reason. Stein goes as far as to call it pretentious, even

[80] Hanslick was one of the most influential music scholars and critics of the 19th century and a vocal opponent to Wagner. He wrote *Vom Musikalisch-Schönen*, translated in 1891 by Gustav Cohen as: *The Beautiful in Music*.

ludicrous, although he concedes that it was eminently suitable for Wagner's purposes as a composer (1960: 71).

Despite such negative criticism of *Stabreim*, it cannot be denied that it was, nevertheless, according to Wagner's account in *O&D*, essential to his theory of composition with regard to *Versmelodie*, for *Stabreim* had a musicality in its rhythm that Wagner considered ideal for opera. With its variable accents, it could engender more expressive music than the traditional combination of metric verse and regular periodic music. Its expressive force would fit perfectly the heroic mood of Wagner's story, thanks to the way that important words, usually alliterative rhymes with a connection through similarity or contrast, would be set to the accented notes of the musical line. Regardless of what one thinks about *Stabreim*, it led to the creation of a new operatic style in which music and words are equally essential to its full understanding and appreciation.

6.2.2 English translations: the absence of rhyme

In the *Ring* translations by Foreman and the Corders, more or less one hundred percent of Wagner's alliterative rhymes were reproduced (even if not strictly adhering to the rules of *Stabreim* as adapted by Wagner and often ignoring the requirement that the rhymes have some emotional or semantic relationship). The Corders' translation of Wagner's *Ring*, was thought 'clever' because it retained the alliterative verse ("The 'Ring' in English," 1908), however, to do so they relied on archaic vocabulary (weenest, wight) and syntax rife with inversions, which sometimes challenges comprehension. Since then, *Ring* translations used in performance have included less and less alliterative verse. The main reason appears to be the desire for ease of comprehension. Critical reviews of the time suggested that Jameson's prioritisation of comprehension over rhyme made his translation better than those that had gone before ("The 'Nibelung's Ring' in English," 1908). Porter wrote that his reason for taking on the translation of the *Ring* was to produce something 'more fluent and direct, a little easier to understand' (1977: xiii). Sams claims that 'the translator can only be interested in something that has resonance and immediacy now'(Sams & Johnston, 1996: 175). On the evidence of the Forman and Corder translations, these translators may have assumed that manipulation of the text to accommodate alliterative rhymes would

produce awkward syntax and unusual, sometimes incomprehensible, vocabulary, which would make the translation as difficult to understand as the original and impair the quality of the text so that singers could not sing it with conviction.

Other justifications for abandoning rhyme in the *Ring*, (unless something specifically demands it, such as the music[81]) are broadly related to the different roles that rhyme plays in poetry and vocal music. In poetry, rhyme has three main functions: semantic, rhythmic and euphonic (Levy, 2011: 232), however, in vocal music, its rhythmic and euphonic roles are replaced by music. Whilst the repetition of similar sounds in poetry foregrounds semantic function and gives sonic pleasure, in vocal music the sound symbolism of rhyme for semantic purposes is often masked by the music, as Wagner himself pointed out in his criticism of end-rhyming libretti in *O&D* (1852/1914b: 213). The organisational function of rhyme in poetry and its use to mark closure are also replaced by music. These are valid reasons why rhyme might be set aside (see also Chapter 4.1) but the most obvious reason might be that it is simply not essential for a singable translation. Whilst matching the translated text to the rhythms of the music is non-negotiable, rhyme might only be considered an aesthetic factor.

Jameson, Porter and Sams do not reproduce the alliterative verse of Wagner's *Ring* libretto, at least not consistently. In some verse-lines, rhyme, accent and related semantics converge, but more often than not alliteration is for ornamentation. To compare the quantity of rhyme (Table 4) reproduced in their translations to that of Wagner's original libretto and my translation, without counting the rhymes of five libretti in two operas, I sampled one act of each opera: Act I of *DW* and Act III of *GD*. Both acts are of a similar number of verses (243 and 205 respectively) and contain a similar mixture of dialogue and poetic or lyrical language in monologues or soliloquys. For each translation, I identified the verse lines according to Wagner's adaptation of Old Norse based on two hemistichs (half lines) separated by a caesura where the first stressed syllable of the second hemistich alliterates with one of more stressed syllables of the first half line (although Wagner has many variations on this), for example:

9 **Lab**ung biet' ich // dem **lech**zenden Gaumen:
10 **Wass**er, // wie du ge**wollt**.
11 **Kühl**ende **Lab**ung // gab mir der **Quell**,

[81] Recurring patterns and parallelisms in music can be likened to rhymes.

I counted the number of verse lines in each translation in which:

1. the number of rhymes in each verse line is the same as the original libretto [Column A]
2. over fifty percent of the rhymes in each verse line are reproduced [Column B]
3. less than fifty percent of the rhymes in each verse line are reproduced [Column C]

Rhymes that do not follow Wagner's rhyme scheme are included as long as they are located on the same stressed notes as Wagner's rhymes. The quality of the rhymes was not considered and I counted as rhymes many that would be considered incorrect according to the 'rules', for example, '**sing**ing' and '**spring**' was allowed as well as 'be**stowed** the **sword'**. For a broad overview of the level of rhyme in each translation, column D shows the proportion of verses in which any rhyme at all was reproduced and column E shows the proportion in which no rhyme at all was reproduced.

Table 4 Estimated rhyme quantity for each translation

	A	B	C	D	E
	100% (full) rhyme	≥ 50% (part) rhyme	< 50% (part) rhyme	Total no. verses with any rhyme	Total no. verses with NO rhyme
Jameson	12%	21%	12%	45%	55%
Porter	8%	18%	11%	37%	63%
Sams	2%	14%	8%	24%	76%
My Transl.	50%	30%	4%	84%	16%

The above data suggests that over time translators have chosen to produce less and less rhyme. When Jameson's translation was published, the Corders' translation was the benchmark that had faithfully reproduced Wagner's rhymes in quantity and position, with only a few exceptions, even though the rhyme schemes were changed and the quality of the rhyming words is questionable. Based on my sample, Jameson's translations, by comparison, reproduces only forty-five percent of Wagner's rhymes. Porter's desire for immediate audible intelligibility saw him further reduce the quantity of rhyming verses with only thirty-seven percent of the rhymes of the original being reproduced in his translation. Sams almost halves this with his 'accessible but …

prosaic translation' (Picard, 2003) and reproduces only twenty-four percent of the rhymes. The telling column is A, which points to the fact that Jameson, Porter, and Sams did not treat alliterative rhyme as a structural style element related to verbal and musical intersemiosis. My translation shows that alliterative verse can be preserved, if not fully, then to a high degree. In an estimated eighty percent of my verse lines, I reproduced either all the rhymes or over fifty percent of them. To do this meant compromise. Rhymes schemes were changed, liberties were taken with the correctness of the rhymes, as in rhyming 'spear' with 'strength', and the semantic match was often loosened and paraphrase employed. However, thanks to reproducing the rhymes, verbal and musical meaning converges (as will be discussed in Chapter 6.3) and the expressive nature, diction and mythic Norse character of the language is preserved.

The degree to which alliterative rhyme is reproduced in the translations varies between the recitative-type sections and the more lyrical ones. This is understandable, since in the more open dialogue-like sections, which carry the plot forward, comprehension is at a greater premium than in sections of lyrical soliloquy or monologue. Wagner's music reflects the difference in function of these different sections for where it is important that information is communicated, he tends to avoid melisma and elaborate ornamentation and sets the words syllabically for clarity and ease of understanding. The melody tends to follow the natural intonation of speech with a more limited pitch range, smaller intervals between notes that move with a stepwise motion, a rise and fall of intonation for question and statement, and fewer long notes. The absence of symmetrical phrases and periods in the music emphasise its discursive aspect. On the other hand, the more lyrical sections, usually monologues (interior thought, narrative), are a type of 'closed-composition discourse'[82] (Berger, 2016: 79), marked by such elements as an introductory orchestral phrase, an introductory vocal phrase, a stable key and two endings whose similarity forms ' a kind of large scale rhyme' (ibid: 80). These sections are characterised by more two-note melismas, more variation in pitch and greater intervallic gaps.

The variance in rhyme quantity between the discursive and lyrical sections of the translations can be seen by comparing *DW* I/3 (which includes a duet between

[82] Closed composition usually describes forms such as the aria with a distinct beginning and end.

Siegmund and Sieglinde and is predominantly a ‘fully developed closed lyrical number’ (ibid: 92)) with the level of rhyme achieved overall, based on the two sampled acts from *DW* and *GD*:

Table 5

	Level of rhyme (any): Overall	Level of rhyme (any): *DW* Act 1 Scene 3
Jameson	45%	65%
Porter	37%	59%
Sams	24%	55%
My Transl.	84%	89%

The desire for ease of comprehension may explain why in the first two scenes of *DW* Act I, made up largely of open discourse, the translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams show a marked absence of rhyme. This can be seen by the high number of X's in the ‘rhyme scheme’ column that indicate missing rhyme words:

Table 6

Wagner	Rhyme scheme
Siegfried Wess’ **Herd** dies auch sei, // **hier** muss ich rasten. *Sieglinde* Ein **fremd**er **Mann**? // Ihn **muss** ich **frag**en. Wer kam ins **Haus** und liegt dort am **Herd**? // **Müd**e liegt er von Weges **Müh'n**.	 a a a b b a a a b b
Jameson	
Siegfried Whoe'er own this hearth, // here must I rest me. *Sieglinde* A stranger **here**? // Why came he **hith**er? What man is this who lies on the hearth? // Worn and way-weary lies he there.	 xx x a x a x x xx
Porter	

Siegfried
The storm drove me here; // here I must shelter.
Sieglinde
A stranger **here**? // Where **has** he come from?
Who sought this house, and lies near the fire? //
He’s exhausted and does not move.
	
	x x
	
	x a a x
	x x x x

Sams	
Siegfried God knows where I am…// but I must rest here *Sieglinde* There [is] someone there… // [] It's a stranger… Who is this man who's slumped by the fire? // Too exhausted to raise his head.	 x x x x x x x x x x
My translation	
Siegfried A **hearth** and a fire, //**here** I can shelter. *Sieglinde* Who **can** this be? //I must look **clos**er. Who found this **house**? Who lies by the **hearth**? // **Tired** he lies there, from journey's **toil**.	 a a a x x a a a b b

By comparison, on examining Siegmund's lines in *DW* I/ 3, beginning at 'Winterstürme wichen dem Wonnemond' (*Spring Song*), fewer X's in the 'rhyme scheme' column indicate the greater proportion of rhymes reproduced by the translations:

Table 7

Wagner	Rhyme scheme
Winterstürme **wich**en dem **Won**nemond, in mildem **Licht**e **leucht**et der **Lenz**; auf **lin**den **Lüf**ten **leicht** und **lieb**lich, **Wun**der **web**end er sich **wiegt;** durch **Wald** und **Au**en **weht** sein **At**em, **weit** ge**öff**net lacht sein **Aug'**: aus **sel**'ger Vöglein **Sang**e **süss** ertönt, **hold**e Düfte **haucht** er aus; seinem **warm**en **Blut** ent**blüh**en **won**nige **Blu**men, **Keim** und **Spross** ent**springt** seiner **Kraft**.	a a a b b b b b b b a a a a b a b a b b a a a b b a b b a b a b b a
Jameson	
Winter storms have **waned** in the moon of May, with tender radiance **spark**les the **spring**; on **balm**y **breez**es, **light** and **love**ly, **weav**ing **won**ders, on he floats; o'er **wood** and meadow **wafts** his breathing, **wide**ly **op**en laughs his **eye**: in **blithe**some song of **birds** re**sounds** his voice, **sweet**est fragrance **breathes** he forth: from his **ard**ent **blood** bloom **out** all joy-giving **bloss**oms, bud and shoot spring up by his might.	a a x x b b c c d d a a x a x a x a b b a a b b a a b a x b x x x x

Porter	
Winter storms have vanished at Spring's command; in gentle radiance **spark**les the **Spring**, on **balm**y **breez**es, **light** and **love**ly, **work**ing **won**ders on his **way**; on **wood** and meadow **soft**ly breathing, **wide** and **smil**ing are his eyes. The **songs** of happy birds reflect his voice; **sweet** the fragrance of his breath; from his ardent **blood** the flowers are joyfully **bloom**ing; **buds** and **blooms** have sprung at his call.	a x x x b b c c d d a a a a x b x a b x a x x a x x a x x a a a x x
Sams	
Spring has driven all of the clouds away, and bathed the night in blue and in gold. The **balm**y **breez**es rock the trees and **waft** a**way** the winter cold. A **warm**ing **wind** begins to blow as **woods** and meadows start to glow, the birds are singing, **sing**ing that **spring** is here. Fragrant flowers join in the song. Now their blood is flowing, all the wonders of springtime. **Bud** and **bloss**om, **bur**geon and throng.	x x x x x x a a x x b b x a a x x a x x x a a x x x x x x x a a a x
My translation	
Winter storms give **way** to the **won**drous May, - in gentle **sun**light **spark**les the **Spring**;- who **sweet**ly **sigh**ing, **soft** and **sooth**ing, **weav**ing **won**ders, **wends** his **way**; through **fields** and **woods** he's **faint**ly **waft**ing, **op**en **wide** his smiling **eyes**: with **sil**ver tongue he **sings** and **sweet**ly pipes, **subt**le perfumes **scent** his breath; from his **fer**vent **blood** there **bloom** the **fair**est of **bloss**oms, **leaves** and **buds**, he **brings** them to **life**.	a a a b b b b b b b a a a a b a b c b c a a a a a a b b a b a b b a

Attempting to rhyme in the recitative-type sections may have been considered a threat to the clarity essential for following the story and the themes of the opera, however, Jameson, Porter and Sams seem to have relaxed their criteria for clarity and ease of understanding in verses concerned mainly with emotion rather than information. Some loss of clarity, for the sake of the poetic function of language (see Chapter 4.3), seems to have been accepted to achieve a synthesis of words and music in the lyrical sections concerned with emotions.

6.2.3 The loss of *Stabreim* and its effect

Although *Stabreim* is part of the structure of Wagner's verse and music and was evidently essential to the composition of the *Ring*, whether or not it is essential to the audience is another matter. Whilst it is true that alliteration produces striking sound effects, it is debateable whether the initial rhymes can be heard and appreciated by the audience and whether such sensorial perception affects the emotions and the understanding simultaneously, as Wagner tries to persuade the reader of *O&D* and other essays. One might also argue that music replaces the sensorial role of alliterative rhyme and highlights any shared semantic relationships as long as semantic equivalents of ST rhymes occur in the same position in the text (on the same notes) thus maintaining a musico-semantic relationship.

Although *Stabreim* contributed to Wagner's style through its immediacy of communication and understanding (1852/1914b: 131-132) and its diction was ideal for the mythic world of the *Ring*, its loss might be mitigated stylistic choices made by the translators, such as concision or terseness of expression. Jameson was able to reproduce the terse, direct and elevated sound of Wagner's language through his pseudo-archaic English, with its inversions and unusual word order, and by taking care to only place content words where previously alliterative rhyme words had converged with musical accents.

Wagner *GD* II/1	Jameson
Bist du **kräft**ig, **kühn** und **klug**:	Be thou crafty, strong and bold!
die wir be**kämpf**en	Those whom with weapons
mit **nächt**igem **Krieg**,	of darkness we fight,
schon gibt ihnen **Not** unser **Neid.**	e'en now are dismayed by our hate.

Although Porter rejected archaic English, he also managed to preserve some of the same sound world by avoiding turning the poetry to prose and by strictly adhering to Wagner's musical phrasing. Even though he sacrifices rhyme, he is usually careful to ensure that content words appear in the same position as the rhyming words of the ST and is even willing to invert subject and verb order to achieve this and keep particular words on particular notes as in 'Weak-spirited, womanish brood! / Such whining ways you learnt not from me!' (*DW* III/2).

One of the reasons given for not attempting to reproduce Wagner's verse form was the need for natural sounding language, that would not need to be '"worked out" by a puzzled listener' (Porter, 1977: xv). However, the more the translator errs on the side of naturalism, as Porter does, the more the terse sound of the original verse is lost and the smoother, more natural sounds make the language more ordinary, not one that gods and dwarves, heroes, Norns and Rhinemaidens speak. Compare, for example, my translation with that of Porter in these lines of Brünnhilde:

Wagner
Soll ich aus **Wal**hall **scheid**en,
nicht mehr mit dir **schaff**en und **walt**en,
dem **herr**ischen Manne ge**horch**en fortan:
dem feigen **Prahl**er gib mich nicht **preis**!
Nicht **wert**los sei er, der mich ge**winnt**.

Porter
If I must go from Walhall,
and play no more part in your actions,
and take as my master some man to obey:
be sure no coward makes me his prize;
but **see** some hero wins me as **bride!**

My translation
If I must **part** from **Wal**hall,
if I have no **place** as your **vass**al,
if **mor**tals may claim me and **make** me obey:
be sure no **bragg**art makes me his **bride**!
No **worth**less man should win me to **wife!**

Although Porter correctly uses content words in the position of the rhymes and though the translation is very close to the ST semantically and functionally, his use of conjunctions (and / but) smoothes the language and the loss of terseness results in a loss of the anxiety with which Brünnhilde is speaking.

The loss of alliterative rhyme may not be a loss for the audience, whose main interest is to know what is happening and why, but its loss might affect how the performer comprehends the libretto for it alters the potentialities of meaning created within the nexus of musical sound, repeated initial consonants and verbal meaning. At best, the verbal meaning loses the additional meaning of the music and the music loses the elucidation of the words. At worst, it is possible for the musical meaning to

contradict or undermine the verbal meaning. Porter's compromise, which I have followed when I found it impossible to create a rhyming verse without risking a loss of comprehension, was to preserve 'important words – such as *Liebe, Leid, Ring, Rhein* – and especially proper names exactly where Wagner placed them' (1977: xv). In this way, the singer, at least, can benefit from the combined meaning and emotion of words and music and ultimately this will benefit the audience.

6.2.4 The importance of *Stabreim* in my translation

Given that *Stabreim* is difficult to reproduce, unnecessary for the translation to be singable, unlikely to be appreciated by the audience during the performance, and that musical and verbal meaning can still converge despite its loss, it may seem pointless to attempt reproducing it. However, I am convinced that *Stabreim* is an essential feature of Wagner's style and a necessary one to replicate in a translation that hopes to emulate the semantic integration of music and words as found in the original, for the benefit of its interpreters and the audience. What made *Stabreim* an imperative for my translation was not only its contribution to style as a signpost to meaning, but also its contribution to diction and characterisation and its function as a mnemonic for singers. My translation was intended, in part, as an experiment to prove that alliterative verse could be reproduced in English to serve these functions without the libretto proving incomprehensible.

It is easy to dismiss the aesthetic function of poetry in a libretto and be concerned solely with language in a pragmatic sense: who is doing what to whom and why. This is certainly enough to make a singable and performable translation and very much the approach that Jameson, Porter and Sams took. However, all the modes of signification in Wagner's *Ring* contribute to its meaning, especially the alliterative rhymes and their combination with rhythm and musical meaning. Respect for Wagner's nexus of alliterating syllables, sense and musical meaning is not empty fidelity, but one that might guarantee a level of singability far in excess of mere metrical matching of plausible language and declamation (Kerman, 1964: 151ff.). In respecting the alliterative rhymes, the translator is more likely to respect the relationship of verbal and musical meaning that is available to the singer who performs in German but often absent for the singer of the translation. Reproducing the alliterative rhyme is necessary

if singers are to be given access to the style of the original score that is responsible for the way in which it is understood. A translation that preserves the alliterative rhyme would enable singers to understand how and why the music is written as it is. This in turn helps develop vocal and character interpretation. From the words, the musical patterns or phrases and instrumentation, the singer can make up his own subtext to use in creating the character.

Even on a pragmatic level, the more the translator retains the rhymes, the more likely he or she is to avoid any problems of rhythmic fit and declamation. As Sams says, it is important for the new text of the translation to 'cling[s] to the contours of the music' (Sams & Johnston, 1996: 177) so that words and music can touch the audience. Therefore, as far as the English language and my creative ability allowed, I decided to follow Wagner's rhyme schemes unless sense would be obscured to the degree where cohesion and coherence were threatened or the language became so unnatural that it would be embarrassing to sing.

Purpose and power come from the emotions. The emotions make what is sung beautiful and meaningful and for that to be possible, the singer needs words that make sense within the context of the music. Since the semantic relationship of repeated initial consonantal rhymes is at the heart of Wagner's *Versmelodie*, it must be important to singers and conductors, whose interpretation depends on their understanding of both words and music. John Tomlinson (baritone), speaking of the 2004-2007 *Ring* Cycle production at the Royal Opera House, London, said of the verse, 'the text is crucial…the way you sing has to be governed by a thorough understanding of the … text' (Kahn, 2007: 142).

In choosing to reproduce *Stabreim*, I sought to produce a similar diction to Wagner's, far removed from Sams' recent translation, which makes the gods and heroes of Norse mythology speak in the idiom of twenty-first century Britain. Alliterative verse provides Wagner's *Ring* with a distinctly recognizable register unlike everyday language (Panagl, 2002: 91). Whether one sees the *Ring* as a story of gods, giants, heroes and heroines struggling for power, as an allegory for the human condition, or capitalism gone wrong, or any number of other interpretations, the *Ring* is a drama of epic proportions and, therefore, requires a language with the dignity and

gravitas suited to its mythic material. Unlike verismo operas (for example, those by Verdi such as *La Traviata*), which strove to depict ordinary people and everyday emotions in a realistic style, Wagner's mythic opus that tries to comprehend all the principles, moral, political and spiritual by which the modern world is governed, demands a language commensurate with its philosophical proportions. Setting aside alliterative verse in a *Ring* translation reduces the text to prose and, potentially, to a level of banality that is out of character with the subject matter.

One more minor reason for preserving the alliterative verse, but one I am familiar with as an amateur singer, is that there are many words to remember in an opera and although alliterative rhymes may not be heard by the audience in the opera house, they are useful to singers as a mnemonic aid. Research shows that humans do better at memorizing lists or random items when they are able to provide some structure to the data they are attempting to recall (Bartlett, 1932/1995: 45). Opera libretti possess such structural characteristics: metrical structure, semantics, and sound patterns such as end-rhymes or alliteration. Studies have shown that rhyme enhances memorisation of lyrics (Racette & Peretz, 2007: 247) because it is able to 'cue recall and limit choices' (Rubin, 1995: 77). Singers, rather than focussing on the semantic meaning of words to help memorization, find attention to rhyme a more effective strategy (ibid). It has also been shown that when rhyme is associated with musical features, recall is enhanced (Ginsborg, 2002: 61).

6.2.5 The challenges of preserving *Stabreim*

There are two main challenges in recreating alliterative verse: firstly, finding English alliterating synonyms for Wagner's rhyme words with the required semantic relationships and syllabic fit, and secondly being able to locate them in the same position (on the same accented note) whilst also arranging the other words in accordance with their accentual features within syntactic constraints.

6.2.2.1 Finding English translation equivalents that alliterate

Wagner's ideas and their expression were bound and simultaneously inspired by his language. He was free to adapt ideas to language and vice versa. The translator, who has no such freedom, must express an interpretation of Wagner's ideas and thoughts in

a new language, not always being able to find words, even though English and German are closely related and share many cognates, which serve the necessary semantic purpose and share an initial consonant or vowel and the same syllabic accents.

Earlier translators, like the Corders, were able to find alliterative rhymes more easily because they used archaic English lexis, which because of its closeness to German facilitates alliteration in a way that modern English does not. In these two verses from *GD* I/1, the Corders were able to translate almost word for word, reproducing all the rhymes and the rhyme scheme of the original by using Old English so that weal (prosperity) could rhyme with wit (knowledge) and wot (first person singular of to wit (to know)) could rhyme with 'won'.

> Wagner
>
> So **schelt'** ich den **Rath**, //da **schlecht** noch dein **Ruhm**:
> denn hohe **Güt**er **weiss** ich, //die der **Gib**ichung noch nicht ge**wann**.
>
> Corders
>
> To **blame** is my **wit /** that **bad** is thy **weal**;
> for rarer **goods** I **wot** of / than the **Gib**ichung yet ever **won**.

When using modern English this is a great challenge. The following example is a case in point:

> Zu der mich nun **Sehn**sucht **zieht**, / die mit **süss**em **Zau**ber mich **sehrt**,
> im **Zwang**e **hält** sie der **Mann**, / der **mich** Wehrlosen **höhnt**!
>
> (To whom me now longing pulls / who with sweet magic me hurts,
> in constraint holds her the man / who me weaponless-one scorns)

Apart from the rhyme pair ***Mann/mich*** (*DW* I/3), which can be reproduced using the English cognates 'man/me', modern English does not provide alliterating synonyms for any other rhyme words:

Table 8

Sehnsucht / **süss**em / **sehrt**	longing (yearning) / sweet / hurt (injure)
zieht / Zauber / **Zwang**e	pulls (draws) / magic (enchantment) / constraint
hält / höhnt	holds / scorns
Mann / **mich**	**man / me**

Jameson's translation does well to reproduce three rhyme pairs:

> The woman who **holds** me **chained,** /who with sweet en**chant**ment wounds,
> in thrall is **held** by the **man** /who **mocks** [his] weaponless foe.

Although only one rhyme pair, '**chained**/en**chant**ment', translating *zieht* and *Zauber*, can be said to reproduce the ST semantically, the ideas paired in '**man**/**mocks**' and '**holds/held**' are at least semantically linked and coherent with the overall sense of the ST lines. Porter, who copies Jameson's '**man**/**mocks**' and '**holds**/**held**' rhyme pairs abandoned the '**chained/enchantment**' rhyme probably because he disliked the awkward word order of the final phrase that Jameson felt acceptable over seventy years earlier:

> This woman who **holds** me bound, /whose enchantment tears at my **heart**,
> as slave she's **held** by a **man** / who **mocks** his weaponless foe.

In Sams' translation of the same lines, there are ostensibly two rhyme pairs, however, one is simply a repetition of the same word. The other rhyme pair neither translates the original text nor provides any semantic relationship, only a grammatical one, and is an example of fortuitous rhyme:

> her voice has ensnared my heart, /she's im**pris**oned me with her eyes,
> yet she's im**pris**oned by him. / And **I** stand here un**armed**.

In my translation, I was able to find more rhymes than the other translators but set them in a different rhyme scheme in which the rhymes do not bind together the same thoughts as those of Wagner.

> Zu der mich nun **Sehn**sucht **zieht**, / die mit **süss**em **Zau**ber mich **sehrt**,
> im **Zwang**e **hält** sie der **Mann**, / der **mich** Wehrlosen **höhnt**!

> That woman en**snared** my **soul**, / and her **smile** still pierces my **heart**,
> like a **slave** she's **held** by this **man**,/ who **mocks** this weaponless **hand.**

However, given the constraints, the ideas they do bind are coherent with each other and with the overall sense of the ST, both within the verse-line and in relation to the scene as a whole:

Table 9

Wagner's rhyme scheme: ab/aba/bcd/dc	Gloss	My rhyme scheme: aa/axx/abc/cb
a: **Sehn**sucht /**süss**em /**sehrt**,	longing/sweet/hurts	a: en**snared** / **soul** / **smile** / **slave**
b: **zieht / Zau**ber / **Zwang**e	pulls / magic / constraint	x: pierces
c: **hält /höhnt**!	holds / scorns	b: **heart** / **held** / **hand**
d: **Mann / mich**	man / me	c: **man** / **mocks**

As the chart above shows, finding rhymes to translate the ST is not impossible but the semantic accuracy can be questionable and the semantic connections made between words can certainly be altered. Whether this is worthwhile depends on other considerations, which I will address later in this chapter.

6.2.2.2 Recreating convergence between rhyme and musical accent

Even if found, rhyme words can be difficult to locate in the required position, on specific accented notes. This is largely due to Wagner's compact textual style. He believed that contemporary language forced the speaker into long and complex expressions in which the most salient words and feelings were lost. In order for his operas to have the emotional impact he intended, Wagner argued that compression (*verdichten*) within the verse was necessary to intensify and heighten its power of affect.

Wagner's concision and brevity of expression produced a style that was as unusual to audiences of his day as it is today. Then, his language was described as extraordinary, baffling (Dollhopf, 1870: 31) and unnatural[83] (Hanslick, 1876b: 1). Today, it is described as 'abenteuerlich' (adventurous/bizarre) (Stemmler, 2012) and it sometimes seems that a course in German philology is necessary to understand the many obsolete Old and Middle High German words. His brevity was made possible by his borrowing of archaic grammar and vocabulary, the inherent characteristics of the German language (inflection and word order) and by certain stylistic choices that emulate the style of the *Edda* poems. Many of the grammatical and lexical options available to Wagner are not available to the English translator in modern times and make concision in an English translation challenging.

[83] Hanslick says in his review of the first Bayreuth festival: 'never have people spoken to each other like this (including the gods)'

In order to emulate the predominantly monosyllabic Old Norse verse of the *Eddas*[84], Wagner looked to Old and Middle High German vocabulary and grammar. Here he found many of his one or two syllable words whose modern German synonyms are longer such as *Mage* instead of *Verwandter* (relative), *Friedel* instead of *Geliebte/r* (beloved) or *Trug* instead of *Betrug* (deception). In order to save syllables, Wagner also used Modern High German words for their ancient meanings so that *vertragen*, which means 'tolerate' or 'stand' (or as a reflexive verb, 'agree'), was used to mean 'to conclude an agreement' based on its fifteenth century usage in deeds and charters (Grimm & Grimm, 2003). Wagner used it when Wotan explains why he cannot retrieve the ring from Fafner himself but needs a hero who will unknowingly do it for him:

> Doch mit dem ich ver**trug**, ihn darf ich nicht **treff**en;
> **macht**los vor ihm erläge mein **Mut**: (*DW* III/2)
>
> (But since I made a contract with him, I may not attack him;
> or my courage would laid powerless before him)

In modern German, the line would have to be longer and the immediacy of *vertrug* lost:

> Doch mit dem ich einen Vertrag schloss, ihn darf ich…

Wagner's knowledge of archaic vocabulary was thanks to his interest in philology (Trippett, 2013: 303-304), his admiration for the works of Goethe (Geck, 2013: 3) and his study of the sources of the *Ring* mythology (see Appendix 4). His passion for language means that there are words in the *Ring* that only Germanists, Medievalists or specialists in legal history would know (Henle, 2011: 165). Many frequently used words like *freislich* instead of *schrecklich* (terrible) and *Harst* instead of *Kampf* (battle/fight) cannot be found in modern German dictionaries like *Duden*[85]. The *Ring* translator must refer frequently to the nineteenth century *Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Grimm & Grimm, 2003), the *Mittelhochdeutsches Handwörterbuch (Middle High German Pocket Dictionary)* (Lexer, 1872-78), the *Etymologisches Wörterbuch der deutschen Sprache* (*Etymological dictionary of the German Language)* (Kluge, 1899) and other specialist publications (Dollhopf, 1870; Henle, 2011; Panagl,

[84] In the Old Norse language, almost forty percent of words were monosyllabic (Hoops, 1986: 370).
[85] The equivalent to the Oxford English Dictionary

2002; Von Wolzogen, 1878) or websites ("Der Ring des Nibelungen - Wörterbuch - WagnerWeb," 2002).

In his search for the shortest words with which to express himself, Wagner avoided modern compounds and preferred verbs without prefixes, unless they made other words unnecessary (such as compounds that include a prepositional element). The removal of verb prefixes can be seen in *DW* (I/3) where, for example, *versehren* (to wound) becomes *sehren* (from the MHG *seren*), as in 'die mit süßem Zauber mich sehrt' (who with sweet enchantment me wounds). Wagner's use of obsolete strong verb inflections, such as *frug* instead of *fragte* served the same function. *Fragen* is a weak verb in modern German, whose root vowel does not change in the preterite unlike strong verbs that form their preterite by means of an *Ablaut* or vowel modification to signify tense: *binden, band, gebunden*. Wagner also frequently uses the archaic imperfect of werden, *ward* instead of *wurde*, which again saves a syllable:

> **manch**e Jagd ward auf sie ge**macht**; doch **mu**tig **wehrt**e das **Wolfs**paar sich (*DW* I/2)
> (many a time we were hunted down, but bravely the Wolf pair defended themselves)

Another prevalent feature that enabled Wagner to shorten clauses for the benefit of rhythm and to locate rhyme words on the lifts, was apocope, the loss of a word-final unstressed vowel: 'O **fänd'** ich ihn **heut'** und **hier,** den **Freund**; / käm' er aus **Frem**den zur ärmsten **Frau**' (*DW* I/3). It also contributes towards the imitation of spoken language. Apocope not unusual in literary texts and just as Goethe and Schiller used it to preserve the metre of their verse, Wagner used it to reduce the number of syllables in a half-line and to produce the required number of lifts.

The English translator often needs more syllables (and notes) than are available to translate the German ST because modern English has lost much of its monosyllabic Anglo-Saxon lexis in favour of a polysyllabic Latinate one and not being an inflected language has none of the opportunities of German such as a choice of preterite. Even apocope, which is common in spoken language, is far less used in poetic texts. This often makes it necessary to omit elements of information in the phrase or to paraphrase rather than strictly translate it, which can affect opportunities for alliterative rhymes. In the following example, Wagner was able to compress what would have been a longer verse in Modern High German using the strong preterite of the compound word

entfragen[86] that avoids additional prepositions and using the archaic monosyllabic noun *Trug*. All the translations are paraphrases rather than strict translations, as English requires far more words to express the same ideas:

> Wagner
> So leicht ja ent**frug** mir **Frick**a den **Trug**:
> zu **tiefst**er **Scham** durch**schaut**e sie mich!
> (So easily indeed found out from me Fricka my deceit:
> to my deepest disgrace she saw through me)
>
> Jameson
> So lightly my **false**hood **Frick**a laid bare:
> be**fore** her glance I stood in my shame!
>
> Porter
> The lie was revealed when Fricka arrived:
> I stood ashamed; I had no reply!
>
> Sams
> My Fricka perceived the trick straight away.
> To [my] deepest shame she saw through [] me:
>
> My translation
> How easily **Frick**a **found** out my **fraud**:
> and **foul** dis**grace** she **glimpsed** in my soul!

Wagner's concise language was also a function of German being highly inflected (words have different endings according to their case, number and gender) like Old Norse, requiring few unstressed function or marker words. English, however, is a non-inflected language, which relies for understanding on specific grammatical words or particles and on the placement and relationships between different words in a sentence. German word order is, therefore, more flexible than English word order because the grammatical function of a word is indicated by its inflection (or variant ending) not its position. Wagner's libretto reveals an extraordinary manipulation of German word order due to this flexibility, which not only facilitated the required brevity for *Stabreim*, but also and more importantly allowed Wagner to foreground thoughts, concepts and objects at will. This foregrounding occurs simultaneously in

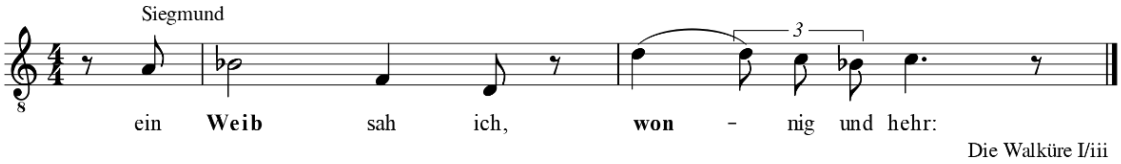
[86] The compound *entfragen*, where *fragen* means to question and the prefix 'ent-' denotes separation, means 'to elicit something through questioning'. To communicate the sense of *entfragen* in modern German would require more syllables, for example: 'So leicht ja entlockte mir Fricka den Trug durch Fragen…'

alliterative rhymes and music and their intersemiosis can be easily lost because English syntax does not afford the translator the same flexibility.

As an ‘artistically motivated deviation’ (Leech & Short, 2007: 39) from everyday speech patterns, fronting an element of the clause to sentence-initial position is a strategy for foregrounding something specific in the text. German is highly ‘flexible in its placement of constituents in front position’(Steiner, 2000: 200) and the Theme can be filled by various syntactic functions other than the subject, including circumstantial elements (such as locational or temporal adjuncts) and adjectival or adverbial complements. German and English speakers are primed to attach importance to what comes first in a clause and defines the ‘point-of-view’ of the speaker or writer. It is an important means of providing cohesion to facilitate comprehension. A word of caution is necessary, however, as fronting might be taken by English speakers to automatically denote markedness but this is not always the case in German where the object or other fronted element is often used to maintain ‘an unmarked given/new distribution of information’ (Dreschler, 2014: 116). In other words, sometimes placing the object or adjective before the verb simply provides the given-before-new construction required for cohesion. Unmarked themes are defined on the basis of ‘high frequency and unmarked intonation, in which the nuclear stress falls on the last lexical element in the clause or the element before the last’ (Teich, 2003: 119). Frequently used, idiomatic expressions in which the subject is removed from Theme position, such as ‘Um vier Uhr fahren wir los’ (at four o’clock we will set off), for example, are not marked. For a Theme to be marked in German, an item in initial position has to be perceived as unusual in that position.

The translator of the *Ring* will not have to wonder whether or not Wagner’s fronted objects, adjective-complements and even verbs are marked or not since the music will answer the question. In the verse line ‘ein **Weib** sah ich, **wonn**ig und **hehr**:’ (a woman saw I, lovely and noble), Wagner is deliberately fronting the object (Weib), which, if not clear from the words, is clear in the music:

Fig. 33



Jameson, with his archaic English, is able to preserve the rhymes by translating this almost literally and word-for-word, with a marked fronted object (wife) and subject-verb inversion: ‘a **wife** saw I, **won**drous and fair’. When subject-verb inversion is ruled out, keeping ‘women’ or ‘wife’ as the fronted object is almost impossible and only achievable if the point-of-view is changed, which is what Sams and Porter do:

> Sams: ‘That woman, that angel on high’
>
> Porter: ‘But she’s here too, lovely and fair’.

Both effectively keep *Weib* as the theme of the clause, but despite the word order facilitating some concision, they do not manage to produce a verse with alliterative rhymes. In my translation, I was able to retain *Weib*/’wife’ in clause initial position by changing the perspective from being focussed on Siegmund’s act of seeing to Sieglinde’s act of standing: ‘his **wife** stood there, **won**drous and fair’. Although ‘wondrous’ says more than ‘lovely’ (the more usual translation of *wonnig*), my rhymes connect the person with the adjective in a way that is wholly coherent with the surrounding text.

A close analysis of *DW* I/3 shows that Wagner also fronts or thematises an adjective (‘Waffenlos **fiel** ich in **Fein**des Haus’)[87], a genitive-object (‘Des **Blind**en Auge leuchtet ein **Blitz’)[88],** an adverb (‘**Sel**ig schien mir der **Sonn**e Licht’)[89] and a verb (‘Er**jagt** hätt' ich, was **je** ich verlor’)[90]. It is not impossible to front the same meaning as Wagner but it is not always possible to create rhymes as well. In the case of the fronted genitive object, Jameson keeps Wagner’s thematic design but not the rhyme. Porter and Sams ignore both. I manage to preserve both the fronting and the rhyme with a passive

[87] Gloss:Weaponless fell I in the enemy’s house

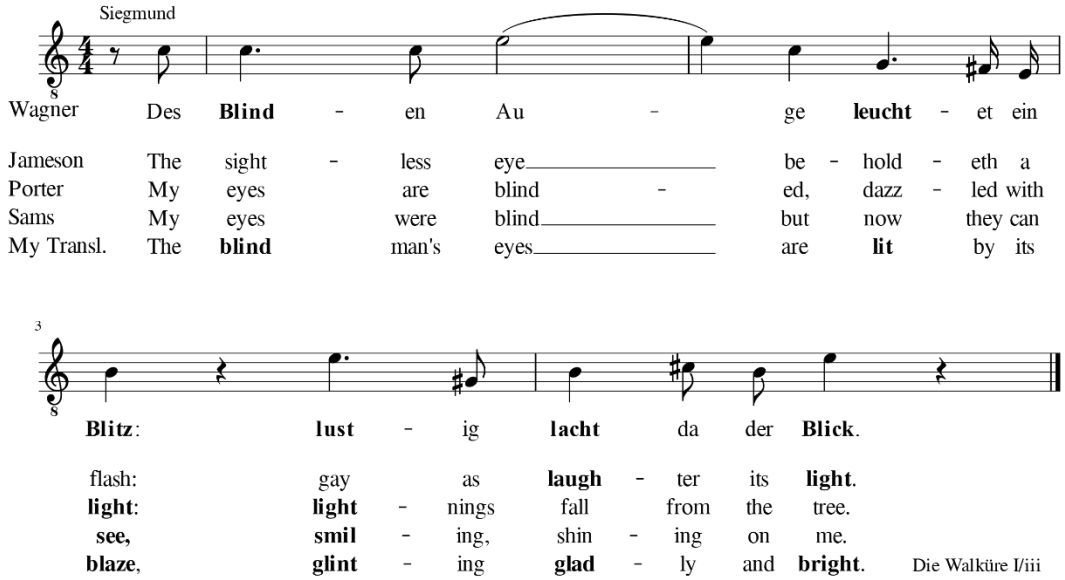
[88] Gloss: in the eyes of the blind man lights a flash

[89] Gloss: Blissfully shone on me the sun’s light

[90] Gloss: acquired would I have all I ever lost

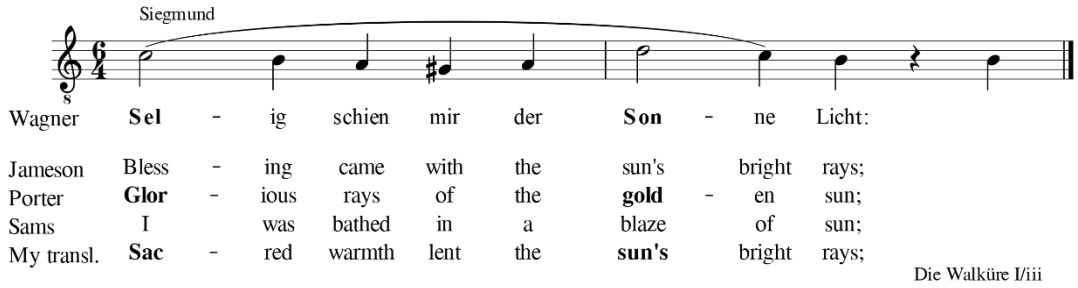
construction and by changing the subject to a possessive pronoun, whose object is ‘star’ in the preceding phrase:

Fig. 34



Where the fronted adverb *selig* is concerned, it should not be difficult in principle to front an English equivalent but translating *selig* is not straightforward in the phrase ‘**Sel**ig schien mir der **Sonn**e Licht’. There are not enough available notes to translate the phrase closely as in ‘blissfully shone on me the sun’s light’. Jameson probably provides the closest semantic translation preserving Wagner’s fronted idea of *selig*/’blessing’. Porter keeps something of the spirit of the meaning including the fronted idea of *selig* with ‘glorious’ and his words are a good match to the musical shape of the phrase (the verb of his phrase follows in the second half of the musical phrase). Sams, I suggest, does very little more than simply translate the content of the phrase with a pronoun having to take the weight of the downbeat minim and inventing his own rhyme scheme simply because ‘bathed’ presented itself as an appropriate translation of *schien mir* and ‘blaze’ as a meronym for ‘sunlight’. My translation again preserves the fronting and the rhyme, though a small liberty was taken with verb inversion:

Fig.35



One of the most noticeable ways in which Wagner achieves his concise phrasing is through omission of the conjunction *wenn* in conditional and optative clauses. This contributes to the paratactic structure that dominates his poetic and musical style but necessitates inverted word order, especially of subject and verb. Wagner prefers two alternatives to *wenn*, which today are limited to literary German. The first is the use of the present or past indicative with subject-verb inversion, the second is the use the imperfect subjunctive (*Konjunktiv* II) in both the main and sub-ordinate clause with subject-verb inversion. The problem for the translator into English is how to incorporate conditionality and preserve the rhyme on the accented note, given the restricted availability of syllables and the stress pattern established by the S-V inversion. In the verse line 'Ha, **Schan**de ihm, der das **Schwert** mir **schuf,** /be**schied** er mir **Schimpf** für Sieg!'[91] (*DW* II/4), Wagner uses the past indicative to signal conditionality in a verse of five alliterating rhymes all using one initial consonantal sound (sch). To tackle the grammatical problem, Jameson and Porter simply took out the conditional element. Jameson was then able to furnish four of the five rhymes[92], although his final phrase is not a translation of the ST. Porter borrows Jameson's translation except for the final phrase, which he tries to translate more closely and, therefore, loses some rhymes:

Jameson	Porter
O <u>shame</u> on him	Then <u>shame</u> on him
who be**stowed** the **sword**	who be**stowed** the **sword<u>,</u>**
and **tricks** me with **trust**less blade!	the **sword** that will <u>bring</u> my shame!

