

GRAMMAR OF ICELANDIC

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Volume 2

Rasmus Kristian Rask

**A Grammer of the Icelandic or
Old Norse Tongue**

RASMUS KRISTIAN RASK

A GRAMMAR OF THE ICELANDIC OR
OLD NORSE TONGUE

Translated by

SIR GEORGE WEBBE DASENT

New edition

with a Preface, an Introductory
Article, Bibliographies and Notes
by

T. L. MARKEY

University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

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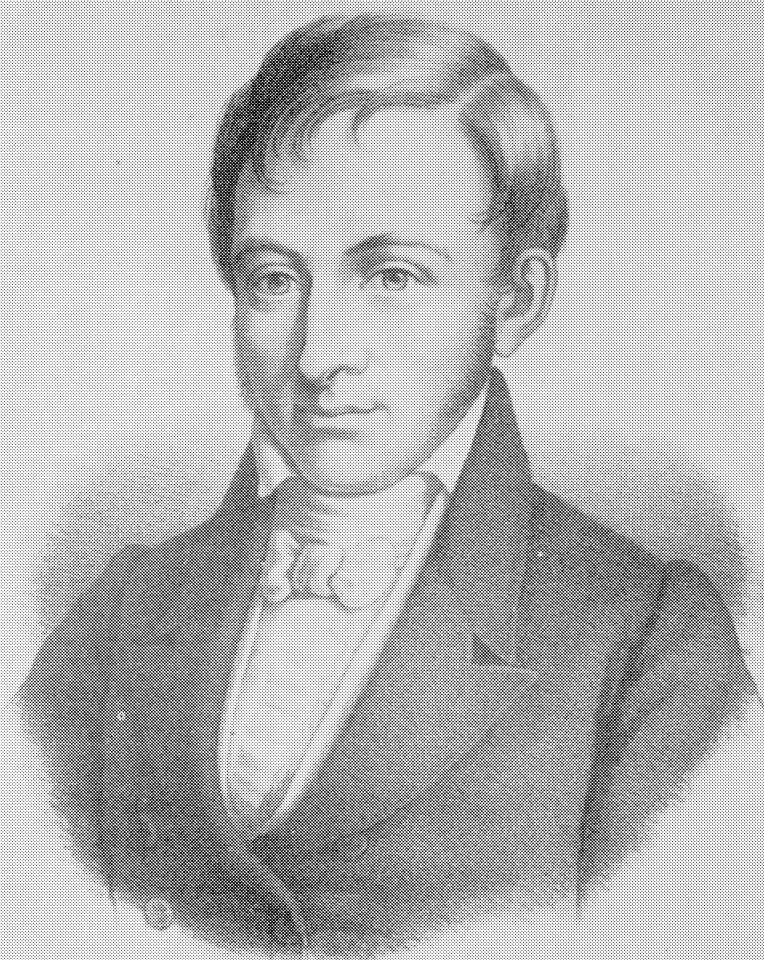
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Rasmus Christian Bask.

FOREWORD

Next to his famous *Undersøgelse om det gamle Nordiske eller Islandske Sprogs Oprindelse*, which was written in 1814 but not published until 1818, thus appearing two years after Bopp's *Conjugationssystem* (Frankfurt, 1816) and just one year before the publication of the first volume of Grimm's *Deutsche Grammatik* (Göttingen, 1819), Rask's *Vejledning til det Islandske eller gamle Nordiske Sprog* (Copenhagen, 1811) may be regarded as his most important contribution to historical-comparative linguistics.

Acting upon a suggestion made by Jacob Grimm, who reviewed the original Danish work in detail and very favourably,¹ Rask prepared a Swedish version of his study, which appeared in 1818 under the title *Anvisning till Isländskan eller Nordiska Fornspråket*, and later on served as the basis for Sir George Webbe Dasent's (1817-96) English translation of 1843, which has been reproduced for the present edition.² In addition, Rask himself published an abridged Danish version of his 1811 work which, together with the original study, formed the basis of George Perkins Marsh's (1801-82) *Compendious Grammar of the Old Northern or Icelandic Language* of 1838 (see Rask's bibliography, for details).

Indeed, Rask's *Vejledning* of 1811 constitutes a kind of preliminary study for his 1818 masterpiece, the *Undersøgelse*, which (it is inter-

¹ See *Allgemeine Literatur-Zeitung* vol.I, No.31, coll.241-48; 32, coll. 249-54; 33, coll.257-64, and 34, coll.265-72 (Halle, 5-8 Feb. 1812).

² The section "Verslæren" (Rask 1811.211-36) was also translated into German; cf. E. Chr. Rask, *Die Verslehre der Islaender*, verdeutscht von Gottlob Christian Friedrich Mohnike (1781-1841), (Berlin: G. Rei-

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esting to note) has never been translated into another language, if we ignore the Swedish translation of five pages of the original (pp. 162- to 166),³ and a 144-page excerpt (pp. 155-302) which Johann Severin Vater (1771-1826) included in his *Vergleichstafeln der Europäischen Stammsprachen und Süd-, West-Asiatischer* (Halle: Renger, 1822).

As General Editor of the series in which this volume appears, it is my special duty to express my gratitude to Professor T. L. Markey of the University of Michigan for having taken pains to present an up-to-date evaluation of Rask's achievement together with a historical-biographical sketch of Rask. In addition, Professor Markey has prepared a select bibliography of Rask's works, a bibliography of the studies mentioned in his introductory article, and a number of *addenda et corrigenda* for this new edition.

I would also like to thank Professor Jacob Mey, University of Odense, and, in particular, Dr. Caroline C. Henriksen, University of Copenhagen, for having helped me complete, as far as this was possible, the bio-bibliographical details of the Rask Bibliography (pp. xxix-xxxvi) and those References (pp. xxxvii-xlv) of this new edition which Professor Markey was unable to supply.

It is hoped that this re-edition of Rask's Grammar of the Icelandic or Old Norse Tongue, together with the bio-bibliographical account and the portrait of Rask, will enable the linguist of today to obtain a fairly rounded picture of this important 19th-century scholar who, together with Bopp and Grimm, has justly been ranked among the founding fathers of the New Philology, i.e., the comparative-historical study of Indo-European languages.

REGENSBURG, 4 June 1976

E. F. K. K.

mer, 1830), 85 pp.

³

"Om det gamla, äkta Grekiska Uttaleet", *Svensk Litteratur-Tidning* No. 47, coll. 737-47 (Uppsala, 13 Nov. 1819).

