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*Rewriting and intertextuality: metamorphosis, interference and reinterpretation of Medieval texts*

*Summary.* In this paper I will deal with the major results achieved by the Research Group that in the past two years has worked under my supervision on the Programme *Rewriting and Intertextuality: Metamorphosis, Interference and Reinterpretation of Medieval Texts*. In the first part I will introduce the essays which colleagues from various Universities presented during the 2002 Conference in Pavia (*Eroi di carta e celluloidi. Il Medioevo germanico nelle forme espressive moderne*) and the 2003 Conference in Bergamo (*Riscritture del testo medievale: dialogo tra culture e tradizioni*). In the second part I will discuss some features pertaining to intertextuality which may be of interest for the rewriting of medieval texts. My discussion aims to create a closer link between philological studies – especially those related to Germanic Philology – and recent critical orientations, hoping that this integrated approach will contribute to the development of literary science.

1. *Introduction to the Research Programme*

The title of my paper *Rewriting and intertextuality: metamorphosis, interference and reinterpretation of Medieval texts* is the same as that of our Research Programme, since my purpose is to present the Project and to offer an opportunity for discussion. Indeed, this Conference in Venice is precisely an occasion to present and discuss our contributions and latest results with researchers of different areas together with foreign colleagues.

The team I have co-ordinated for two years had already promoted another Research Programme (i.e. *Modernizzazione del testo medievale. Aspetti della ricezione e traduzione*) under the supervision of Professor Maria Vittoria Molinari. Two Conferences have been organized at the University of Bergamo: in 2000 *Testo medievale e traduzione* and in 2001 *Tradurre testi medievali: obiettivi, pubblico, strategie*, the proceedings of which have been published.<sup>1</sup> Both the characteristics of translation in the European Middle Ages and the theoretical problems of comparing contemporary theories on

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<sup>1</sup> Cammarota / Molinari (2001); Cammarota / Molinari (2002).

literary translation to the particular critical perspective of the historical-philological analysis of medieval texts have been studied.

I would like to introduce colleagues from several Universities who have participated in this Project since they deliver their speeches here too: Maria Vittoria Molinari (Bergamo), Fulvio Ferrari (Trento), Ulrike Kindl (Venezia), Alessandro Zironi (Ferrara), Maria Grazia Cammarota (Bergamo), Marusca Francini (Pavia), Massimiliano Bampi (Venezia) and, last but not least, Marina Buzzoni (Venezia). We owe a special thank you to the latter for promoting and organizing this Conference.

In addition to studies on translation, the research has focused on rewriting and intertextuality. In particular, they have studied both different patterns of rewriting in the Middle Ages and the present-day rewriting of medieval texts using different media: film, comics, illustrations, etc. As for the study of medieval texts, they have considered cultural and intercultural aspects, as well as the particular context in which each rewrite took place. As far as the rewriting of Germanic texts and characters is concerned, they have analysed the consequences of these revisions on the medieval image or images spread in present-day culture and society.

In terms of studies and trends of criticism which can offer potential theoretical and methodological points of reference for this kind of research, they have considered the work of Genette *Palimpsestes*,<sup>2</sup> the studies on intertextuality by J. Kristeva, M. Riffaterre, H. Bloom,<sup>3</sup> and, in the field of *Translation Studies*, they have followed an epistemological approach based on the actual product of the translation process (from Even-Zohar, Toury to Bassnett, Lefevere)<sup>4</sup> by investigating the different types and meanings of the transformation of the translated text. Moreover, these processes of rewriting are not seen as “neutral”: on the contrary, they assume a vision of the world and a hierarchy of values which vary according to the translator and to the specific context. The socio-cultural context of the target text is important, because it makes possible additional meanings and develops potential alternative meanings of the source text. Through rewriting, the source text is transformed and enriched in an ongoing metamorphic process.

In the study of medieval texts there is also the problem of ‘authorship’. This is a problematic issue in medieval texts since many of their authors are

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<sup>2</sup> Genette (1982).

<sup>3</sup> Worton / Still (1990); Allen (2000).