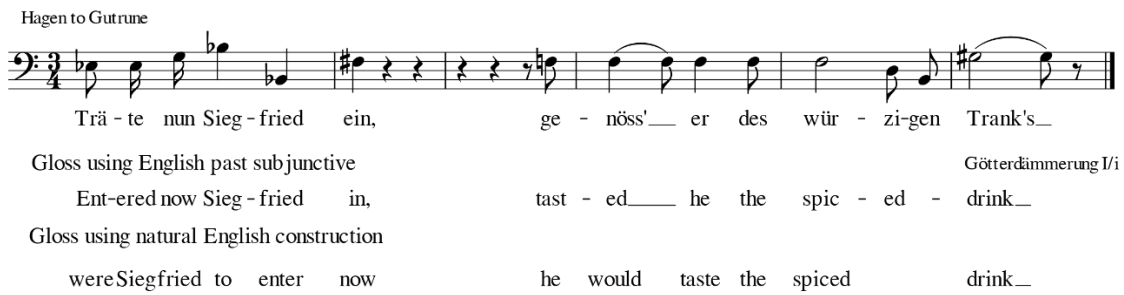
[91] Gloss: Ha, shame on him, who made the sword for me, if he chose for me dishonour instead of victory.

[92] According to Old Norse rules, the initial consonant cluster 'st' and 's' do not alliterate, however, Jameson, Porter and Sams often ignore this fact.

Sams retains the conditional element by reorganising the phrase and altering the music to accommodate an extra syllable having no doubt decided against the need for rhymes: ‘Oh shame on him, if he made that sword, not [for] victory but for death!’ Although Sams loses the emphasis that Wagner gives to *beschied er mir* (decided for me) by fronting the indicative preterite, the line is fluent and the meaning is essentially Wagner’s. Like Sams, I preserved the conditionality of the phrase by adding a note to the music to achieve four of the five rhymes but on two initial consonant sounds rather than one: ‘O shame on him if he **sent** this **sword**, / not [for] **vic**’try but **vile** defeat.’

Wagner’s second, and very frequent way of avoiding the conjunction *wenn* in order to compress his verse and create alliterative rhymes, was to use the imperfect subjunctive (Konjunktiv II) in clause initial position in both the main and subordinate clause with subject-verb inversion. This is not uncommon when modal verbs are concerned but Wagner’s use of lexical verbs in this way was as unusual in his time as it is today (Dollhopf, 1870: 31). An example from *GD* (I/1) will demonstrate the translator’s challenges:

Fig.36



Just as modern German would require many more syllables (*wenn nun Siegfried eintreten würde, dann würde er des würzigen Trankes genießen*) so does English and since in modern English the lexical verb cannot be in clause initial position (unless being used in the imperative), it is impossible to recreate the alliterative verse of Wagner’s libretto. Instead, Jameson and Porter use a passive let-imperative phrase followed by the indicative, whilst Sams retains the if-clause but alters the construction of the verse to do so. I have chosen an interrogative-type conditional construction starting the clause with ‘should’ instead of ‘if’ because it has slightly more weight

suitable for the first beat of the bar on which it is set. None of these solutions was also able to furnish the translations with rhymes:

Wagner
Träte nun Siegfried ein, genöss' er des würzigen **Trank's**

Jameson	Porter
Let now but Siegfried come	Now let our Siegfried come
and taste of the magical draught	we'll give him the magical drink

Sams	My translation
if he were here today,	Should ever Siegfried come,
if he took one sip of that drink,	we'd serve him our magical draught

Wagner frequently uses the imperfect subjunctive in clause initial position as a rhyme word to express wishing and speculating, which his characters spend a great deal of time doing in the *Ring*. In English, this is normally expressed simply as 'I wish' or 'if only' but can also be expressed with modal verbs such as 'would', 'could', 'may', or 'might'. In German, the optative subjunctive can express a wish in one word, sometimes one syllable, but in English, the expression of hypothesis is usually lengthier, requiring more notes than are available and making it even harder to place rhymes on the appropriate stressed notes. When Sieglinde is wondering if she has found in Siegmund someone to save her from her husband Hunding, Wagner uses the verb *finden* (to find) in the imperfect subjunctive mood, *fände*. Then he shortens it to one syllable *fänd'* (apocope). He does the same with 'kommen': 'O **fänd'** ich ihn **heut'** und **hier,** den **Freund**; / käm' er aus **Frem**den zur ärmsten **Frau**.' (*DW* I/3), creating two half-lines of nine syllables each. The English translations need more words to express Sieglinde's wishful thoughts so some information, such as location (*hier*) or time (*heut*'), is omitted. Some rhymes are possible because of the English cognates (or near-cognates) for *fände* (would find), *Fremden* (abroad) and *Freund* (friend). Jameson uses the modal auxiliary verb 'might' plus an infinitive to express hypothesis but is only able to produce two alliterative rhymes: 'O might I today find here the **friend**; come from a**far** to the saddest wife'. Porter makes the phrase interrogatory but still only produces two rhymes: 'And oh, have I **found** today that **friend**, come from the distance to end my grief?'. Sams chooses a conditional construction using 'if' twice, which necessitates additional notes, and manages to include three rhymes: 'Oh yes [if] he

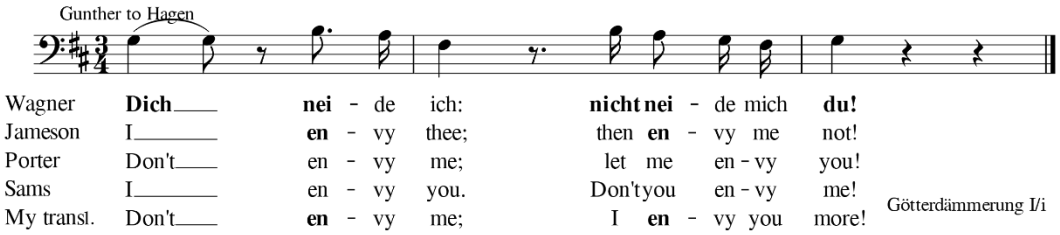
were here my **fate**, my **friend**, if he could save me from mis'ry [and] **fear**'. I liked the slightly old-fashioned 'might I find' that Jameson used, which is still used in some contexts and not difficult to understand. It meant I could translate three of the rhyme words almost literally, keeping them on the same notes as Wagner's rhymes. However, to create a fully rhyming verse line I chose to do what Sams describes as looking at the words as if they are 'symptoms' (Sams & Johnston, 1996: 176) of ideas. Rather than translate the words, I translated what, according to my interpretation, caused them to be written: 'O **might** you be **him**, the **man** of my **hopes**; come from a**far**, who will change my **fate**'.

Sometimes, Wagner's succinctness has nothing to do with linguistic imperatives and his departure from normal syntax is purely rhetorical, which the flexibility of his language allows. He was not averse to non-idiomatic word order if it would make a good line of verse and subsequently a dramatic piece of music. To this end, he produced lines like:

> **Dich neid**e ich: **nicht neid**e mich **du**! (*GD* I/1)
> (you envy I: not envy me you)

Gunther is reassuring Hagen that he does not have to be jealous of him. The strange syntax suggests that Wagner wanted *Dich* (accusative/object case 'you') and *du* (you) to be the first and last thought in this phrase, putting Hagen first and last so to speak. The position of *Nicht* is equally important, as normally it would be at the end (*neide mich nicht*). The use of ***du*** is unnecessary but again Wagner wants to stress the 'otherness' of Hagen. It is an example of the many succinct lines in Wagner's verse that is almost impossible to translate accurately and succinctly whilst preserving the rhymes:

Fig.37



Possibly the most noticeable feature of Wagner's economy of language, which facilitated *Stabreim*, was his use of asyndetic parataxis, a construction in which sentences or clauses are not formally coordinated or subordinated with any connective or coordinator. The prolific use of the semi-colon is a typographical marker of this. According to von Wolzogen, this stylistic element was probably part of Wagner's desire to avoid any mediation of feelings and experiences, simply wanting to express them in quick succession (1878: 56). Wagner's parataxis is not that of unrelated clauses juxtaposed or one of digression; there may be no conjunctions to express relationships, but sentences or phrases are linked by some semantic or logical relationship.

> Der **Welt** Erbe ge**wänn**e mir ein Ring:
> für der **Minn**e **Gunst miss**' ich ihn **gern**;
> ich **geb'** ihn euch, **gönnt** ihr mir **Gunst**. (*GD* III/1)
>
> (This ring might win me the world's wealth:
> for the gift of love I would gladly relinquish it;
> I'd give it to you if you'd give me your affection.)

If the unspoken conjunctions of the above example were included, it might read:

> This ring might win me the world's wealth
> BUT for the gift of love I would gladly relinquish it
> SO I'd give it to you if you'd give me your affection

Such self-contained paratactic phrases are not a problem in English. Without the constraints of conjunctions or the necessity for parts of grammar required in standard speech, word order can arranged more freely making the preservation of rhyme easier. The following example shows how Jameson, Sams (with one exception) and I take advantage of this:

> Wagner
> Des **Va**ters Wehr **fügt'** ich mir **neu**:
> **Na**gelfest schuf ich mir **Noth**ung.
> **Tüch**tig zum Kampf **dünkt'** er dem Zwerg*;*
>
> Jameson
> My **fa**ther's blade **forged** I a**new**.
> **Ne'er** was steel stronger than **Noth**ung.
> <u>Fit</u> for the fight <u>then</u> it was deemed;

Sams
My **fa**ther's sword, that's what I **forged,**
Nothung that's what he called it.
Just what we need, Mime agreed,

My translation
My **fa**ther's sword, **fashioned** like new:
nail-hard steel glittered in **No**tung.
Mighty and sharp, **Mi**me was pleased,

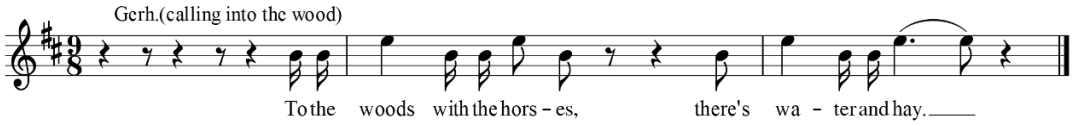
Another way Wagner opted to compress his verse and manipulate word order for semantic and musical effect was through ellipsis, readily omitting words that he assumed would be inferred by the listener. At the end of the oath-swearing section in *GD* II/4, Brünnhilde's passionate outburst below has even more impact for its brevity; written in standard German it would be longer and lose the emphasis on *brach* (broke) and *schwur* (swore):

Wagner
denn, brach seine **Eid**e er **all'**, schwur **Mein**eid jetzt dieser **Mann**

Standard German
so wie er alle seine Eide brach, so hat er auch jetzt Meineid geschworen
(just as he broke all his oaths, now he has also sworn falsehood)

Wagner's verse is most challenging when the verb is omitted. Occasionally, English, like German, can omit the verb but in most cases, the absence of the verb makes the phrase incomprehensible. The absence of the verb works in the translation of 'In **Wald** mit den **Ross**en zu **Weid'** und **Rast**![93] (*DW* III/1) because there is enough background information for the hearer to retrieve it:

Fig.38

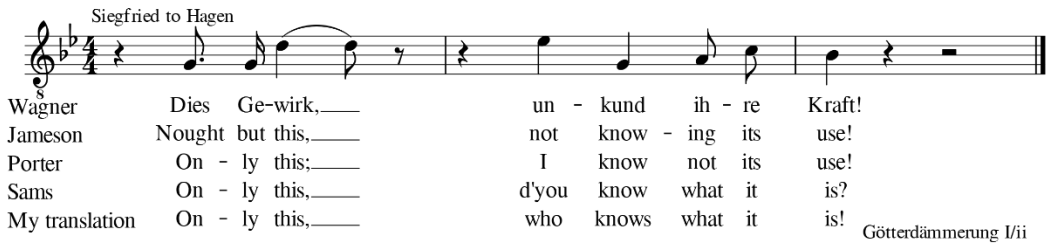


However, in order to preserve the rhyme, I had to add information not found in the ST. The English translation of 'Wohin, du heitrer Held?' (*GD* I/1) could, like the German,

[93] Gloss: To the wood with the horses where they can graze and rest

also omit the verb but ‘where to you happy hero?’ makes Hagen sound like a bus conductor selling a ticket! In most cases, the omission of the verb in English does not work and its necessity makes reproducing rhyming words on specific notes difficult. Whilst longer phrases at least allow the possibility of arranging the words to create alliterative rhymes, shorter elliptic utterances do not. When Hagen asks Siegfried in *GD* I/1 whether after slaying the dragon he took anything from the hoard of treasure, Siegfried answers: ‘Dies Gewirk, un**kund** seiner **Kraft**’, literally ‘this metalwork, ignorant of its power’. Both subject and verb have been omitted and further concision achieved by contracting *dieses* (this) to *dies* and dropping the suffix of *unkundig* (ignorant). To say the same in standard German might require about twice as many syllables: ‘Nur dieses Gewirk nahm Ich, dessen Kraft ich unkundig bin’. Siegfried’s throwaway response is significant to the plot but the brevity of the music means something must be sacrificed. In this case there is loss of detail as *Gewirk* (woven material, reference to the Tarnhelm) is replaced by a deictic ‘this’ by all the translators, which relies on the visual signs of the stage to make sense.

Fig.39



Jameson comes closest to Wagner’s construction with no active verb or subject. Porter, Sams and I introduce an active verb whose use forces Porter into a rare inversion and Sams into colloquial elision and a change of meaning.

It has been suggested that fronting and inversion are entirely related to musical design, after all, in *O&D* Wagner claimed that he wrote the poetry for his libretto (1852/1914b: 159) with musical composition in mind. Phrases with inverted word have the effect of a musical phrase, which at its start draws the listener into a sort of suspense that is held and developed until at its end there is resolution leading to understanding (Dollhopf, 1870: 31). The fronting of a part of speech along with its musical interpretation serves to highlight, contrast, hold up for scrutiny, or dramatize

some aspect of the drama both verbally and musically and unless the translator gives rhyme priority, these stylistic features and their inherent contribution to meaning are potentially lost in translation.

6.2.6 Translator strategies with respect to *Stabreim*

In simple phrases, with only one rhyme couplet, where the rhymes can be translated with English cognates, the translator can easily replicate *Stabreim*. The advantage to the translation is that the convergence of text and music is not altered thus preserving the same meaning potential as the original libretto:

DW I/3
a a
Die **bräut**liche Schwester befreite der **Brud**er;
The **bride** and sister is/are freed by the/her **broth**er
Jameson, Porter and my translation

On occasion, longer verse-lines with two rhyme couplets can also be successfully translated when English cognates are available and English word order is similar to the German:

GD III/1
a a b b
Frau **Sonn**e, **sen**de uns den Helden, der das **Gold** uns wieder**gäb**e! Wagner
Fair **sun**light, **send** to us the hero, with our **gold**, which he can **give** us! Porter

More often than not, however, it is difficult to translate Wagner's verse lines into acceptable English whilst keep the alliterative rhymes in the same place as the ST for reasons discussed in the previous sub-chapter. When the translator is unable to preserve the rhymes and their relationship to the music as found in the original score, then the following choices, in order of decreasing fidelity, may suggest themselves:

1. preserve the sense, rhymes and their semantic connection but alter the rhyme scheme
2. reduce the number of rhymes
3. alter the sense slightly and make new rhymes
4. paraphrase with the same or alternative rhyme scheme
5. place rhymes on accented notes to which Wagner set no rhymes

6. abandon alliterative rhymes but replace them with content words, which have the same semantic connections
7. match the musical and spoken accent without concern for rhyme or content words or their semantic relationships

What follows are examples of these strategies taken from *DW* (I/3) unless otherwise noted.

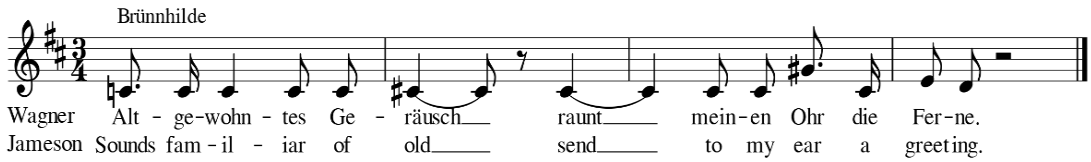
6.2.6.1 Rhyme scheme alteration

The translator is able to find alliterating semantic equivalents for Wagner's rhyme words but unable to place them in the same position so he creates a new rhyme scheme:

a b b a
Altgewohntes Ge**räusch raunt** meinem **Ohr** die Ferne. *GD* (I/3)
(old familiar sounds whisper in my ear from afar)
a b a b
Sounds familiar of **old send** to my **ear** a greeting. (Jameson)

Although in this example, Jameson's rhymes closely translate Wagner's, the change of rhyme scheme means that there will inevitably be some alteration to the subtle meanings created through the combination of words and music. Instead of the murmuring sounds of the repeated C sharp pictorializing the rhyme words *Geräusch* (sound) and *raunt* (whispers), it is rendered meaningless in its association with 'old' and 'send'. The melody highlights the connection between *Gerausch* and *Ohr* (sound/ear) in that each word (syllable) is set to a rising interval but Jameson's rearrangement means that the music connects 'old' and 'ear', which is of no significance:

Fig. 40



Jameson could easily have retained Wagner's musico-poetic synthesis using the same words if he had organised them differently: '**Old** familiar **sounds**/**send** to my **ear** a greeting'. Such detail may be lost on the audience in the opera house, for whom such

moments are fleeting, but for the singer, the danger of uncoupling musical and verbal meaning is always present when, as Porter put it, ‘important words’ are not kept ‘exactly where Wagner placed them’ (1977: xv). The challenge is identifying the important words and weighing their loss against the interests of communication that drives the drama forward.

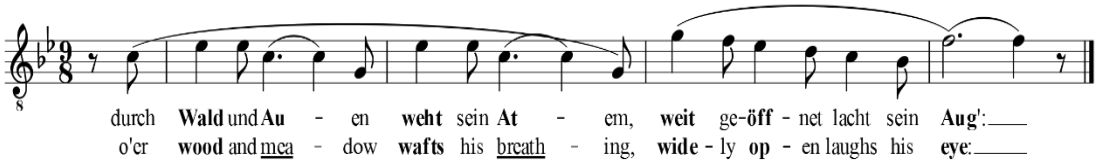
6.2.6.2 Reduction of rhymes

The translator translates most, but not all, of Wagner’s rhyme words with alliterating semantic equivalents:

a b a b a b b
durch **Wald** und **Au**en **weht** sein **At**em, **weit** ge**öff**net lacht sein **Aug'**:
(through wood and meadow wafts his breath, / wide open smiles his eye!)
a x a x a b b
o'er **wood** and meadow **wafts** his breathing, **wide**ly **op**en laughs his **eye**:
(Jameson)

The rhyme words ‘wood’/ ‘wafts’ are perfect equivalents for *Wald / weht*, as are ‘widely’/ ‘open’/ ‘eyes’ for *weit / geöffnet / Aug’*. Although it is unfortunate that two of the most emphasised notes of the phrase (tied dotted crochet and crochet C4, repeated) have lost their rhymes, at least they still foreground the same meaning whose connection remains the same as in the original score:

Fig. 41

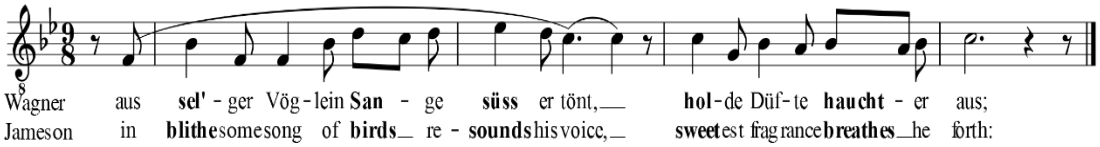


A translation can omit parts of the rhyme scheme and the remaining rhymes will remain valid if they have a function beyond mere decoration, as they do in this example. Alliteration in verse-lines where fewer than half the original rhymes are reproduced will tend to be mere ornament, unable to enhance the communicative effect through shared verbal semantics and sonic relationships, whether verbal or musical.

6.2.6.3 Alteration of meaning and new rhymes

The translator creates a rhyming verse-line with the same number of rhymes but they are not translations of the rhyme-words in the ST; other words in the verse-line have been made into rhymes due to the needs of syntax and grammar. The rhyme scheme changes and the translated rhymes may have no obvious semantic relationships. The rhyming words of the TT, have no specific association with the notes to which they are attached and the verse-line may lose any additional meaning that the music had given the ST.

Fig. 42



In this example from Jameson's translation, the coherent trio of rhymes *sel'ger / Sange / süss* (blessed/song/sweet) has been replaced by the less coherent trio of 'blithesome' (translating sel'ger), 'birds' (which translates *Vöglein* and was not in the rhyme scheme of the ST) and 'breathes' (direct translation of *haucht*). However, the rhyme pair *holde* (lovely) and *haucht* has been replaced with the rhyme pair 'sounds' and 'sweetest' that has some semantic coherence though different to Wagner's. None of the original semantic connections remains. In musical terms, the new rhyme scheme means that a relatively rare melisma on the first syllable of the word *Sange* (song), a miniature word-painting, is lost on the word 'birds':

6.2.6.4 Paraphrase

There is a temptation when seeking to recreate alliterative verse, to diverge from the original thoughts and ideas of the author and to accept infidelity to the ST through either a paraphrase or adaptation. Of all the translators, Jameson chooses paraphrase the least, partly because his use of archaic English made paraphrase less necessary. Porter, however, who was intent on natural word order and easy comprehension, often chooses to paraphrase whether attempting to retain the rhymes or not. Sams has a similar approach but demonstrates much less regard for any kind of fidelity to the ST semantics

or its form elements. I also chose paraphrase on some occasions for the sake of producing rhymes.

The first approach to paraphrasing involves retaining the same rhyme scheme (quantity/order) so that the new rhymes converge with any musical meaning in the same way as those of the ST:

a b b a
Keim und **Spross** ents**pringt** seiner **Kraft.** (Wagner)
(seeds and shoots spring up from his power)
a b b a
leaves and **buds**, he **brings** them to **life.** (My translation)

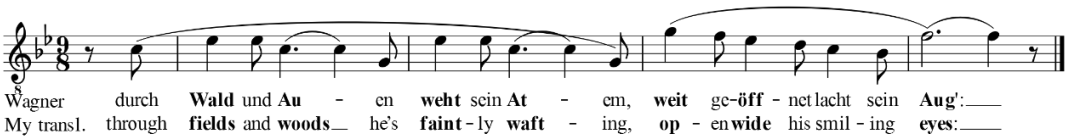
The second approach alters the rhyme scheme and therefore the relationship of music and verse:

a b a b
durch **Wald** und **Au**en **weht** sein **At**em,
(through wood and meadow wafts his breath,)
a b b
weit ge**öff**net lacht sein **Aug'**: (Wagner)
(wide open smiles his eye!)

a b a b
through **fields** and **woods** he's **faint**ly **waft**ing, /
c b c
open wide his smiling **eyes***:*(my translation)

The music on which the words above are set contains two repeated bars with a swaying or rocking pattern that seems to imitate in sound the image of springtime breezes wafting back and forth through woods and meadows.

Fig. 43



In the ST, the breath (*Atem*) of spring is wafting (*weht*) through woods and meadows but in my paraphrase, spring's breath is no longer mentioned specifically, yet his breath, a metaphor for breeze, is implied through the action of 'wafting'. The

alliterative rhymes and the image of the freedom of the spring breezes (*Atem*) wafting through the landscape (*Auen*) remain convergent with their musical pictorialisation through the repeated tied Cs in the middle of each of the first two full bars. The translator must decide whether this is acceptable based on context and the musical contribution to the communication.

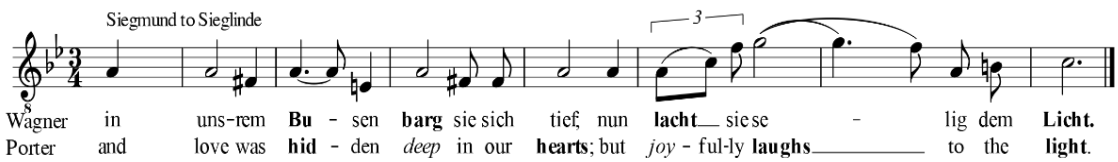
6.2.6.5 Placement of rhymes on alternative accented notes

The translator can create alternative rhyme schemes using accented notes on which Wagner placed no rhymes. The rhymes translate those in the ST but are in different positions. This approach is possible because Wagner did not adhere strictly to the 'rules' of *Eddic* verse, which has a restricted number of accents in each half-line, usually two. Wagner's verse often has more accents, which are not associated with rhymes and so the music provides opportunities to accent translated rhyme words that for syntactic reasons could not be made to fit the rhyme accents of the ST:

> Wagner
> in unsrem **Bus**en **barg** sie sich tief; nun **lacht** sie selig dem **Licht**.
>
> Gloss
> (in our bosom hid she herself deep; now smiles she blissfully to the light.)
>
> Porter
> and Love was **hid**den <u>deep</u> in our **<u>hearts</u>**; but <u>joy</u>fully **<u>laughs</u>** to the **light.**

The first rhyme pair *Busen* and *barg* (preterite of *bergen*) are closely translated as 'hearts' and 'hidden' as are *lacht* and *Licht* as 'laughs' and 'light', but Porter sets them to accented notes given to non-alliterating words like *tief* (deep) and *selig* (blissful/blissfully) instead.

Fig. 44



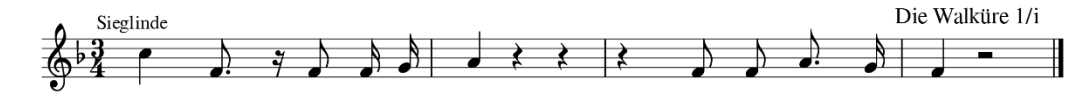
As can be seen, there is no longer any convergence of musical and verbal meaning. Wagner set *lacht* (laughs) on the first two quavers of a triplet as a sort of musical pictorialisation of the word, and he placed *selig* (blissfully) at the pinnacle of the phrase

creating an image in sound of love reaching up towards the light from the deep dark recesses where it had been hidden. Porter's alteration inverts the verbal and musical expressions of joy and bliss:

6.2.6.6 Replacement of rhymes with content words

It can by no means be said that Jameson, Porter or Sams systematically made efforts to replace rhymes with semantically equivalent content words. However, there are occasions when it seems that the force of the parallelism or contrast between musical meaning and words has influenced their choices. In the following example, the verbal alliteration contrasts *mutig* (courageous) with *müd'* (tired). The 'courageous' character of the first alliterative rhyme word is suggested by it being set on the dominant chord of F major, on the accented downbeat of the bar and at a pitch that is the highest of the preceding three bars. By contrast, *müd'* is set on the weakest beat of the bar against a harmony based on the dissonant dominant seventh. Setting aside Sams' rendition that not only does not translate the ST but whose decision to use 'Heavens' is decidedly questionable, Jameson and Porter's choices of 'valiant' and 'worn/'weary' demonstrates an understanding of the parallelism in the music:

Fig. 45



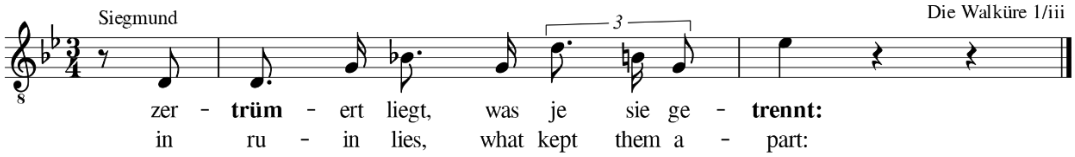
Wagner	**Mu** - tig	dünkt mich der	**Mann,**	sank	er	**müd**	auch	hin.
Jameson	Val - iant	is he me -	seems,	though	so	worn	he	lies.
Porter	Val - iant,	strong is the	man,	though	he's	wear - y	now.	
Sams	Heav - ens,	he must be	strong,	if	he	came	this	far.
My transl.	**Fear** - less,	that's how he	looks,	yet	he's	**faint**	and	worn.

When vocabulary choices, grammar and syntax make it impossible to create a rhymed verse-line, preserving the semantic relationship between the words and some relationship to musical meaning can be the next best option:

a				a		
zer**trümm**ert	liegt, was	je	sie	ge**trennt:**		(Wagner)
(wrecked	lies	what	always them	had separated)		
in **ru**ins	lie	what	kept them	a**part;**		**(**My translation)

In this case, the music rises metaphorically from the ruins on a D^3 to an $E^{4.}$:

Fig. 46

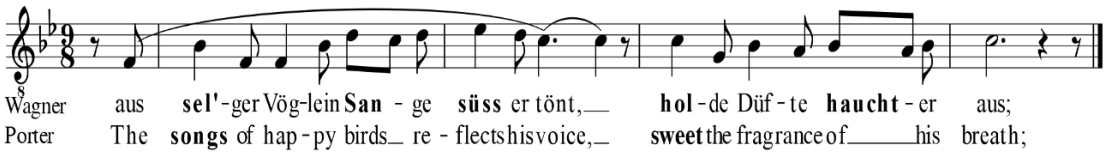


This approach might be considered preferable to one where the verbal meaning is compromised by awkward syntax in an attempt to produce a rhymed verse, as in older translations by Foreman: ‘the walls are waste that held them away’ and the Corders’ ‘lie prone the walls that held them apart’.

6.2.6.7 Replacement of rhymes with function words

In the translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams, there is more often than not no reproduction of the alliterative rhymes and no semantically equivalent content word to replace them. This means that any verbal and musical convergence is lost but it can also mean that the translation is marred by falsely accented words. In this example, *haucht* (breathes) is set to a two-note melisma that pictorialises (in minute detail) the idea of breath as breeze and though set to the third beat of the bar, the emphasis of the melisma demands something weightier and longer than Porter’s functional word ‘of’:

Fig. 47



When the nuances of meaning reciprocated between words and music are lost in this way, at best, the words and music do not contradict or disturb one another, at worst, the words and music might say different things. However, given the talent and experience of Jameson, Porter and Sams, this latter is seldom the case.

There are several reasons that justify a translator's decision to sacrifice rhyme in opera translation: its rhythmic, euphonic and organisational functions that are important in poetry are replaced by music; its semantic sound symbolism is often masked by the music, and the most obvious reason might be that it is simply not essential for a singable translation. It is not surprising, given these facts, that Jameson, Porter and Sams did not prioritize alliterative verse, though based on reviews, essays and interviews, the main reason seems to be that the translators feared the constraints that alliterative verse would have on their translation aims of ease of comprehension and naturalness. Based on the evidence of my translation, however, which reproduces over an estimated eighty percent of the rhymes of the original libretto, it is not impossible to produce a libretto with alliterative verse that is comprehensible and sings well. Of course, as in all translation, there are losses ranging from incomplete and altered rhyme schemes to changes of meaning. What is more likely to account for the paucity of alliterative rhymes in Jameson, Porter and Sams' translations than concerns about clarity of understanding are the difficulties of creating alliterative verse within the constraints of the music and within a limited time. Jameson, Porter and Sams were or are musicians first and wordsmiths, second, and Porter and Sams probably had a limited amount of time to complete the translations, having been commissioned to do so for a specific production. My fascination with Wagner's nexus of rhyme and melody as signposts to meaning meant that I was prepared to devote a great deal of time and effort to reproducing it for a translation that will give non-German speaking singers a much closer appreciation of Wagner's libretto and its musical context than those currently available.

Even if only being used as a translation aid for non-German speaking singers, a translation that respects Wagner's stylistic device of alliterative verse may assist the singer to interpret his or her role better because the loss of alliterative verse denies the performer in English the same semantic and emotional understanding as the performer in the original language. This is not purely a linguistic concern, the loss of rhyme, which was integral to the design of the music and intrinsic to Wagner's artistic expression, alters the relationship of music to words. Although it is not always possible to achieve a rhyming verse line to replicate Wagner's verse both formally and semantically, it is not impossible to preserve the relationship between the meaning of

the words that replace the rhyme words and the meaning of the music. Porter's suggested compromise to keep important words on the notes to which Wagner set them goes some way to preserving the word-tone intersemiosis for the performer's benefit, as do the translator's stylistic choices, when despite the absence of rhyme, the terse, direct and elevated sound of Wagner's language is reproduced to preserve the sound world of the *Ring.* The loss of alliterative verse is also mitigated and the convergence of verbal and musical meaning preserved when some rhymes are sacrificed for the retention of others and when rhyme words are replaced with semantically equivalent content words. It is also possible to compromise by relaxing the criteria of clarity and ease of understanding in lyrical sections where the dramatic narrative is less important than the expression of emotions.

6.3 Intersemiosis of music and words

This sub-chapter explores how Wagner's verse and melody converge as modes and how music serves to multiply the meaning of the verse, corroborating, elaborating, enhancing or contradicting it. I shall look at whether and how the translators have chosen to reproduce any convergence between music and verse in English and, therefore, whether the *Gestalt* of the opera is preserved and if not, how its meaning is altered for the audience. My main interest lies in how music gives meaning to the words and how translations, which are unable to create the same musico-poetic relationships, suffer loss or alteration of potential meaning and deprive singers of information necessary for their interpretation. My comparison is based on the discussion in Chapter 4.4 concerning the meaning of music in association with words.

The analysis looks firstly at how melody interprets and represents the verbal sense of the verse through musical imitation of declamatory style, musical pictorialisation of words and musical imitation of gesture as an indicator of emotion. Secondly, I look at how the text is interpreted by conventionalised musical figures or topics, as well as how Wagner's own musical language of tonality and leitmotif contribute to textual meaning. Finally, I look at how music goes beyond iterating the meaning of the words, functioning like a linguistic sub-clause that emphasises, contradicts, undermines or adds meaning not available in the words alone. It is highly artificial, of course, to separate elements of meaning that in reality work together and

although a particular line of the score is analysed only in terms of tonality, for example, it should not be forgotten that in the process of translating, the modes of music, rhyme, rhythm and drama are simultaneously being considered.

I have chosen my examples from *DW* Act II, scene 4 (hereafter referred to as the 'annunciation' scene.) and *GD* Act II, scene 5 (hereafter referred to as the 'conspiracy' scene). They are critical dramatic scenes containing a mixture of dramatic dialogue, arioso[94] and lyrical passages and exemplify Wagner's methods of creating a convergence of music and words. In the 'annunciation' scene (*DW*), Brünnhilde appears to Siegmund and orders him to follow her to Valhalla but he refuses because his love for Sieglinde will not allow him to abandon her. Brünnhilde is so moved by his love that she decides to protect Siegmund from death. This is a pivotal scene in the *Ring* because here Brünnhilde, through her compassion for Siegmund, learns about the power of love. In the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*), Brünnhilde plots Siegfried's demise with Hagen and Gunther. She reveals that Siegfried is invulnerable save for one spot on his back, where Hagen decides he will strike Siegfried and kill him. The German vocal score of each scene[95] can be found in Appendix 6. Translations of each scene by Jameson, Porter and Sams can be found in Appendix 7 (for ease of reference, my translation appears alongside them). My translation of the 'annunciation' scene can be found beginning on page 93 of Volume 2 of this thesis and the 'conspiracy' scene begins on page 362.

6.3.1 Music imitates textual meaning

Unlike instrumental music, the musical meaning in opera and vocal music is, in most cases, intrinsically related to the meaning of the words to which the music is set and music is invariably described as a musical expression of textual affect (referential) or as a musical transformation, assimilation or appropriation of textual affect (analogy).

[94] Recitative of a lyrical and expressive quality

[95] *Die Walküre/Götterdämmerung*: Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, n.d. [1865] Plate 17995/ n.d.[1875] Plate 21500. First Edition. Arranged by K. Klindworth.

Music is able to be referential or analogous to the words through imitation of various kinds and through the referential power of music's own conventionalised language.

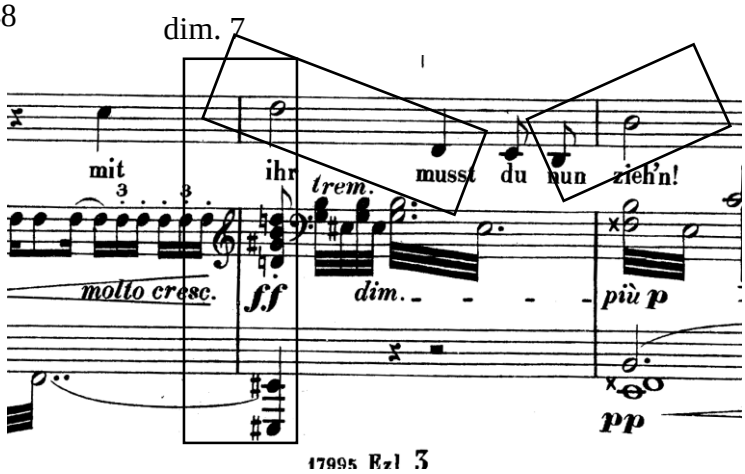
6.3.1.1 Imitation of speech intonation and rhetorical declamation

Speech intonations that express attitudes and sentiments are readily imitated by music. Wagner had a particular interest in the way in which musical rhythm and intonation shared expressiveness with speech because a central tenet of his theory of word-tone synthesis insisted that music mimetically follow declamatory patterns so that the meaning and emotions of the words are made easily available to the listener.

Intonation is an expressive aspect of prosody where exaggerated pitch, volume, elongated vowels and tempo changes serve to express the speakers' values and emotions, often intensifying them. One way to preserve the convergence of musical and verbal meaning is to heed the semantic and emotional intentions of musical declamation in the translation. In the first half of the 'annunciation' scene (*DW*), for example, the notes of Wagner's gentle, undulating melodic line move in small steps to create a naturalistic dialogic spoken style, with intervals of rarely more than a fifth. As the drama unfolds, however, larger intervals, often dissonant, become more frequent as Wagner uses them for dramatic purposes in moments of anger or fear. Extreme intervallic leaps (greater than a sixth) emphasise or colour the meaning of a word or phrase, often making the melody disjointed and difficult to sing. When Siegmund, having refused to follow Brünnhilde to Valhalla, asserts his desire to remain with Sieglinde, the angrier tone of his voice involves wider intervals than have been heard hitherto in this act. Brünnhilde's tone also becomes increasingly impatient and angry when octave intervals feature in her responses to Siegmund's defiant questions. After a reprise of the 'fate' and 'death-song' motifs, now faster and more agitated than when heard at the beginning of the scene and reminding the spectator of Brünnhilde's purpose, her anger becomes aurally palpable when an emphatic octave gesture interrupts the normal course of the 'death-song' motif. A descending perfect octave, which is often used to emphasise grandeur and strength (Rieger, 2011: 12), here signifies Brünnhilde's difficulty in asserting her power over Siegmund (Fig. 48). Wagner's setting of the word *ihr* [her] on a dissonant diminished seventh chord adds

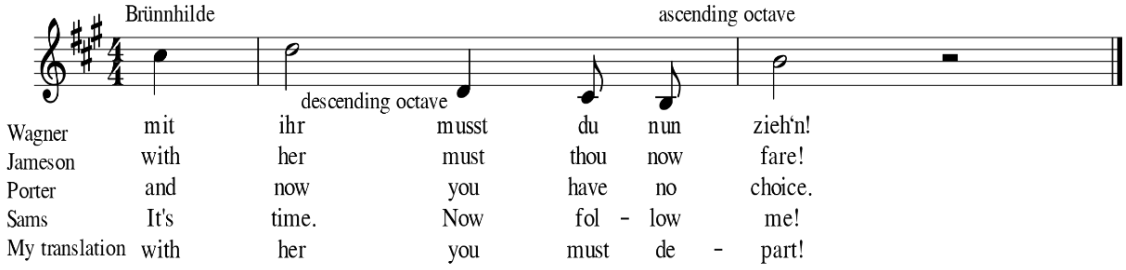
additional meaning as it reveals Brünnhilde's fear and bewilderment at being refused by Siegmund.