PREFACE

Frequently in transitory periods in the continuing epistemological evolution of a science there are times when its practitioners pause to reflect on the accomplishments of the past. At present, our science appears to be in such a transitory period. The data-oriented descriptions and analyses of the structuralists were succeeded by the perceptive, theoretically-oriented investigations of the transformationalists and now, as evidenced primarily by Labov and his followers and a renewed interest in historical linguistics, a return to more empirically oriented and less theoretical methods of investigation is apparently emerging. Recent interest in and reflection on the history and development of linguistic thought in this transitory era is firmly evidenced by an increment in histories of linguistics (see Markey 1974). In reflecting on the past, some linguists, such as Chomsky in *Cartesian Linguistics* (1966), have sought to show a relation between and voice an intellectual debt to venerable precursors, while Kelly (1971), in the same vein, has pushed the clock of Chomskian precursors even further back in time in his attempt to show points of contact between Chomsky and the *Modistae*, the group of linguists who dared go beyond the taxonomic approaches of Donatus and Priscian. The majority of linguistic historians have, however, been far less self-advertive in their motivations for probing the past in order to clarify and comprehend the purposes, accomplishments and convictions of a particular era. In his *Linguistic Science in the Nineteenth Century* (1931) Holger Pedersen reveals himself as an outstanding representative of this majority.

Brief or even lengthy histories of linguistics can but summarize and evaluate, sometimes with enlightening critical commentary and some-

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times not, the findings of the past and chart the directions thought about what remains the eternally intriguing mystery of human speech have taken.

Such capsule and encyclopedic summaries, however helpful or essential they may be, are simply not enough: the time has come for us to return to the primary sources of the past, the very texts in which so many of the concepts upon which we now base our variant methodologies were initially enunciated and formulated. The time has come to make the linguistic classics of the past, many of which have either long been out of print or otherwise extremely difficult to obtain, more readily available. Lehmann 1967, Silverstein 1971 and others have taken steps to accomplish this. This edition of Sir George Webbe Dasent's (1843) competent translation of Rasmus Rask's *Anvisning till Isländskan eller Nordiska Fornspråket* (1818) is to be regarded as a further step in this direction.

As shown in the *Introductory Essay* and as evidenced by the appended select bibliography of his works, Rasmus (or Erasmus) Kristian Rask (1787-1832) managed to compress an incredible variety of experiences and intellectual interests and pursuits into a brief life. The range of his linguistic interests alone, which included varying degrees of competency in more than thirty languages, is astounding even in the present era of computerized language learning and other foreign-language teaching devices. Nevertheless, though commonly regarded, together with Grimm and Bopp, as the founder of modern historical linguistics who first brought "order into etymological relationships by setting out systematic comparisons of word forms, ..." (Robins 1967:171), a statement presumably derived from Bloomfield (1933:347), Rask is, with the notable exception of Pedersen 1931, normally given scant notice in general histories of linguistics. Bloomfield (1933:14, 347, 355, 360) mentions him in passing only for his work on Avestan, while Delbrück (1904:74) dismisses him in a few lines and states that Jacob Grimm was clearly the most important of the early Germanic philologists. Paul (1901:80-83, 89) is similarly cursory in his account of Rask's accomplishments. Lack of recog-

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dition during his lifetime and after is certainly due in part to the fact that he persisted in writing his scholarly works in Danish which naturally restricted him from a wider audience; compare the case of Søren Kierkegaard. The Grimms deserve chief credit for making Rask and his work known to a larger community of scholars.

Rask's major accomplishments are traditionally listed as: 1) formulation of what became known as Grimm's Law some five years prior to Jacob Grimm (recognition of regular sound correspondences), 2) realization of the phonemic principle of establishing contrastive minimal pairs (systematic investigation of sounds), 3) his work on Avestan (recognition of its relationship to Sanskrit), 4) cogent and rigorous formulation of rules for determining linguistic relationships, 5) discovery of numerous historical developments, e.g., loss of word final *-s* and *-s-* > *-ch-* in Slavic, which permitted the typological classification of languages on the basis of their grammatical structures.

Aside from realization of a fundamental principle of phonemic theory, a principle Rask may well have derived from the Icelandic *First Grammatical Treatise*, which Rask printed for the first time in his 1818 edition of Snorri's *Edda*, these accomplishments may be relegated to the realm of achievements of 19th century comparative linguistics. This is not to say that they are inconsiderable nor to denigrate them in any way. However, Rask did not occupy himself with historical linguistics alone as a comparativist, but also with language as a system based on a notion of structure comprised of three key ideas: the idea of wholeness, the idea of transformation (derivation and composition, as he calls it, which he may have learned either directly or indirectly from the so-called Cartesian linguists of the Port-Royal school) and the idea of self-regulation. Rask was first and foremost a grammarian. He formulated theoretical and practical premises for the composition of grammars, the true significance of which has only recently been recognized, and in this he was far ahead of his time and stands in closer relationship to the linguistic concerns and problems of our era than his (cf. Diderichsen 1960).

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As a grammarian, Rask was a pragmatic rationalist capable of grasping basic truths (axioms - rules) intuitively and of deriving other truths (postulates) from them by careful, rational procedures and logical demonstrations. Philosophically, he may be classed as a Kantian, for his grammars reveal that he held that there was necessarily an underlying framework of rules in language (regularity principle) and in associative thought (analogy) to which linguistic behaviour must conform. These are the metaphysics of his views as a grammarian, views which are strikingly modern in conception. It is, then, in his grammars (Old Icelandic, Old Frisian, Old English, Danish, Spanish) that we find the points of greatest interest for the modern linguist and not in his comparative works, such as his Prize Essay, *Undersøgelse om det gamle Nordiske eller Islandske Sprogs Oprindelse* (1818), which, despite innumerable brilliant insights, were soon superseded by later studies.

His Icelandic grammar was the first of his remarkable series of grammars. The first version, *Vejledning til det Islandske eller gamle Nordiske Sprog*, based to a certain extent on the notes of Runolfus, was completed in 1809 when Rask was but twenty-two and published two years later. It was his first independently authored work, included a lengthy preface in which he outlined his general views on grammatical theory and the composition of grammars, and was reviewed critically but with general approbation by none other than Jacob Grimm (1812). Six years later, in 1818, Rask published the *Anvisning*, which is not merely a Swedish translation of the *Vejledning*, but a careful revision of this earlier work which incorporates many of the suggestions made by Grimm in his review and which includes sections on sound changes lacking in the *Vejledning*. The *Anvisning* is the most carefully edited and composed of Rask's many grammars and the grammar of the one language other than his mother tongue which he knew best. The *Anvisning* also includes notes and revisions of earlier statements about Modern Icelandic in which he had gained expertise during his stay (1813-15) on the island. Rask's grammars, then, may be singled out of his total production as the works

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which hold the greatest interest for the modern linguist. The foremost of these is the *Anvísning*.

The *Anvísning* has, of course, been superseded by more recent historical grammars, but from both pedagogical and theoretical points of view it remains a most remarkable work: it can and should be read by both the neophyte and the established scholar alike.