<sup>4</sup> Toury (1995); Bassnett (1980); Lefevere (1992).

anonymous. Another aspect to be considered is the instability of medieval texts within their tradition, a result of which was the encouraging of intervention and revisions by copyists, translators and remakers. This aspect of the instability of the text has been investigated within the Project for the Sacred text as well, which was submitted to rewriting in Germanic tradition. Indeed, our research will produce a synoptic edition of the Germanic translations and revisions of St. Matthew's Gospel.

As regards the rewriting phenomena of the Middle Ages in a modern or contemporary age, the intent has been that of combining the methods of translation studies, inter-cultural criticism and comparative studies. Furthermore, it has been necessary to deal with methods and critical results of other disciplines such as semiology, the history of cinema and theatre and the study of new genres and media.

To sum up, the researchers involved in the Project have unanimously agreed that their studies of rewriting should also take into consideration the contribution of studies on intertextuality and reception in order to overcome the limited approach of a mere research of sources so as to consider the relationship between a text and its antecedents as an interplay between texts and cultures.

## 2. *Contributions from the Conference in Bergamo*

After speaking about the Research Project, I would like to move on to describe some methodological aspects and problems and to illustrate the results achieved in the research presented in two Conferences, one in Bergamo and the other in Pavia.

I will start with the Conference in Bergamo, held in November 2003: *Riscrittura del testo medievale: dialogo tra culture e tradizioni*.<sup>5</sup> The Conference papers dealt with rewriting and intertextuality in Medieval Texts and, in some cases, also with rewriting in contemporary times and in modern literary genres.

I myself presented a paper on *Riscrittura e riutilizzo delle immagini poetiche nel Wanderer*<sup>6</sup> (*Rewriting and re-use of poetic images in The Wanderer*). I started from the assumption that in the study of a medieval poetic text it is

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<sup>5</sup> Cammarota (2005b).

<sup>6</sup> Saibene (2005: 125-157).

not sufficient to search only for sources, rather it is of primary importance to understand the type and method of composition. In the Old English elegies, for example, poets supported the re-use of formulaic expressions and themes, as well as the formation of new words from existing material. For this kind of poetry we can speak of a tradition, but only if we take into account the way in which the poet, for example the poet of *The Wanderer*, took and rewrote the poetic material for particular purposes and for his specific audience.

At the theoretical-methodological level, I've made reference to some studies and principles like those of Julia Kristeva on dialogicism, which enabled me to verify the applicability and the productivity of modern theories for the study of rewriting and intertextuality in the Old English elegies. Moreover I was able to review other studies which, in the definition of the genre or the structure of *The Wanderer*, have a unidirectional point of view which cannot fully explain all the aspects of these poetic texts. In accordance with Pasternack's studies on textuality,<sup>7</sup> I think that there is a polyphony of voices and elements in the text of *The Wanderer* and that many of its aspects can be traced back to an oral tradition, but with differences in the reworking of the written text. I think that the text, the organic structure of which has been under discussion for quite some time, has three "voices" (*anhaga*, *eardstapa*, *snottor on mode*) and various sections linked by cross-references within the text and by reproductions of themes and expressions. I've also looked at the other aspect of interest to me, i.e. intertextuality, both through comparisons of *The Wanderer* and *The Seafarer*, as well as with other texts, for example *Beowulf*. In the latter, the figure of the sole surviving warrior, who is the guardian of the treasure, represents an analogous example for the poet and his audience. The *Wanderer*-author does not show himself, because there is the character who speaks for himself. Moreover, the text in the Medieval manuscript tradition displays an inherent instability and temporariness. For this reason, I think that now, as well as at the time, one particular aspect gains importance: the reception and interpretation of the reader who, thanks to possible cross-references and comparisons, plays an important role by creating variable and diverse interpretations of the text.

Moving on to our next contributor, Maria Grazia Cammarota, in *Tannhäuser dopo Tannhäuser*<sup>8</sup> (*Tannhäuser after Tannhäuser*), studied the metamorphosis of a figure, the Minnesänger Tannhäuser. Intertextuality here is not studied only with reference to works that preceded the text's writing; indeed, ac-

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<sup>7</sup> Pasternack (1991); Pasternack (1995).

<sup>8</sup> Cammarota (2005a: 281-316).