Fig. 48



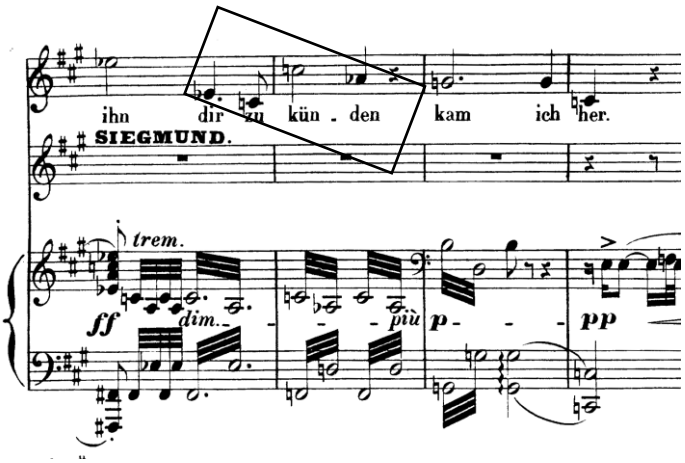
Wagner's decision to make 'mit ihr' (with her) the theme of the phrase with its resultant inverted word order is difficult to reproduce in an English translation without the use of inversion. Jameson, whose chosen style allowed for S-V inversions, did not have the problem: 'with her must thou now fare'. Porter and Sams, who insisted on natural word order, do not reproduce Wagner's thematization of 'mit ihr' and the significance of the diminished seventh chord is lost in their translations (Fig. 49). At the end of the phrase there is an ascending octave leap, which is an imperious or assertive intonation usually associated with commands, however, the minor key in which it is set undermines Brünnhilde's assertiveness and gives her command the sound of desperation. With the exception of Sams' translation, all the others reflect the questionable assertiveness of Brünnhilde's command. Sams' translation seems banal given the musical implications:

Fig. 49



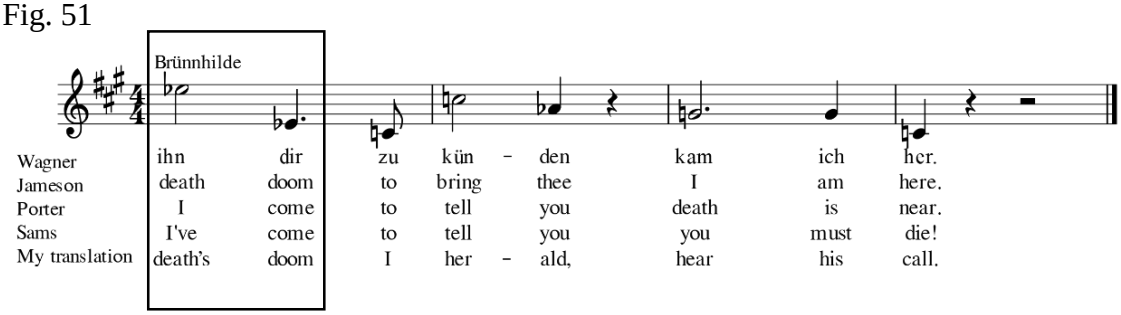
A descending octave leap occurs again at the end of Brünnhilde's next phrase in response to Siegfried's refusal to follow her. This time it begins a semitone higher:

Fig. 50



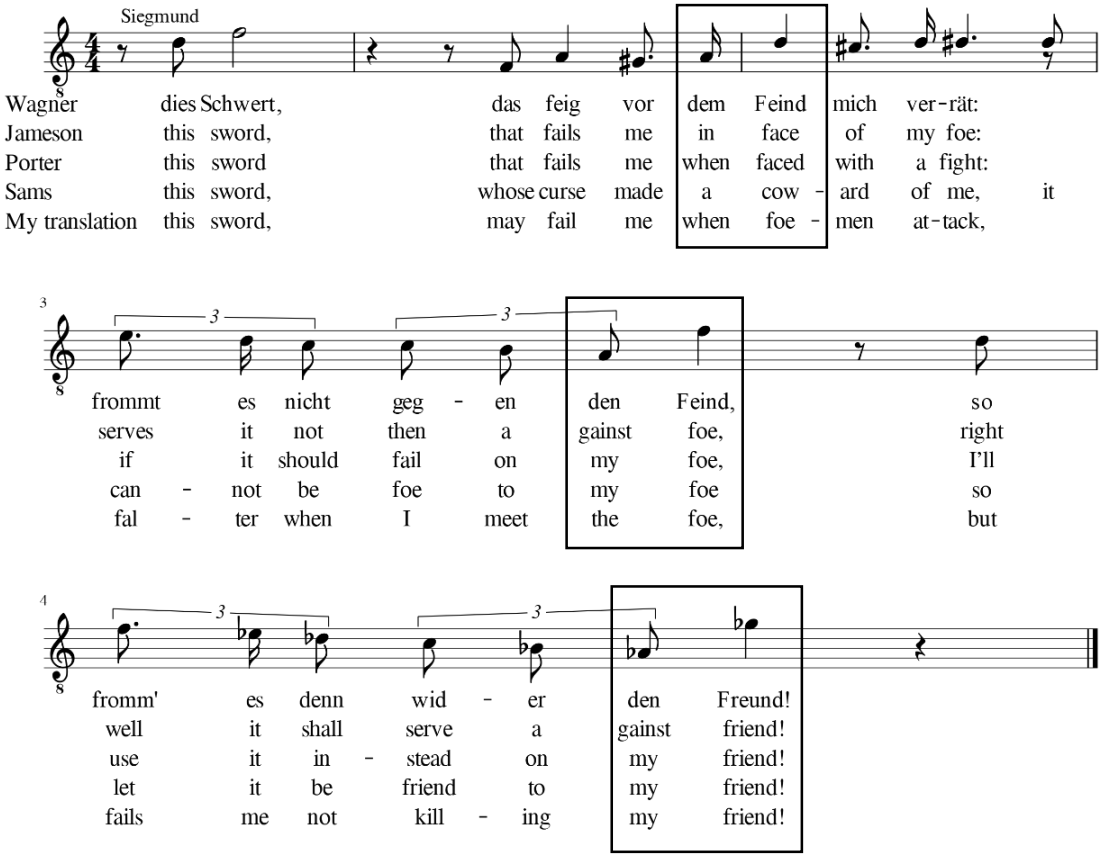
The word *ihn* refers to ‘death’ and the octave descent reflects a sense of doom and fate. A word-for-word gloss would read, ‘it to you to announce came I here’. It is almost impossible to say this in English with as few syllables as the German or to position semantic and grammatical equivalents of *ihn* and the indirect object pronoun *dir* (referring to Siegfried) at the top and bottom of the descending octave whilst conforming to the prosodic requirements of the high Eb minim and the low Eb dotted crochet. Porter and Sams, unconcerned about rhyming, find a solution by using the pronoun ‘I’ and the contraction of pronoun and verb ‘I’ve’ at the top of the octave and ‘come’ at the bottom (Fig. 50). In terms of intonation, it works well enough but seems semantically too light to set to a dramatic octave interval. Jameson’s solution is satisfying in terms of the doom-ridden intonation for ‘death doom’ but this is followed by unnatural word order. Inspired by Jameson’s ‘death doom’ and given the slow tempo, I was satisfied that the fronting of ‘death’s doom’ would reflect the meaning of the intonation in the octave interval without sounding unacceptably unnatural or being a barrier to comprehension:

Fig. 51



In vocal melody, the minor seventh interval is rare and when it occurs, it is for effect. Described as a ‘mild dissonance’ (Cooke, 1959/1990: 74), it has a ‘gentle mournful feeling’ rather than one of ‘violent anguish’ (ibid), which suits the words of Siegmund, who in the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*) threatens Sieglinde’s life not out of anger but despair (Fig. 52). As he holds the sword above her, on a rising minor seventh interval of woe and hopelessness, he speaks of her as ‘den Freund’ (the friend). This is an occasion when only words that closely translate the original text seem appropriate and in this case, each translator seems to agree. All feel the necessity to create rhymes to correspond with the parallelism of the rising minor seventh and the rising minor sixth in the previous bar, which connects the antonymity of the rhyme pair *Feind* (foe) and *Freund* (friend). What helped on this occasion were the near cognates in English that provided monosyllabic alliterating translations of *Feind* and *Freund*:

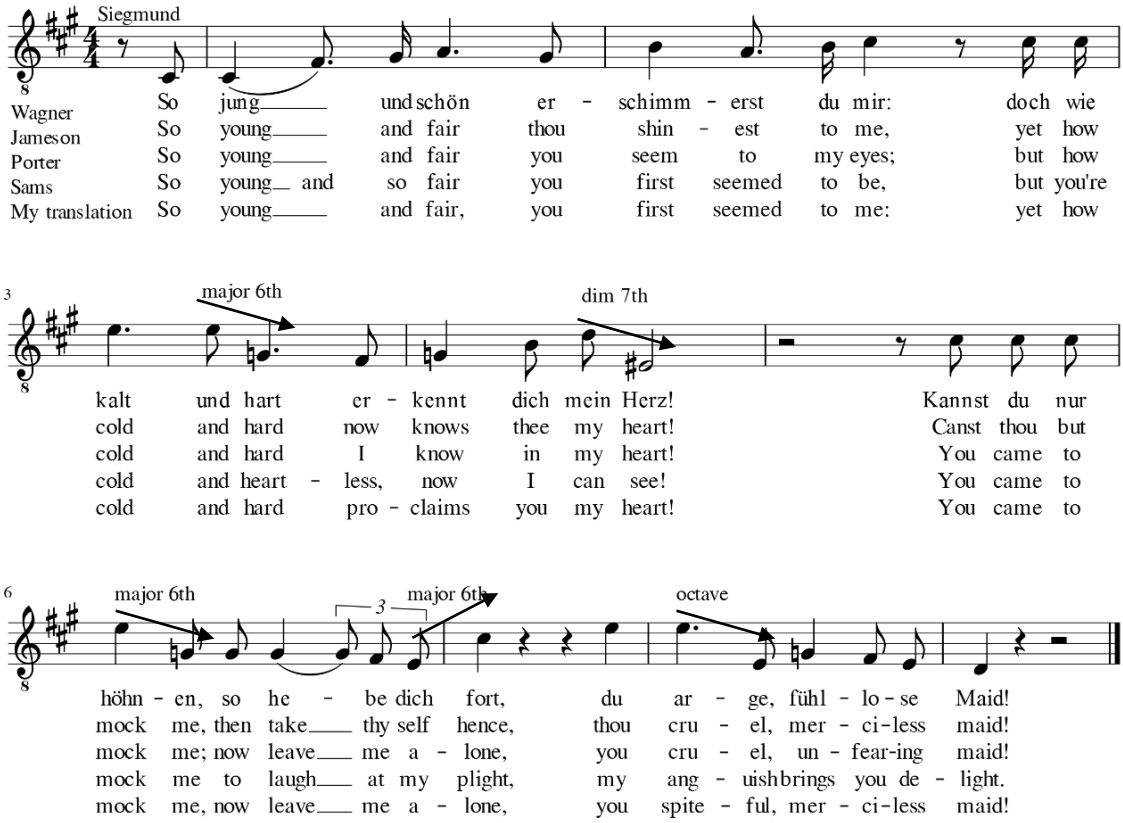
Fig. 52



Wagner’s use of intervals to imitate intonation can be found in Siegmund despair and anger as he begins to lose patience with Brünnhilde in the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*).

As Siegmund realises that Brünnhilde brings him not the promise of paradise but only sorrow, he laments with a pair of descending major sixth intervals that she is hard-hearted and has only come to mock him (rhyme pair: *hart* (hard), and *höhnen* (scorn)). A diminished seventh interval on the word 'heart' further tells of despair but also deep agitation (Rieger, 2011: 12). The descending octave on *arge* [cruel] is a release of his anguish in response to being told that the sword he was given no longer has any magic power to protect him from death.

Fig. 53



With the exception of Sams, the translators retain the convergence of musical and verbal meaning because they are able to translate almost word for word and retain the original positions of the important words. Sams' translation departs from the original so that the connection of intervallic tension and verbal implication is severed. The lamenting diminished seventh interval, to which he sets 'can see' loses the effect it had when set to 'mein Herz' (my heart). Similarly, because Sams replaces 'hebe dich fort' (go away) with 'laugh at my plight' he has turned an expression directed at Brünnhilde to one pointing back to Siegmund and though the minor sixth expresses

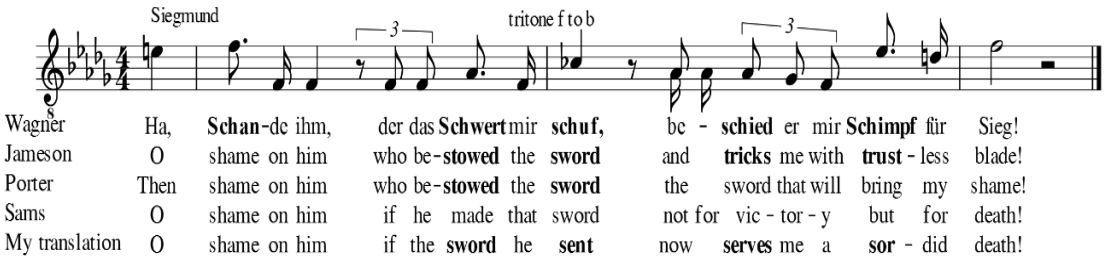
‘plight’, the phrase fails to match the overall direction of Siegmund’s emotions towards Brünnhilde, which are expressed in the music.

The unpleasant, dissonant sequential tritone interval and chord frequently symbolise ‘dark, sinister forces in the *Ring*’ (Bribitzer-Stull, 2015: 114) and is always fraught with semantic meaning whenever it appears. Wagner frequently uses the strident dissonance, which speaks of restlessness and unease, to communicate pain and sorrow, as well as evil and insanity. Also known as a diminished fifth or augmented fourth, the tritone comprises three whole tones that divide an octave in two equal parts. Its unstable sound demands some sort of tonal resolution and being neither major nor minor its ambiguity serves composers as a means by which to modulate to a distant key. Its nickname, the *diabolus in musica* (the devil in music), arose because in medieval ecclesiastical music it was forbidden due to its dissonant and, therefore, sinister quality[96], which the Church considered malignant and a contradiction to the perfection and harmony associated with God. It was also difficult to sing!

In the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*), when Siegmund rages in anger at being told that the sword he thought was given to protect him no longer will do so, Wagner sets the words ‘mir schuf’ (created for me) on a rising tritone interval amidst other extreme intervals (octave and minor seventh). The agent of the verb *schuf* (made) is Wotan, though he is referred to simply as ‘he’. This is the third time the verb, *schuf*, has been repeated in relation to the sword in this scene but on this occasion the tritone’s ambiguous nature reminds the audience of Wotan’s duplicity that lies at the heart of the tragedy. Jameson, Porter and Sams (and I at first) set ‘the sword’ to the tritone interval, which fits the tritone’s intonational anger. The emphasis given to the sword is not unwarranted in semantic terms given the role the sword plays in the tragedy:

[96] See the *New Oxford Companion to Music Volume 2*, 1994,edited by Denis Arnold for further information.

Fig. 54



However, Wagner is not using the tritone simply to intone anger but to emphasise Wotan's duplicity that is responsible for the eventual downfall of Valhalla and the gods. This meaning relies on the repeated use of the rhyme word *schuf*, which shortly before the utterance above appeared as follows:

Siegmund	Gloss
Kennst du dies **Schwert**?	Know you this sword?
Der mir es **schuf**,	He who made it for me,
be**schied** mir Sieg:	chose for me victory:
deinem **Droh**en **trotz'** ich mit ihm!	your threats I defy with it.
Brünnhilde	
Der dir es **schuf**,	He who made it for you,
be**schied** dir jetzt **Tod**:	has chosen for you now death:
seine **Tug**end nimmt er dem **Schwert**!	its virtue he takes from the sword

The tritone's significance relies not purely on its dissonance but on the repetition of the rhyme word *schuf* with which it is associated. Without the repetition of an equivalent word that translates *schuf*, the tritone as a sign of Wotan's duplicity is somewhat lost. My translation preserves this meaning more closely than the other translations by translating *schuf* as 'sent':

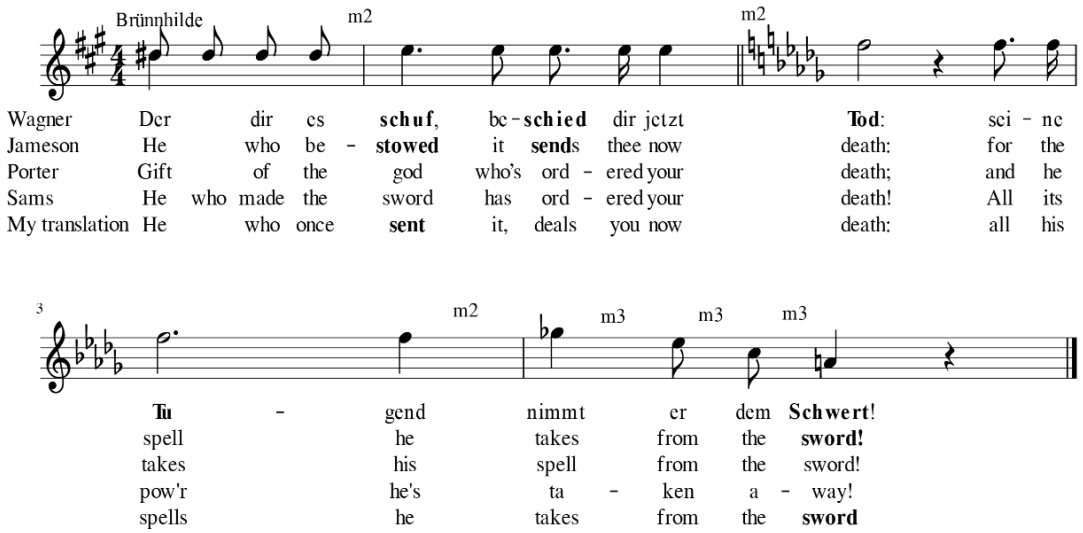
Siegmund:	See here my **sword**! It has been **sent** to **save** my life. I shall **thwart** all **threats** with this sword.
Brünnhilde:	He who once **sent** it, **sends** you now **death** and with**draws** his charm from the **sword**…
Siegmund:	O shame on him if the **sword** he **sent** now **serves** me a **sor**did death!

The tritone aside, it is worth mentioning that other intervals to which alliterative rhymes are set in these bars are also unusually large and reflect the anger that Siegmund feels towards Wotan. Note also, how *Schande* (shame), *Schwert* (sword) and *Schimpf*

(dishonour) are not only semantically connected through alliterations but through parallel note values (Fig. 54).

Although wide intervals are dramatic, the intonational meaning of small intervals is of equal importance when imitating speech. When Brünnhilde tells Siegmund in the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*) that he cannot rely on the sword’s magic to save him, she does so in groups of repeated notes, each sequentially rising by a minor second that has historically signified anguish (Cooke, 1959/1990: 78). The important words (all alliterative rhymes) occur on the semitone change. After the climax of the second musical phrase on Gb, the phrase then descends by minor thirds expressing the gloomy inevitability of Siegmund’s death:

Fig. 55

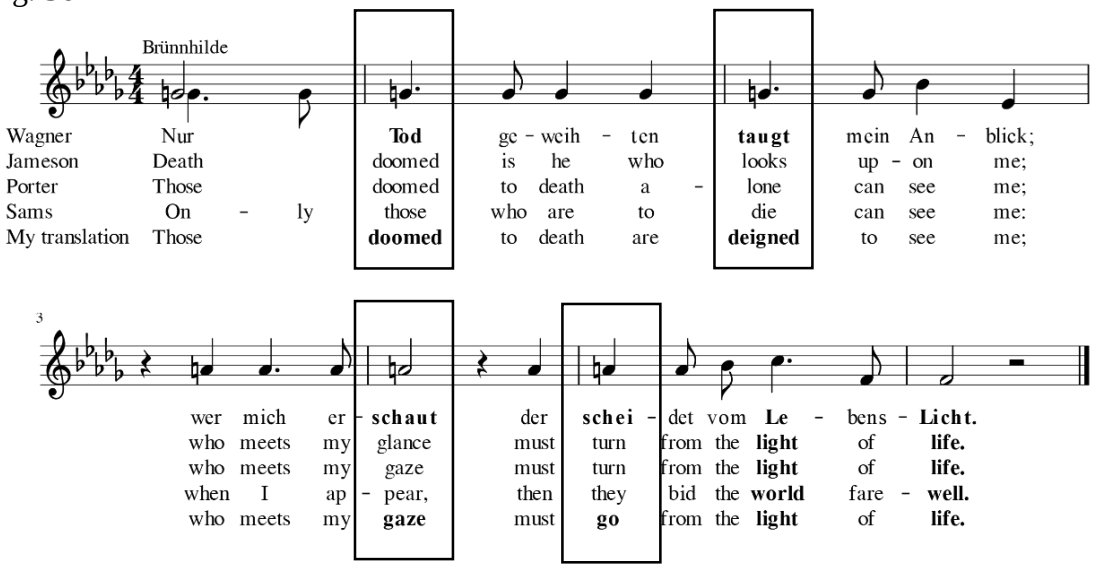


The minor second is the most unstable interval and its dissonance reveals both Brünnhilde’s reticence to carry out Wotan’s order to bring Siegmund to Valhalla and her anger at Siegmund for refusing to do her bidding. All the translations reflect the bitter anger of the repeated notes and minor second intervals and though the rhymes are mostly ignored, whose pairings are mirrored by parallel pitch (except for *Schwert*), the intersemiosis of verbal and musical meaning remains unaltered because the translators replaced the rhyme words with content words, coherent with Wagner’s meaning.

It is rare for people to speak without intonation but even a monotone utterance sends a message. Monotone utterances try to give nothing away about the speaker’s attitude or their emotions. Brünnhilde, who is highly emotional about Wotan’s order to

let Siegmund die at Hagen's hands, and who would like nothing more than to save him, is masking her sadness in the monotone delivery and the pairing of rhymes on repeated pitch and note durations in the passage below:

Fig. 56



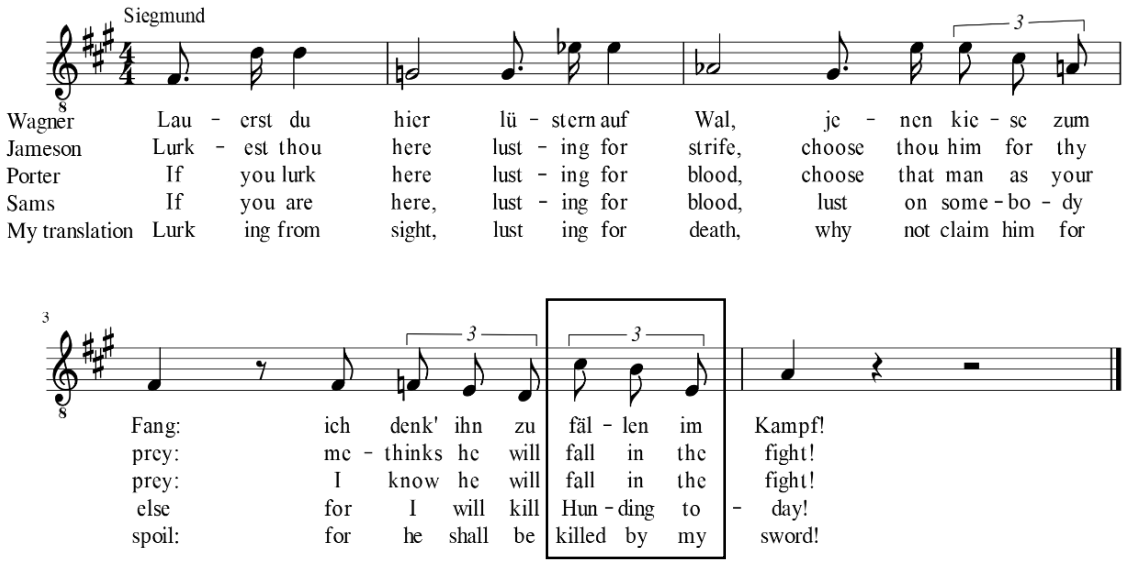
The intonation is quasi-religious, after all Brünnhilde, Wotans' daughter, is performing a ritual duty. The rhyme words *Tod/taugt* (death/is meant for) and *erschaut/scheidet* (sees/departs) punctuate the monotone delivery with their repeated sounds and semantic associations. Each rhyme pair is set to the same pitch located in the same position in the bar. Jameson maintains the sombre intonation thanks to slightly inverted word order and his choice of semantically connected content words that replace the rhyme words. He changes the construction of the phrase to keep the important content words 'doomed' and 'looks' in the same position as *Tod* and *taugt*. Porter's translation is slightly less satisfying because he replaces *taugt* with the adverb 'alone' and the emphatic accent of the music seems inappropriate. Sams' solution is the weakest despite changing the music to accommodate it. His translation may be very naturalistic, but it lacks the fateful gravitas of the music whose accents are ill matched to the pronouns 'those'/'they'. Where there is such obvious 'alliteration' in the music, thanks to the repeated pitch and position of the notes on the strongest beat of the bar, much care must be taken with the choice of words that replace the rhyme words attached to the notes. Jameson and Porter, by placing content words with some degree of coherence with the ST, preserve the meaning in Brünnhilde's solemn command but

reproducing the rhymes enhances her meaning much more even if a few compromises are needed. The word ‘doomed’ does not translate *Tod* of course, but the words ‘doom’ and ‘death’ have similar connotations and I was able to place ‘death’ closely after ‘doom’ on the second strongest beat of the bar. The rhyme word ‘deign’ that I used to translate *taugt* is unusual but quite accurate if ‘deign’ is understood as ‘thought worthy’. To achieve the rhyme pair ‘gaze/go’, translating *erschaut/scheidet* (behold/depart), meant replacing a verb with a noun and losing the strong image that *scheidet* evokes but for me this was worthwhile in order to preserve the word-tone synthesis.

6.3.1.2 Imitation as pictorialisation of words or phrases

Musical pictorialisation or word painting is the matching of poetic imagery with musical analogy, which is often of an iconic nature with tonal patterns reflecting some aspect of the word’s meaning, for example, the word ‘low’ might lead to the use of a downward interval or low pitch notes. In the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*), Wagner paints the word *fällen* (literally, to fell or cut down but figuratively meaning to kill) with a downward triplet including a descending perfect fifth interval, which produces the effect of finality:

Fig. 57

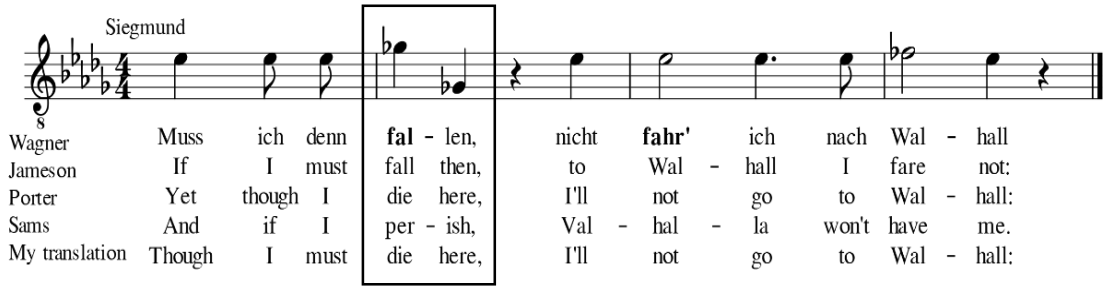


Jameson and Porter’s use of ‘fall’ changes the point of view of the phrase so that the action is Hunding falling rather than Siegmund killing him, nevertheless, the music

reflects this meaning as well. Sams' decision to alter the word order so that 'Hunding' is set on the descending triplet fails to marry the musical word painting with an appropriate word and the emphasis is on Hunding instead of on his death. The use of 'killed', which provided me with a rhyme, is an accurate translation of *fällen* even if the mental image of 'kill' fits less well with the music in literal terms than 'fall'.

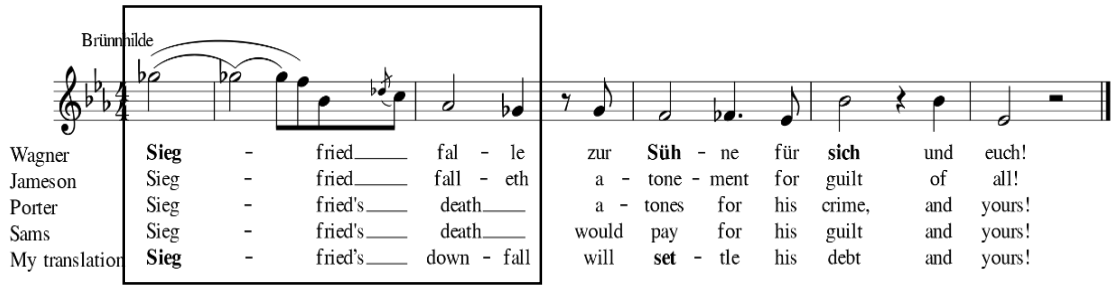
A falling octave imitates a similar word, 'fallen' ('to fall' or 'be killed'), which all the translations recognise and reproduce to preserve the convergence of textual and musical meaning:

Fig. 58



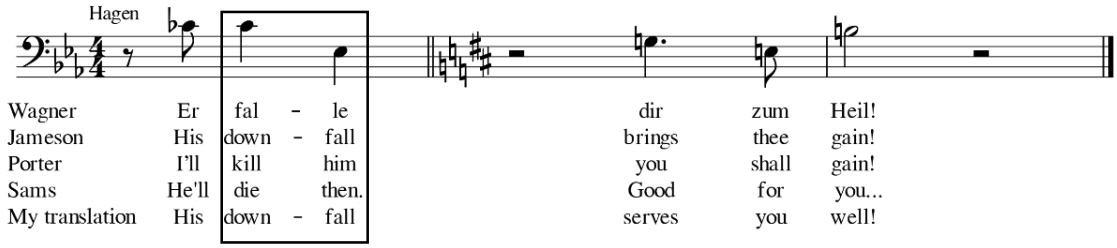
The words *fällen* and *fallen* occur several times in the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*) when Siegfried's death is being plotted, and they are always pictorialized in the music. Towards the end of the scene, *falle*, the present subjunctive of *fallen*, being used to express the future, is uttered twice in fairly close succession, first by Brünnhilde as she declares that Siegfried's death will atone for his treachery and then by Hagen telling Gunther that Siegfried's death will be to his benefit (Figs. 68 and 69). Wagner's musical setting is different in each instance, illuminating Brünnhilde and Hagen's different motivations; one is passionate, one cold and calculating. When Brünnhilde sings the word, it is at the end of a figure that descends through an octave and includes a long melisma for the setting of *Siegfried* (fig. 59). The word *falle* is positioned at the bottom of the octave, and sits on the final two notes of the figure, which is a major second interval that introduces a mild dissonance that contributes to the word's meaning.

Fig. 59



When Hagen sings *falle* to two crochets set on a dissonant descending minor sixth, he is much more succinct, direct and sinister:

Fig. 60

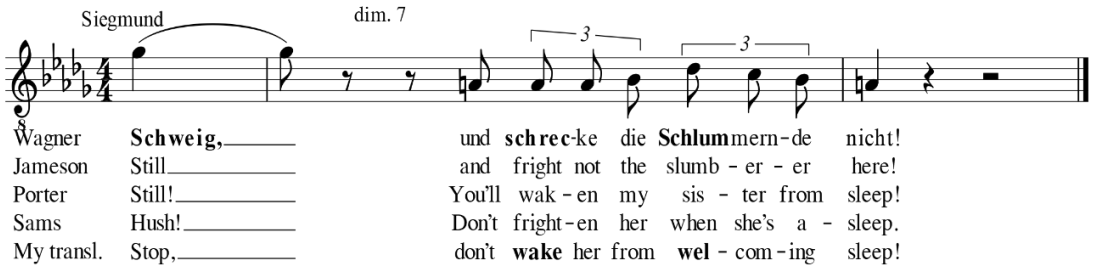


When translating both these lines, the translator is first faced with the problem of the difference in syllabic accent between *falle* and the most obvious words that can translate it ‘shall fall’ and ‘shall die’. In Brünnhilde’s line (Fig. 59), Porter and Sams overcome this problem by placing the noun ‘death’ on the last two notes and creating a melisma to accommodate its single syllable. Jameson, of course, does not have this problem, as he is able to access the two-syllable ‘falleth’ because of his archaic English style. I chose ‘downfall’, which satisfies both syllabic count, stress, meaning and emotion. In Hagen’s line, the replacement of the two syllabic word *Falle* with two words, as Porter and Sams have done, brings prosodic problems and tends to dissipate the meaning derived from the music. Porter’s ‘kill him’ and Sams’ ‘die then’ replace an unstressed final syllable with a small function word, which in the middle of a phrase would usually work, however, at a phrase-end the accent is a little too light for it to sound completely natural. Neither works as well as ‘downfall’ does with the visual analogy created by the descending minor sixth.

Another example of simple word painting can be found in Siegmund’s description of the slumbering Sieglinde in the ‘annunciation’ scene in (*DW*), where

triplets rise from A to Db and back again uniting the two rhyme words and musically imitating the rocking gesture associated with sleep:

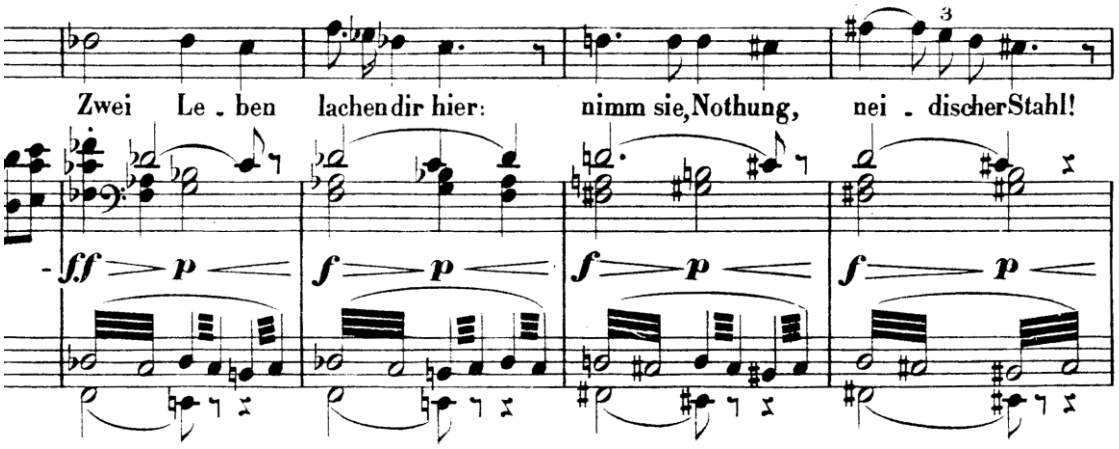
Fig. 61



All the translations, except Jameson's, fail to match their words to the rocking gesture of the music produced by the triplets that conjure an image of slumber and, therefore, lack the corroboration that the musical doubling of meaning gives Wagner's original words. Manipulating the phrase to reflect Wagner's intentions is, however, not impossible and something like 'don't trouble the slumberer's peace' could work, although my prioritisation of rhyme meant I rejected this option.

The following example of word painting demonstrates how melody and rhythm work to pictorialize a word. When Siegmund threatens to kill Sieglinde, he sings:

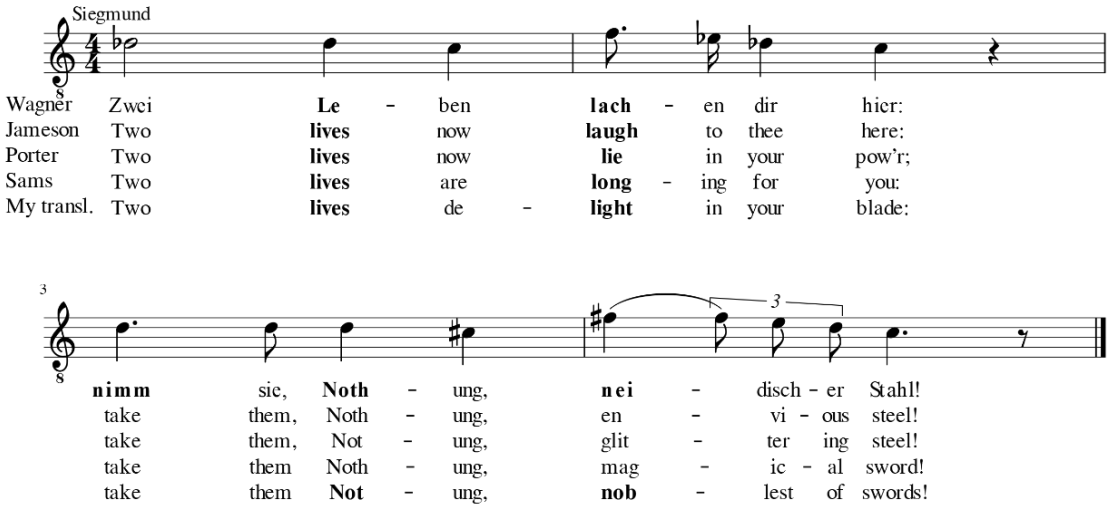
Fig. 62



Wagner has set *lachen* to a sound and rhythm that suggest the sound and physical movement of laughter. Only Jameson uses 'laugh' in a literal translation of the ST that matches the musical laughing (Fig. 62). Porter and Sams paraphrase Wagner and although the overall connotations cohere closely with the ST, any relationship between

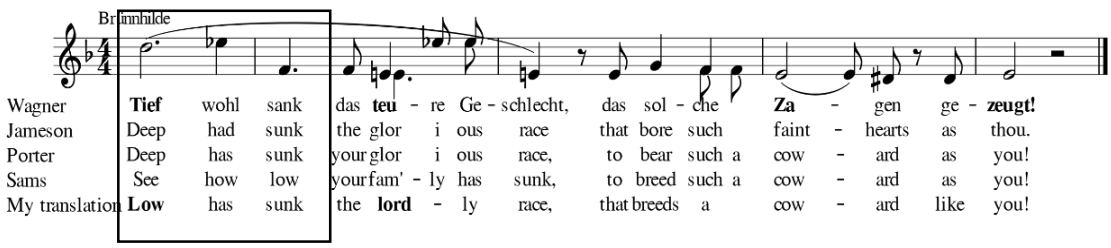
the words and the music is lost. In choosing ‘delight’, my translation captures the OHG meaning of *lachen* as ‘to be favourably disposed toward’ something (Lühr, 2014: 72) and sits well with the musical implication of laughter*:*

Fig. 63



Translation often separates the verbal significance from that of the music, undoing a partnership that enhanced meaning and emotion. Often this is because the English language, within the restrictions of note quantity, stress and melodic design, cannot be manipulated in such a way as to place a particular word on a particular note or notes. Even when Wagner’s word painting is of the simplest kind, it may be difficult to preserve its significance in the translation. However, it is clear that where other translation priorities permit, the translators marry words and music as these examples from the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*) show:

Fig. 64

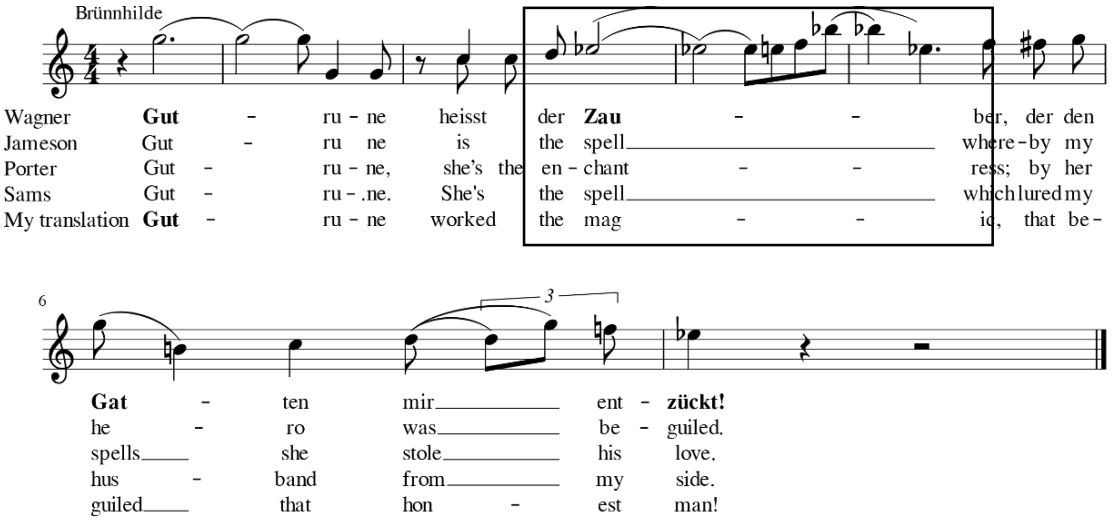


In this line, the thematic choice made by Wagner, which is mirrored in the music with *sank* being positioned on a descending dissonant minor seventh interval that suggests anger, is preserved in Porter’s and my translation through choosing inversion. I imagine

that Porter, like me, did not think this inversion would make comprehension difficult or sound too unnatural. Sams, however, who prioritises natural speech patterns, has decided that ‘low’ suits the musical meaning as much as ‘sunk’ and makes use of the descending diminished octave at the end of the phrase to position ‘sunk’. What his translation loses by doing this is the sound of disdain and digust that the diminished octave interval provides to the meaning of *Geschlecht* (race) that is being described as ‘sunken low’.

In the following example, the amazing melisma on which *Zauber* is set, begs a translation whose meaning will converge with the music’s suggestion of supernatural forces being at work. Such glaring pictorialisation has forced the translators to set a word of comparable meaning to it:

Fig. 65



There are other matters to consider, as always, such as the high tessitura and length of the phrase. ‘Spell’ and ‘enchantress’ work better than ‘magic’ because their vowels are more comfortably sung at this pitch, but because I wanted to rhyme, I allowed myself to assume that the soprano would be able to modify the vowel enough to make it comfortable to sing without making it incomprehensible.

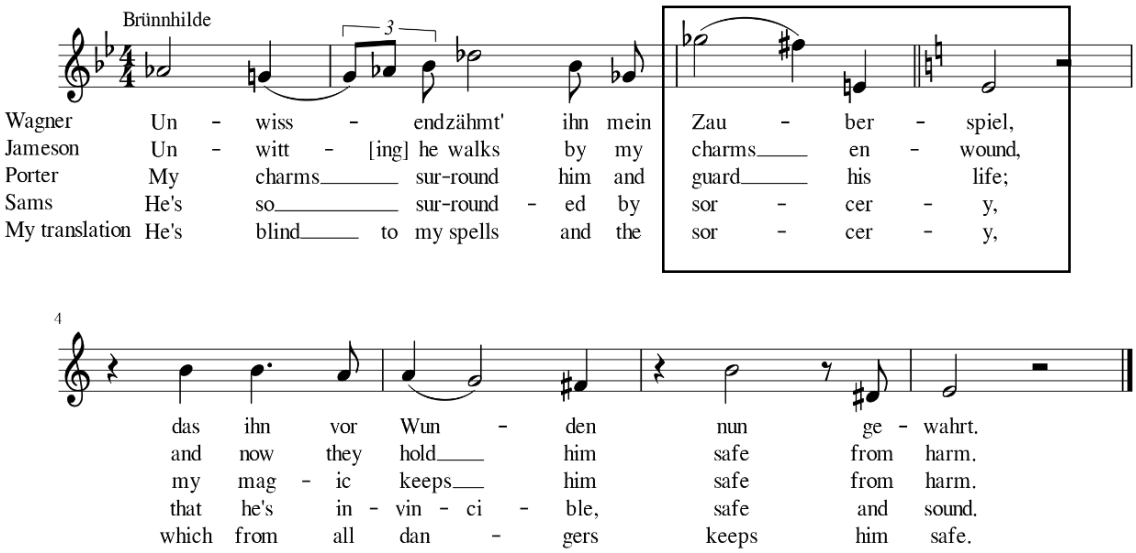
6.3.1.3 Imitation of gesture as an indicator of emotion and thoughts

Music is able to imitate psychological or emotional states because ‘melodic contour or harmonic progression, and …tonality and meter, … produce an equivalent of

embodied gesture that we can recognize as expressive of an imagined agent…' (Hatten, 2004: 132). Music shows things acoustically through 'analogous encoding' (Bierwisch, 1979: 59), so that it is not surprising, for example, to find the sinking feeling associated with sadness expressed musically in descending motifs. Rhythm, pace, harmony and instrumentation play their part in creating a musical analogy for such gestures but the most frequently used musical resources in the *Ring* are intervallic tensions and Wagner's chromatic idiom.