Of the modern standard historical grammars of Icelandic the following may be singled out for special mention: critical readers of this edition of Rask's *Anvísning* may find them referentially valuable for comparing and contrasting Rask's views and interpretations with those of recent scholarship. Andreas Heusler's *Altisländisches Elementarbuch* (1913; 5th ed., 1962) contains the best concise survey of Old Icelandic syntax. R. C. Boer's *Oudnoorsche handboek* (1920) contains a detailed account of phonological developments with many striking insights. Alexander Jóhannesson's *Íslensk tunga í fornöld* (1923-24) contains little that is new, but it affords the English-speaking student a view of what an Icelandic considers to be important aspects of the history of the language. Adolf Noreen's *Altisländische und Altnorwegische Grammatik* (4th ed., 1923) still remains unsurpassed for its detailed treatment of phonology and morphology. Ragnvald Iversen's *Norrøn Grammatik* (1923) and Wolfgang Krause's *Abriss der Altwestnordischen Grammatik* (1948) are commendable reference grammars, and Siegfried Gutenbrunner's *Historische Laut- und Formenlehre des Isländischen* (1951) is the only reference grammar to date which contains an easily accessible survey of runic inscriptions as an integral part of the text. For those interested in runes and runology, Lucien Musset's *Introduction à la runologie* (1965) and Wolfgang Krause's *Die Runeninschriften im älteren Futhark 1-2* (1966) are invaluable. Gutenbrunner's grammar gives the Gothic equivalents of the Proto-Scandinavian and Old Icelandic forms and is, therefore, doubly valuable in this respect. Elias Wessén's *Isländsk grammatik* (1958; 2nd ed., 1962) is remarkable for the amount of material it manages to compress into a small

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space, but it is doubtful that this grammar, which incidentally includes some contestable morphological interpretations, will ever replace those mentioned above. M. I. Steblin-Kamenskij's *Drevneislandskij jazyk* (1955) provides some new insights into phonological and morphological developments, and his account of phonological changes, *u*-umlaut and breaking in particular, can be supplemented by his article on these topics in *Voprosy germanskogo jazykoznanija* (1961).

In organizational format, content and, to some extent, in matters of etymological interpretation and syntax all of these are indebted to Rask's *Vejledning* and *Anvisning*. Rask is to be regarded as the father of traditional historical grammars as we know them today. He was profoundly aware of the significance of language as a cultural fact and considered knowledge of a language in both its older and younger stages crucial for an understanding of literary monuments. His pedagogical treatment of language as a cultural fact in his grammars raises questions which are still of fundamental methodological importance for rationalist grammarians.

There are some overlaps between statements in the *Introductory Essay* and commentaries appended to *A Note on the Translation*. This seemed unavoidable if Rask's peculiar terminology and scope of presentation were to gain ultimate clarity for the modern reader.

Finally, it is a pleasant duty to acknowledge my gratitude to the Library of Congress for making Dasent's translation, as well as some Raskian exotica, scarcely obtainable elsewhere, available. Doctors Carol and Peter Henriksen were kind enough to forward a xerox copy of the original *Vejledning* from the Royal Library, Copenhagen, and to check with scrupulous attention particularly works by 18th-century Danish grammarians.

ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN
March 1976

T. L. M.

RASMUS KRISTIAN RASK
HIS LIFE AND WORK

Rasmus Kristian Rask, son of Niels Rask (or Rasch as the name was then spelled), a tailor of rather modest means, was born in Brendekilde near Odense on 22 November 1787. Young Rask grew into a spindly, weak child, and health was to remain a problem for Rask throughout his life. After rudimentary preparatory education at home supervised by his father, who was recognized locally for his common sense, acumen, and surprisingly vast knowledge of disparate facts, and in the parsonage under the tutelage of the village minister, Rask was accepted at the age of thirteen on 3 June 1801 to enter the Odense Latin School, where he remained until 1807. The autumn of the same year he entered the University of Copenhagen. He passed the propaedeutic examination in philology and philosophy with honors in 1808 at the conclusion of his first academic year: he had come to the university with sound preparation.

The years spent at the Latin School in Odense were particularly significant in the formation of Rask's views on language, grammar, philosophy, and history, the subjects in the requisite curriculum in which he was most interested and distinguished himself: he was recognized generally by his teachers as an especially capable and diligent student. Indeed he was extraordinarily fortunate in the teachers he had at this renowned school, and it is through sketches of some of these teachers and of his and their more than merely cerebrally intagliated intellectual pursuits that we may best locate Rask within the intellectual climate of the era (see Diderichsen 1960:7-32, Bjerrum 1959, and Jespersen 1918, for further information).

Sören Nicolaus Johan Bloch (1772-1862), nationally recognized both

for his scholarship and innovative pedagogical concepts, was Rask's teacher in Greek and Danish (1802-06). Bloch's Greek grammar (1803), methodologically based in part on J. F. F. Delbrück's *Beispiele einer analytischen Methode beym grammatischen Unterrichte im Griechischen* (1796), and his views on grammar were fundamentally formative in shaping Rask's systematic conception and presentation of grammatical facts. Bloch's major concerns were the Greek conjugation system and the relation between the spelling and pronunciation of both Classical and Modern Greek, and it is in Bloch's *Buchstabenphonetik* that we find the seeds of Rask's interest in the subject and the source of many of his ideas for Danish orthographic reform, a topic upon which he pontificated periodically during the last decades of his career.

Carl Ferdinand Degen (1766-1825), a native of Braunschweig who had written a doctoral dissertation centered around *theoria heuristica generalis* based on Kant, was Rask's instructor in mathematics at the Latin School. Degen probably introduced Rask to Kantian philosophy, either directly through suggested reading, or indirectly through his teaching methods; he was recognized widely for his pedagogical innovations founded on the philosophical precepts expounded in his dissertation (cf. Diderichsen 1960:19-22, for details). Degen published his views on pedagogy in his two-volume *Pædagogiske Aphorismer i systematisk Sammenhæng* (1799), in which he stresses the necessity of independent thinking and the importance of *a posteriori* theoretical formulation as the initial step in heuristic procedure. Moreover, Degen was a linguist and comparative philologist at that, as shown by his *Bidrag til de etymologiske Undersøgelsers Theorie* (1807), one of the few linguistic works Rask cites with unreserved praise and a work which certainly exerted a profound influence on Rask's conception of historical linguistics. In one of the periodic evaluations of the school's students Degen stated that Rask was, however, undistinguished as a student of mathematics.

Ludwig Heiberg (1760-1818) was Rask's instructor in Latin for three years (1804-07). Heiberg was a proponent of Herder's and Adelung's linguistic theories which were to figure prominently in Rask's writings.

Rask was not an outstanding student in Latin and stated later that Latin had been 'pure hell' for him.

Although it cannot be proven with certainty, it appears likely that Rask familiarized himself with Cuvier's classificatory theory through a Danish translation, *Lærebog i Dyrhistorien* (1801-03), of the French biologist's work during his secondary school years. Diderichsen (1960:23- to 25) indicates the many striking similarities between Cuvier's and Rask's typological concepts. Moreover, Cuvier's taxonomy is reflected in F. von Schlegel's (1808) scheme of linguistic typology (cf. Diderichsen 1960:128-31).