According to the researcher, later works can be important for the study of earlier ones. This figure was investigated using a system composed of various types of documents (poetic work, the miniature, the legend and other subsequent examples) analysed through their mutual relationships. In this case, too, the important and active contribution of the receiver and the researcher is recognised when interpreting this figure. What is new in this study is that the research is based not only on texts, but also on a figure which has become legendary. The theory proposed by Cammarota is that the way in which Tannhäuser is presented in the miniature contained in the *Manesse Codex* (f. 264r) clashes with the image of the poet that emerges from the Minnesänger's love lyrics, and therefore the objective of the miniature might have been that of contrasting with the original image which presented a free and bold Minnesänger. The Wagnerian rewriting of Tannhäuser has led to the superimposition of a new Romantic figure onto that of the Medieval poet, and this image is still widespread, despite a recent parodic rewriting of the character.

Alessandro Zironi in *Dentro Matteo: il rinnegamento di Pietro da Vulfila alla Bibbia di King James*<sup>9</sup> (*Inside Matthew: the repudiation of Peter from Vulfila to the King James' Bible*), studied many Germanic versions of the repudiation of St. Peter as recounted in St. Matthew's Gospel. His study examines the texts in light of rewriting, with particular attention to the lexicon, which is characterized in many cases by an adaptation towards the cultural context of the receiver. Thus the question of rewriting was analysed as an adaptation to another semiotic system.

Fulvio Ferrari has contributed *La reinvenzione della tradizione: riscritture fantasy della materia nibelungica*<sup>10</sup> (*The reinvention of tradition: fantasy rewriting of the Nibelungen materials*). If we take the papers of both Conferences into account, we can see that the Nibelungen materials, the figure of Siegfried and *Beowulf* were the themes which aroused the greatest interest among researchers, mainly as regards their adaptation into modern forms of expression. First of all, Ferrari refers not to the definition of myth worked out in anthropological studies, but rather to the one given by R. Barthes: "The myth is a second-order semiological system".<sup>11</sup> In Ferrari's opinion the form of the Nibelungen "myth" itself is very vague from its inception and therefore open to successive interpretation and updating. Its various rewrites communicate a different and ideologically important image of the past. The author's

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<sup>9</sup> Zironi (2005: 191-218).

<sup>10</sup> Ferrari (2005: 237-262).

<sup>11</sup> Barthes [1957 (1994: 196)].

analysis of six different groups of *fantasy* texts that revise the Nibelungen theme was aimed at analysing the process of intertextual construction, a process which states that the Nibelungen myth continues in modern and contemporary culture. As a result, the researcher identifies a group of texts where there is a special interest in the worship of Northern gods, a new myth and a new meaning for the Nibelungen theme in a neo-pagan context. In this research attention is focused on strategies of rewriting and on emphasizing the characteristics of the *fantasy* genre and on the different forms of reviving characters and stories, also from the point of view of ideology. The medieval period is chosen as the rewriting setting because it is a “different” world, where magic, the supernatural and Germanic pagan gods can reign. Referring to a statement by Genette that “there aren’t innocent transpositions”,<sup>12</sup> the author believes that *fantasy* rewrites cast special glances on the world and generate new meanings, at times even clashing with previous traditions.

Marina Buzzoni has written *Riscrittura e criteri di testualità: il diario di viaggio di Ibn Fadlan nei Medical Thrillers americani*<sup>13</sup> (*Rewriting and criteria of textuality: the travel diary of Ibn Fadlan in American Medical Thrillers*). The starting point for her research was the journal written by Ibn Fadlan and its rewrite in the genre of the American Medical Thriller; this work refers in particular to the criteria of textuality according to the taxonomy of Beaugrande/Dressler. From this vantage point the research investigates whether “translation” and “rewriting” represent two different ways of interpreting text; based on a survey carried out among students together with the results of research on aphasia, the answer is yes. This is because the process of interpretation for both the translation and for the rewriting goes back to specific cognitive components and cannot be analysed from the point of view of the rewriter’s work only. Any receiver has an inter-subjective opinion of textuality and the two forms of text manipulation are transversal to all of the literary polysystems and have therefore the same structural characteristics, even if the actual works are different in the end. In short, the researcher has found a “strong” concept of translation and a “weak” concept of rewriting. In Medieval Western cultures the use of rewriting was greater than that of translation, which can be regarded as a typical cultural variable of “young” polysystems. In the Middle Ages, the Old and the New Testament were rewritten, so that it is not with respect to the content that we can assess the feasibility of rewriting; on the contrary we can assess it with respect to how the rewriting of the pragmatic structure of the hypotext was carried out. Other researches were also presented during the Conference.