The nature of the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*) makes it no surprise to find the frequent use of wide intervallic leaps upwards and downwards to create analogous musical gestures of lament, anger and revenge. Perhaps the most noticeable of these is when Brünnhilde, whose thoughts have turned to revenge, laments that she protected Siegfried's life with her *Zauberspiel* (magic), a single word that corresponds to a single musical figure that lasts for two bars, includes a melisma and a leap downwards of a compound major ninth interval. The long notes and downward trajectory of this wide interval speak of crushing disappointment, pain and sorrow. When Jameson and Porter translate the word with a phrase, the emotional quality of the music is dissipated because a phrase requires more parsing than a single word:

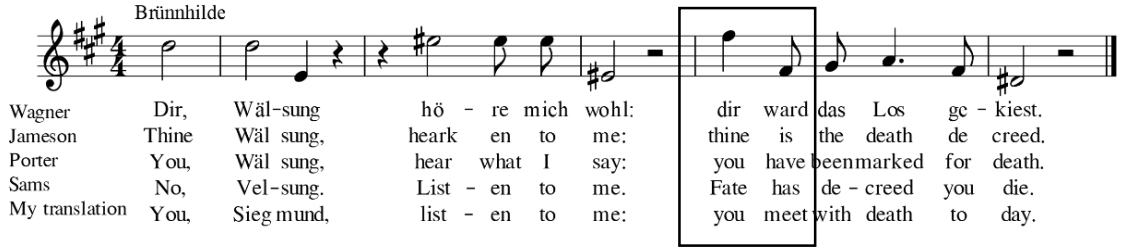
Fig. 66



The power of the octave interval with regard to intonation has already been discussed, but both as a descending motion and a leap upward, it serves as a musical analogy for various concepts associated with up and down movement or spatial

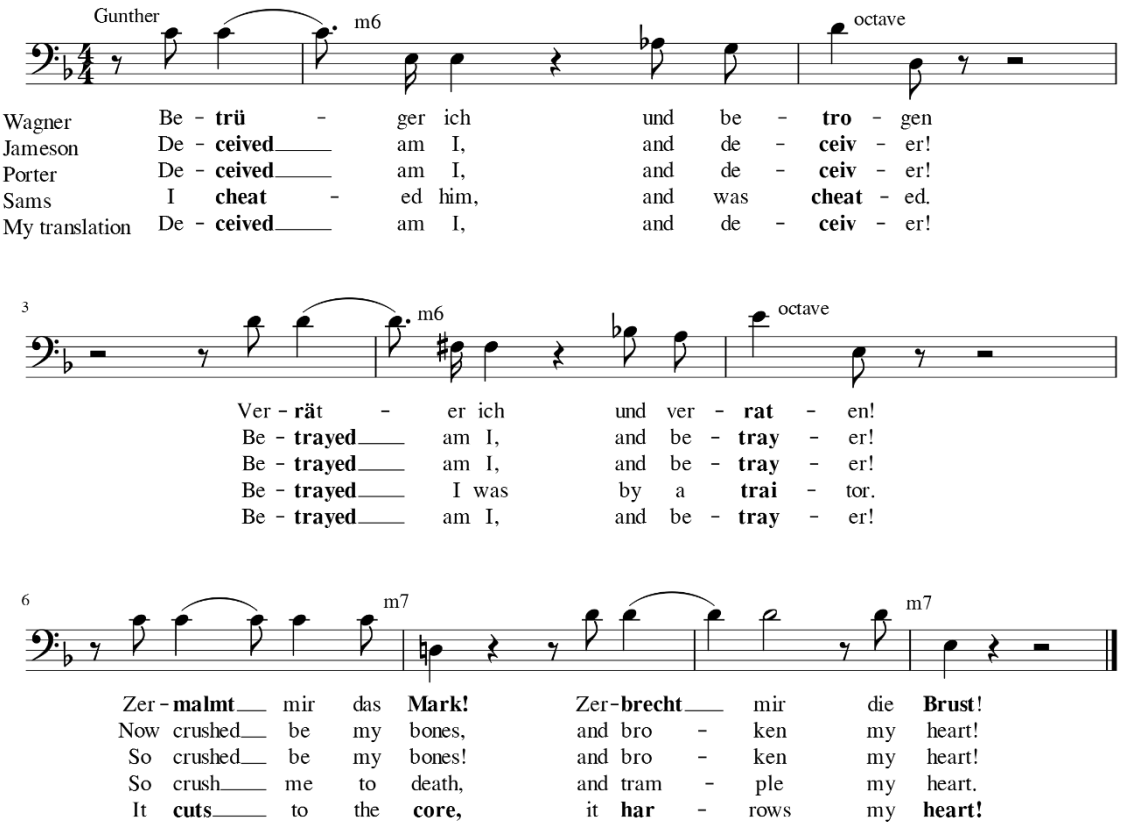
conceptions of height and depth, such as power, strength, descent, falling, and heaviness. In Wagner's *Ring*, the descending octave is further associated with two important leitmotifs, those of the 'sword' and 'curse', where it symbolises death and doom (Spencer, 1976: 15). The octave leap downwards, which can suggest great intensity of emotion is used by Wagner in the 'annunciation' scene (*DW*) to characterise Brünnhilde's vehemence and frustration at Siegmund's refusal to follow her to Valhalla (Fig. 67). Brünnhilde's octave descent is emphatic, insisting that he listen to her as she dictates to him that his lot has been decided:

Fig. 67



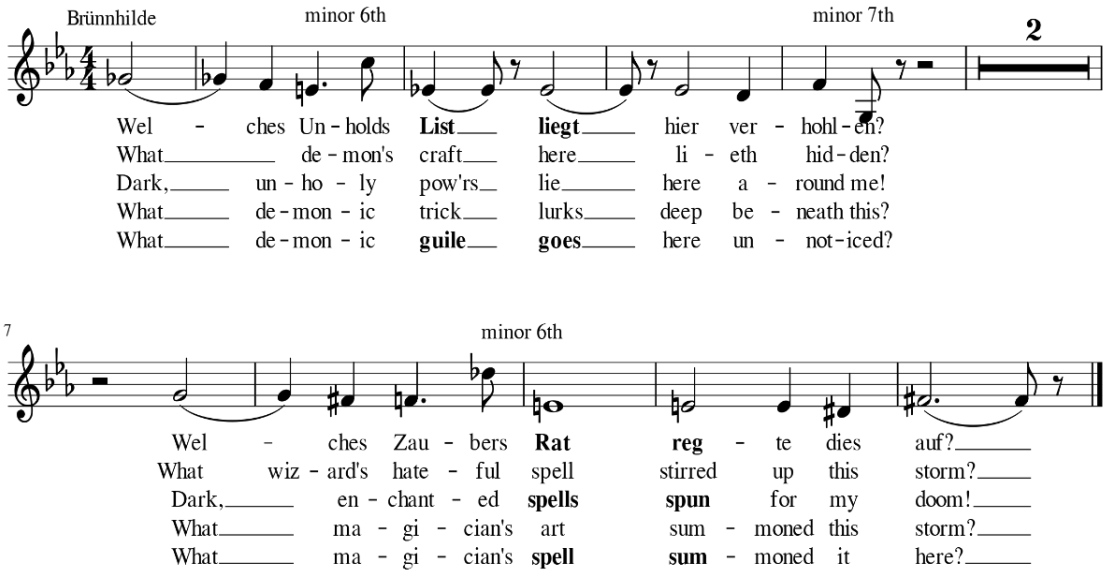
In the following example, alliterative rhymes combine with alliterating dissonant descending minor sixths and sevenths as well as octaves to portray Gunther's overwhelming feelings of remorse and humiliation, of being cast down. He realises he has inadvertently tricked Siegfried into winning Brünnhilde as his bride and now her accusations that it was Siegfried not him to whom she was wed, are a stain on his honour. The setting of *Be**trüg**er/be**trog**en* (deceiver/deceived) and *Ver**rät**er/ver**rat**en* (betrayer/betrayed) would enable any singer to reach a pinnacle of emotional expression and all the translations ensure this is possible for the singer of the English translation. However, whilst positioning English rhymes on the paired minor sixths and octave leaps is easy because English synonyms for *Be**trüg**er/be**trog**en* and *Ver**rat**er/ver**rat**en* are found in 'de**ceiv**er'/'de**ceived**' and 'be**tray**er'/'be**trayed**', there are no obvious English rhymes to set to the woebegone minor sevenths that connect the rhymes of *zer**malmt**/das **Mark*** (crush/marrow) and *zer**brecht**/**Brust*** (shatter/breast). Since I prioritised rhyme for the sake of the nexus of music, alliteration, emotion and meaning, I chose to paraphrase Gunther's expressions of despair using different imagery in order to preserve the convergence of musical and verbal alliteration:

Fig. 68



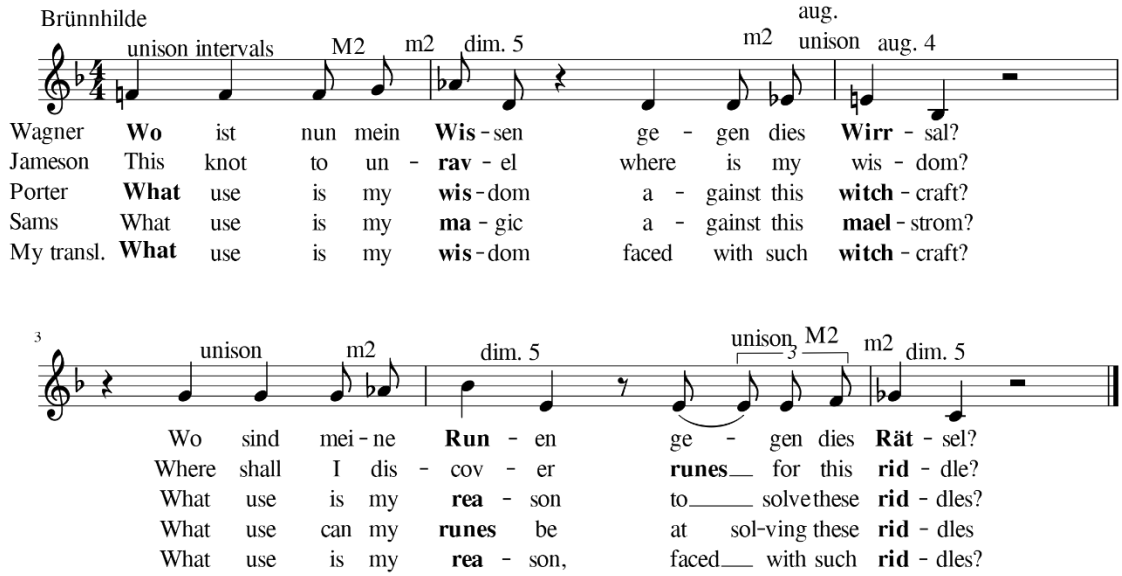
Although the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*) is characterised by big gestures and emotions and wide intervals, now and then, the emotions of the characters find their analogy in smaller ones. At the beginning of the scene, Brünnhilde asks herself what could possibly have brought about such a turn of fortune that she now finds herself betrayed by Siegfried. The first two verse lines (fig. 69) feature wide dissonant intervals, minor sixths and sevenths, portraying in music the torment, bewilderment and disbelief Brünnhilde feels at learning of Siegfried’s betrayal in the preceding scene:

Fig. 69



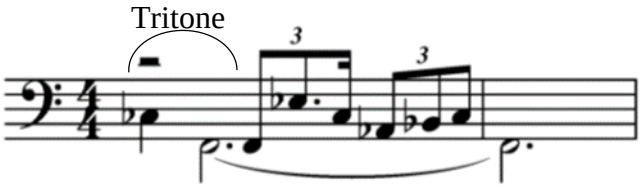
However, the next two verse lines (Fig. 70) contain small melancholy chromatic intervals that portray a sense of powerlessness in the face of what has happened to her at the hands of Siegfried, who, she thought, loved her. Though there are several questionable decisions about syllabic stress (Porter and Sams' 'against', Porter's 'to') and the parallelsim between the image that the music conjures and the words of the translations is clear to see:

Fig. 70



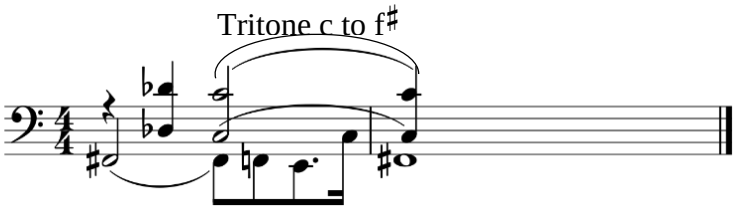
Not only can the size and trajectory of an interval serve to depict bodily movement and suggest psychological emotions, the rising or falling of dissonant intervals can construct a picture in the mind of physical action that illuminates the words. The dissonant tritone interval is used by Wagner both to imitate fear and anxiety in the intonation of the voice and to create a musical analogy of states of mind. Before discussing this further, it is worth pointing out that two leitmotifs closely connected to the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*) both feature a tritone interval. Firstly, Hagen's leitmotif that begins with a falling tritone (Cb to F) and was first heard at the beginning of 'Hagen's Watch' in *GD* (II/1):

Fig. 71



Secondly, the 'revenge' motif (*Rachebund* (vindictive league) (Von Wolzogen, 1905: 108)), which incorporates Hagen's tritone at its end (C to F♯):

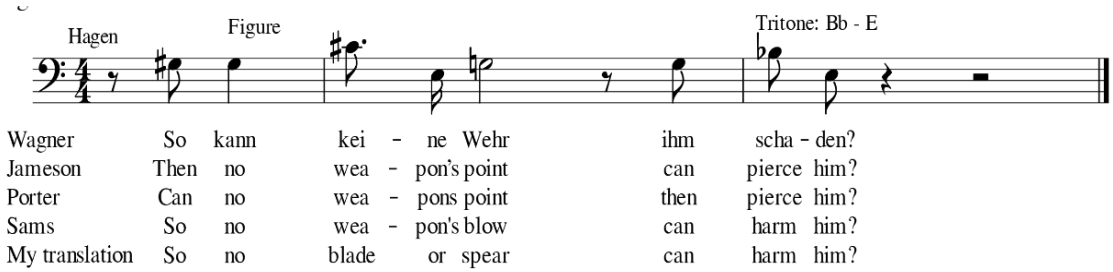
Fig. 72



In the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*), both motifs intrude into the action, often abruptly, creating a sense of danger and threat as Brünnhilde, in her anger, is manipulated by Hagen to give away the secret of Siegfried's vulnerability so that he can be killed. To the ambiguous tones of these motifs, Brünnhilde eventually calls for Siegfried's death as atonement for his infidelity. She breaks her vows of love and Gunther breaks his bonds of loyalty to Siegfried. Both are swept up by strong emotions and Hagen orchestrates them to his own ends, which are to obtain the ring for himself. The abrupt repetitions of the motifs, the wide intervallic leaps of the vocal melody and chromatic dissonant chords converge with the words to make the drama. The very portentous tritone interval ominously colours the melodic line and as Hagen starts to manipulate

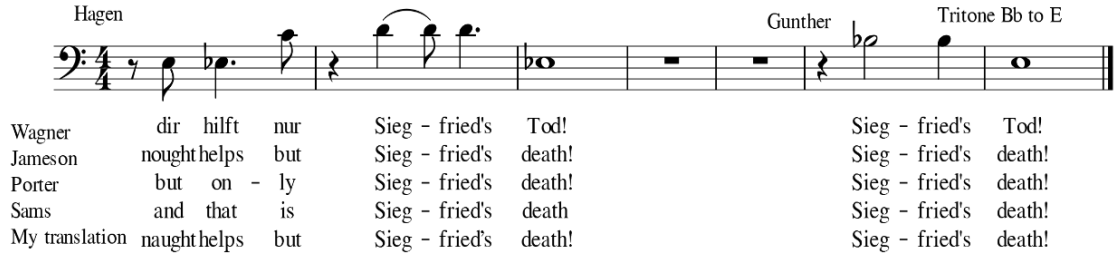
Brünnhilde in order to find out how Siegfried might be killed, Wagner sets the word *schaden* (harm) to a descending tritone interval whose dissonance and descending motion points not only to the physical action of slaying Siegmund but to the treacherous machinations of Hagen's mind. The close translations ensure the preservation of verbal and musical meaning:

Fig. 73



Later in the scene, when Hagen tells Gunther that only Siegfried's death can restore his reputation, his words are 'dir hilft nur - Siegfrieds Tod!', the last words of which are repeated questioningly by Gunther. Again the descending dissonace of the tritone suggests Gunther's wavering emotions and doubts. He has yet to be convinced by Hagen that Siegfired's murder is necessary to save his honour:

Fig. 74

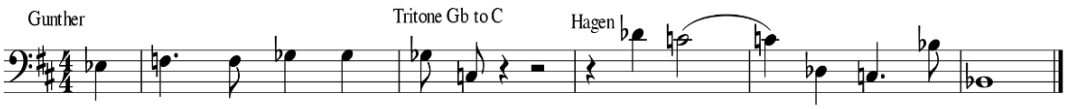


As English can treat the possessive in the same way as German and because the most obvious translation of *Tod* is the monosyllabic word 'death', it is not surprising that all the translations are word-for-word and, therefore, produce the same convergence between verbal and musical meaning as the original text.

Later in the scene, the indecisive Gunther, after vacillating about killing Siegfried, finally commits himself to the act with the words 'So wär' es Siegfried's Ende'. *Ende* is set to a tritone interval that suggests the treacherous nature of Siegfried's death. Unfortunately, the obvious English translation of *Ende* (end) has only

one syllable, which will not work prosodically if placed at the end of the phrase on the triton interval.

Fig. 75



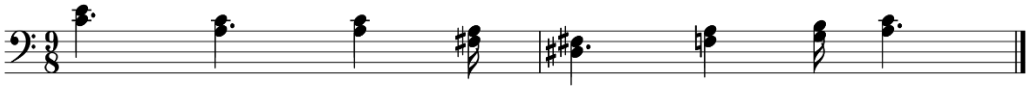
Wagner	So	wär'	es	Sieg - frieds	**En** - de!		Uns	**All**	-	en	frommt	sein	Tod.
Jameson	Must	this	be	Sieg - fried's	**down**-fall?		His	**death**_____		will	serve	us	all.
Porter	So	Sieg - fried's	doom's	de -	cid - ed!		His	death_____		will	serve	us	all.
Sams	Is	this	the	end of	Sieg-fried?		His	death_____		will	serve	us	all.
My translation	Let	come	then,	Sieg - fried's	**down**-fall!		His	**death**_____		will	serve	us	all.

The translations show a number of approaches to tackle the problem of syllabic quantity, but not to address the significance of the tritone. Jameson's choice of 'downfall' makes sense of the tritone but the falling intonation of the music ill fits the intonation of a question. My own decisions were motivated by the desire to have 'downfall' as a rhyme to pair with 'death'. To this end, I was prepared to accept the slightly unusual imperative construction of 'Let come then' with its somewhat biblical overtone. Though unnatural compared to normal English, it fits the register of a mythical drama and does not hinder comprehension. Porter and Sams, however, do not reflect in their word choices the ominous meaning of the tritone in the same way as *Ende* and 'downfall'.

One musical resource often used by Wagner to capture a psychological state is chromaticism[97]. It is often used to indicate imbalance or agitation, because in musical terms, that is what it does within the tonal system. Chromaticism means that the diatonic scale (the octave made up by five full tones and two half tones) is increasingly modified and undermined by the addition of half tones. In the *Ring,* chromaticism has a particular significance because its ominous sound is associated with the 'ring' motif, which represents something that was once benign but now deals death:

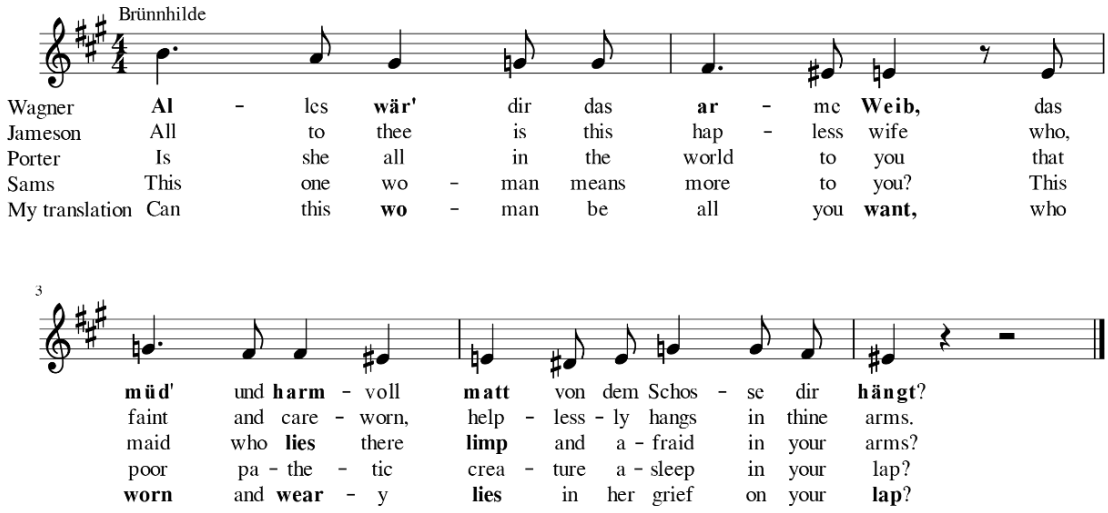
[97] Chromaticism is 'an alteration of, an interpolation in or deviation from this basic diatonic organization' (Meyer, 1956: 217). It is used expressively and structurally to modulate to a different key.

Fig. 76 ‘Ring’ motif



In the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*), when Brünnhilde asks in disbelief whether Sieglinde could mean more to Siegmund than eternal life with the gods in Valhalla, her agitation is communicated musically in the chromatic turns of the music (Fig. 77). What is more, the downward chromaticism imitates the downward physical implications described by the words: worn, weary, sleeping etc. Even the notion of *arme* (poor) has physical implication of ‘downwardness’ in its meaning of pitiable, pathetic, unfortunate. Gestures are never clear-cut and rely on the words for more precise meaning but they orient the listener and predispose him to the connotations of the words. Gesture and its physiognomic aspect are apt in opera where the medium of the singer also reinforces the significance of text and music with their body.

Fig. 77



The chromatic end to the first phrase draws a picture of a physically and mentally downcast woman but this is not replicated by the meaning or word order of any of the translations except Jameson’s, whose archaic syntax allowed him to imitate Wagner’s thematization of *Alles wär’ dir* and essentially retain the same word order as the original libretto. In the second phrase, Porter misses the musical point when he begins

‘that maid who lies there…’, since the torment made evident in the music that corroborates the distraught situation that Sieglinde has been facing, is completely lost.

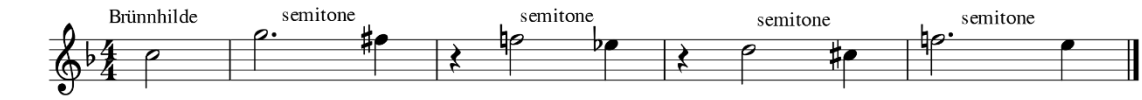
6.3.2 Conventionalized musical meaning corroborates textual meaning

As Cooke suggests, there are a number of melodic patterns, the ‘up-and-down’ dimension of melody (1959/1990: 102), which have become associated in music with particular ideas. They may have begun life as Baroque musical rhetoric derived from tonal word painting or have developed over time through constant association with one idea or emotion to become symbolic. In other words, they are a sort of vocabulary (ibid: 113). In the *Ring*, Wagner freely uses conventionalised musical meaning knowing its significance will be understood by his audience, and, of course, invents his own in the shape of leitmotifs.

6.3.2.1 Rhetorical figures

In the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD),* one of the most evident conventionalised melodic patterns used by Wagner is the *pianto*, a two-note descending semitone. Originating in Baroque musical rhetoric, it served as an indexical, even iconic sign for weeping, always accompanied by words of the same meaning (Monelle, 2010: 17). Its primary significance may have been long forgotten by Wagner’s time but it had become conventionally associated with grief, pain, regret and loss (ibid). Many leitmotifs in the *Ring* are based on the descending semi-tone of the *pianto* motif or they feature it prominently; they include the ‘fate’ motif, the ‘revenge’ motif, and the ‘renunciation of love’ motif. Hagen, in particular, is closely associated with the descending semi-tone because it is the sound of his father Alberich’s bondage of the Nibelungs (*Frohn-motiv*). It was also the ominous sound used by Hagen to call the vassals to greet Gunther and Brünnhilde in *GD* II/1. In the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*) the ‘fate’ and ‘revenge’ motifs are heard regularly like an ominous refrain (Abbate, 1989a: 105). When the descending semitone is not linked specifically to one of the motifs nor associated with words related to weeping, it is usually associated with pain, lamentation or regret. Near the beginning of the scene, Brünnhilde expresses her regret for having given Siegfried all her godly wisdom through a succession of *pianto* intervals:

Fig. 78



Wagner	Ach	Jam	-	mer!	Jam	-	mer!	Weh',	ach	We	-	he!
Jameson	Oh	sor		row!	Sor		row!	Woe's	me!	Woe's		me!
Porter	Oh	sor		row!	Sor		row!	Grief	and	sor		row!
Sams	A	liv	-	ing,	wak	-	ing,	ach	- ing	night	-	mare!
My translation	Oh	sor	-	row!	Sor	-	row!	Hurt	and	heart	-	ache!

Only Sams chooses not to take the most obvious course and use the word ‘sorrow’ to translate *Jammer*. Sorrow is a perfect fit on all levels. The repetition of *Weh’/Wehe* is more problematic. Jameson’s rhyming solution relies on the contraction of the archaic phrase ‘woe is me’, which sounds very strange when spoken or sung: ‘woesmee’. Sams’ decision to make an extended phrase and ignore the effect of the single word outbursts in the original text is puzzling because of the phrasing and rests but extraordinary in relation to the emotion of the semitones with which ‘living’ and ‘waking’ , unlike ‘sorrow’, have no intrinsic connection. One might have simply repeated the word ‘sadness’, but the rise to F♮ on the final *pianto* suggest more is needed than repetition, hence my choice of ‘Hurt and heart-ache’.

6.3.2.2 Conventionalized intervallic patterns

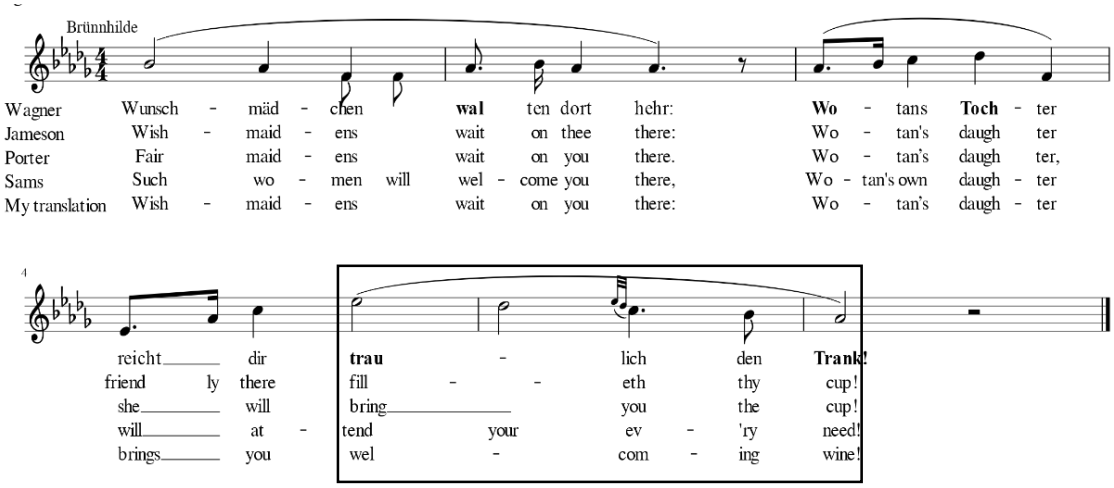
Among the musical figurations Cooke identified as having a specific conventionalised meaning, is the descending 5-3-1 pitch pattern in a major key (1959/1990: 130). The descent from the dominant[98] to the tonic[99] via a major third[100], suggests ‘a sense of …joy …blessings …together with a feeling of ‘having come home’ (ibid.) One such example occurs in the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*) when Brünnhilde tells Siegmund about Valhalla and of how she will welcome him there:

[98] Fifth scale degree of the diatonic scale.

[99] First scale degree of the diatonic scale.

[100] Musical interval encompassing three staff positions and four semitones.

Fig. 79



The adverb ‘traulich’, which indicates the conviviality of her welcome, is set to a descending 5-3-1 pattern (Eb-C-Ab) in Ab major. Music and text suggest that nothing could be more desirable than for Brünnhilde to welcome Siegmund in Valhalla. On the surface, all the translations communicate a convivial welcome, but as I shall discuss later (Chapter 6.3.4.5), other elements, such as the melismatic setting of *traulich*, introduce additional ironic meaning that makes Jameson, Porter and Sams’ use of a verb instead of an adverb incongruent with the musical meaning. No element of musical meaning can ever be considered in isolation.

6.3.3 Wagner’s word-tone synthesis: tonality and leitmotif

It is unquestionably important for anyone translating the *Ring*, or any text, to discern how its author/composer constructed the text to direct its interpretation and meaning by the reader/listener/viewer. Wagner’s meaning is channelled by his very specific theory of word-tone synthesis where the melodic vocal line uses the semiotic resources of music to iterate, corroborate or contradict the semiotics of the verse creating an intersemiosis that often multiplies meaning far beyond the possibilities of one mode alone. Leitmotifs, which grow out of this synthesis, become fixed references and a sort of musical language. They function like alliterative rhymes but on a grander scale to preserve dramatic and musical cohesion through recollection, reminiscence, and premonition. However, their significance for the translator is in their function as commentator or subtext, whereby the music is able to say something different

simultaneously with the words of the singer, and what it says may colour any interpretation of the actual words being sung.

6.3.3.1 Key relationships and modulation

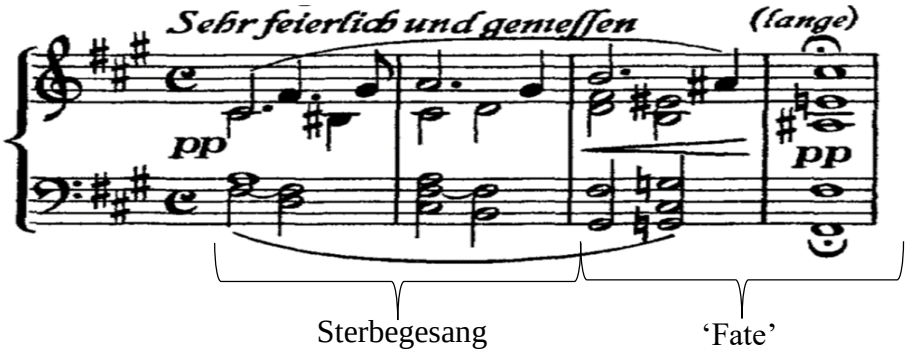
The relationship between alliterative rhymes, and other important words, with a change of key (modulation) forms the backbone of Wagner's compositional method in the *Ring*. The kinship of opposing or similar feelings, thoughts, ideas, events and memories expressed by alliteration could only be brought to fullness of expression, according to Wagner (see Chapter 4.4.3), through tonal contrast or similarity. Wagner also consistently associates certain keys with specific themes, objects, events, people, places and so on to create 'units of meaning' (Petty, 2005: 2) and these associations add significance to the words with which they are linked. It is important for the translator who seeks to retain the verbal and musical cohesion of the original opera to be aware of what significance lies in the relationship between words and tonality, especially key changes (modulation), key relationships and key associations.

The 'annunciation' scene (*DW*) provides an excellent example of modulating tonality and its relationship to verbal meaning. The scene is dominated by a 'classically structured dialogue argument' (Grey, 2006: 230) reflected in a parallel musical dialogue (ibid), which does not merely mirror the meaning of the words but behaves as a voice in its own right contributing to the scene. Siegmund's questions, in sharpened keys, and Brünnhilde's answers, in flattened ones, contrast tonally with each other and are supported by motifs of different kinds related to the text (such as 'Valhalla'). Wagner freely moves contrasting dramatic statements and the shifting emotions of the speaker between tonalities (Grey, 2006: 234). In this scene, the dialectic or modulation between major and minor tonality reflects the dialectic between death (minor) and immortality (major) that lies at its heart as Brünnhilde tells Siegmund that he must die in battle and follow her to Valhalla to become one of Wotan's heroes.

The 'interdependent systems' of major and minor have been the 'twin poles' of Western musical expression since 1400 (Cooke, 1959/1990: 50) and it is generally taken (though often disputed) that positive emotions are expressed by major keys and negative ones by minor keys (ibid: 50-51). This dialectic is also present in the leitmotif

that dominates the scene referred to as the *Todesverkündigung* (‘annunciation of death/doom’) motif (it is repeated forty-three times).

Fig. 80



This motif (Fig. 80) is ‘tense, tragic and questioning’ (Scruton, 1997: 164) thanks to the suspensions[101] and the Neapolitan cadence[102] ending on a dominant seventh chord. It is made up of two motifs, the *Sterbegesang* (‘death-song’/’doom’ motif) (Von Wolzogen, 1876: 57)[103] and the ‘fate’ motif. The variation of tonality throughout the motif, uniting flattened and sharpened chords produces a strange, frightening, almost gruesome effect (Tarasti, 2012: 200) that reflects the direction of the drama, in which Siegmund must die on the orders of his own father. In uniting two distant tonal areas, the motif metaphorically combines two opposing semantic categories: the pain of death and the pleasure of eternal life with the gods in Valhalla. The motif, is typical of many, with elements of other established motifs within it that give it additional meaning; the ascending scalar sequence is similar to the C sharp minor ‘Erda’ leitmotif that represents all-knowing wisdom, introduced in *Das Rheingold*, when Erda, the earth-goddess, prophesies the end of the gods. Its final three notes are the ‘Fate’ motif, which will be heard frequently throughout the rest of the cycle, particularly in the opening bars of *GD*. The first two notes of this motif are a descending minor second interval, the Baroque figure for a musical ‘sigh’, an imitation

[101] A means of creating tension by prolonging a consonant note while the underlying harmony changes.

[102] A harmonic progression employing the first inversion of a flat II chord.

[103] Elsewhere it is also referred to as the *Todesmotiv* and *Todesklage*

of a cry of despair (Monelle, 2006: 4-5) and its final note rises up in a questioning minor third.[104]

The dialectic of major and minor at the beginning of the question and answer dialogue between Brünnhilde and Siegmund in the 'annunciation' scene (*DW*) passes through various different keys as shown below:

Table 10

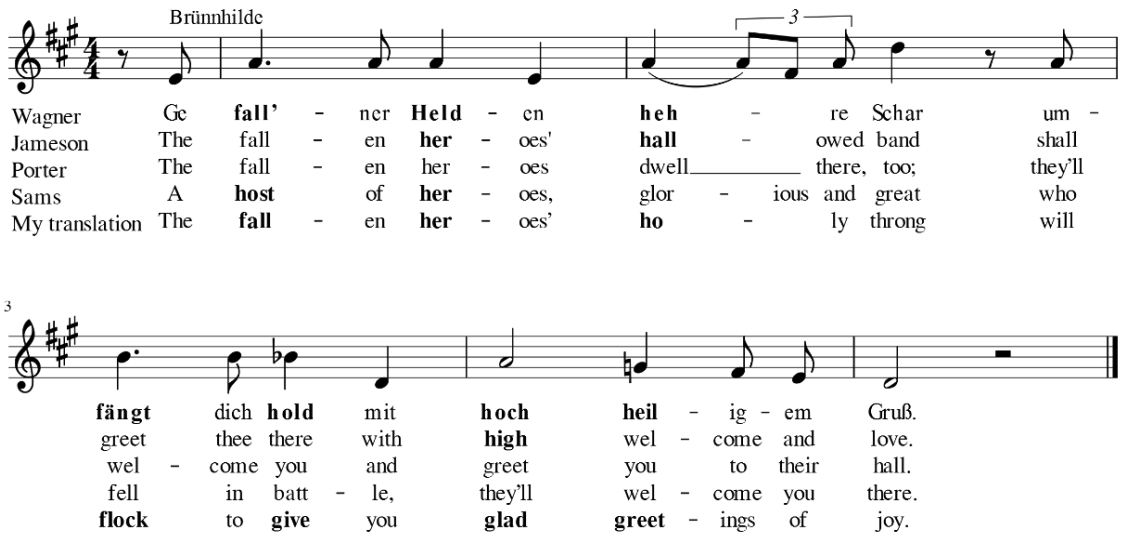
Character	Question or answer summarised	Key
Siegmund	Who are you…?	F# minor
Brünnhilde	She only doomed men see… Only on the battlefield… do I appear to warriors who have been chosen for death.	Ab minor Bb major Gb major
Siegmund	Where do you take them?	F# minor
Brünnhilde	To Wotan… To Valhalla…	A major E major
Siegmund	Is Wotan waiting alone?	A minor
Brünnhilde	No, an army of heroes waits to greet you	D major
Siegmund	Is my father there?	B minor – E major
Brünnhilde	Yes…	C major
Siegmund	Is a woman waiting for me there?	A major
Brünnhilde	Wish-maidens are there, Wotan's daughter will bring you a drink in friendship	Db major Ab major

The dialogue opens in a minor tonality when Siegmund begins to question Brünnhilde to the melody of the 'death-song' motif in the key of F# minor. This was the key in which the final chord of the 'death-song' motif was first heard a few bars earlier and which is now associated with fear. It is the key with which Siegmund becomes identified during the question and answer phase of this scene. Siegmund's first question, which asks about Brünnhilde's identity, is answered in Ab minor but as she continues, she 'transforms…death, from dysphoric to euphoric' (Tarasti, 2012: 205) as she moves to the major key of Bb followed by Gb major. As the orchestra plays the 'Valhalla' motif, she tells of how on the battlefield she chooses only the noblest warriors to die. Siegmund's second question, again in F# minor, anxiously enquires where he will be taken ('wohin führst du den Helden?'). Brünnhilde explains in the

[104] For an interesting and extensive discussion of both motifs see Cooke (1979: 225ff)

relative key of A major followed by its dominant, E major, that he has been chosen by Wotan for Valhalla (‘Zu Walvater, der dich gewählt, führ' ich dich: nach Walhall folgst du mir’). When Brünnhilde speaks in a related tonality, the listener hears concord; all is as it should be. The major keys tell of the high honour and joy of Siegmund’s fate. Thus far, the words of all the translations are highly coherent with the musical moods set by the tonality of each phrase. Siegmund’s next question begins in another minor key (A minor), which is the tonic minor of Brünnhilde’s preceding answer in A major. The even closer relationship of keys suggests perhaps that Siegmund is beginning to be won over by Brünnhilde. He asks if Wotan is alone in Valhalla and Brünnhilde again answers in a major tonality (D major) that fallen heroes are joyously waiting to greet him. In the music, the measured tempo and horn sounds, reminiscent of battle and war, quietly give substance to Brünnhilde’s description of Valhalla as somewhere auspicious (*hold*) and sacrosanct (*hochheilig*). A sense of joy begins to pervade the music, but at this point the translations of Porter and Sams fail to capture any sense of that joy, unlike Jameson, who conveys *hold* and *hochheilig* with ‘high welcome and love’. I, for purposes of rhyming, chose ‘glad greetings of joy’:

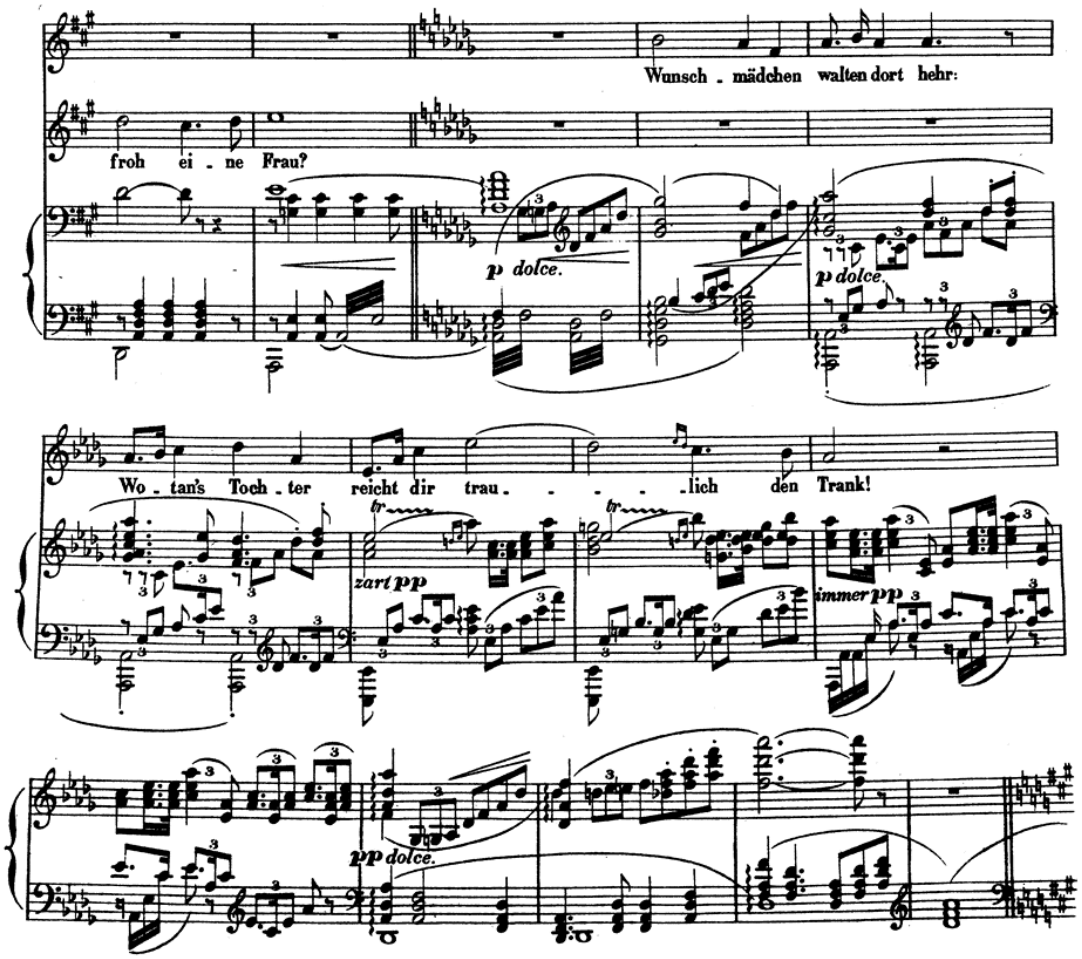
Fig. 81



The climax of this section is Brünnhilde’s C major response that Siegmund’s father is waiting for him (Wälse is Wotan). From here on thoughts and emotions shift and change as Siegmund considers Brünnhilde’s invitation to follow her to Valhalla. At first, Siegmund seems persuaded to follow her as his next question begins in A major

the key in which Brünnhilde's last answer was put: 'Grüßt mich in Walhall froh eine Frau?' (welcomes me in Valhalla gladly a woman?). Brünnhilde does not give a straight answer to this question. She does not answer in the related subdominant key of D major but her evasive answer is given in a musically distant and unrelated key of Db major, which happens to be associated with Valhalla.

Fig.82

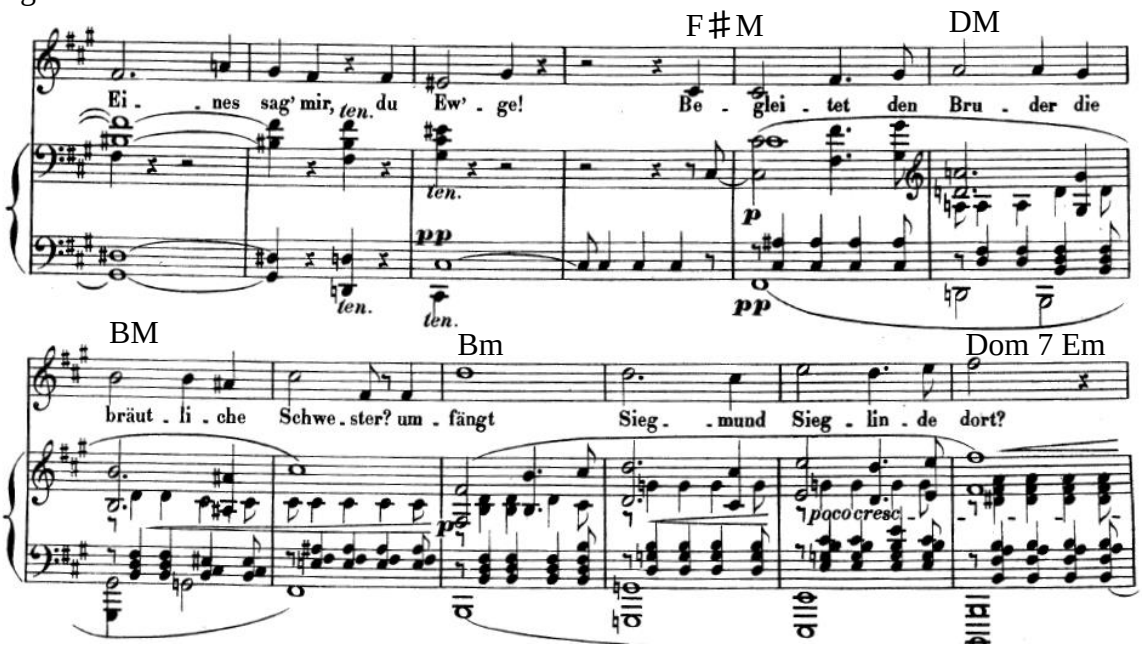


For the first time in the scene, the melody moves away from the mixed major-minor tonality of the 'death-song' motif to a major tonality as Brünnhilde tells of the pleasures of Valhalla (Fig. 82). Like the music, her words are evasive as she says that Wotan's 'wish-maidens' wait for Siegmund in Valhalla: 'Wunschmädchen walten dort hehr: Wotans Tochter reicht dir traulich den Trank!' (Wish-maidens abound there: Wotan's daughter will bring you in friendship a drink). The lyricism of the music contrasts with what has gone before and its arching phrases, dotted rhythms, melisma and ornamentation express the carefreeness and bliss of Valhalla. Other musical

attributes also contribute to Brünnhilde's efforts to make Valhalla sound attractive: the 'veiled, soft key' of Db major that speaks of quiet repose and pleasure (Riemann, 1893: 15), the high woodwind and harps that promote the attractions of all things 'feminine' (Grey, 2006: 235), the *piano* and *dolce* markings and two feminine leitmotifs, the 'Valkyrie' and 'Freia' motifs.

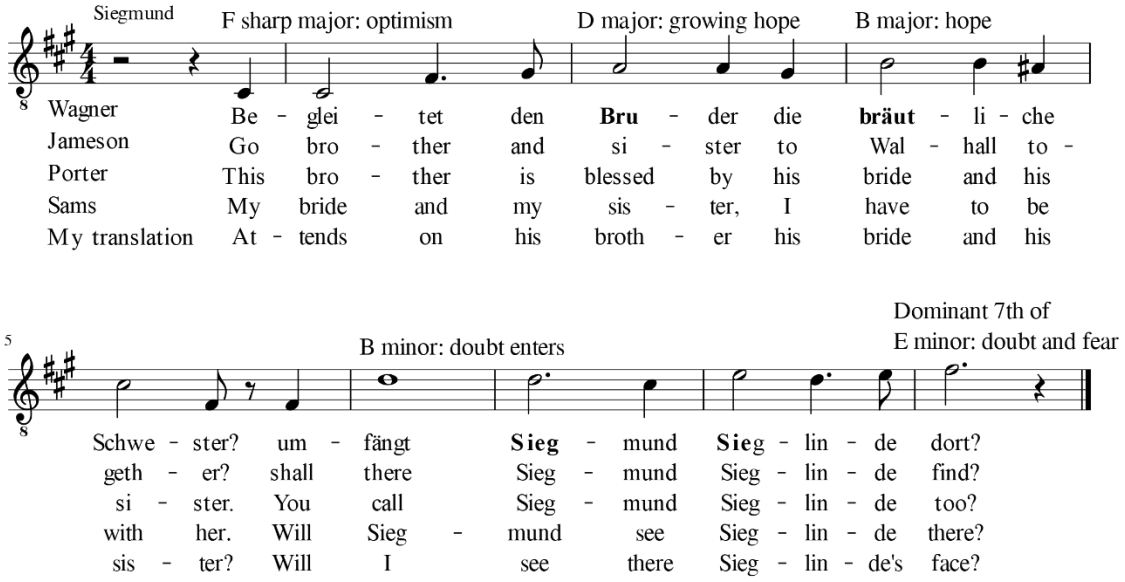
After this evasive answer, Siegmund's next question insistently returns to the same subject. He wants to know if Sieglinde will go with him to Valhalla and his question vacillates between minor and major tonalities. This makes altering the word order a matter of important consideration (Fig. 83). Siegmund begins optimistically in F♯ major (*Begleitet*/accompanies), moving through D major, the primary key of the 'sword' motif that is closely associated with Siegmund, to B major as he sings the words 'die bräutliche Schwester/the bridal sister', as if happy or fond thoughts have entered his mind on thinking of Sieglinde. However, the final part of the question moves through B minor to the dominant seventh of E minor on 'dort' as doubt and premonitions of sadness creep in.