It may also have been during these preparatory years that Rask first became acquainted with the ideas of the Port-Royal tradition of the *grammaire générale*, which is most articulately expounded in the work of Arnauld and Lancelot (1660). If so, then it was only indirectly, perhaps through Høysgaard's *Accentuered og Raisonnered Grammatica* (1747). The basic maxims of the Port-Royal Grammar are the derivation of linguistic universals, the use of techniques developed in the analytic sciences as discovery procedures, the statement of rules according to which linguistic units interact, and the use of taxonomy only as a descriptive, not as an explanatory device. However, it is clear from Rask's essays, *En Forelæsning over Sprogets Filosofi* and *Vejledning til en kort Udsigt over Sprogvidenskaberne hele Kreds* (= published in Hjelmslev's edition, vol. 2, 373-78 and 361-72, respectively), that he became familiar with the precepts of *grammaire générale* later in his career. The impetus for the first essay was an accusation that Rask had concerned himself solely with the strictly mechanical, rather than the philosophical aspects of language. It provides a vague outline of his philosophy of language; in it Rask reacts strongly against the absolutist concept of linguistic universals, but not against stating the rules according to which the linguistic units of a *particular* language interact. He never argued *a priori* from the general to the particular. In this he was just as inimical to the dogmatic aspects of General Grammar as was Grimm (1819:xii). In

his *Vejledning til en kort Udsigt* Rask mentions the Port-Royal grammars of Greek, Latin, Italian, and Spanish, but there is no positive indication that he actually read them. Rask presumably gained his firmest knowledge of *den almindelige eller filosofiske Sproglære* via Nissen's (1808) Danish grammar, which was largely based on Meiner's *Versuch einer an der menschlichen Sprache adgebildeten Vernunftlehre oder Philosophische und allgemeine Sprachlehre* (1781) and which Rask is known to have used (see Diderichsen 1960:158). Rask's *particular*, rather than *general*, philosophy of grammar is closer to the so-called Whorf-Sapir hypothesis and the views of 18th-century natural philosophers than to the precepts of the Port-Royal grammar. He was, in fact, more of a 'structuralist' than a 'generativist' in his theoretical views on grammar. He was more interested in providing concrete linguistic data and evaluating it within a formalized framework than in constructing speculative general theories which, in their claims to universality, purport to answer all demands of explanatory power and descriptive adequacy.

In this brief sketch of Rask's years at the Latin School, I have attempted to show that it was during these receptive years that Rask was trained linguistically primarily as a pragmatist and to reject any kind of speculative philosophy.

During his first year at the University Rask (1808) translated the *Elder Edda* together with Professor Rasmus Nyerup (1750-1829). A year later he completed the first draft of the *Vejledning til det Islandske eller gamle Nordiske Sprog* [Introduction to the Icelandic or old Norse language] (1811). At the University he became acquainted with Finn Magnussen (1781-1847), an Icelandic by birth. As Diderichsen (1960:144-45) has pointed out, the years 1805-10 were Rask's receptive period; it was during these years that he received and completed his formal education. He avidly perused the works of the outstanding linguists of 18th-century Germany: Wachter, Meiner, Adelung, and Trendelenburg. He first became acquainted with natural philosophy, specifically the classificatory system of Cuvier. He acquired detailed knowledge of a number of languages,

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including Greek, Latin, Icelandic, other older Germanic languages, Greenland Eskimo, Hebrew, and Creole, all of which were fundamental in forging his views on grammar, the 'ecology' of language in its functional dimension, the formulation of a general view of language study as a scientific activity, and his vision of language as a particular natural system. In 1805 he was awarded a copy of Snorri's *Heimskringla* as a book prize which spurred his interest in Old Icelandic and Nordic antiquities. His interest in history, both general and linguistic, was whetted further by receipt of K. Fr. Becker's *Weltgeschichte* (1801-05) as a book prize in February of 1807. Through the guidance and inspiration of Bloch he first became interested in orthography as a purely technical problem and aware of the significance of phonology in grammar. He was then to employ the most salient and significant of the notions received and evaluated during this formative period in his first independently written work, the *Vejledning*. Its publication in 1811 sets the terminus of one phase of his career and the initiation of another.

A correspondence with the Grimm brothers was begun in April of 1811 by Rask of which eighteen letters have been preserved and published by Schmidt (1885:85-126). The letters fall into two periods: 1) 1811-13 and 2) 1823-26. There are thus no letters preserved from Rask's official *Wanderjahre* (1819-22). The correspondence was terminated by Rask, who was embittered by Jacob Grimm's (1825) just, but harsh review of Rask's Old Frisian grammar (1825b), and the friendship among the three philologists was ended forever. In his final letter to Rask of 26 February 1826, Jacob expressed his hopes that the friendship would continue despite his critique, which had been misconstrued by Rask as a personal attack (see Schmidt 1885:126). Years earlier, in his review of the *Vejledning*, Jacob Grimm (1812) had performed the invaluable service of making Rask and his work known to the scholarly world at large.

Rask's *Wanderjahre* actually began in 1812 when he accompanied Professor Nyerup on a trip to Norway and Sweden. In the spring of 1813 he journeyed to Iceland, ostensibly to gain first hand knowledge of spoken

Icelandic in the field. He returned from Iceland to Copenhagen via Edinburgh and Norway in the fall of 1815.

It was during his stay on Iceland that he composed his *Undersøgelse om det gamle Nordiske eller Islandske Sprogs Oprindelse* [Investigations concerning the origin of the Old Norse or Icelandic language], which he submitted from Iceland in 1814 as his answer to a prize contest conducted by the Danish Academy of Sciences and announced in 1811. Rask won the contest with his essay, and, after the granting of royal support in 1817 for its publication, it appeared as a book in 1818. It was seen through the process of publication in Rask's absence by Rasmus Nyerup and Finn Magnussen. Rask had left the manuscript as an imperfectly polished draft, and so it was left to Nyerup and Magnussen to insert the necessary corrections and emendations. The stipulation for the prize essay read:

Investigetur crisi historica, accedente exemplorum idoneorum luce, ex quonam fonte lingua vetus Scandinavica rectissime deducatur; explicetur hujus lingvæ ingenium, nexusque et mutua ratio, quæ ex antiquissimo tempore, et medio, quod dicitur, ævo ei cum dialectis, sive septentrionalibus sive germanicis intercesserit; certæque constituentur regulæ, quas in omni horum idiomatum derivatione et comparatione sequi oporteat (see Pedersen 1932 for further details).

Attainment of the prize for the *Undersøgelse*, despite its many flaws, established Rask as both a nationally and internationally recognized comparativist. Grimm was nearly finished with the first volume of his monumental, pioneering *Deutsche Grammatik*, but in the preface (1819:xviii) he writes that he only belatedly learned of "Rasks treffliche, mir erst beinahe nach der Beendigung dieses Buchs zugekommene Preisschrift ...". As he indicated in a letter to G. F. Benecke, Grimm must have read Rask's essay sometime prior to 5 July 1818 (see W. Müller 1889:97). Nevertheless, in the second edition of this volume (1822), Grimm gratefully acknowledged that Rask's essay provided much of the material for that vastly revised and restructured edition.

In October of 1816 Rask left Copenhagen for Sweden. In 1817 he lectured on Icelandic in Stockholm, revised and translated the *Vejledning*, and brought out his *Old English Grammar*. He remained in Sweden until

the end of February 1818, when he departed via Finland for St. Petersburg, where he stayed from 27 March 1818 until 13 June 1819. He then set out on his long journey (1819-22), the ultimate goal of which was India.