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<sup>12</sup> Genette [1982 (1997: 352)].

<sup>13</sup> Buzzoni (2005: 53-72).

Verio Santoro, in “Stirb und werde! *Metamorfosi di Sigfrido, il re del Niederland*”<sup>14</sup> (“Stirb und werde! *The Metamorphosis of Siegfried, King of the Netherlands*”), studied the character of Siegfried through the analysis of three texts: *Das Lied vom Hürnen Seyfrid*, Hans Sach’s tragedy *Der Hürnen Sewfrid* and the ‘Volksbuch’ *Der gehörnte Siegfried*. Santoro’s paper deals mainly with Siegfried’s transformations at the beginning of the Modern Age and focuses particular attention on two episodes: the discovery and abandonment of the treasure and the fight with the dragon. The rewritings considered reveal the flexibility of this legendary hero in adapting to the religious, political and social changes occurring in Germany during the Reformation and Counter-reformation.

Giuseppe Brunetti with *Il gioco di Ismaele: un trattato medio inglese sul teatro*<sup>15</sup> (*Ismaele’s game: a Middle English tract on the theatre*) analysed the Middle English *Tretise of Miraclis Pleyinge*, a short tract against religious drama contained in an early 15<sup>th</sup> century manuscript. The final thesis is that the staging of biblical and hagiographical stories deprives them of their spiritual efficacy: theatre is incompatible with religiousness, because it is a form of ‘playing’, which contrasts with what is ‘serious’.

Eugenio Burgio in *Ricezione e riuso dell’agiografia in volgare: note sulla traduzione della Vie de saint Grégoire*<sup>16</sup> (*Reception and re-use of hagiography in the vernacular: notes on the translation of Vie de saint Grégoire*) studied the medieval texts which form the corpus collected by Arne & Thompson under Type n. 933 ‘Gregory on the Stone’.<sup>17</sup> There are many versions and types which go back to different times and cultural contexts and the author demonstrates the mutual relationships between these practices and ideological shifts.

In the area of Romance philology there is a contribution by Maria Luisa Meneghetti, *Il ritratto in cuore: peripezie di un tema tra il profano e il sacro*<sup>18</sup> (*The portrait in the heart: the vicissitudes of a theme between the profane and the sacred*). On the basis of poems by Folchetto di Marsiglia and other poets, she investigates the spread of this metaphor (i.e. “the portrait in the heart”) in various text types as well as related iconographic aspects.

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<sup>14</sup> Santoro (2005: 219-235).

<sup>15</sup> Brunetti (2005: 159-190).

<sup>16</sup> Burgio (2005: 87-123).

<sup>17</sup> Arne / Thompson (1961).

<sup>18</sup> Meneghetti (2005: 73-85).

Gustav-Adolf Pogatschnigg wrote *'Distanza' e 'interesse': la traduzione come parabola*<sup>19</sup> (*'Distance' and 'involvement': translation as parable*), which, after discussing various aspects of translation (e.g. the basic concepts of a definition of translation as access to a given text-sense are 'distance' and 'interest'), tackles the specific problem of the translation of Medieval Texts. He concludes that there is no substantial difference between the latter and the translation of modern texts; thus he asserts that it is not necessary for the translator of Medieval Texts to be a learned philologist.

The contribution of Siri Nergaard also focused on translation, *La traduzione come riscrittura. Dalla rielaborazione intralinguistica all'adattamento intersemiotico*<sup>20</sup> (*Translation as rewriting. From intralinguistic re-elaboration to intersemiotic adaptation*). The theoretic-methodological view leads to linking together various types of 'translation' in the light of rewriting, taking into account differences due to each one's specific field.