Fig. 83



Although the arrangement of keys with alliterative rhymes *Bruder/bräutliche* serves to highlight the juxtaposition of 'brother/bride' on which the dialogue turns, Jameson, Porter and Sams evidently did not see any significance worth preserving and altered the word order and lost the rhymes.

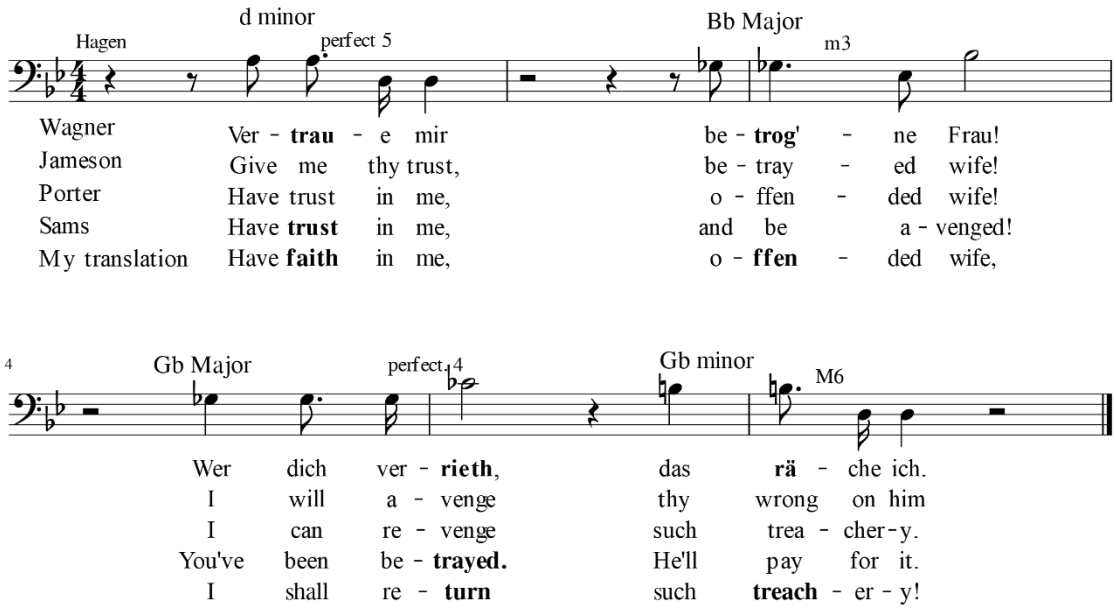
Fig. 84



The music in their translations highlights a connection between ‘sister/Walhall; (Jameson), ‘blessed/bride’ (Porter) and ‘sister/have’ (Sams), none of which are related to the central theme of the scene and this passage. The tension in the music and the juxtaposition of the words were, however, significant enough for me to preserve the word order and rhymes of the ST despite a slightly cumbersome verb-subject inversion whose awkwardness, however, is mitigated by the slow pace, tonal shifts and rising arch of the melody.

GD is described as having a looser relationship between music and words, but is, nevertheless, replete with examples of Wagner’s small-scale modulation. Within one or two short lines of verse, modulation from one key to another emphasises the changing thoughts of the character or marries similar and dissimilar ideas for theatrical effect. Near the beginning of the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*), Hagen’s words, ‘trust’, ‘deception’, ‘betrayal’ and ‘vengeance’ (two rhyming couplets) are set to a series of mostly descending intervals: perfect fifth, minor third, perfect fourth and major sixth within the context of four different keys:

Fig. 85



The juxtaposition of the major and minor keys portrays Hagen's devious character, his malicious motivation and his evil intention. The rhymes, accents and intervals load each word with significance. The dialectic of major/minor through which Hagen hopes to ingratiate himself with Brünnhilde to become her defender can be summarised as follows:

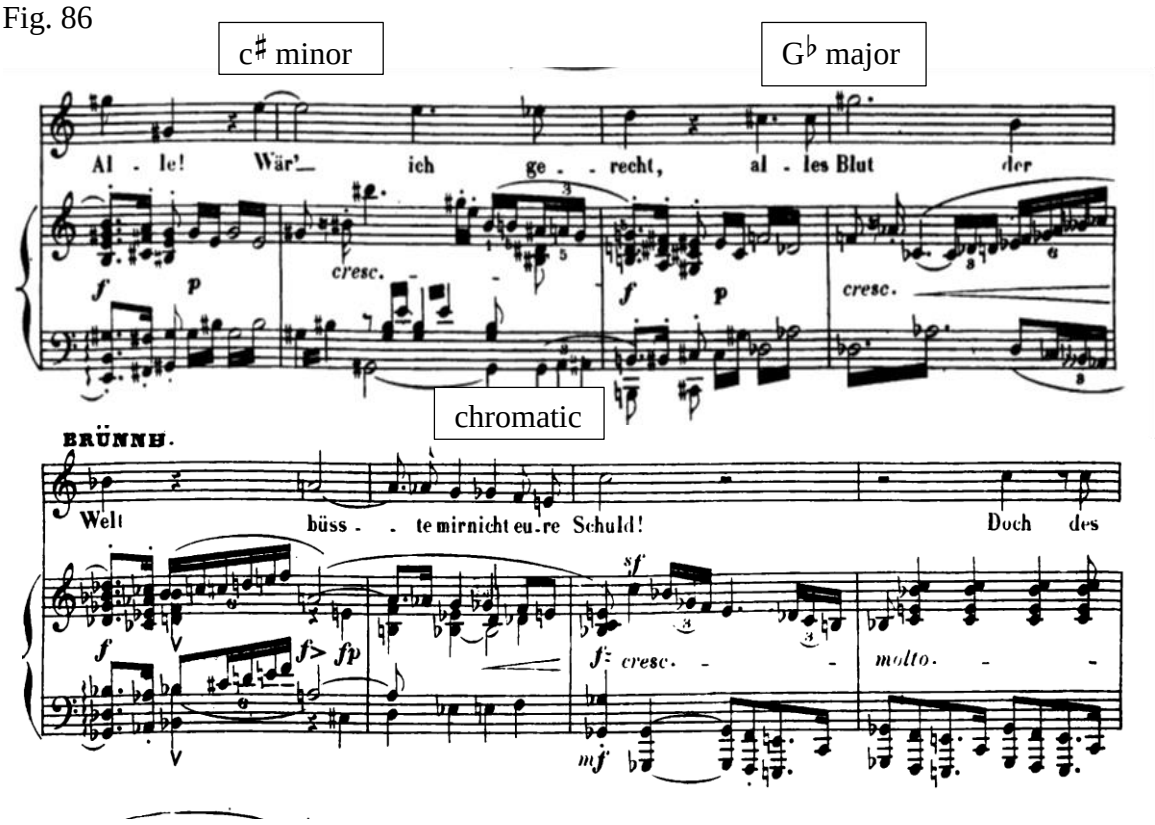
Table 11

Vertraue mir (trust me)	*betrogene Frau* (deceived woman)
Perfect 5th/d minor: The consonant interval suggests 'trust' but the minor key undermines it	Minor 3rd/ Bb major The minor 3rd suggests the evil of Hagen's attempt to inure himself with Brünnhilde despite the positive tone of the major key
Wer dich verrieth (on he who betrayed you)	*das räche ich* (I will avenge you)
Perfect 4th/ Gb major The consonance of the interval set in a major tonality against these words is ironic: Hagen was the one who betrayed Brünnhilde by giving Gutrune the magic potion thanks to which Siegfried forgot her and his love for her.	Major 6th/Gb minor The minor tonality serves to undermine assertiveness of the major interval

The fluctuating tonality reveals Hagen's deceitfulness through which Brünnhilde was betrayed and the mixed tones allude to the fact that her revenge will ultimately mean her sadness as it involves Siegfried's death. Each translation has merits but none can fully exploit every signifying feature of the original, such as the sound of the consonants, which give a bitterness to the words that their English equivalents cannot. However, Jameson, Porter and Sams' translations, though lacking in rhyme, link the same concepts expressed in the alliterative rhymes set on the 'alliterating' dotted notes: *vertraue* (trust), *betrogene* (betrayed), *verrieth* (deceived) and *räche* (revenge). The alignment of word, note value and tonality creates a similar musico-poetic integration to Wagner.

Later in the 'conspiracy' scene, when Brünnhilde declares that only Siegfried's death will atone for his infidelity to her, each thought is aligned to a different tonality:

Fig. 86



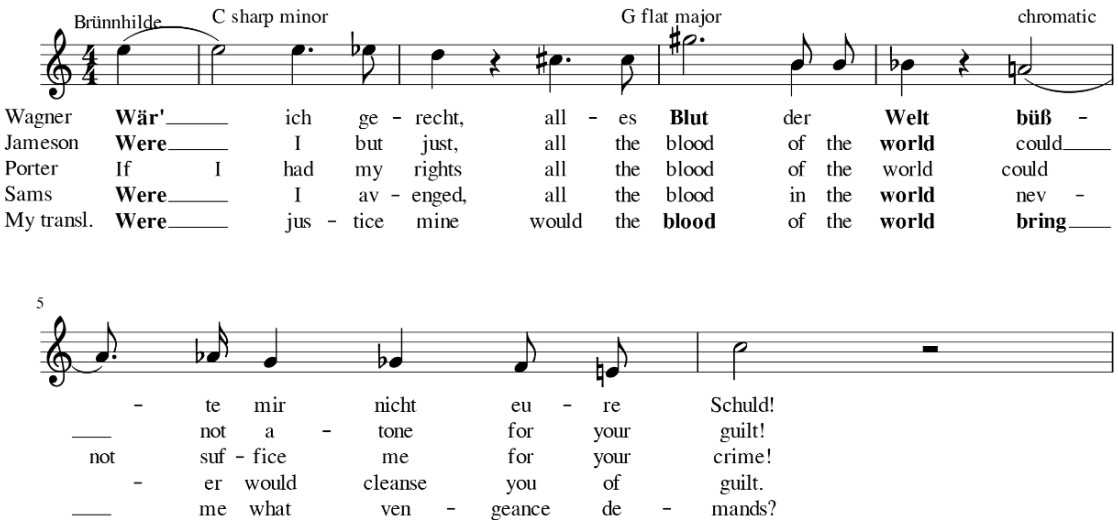
These major, minor and chromatic tonalities suggest meaning in a conventional way, with minor signifying something negative and major something positive whilst the chromatic tonality is ambiguous or undecided:

Table 12

Wagner	*Wär' ich gerecht,*	*alles **Blut** der Welt*	***büß**te mir nicht eure Schuld!*
Tonality	C♯ minor	Gb major	chromatic/indistinct tonality
Gloss	Even if I had my due,	all the blood of the world	atones not for your guilt!
Expression	doubt	hope for revenge	return of doubt and negative affirmation

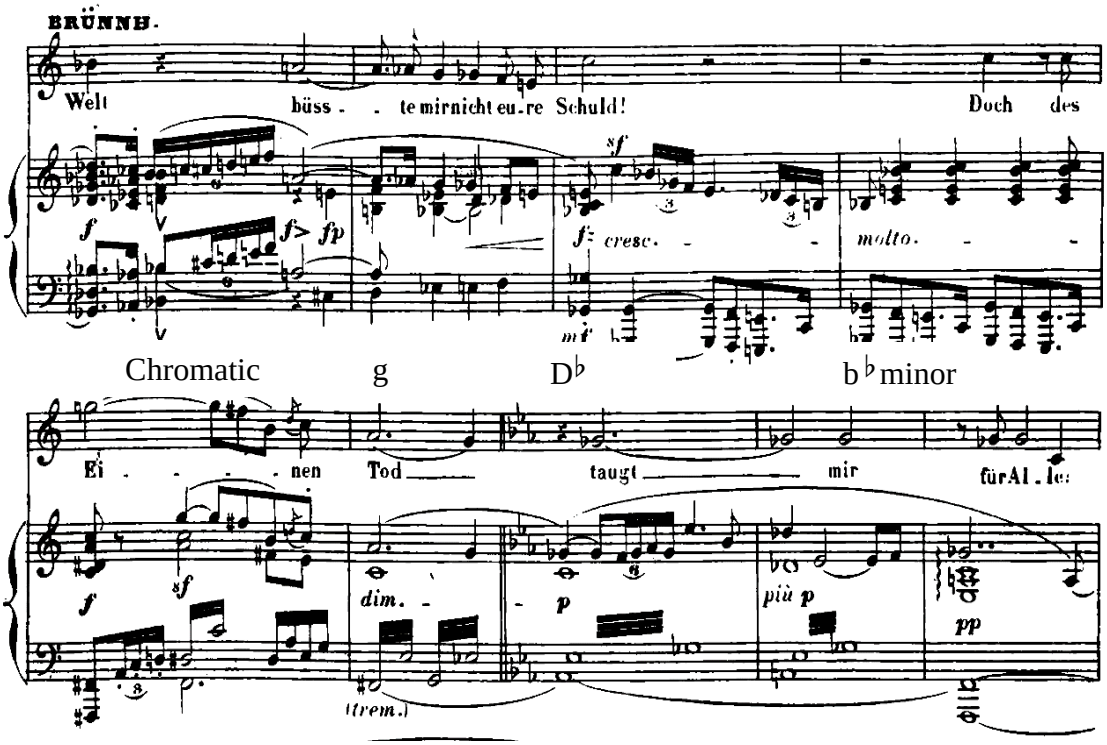
By avoiding any alteration to the order of ideas, the translators have avoided altering the relationship of music and words:

Fig. 87



This happy convergence, however, does not continue. The next verse line (Fig. 88) demonstrates how other elements within the nexus of rhyme, accent and music can disturb the intersemiosis of words and music. The line contains a proximate rhyme pair, which is one of the most difficult to replicate in English. The words of the rhyme pair, ‘Tod / taugt’, are stressed almost equally in speech and Wagner has replicated this in musical terms, setting each to notes of long duration:

Fig. 88



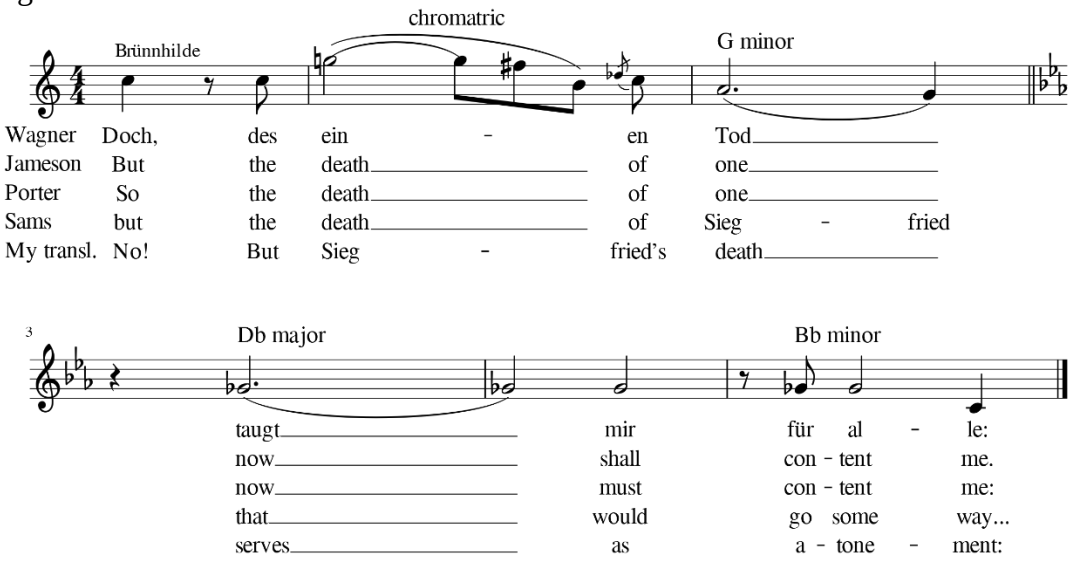
The gloss translation below shows that what is required are two adjacent words that are content words, in this case a noun and a verb, which correspond to the verbal and musical accents (note duration and pitch) and the semantic values suggested by the tonalities against which they are set:

Table 13

Wagner	Doch des Einen	Tod	taugt mir	für alle:
Tonality	Chromatic	G minor	D♭ major	Bb minor
Gloss	But this one man's	death	serves me	for all:
Expression	Ambiguity	Negativity	Positive satisfaction	Irony

By changing the word order, Jameson, Porter and Sams alter Wagner's relationship of text to music. Instead of the chromatic melisma saying something about Brünnhilde's ambiguous feelings regarding Siegfried (torn as she is between love and hate) it is attributed to 'death'.

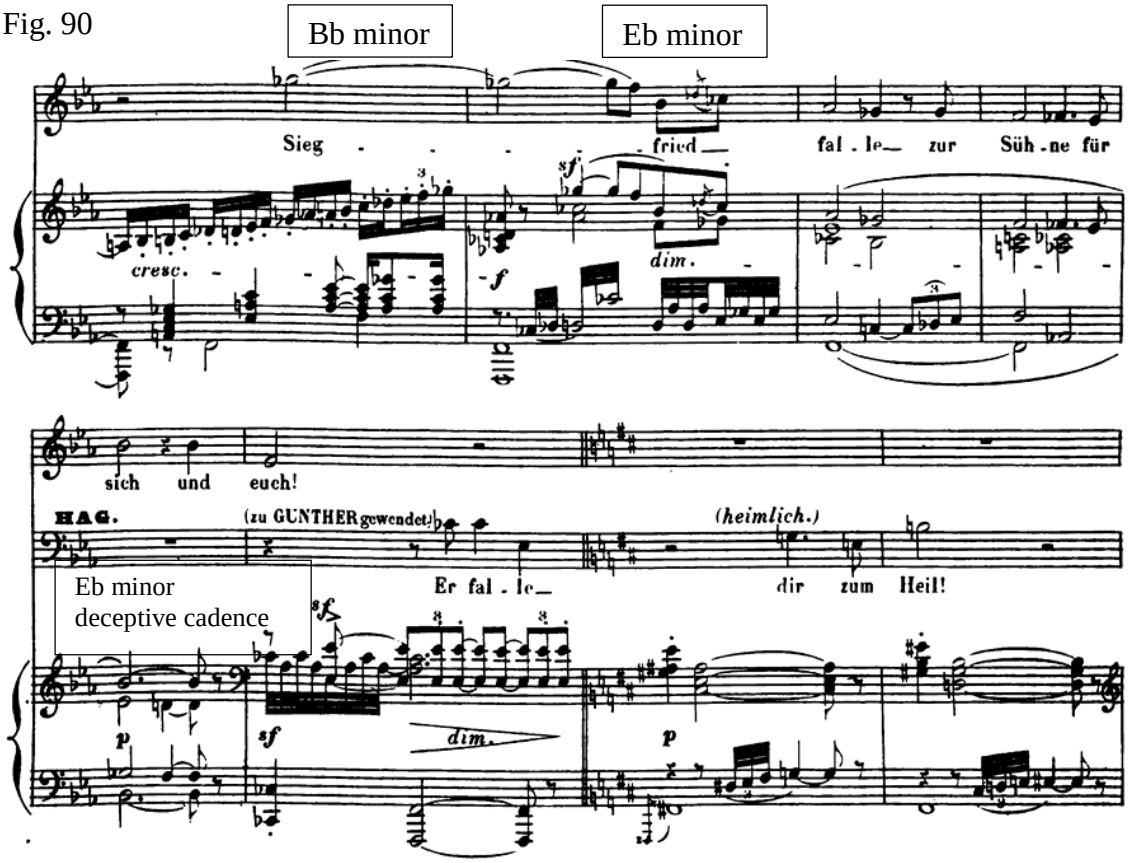
Fig. 89



Only in my translation is the genitive object (*des Einen*) placed in clause initial position where the melisma and minor key speak of Siegfried's fate with ambiguity and irony. The other translators have deemed the chromatic melisma with its downward movement suggestive of 'death' but Wagner placed *Tod* at the end of the phrase where the key modulates to G minor and a long minim slides down to the lowest pitch of the phrase, pictorializing death. Jameson, Porter and Sams' must have felt that the music has a gravity and an ominous tone suited to their reference to Siegfried. Having decided to place 'death' on the melisma, the requirements of sense and syntax force Jameson, Porter and Sams to move the verb to the end and they place an insignificant function word or adverb on the key change and a note that lasts for five long beats (tied dotted minim and minim). This key change on the verb *taugt*, which is not easy to translate, moves Brünnhilde's sentiments from minor (negative) to major (positive) as she anticipates revenge, but Jameson, Porter and Sams' translations are unable to harness this musical meaning to work for their text and settle for weak function words again.

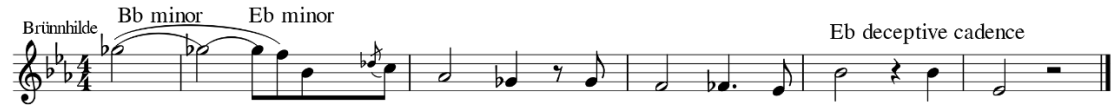
In the final phrase of this section (Fig.90), the certainness of Brünnhilde's words, 'Siegfried shall die', is not supported by the music. The modulation from Bb minor to its subdominant Eb minor gives a sense of yielding where one might expect a sense of striving and a modulation to the dominant key (Green, 2003: 121). This is further emphasised by the interrupted cadence at the end of the phrase:

Fig. 90



Both elements point with irony to the fact that Siegfried's death, which was originally to redeem the world for Wotan, has been reduced to something base: revenge for infidelity in love and a means to access power through the ring.

Fig. 91



Wagner	Sieg		fried	fal	- le	zur	Süh - ne	für	sich	und	euch!
Jameson	Sieg	-	fried	fall	- eth	a	- tone - ment	for	guilt	of	all!
Porter	Sieg	-	fried's	death		a	- tones	for	his crime	and	yours!
Sams	Sieg	-	fried's	death		would	pay	for	his guilt	and	yours!
My transl.	Sieg	-	fried's	down	- fall	will	set - tle	his	debt	and	yours!

Although Jameson, Porter and Sams retain 'Siegfried' on the melisma, they lose the semantic reference back to *des Einen* (referring to Siegfried) set on the same configuration of notes only with more chromaticism. However, the convergence of musical and verbal meaning is preserved in these bars because the German syntax can be easily reproduced in English and the falling interval of *falle* and the plaintive semitone descent on *Sühne* are reflected in the translator's choices. Even the misguided

nature of Brünnhilde's revenge, signalled by the deceptive cadence, is preserved in the translations through the dramatic and effective placement of 'and yours!'

Wagner does not simply use music to corroborate the meaning of words but uses the two sign systems, to interact together and create layers of meaning. Like a subordinate clause that might provide additional information necessary for understanding the main clause, music serves to clarify verbal meaning through emphasis and additional information. In the *Ring*, the translator cannot help but notice that 'important words …are often set in key positions, musically' (Porter, 1978: 401). Porter does not say so, but alliterative rhymes, in particular, are usually underlined by the shape of the melody, parallelism of pitch or intervallic distance, modulation, or the sound of a leitmotif. The recognition of words in key positions and any decision with regard to them is in the hands of the translator and depends on his or her knowledge, interpretation and regard for Wagner's stylistic choices. This may be irrelevant for the audience, but for the musician this is another matter. Porter recalls that the conductor Reginald Goodall once pointed out the importance of a chord in relation to the word 'love' and how he was obliged to change the perfectly constructed phrase, 'You who inspired me to feel this love', to a more stilted one, 'You who this love in my heart inspired' (1977: xvi). This was to create a better match between the important word 'love' and the significance of the musical harmony. Porter concluded that key words and their musical setting should be 'preserved' even if it means 'shuffling the rest of the English round them'. I was always careful to note whether something specific in the music laid more than usual emphasis on a word or connected it to others and I came to the same conclusion as Porter, but based on the importance of alliterative verse in Wagner's word-tone intersemiosis.

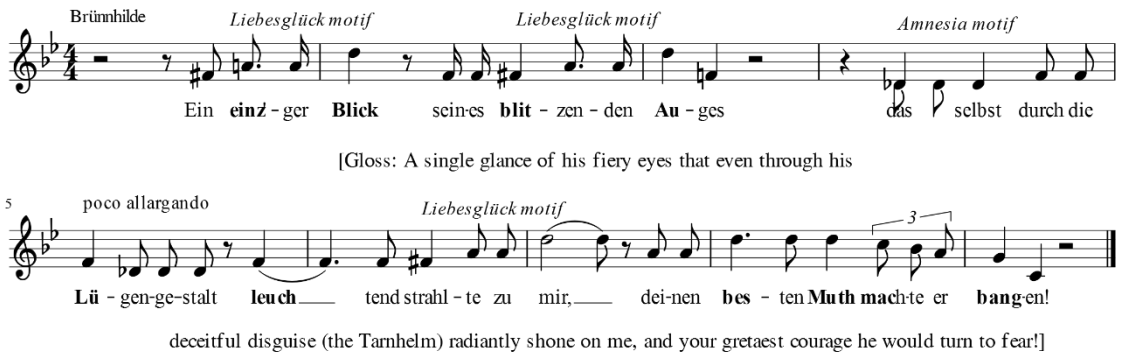
6.3.3.2 Leitmotif: symbolic meaning

According to Wagner's theories in *O&D*, the leitmotif was supposed to be a musical reference to something spoken (sung) by a character but this is not how Wagner created all his leitmotifs. Many originate as orchestral music and only at some later point does their meaning become clear. The significance of all leitmotifs is effectively 'learned' as the opera progresses, and through repetition and association with events, people, objects and words, they gain semantic value.

By the time of composing *GD*, Wagner had created dozens of leitmotifs that referred to specific people, objects, ideas, events, and emotions and in *GD* the leitmotif becomes more dominant as the balanced melodic phrases that dominated the composition of *DW* give way to a style dependent on successively and then simultaneously assembled leitmotifs (Lippman, 1999: 203). Rather than words generating the leitmotif, Wagner sets words to existing leitmotifs established in earlier operas of the tetralogy, some already associated with other words, some purely orchestral. In fact, the music now begins to dictate the vocal line and words are made to fit established orchestral leitmotifs, sometimes even forcing Wagner to produce verse with unnatural accentuation.

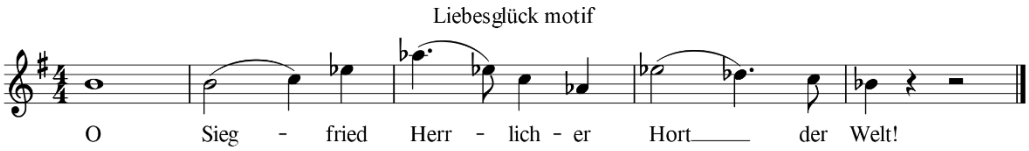
When Wagner sets words to music that already has a given meaning, through association or words, the translator must be able to recognise that meaning and consider it in the translation in order to preserve the cohesion of the opera. In the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*), when Brünnhilde tells Hagen that he is no match for Siegfried, her words are set to two leitmotifs, music Wagner had already written:

Fig. 92



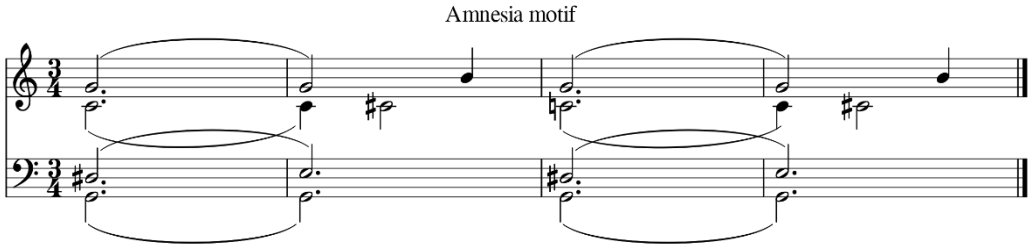
The *Liebesglück* ('love's joy') motif was introduced in *Siegfried* when Brünnhilde was awakened by the eponymous hero whom she addressed through this melody as the 'treasure of the world' who would bring about a new world order after the downfall of the gods:

Fig. 93



The second motif is the *Zaubertrüges* (‘magic deception’) motif (Von Wolzogen, 1876: 100) known as ‘Hagen’s potion’ or the ‘amnesia’ motif:

Fig. 94

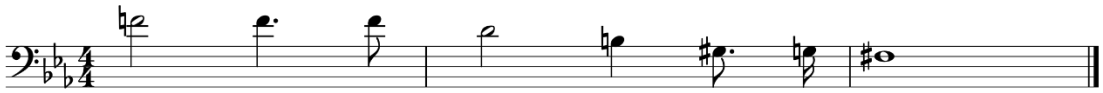


In both cases, the melodies are easily recognisable in Brünnhilde’s music (Fig. 92) even though they are in a different key and with different performance indications. Wagner does something quite complex with the rhymes *Lügengestalt/leuchtend*, which sit on the two motifs. *Lügengestalt* (deceitful disguise), which occupies the climax of the ‘amnesia’ phrase, is made to rhyme with *leuchtend* (radiantly) through repetition of the pitch on which the rhymes are set and through the juxtaposition of the ‘Liebesglück’ motif. The deception of the Tarnhelm’s disguise is joined to the musical memory of the magic potion of memory loss, and Brünnhilde’s memory of the way Siegfried looked at her when they fell in love recalls how she believed he would be the saviour of the world for whom Wotan had hoped. This verbal and musical juxtaposition of deceit and love lies at the heart of the opera. This level of nuance does not appear in the translations where Jameson pairs ‘lying’ and ‘looming’ and Porter pairs ‘Tarnhelm’s’ and ‘such’. Sams’ version is similar, ‘deceitful’ pairs with ‘still’. My translation also fails to live up to Wagner’s nuanced coding but ‘deceitful’/’stirred’ takes some account of the musical memories.

At the end of the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*), Porter and Sams’ translation choices highlight again the problem of recognising and incorporating the leitmotif’s significance or symbolism into the translation of new words set to it. The leitmotifs in

question occur during the ‘trio of the Deadly Oath’ (Von Wolzogen, 1876: 111) when Gunther and Brünnhilde sing ‘Sühn' er die Schmach die er mir schuf!’ (let him atone for the shame he brought on me) to a melody known as the ‘atonement’ motif (*Sühnerechtes Motiv*). This was first heard in Act I (*GD*) when, as part of their oath of blood brotherhood, Gunther and Siegfried vowed that blood would be paid if they broke their oath: ‘mit seinem Blut büss' er die Schuld’ (with his blood let him atone for his guilt). Music and words draw parallels between the oath making of Act I and the consequences of breaking them at the end of Act II; the key words are *Blut* (blood) and *Sühne* (atone). Strangely, this wealth of signification is largely ignored by Porter and Sams.

Fig.95



Wagner	Sühn'	er	die	**Schmach,**	die	er	mir	**schuf!**
Jameson	Purged	be	the	shame	cast	by	his	crime
Porter	Freed	from	the	shame	cast	by	his	crime!
Sams	Then	he	will	purge,	purge	all	my	shame!
My transl.	Die	for	the	shame,	I	have	en -	dured!

Porter’s ‘freed’ and ‘Sams’ ‘then’ as translations of *Sühn*’ (atone) seem poor choices given the significance of the music.

As is often the case, neither is concerned about rhyme, but that aside, the concept of ‘being freed from shame’ is different to that of exhorting retribution for it, which the rest of the scene suggests is the real intention. Porter’s translation is also incoherent with the previous and following verse:

Gunther & Brünnhilde:	It shall be so! Siegfried dies then!
	Freed from the shame cast by his crime!
Hagen:	Siegfried will die, destroyed in his pride!

It is not clear who is freed from the shame, Siegfried or Gunther and Brünnhilde. Sams, as is often the case, has no qualms about placing function words on stressed notes nor about repeating words. However, to replace *Sühn*’, at the beginning of the ‘atonement’ motif, with ‘then’, seems unsatisfactory from both a translation point of view and from a singer’s: ‘Then he will purge, purge all my shame’. In the verse ‘Sühn' er die Schmach die er mir schuf’, Wagner’s concise language, facilitated by the use of the

subjunctive, does not make it easy for the translator into English to place a verb in initial position or to communicate the mood of the hortative subjunctive. Jameson could achieve something similar to the ST because of his use of inversion 'Purged be the shame cast by his crime'. I chose the imperative to enable the verb to be in clause-initial position for the sake of stress and rhymes, 'Die for the shame that I endured'. Both 'purged' and 'die' seem coherent with the meaning of the verse and with the musical implications of the leitmotifs.

6.3.4 Music expands and creates layers of verbal meaning

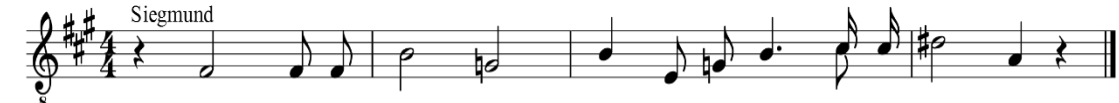
6.3.4.1 Emphasis

Melodic parallelisms, modulation and melismatic word setting are used by Wagner to draw attention to a particular word or set of alliterative rhymes in order to underline their significance or to suggest a relationship of significance that the words alone do not. Diminished seventh chords, for example, are always worth looking at closely in relation to the words, for as a chromatic chord that temporarily destabilizes or suspends tonality, it is the one most often used for modulating from one key to another. It is one means by which Wagner creates 'endless melody' since each tone of a diminished seventh chord can serve as a leading tone and resolve or continue in any direction. Wagner uses the diminished seventh chord for dramatic effect to create tension but when the discourse climaxes with this chord, the listener is caught in the tension and in a sort of suspense that forces him to pay attention. When Wagner sets a word to a modulation or other significant musical feature, he has done so for a purpose, perhaps to emphasize its importance, draw attention to its relationship with other words (usually alliterative rhymes) or to surprise us with new information that may change our understanding of the events on stage.

It soon becomes obvious to the translator that when a word falls on a modulation in the *Ring*, its significance is especially marked but translating the German 'acceptably, so that the modulations occur on the words desired' is often impossible (Magee, 1988: 68). Jameson's decision to use archaic language provided him with access to inversions that could imitate the German syntax and make his task easier. For Porter, Sams and me, who generally avoid syntactic inversion, it is a more arduous task,

although as Porter said, it is sometimes necessary to accept unusual word order to keep a specific word on a specific note or chord (1978: 401). When Siegmund asks Brünnhilde in the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*) if his father, Wälse, will be found in Valhalla, the question begins in B minor but on the first syllable of *Vater* (father) moves to the dominant seventh and resolves to the foreign key of E major. This key is associated in the *Ring* with love (Petty, 2005: 119, 141), however, during the first Act of *DW* it has also been associated with Valhalla, which is almost synonymous with Wotan. Jameson, Porter and Sams place the word ‘father’ in the same position to coincide with the key change, so that music that stands for Wotan accompanies a reference to him and lends emphasis to it (Fig. 96). I did not do this initially because the English alliterating translations for the German words *fänd’* and *Vater* (‘find’ and ‘father’) cannot be combined with the rhyme words *Walhall* and *Wälse* in the same phrase due to syllabic quantity, stress, grammar (subjunctive) and the requirements of naturalness. Since my aim was a rhyming translation, I decided instead that ‘Walhall’ could be set to the modulation. However, I eventually decided that although my second version, which uses ‘father’, is less satisfying in terms of rhyme and naturalness, the significance of ‘father’ being set on the modulation was more important, so I altered my translation:

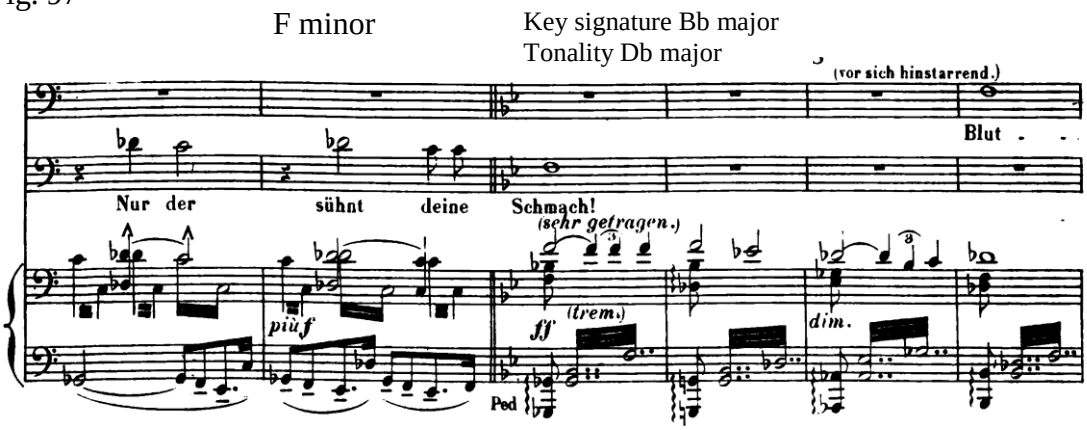
Fig. 96



Wagner	**Fänd'**	ich	in	**Wal**	-	hall	**Wäl**	-	se,	den	eig	-	nen	**Va**	-	ter?
Jameson	Dwell	-	eth	in	**Wal**	-	hall	**Wäl**	-	se,	the	Wäl	-	sung's	fath	-	er?
Porter	And	shall	I	**find**	there			Wäl	-	se,	my	no	-	ble	**fath**	-	er?
Sams	In	this	Val	-	hal	-	la	shall		I	find	Vel	-	sa my	fath	-	er?
My 1st transl.	**Will**	I	find	**Wäl**	-	se	**wait**	-	ing	for	me		in	**Wal**	-	hall?
My final transl.	Say,	shall	I	**find**	there,			Wäl	-	se	my	no	-	ble	**fath**		er?

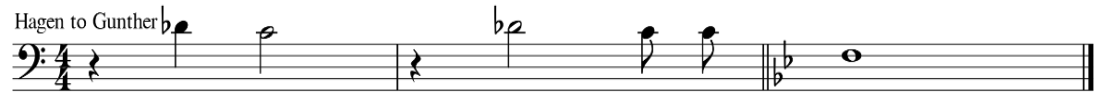
The ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*) offers more examples of this kind of emphasis. As Gunther tentatively accepts the idea of murdering Siegfried, Hagen tells him that only Siegfried’s death will atone for the shame he has brought on Gunther. The word ‘shame’ (*Schmach*) is on both a modulation from F minor to Db major and a change of key signature to Bb major:

Fig. 97



In the modulation to Db major, the orchestra and vocal line become Gunther's 'blood-brotherhood' motif as he recalls the oath. Both Jameson, because of his archaic style, and Porter, by repeating the word 'death' from the first half of this verse-line, find suitable ways to manage the accents, sense and necessity to replicate the placement of *Schmach* on the key change. Sams' translation also places 'shame' on the modulation, but is the least successful because the prosody of 'it will' does not fit the musical accents well. This goes to show how powerful the claim of modulation on an important word can be for a translation:

Fig. 98



Wagner	Nur	der	sühnt	dei -	ne	Schmach!
Jameson	Nought	else	pur -	ges	your	shame!
Porter	His	death	pur -	ges	your	shame!
Sams	**It**	**will**	**cleanse**	**all**	**your**	**shame.**
My translation	His	death	saves	you	from	shame!

It is within the same verse-line and around the same concept of atonement that another modulation highlights the word, *sühne* (atones): 'Des Bundes Bruch sühne nun Blut!' (the bond's breakage is atoned for only by blood). This sentence is made compact by the inflections of the German language, its flexible word order, and use of the subjunctive. English syntax demands more words and since these will not fit the music, other solutions have been sought (Fig. 99).

Jameson and Porter, recognising the significance of the modulation decided that a word with similar ominous overtones, ‘blood’, should replace the verb *sühne*. With a little parataxis, they emulate the succinctness of Wagner’s syntax and reproduce the phrase semantically even though only part of the rhyme scheme remains. Sams, reproduces the rhymes accurately with their English cognates but places a weak function word, a pronoun, on the modulation, no doubt counting on rhetorical emphasis to account for the somewhat false accentuation. The emphasis that the modulation brings to the musical phrase demands a content word and in order to satisfy the needs of the modulation, accents and rhyme scheme I chose to paraphrase the meaning slightly:

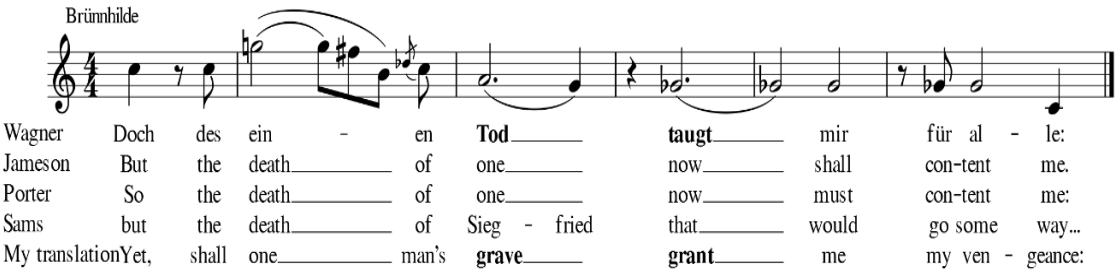
Fig. 99

Wagner	Des	**Bun**	-	des	**Bruch**	süh	-	ne	nun	**Blut!**
Jameson	The	**bro**	-	ken	**bond**	blood		shall	a -	tone!
Porter	He	**broke**		that	**bond;**	blood		must	a -	tone!
Sams	He	**broke**		that	**bond.**	He’ll		pay	in	**blood.**
My transl.	The	**bro**	-	ken	**bond**	seeks		out	his	**blood!**

Emphasis can also be given to key words through other musical resources. One such resource that stands out in Wagner’s *Ring* is the use of melisma. There are several examples of extended melisma to be found in the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*) that are used for emphasis, either semantic, dramatic or both. Written some two to four years before the other *Ring* operas and before *O&D*, *GD* contains more melisma than the other operas just as it contains other elements of traditional opera such as the only trio of the cycle (in this scene) and the only chorus (vassals in Act II Scene 3). Melisma was largely rejected in the *Ring* libretti written after *GD* because it makes it more difficult to hear the words and does not suit the more naturalistic, drama-like speech that Wagner desired. In *GD*, extended melismas are used to express rage and vengeful desire. They emphasise one word although they colour a whole phrase, and this makes the choice of that one word important. The melisma to which *Einen* (one man) is set (Fig. 100), demonstrates some of the challenges this feature can raise for the translator. The verse line in which it occurs appears immediately before another in which ‘Siegfried’ is set to an identical melisma (Figs. 103/104). Both melismas have an identical note pattern

although in different keys (B minor and Bb minor) and different note lengths for the first syllable (the ‘Sieg-’ of *Siegfried* is four and a half beats whilst the ‘Ein-’ of *Einen* is only two and a half beats). Bearing in mind that all the translators chose to retain *Siegfried* on the second melisma, logic dictates that to retain the same connection of thought as Wagner, a close semantic translation for *Einen*, which refers to Siegfried, would be sought for the first melisma. However, this is not the case for Jameson, Porter and Sams:

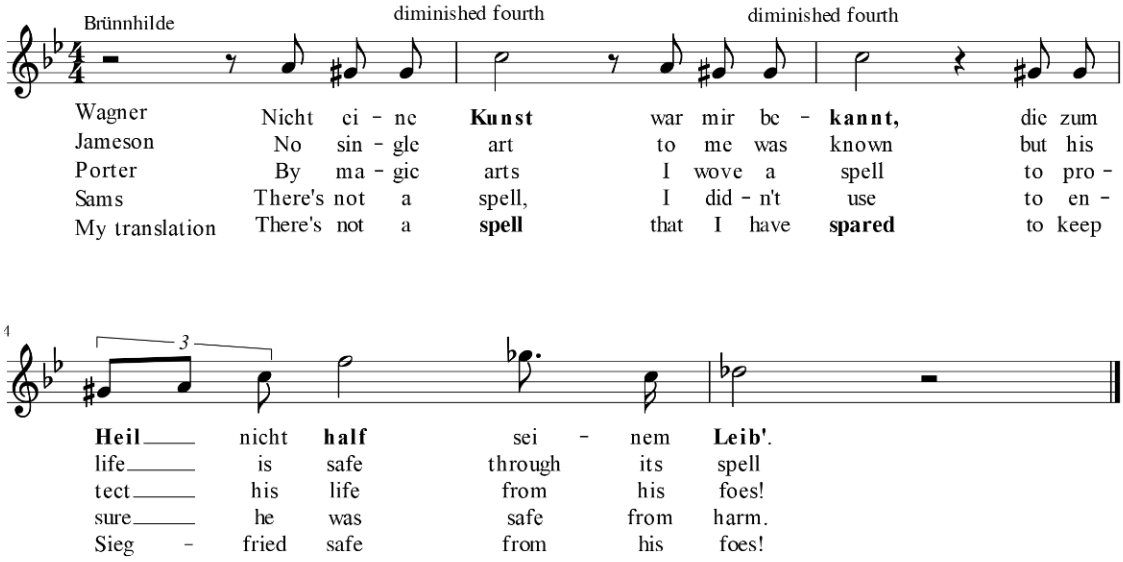
Fig. 100



It cannot be for reasons of syntax or accent that the other translators chose to place ‘death’ on the melisma, since something like ‘No, but one man’s death, that will content me’ would fit. As I suggested earlier, it may be because they see the melisma as word-painting depicting death. Whatever the reason, it seems they did not deem Wagner’s connection of *Einen* and *Siegfried* through the repeated melisma important.