The period 1811-18 were the years of Rask's maturation as a scholar. These are the years during which the most complete and important of his works were finished and published. They commence with the *Vejledning* and culminate with the publication of the prize essay and the *Anvisning*, each of which we shall discuss in more detail subsequently.

From St. Petersburg, Rask made his way to Moscow, whence he departed for Georgia, chiefly Tiflis, where he spent four months. He then went to Persia, where he collected Avestan manuscripts, the official purpose of his trip. From Persia he continued on to India, visiting Bombay, Benares, Calcutta, and Madras, and finally traveling to Colombo, Ceylon. *En route* and *in situ* he acquired a knowledge of Finnish, Lappish, Russian, a smattering of the languages of the Georgian area, Pali, Avestan, Old Persian, Sanskrit, and Singhalese, a grammar of which he published in Colombo (1821b) at his own expense. In April of 1822 he left Colombo in order to the return journey to Copenhagen, but was shipwrecked off-shore. His second attempt at departure was more successful: Rask left Colombo in August of 1822 and arrived back in Copenhagen on 5 May 1823. He re-initiated his correspondence with the Grimms in a letter to Wilhelm from Copenhagen dated 3 June 1823; he was attempting to re-establish contact with the scholarly community from which he had been disassociated during his absence from Denmark. For a detailed account of Rask's journey, see the biography by Niels Matthias Petersen (1791-1862), his foremost friend and supporter, in Rask (1834b:1-115).

Rask's journey to Asia had, in fact, commenced with his departure from Copenhagen for Sweden in 1816 and thus extended over nearly seven years at a cost to the Danish government of 10,000 rix-dollars; but the manuscripts he brought back, a list of which appears in Rask (1838b:1- to 56), now preserved in the Royal Library, Copenhagen, were even then worth far more than the amount the government had expended for his journey. Although the official purpose of the trip was the collection of

manuscripts and the acquisition by Rask of a knowledge of a vast variety of 'exotic' languages, his trip might be viewed psychologically as an escape from the anxieties engendered by a personal defeat: he was denied a professorship in Icelandic at the University which he had sought in 1815.

Love apparently entered Rask's life seriously but once, and it was at the conclusion of his long journey in the form of a certain P. B., identified with relative certainty as Pauline Boalth (b. 14 Feb. 1800), daughter of Chr. Tullin Boalth, a Norwegian from Bergen who had become a government official in Trankebar. Rask was in his mid-thirties, and she 22 or 23 when he presumably accompanied her on the arduous and lengthy voyage from Colombo to Copenhagen (Diderichsen 1960:214). The affair, if it can be called that, must have ended shortly after Rask's return to Copenhagen, and Pauline, of whom nothing further is known, married a music instructor, A. Lund, in Copenhagen in 1828. This was Rask's first and final brush with love; he remained a bachelor throughout his life.

Diderichsen (1960:145) maintains that the period 1819-20, though I would say 1819-23, terminating with his return to Copenhagen, was a stage in Rask's career marked by a more liberal than previously predilection for far-flung, but rather unstructured ideas and interests, all of which are extensions of the major concepts in the prize essay of 1814. It was, of course, a period of feverish activity in language acquisition. Rask's knowledge of languages and linguistic structures expanded inordinately during this period.

The final years of Rask's life from 1824 until his death on 14 November 1832, just eight days before his 45th birthday, were the most tragic of his career. His health, always precarious at best, had been severely impaired by the Asian journey. Professionally he had to begin life anew after his return, but at the bottom of the ladder as an assistant librarian with the modest annual salary of 200 rix-dollars. Immediately after his return, he began to polish and publish some of what he had preserved from the past in the form of unfinished rough drafts. He had, as Diderichsen (1960:145) convincingly contends, become a victim of

his fame and lamentable economic circumstances. He lacked or was deprived of the individual concentration necessary to accomplish completion of any major scholarly undertaking, for he became entangled in academic in-fighting and intrigues, reading proof on reprints of earlier works, writing polemic reviews, conducting an extensive correspondence to answer questions posed by untrained amateurs interested in Nordic history and antiquities, and taking active and acrimonious participation in the on-going debate about orthographic reform. Psychologically and intellectually he stiffened into a sterile formalist thereby betraying his earlier scientific principles and ideals. He gradually became a testy, almost paranoid figure distrustful of both himself and even his most steadfast friends. A letter from Christian Molbech (1783-1854) to Jacob Grimm from Copenhagen dated 10 July 1826, and therefore after Rask's break with Grimm is indicative. According to Schmidt (1885:188), Molbech wrote:

Die öffentliche Stimme hat sich aufs stärkste gegen Ihm erklärt; so dass seine neue Schreibart selbst einen Gegenstand des Spottes der Vaudevillen im Theater geworden ist. Man wundert sich auch bei uns im Allgemeinen, dass dieser Gelehrte, dessen Reisen und Forschungen dem Staate enorme Summen gekostet haben, noch gar keine andere Früchte seiner Russisch-Asiatische Reise ans Licht gebracht hat, als eine barbarische Schreibart und orthographische Theorie im Dänischen. Es ist unter andern auch öffentlich bekannt, dass unser König den Einfall gehabt hat einmal zu sagen: es wundere Ihm, noch keine andere Frucht von Rasks vieljährigen Reisen gesehen zu haben, als eine Null über dem A.

Rask (1825a) had proposed writing *aa* as *ǣ*, as was currently the practise in Swedish.

Molbech's, as well as official, criticism was both premature and unfair. Sometime in 1824 Rask began his study of Old Frisian, and his grammar of the language was published a year later. In 1826 he published his treatise, actually a slim monograph, on Avestan which appeared simultaneously in a German translation. The close affinity between Sanskrit and Avestan had already been noted by various scholars, but in his essay on the age and authenticity of the Zend-Language Rask (1826c) showed the

relation with concrete exactitude, proved the antiquity of the language, showed it to be distinct from Sanskrit, though closely related, and made a significant interpretative investigation of the script of the texts, many philological details of which still remain problematic. This essay alone should have been just recompensation for the Asian undertaking, and it certainly paved the way for later, more exhaustive studies, e.g., Jackson (1892), Reichelt (1909), which superseded it.

Rask had planned the Old Frisian grammar as early as 1817 as a supplement to his grammar of Old English. Grimm's (1825) review of Rask's Old Frisian grammar is hardly caustic and is well-founded in most of the objections raised, though typically couched in Humboldtian terms. For example, the inflexion of the strong verbs is described as "ungleich vollkommner, schöner und alterthümlicher". Nevertheless, it is clear from the review that, during the seven years between the *Anvisning* (1818) and the *Frisisk Sproglære*, Rask had been surpassed by Grimm as the undisputed master of Germanic philology. Rask uncritically based his grammar on Wiarda's (1786) imperfect dictionary. He incorrectly classes strong nouns (*lāve*, *ēre*) as weak, fails to comment on the anomalous development of Gmc. *au* > Ofr. *ā* vs. OE *ēa*, makes uncritical use of careless editions of Old Frisian texts, persists in writing *jā*, *jū* for OFr. *ia*, *iu*, respectively, for which documentation is entirely lacking, and wrongly persists in establishing the weak declension and the neuter as founding forms, all of which Grimm justifiably criticizes. Grimm also points out that Rask's terminology is confusing. For example, Rask's dat. = imperfect could easily be confused with dat. = dative. Grimm is, however, not entirely free of error in his critique. For example, he incorrectly criticizes Rask's presumably intuitively based assertion that Flemish represents a mixture of Frisian, Frankish, Saxon, and, possibly, Burgundian elements. Modern researchers have shown that, at the earliest period, the Frisian speech community extended from the present French-Belgian border in a narrow coastal strip including Flanders as far north as the tip of the province of North Holland. Rask was excessively dependent

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upon Old Icelandic in deriving Germanic base forms, and Grimm pointed out that the use of Gothic and/or Old High German forms might have been more serviceable to show the course of development. Rask attempted, for example (1826b), to defend his grammar, but it remains one of his least successful works. That he completed this work at all, which had been contemplated since 1817, may well attest to a subconscious desire on his part to establish contiguity with his intellectual past as a practical grammarian before he embarked on his Asian trip (cf. Piebenga 1971).