### 3. Contributions from the Conference in Pavia

I will now move on to discuss the Conference in Pavia, which took place in December 2002 and was entitled *Eroi di carta e celluloidi. Il Medioevo germanico nelle forme espressive moderne*.<sup>21</sup> The Conference was an occasion to review the current state of research and to discuss different methodologies, as well as the multiplicity of rewriting styles in modern media. Moreover, we examined closely the concept of using narrative patterns and literary and iconographic themes to build a contemporary view of the Germanic Middle Ages. Several papers dealt with the film-transposition of works, figures and Germanic mythological and legendary traditions.

Maria Vittoria Molinari, in *Die Nibelungen di Fritz Lang e il Nibelungenlied. Trasformazioni ed equivalenze tematiche e stilistiche*<sup>22</sup> (*Fritz Lang's Die Nibelungen and Nibelungenlied: transformations and thematic and stylistic parallels*), analysed the thematic and stylistic transformations and parallels between *Die Nibelungen* by Fritz Lang and the *Nibelungenlied*. According to the author, the narrative topic is considered as the "object of narration" both in the film and in the Medieval work, and the Lang's version sticks to an ideological reading of the story which is similar to that of *Nibe-*

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<sup>19</sup> Pogatschnigg (2005: 33-52).

<sup>20</sup> Nergaard (2005: 15-31).

<sup>21</sup> Saibene / Francini (2004).

<sup>22</sup> Molinari (2004: 11-33).



*lungenlied*, where the end of the Burgundian kingdom is brought about by the wicked will for power of humankind. The closeness of Lang's film to the medieval German poem is evident, especially when compared to other remakes, and particularly to those of Wagner and Hebbel.

In my contribution, *Il Perceval di Eric Rohmer: rielaborazione filmica dell'opera di Chrétien*<sup>23</sup> (*Eric Rohmer's Perceval: the filmic reworking of Chrétien's work*), I analysed Eric Rohmer's *Perceval*, that is a filmic transposition of Chrétien's work. What is particular about this adaptation of the medieval work are the choices and the techniques used by the French director, who aims at an extreme stylisation, even though the film can be considered a faithful reproduction of Chrétien's original. The result is the reviving of a character and of a medieval story in the form of *Bildungsroman*; moreover, Rohmer paints an almost iconographic and alien picture of the Middle Ages. A picture which, however, conveys a message that is enjoyable to an élite type of spectator.

Marina Buzzoni's study was entitled *I volti delle parole: le rappresentazioni cinematografiche di Beowulf*<sup>24</sup> (*The faces of words: the cinematographic representations of Beowulf*). Her research focused on two filmic transpositions: *The Thirteenth Warrior* (1999) and *Beowulf* (1999). In particular, she examined the female roles and functions in both the medieval poem and in the two films. The conclusion of the analysis was that the transformations in the modern rewriting are clear. Actually, the female characters' roles and their relative communicative performances have a public role and influence the action in the medieval work, whereas in the analysed films the domestic role prevails, though in different ways according to the different genres: *historical thriller* or *techno fantasy movie*. The Research Programme of the University of Venice is planning to create a CD which will make it possible to consider the literary and cinematographic rewriting of *Beowulf* through a hypertextual treatment of the data.

Fulvio Ferrari authored *Da Sigfrido a Capitan Harlock: mito e leggenda germanici nei fumetti e nei cartoon*<sup>25</sup> (*From Siegfried to Captain Harlock: Germanic myths and legends in comics and cartoons*). Ferrari examined the different strategies of rewriting German mythological and legendary elements in different styles and works. His research centred on the following topics: the rewriting of *Beowulf* and the story of the Nibelungen theme in

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<sup>23</sup> Saibene (2004: 35-47).

<sup>24</sup> Buzzoni (2004: 195-222).

<sup>25</sup> Ferrari (2004: 55-91).

comics and in the *graphic novel*; the humorous rewriting of a myth or of a literary plot in *Mickey Mouse*; the transformation of events and of the narrative universe of a medieval work in the series of *Capitan Harlock*; and finally the quoting and transferring of myth in a new narrative context or the free reuse of myth in the *fantasy* genre. Particularly interesting is his analysis of the relation between text and illustration, as well as the ways the story is re-proposed and represented when submitted to a new interpretation.