Very often in the *Ring*, alliterative rhymes are highlighted or emphasised through melodic parallelisms, that is, through some sort of musical structure or feature. The musical features draw such attention to the relationship of the rhymes that it is difficult to ignore them, although often difficult to replicate them in the translation. In the following line from the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*), the rhyme words *Kunst* (art) and *bekannt* (known) are linked through the repetition of a melodic figure in which the rhyme words are set to the same upward leaping diminished fourth interval, at the same pitch and with the same note durations:

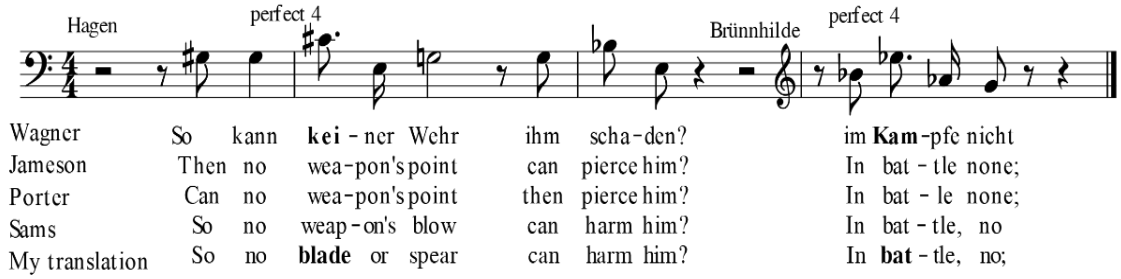
Fig. 101



In this case, the repetition is related to intonation and to conventionalised musical meaning. In intonational terms it is as if Brünnhilde is struggling to speak and falters on the rhyme words *Kunst* and *(be)kannt* as she regrets that her own magic protects Siegfried from the revenge she now seeks. In conventionalised musical terms, the discordant rising diminished fourth interval, through its age-old associations, suggests pain, suffering, despair and lament. Its painful quality has a poignancy befitting Brünnhilde's feelings of betrayal and desire for revenge. Jameson, Porter and Sams translate Wagner's meaning closely but the loss of the combined sound effect of alliterative rhymes and repeated musical sounds reduces the impact of her regret.

Another example of the way in which the combination of rhyme and a repeated musical feature underline the semantic intention of a verse line can be found in Fig. 102 where the rhyme pair *keiner* (no) and *Kampfe* (battle) are set to repeated rising perfect fourth intervals although at a different pitch. The upward leaping interval on *keiner* (not one) reveals Hagen's angry disappointment to hear that Siegfried has been protected from death by Brünnhilde's spells. When Brünnhilde repeats the interval, though anger remains in her voice, Wagner's melodic parallelism very subtly marks the moment when Brünnhilde moves from anger to thoughts of revenge as her intonation mirrors that of Hagen.

Fig. 102



The musical connection draws attention to the characters uniting in their desire for vengeance for the first time. Wagner did not emphasise ‘weapon’ but rather its negation, the word ‘no’ is what is significant. All the translations, however, position ‘weapon/blade’ on Hagen’s rising interval and whilst overall the sense of the phrase and the music match, the potential venom that the singer working with the German can bring to the interpretation when combining ‘no’ with the upward arching interval is unlikely to be possible when ‘weapon’ or ‘blade’ replaces it. The negative element can be set on the rising interval using: ‘So there’s not a spear can harm him?’ but my aim of preserving the rhyme stopped me from using it.

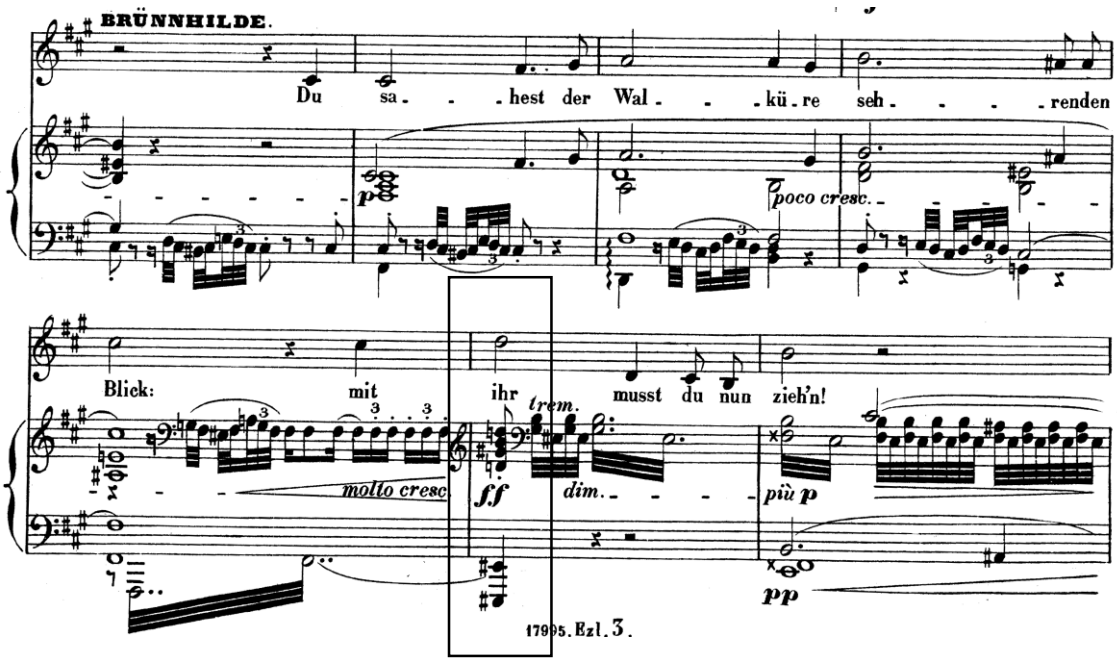
6.3.4.2 Contradiction, ambiguity and contention

Wagner uses music to contradict what a character might be saying or doing to achieve dramatic effect, to build tension, create suspense and so on. In the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*), when Brünnhilde insists that Siegmund must go with her to Valhalla because he has been chosen, she refers to herself in the third person and Wagner places the pronoun *ihr* on a very unusual chord that markedly draws attention to the word.

The F diminished seventh chord (written enharmonically) that is marked fortissimo, is used to undermine the certainty of Brünnhilde’s words and the will of Wotan that she has undertaken to carry out. The diminished seventh is often used to signify despair or agitation, ‘especially when accompanying… a single word’ (Rieger, 2011: 12), because it is tonally uncertain and ambiguous, ‘inherently chromatic, since it cannot be constructed from the diatonic pitches of a single key’ (Randel, 2003: 175). By placing the word *ihr* on a diminished seventh, Wagner undermines Brünnhilde’s power, which in Act III will be taken from her by Wotan for her disobedience; it

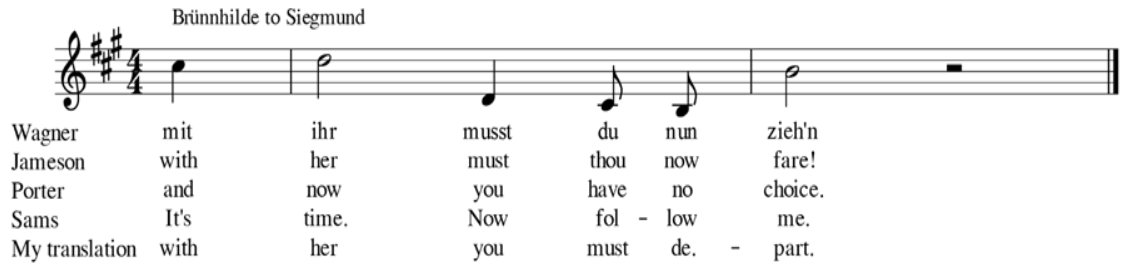
anticipates her weakness, for she will soon give in to Siegmund and defy Wotan's command by promising to protect him from death.

Fig. 103



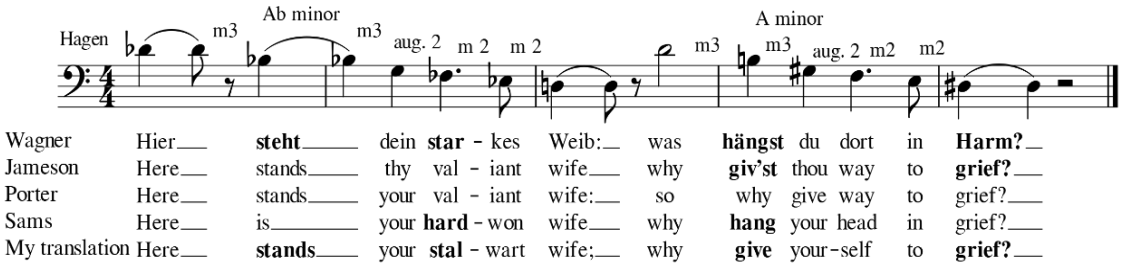
Translating this small phrase brings with it two challenges that may prevent the translator placing a synonym of *ihr* on the special chord: the problem of accent due to German subject-verb inversion and the question of whether or not to allow Brünnhilde to speak of herself in the third person. Jameson, as usual, has no problem with the prosody because his archaic syntactical style means he can resort to S-V inversion and he decided to preserve the third person reference. Porter and Sams avoid the third person, probably because they prefer language that is more naturalistic. Porter paraphrases Wagner and relies on rhetorical emphasis to absorb the heavy accent of the third beat on which the inverted verb *musst* is set. Sams begins a new sentence on the accented note. Both choices ignore the semantic implications of the F diminished seventh chord, which speaks of ambiguity, reflecting Brünnhilde's hidden desire that Siegmund live and not die as Wotan commanded. Yet without resorting to inversion, the combined effect of music and words can be preserved, as it is in my translation, if the note on which *musst* is set is seen as giving rhetorical weight to 'you:

Fig. 104



In the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*), Wagner makes extensive use of chromaticism to colour the meaning of the words and draw them into question. In the following example, two almost identical chromatic figures, one in the key of Ab minor and one in A minor, cast a different light on the verbal phrases they accompany:

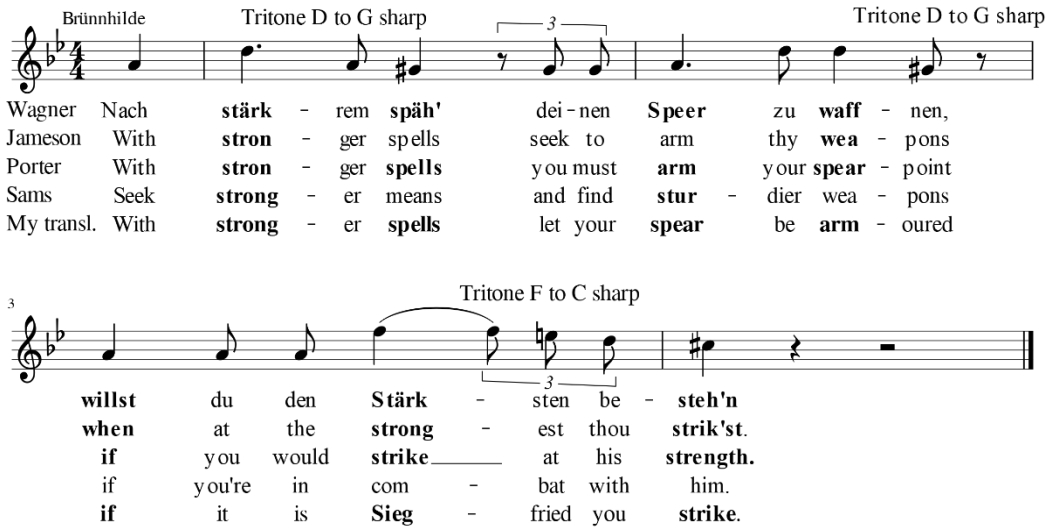
Fig. 105



These two figures, a sequence of descending minor intervals (thirds, then seconds) divided by an augmented second, might be called ‘crooked’ or ‘fractured’ (Trippett, 2013: 35). The augmented second interval is highly unusual, slightly exotic, almost disruptive and serves to emphasise ‘dein Star(kes)’ and ‘du dort’. Whilst the descending gesture corroborates the words of the second phrase, which goads Gunther for his weakness and cowardice, it seems to contradict those of the first. Hagen’s words are crooked. He calls Brünnhilde ‘strong’ but he has just manipulated her to find out how he can kill Siegfried. Sams’ translation invalidates the musical comment on the words in the first phrase, since ‘hard won’ says more about Siegfried and Gunther’s efforts to win her rather than about her nature as a ‘strong’ woman. However, Sams has probably the best translation of the second phrase, if rhymes are not required. The physical gesture of hanging one’s head is captured in the musical gesture much better than the idea of ‘giving oneself to grief’ but one has to weigh this up against the powerful pull of alliteration in words and music that this excerpt exhibits.

The very portentous tritone interval is also used by Wagner to ominously colour the melodic line and draw doubt on the words associated with it. When Brünnhilde begins to reveal to Hagen how Siegfried might be killed in the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*). Her words may speak of strength (*stärkrem/ stärksten*) and armour (*waffnen*) but the descending tritone intervals speak of treachery through their association with the 'Hagen' and 'Revenge' leitmotifs:

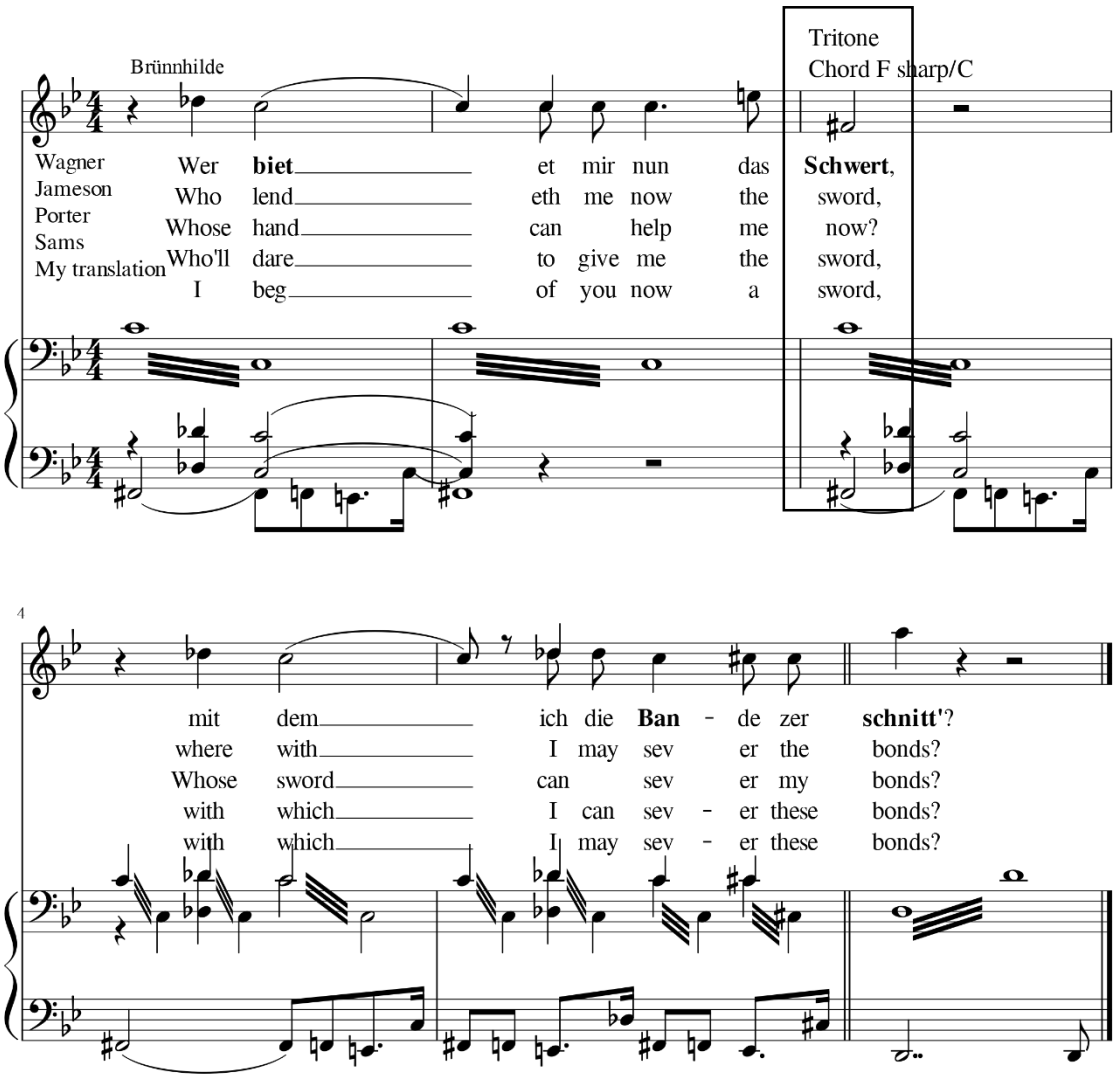
Fig. 106



Wagner's elliptical language omits the noun to which the comparative *stärk'rem* (stronger) refers, but the meaning is 'seek stronger means with which to arm your spear'. In this case, all the translations provide appropriate, if not close translations to retain a relationship between *stärk'rem* (stronger) and *waffnen* (arm) and thus make the most of the twin tritones and their semantic relationship.

Earlier, I described how the inherent instability of a tritone interval brings to mind 'devilish and inimical forces' (Cooke, 1959/1990: 90) and that it is used in the melody line to denote fear, conflict or threat. When the tritone chord is part of the harmony in the orchestra, it may comment similarly on the words being sung or its unstable nature may be exploited to make the utterance ambiguous. In the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*), the tritone chord adds ambiguity to Brünnhilde's words when she asks who will give her a sword with which to sever the bond between herself and Siegfried.

Fig. 107

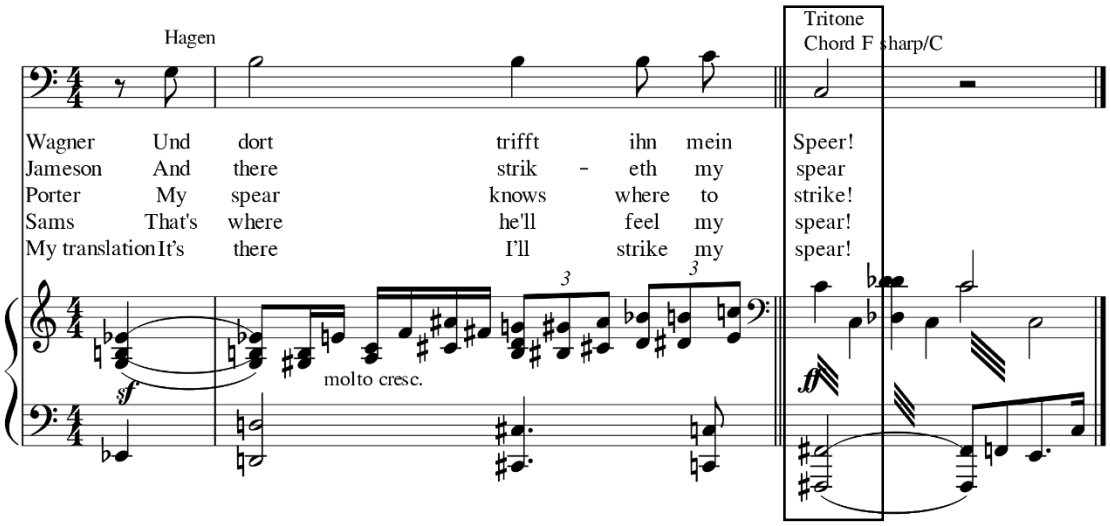


Is her request metaphorical, in that she wishes publicly to cut all ties with Siegfried, or does she wish him harm? Ambiguity of language and music prefigure a scene in which Siegfried's murder is eventually plotted. The sinister tritone demands that the translation place the same word on it, if the meaning of the chord is to work in the same way as in the original score. All the translators were of this mind, except Porter, who contrary to his own exhortation to take care with key words and their position, replaces 'sword' with the innocuous word 'now' and loses the impact of the tritone.

In another example, Porter, instead of positioning the translation of *Speer* (spear) on the tritone chord as in Wagner's original score, uses the word 'strike'. The word 'strike' is a good alternative and coherent with the ominous meaning of the tritone

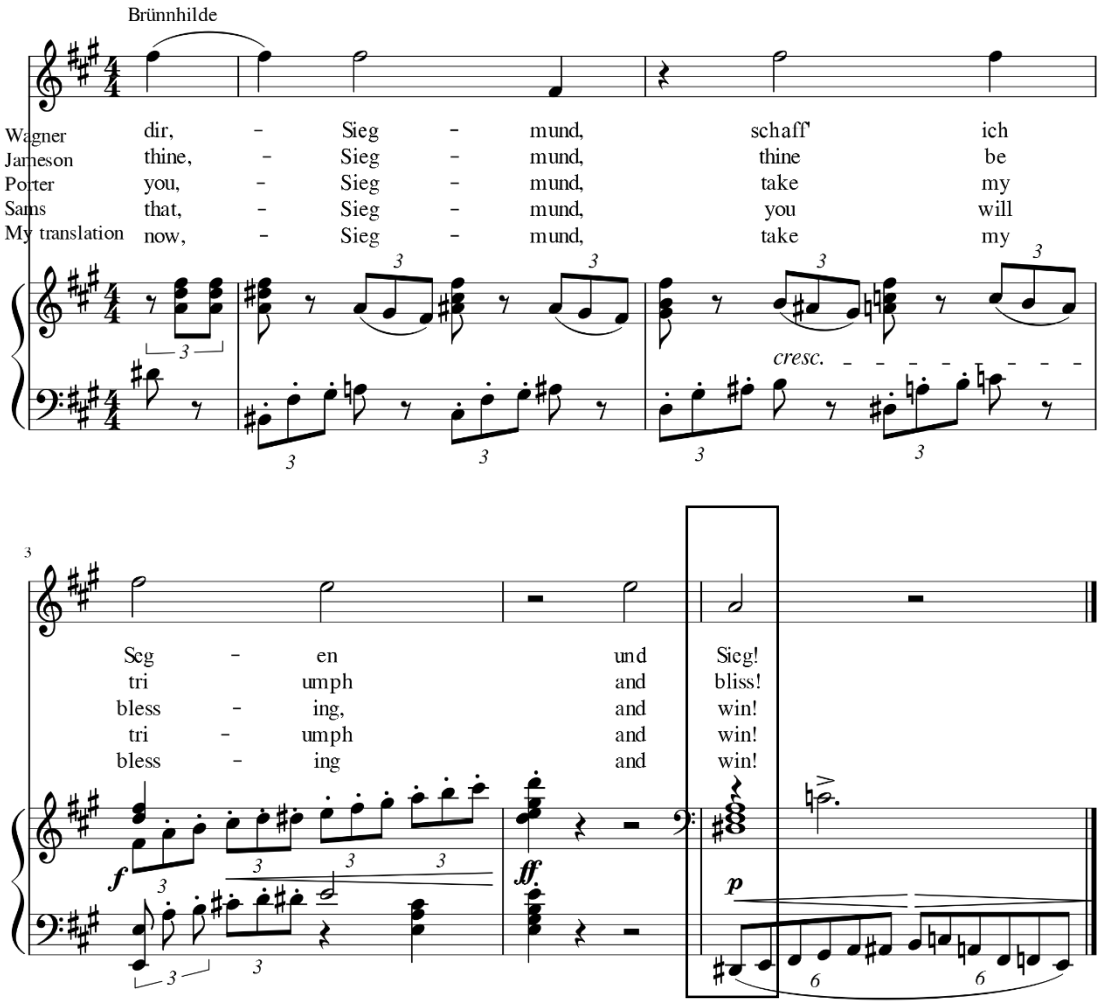
chord, but ‘spear’ is the word with all the significance because of its inherent ambiguity throughout the opera. Wotan rules the world through his spear; he breaks the sword Notung with it to cause Siegmund’s death; Gunther and Siegfried swear their blood-brotherhood oath on Hagen’s spear as a guarantee of law and order, which becomes a murder weapon. This, however, is an example of where coherence can be as good as equivalence and Porter’s choice would probably make no difference to the singer’s delivery or the dramatic action.

Fig. 108



Wagner’s music is characterised by the absence of traditional cadences as part of the architecture of the music and the effect produced Wagner’s ‘unending melody’(1861/1898: 172). He avoided the symmetry of regular cadences and perfect cadences are rare, however, cadences that suggest that more needs to be said, leave questions unanswered, or deceive expectations, abound. Wagner uses them in conjunction with the text to enhance meaning. For example, near the end of the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*), Brünnhilde, overcome by Siegmund’s love for Sieglinde, decides to disobey Wotan and change the outcome of the battle so that Siegmund might live; but her promise to him of victory is questioned by the cadence.

Fig. 109



Her words might lead the listener to expect the decisiveness of a perfect cadence to the A major tonic, but instead the word *Sieg* (victory) is set to a diminished D♯ minor chord in a deceptive cadence, which reveals that Brünnhilde's promise will never be fulfilled (Tarasti, 2012: 203). The vocal line, ending in a perfect cadence (dominant to tonic) says one thing, but the music, like a Greek chorus, says something else and puts a question mark over what Brünnhilde has asserted. In this case, all the translations provide words that together with the deceptive cadence allow the contradictory voice of the music to have its effect.

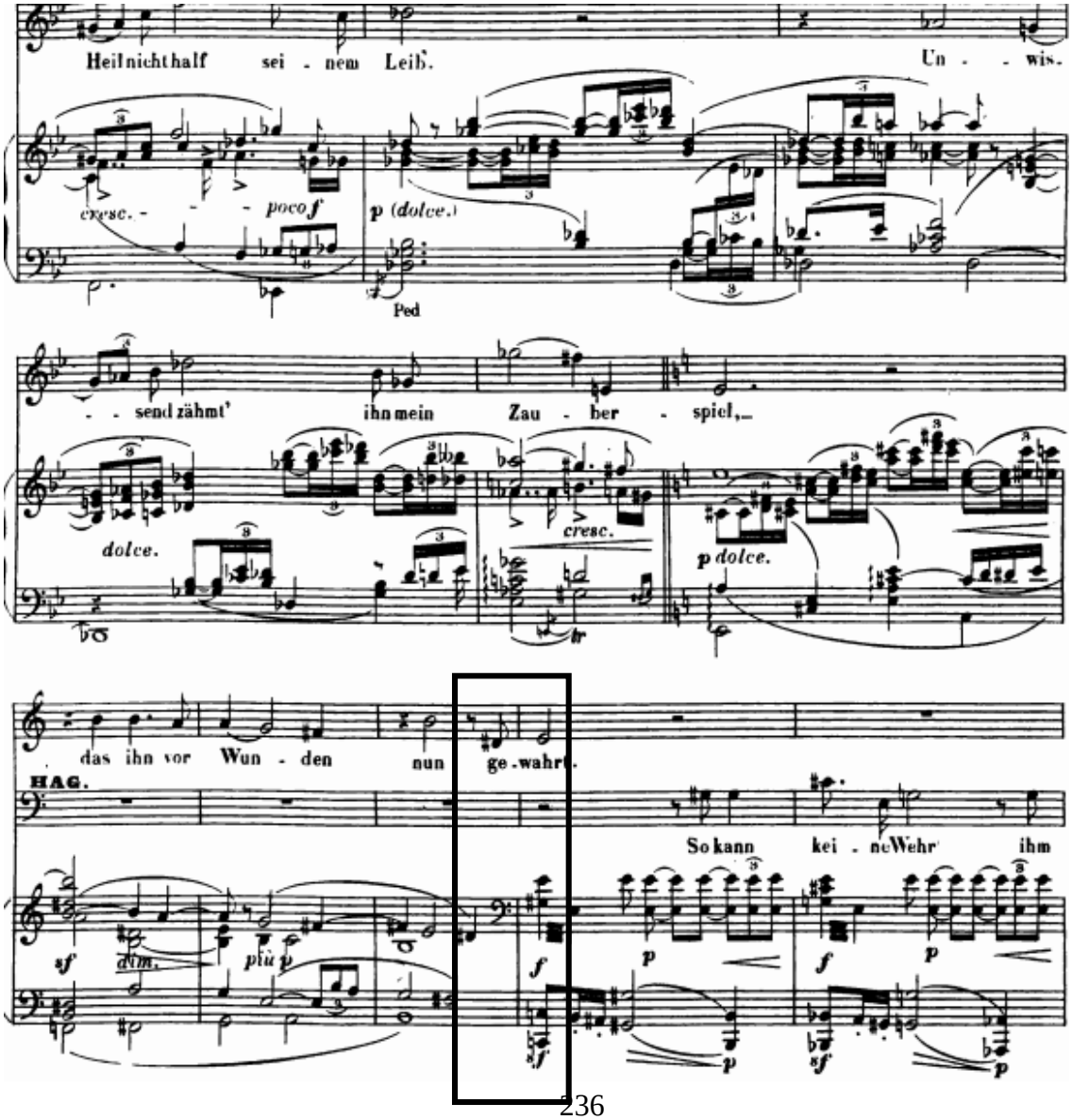
6.3.4.3 Irony

Wagner had been eager to make a musical drama in which text, music and other artistic elements contributed to drama. To this end, he imported from drama devices

such as dramatic irony that relies on the audience knowing something that the character does not. All irony depends on the audience perceiving multiple perspectives simultaneously for which the combination of music and words is ideally suited. Wagner achieves ironic effects by creating divergence between music and words, by making the music contradict the words through a number of musical resources: cadence, intervallic tensions, melismatic word setting and tonality.

When Brünnhilde expresses her venomous regret at having protected Siegfried with her spells in the ‘conspiracy’ scene (*GD*), the instability of the interrupted cadence (with a raised third in the chord), on which the word *gewahrt* (protects) is set, questions her words.

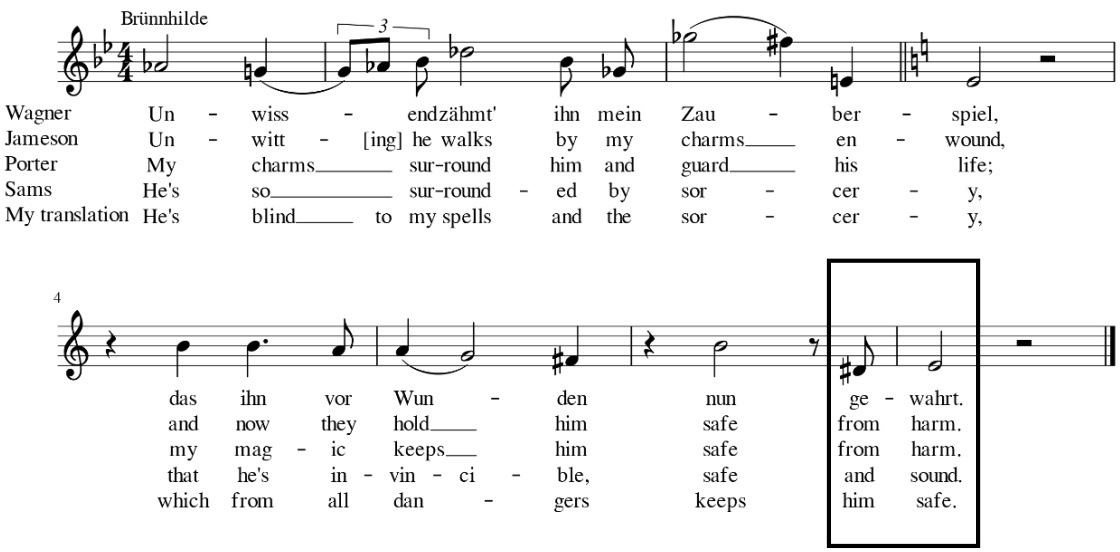
Fig. 110



The irony arises because the audience knows that Siegfried dies in the story because his back is not protected by her spells. It is difficult to preserve the effect of irony because the differences in grammar and syntax between Wagner's archaic German and modern English often make it impossible to place the required word on the cadence as Wagner did. The translator might be able to relate a phrase to a cadence but not always a single word.

Jameson and Porter, by placing 'harm' on the interrupted cadence, instead of something equivalent to 'safe', nullify its ironic effect. There is nothing for the music to question, nothing on which to cast irony.

Fig. 111

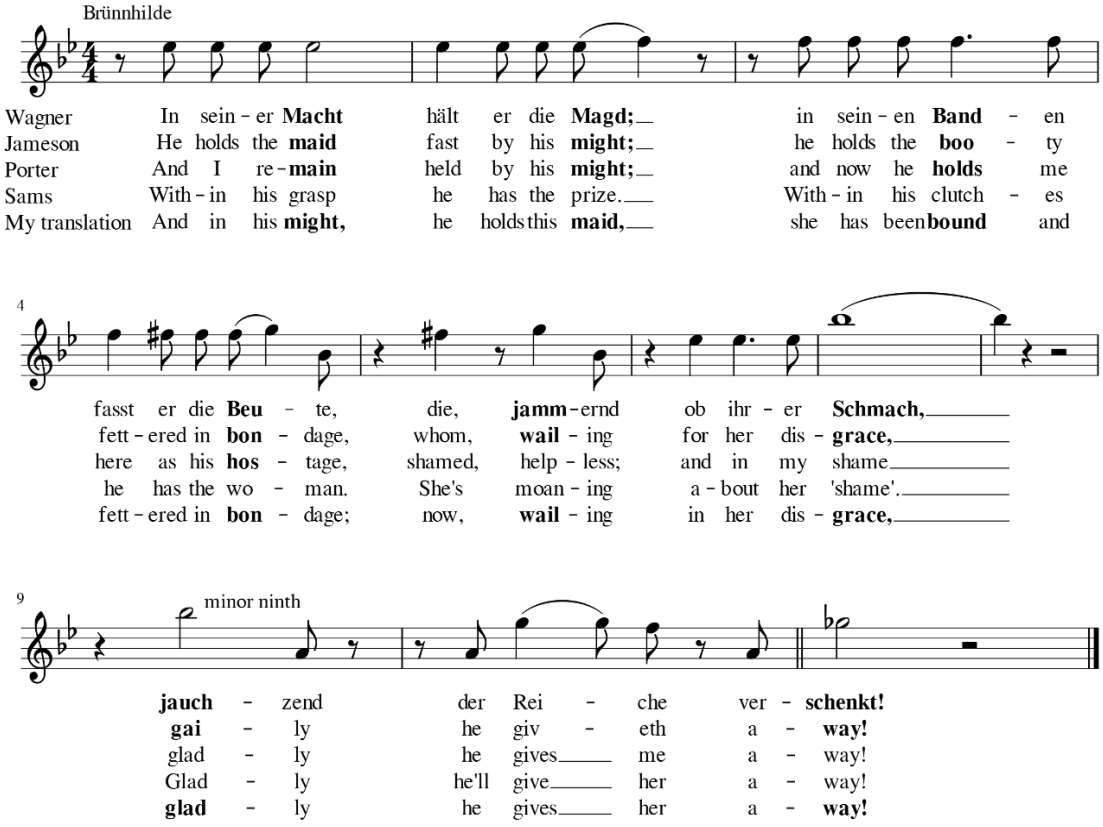


Sams' use of 'sound' goes some way to preserving the effect but the use of cliché is unsatisfactory. A better way to bind words and music more closely, would be to place 'safe' on the cadence, because it is Brünnhilde's ability to save Siegfried that is in question, after all in a few moments she will be plotting to kill him.

Brünnhilde's vocal line in the second half of the 'conspiracy' scene (*GD*) is marked by large intervallic leaps. They reflect both her pain and her anger and reveal her vengeful desires. The most frequently used intervals in this pivotal and momentous scene go beyond octave intervals and Brünnhilde sings the word *jauchzend* (jubilantly), for example, on a descending compound interval of a minor ninth (Fig. 125). This dissonant interval, just a half tone above the perfect consonant interval of the octave,

seems to ‘evoke pain…agony, torment’ (Saint-Dizier, 2014: 71). Indeed, the minor ninth chord has been designated the ‘pain’ chord (Nicholls, 1924: 28) and Wagner uses it here to evoke irony, since the musical meaning is the opposite of the word ‘joyful’ that has been set to it.

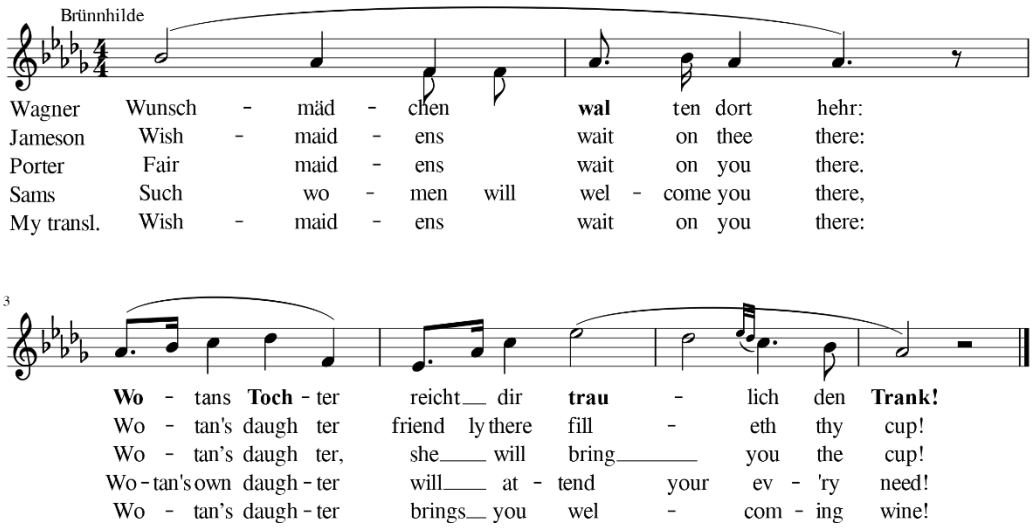
Fig. 112



Brünnhilde speaks of Siegfried jubilantly giving her away to another man (Gunther) but the music speaks of the pain this action caused her. Unlike Wagner’s usually succinct language, the verse lines in which *jauchzend* appears include a subordinate and a parenthetical clause, however, when he set it to music, he split the phrases into small sections with numerous rests in between. This extended musico-verbal arrangement makes translation easier than when succinct verbal phrases are set to succinct musical ones and all the translations position an equivalent of the word *jauchzend* in the same position as Wagner. Except for Jameson, all the translators chose ‘gladly’, which though not as accurate as ‘joyfully’ or ‘jubilantly’, works on all levels: sense, syllabic count and stress. Jameson’s choice of ‘gaily’ is equally good, but now outdated.

In the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*), Wagner uses melisma for ironic effect. When Brünnhilde tells Siegmund of the wish-maidens waiting in Valhalla, she uses the word ‘traulich’ to describe how they will greet him.

Fig. 113

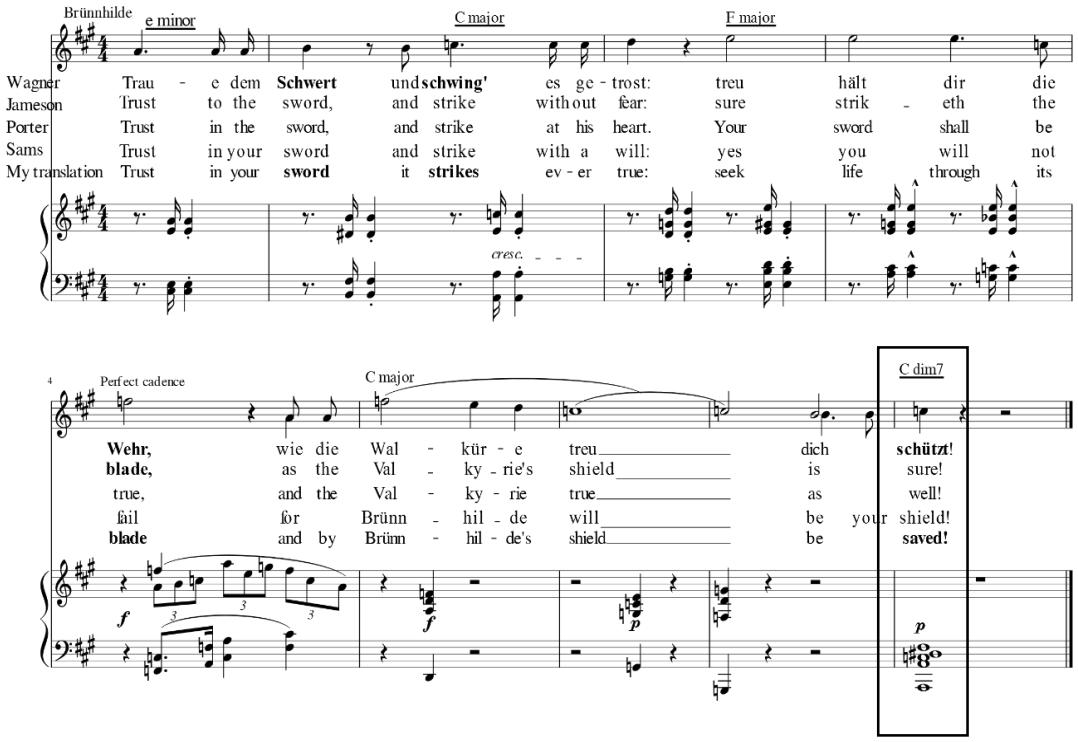


On this word the tonality modulates to Ab major with an extended descending melisma that begins on the dominant and descends through a major third to the tonic, a point of repose, which according to Cooke (1959/1990: 130) is often used to convey a sense of passive joy, relief, consolation or fulfilment. Wagner’s decision to set *traulich* [convivial] in this way is an ironic comment on the state of Valhalla. The audience knows Valhalla is tainted since it has been paid for with the gold stolen from the Rhinemaidens; and from the earlier scene in this act between Fricka and Wotan, the audience has learned of Wotan’s morally flawed plan to retrieve the gold from Fafner in order to save the gods and Valhalla. The word *traulich* has other ironic connotations since for Siegmund it must mean being separated from Sieglinde (though he has yet to learn this). This is a good example of music adding a level of meaning to the words. However, the choices made by Jameson, Porter and Sams with regard to *traulich*, the melisma and the descending figure negate the additional meaning offered by the music. The words ‘filleth’ (Jameson), ‘bring’ (Porter) or ‘attend’ (Sams) fail to replicate the irony communicated by the melismatic setting of *traulich* because they do not refer in any way to Valhalla. I chose the word ‘welcoming’ because that is how Brünnhilde is trying to make Valhalla seem to Siegmund and because I could rhyme it with ‘wine’, a

meronym for ‘drink’. The idea of a ‘welcoming’ drink captures the meaning of *traulich* as ‘convivial’ and is close to the definitions ‘fondly’ and ‘tenderly’ given in Grimms’ dictionary (Grimm & Grimm, 1854), therefore, it preserves the connotations of irony found in the original score.