After his return from his long journey in 1823, Rask's personal and professional life became inextricably associated with that of Nyerup, who was then University Librarian, Professor of Literary History, and highly placed in governmental academic councils. Due to an unfortunate combination of penury and ill-fated friendship Rask was practically forced to lodge with the Nyerup family. He not only paid for his room and board, but also served without compensation as amanuensis to Nyerup. Nyerup finally agreed to retire and cede his position(s) to Rask as a sort of *fi-lius academicus* if Rask would agree to marry Nyerup's youngest daughter, Lovise, who loathed Rask: the dislike was apparently mutual. Nevertheless in 1827, at the age of forty, Rask became officially engaged to Lovise, but the engagement was soon broken off. Nyerup died in 1829, the year Rask became University Librarian. The following year he became a member of the Arne Magnean Commission, and in 1831 he received the much coveted chair of Oriental Languages in which he served as professor until his untimely death. He had become increasingly irascible and bitter about the academic intrigues surrounding the awarding of the professorship. Rask died with an estate valued at between three and four thousand rix-dollars, the equivalent of three to four years of professorial salary. N. M. Petersen honored him in death with a poem, and his brother, H. K. Rask, became his literary executor. He edited the three volumes of Rask's works entitled, *Samlede tildels forhen utrykte Afhandlingar*, in co-operation with Petersen at biennial intervals commencing in 1834, still the most complete and accessible compendium of Rask's works. Petersen's biography of Rask in the first volume remains the most complete to date.

As an example of the sort of request for information by educated laymen interested in Nordic history and antiquities which Rask felt constrained to answer during the last years of his life, we note his letter in remarkably good English dated 29 December 1831, to Henry Wheaton, American chargé d'affaires to Denmark (1827-35), in which Rask cites detailed documentation from Old Icelandic sources describing Viking visits to North America. Rask suggests that it was probably Labrador, Newfoundland, and Nova Scotia that were visited (see Dexter 1881 and Benson 1930, for details).

Having provided this brief account to chart the geography of Rask's intellectual development interspersed with biographical asides, I shall now concern myself with what are, for the present purposes, his three major works: the *Vejledning* (composed 1809, published 1811), the Prize Essay (completed 1814, published 1818), and the *Anvisning till Isländskan eller Nordiska Fornspråket* (composed 1817, published 1818).

The *Vejledning* may rightfully be considered the first true historical grammar of any Indo-European dialect; at any rate Rask was certainly the first scholar who applied the principles of historical linguistic investigation to a Germanic dialect. Its organizational format - 1) phonology and orthography, 2) morphology-inflexion, 3) word formation, 4) syntax, 5) metrics-prosody, and 6) dialectal variants - served, *mutatis mutandis*, as the model for most subsequent historical grammars of particular dialects and certainly for the grammars in the *Sammlung kurzer Grammatiken germanischer Dialekte*, the pedagogically optimal series fathered by Wilhelm Braune (1850-1926) three generations later. In his (posthumously published) essay, *Vejledning til en kort Udsigt*, however, Rask suggested that it might be more advantageous to have the section on word formation precede the section on inflexion (inflexion), a suggestion heeded by Rask's countryman, Hans Jensen, in his *Altarmenische Grammatik* (1959). Rask's justification of his organizational principles is outlined in the preface to the *Vejledning* (1811:xl *et passim*).

The major sources for the *Vejledning* were Snorri's *Heimskringla* as a

primary literary source, the then unpublished dictionary by Björn Hal-dorsson (d.1794), and the imperfect grammars of Runolphus Jonas (1651) and Hickes (1689): Rask had to rely on his own genius for organization to impose order on what had previously been chaos in the realms of phonology, morphology, and word formation. In both the *Vejledning* and the *Anvisning*, however, the sections on syntax are rudimentary, and it was not until the publication of Nygaard's *Norrøn Syntax* (1906) that the subject received exhaustive treatment with ample exemplification.

The *Vejledning*, though not the *Anvisning*, has no independent section on phonology as such in its diachronic and synchronic dimensions, but merely sets of suggested correspondences between Modern Icelandic and Danish 'sounds' as a distinctly pedagogical aid for acquiring a pronunciation. Rask was subsequently criticized for omitting historical phonology by Hermann Paul (1901:80-81), who infers that omission denotes lack of phonetic sophistication and insight sufficient to effect comparative conclusions. Grimm (*KL. Schr.* 7.515-16), however, praised Rask's appreciation of the connection between Icelandic and Danish sounds, presumably out of pedagogical bias, though he (*KL. Schr.* 4.70) criticized Rask for his impressionistic ranking of languages as 'middle' (Ic.), 'low' (Germ.), and 'soft' (Da.) in terms of relative clarity in consonant articulation. In presenting sets of correspondences rather than a synchronic/diachronic comparative phonology, Rask aligned himself with the pragmatic, 'Cartesian' grammarians of the time, e.g., Baden (1782, 1792), Høysgaard (1747), Tøxen (1806), and the then topical, pedagogically based consideration, e.g., Nyerup (1805), Boye (1800), Kølle (1774), of Danish orthographic principles. His primary interest was not a comparative, but a pedagogically efficient grammar, and in this he obviously disappointed subsequent Neogrammarians of the likes of Paul.

Rask was not prepared to confuse the student intent upon language acquisition — and Rask was, after all, still a 'student', by incorporating theoretical deliberations about the presumed regularity of his-

torical correspondences and thereby articulating a novel 'paradigm' in the Kuhnian sense which the Neogrammarians were to involve more than half a century later. Rask's predominant concern with pedagogical clarity also emerges from his terminology, despite Grimm's reservations. His terminology largely follows that in contemporaneous grammars and is not as is the case with Grimm's (1819) 'weak'/'strong' dichotomy, forged around Humboldtian views about language evolution, nor is it justified by and allied to an individualistic interpretation of historical developments, see Ginschel (1956), Gipper (1965). Rask's terminology is generally peculiar to his time and not to Rask.