Alessandro Zironi chose the following topic: *I Goti: uso di materiale germanico dal melodramma ottocentesco ai bestsellers contemporanei*<sup>26</sup> (*The Goths: the use of Germanic source material from nineteenth-century melodrama to contemporary bestsellers*). Thanks to this contribution, music (along with melodrama) has joined other modern modes of expressing Germanic material. Zironi studied the melodrama *The Goths* by Gobatti, as well as the rewriting of Gothic material into *fantasy* works and into several stories. *The Goths* reflects the taste and the cultural climate of the end of the nineteenth century.

The Conference in Pavia was particularly noted for its interdisciplinary approach and for the presence of a wide range of experts. The illustrator Sergio Toppi presented a series of illustrations, which included the figures of Odin and a Viking.<sup>27</sup> He also explained the originating process of his work and techniques for producing comics. The semiologist Paolo Jachia, who talked about Dylan Dog comics,<sup>28</sup> offered us an opportunity to broaden our field of research with a far-reaching overview of critics from Bakhtin to Umberto Eco. His analysis of Dylan Dog comics convinces us to place the “specific” genre of comics in the disciplines of ‘visual and verbal traditions’. More specifically, Jachia has shown the relationship between Dylan Dog and episodes and elements of different genres of novel: from the chivalric novel to the carnival novel, the classic Gothic novel and so on, up to the present-day romance novels. Perry Rhodan’s comics<sup>29</sup> were presented by a scholar of German literature, Alessandro Fambrini, who identified a variety of elements and allusions taken from Germanic myths and traditions in these comics and their new functional roles. Indeed, in Perry Rhodan we see once again a political and cultural pattern which appears to give answers to contemporary questions by projecting problems into a hypothetical future, but which in reality also absorbs and interprets the past. Finally, there was a paper on

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<sup>26</sup> Zironi (2004: 129-156).

<sup>27</sup> Toppi (2004: 49-53).

<sup>28</sup> Jachia (2004: 93-127).

<sup>29</sup> Fambrini (2004: 181-193).

Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings: Tolkien's Twin Towers. Aspettando che le luci si spengano*<sup>30</sup> (*Tolkien's Twin Towers. Waiting for the lights to fade*), which was presented by John Meddemmen, who is a scholar of English language and literature. From the perspective of the "college hall" the author developed this topic together with related aspects of the filmic transposition of Tolkien's work and made explicit certain ties to the Old English poem *Beowulf*.

#### 4. *Theoretical approaches to intertextuality and conclusions*

After this part of my talk, which can be considered in a certain sense 'intertextual', even if it is a personal interpretation – and incidentally I beg anyone's pardon who doesn't find his/her thoughts expressed faithfully – I come to the conclusion and I discuss some features pertaining to intertextuality which may be of interest for the rewriting of medieval texts. My discussion aims to create a closer link between philological studies – especially those related to Germanic Philology – and recent critical orientations. My hope is that this integrated approach will contribute to the development of literary science.

Kristeva's pioneering studies on intertextuality<sup>31</sup> have led to a revision of certain traditional approaches in our field of inquiry: in particular the critical research on sources and the notion of 'influence' that has led to an interpretation of the interaction between two texts or two authors, etc. where the author plays a dominant role and the literary product is seen as a self-sufficient entity. From the point of view of intertextuality, on the other hand, the text is seen not only as a 'crossing entity', where one can find what the author draws from other texts both consciously and unconsciously, but also as a product the reader is presented with, thus taking part in the process of constructing the meaning through his/her own knowledge. It is not necessary to mention here all the scholars who have contributed to this debate on intertextuality (in addition to Kristeva: Genette, Barthes, Riffaterre, Bloom etc.);<sup>32</sup> rather I'm going to consider whether and to what extent the results achieved through intertextuality can be applied to our studies.

First of all, I'll deal with the problem of the 'authorship' of medieval texts, an issue much debated by contemporary scholars. Medieval comparative

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<sup>30</sup> Meddemmen (2004: 157-179).

<sup>31</sup> Kristeva (1969).

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Allen (2000); Worton / Still (1990).

studies – see, for example, Curtius –<sup>33</sup> have urged us to sort out the influences of the sources and the reception of themes in texts, judging the value of a literary work in relation to its author. This approach may still prove useful when information about the author and his/her work is available. Yet, I'd like to underline that these evaluations have sometimes led to the total disregard of some very interesting texts, which deserve to be brought back to life.