Towards the end of the ‘annunciation’ scene (*DW*), Brünnhilde tells Siegmund to trust in his sword, to wield it well and to believe that it will protect him (Fig. 114). This turns out to be an ironic exhortation as Wotan smashes Siegmund’s sword to pieces, which allows Hunding to slay him. The ‘sword’ leitmotif is normally in C major, a key that stands for simplicity and integrity (Cicora, 1998: 21). It is the key of innocence and goodness, of the purity of Rhine-gold. However, as Brünnhilde tells Siegmund to trust in the sword, the key is not C major but E minor and this deviation into a minor tonality already questions her words.

Fig. 114



As she tells him to swing the sword confidently, C major, the key associated with the sword is arrived at as if to confirm its trustworthiness. F major serves to confirm with optimism that the sword will serve Siegmund well. At the mention of the word, *Wehr* (weapon) there is a triumphant perfect cadence. In all innocence,

Brünnhilde expects to be able to save Siegmund from death and she begins to say this in C major but as she sings the word, *schützt* [protects] there is a diminished seventh chord turning what promised to be a perfect cadence into a false one. The orchestra is telling the audience her words are false. These lines show how tonality and alliterative rhymes work in conjunction with one another to undermine each other's meanings:

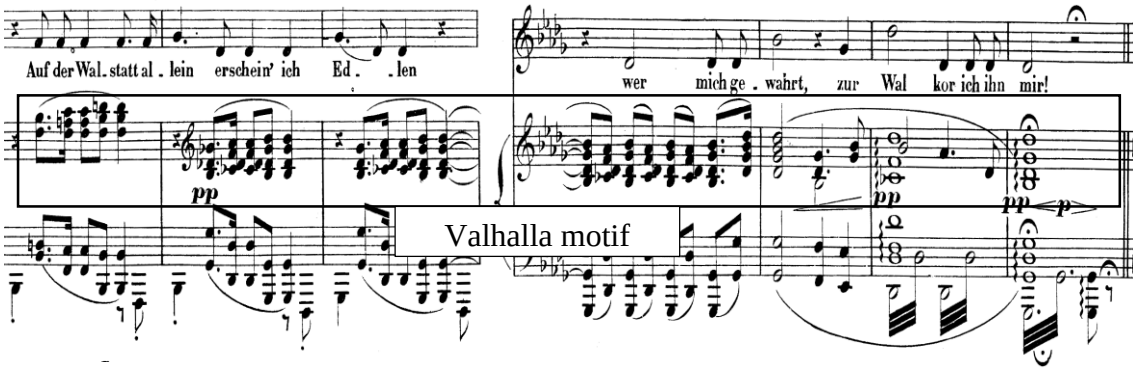
The 'tr'-rhymes *Traue/getrost* /*treu* (trust/confidently/faithful) whose meanings are closely related, are separated musically by each being set in a different tonality. The shifting tonality suggests falsehood and faithlessness, making the words ring false. The music also undermines the semantics of the 'sch' rhymes; Brünnhilde is saying that Siegmund's sword and his ability to wield it, along with her protection, will carry the day for him. The music disagrees. The clever play between rhymes and music, central to Wagner's method, is almost impossible to replicate. Not only is there a problem of lexis, but syntax and grammar predicate against alignment of verbal and musical meaning. Even a major feature like the diminished seventh chord in the final cadence cannot always be made to work with the words of the translation. Although Jameson's 'sure', Sams' 'shield' and my 'saved' allow for the interplay of musical doubt with verbal assertion, Porter's translation seems to take no note at all of the musical implication of this chord when he sets the word 'well' to it.

6.3.4.6 Leitmotif: comments on the words

The leitmotif is often only heard in the orchestra, where it contributes to the dramatic action by commenting on or making observations on the words and actions on stage. A leitmotif when incorporated into the accompaniment or the harmony has the effect of modifying the meaning of the melody and its words, which makes recognising and interpreting such 'comments' also essential to the translation.

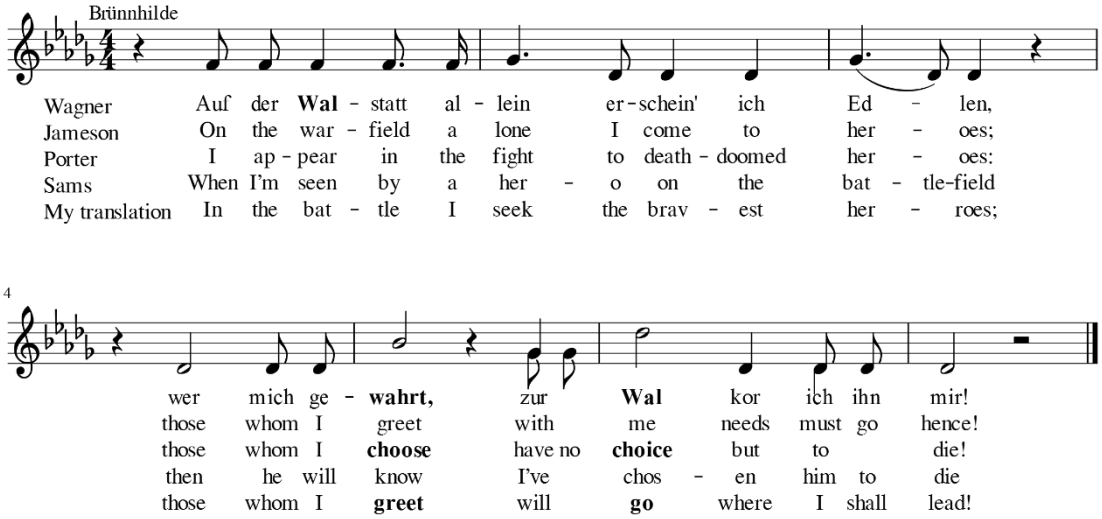
In the 'annunciation' scene (*DW*), Brünnhilde reveals her identity and explains why she has come to Siegfried accompanied by the 'fate' motif. As she tells him about Valhalla, its motif, normally associated with the majestic Db major key, is heard in the brighter keys of Bb major and Gb major. The upward, positive gesture of the 'Valhalla' motif recalls the first time it was heard in *Das Rheingold* when the gods triumphantly entered their new fortress.

Fig. 115



At this point, Brünnhilde still believes in the glory of Valhalla and though she does not understand Wotan's decision to let Siegmund die, she believes that a warrior's death is sacred and his eternal life in Valhalla is to be envied. Yet these beliefs are subtly undermined by the dynamics (pp[105]), for when the motif was heard at the end of *DR* it was played loudly on the Wagner horn[106], bass trumpet, trumpet, trombone and contrabass tuba. The translations of Porter and Sams do not acknowledge the brighter key of the motif, focussing solely on death rather than the promise of Valhalla and its pleasures.

Fig. 116



[105] Pianissimo means very quiet.

[106] Wagner invented the Wagner tuba after he visited Adolphe Sax, the inventor of the saxophone and saxhorn, in Paris in 1853. Wagner wanted an instrument with the timbre of the horn, tuba and trombone for the sombre 'Valhalla' motif (see https://vsl.co.at/en/Wagner_tuba/History).

By contrast, Jameson and I make a tangential reference to death, which is closer to the ST and allows for the intimation of pleasure suggested by the motif.

In this sub-chapter, I have described a number of ways in which Wagner's music corroborates the meaning of his libretto's words or comments upon them thus modifying their meaning in some way and demonstrated how translators have approached his word-tone intersemiosis, suggesting possible reasons for their decisions. They are not definitive or exhaustive. There may be other ways to consider the intersemiosis of words and music and its reproduction in a translation. One of the problems of discussing musical meaning is its more open semanticity compared to language, which makes meaning more open to change depending on the situation and context. However, focussing on Wagner's theory of *Versmelodie* and on musical meaning through imitation, analogy and conventionalised musical figures serves to demonstrate how music correlates or juxtaposes its meaning with words to create a multi-layered semiosis and to explain the different ways that the translations of the *Ring* preserve or undo the careful interweaving of verbal and musical semantics.

Music and words in Wagner's *Ring* operas work in a symbiotic fashion, each giving meaning to the other. Musico-poetic correlation and juxtaposition are outcomes of stylistic choices made by the librettist and composer, who in the case of the *Ring* were one person with a particular theory of word-tone synthesis. It is a great loss for the singer when the meaning of the words no longer synthesises with the musical meaning and a great loss for the audience when the subtleties of emphasis, contradiction, ambiguity, contention and irony are no longer made available because the relationship of words and music have been lost or altered. If the translator wishes to ensure that the meaning of the translation remains coherent with the meaning communicated by the music, not only must the stylistic elements of the text be considered but also those of the music and how the composer has chosen to combine them. However, in the struggle to negotiate the constraints of prosody, to communicate the information of the words for purposes of plot and character development and to produce a text that sounds

acceptable to the contemporary ear, the union of verbal and musical meaning, usually mediated through alliterative rhyme, is often sacrificed in the translation. This analysis also shows that apart from the constraints and aesthetic considerations that influence how far the translator can go to replicate the intersemiosis of words and music, the translator's overall aims or skopos determine what aspects of musical meaning carry greater or lesser importance. Whether a translation creates the same musico-poetic relationships or suffers loss or alteration of potential meaning and deprives singers of information necessary for their interpretation is determined by the purpose he or she envisions for the translation. Intersemiosis or its absence is decided at a macro level.

6.4 Mode constrained by medium: words and voice

When the translator exchanges the vowels and consonants of one language for another, the physical features of the vocal apparatus also require consideration (Apter, 1989: 27). The challenges relate to the pitch and speed at which syllables are sung. The focus of attention is on the articulation of phonemes as well as breath management. In other words, the words of the translated libretto must be such that the singer can be expected to produce them physically on the stage, over an orchestra, whilst acting. Sometimes, the desire to translate accurately, or achieve a rhymed verse can dominate all other considerations and undesirable sounds can be overlooked.

It is likely that anyone translating for a specific production would have the opportunity for any problems of diction to be discussed and for awkward vowels and tricky consonants to be highlighted and alterations considered during rehearsals. For the translator who is not in this position, the services of a professional singer may prove helpful and is to be recommended. However, this does not mean that the translator can rely on the singer to identify awkward vowels or tricky consonants, this would potentially entail too many subsequent changes to the entire translation and so a final review should only be used to identify the few diction problems overlooked by the translator. In other words, it is better for the translator to have enough knowledge of vocal production to avoid most of the problems as they translate. It should also be noted that according to research, opera composers and librettists have rarely matched vowels and pitch (Smith & Wolfe, 2009: EL200) and that professional classical singers are used to dealing with text that has not always been set to music with the singer's vocal

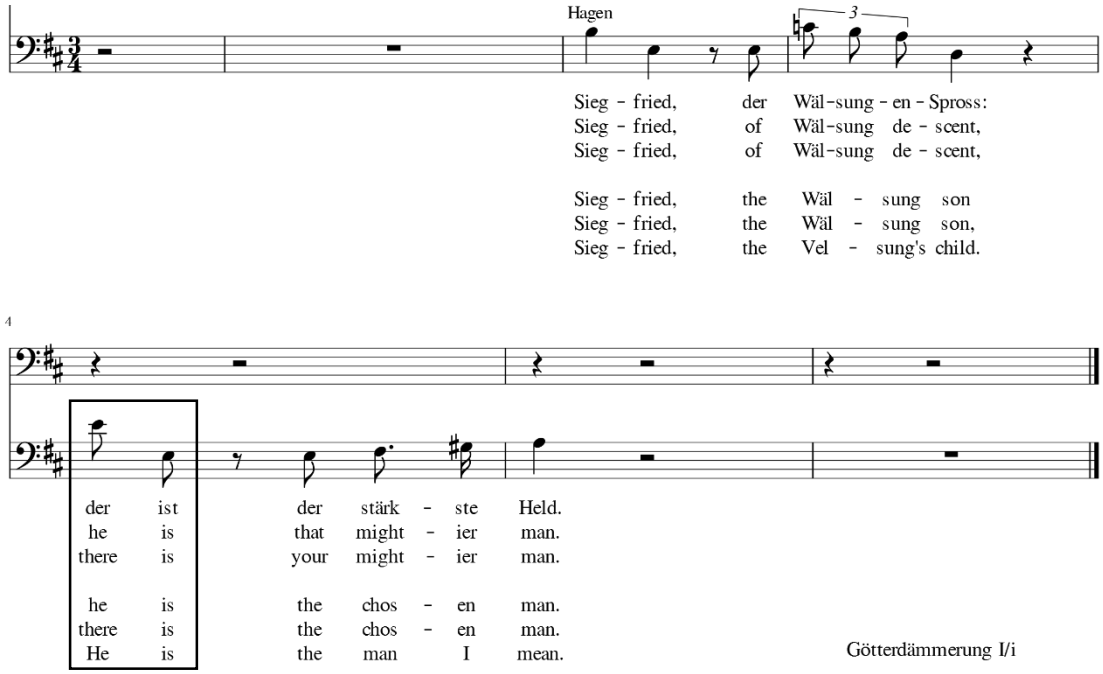
apparatus in mind. Years of training and performance experience mean that professional singers are able to modify vowels to the same frequency as the note being sung and have various strategies to deal with difficult consonants.

The following examples are some of the ten diction problems found in my translations of *DW* and *GD* when a professional opera singer[107], my singing teacher, reviewed my translation. They are examples of the sort of issues of that can arise when translating vocal music. In each example, I show my original version and the revised translation as well as the translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams for comparison.

6.4.1 Closed Vowels

In this first example (Fig. 117), I created a problem for the bass by asking him to sing 'he' on an E^4. This note is at the very top of his range, and the closed and lateral vowel [i], pronounced at the front of the mouth would require adjustment in order to sing it.

Fig. 117



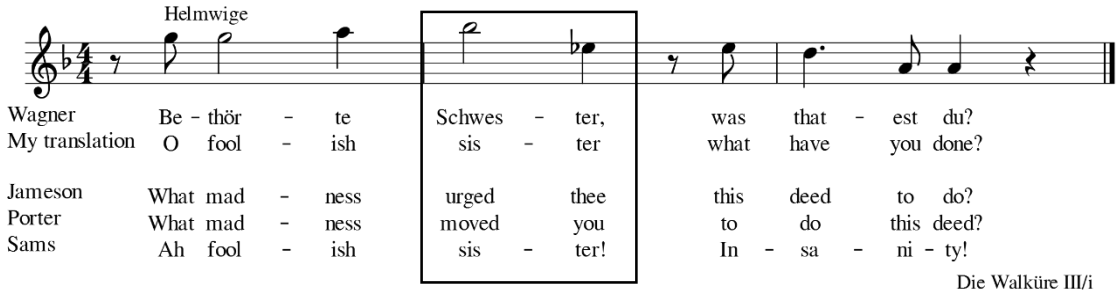
Wagner had set an open vowel, the long [ɛ], a vowel English does not have, on this note to match vowel and pitch frequencies (see Chapter 4.5), which Porter's 'there'

[107] Andrew Ashwin – see acknowledgements.

approximates. I chose the same word for my revision in order to give the singer a more comfortable vowel to sing whose frequency would resonate as required, producing good tone.

The word *Schwester* is repeated eleven times in *DW* (III/1) and sung in chorus by the Valkyries, some in the high register. It is a word of special significance in the *Ring* both for its immediate connection to the Valkyries and their relationship with Brünnhilde, and because of the brother-sister relationship of Siegmund and Sieglinde at the heart of *DW*. Its most obvious translation equivalent in English is 'sister', however, the short, closed English vowel [ɪ] can be problematic. It is one of the most frequently used vowels in the English language (Gimson & Cruttenden, 2008: 156) and will inevitably be one of the most frequent in any translation in words like 'him', 'it' , 'with' and in endings like '-ing'. In the high register, it will be modified by the singer to make it comfortable to sing and to make it resonate as required. If it were possible to avoid using it on exposed high notes, especially long ones like the Bb[5] in the next example, it would be helpful to the singer and avoid potential comprehension difficulties for the audience. For this reason, Porter and Jameson, who do not translate *Schwester* with anything other than 'sister' on most other occasions, avoid it here to provide a better vowel for the singer. Sams and I kept 'sister' with its [I] vowel:

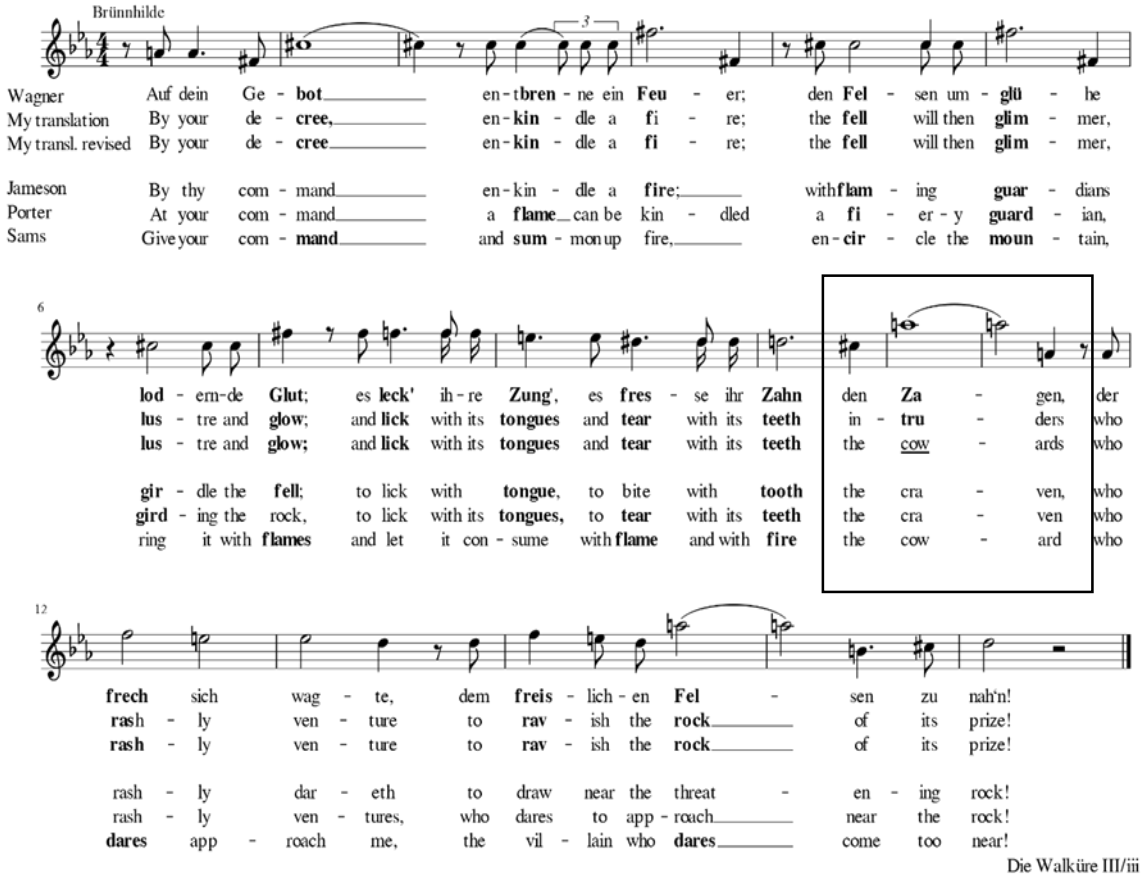
Fig. 118



My decision to leave 'sister' unchanged was partly because I am sure that the singer can modify the vowel to produce good tone and partly because it is repeated and sung in unison with five other voices, some of which sing in a register where the word can be easily heard and comprehended.

On another occasion in *DW* (III/3), I set the closed [uː] of ‘intruders’ to an A^5. In this register, a soprano will find it difficult to produce good tone and resonance with such a vowel. The word ‘intruders’ as a translation for *Zagen* (cowards) was chosen because it rhymes with and is semantically connected to other words in this verse line: ‘tongues’, ‘tear’ and ‘teeth’. Jameson, Porter and Sams, whose rhymes, rhyme schemes and semantic connections are less in evidence and somewhat arbitrary, had no concern about creating rhymes to translate *Zagen* in their translation and so Jameson and Porter chose ‘craven’, the archaic term for ‘coward’ and Sams chose ‘coward’ itself. The word ‘craven’ with its diphthong [eɪ] vowel is not ideal either and I am sure the singer would have to sing something closer to [e:] (creven) in the high register. Even ‘coward’ has the drawback of its semi-vowel glide [w], which effectively means the singer must deal with a triphthong (oua). This means she will give the first vowel the lion’s share of the attention and fit the vowel sounds associated with [w] on the lower A.

Fig 118



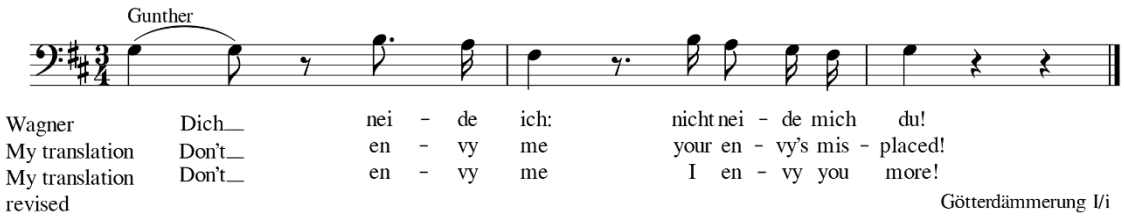
Although my initial word choice provided a near-perfect rhyming translation, I felt it necessary, once the difficulty was pointed out, to alter my translation to avoid discomfort for the singer and the potential loss of comprehension of an important word.

6.4.2 Consonant clusters

Worrying about consonants and consonant clusters in an English translation may seem questionable given the nature of the German language with its many percussive consonant clusters that produce a different kind of articulation from the fluid legato desired for singing. Professional singers learn to enunciate every consonant of complex consonant combinations, such as *Hochzeitstag* or *Weihnachtsfest*, and to avoid any interruption of airflow by the consonants so as not to reduce the continuity of vocalised sound. There ought, therefore, to be no concern about such matters but given that some consonant combinations are inherently difficult to enunciate clearly, awkward to sing and potentially confusing to an audience, some attention is in order. Sibilants, for example, are a particular potential problem.

In *GD* (I/1), when Gunther tells Hagen not to be envious of him as the leader of the Gibichung clan, he sings:

Fig. 119



My original translation forced the singer to deal with the sibilants of 'envy's misplaced'. Not only is it difficult to get one's teeth and lips around these consonant combinations when sung at speed but it is likely that they will not be heard clearly by the listener. In my revision, it was still necessary to place 'envy' in the same place in order to preserve the rhyme scheme, but I have more vowel sounds, which is always good for a singer.

It is also worth avoiding words that begin with the same consonant that ended the preceding word. Such consonant clusters can be potential tongue twisters and force

the singer either to sing two words as one or separate them too much so that an unnatural ‘silence’ is heard between them. Here are three examples (bold underlined) that I decided to alter to make vocal production and comprehension easier even though it meant sacrificing the alliterative rhymes on one occasion:

GD Prelude	Für den **Ring** nimm nun auch mein **Ross!**
My translation	In <u>its **stead**</u>, take my valiant **steed**!
My translation revised	For the <u>ring</u>, take my valiant <u>steed!</u>

In this example, I had originally chosen ‘stead’ to rhyme with ‘steed’ but the combination of ‘ts’ and ‘st’ had to be replaced for the sake of ease of singing. Unfortunately, I was unable to find an alternative rhyme pair.

In this second example, the problem is not so much that it is difficult to sing but that it makes it sound as if Sieglinde is going to give birth to someone with the Scandinavian family name Sigmundson!

DW III/ 1	Rette das **Pfand**, das von ihm du em**pfingst**: ein **Wäl**sung **wächst** dir im Schoss!
My translation	Cherish the **pledge**, which in you has been **placed:** for <u>**Sieg**mund’s **son**</u> you shall bear!
My translation revised	Safeguard the **gift** that [] Siegmund has **giv’n**: a **gift** that **grows** in your womb!

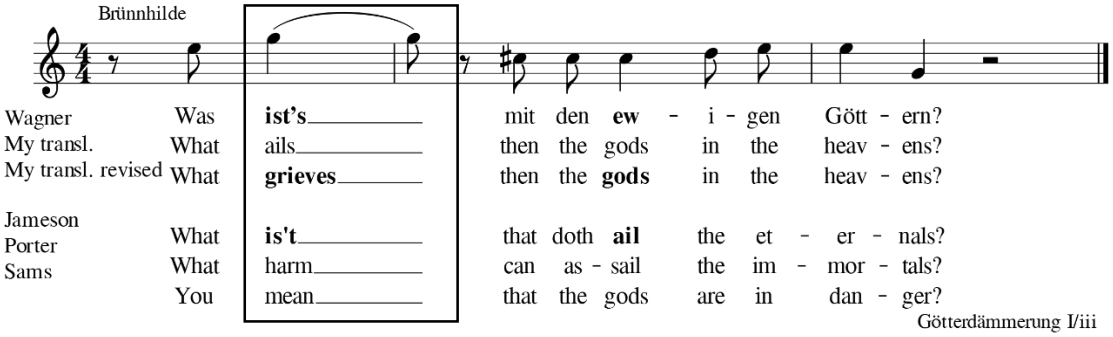
In the third example, sibilants again make a tongue twister of ‘forests spreading’ and my alternative is more comfortable to sing.

DW III/ 1	Nach Osten **weit**hin dehnt sich ein **Wald**:
My translation	The east has <u>**for**ests spreading</u> a**far**:
My translation revised	The east has **woods** all savage and **wild:**

6.4.3 Diphthongs

English has many diphthongs that if pronounced in singing, as they are in speech, would produce unwelcome sounds ‘injurious to the legato line’ (Miller, 1996: 24). Professional singers train to give the first vowel sound the greater amount of time value and ‘tuck in’ the second vowel quickly at the end (with the exception of certain words where the second vowel is what identifies the word, such as, ‘few), maintaining the same level of pitch during the move to the second vowel. However, some diphthongs can be troublesome when set to particular notes; managing them at high pitch is demanding. A simple word like ‘ails’, with its [eɪ] diphthong, would not be difficult to sing or hear at a low pitch but becomes ‘tricky’ for a soprano when set to a G^5.

Fig. 120



Although ‘grieves’ is an improvement on the diphthong, it is, on the other hand, a closed vowel and would most likely be slightly modified for comfort and tone. Neither Jameson nor Sams offer anything better in terms of vowel sound; ‘is’t’ and ‘mean’ are both closed vowels that need modification and Sams’ match of verbal and musical intonation is slightly questionable because his question format relies on rising intonation at the end rather than a falling one as supplied by the music. Porter’s ‘harm’ has a perfect vowel for singing!

I have not presented an analysis of the translations of Jameson, Porter and Sams in terms of how they considered the needs of the voice because as with prosody, aberrations in this regard are rare. Musicians concerned with vocal music, even if not singers themselves, are aware of the basic issues of vowels and consonants at high pitches for sopranos and tenors and very low pitches for basses. They are also aware

that singers can modify vowels for vocal production without necessarily endangering comprehension. Ideally, the translator takes the needs of the singer's medium into account to ensure good sound and comprehension, but any decision to alter the semantics of the ST or to abandon rhymes must be made in terms of the opera being a *Gestalt.* Beautiful sounds of words whose meaning is incoherent with the surrounding text or a semantically accurate translation that cannot be comprehended are not solutions for a translator of opera who can look to other available modes of meaning to compensate for losses in others.

7. Conclusion

Translating opera requires particular attention to its hybrid nature where several semiotic systems are at play and this is especially true when translating Wagner's *Ring*, given the composer's stated compositional theory and practice. The most important part of Wagner's theory of opera for the translator of the *Ring*, as described in Chapter 2, and again in more detail in Chapter 4.4.4, is *Versmelodie* where *Stabreim* (alliterative verse) and melody combine for semantic and emotional effect. When melody is added to *Stabreim*, its strong rhythmic force strengthens the basic pattern of the verse to stress the sensuous quality of the words and intimately fuses with and mirrors its meaning.

Given Wagner's integration of rhythmic accent, alliterative rhyme and melody to foreground meaning, it soon becomes apparent that vocal music translation theories alone are unable to offer the framework and insights necessary to describe translations of the *Ring* and its translator's practices. Vocal music translation theory tends to be of a functional nature and oriented to the TT, its chief concerns are rhythmic fit (stress, note length, syllabic patterns), compliance to TL norms, the reproduction of rhyme and singability (phonetic suitability of translated words with regard to particular note values). As Low admits, this approach is primarily a pragmatic one (2017: 109). With the exception of Kaindl (1995), vocal music theory largely fails to consider the subtleties of the semantic and emotional relationship between music and words.

The theoretical framework for this study, therefore, is somewhat eclectic, fusing the theories, methodologies and practices of function oriented vocal music translation theory with translational stylistics and multimodal discourse analysis to consider stylistics within a multimodal context. The source text orientation of translational stylistics is ideally suited to opera translation where the preservation of the music requires any critique to be both source and target text oriented (Kaindl, 1995: 184). The evaluation of the translator's stylistic choices cannot only be in terms of the target culture reception of the translation, but must rest on judgment of the translation's coherence with the source text as part of a network of multimodal relationships between text, music and staging (ibid). The stylistics of opera's verbal and non-verbal semiotic modes is investigated, therefore, using concepts from multimodal discourse theory that facilitates analysis of intersemiotic complementarity or dissimilarity, which suggests

that translation of opera libretti must go beyond the transposition of verbal signs and re-create the textual whole with the same relationships, interaction and interdependence between the parts created by its author-composer. The 'parts' of an opera are its modes: words, music and the scenic-mimetic. As each mode has different meaning making potential, a composer configures the modes to make his meaning richer and fuller. In simplistic terms, the music and visual modes of opera can communicate emotion better than words but only the words, the poetry, can answer the question, why?

Modal intersemiosis tends to function in two ways: through convergence (relations of parallelism) and through divergence (relations of dissonance) (O'Halloran, 2008: 452). This can only occur where modes share at least some semiotic principles. For example, music and poetry share a system of meaning that operates through the syntagmatic axis where word and note combination overrides selection. Concepts such as convergence and divergence, multiplication and enhancement, elaboration and elucidation consider how verbal and non-verbal text elements integrate to co-create meaning. In Wagner's *Ring*, music and words, particularly alliterative verse, work in a symbiotic fashion, each giving meaning to the other.

Everything, however, rests on prosody, a sub-mode of music, verse and everyday speech. The cohesion of verbal and musical meaning and the inclusion of stylistic features such as rhyme depend on the translator being able to integrate them with the demands of prosody. In the translations of *DW* and *GD* examined in this thesis, very few mismatches of verbal and musical accent or discrepancies between syllabic weight and note duration are evident. Jameson, Porter and Sams were or are experienced translators and were unlikely, as musicians, to make errors of accentuation or intonation. In all the translations, however, the addition or subtraction of a syllable for semantic reasons, or to create a natural sounding translation, has meant small changes to the rhythm, effectively altering the music. Jameson and Porter's alterations, like mine are modest, however, Sams, makes changes on a much grander scale. What is acceptable or not is inevitably decided by musical directors or publishers! Over and above the linguistic prosody of individual words or the metre of poetry, comes the prosody of the phrase, what Stein calls 'sentence accent' (1971: 71), to which the music has been composed and that reflects speech intonation and emphasises key words.

Translators who do not write to the prosody of the musical phrase risk estranging the melody from the verbal content or even making the text incomprehensible.

Whilst for a singable translation, prosodic match is non-negotiable, the structural and stylistic role of poetic rhetoric, especially rhyme, has been much debated. Most opera libretti and their translations rhyme but rhyme's acoustic parallelisms are difficult to hear during performance thanks to the orchestra and because music tends to slow down the momentum of language altering how rhymes are heard. For these reasons, past and current vocal music translation scholarship tends to dismiss the necessity of rhyme for a successful translation (see Low 2008, 5-6; Apter, 1985: 309ff), especially if it means the translator must 'mutilate words…to make them fit' (Lefevere, 1975: 38). However, whilst this may be possible when the relationship of rhyme and music is considered superficial and not essential for cementing semantic parallelisms, in the case of Wagner's *Ring*, where rhyme is inseparable from prosody and melody, its preservation must be considered differently. Wagner's *Stabreim*, plays an essential role in the musical structure and is fundamental to the semantic intent of each verse line. More than this, it is an essential part of the diction and contributes to the mythic atmosphere of the operas. Yet, the most performed translations of the *Ring* only preserve the alliterative verse in part, its semantic and structural function is often ignored and its use tends to be mainly decorative.

Though Porter admits that alliterative rhyme is an 'essential part of the patterning in the score's structure' (1977: xvi-xvii) only an estimated twenty-six percent of his verse lines contain alliterative rhymes to any significant degree.[108] Jameson's translation (1899) reproduces only thirty-three percent[109] of the rhymes despite the use of archaic English whose lexis and inversions facilitate imitation of Wagner's poetic concision and inverted word order more than does modern English. Sams' translation (2001) shows the greatest disregard of the alliterative rhymes. Only an estimated sixteen percent[110] of his verse lines contain rhymes to any significant

[108] See Chapter 6.2.3. The percentage includes verse lines where, either all the rhymes are reproduced, though not necessarily with the same rhyme scheme, or where fifty percent or more of the rhymes are replicated.

[109] As above.

[110] As above

degree, with only an estimated two percent preserving all the rhymes. According to their own accounts or, in the case of Jameson, critical reviews, the reason given for the paucity of rhymes is that the manipulations of the language necessary to facilitate rhyme would make the translation obscure and difficult to understand. This view was probably based on the evidence of the only translations to include alliterative rhymes, those of the Corders and Forman, who in manipulating the text to accommodate them, produced awkward syntax and a text almost as foreign to comprehension as the German. The overriding desire to produce a text comprehensible on first hearing, however, would suggest that words alone are responsible for the audience's understanding of the opera thus underestimating the power of the other semantic modalities at work. Clarity, for singer and audience, is hardly something the original text supplies and German-speaking *Ring* audiences or singers are unlikely to understand every word or phrase thanks to Wagner's use of archaic German lexis and syntax (Prüwer, 2014). Audiences must rely on the singer's interpretation, the music and other stage modes to understand the opera. That is the advantage of multimodal texts; their meaning does not rely on one mode.

My translation was something of an experiment to show that Wagnerian *Stabreim* can be preserved for the benefit of musico-poetic intersemiosis, without ignoring the need for semantic equivalence, ease of comprehension or naturalness. In my translation, an estimated eighty percent of verse lines contain alliterative rhymes to a significant degree.[111] What made alliterative verse an imperative for me was its contribution to style as a signpost to meaning, as well as its contribution to diction and its function as a mnemonic for singers. My aim was to give singers of the *Ring* in translation greater access to the original score than earlier translations. Wagner's stylistic choices, which govern any understanding of the words in their musical context, must be as important to singers of a translation, and their interpretation of a role for the audience, as they are to singers of the original libretto. Though it is essential in a translation destined for singing that the prosody of verse and music converge to create the illusion that the words of the translation might have been those the composer actually set, for a truly singable translation, the singer needs more. If a singer is to be

[111] See 109 above

able to interpret the work in the same way as one singing the original score, then the translation must consider how meaning is delivered through the integration and relationship of a number of modes of communication or semiotic systems, simultaneously, in particular, words and music.

Based on what was identified in Chapter 4.4 as the means by which Wagner forged relationships between verbal and musical meaning, Chapter 6.3 analyses the 'annunciation' scene from *DW* and 'conspiracy' scene from *GD* to look in detail at how Wagner's music iterates, corroborates or diverges from verbal meaning and at whether and how the translators have preserved their interrelationship. Chapter 6.3 demonstrates how music communicates the meaning of the words in its own idiom through imitation of declamation, pictorialisation of words and musical analogies of movement that suggest feelings and emotions as well as how conventionalised musical figures with their coded meanings corroborate the meaning of the text. It also looks at Wagner's concept of word-tone synthesis according to which tonality, modulation, pitch, intervals and the symbolic meaning of leitmotifs mirror or modify verbal meaning. More importantly, sub-chapter 6.3.4 looks at how music, especially tonality, special chords, cadences and intervallic tensions serve to expand the meaning of the words through emphasis, contradiction, negation, irony and ambiguity. The analysis reveals a mixed response by the translators to word-tone intersemiosis. It suggests that where musical meaning and its convergence with the words was 'obvious', that where English cognates were available with which to translate the German and that where there was no necessity to produce alliterative rhymes, Jameson, Porter and Sams made efforts to preserve the unity of verbal and musical meaning. Its preservation was not a major criterion that informed their aims or process nor against which they measured their success. In the struggle to negotiate the constraints of prosody, to communicate the information of the words for purposes of plot and character development and to produce a text that sounds acceptable to the contemporary ear, the union of verbal and musical meaning, usually mediated through alliterative rhyme, was not a priority. Even though Porter said one of his main aims was to place important words where Wagner placed them because they coincide with 'motivic significance' and 'particular harmonies' (1977: xvi), which comes close to the idea of preserving the word-tone intersemiosis of the original, as he also admitted his aim was seldom met (ibid: xvii).

Sams also speaks of words matching the contours of the music (Sams & Johnston, 1996: 177), but this is only in evidence where prosody and intonation are concerned and not with regard to any shared semiosis between words and music. Of the three translations, his gives least attention to Wagner's stylistic means of musico-poetic integration and foregrounding.

The main finding of this thesis is that alliterative verse, Wagner's chief stylistic choice for his libretto, can be reproduced without jeopardizing comprehension and is highly desirable in a translation of the *Ring* if the integration of music and words is to be preserved. Of course, translating opera is a game of gains and losses, choices and priorities, constraints and multiple influences and as Porter said, 'the translator cannot do everything'(1977: xvii). Though I created alliterative rhyme in an estimated eighty percent of verse lines, I was not always able to have the rhymes accurately translate the ST rhymes semantically, I was not always able to place the translated rhyme word in the same position as the ST and in some cases, I was unable to rhyme at all. Though rhymes were a high priority, which made me craft my verse carefully, I still had to give priority to prosody and to a certain naturalness of language, albeit I did not make the characters of the *Ring* speak like the man in the street! Above all, it was attention to rhyme that enabled me to preserve as much of Wagner's verbal and musical intersemiosis as the change from one language to another and the competencies of a translator will allow.

Based on the analysis in Chapters 6.2 and 6.3, I must conclude that Jameson, Porter and Sams' decision to sacrifice alliterative verse in their translations, because they believed preserving it would result in tortuous English that would be difficult to comprehend on first hearing, often accounts for the loss of convergence between musical and verbal meaning that Wagner carefully created. Put simply, having dispensed with the necessity for rhyme, which is always connected to a particular accented note in the musical phrase, and having no consistent systematic approach to their replacement with signifying content words, their translations often fail to marry words with the music intended to iterate or elucidate them. In certain specific instances, when rhyme words of particular significance occur, such as 'sword', 'spear', 'Nibelung' and so forth, Jameson and Porter replace them with non-rhyming but semantic equivalents that go some way to preserving the musico-poetic integration, but

far too often, especially in Sams' translation, insignificant words are set to significant music, which as a result loses its saliency. Compared to Sams, Jameson and Porter were more attuned to Wagner's style, recognising that the intimate relationship between words and music meant that the closer the translation is able to be to the ST, semantically as well as in the order of thoughts or even individual words, the more likely it is to remain contextually coherent with the music.

This analysis also shows that above the constraints and aesthetic considerations that influence how far the translator will go to replicate the alliterative verse and intersemiosis of words and music, the translator's overall aims, determine what aspects of musical meaning carry greater or lesser importance. Whilst one can only surmise Jameson's aims (he never wrote about them nor were they discussed in newspaper reviews), based on what has been written by Porter and Sams, their aims essentially prioritized two aspects of opera translation. Firstly, the close fit between the prosody of words and music and articulation of the words within the musical phrasing (Porter, 1977: xvii: Sams & Johnston, 1996: 177). Secondly, ease of comprehension, with natural words in a natural order (Porter, 1977: xv) that an audience could believe would have been the words that engendered the composer's music (Sams & Johnston, 1996: 176). As Porter wrote, he did not want a translation that was 'involved and obscure' but one that would let the audience know 'exactly what all those characters are saying' (1977: xvii). Nowhere does Porter or Sams ever mention Wagner's aesthetics and their contribution to the meaning of the text and opera as a *Gestalt*. If the audience is the primary recipient and judge of the translation, and bearing in mind that their judgement is unlikely to include any reference to the ST whose language they do not know, then respect for Wagner's theories of word-tone synthesis and the preservation of alliterative verse may rightly be deemed irrelevant. That is not my view, however, because I suggest the audience's understanding is not based on the words per se, which they often cannot hear clearly because of the orchestra, the pitch of the voice or indeed poor diction (ENO introduced surtitles for operas sung in English), but on the singer's interpretation and the entire operatic *Gestalt* before their eyes. It is, I suggest, for the singer's interpretation that a translation that respects Wagner's stylistic choices can be most helpful, an interpretation that will eventually provide the audience with a satisfactory experience.

Noticeably, this thesis only touched on the scenic-mimetic mode, without which the verbal and musical modes cannot become opera. The sheer magnitude of any study of the scenic-mimetic mode and its integration with the music and words prohibited it from being included in this thesis, not to mention the methodological difficulties. The scenic-mimetic mode is one of the least researched areas of opera studies (Rossi & Sindoni, 2017: 97) for whilst the libretto and score are fixed in printed media, the performance is always 'a work in progress' (ibid) influenced by numerous factors outside the text and musical score. Although there is a growing corpus of recorded opera performances, which could facilitate the study of opera mise-en-scène, the availability of recorded performances of opera in translation is almost non-existent. Without the basic data of recordings of the same opera using the same and/or different translations, the multimodal elements of performance can only be studied as potentialities based on the libretto and score. That is, unless translation scholars and opera performance scholars collaborate: perhaps as part of the practical study of opera performance, an opera scene might be staged using different translations and recorded as data for the study of multimodality in action.

No one theory can fit all opera translation. The many different operatic styles from different periods and countries with their many different subjects have different demands. For a singable translation, prosodic match is non-negotiable, but everything else will depend on the work and the cultural and artistic conditions of its reception. In this analysis of Wagner's *DW* and *GD,* it was most desirable to look at alliterative verse and musical and verbal intersemiosis because of Wagner's theories and their prominence and importance in the work. In other styles of opera from the sung poetry of Monteverdi's (1567-1643) 'numbers' operas to Berg's (1885-1935) through-composed prosaic *Sprechgesang* (speech in music), the importance of the modal resources will change and new ones come into play. Rhyme, for example, may demand different treatments depending on its function in the libretto and the aims of the production and in 'numbers' operas consideration of the different needs of recitative and aria will be important. In terms of the musical resources, I have limited my thesis to pitch, tone movement and tonality, but had space allowed, I could have looked at time movements and dynamics, articulation or even instrumentation and texture.

My thesis shows that semantic fidelity is far from adequate when translating opera, but whilst prosodic fit is non-negotiable, the way a translator negotiates between poetic fit and musico-semantic fit varies and does not prevent the production of a singable vocal score. However, these modes of meaning can affect the way in which a singer/director interprets what he or she sings which affects the audiences' understanding and emotional response to the opera. Decisions are largely subjective but mostly shaped by the translator's aims and aesthetics, and perhaps their abilities (alliterative rhymes are easier to find than Jameson, Porter and Sams' translations would have us believe). I have sought in this thesis to create a theoretical framework and suggest practical strategies for the understanding and translation of multimodal opera texts not only to assist other opera translators but as a starting point for the description and criticism of singable opera translations old and new. If this thesis can raise attention and contribute to the awareness of how the relationship between text and music influences translation choices and decisions and open up a wider interdisciplinary dialogue that may include the scenic-mimetic mode, which consequently leads to the higher enjoyment value of operas in translation, its aims will have been met. What is more, the framework is not only relevant to opera texts but any multimodal text that must be dissected and its resources analysed before commenting on it or creating a translation.