In contrast to his description of the 'sounds' (= 'letters') of Icelandic, historical considerations come to the fore in the sections on its morphology (*Vejl.* 27-145 = *Anv.* 61-171) and word formation (*Vejl.* 146-89 = *Anv.* 172-220), which together constitute the bulk of the 282 page text (vs. *Anv.* = 298 pp.). These are generally considered the richest and most significant sections in the grammar(s), not only pedagogically, but also heuristically. They are modelled in part after Botin's (1777) Swedish grammar; Rask sides with Botin in protesting the treatment of strong verbs as anomalous, and proposes his own classificatory system for their regular description. The system proposed is not exhaustive for Germanic, nor is it congruent with Grimm's seven classes, though fully adequate for Icelandic. In his perception of derivational processes, Rask evinces his debt to his teacher, S. N. J. Bloch, and the latter's Hebrew (1802) and Greek (1803) grammars. The underlying principle for both lexical formation and inflection is the view that both are the result of regular and, hence, readily formulatable as prescriptively predictable mechanical processes, a view enunciated by de Brosse (1756) and rearticulated by Delbrück (1796), to whom Rask is also indebted. The mechanical process view was subsequently invoked by Becker (1824) and Hjort (1825, 1826), as well as Grimm and the venerable Schleicher (cf. Beneš 1958).

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Inclusion of historical asides and the achievements of implicit internal and external (comparative) reconstruction in these sections is subordinate to Rask's primary concerns: instructional adequacy and clarity of exposition. He attempts to establish base forms as nuclear for the derivation of subsequent formations and inflections. Language is viewed as an organic phenomenon. Rask's concern for establishing regular synchronic correspondences in his description of sounds and his recognition of nuclear base forms for the organization of his description of morphology, inflection, and lexical formation were to characterize his Prize Essay, for which, in a very real sense, the *Vejledning* served as a proving ground. In fine, Rask's pedagogical concerns and historical interest converged in his rationalist grammars and the crowning achievement of the Prize Essay.

Apart from the grammatical sections proper, it is the preface to the *Vejledning*, as opposed to that of the *Anvisning*, that is of major import to the linguistic historian; it contains one of the earliest plans for organization of a 'modern' historical grammar, a statement lacking in the preface to the *Anvisning*. The prefaces are not substantively identical, and that in the latter (*Anv.* = 28 pp.) is roughly half the length of that in the former (*Vejl.* = 56 pp.). As shown by Diderichsen (1960:172-74) from a survey of manuscript versions in Rask's *Nachlass*, the preface passed through several revisions prior to receiving its published form. In his translation of the *Anvisning*, Dasent excluded the preface, an omission he attempts to rationalize in his introduction by erroneously contending that much of the information contained is included in Rask's Old English grammar, previously translated by Thorpe (1830), and stating that Rask refers to works, e.g., Jönsson (1651), Hickes (1689), Ihre (1769), and Lye (1772), long superseded.

With the exception of minor changes, the two prefaces are nearly identical through page thirty-nine in the *Vejledning*, which then continues for a further seventeen pages containing Rask's declaration of intent and plan of the grammar, items absent from the preface in the

Anvisning. Of note in this portion, however, is Rask's (*Vejl.* xvi-xvii) passing mention, lacking in the *Anvisning*, of the long-standing debate about the origins of the Icelandic language: these are obviously the seeds of his interest in the Prize Essay contest. Moreover, if Rask was at work on completion of the preface to the *Vejledning* in the year of its appearance, then this is a positive indication of his immediate interest in the contest, announced in 1811. Rask may well have begun work toward fulfilment of the stipulations of the Prize Essay contest more than five years prior to the appearance of Bopp's *Conjugations-system* (1816). In the corresponding place in the *Anvisning* (p.xi), Rask mentions the Prize Essay, saying that it had not yet appeared, a statement corrected at the very conclusion of the *Anvisning* preface: the *Anvisning* must have been in press when the Essay appeared.

Before turning to Rask's plan, we note that specific points to which Grimm objected in his review (1812) of the *Vejledning* are not altered in the preface to the *Anvisning*. For example, Rask retains the term *Göthisk* (= *Germanic*). In the preface, though not in the text proper, of the *Anvisning* he no longer asserts, as he had even in the Prize Essay, that the neuter is derivationally nuclear. As suggested by Grimm, he adopts the early 'German' order (nom.-voc.-acc.-dat.-gen.) for presentation of the cases, but contends that the order is arbitrary, for no given order can reflect the course of development and none is, therefore, pedagogically preferable. Rask was clearly zealous of his intellectual independence, and the rift which subsequently came after Grimm's (1825) review of Rask's Old Frisian grammar is perhaps foreshadowed in the *Anvisning*. Finally, we note that Rask refers (*Vejl.* xlix = *Anv.* x) to Ihre (1769), the noted Swedish scholar who had cited many of the consonant correspondences between Greek and Latin which Rask lists in the Prize Essay formulation of what became known as Grimm's Law (cf. Sverdrup 1920, Agrell 1955).

In discussing the plan of his grammar, Rask (*Vejl.* xl-xlii) asserts that he had designed a format for presentation before examining older

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grammars and claims that he had precursors for but two sections: morphology-inflection (2) and metrics-prosody (5). He stresses the importance of acquiring a modern, rather than a reconstructed, pronunciation: the student should, quite simply, be understood by contemporary speakers. He states (*Vejl.* xliii) that in Section II his intention was to uncover the 'systems' of analogy at work in the language and to display them in the clearest fashion possible, rather than list each exception, the traditional practice. Section III (word formation) is noted as being barely in evidence in the older grammars, while he admits that the section (4) on syntax consists merely of casual observations about the most frequent constructions. The final section (6) on dialectal variants is not regarded as part of the grammar proper. Nevertheless, by including dialectal variants and crediting them (*Anv.* xx) with profound antiquity, Rask anticipated J. A. Schmeller's (1821) identical premise by more than a decade. Then, too, he pronounced (*Vejl.* xxiii = *Anv.* xx) personal and place names the oldest witnesses of any language and the one sector of the lexicon most prized for comparative purposes.

These programmatic statements about the historical presentation of grammar became more explicit in the Prize Essay, but the preface to the *Vejledning* is precious because it is one of the earliest testimonies of a historical linguistics which proceeds from formal (lexical and phonological) correspondences and grammatical comparison. Although a pioneer, Rask was still distinctly a child of his time in his contention that the age of a language is signaled by its relative degree of purity as reflected by inflectional complexity (cf. Pedersen 1932:50). In view of the more explicit reification of historical principles in the Prize Essay, it is small wonder that the preface to the *Anvisning* is a greatly abbreviated version of what we find in the *Vejledning* (cf. Jankowsky 1972:68-69).

The scant attention paid to historical phonology in the *Vejledning* was, of course, rectified in the Prize Essay. Here correspondences were

realized more concretely and comparisons were made more conclusive than in the *Vejledning*. The *Anvisning*, which incorporated phonology as integral part of linguistic description and which treated sound change, is to be preferred to the *Vejledning* as the more complete and richer of the two grammars.