Turning back to the problem of 'authorship', the great majority of the texts we deal with provides very little information about the author. Therefore, his/her intentions are difficult to sort out; what's more, the attitude of the medieval author was different from that of a modern one. He/She didn't seek out originality and innovation (if these features do play a role, they do it in the process of rewriting and putting together the traditional material and not in relation to the subject-matter). The principle on which the medieval author relied is that of *auctoritas*, whose function was to validate his work in front of the audience. However, the rewriting of the text in relation to its sources was not deeply affected by this principle (I leave out here the issues pertaining to translation, a field of its own).

In my opinion, many medieval texts such as the Anglo-Saxon elegies show features that can be analysed through an intertextual approach. So the important question becomes precisely which theories and which references should be taken into consideration. I might quote Bloom, who maintains that "texts presuppose intertexts".<sup>34</sup> Bloom, however, still considers the author a central figure within the process of rewriting; in addition, he omits many other features. Though generally in agreement with him, I think that critical inquiry should stretch into the context the work springs from, going beyond literary boundaries and taking into account the process of reception on the part of the addressee, both in the Middle Ages and nowadays (see New Historicism). Due to the distance in time and the otherness of the Middle Ages, an issue emerges regarding the work's reader/addressee. First, the process of reception does indeed concern the medieval author himself since he reshapes what he has either read or heard. Second, the interpretation of a medieval text is carried out by a scholar, who can't rely simply on his/her own knowledge, but has to deal with the reconstruction of the former addressees' position. This cultural path passes not only through the written tradition, but also through the oral stages of textual transmission and the many issues connected to them. This is the reason why I consider it extremely important to pay attention not only to the notions of 'hypo-text' and 'hyper-text' in the

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<sup>33</sup> Curtius (1948).

<sup>34</sup> Worton / Still (1990: 28).

analysis of the medieval text, but also to the notion of ‘inter-text’. The latter in fact undergoes constant variation according to the agent (author, addressee, modern reader).

Julia Kristeva in her re-elaboration of Bachtin’s theories ended up by maintaining that “any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations; any text is the absorption and transformation of another. The notion of intertextuality replaces that of intersubjectivity”.<sup>35</sup> Making the proper distinctions, I think that Kristeva’s words can also be applied to the medieval text, whose features – mainly though not solely aimed at serving either a didactic or an exegetic purpose – imply a revisiting and reshaping of the material drawn from other texts and literary currents so as to present the addressee with a new message.

Yet, in my opinion, Kristeva’s point of view, as well as that of other scholars who have carried out research on intertextuality, is characterized by being un-historical. According to Roland Barthes,<sup>36</sup> for example, a text is a new tissue of past citations and relies on a general field of anonymous formulae whose origin can scarcely ever be located. To my mind, in the study of the medieval text we also need to take into account the literary genre to which the work belongs, in order to narrow the field of inquiry and arrive at a reading which, though not exhaustive, can impose at least some constrictions. The interpretation on the part of the reader should not be given an absolute value; rather, a set of options needs to be sorted out by the scholar, in order to avoid the risk of unbounded, illimitable reasoning.

Furthermore, a distinctive feature of some medieval texts is their so-called ‘dialogicity’, a definition that goes back to Bachtin and was later adopted by other scholars. Pasternack, for example, speaks of a ‘poliphony’ in the process of composition,<sup>37</sup> thus seeking to capture both the aural and the written properties of the verses. This approach may lead not only to sorting out the many voices that make up a text, but also to proposing a different segmentation of the text in its basic units (movements), thus giving new life to studies on textuality. In this respect, the edition criteria of Anglo-Saxon texts elaborated by Doane<sup>38</sup> are most interesting, since they take into account both intertextuality and orality. As for a philological study of medieval texts, the contribution of Riffaterre seems to me particularly relevant.<sup>39</sup> On the basis of

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<sup>35</sup> Allen (2000: 39).

<sup>36</sup> Worton / Still (1990:18-23); Allen (2000: 61-94).

<sup>37</sup> Pasternack (1991).

<sup>38</sup> Doane (1991).