APPENDICES TO VOLUME 1

Critical/Reflective Component

Appendix 1

Characters and synopsis of Wagner's *Der Ring des Nibelungen*

Main characters:

Gods:

Wotan, king of the gods (bass-baritone)

Fricka, Wotan's wife, goddess of marriage (mezzo-soprano)

Erda, goddess of wisdom, fate (contralto)

Loge, demigod of fire (tenor)

The Norns, the weavers of fate, daughters of Erda (contralto, mezzo-soprano, soprano)

Valkyries

Brünnhilde (soprano)

Waltraute (mezzo-soprano)

Helmwige (soprano)

Gerhilde (soprano)

Siegrune (mezzo-soprano)

Schwertleite (mezzo-soprano)

Ortlinde (soprano)

Grimgerde (mezzo-soprano)

Rossweisse (mezzo-soprano)

Rhinemaidens

Woglinde (soprano)

Wellgunde (soprano)

Flosshilde (mezzo-soprano)

Giants

Fasolt (bass-baritone/high bass)

Fafner, his brother, later turned into a dragon (bass)

Nibelungs

Alberich (bass-baritone)

Mime, his brother, and Siegfried's foster father (tenor)

The voice of the wood-bird (soprano)

Humans:

Siegmund the Wälsung, mortal son of Wotan (tenor)

Sieglinde, his twin sister (soprano)

Siegfried, their son (tenor)

Hunding Sieglinde's husband, chief of the Neidings (bass)

Gunther, king of the Gibichungs (baritone)
Gutrune, his sister (soprano)
Hagen, their half-brother, and Alberich's son (bass)

Das Rheingold (Prologue – Preliminary evening) Premiere: Munich, Sept. 22, 1869
Scene 1 (at the bottom of the Rhine): A hoard of gold exists in the depths of the Rhine, guarded by the Rhine-maidens. Alberich, the Nibelung dwarf steals the gold, with the intention of fashioning a ring, which will give him limitless power because he is willing to renounce love.
Scene 2 Wotan has built his fortress, Valhalla, by offering Freia, the goddess of love, as payment for the work of the giants, the brothers Fasolt and Fafner. Without Freia and her golden apples, the gods will age and die. With the help of Loge, Wotan will go after the gold stolen by Alberich, in order to provide a ransom for Freia.
Scene 3 Wotan and Loge trick Alberich and transport him, the gold and the magical ring to Valhalla.
Scene 4 Fasolt and Fafner are satisfied with the gold in exchange for Freia, but not before Alberich curses the ring. Erda appears and warns Wotan that possession of the ring will have fateful consequences, even the end of the gods themselves. He gives up the ring to the giants, and the curse is in evidence as Fafner immediately kills his brother. To the lament of the Rhine-daughters over the loss of their gold, the gods enter Valhalla.

Die Walküre (Part 1 – first day) Premiere: Munich, June 26, 1870
About 20 years have passed since. Fafner has transformed himself into a Dragon to protect the treasure. Wotan is afraid that he will be defeated by the evil Alberich, who will recover the ring and use its powers to annihilate the Gods. However, as a god who is a guardian of treaties he cannot break the one he made with Fafner and take back the ring himself. To resolve his political and moral dilemma and recapture the ring he plans to sire a mortal hero, a surrogate acting on his own free Will, who would recapture the ring and redeem the world from its Curse. Wotan descends to earth in human guise as "Wälse" and sires the twins Sieglinde and Siegmund, with a mortal woman. He lives for a time in the forest with his son Siegmund, and trains the future hero for combat. He places a Sword called Notung in an ash-tree for the young hero to find in his greatest need. At the same time, Wotan reinforces Valhalla's defences against invasion by the

Nibelheim Dwarfs by seducing Erda and siring the Valkyries. These nine warrior daughters gather slain heroes from the battlefields, and take them to protect the Gods and Valhalla.

Act I Siegmund, fleeing his enemies after a battle, arrives exhausted and weaponless in the dwelling of Hunding, where he is tended by his wife, Sieglinde. When Hunding returns and recognises Siegmund as his enemy he offers him the shelter that night, but in the morning, they must fight to the death. Siegmund is without any weapon, but he recalls that his father told him a sword would be available to him in time of need. Sieglinde returns, having given Hunding a sleeping potion. She recalls that at her wedding, a stranger (Wotan in disguise) appeared and plunged a sword into the tree that is in the middle of their dwelling. They soon realize they are twins of the Wälsung clan, separated in early childhood, and Siegmund embraces her, not only as sister but as wife, and, having extracted the sword from the tree, they both escape from the dwelling.

Act II Wotan is confronted by his wife, Fricka, the goddess of love, over the offenses of Sieglinde deserting her husband and of a brother taking his sister as wife. Wotan reveals to her that the twins are his own children by a mortal woman and part of his plan to create a hero free of his influence who can regain the ring. But, as Fricka points out, Siegmund is not truly free, since Wotan provided him with the sword and she demands that for his offense he must die. Wotan reluctantly agrees, and orders his favourite daughter, the Valkyrie Brünnhilde, to carry out this task. She finds Siegmund and the exhausted Sieglinde and whilst the latter is asleep tells Siegmund his fate, but moved by the depth of Siegmund’s love for Sieglinde she decides instead to defend him against Hunding. Wotan appears and shatters Siegmund's sword to prevent him killing Hunding. Siegmund is killed by Hunding who in turn is killed by Wotan. Wotan goes after Brünnhilde for disobeying him.

Act III Brünnhilde, to protect Sieglinde, sends her off with the shards of the sword to hide in the forest, telling her that she carries Siegmund's child. Wotan appears, threatening destruction to all who shield Brünnhilde. Facing Wotan alone, she defends herself, explaining she was only following Wotan's heart. As punishment for her disobedience, Wotan condemns her to sleep on a rock on a mountain top, to become the

mortal bride of whatever man awakens her. As a consolation he agrees to protect her with a circle of magic fire that can be passed by only the mightiest of heroes.

Siegfried (Part 2 – second day) Premiere: Bayreuth, Festspielhaus, August 16, 1876

Act I About seventeen years have passed since the events of *The Valkyrie*. Mime, Alberich's brother, who helped Sieglinde with the birth of Siegfried before she died, has taken on the role of foster parent. He has set up a forge near the horde and has been trying to teach Siegfried the art of forging and how to be afraid, but to no avail. However, he is well aware that this hero may one day regain the ring, and he wants to be there when he does. As Siegfried leaves, Wotan enters (now disguised as the Wanderer), and through a game of riddles, informs Mime that Siegmund's shattered sword (needed for the task of regaining the ring) can only be forged by one who knows no fear. When Siegfried returns, that is exactly what he does.

Act II Fafner is guarding the gold and the ring. Siegfried and Mime arrive, and, Siegfried kills Fafner. When Siegfried accidentally touches a drop of Fafner's blood to his lips, he suddenly understands the singing of the bird, which directs him to the gold in the cave from where he takes the ring and the Tarnhelm (a helmet that enables the wearer to assume any disguise and to be transported anywhere instantly). Siegfried is still dismayed however because he has still not learned what it is to fear and regards the ring and Tarnhelm as mere trinkets, not knowing their power. The bird also warns Siegfried not to trust Mime, and when the dwarf offers him the potion with which he has planned to kill him, Siegfried kills him instead. Then the bird tells Siegfried of a beautiful woman named Brünnhilde, asleep on a mountain surrounded by fire and shows him the way to find her.

Act III Wotan, in turmoil about the situation he has created, hurries to Erda to seek advice. At first he wants to know how the gods can avoid their downfall. Erda tells him that the hope of the world's redemption lies in Siegfried, who has gained the ring without help from the gods and on whom the ring's curse will have no effect since he is free from envy and knows no fear. He will awaken Brünnhilde and they will redeem the world. Wotan accepts the fate of the gods as inevitable, finds comfort by willing it on himself, but has faith that Siegfried will emerge to defeat Alberich.

Siegfried arrives at the mountain where Brünnhilde lies surrounded by fire and Wotan disguised as the Wanderer tries to block his way. Siegfried shatters Wotan's spear, the source of his authority by virtue of the contracts engraved on it. With this act, Wotan's authority is also shattered signifying the end of the god's power. Siegfried cuts through the magic fire, awakens Brünnhilde, and the two fall in love.

Götterdämmerung (Part 3 – third day) Premiere: Bayreuth, Aug. 17, 1876

Prelude: At night, on the Valkyries' rock, the three Norns weave the rope of destiny. They effectively recount all that has happened up to this moment and how Wotan has ordered the world ash tree to be felled and its wood piled around Valhalla. The burning of the pyre will mark the end of the old order. Suddenly the rope breaks. Their wisdom ended, the Norns descend into the earth.
Dawn breaks and Siegfried and Brünnhilde emerge. She conveys all the wisdom of the gods to Siegfried and send him into the world to do heroic deeds and achieve great fame. She implores him never to forsake their love. As a pledge of his love, Siegfried gives her the ring he took from the dragon Fafner, and she offers her horse, Grane, in return. Siegfried sets off on his travels.

Act I In the hall of the Gibichungs on the banks of the Rhine, Hagen advises his half-siblings, Gunther (king of the Gibichungs) and Gutrune, to strengthen their rule through marriage. He suggests Brünnhilde as Gunther's bride and Siegfried as Gutrune's husband (keeping from them that Brünnhilde is already wed to Siegfried). Since only the strongest hero can pass through the fire on Brünnhilde's rock, Hagen proposes that Siegfried could undertake the feat for Gunther which he would do if he were indebted to him because he promises to give him Gutrune as his wife. Hagen also tells Gunther of the treasure that Siegfried owns and about the ring and Tarnhelm. Nevertheless Gutrune is afraid that Siegfried will not want her, but Hagen assures her that he will forget all his past and having ever known any other woman when he drinks the magic potion he plans to give him. Siegfried arrives and reveals he knows nothing of the power of the Tarnhelm and ring. Hagen tells him what the Tarnhelm can do and discovers that Siegfried has given the ring to Brünnhilde. Gutrune brings the magic potion to drink and as Siegfried salutes Brünnhilde in a toast he immediately forgets her and falls in love with Gutrune. He offers to win Brünnhilde for Gunther if he can marry

Gutrune. Hagen's plan begins to work. Siegfried will use the Tarnhelm to disguise himself as Gunther and then enter the flames to seize Brünnhilde. Siegfried and Gunther swear an oath of blood brotherhood. Hagen refuses to drink to the same oath claiming his blood is impure and would poison the drink. Gunther and Siegfried set off and Hagen stays behind to guard the castle and wait for the return of the ring, which he plans to use to enslave the world under Nibelung power.

Waltraute, Brünnhilde's sister, arrives to say that Wotan has cut down the World Ash Tree and is waiting with the other gods to die. She begs Brünnhilde to give the ring back to the Rhine-maidens to save the gods. Brünnhilde refuses as the ring is a symbol of Siegfried's love for her which she will never give up as she lives only for Siegfried. As Waltraute leaves, Siegfried arrives, disguised as Gunther. In despair, Brünnhilde holds out the Ring threateningly to protect herself, but its power is ineffective, and Siegfried disguised as Gunther seizes it, which will have terrible repercussions later. She is told she is now Gunther's bride and despairing she obeys his commands. Siegfried draws his Sword, and invokes a solemn oath to safeguard the woman's honour for Gunther. As the unwitting betrayer of his own bride, he spends the night with her but lays his sword, Notung, between them to remain loyal to Gunther.

Act II Outside the Gibichungs' hall at night, Hagen's father, Alberich, appears to his son as if in a dream and forces him to swear to win back the ring. Dawn breaks and Siegfried arrives. Hagen summons the Gibichungs to welcome Gunther and Brünnhilde. When she sees Siegfried, she furiously denounces him, but he, still under the spell of the potion, does not understand her anger. Noticing the ring on Siegfried's finger, she accuses him of having stolen it and declares that *he* is her husband. Siegfried protests, swearing on Hagen's spear that he has done no wrong. Brünnhilde now only wants vengeance. Hagen offers to kill Siegfried, but she explains that she has protected his body with magic, except for his back, which she knows he would never turn to an enemy. Gunther hesitatingly joins the conspiracy of murder.

Act III Siegfried, separated from his hunting party, meets the three Rhinemaidens by the river. They ask him to return the ring to them but he refuses to prove he does not fear its curse. The Rhinemaidens predict his imminent death and disappear as Hagen, Gunther, and the other hunters arrive. Encouraged by Hagen, Siegfried tells of his youth and his life with Mime. While he is talking, Hagen makes him drink an antidote

to the potion. His memory restored, Siegfried describes how he walked through the fire and woke Brünnhilde. At this, Hagen stabs him in the back with the spear on which Siegfried had sworn. When Gunther expresses his shock, Hagen claims that he avenged a false oath. Siegfried remembers Brünnhilde with his last words and dies.

Back at the hall, Gutrune wonders what has happened to Siegfried. When his body is brought in, she accuses Gunther of murder, who replies that Hagen is to blame. The two men fight about the ring and Gunther is killed. As Hagen reaches for the ring, the dead Siegfried threateningly raises his arm. Brünnhilde enters and calmly orders a funeral pyre to be built on the banks of the Rhine. She denounces the gods for their guilt in Siegfried's death, takes the ring from his hand and promises it to the Rhinemaidens. Then she lights the pyre and leaps into the flames. The river overflows its banks and destroys the hall. Hagen, trying to get to the ring, is dragged into the water by the Rhinemaidens, who joyfully reclaim their gold. In the distance, Valhalla and the gods are seen engulfed in flames.

Appendix 2

Wagner: Biography

(Wilhelm) Richard Wagner was born in Leipzig, Germany in 1813 as the son of a policeman, Friedrich Wagner, who died soon after the composer's birth. His mother remarried the painter-actor-poet, Ludwig Geyer, in August 1814, believed by many to be Wagner's biological father. There is evidence that Wagner believed this as well (Nattiez, 1993: 193).

Wagner composed his first music at the age of sixteen: two piano sonatas and a string quartet. In 1831, he attended Leipzig University to study music but unlike many other composers, Wagner's formal training in music was brief and he never became proficient on any instrument. In 1833, he wrote the text and music of his first opera, *Die Feen* (The Fairies), but this was never produced during Wagner's lifetime. His next opera, *Das Liebesverbot* (The Ban on Love), was staged in 1836. Wagner married the singer, Minna Planer, in 1836 and became musical director at the city theatre in Königsberg. He later took a similar post in Riga where he began his next opera, Rienzi. In Riga, he also gained experience conducting the symphonies and overtures of Beethoven.

In 1839 the Wagners escaped their creditors in Riga and went by ship to London and then to Paris, where he was befriended by the composer, Meyerbeer. In Paris Wagner lived a dismal and poverty-stricken life for two and a half years, working as a musical arranger for publishers and theatres. He also worked on the text and music of *Der Fliegende Holländer* (The Flying Dutchman), which was produced in 1843. The Flying Dutchman began Wagner's movement away from the "number opera" tradition. The success of these two operas gained for Wagner the prestigious post as Kapellmeister (Orchestra Conductor) at the King of Saxony’s court in Dresden, a position that he was not to hold for long.

In 1845, *Tannhäuser* was completed and performed, and Lohengrin was begun. In both of these operas, Wagner moved toward a more continuous texture with semi-melodic narrative and a supporting orchestral fabric helping to convey its sense. Despite his musical successes, in 1848, Wagner was caught up in political revolution, and was forced to flee the authorities in 1849, first to Weimar where Franz Liszt helped him and later to Switzerland. Politically suspect, Wagner was unable to return to Germany until 1860.

In Zürich during his exile of 1850, Wagner wrote his ferociously anti-Semitic tract: *Jewishness in Music*. He wrote also wrote *Die Kunst und die Revolution* (1849), *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (1849) and in 1850-51, he completed his basic statement on opera, *Oper und Drama* (1852). Wagner also began sketching the text and music for the

Ring but he abandoned *Siegfried* in the middle of the second act in 1857, not to resume work on this opera until 1869. The twelve-year hiatus was filled by *Tristan und Isolde* (1859) and *Die Meistersinger* (1861), considered to be his most successful opera during his lifetime and one that is performed the most often.

In 1855, Wagner conducted in London, and tensions with his wife Minna led to a prolonged stay in Paris where Minna eventually joined him in 1860. Wagner revived Tannhäuser for the Paris Opera in 1861, but its production was a failure with Parisian audiences, partly for political reasons. In 1862, he was allowed to return to Germany, and that same year Wagner and Minna separated permanently. In 1864, King Ludwig II invited Wagner to settle in Bavaria, near Munich. The king paid all of the composer's considerable debts and agreed to provide Wagner with an annual salary so he could be free to compose.

Wagner did not stay long in Bavaria, because of opposition at King Ludwig's court. This disdain for the composer surfaced when it became public knowledge that he was having an extramarital affair with Cosima Liszt von Bülow, the wife of the conductor Hans von Bülow and daughter of Franz Liszt. Wagner had been living at Tribschen, near Lucerne, since 1866, and during this year, his estranged wife Minna died. Cosima von Bülow joined Wagner at Tribschen shortly after Minna Wagner's death, and she subsequently gave birth to two children before they were married in 1870.

The first two *Ring* Music Dramas, *Das Rheingold* and *Die Walküre*, were first performed in 1869 in Munich, on King Ludwig's insistence, since Ludwig was still providing Wagner with an annual salary years after their first acquaintance. Wagner was very anxious to have a special festival opera house constructed for the complete cycle of *The Ring*, and he spent much energy trying to raise money for it. Eventually, when he had almost despaired, Ludwig came to the rescue, and in 1874, the year Wagner's composition of the fourth opera, *Götterdämmerung* (The Twilight of the Gods), was finished King Ludwig provided the necessary funds.

The theater was built at Bayreuth, and it was designed by Wagner himself as the home for his concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk* (total artwork). The first festival, an artistic triumph but a financial disaster, was held there in 1876 when the complete *Ring of the Nibelungs* was performed. In 1877, Wagner conducted in London, hoping to recoup some of his Bayreuth losses. Later in the year, he began a final music drama, *Parsifal*.

After the second Bayreuth festival, which consisted of sixteen performances of *Parsifal* in July and August 1882, Wagner and his family took up residence in the Palazzo Vendramin, Venice. He died there in February 1883 of heart failure but his body was returned for burial at Bayreuth in the grounds of the house he had had built, Wahnfried, which today houses a museum and Wagner’s manuscripts and writings.

Appendix 3

Composition History: Der Ring des Nibelungen

Year	Libretto	Music	Prose works
1848	Begins and completes *Siegfrieds Tod*.		*Der Nibelungen-Mythus*: first prose draft of the *Ring*.
1849			Essays: *Art and Revolution* and *The Artwork of the Future*
1850		Sketches for *Siegfrieds Tod*. Abandons the work.	
1851	Writes prose sketch and poem, *Der junge Siegfried*.		Completes *Oper und Drama*. Essay: *A Communication to My Friends*.
1852	Writes poems of *Die Walküre*, and *Das Rheingold*. Revises *Der junge Siegfried* Siegfrieds Tod is changed to *Götterdämmerung*		
1853	Privately prints *Der Ring des Nibelungen*:	Composes *Das Rheingold*.	
1854		Begins composition of *Die Walküre*	
1856	New ending for Götterdämmerung, the Schopenhauer ending.	Finishes score of *Die Walküre* Begins composition of *Siegfried*.	
1857		First two acts of *Siegfried* completed.	
1857-1867	No work on the Ring: composes *Tristan und Isolde* and *Die Meistersinger* 1863 First public printing of Ring poem		Essay: *Music of the Future*
1868		Third act of *Siegfried* completed.	
1869		Premiere *Das Rheingold*, September. Begins composition *Götterdämmerung*.	
1870		Premiere of *Die Walküre*, 26 June.	
1871		*Siegfried* score completed	
1872	*Ring* text published in *Gesammelte Schriften und Dichtungen*		Essays: *Actors and Singers* and *On the Name Music-Drama*
1874		Completes *Götterdämmerung* score.	
1876		First performance at Bayreuth	

(Compiled using (Darcy, 1994: 3; Wagner, 2003: v; DiGaetani, 2003: xv)

Appendix 4

Wagner's source texts and their importance to the translator

Though the name of Wagner's opera cycle may suggest that it is an operatic version of the medieval German poem, *Das Nibelungenlied (NL)*, this is, in fact, not the case. It has been suggested that perhaps as little as five percent of the material of the operas comes from the *NL*. The German medieval epic poem may have been one of Wagner's initial inspirations, but the greater part of his source materials were Icelandic sagas and poems with the principal source being *The Saga of the Völsunga*. Eighty percent of the opera's content is derived from the Icelandic sources (Björnsson, 2003: 7). It is worth noting, however, that the Icelandic sagas and legends retold in Wagner's opera were not indigenous to Iceland but originated in the Rhineland (Weston, 1977: 9).

Source text documentation – an overview

Wagner's sources are well known. The earliest and most concise, if not detailed, information is in a list sent by Wagner to Franz Müller, who in 1856 was already writing the first ever study of the *Ring* and wished to know which sources had provided most stimulus. The list was as follows:

1. *'Der Nibelunge Noth u. die Klage.' Ed. Lachmann.*
2. *'Zu den Nibelungen etc.' by Lachmann.*
3. *'Grimm's Mythologie.'*
4. *'Edda*[1]*.'*
5. *'Volsunga-saga' (translated by Hagen – Breslau).*
6. *'Wilkina- und Niflunga saga' (ditto).*
7. *'Das deutsche Heldenbuch.' Old edition, also revised by Hagen. Edited by Simrock*

[1] It is to be assumed that Wagner meant both the Poetic (Younger) and Prose (Elder) Edda (Björnsson, 2003: 111)

in 6 volumes.

8. *'Die deutsche Heldensage' by Wilh. Grimm.*
9. *'Untersuchungen zur deutschen Heldensage' by Mone (very important).*
10. *'Heimskringla' translated by Mohnike (I think!) (not by Wachter — bad).*

(Björnsson, 2003:111)

Wagner's sources may also be deduced from the contents of his personal library in Dresden[2] between 1842 and 1849 during which time he wrote the first prose sketch for the *Ring* and the first prose libretto, *Siegfrieds Tod* (Siegfried's Death). This was only catalogued and made available in the 1960s when Kurt von Westernhagen (1966) gained access to the library which had been in the possession of the Brockhaus publishing company and having survived the war in Leipzig had been transferred to Wiesbaden where it lay forgotten. Heinrich Brockhaus, the brother of Wagner's brother-in-law had taken away the library after Wagner fled Dresden in 1849 after the spring uprising. The library was taken as settlement of a debt and Wagner was never able to raise the funds to retrieve it. In 1990, data also became available regarding the books Wagner borrowed from the Royal Library in Dresden in the 1840s (Magee, 1990: 213ff) which further enhanced scholarship on Wagner's source texts.

The primary source texts

There are five primary sources that were available to Wagner both in the original languages of Old Norse (Icelandic) and Middle High German (MHG) as well as in modern German translations. Of the five primary sources three are Icelandic and two are German. The Icelandic sources are the prose *Völsungasaga* (VS), the *Poetic (or Elder) Edda* (*PE*), and Snorri Sturlson's *Prose* (or *Younger*) *Edda (YE).* Both *Edda* texts survived orally for several hundred years before they were written down (1150 and 1270). The German sources are the *Thidrekssaga of Bern* (TS), which some

[2] Whenever the contents of Wagner's personal Dresden library are mentioned the source is Wseternhagen's *Richard Wagners Dresdener Bibliothek 1842-1849. Neue Dokumente zur Geschichte seines Schaffens*. (Westernhagen, 1966)

classify as Scandinavian despite its German origin and the *NL*, composed around 1200 in Austria. All save the Prose Edda are anonymous.

Das Nibelungenlied

The origins of the German *NL* and of the legends of Siegfried that also appear in the *Edda*s and *Völsungasaga* relate to the German incursions into Roman lands and the downfall of the Burgundian tribe in the fifth century, a tribe which originated in Scandinavia (Bornholm) but had migrated south to the Rhine valley and had its capital at Worms. It is not known how much of the story is legend and how much is history. The story migrated north to Scandinavia by the 6th century (Weston, 1977: 13) and was eventually preserved in the *Icelandic Eddas*, the *Völsungasaga* and the *TS*, before being developed into the *NL* around 1200.

The author of the *NL* is an anonymous poet from the area of the Danube between Passau and Vienna, writing between circa 1180 and 1210. Often translated as *The Song* or *Lay of the Nibelungs*, it is an epic poem written in Middle High German, in medieval chivalric style yet telling of legends and myths of far earlier times. Current scholarship agrees that for the most part the *NL* is an amalgamation of two legends (Benvenga, 1982:14). The first had its roots in stories of the fifth century Burgundian king, Guntharius (Gunther), who ruled a territory around the Rhine but was massacred by the Huns in 437. The second, was popular among the Franks and told the story of the wooing of a woman named Brünnhilde and the consequent death of the hero, the dragon-slayer Siegfried. The two legends merged in the sixth century (534) when the Merovingian kingdom, which is thought to have been where the legend of Siegfried began (ibid:15), conquered the Burgundians.

Content

The story tells of the dragon-slayer Siegfried at the court of the Burgundians, how he was murdered, and of his wife Kriemhilt's revenge.

Form and Style

The text is written in Middle High German and contains approximately 2,379 stanzas divided into thirty-nine "Aventiuren" (chapters or "Lieder") which can be divided into two parts: *Siegfried's Death* and *The Fall of the Nibelungs*. The versification is regulated by accent in stanzas of four lines, which rhyme in pairs (aabb):

> ze Wormze bi dem Rine | si wonten mit ir kraft
> in diente von ir landen | vil stolziu ritterschaft
> (von der Hagen & F.W.Gubitz, 1842)

The language of the *NL* is simple and direct, lacking lyricism and expressing feelings through deeds rather than words. Short sentences and parataxis are also dominant features as are clichés and superlatives.

Wagner and the Nibelungenlied

Wagner knew the *NL* through edited versions and modern German translations of the most important of its thirty-five surviving manuscripts[3] which had only been rediscovered in the middle of the eighteenth century. Possibly the most well-known names associated with the *NL* are Friedrich Heinrich von der Hagen (1780-1856), Karl Lachmann (1793-1851) and Karl Simrock (1802-1876). Wagner is known to have either owned or borrowed works by these authors from around 1843 onwards when he lived in Dresden (Magee, 1990: 213ff; von Westernhagen, 1966: 84ff). Wagner also borrowed a translation by Hinsberg (1812) from the Royal Dresden library in 1845 (Magee, 1990: 214) and owned a translation by Gustav Pfizer with woodcut illustrations (Westernhagen, 1966: 99) . It is also likely that he read the version

[3] The three most important are held by the Bayerische Staatsbibliothek (codex A, circa 1280); the St. Gallen, Stiftsbibliothek (codex B, circa 1250) and the Badische Landesbibliothek in Karlsruhe (codex C, 1220).Digital versions can be viewed at http://www.blb-karlsruhe.de/blb/blbhtml/nib/uebersicht.html)

translated by his brother-in-law Gotthard Oswald Marbach, although a copy of this is not recorded by Magee or Westernhagen.

Straight from the *NL* come Siegfried's arrival at the court of the Gibichungs, his desire for Gutrune, Siegfried's denial, on his honour, that he had wooed Brünnhilde; the revelation of Siegfried's vulnerability (the spot between his shoulders), the double marriage (Siegfried and Kriemhilt and Gunther and Brünnhilde), and very importantly the character of Alberich the dwarf and his connection to the treasure and cloak of invisibility. However, the *NL* only gave Wagner the story of Siegfried from the moment he came to the court of the Burgundians, the references to his mythical past are brief and lack detail. Wagner also wrote that he had found the Siegfried of the *NL* wanting in terms of mythical and universal qualities and too wrapped up in "chivalric shining armour" (Benvenga, 1982: 35). The medieval court setting of the *NL* lacked mystery, the dragon slaying is only given a minor role and is unconnected to the treasure, (ibid: 35). chivalry, and courtly protocol as well as the Christian ethos pervading the *NL*, were as Cooke put it, "valueless" to Wagner (1979: 97).

Thidrekssaga (TS)

Dietrich or Thidrek the Ostrogoth, also known as Dietrich of Bern, was a real historical figure who died in 526 (Benvenga, 1982:14). His story became popular because, like the legendary King Arthur, he was seen as a ruler who championed justice but ruled through strength; a paragon of kingship and government. There are eleven Middle High German poems about him, however, they only recount individual episodes of his life and the only text that gives a complete account is the Old Norse Þiðrekssaga (*TS*) (1260-70) produced in Norway. The text is considered to be either a prose compilation of tales or songs of Dietrich supplied by German merchants trading in Bergen, Norway around 1250 or taken as a manuscript by German monks establishing an order in what is now Sweden in around 1232.

The translation mentioned in Wagner's list was by Friedrich Heinrich von der Hagen (1814/1989), and was in Wagner's personal library in Dresden (Magee, 1990: 30).

Content

The *TS* tells the story of Dietrich who after being tutored by Hildebrand accomplishes heroic deeds. After his father's death, Dietrich is exiled by his uncle Ermenrich, and flees to Attila's court. He unsuccessfully attempts to return to his kingdom, then becomes entangled in the downfall of the Niflungs (Nibelungs), after which Dietrich successfully returns to Verona and recovers his kingdom. Much later, Dietrich kills a dragon that had killed King Hernit of Bergara, marries his widow and becomes king. After Attila's death, Dietrich becomes king of the Huns as well. He dies from his wounds after one last heroic fight.

Form and Style

It is written in prose like a fairy-tale dispensing with the medieval, courtly character of the *NL*.

Wagner and the Thidrekssaga

There is very little in the *TS* that Wagner would not have found in the *Eddas* and the *Völsungasaga*. Like them, it filled in the gaps regarding Siegfried's early life, which were absent from the *NL*, but perhaps more importantly, it provided Wagner with a more authentic primitive Teutonic atmosphere. The *TS* did, however, provide three key aspects of the story, as told by Wagner, which were not included elsewhere. Firstly, it tells of the manner of Siegfried's birth, secondly, it provided Hagen's supernatural parentage (Cooke, 1979: 104) and thirdly, this is where Wagner found the story of Brünnhilde giving her horse Grane to Siegfried, which elsewhere (*Völsungasaga*) is the gift of Wotan.

The Poetic Edda

The *PE* supplied Wagner with his plots, characters and mode of expression more than any other text. An estimated eighty per cent of the content of the *Ring* comes from it (Björnsson, 2003: 7). The *PE* (also known as the *Elder Edda*[4] or *Sæmundar Edda*[5]) is a collection of Old Norse poems written in *Stabreim* (alliterative verse). In mythological and heroic stories, they embody the ethics and culture of 'the North' in late heathen and early Christian times (Hollander, 1962: ix). The *PE* was first committed to writing around 1270 but it is generally considered to pre-date Scandinavia's conversion to Christianity in the latter part of the tenth century. The oldest extant manuscript, known as the *Codex Regius 2365 4to*, was held for centuries in the Royal Library in Copenhagen but in 1971 was returned to Iceland by the Danish government, and is now in the *Árni Magnússon Institute* in Reykjavík. The first volumes of Eddic poems were published by the *Arnamagnaean Institute* in Copenhagen between 1787 and 1828 with side-by-side Latin translations of the Icelandic text.

During the initial conceptualisation and writing of the *Ring* libretto Wagner had a publication of the *PE* (or part thereof) in the original Icelandic (von der Hagen, 1812) and a translation by Majer (1818) in his personal Dresden library. It is suggested that Wagner may have had a rudimentary grasp of old Icelandic based on his use of certain words (like *taugen*) in their archaic senses (Westernhagen, 1981: 94-95) which could only have arisen based on his reading the *PE* in the original language (ibid: 94).

He also borrowed from the Royal Dresden library (see Magee, 1990: 44, 214, 219) the free verse translations by the Grimm Brothers and von der Hagen (1815; 1814) as well as Ettmüller's translation which imitates the alliterative verse-style of the original. His discussion of *Stabreim* in his preface (Ettmüller, 1837: ixff) and Wagner's meetings

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[4] So called because it was written before the *Prose Edda*

[5] So called because when the *Poetic Edda* was first discovered in 1643 by the Icelandic bishop Brynjólfur Sveinsson, who had been commissioned by the king of Denmark to find such artefacts, he mistakenly believed it to be by an Icelandic poet known as Sæmundr Fródi (1056-1133).

with him when they both lived in Zurich contributed to Wagner's knowledge of *Stabreim* and its usage.

Content

The *PE* tells the history of the world from creation to apocalypse. It is divided into two parts: the first eleven poems are known as the *Mythological Songs* and the remaining poems as the *Heroic Songs*. The mythological part deals with the creation of the world, gods, giants, dwarves and men and of the gods' limited time of supremacy before their downfall and the end of their world before a new one would arise. The second part contains tales of legendary heroes like Sigurd the Volsung (Siegfried of the Nibelungenlied) and Atli the Hun and tells of the tribal warfare of the Franks, Burgundians and Huns. The fates of the heroes are given in terms of supernatural and cosmic laws outside their control.

Form and style

The *PE* usually contains anything from twenty-nine to thirty-five or thirty-six poems depending on which edition is being read. There is no continuous narrative; the stories sometimes overlap or are repeated and the poems may be short or very long. The verse style of the poems differ greatly. Scholars tend to use the scansion system developed by Eduard Sievers in the nineteenth century (Sievers, 1893). Laid out in stanzas, each has typically four lines divided by a caesura in which alliterating initial stressed syllables connect within the first half line and across into the second. Each line has two stresses unrestricted as to position. There are three main stanza or verse forms: *fornyrðislag* (story metre), *málaháttr* (speech metre) and *ljóðaháttur* (song metre).

Wagner and the Poetic Edda (PE)

Wagner said that had he not discovered alliterative verse he would probably not have composed the *Ring* (1872: 399-400). The short lines and 'hammered home' (Cooke, 1979:76) effect of the alliteration suited the subject matter of myth and legend and more importantly gave Wagner lyrics which were succinct, direct, immediate and ideal for a music drama, which relied on the amalgamation of words, music and drama to communicate emotions. The Mythological Songs of the *PE* provided Wagner with the mythological elements missing in the *NL* and *TS* and also the speech styles of the divine characters. A number of scenes in the operas also appear to be directly taken from the *PE*: the awakening of Brünnhilde in act III of Siegfried and Siegfried's dialogue with the dying Fafnir earlier in the same opera are just two examples. There is no poem of the *Poetic Edda* that does not appear in some way in the *Ring* either as motif or theme.

The Prose Edda

The *Prose Edda*, also known as the *Younger Edda*[6] or *Snorra Edda*, was written in the early thirteenth century by Snorri Sturluson, who was a leading poet, chieftain and diplomat in Iceland. Of all the main sources Wagner used, it is the only one that is not anonymous. The author is known thanks to a fourteenth century manuscript (*Codex Upsaliensis*) in which he introduces himself and the content of the book.

In the *Prose Edda*, Snorri draws on pre-Christian mythologies and religious belief systems to illustrate in an instruction manual, of sorts, how poets should write in the traditional Old Norse style. The work is often assumed to have been written around the year 1220, before the earliest known manuscripts of the *PE*, yet its quotation of poems from the *PE* clearly indicate it is a later work. The first printed edition, known as *Edda islandorum* was published by Peter Johannes Resen in Copenhagen in 1665, where the complete text appeared with Latin and Danish translations. The best-known edition, the

[6] So named for being written after the *Poetic Edda*.

Arnamagnæan edition (Copenhagen, 1848-87), is the only complete one and combines Latin with the Icelandic text.

The first translation into German was the work of Friedrich Rühs (1812). This contains a long historical introduction, and ends with the story of the Völsungs. It is known to have been in Wagner's personal library in Dresden (Westernhagen, 1966: 102, 88-89) along with Friedrich Majer's *Mythologische Dichtungen und Lieder der Skandinavier*[7] (1818), which contained translations of both *Poetic* and *Prose Eddas*.

Content

The *Prose Edda* comprises four sections. The first section is prologue, which attempts to justify Snorri's retelling of the pre-Christian myths, clarifying that the Norse gods are not something anyone should believe in, thus attempting to safeguard himself from any accusations of heathen worship. The second part is *Gylfaginning* and tells the story about a king of Sweden called Gylfi who disguised as a traveller called Gangleri goes to visit the gods to gain knowledge from them. The third part is called *Skáldskaparmál*, and can be translated as 'Poetic Diction'. It discusses the language and imagery of poetry. The final section called *Háttatal* is a poem listing poetic metres.

Style and Form

The *Prose Edda* is delivered in an entertaining narrative dialogue. *Gylfaginning* combines prose narrative and dramatic dialogue with small sections of poetry usually quoted from the *PE* or other skaldic poems. *Skáldskaparmál* combines dialogue and narrative. *Háttatal* is a poem exemplifying the various verse-forms, accompanied by a prose commentary that points out the main features.

Wagner and the Prose Edda

[7] Mythological Poems and Songs of the Scandinavians

The *Gylfaginning* joins the dots, so to speak, of the Eddic poems. The gods of the *Ring* are clearly those delineated in the *Prose Edda*. The structure of the *Ring*'s world is easy to discern in the *Prose Edda*. According to Cooke, it gave Wagner the essential catalyst to the drama by offering him two myths not found elsewhere (1979: 117), which could provide a significant enough transgression or crime by the gods to account for their demise. The first is the promise to give Freya to the Giants as payment for Valhalla (told in part 42 of *Gylfaginning*) and the loss of the apples of immortality (told in part 1 of *Skáldskaparmál*. Wagner linked these stories to the theft of the treasure from Andvari, the dwarf, told in all the Scandinavian sources to provide the main motives driving the action of the *Ring* drama.

Völsunga saga

This source provides the main themes and storylines for *Die Walküre* and *Siegfried*. It also tells the same legend of the Burgundians, Huns and Sigurd as found in the *Nibelungenlied*. Like the *Eddas*, it was also first committed to writing in the early thirteenth century in Iceland and its authorship is anonymous. The *VS* was evidently written when missing parts of the extant manuscripts of the *PE* were still available and it is thanks to the *VS* that the *Eddas* were able to be reconstructed. The first printed edition, edited by E. J. Bjorner in 1737 contains translations into Latin and Swedish. The first German translation was by von der Hagen in 1815 in volume four of his series *Nordische Heldenromane*[8] (1815). Wagner must have borrowed this from the Royal Library in Dresden, though there is no supporting documentation except that in a letter to Theodor Uhlig, in late 1851, he asks him to borrow it from the Royal Library and post it to him in Switzerland (Hauer, 1991: 52).

Content

[8] Nordic Hero Tales

Structurally, *VS* is a Saga of a family covering many generations, starting with Sigi, the son of Odin (Wotan). All the descendants of Sigi are exceptionally strong, courageous and steadfast. The greatest is Sigurd (Siegfried), the dragon slayer, but even he is doomed by a curse as intrigue causes him to be caught up in a love triangle and he is murdered by his brothers-in law. Yet the curse does not end with his death. The Niflungs, the family into which he married, inherit it, and they and eventually their sister and Sigurd's wife and daughter are also killed or commit suicide.

Form and Style

Whilst most literature from the medieval period is in verse form the saga is a prose narrative form. In many ways the *VS* is simply a prose paraphrase of the heroic poems of the *PE* and in some ways inferior both linguistically and stylistically (Andersson, 2004: 196). It is simple and unadorned, somewhat fairy-tale-like, sometimes quite fantastical (Cooke, 1979: 112). The sparseness of the prose reflects the oral narrative tradition from which the sagas arose.

Wagner and the Völsunga saga

The *VS* has generally been considered the most important source (Cooke, 1979: 113; Hauer, 1991: 52) because it gave Wagner the 'fully coherent tying-together' (Cooke, 1979: 111) of the story which is more fragmentary and complex in the *Poetic* and *Prose Eddas*. It may be that Wagner knew the work having previously read it in his uncle Adolph's[9] library or he may have borrowed it from friends or as Björnsson suggests (2003: 126) he could have read it in the library without taking it away. It is also possible that Wagner used other texts derived from the *VS* to tie together the various elements of the story such as Wilhelm Grimm's *Die Deutsche Heldensage*[10] (1829) and

[9] Adolph Wagner was a philologist and translator, friends with Tieck and Hoffmann and, as a boy had even known Schiller (Borchmeyer, 2003: 8).
[10] German Hero Legends: a collection of approximately 600 legends form the entire German speaking language area.

the anonymous *Hörnen Siegfried*[11] contained within von der Hagen's *Heldenbuch*, (1811) which Wagner had in his personal library (Westernhagen, 1966: 93). Wagner's letter of 1851 to Uhlig, asking him to borrow and send the book to him in Zurich, may infer that although he had tied together the story from other sources, having discovered the *VS*, he realised it would be a valuable source as he refined his poem.

Secondary Sources

Wagner's secondary sources were vast. They, too, are known thanks to the cataloguing of his personal library (Westernhagen, 1966) and from Magee's research (1990) which looked at Wagner's loans from the Royal Library in Dresden before his exile in 1849.

The most important secondary sources were probably *Zu den Nibelungen und zur Klage*[12] (Lachmann & Wackernagel, 1836); *Deutsche Mythologie*[13] (J. Grimm, 1844); and *Deutsche Heldensage*[14] (W. Grimm, 1829). Lachmann's *Zu den Nibelungen und zur Klage* (1836) consists mainly of comparative readings from the different manuscripts with commentary and dictionary definitions by Wilhelm Wackernagel. The essay included at the end, *Kritik der Sage von den Nibelungen* (ibid: 333ff) was greatly influential on Wagner's central theme of *the Ring*, the demise of the gods and Siegfried's role in it. The Siegfried legend makes no mention of gods and in the Norse myths there is no simple connection between the actions of the gods and Siegfried's adventures that eventually lead to their downfall. Lachmann, however, took the absence of any reference to the name Siegfried before the seventh century to indicate he was a god and because of the similarity of their stories, equated Siegfried with Baldur, whose myth tells of his murder and the subsequent downfall of the gods (Lachmann & Wackernagel, 1836: 344-345), thus providing Wagner with the material he needed to tie the two legends together. Wilhelm Grimm's *Deutsche Heldensage* would have

[11] The MHG epic poem (iambic hexameter) about Siegfried's youth is the only source that connects the hoard of gold with the dwarfs, the giants and the dragon.
[12] On the Nibelungs and their Lament
[13] Teutonic Mythology (a translation by Stallybrass was published by W. Swan Sonnenschein & Allen, London, 1810)
[14] German Hero Legends

helped to Wagner to give some order to the complicated material of the Nibelung legends and it was also important because it contained the *Völsunga saga* and was available at a time when Wagner was unable to procure a copy of this. It is a collection of quotations from poems and sagas from between the sixth and sixteenth centuries with extensive commentary. Wagner's Germanic, as opposed to Norse, orientation of the dramatis personae of the *Ring* was almost entirely due to Grimm's work (Cooke, 1979: 130).

Appendix 5 Jiranek's Schemata (1980: 197)

RELATIONSSCHEMA VON AUSDRUCKSMITTELN DER MUSIK

AKUSTISCHE PARAMETER DES KLANGES	I DAUER	II INTENSITÄT	III FARBE	IV HÖHE	
1. auf ihnen basierende, unmittelbar auf die Sinne wirkende musikalische Ausdrucksmittel	a) Rhythmus b) Tempo c) Agogik (prozessuelle Tempoänderungen)	a) Dynamik (Intensitätsgrade und prozessuelle Intensitätsänderungen) b) Akzentuierung	a) Timbre (Instrumentation)	a) Registrierung b) melodische Linie	gemeinsam für Sprache und Musik
	d) Beweglichkeit	c) Intensitätsabstufung von Klangzonen	b) Koloristik c) Finessen der Tonerzeugung im Instrumentenspiel und Gesang	c) Intervallik d) Tonhaftigkeit	nur der Musik eigen
2. auf ihnen basierende musikalische Ausdrucksmittel, die nicht nur unmittelbar auf die Sinne, sondern auch durch ihre eigene vermittelte Logik einwirken	Metrum		a) psychologischer Farbenreichtum von Klangverbindungen b) verschiedene sonische Effekte (Sonoristik)	a) tonal modale Beziehungen b) Akkordik c) tonal harmonische Beziehungen d) Polyphonie	
3. auf ihnen basierende, vor allem durch ihre eigene vermittelte Logik wirkende musikalische Ausdrucksmittel	Tektonik				
4. musikalische, durch eigene Technologie der musikalischen Gestaltung vermittelte, aber unmittelbar auf die Sinne einwirkende Ausdrucksmittel				Faktur	
	Phrasierung				gemeinsam für Rhetorik und alle Bewegungskünste

Appendix 6 See CD on inside back cover of Volume 1

Vocal Score: German

Die Walküre Act II scene 4

Götterdämmerung Act II scene 5

Appendix 7 See CD on inside back cover of Volume 1

Translation by Karen Wilson-deRoze set side-by-side with the German text

Die Walküre/The Valkyrie pp. 2-13

Götterdämmerung/Twilight of the gods. pp. 14-24

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