In the additional chapter (42-51) on sound change in the *Anvisning*, Rask takes up *i*- and *u*-umlaut, but this is not an innovation in the *Anvisning*, for these changes are also mentioned in morphological sections in the *Vejledning* (44-45, 166-67), where they are viewed as 'morphophonemic alternations' in line with "*et morfologisk rækkefølgeprincip*" (cf. Diderichsen 1960:76). Rask regards so-called 'simpler forms', i.e., the nom.-acc. sing. and 1st pers. sing. indicative, as founding forms. The formation of founding forms is the point of departure for vocalic alternations in the root, but Rask unfortunately nowhere clarifies what he defines as the root.

In accordance with this interpretation, Rask distinguishes between interchange of $\ddot{o} > \alpha$ and $\alpha > \ddot{o}$. His treatment of umlaut is thereby obscured for later scholars, and Raumer (1870:518) accused Rask of confounding umlaut with ablaut. However, Rask's realization of what we now term umlaut as a morphophonemic alternation of radical vowels before final *i/u* and comparison (*Vejl.* 135) of vocalic alternations in the verb with those in Greek verbs, with reference to Bloch (1803), indicates that he was well aware of a distinction between the two. Nevertheless, at the same period, Grimm employed umlaut as a general term for a vocalic alternation within paradigms, a view which Rask rejected in a letter (22 Sept. 1812) to Grimm (see Schmidt 1885:109-10). In a later letter (19 Nov. 1816) to G. F. Benecke, Grimm explained his views on umlaut and thereby revealed that he had adopted Rask's interpretation, later introduced in his (1819) grammar (cf. Benecke 1813). Antonsen (1962:190) has succinctly clarified the differences between Rask's and Grimm's original views: "Rask saw mutation as an assimilation of the root vowel to that of the ending; Grimm sees it as a 'retreat' of the

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vowel of the ending into the root." Grimm's view thus engendered the epenthetic and palatal theories of umlaut so popular in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Failure on Grimm's part, though not on Rask's, to recognize the fact that the results of mutation persist after loss of the vowel(s) that induce it necessitated Grimm's *Rückumlaut*, the hypothesis that the original radical vowel is restored after disappearance of umlaut-causing vowels. Remarks on historical phonological developments scattered throughout sections on morphology and word formation in the *Vejledning* were subsequently reassembled to form the additional chapter on historical phonology in the *Anvisning*.

The general distinction between the *Vejledning* and the *Anvisning* is that the historical perspective and comparative finesse achieved in the Prize Essay, not yet fully attained in the *Vejledning*, pervade the *Anvisning*. The *Vejledning* was the proving ground for the Prize Essay, which in turn contributed to the perfection of the *Anvisning*.

For the Germanist and, hence, for a fuller appreciation of the historical aspects of the *Anvisning*, the most striking example of Rask's many efforts to identify sets of regular correspondences obtaining among languages is his formulation in the Prize Essay of what is known as Grimm's Law (see Pedersen 1931:251-54, 1932:xlvi-lv). Rask lists three hundred and fifty-two words as the basic data from which he derives this law. In addition, Rask also perceived the High German consonant shift in the Prize Essay (cf. Pedersen 1932:xxi). Paul (1901:89) contends that Rask is undeserving of the entire credit for discovery of Grimm's Law, but Rask was certainly the first to recognize the sound law concept and utilize it as the most decisive principle of etymology (cf. Jankowsky 1972:71-72). Although Rask incorrectly equated Gk. and Lat. *b* with Gmc. *b*, later corrected by Grimm, who, like Rask, failed to note that the changes subsumed by the law were produced by a uniform principle (*aspirata* > *media*), Rask's data and statement of the correspondence involved was the most complete at the time. Nevertheless, Rask did, indeed, have many precursors, some of whom, such as Johan Ihre (1707-80),

were certainly familiar to him and some of whom were presumably not. Noteworthy predecessors were: Melchior Goldast (1576-1635), Franciscus Junius (1589-1671), Daniel Georg Morhoff (1639-1691), and Erik Benzelius (d.1743). Rask's immediate predecessor was Johann Arnold Kanne (1804:111, 122, 205, 209, 230, 237, 241), subsequently appreciated by Schlegel (1808), who affirmed that linguistic affinity was better determined by morphological, rather than lexical, correspondences.

In addition to realization of correspondences, the scheme of linguistic affinities posited in the Prize Essay is astoundingly correct, though Rask excluded Celtic and Albanian from Indo-European and labelled Armenian a dialect of Iranian, an error corrected in his subsequent, epoch-making investigation of Avestan (Rask 1826c). Nevertheless, the Essay long suffered the tragic fate of obscurity and was unknown to Bopp (1816), who profited from acquaintance with Rask's Iranian studies in his later (1833-52, 1838) works, as did Pott (1833-36). The astonishing fact is that Rask was able to complete his masterpiece while confined to Iceland without benefit of adequate research facilities: it is amazing that his errors were restricted to what were long the most troublesome and etymologically opaque languages in the family. Indeed, it was not until the turn of the century and the application of more refined principles of internal and external (comparative) reconstruction, brilliantly summarized by Meillet (1925), that basic correspondences between Armenian and the other dialects became clearer. Even so, much of our reflection on Armenian, such as derivation the gen.-dat.-abl. pl. in *-Vē* (< IE * *-Vsko-* ?), remains highly speculative.

The *Vejledning*, Prize Essay, and *Anvisning* belong to the highly productive initial phase (1809-1818) of Rask's career during which he matured as a scholar and gained the fame which permitted him to embark upon the *Wanderjahre* (1819-1823), after which he returned to Denmark for a period (1823-1832) of progressive disillusioning until his untimely death. The *Wanderjahre* thus form an interval of five years flanked by nearly two decades of radically different intellectual performance and

persuasion.

Rask is perhaps best characterized as a sort of feverish, increasingly intellectually dyspeptic Mozart of linguistics. However, when his undertakings and accomplishments are compared with those of other Titans recorded in general histories of linguistics (e.g., Arens 1955), or in works lauding his near contemporaries (e.g., Bechtel 1892, Benfey 1869, Stroh 1952), or when given opportunity to compare him distinguished predecessors in his homeland (e.g., Bertelsen 1915-29) then we come to appreciate more fully his fearful vision of the dynamics of language. Rask has been perennially celebrated by his countrymen, particularly during the centenaries of his birth and death (e.g., Christensen 1932, Fussing 1932, Hjelmslev 1951, Rønning 1887, Thomsen 1887, Kälund 1894, and Müller 1833). Recently, he has been recognized as a prophet (e.g., Fowkes 1964). His accomplishments range far beyond those of Grimms, even as related in the most glowing popular accounts (e.g., Michaelis-Jena 1970). An example of his prophetic range is his work with a creole. It is uncertain whether or not he knew Magens (1770), but we are assured that he had broached pidgin and creole studies by acquainting himself with the now-forgotten creole of the Virgin Islands (*Negerhollands*) and in so doing shares interests with immediately contemporary problems. Finally, the one feature common to all of Rask's undertakings, no matter how disparate, is his essentially Kantian outlook (cf. Streitberg 1909). Rask was the first among us to seek out the underlying framework of grammatical rules — to which all linguistic behaviour must conform — and to perceive it as sets of regular correspondences evolved in time.