<sup>39</sup> Worton / Still (1990: 24-27).

a semiotic interpretation of the text, he considers the process of textual genesis an expansion of some expressions.<sup>40</sup> According to him, the reader, after a first referential reading of the text, sorts out what he considers to be ‘ungrammatical’ and then goes on to construct new meanings for obscure passages by resorting to intertextuality and his/her own competence.

These are just some brief and simple considerations regarding the analysis of medieval texts within the theoretical framework of intertextuality. However, no mention has yet been made of the recasting of medieval texts into modern forms. Two major aspects are relevant here: on the one hand, the particularity of the means through which the reshaping takes place, and on the other, the particularity of conveying a message through the mediation of a modern rewrite which has to be analysed within the cultural and ideological boundaries of the context it springs from. In these cases too interpretation cannot be considered totally unbounded and related to the addressee alone; rather, it is partially oriented by the modern manipulator. In these kinds of rewrites, the literary genre and the related canon to which the text belongs are better discernible. For the most part, this field of enquiry is still unexplored (see, for example, the proceedings of the Conference held in Pavia in November 2002). In the end, the most fruitful approach seems to me that of interdisciplinary research, so that philologists can collaborate with scholars belonging to other academic fields.

As a way of concluding, I would like to express a wish. That Germanic philologists – and this consideration could be expanded to include many other academic domains as well – are given the opportunity to fully participate in contemporary critical debate and thus become active and valid interlocutors. Even though they deal with ‘a world apart’ (this is in fact the most common image of the Middle Ages), they can contribute to a broadening of research into contemporary theoretical approaches, helping to put them into practice. Furthermore, and most important of all, philologists can contribute to placing these studies in a historical perspective, which is perhaps the only way to take abstract and self-referring reasoning and put it into more concrete and verifiable terms. Indeed, what is needed today is a historical approach in order to better understand our present world. This should also be the goal of those who are working in the field of medieval studies. By bringing philological research into the context of contemporary critical debate, both Philology and the Middle Ages can be freed from the fruitless Golden Tower where they are all too often left to languish.

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<sup>40</sup> Allen (2000: 120).

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Text, Context and Intertextuality. Types of intertextuality in Chairman's statements. Originality Influence Intertextuality. "Intertextuality' is a covering term for all the possible relations that can be established between texts. The relations can be based on anything from quotes and direct references to indirect allusions to common words and even letters to dependence on language itself. The effect of the relations can extend from support and agreement to one text's rejection and attempted destruction of the other." [Miscall]. Michael Fishbane: Biblical Interpretation in Ancient Israel. ". . . intertextuality is the core of the canonical imagination; that is, it is the core of the creative imagination that lives within a self-reflexive culture shaped by an authoritative collection of text. Intertextuality is a word coined by Julia Kristeva, a French linguist who has written much on this topic. This word has a broader meaning in today's context than the theories she expounds in her seminal work on intertextuality —word, dialogue and novel—. Her notion of Intertextuality refers to the literal and effective presence in a text of another text. A text according to her is a permutation of texts, an Intertextuality in the space of a given text, in which several utterances, taken from other texts, intersect and neutralize one another (Allen 2000:35). Kristeva writes: horizontal axis (sub Intertextuality is the shaping of a text's meaning by another text. Intertextual figures include: allusion, quotation, calque, plagiarism, translation, pastiche and parody.[1][2][3] Intertextuality is a literary device that creates an "interrelationship between texts" and generates related understanding in separate works ("Intertextuality", 2015). These references are made to influence that reader and add layers of depth to a text, based on the reader's prior knowledge and understanding. Examples of intertextuality are an author's borrowing and transformation of a prior text, and a reader's referencing of one text in reading another. Intertextuality does not require citing or referencing punctuation (such as quotation marks) and is often mistaken for plagiarism (Ivanic, 1998). Rewriting and intertextuality: metamorphosis, interference and reinterpretation of Medieval texts. Authors: Saibene, Maria Grazia. Intertextuality is the shaping of a text's meaning by another text. It is the interconnection between similar or related works of literature that reflect and influence an audience's interpretation of the text. Intertextuality is the relation between texts that are inflicted by means of quotations and allusion. Intertextual figures include allusion, quotation, calque, plagiarism, translation, pastiche and parody. It is a literary device that creates an 'interrelationship between texts' and generates