The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English

Volume 1 | TO 1550

EDITED BY

Roger Ellis

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General Editors' Foreword

Peter France and Stuart Gillespie

Since the time of Cicero, translation has been at the heart of literary culture in Europe. In the English-speaking world, now that English has become a lingua franca around the globe, this is perhaps less obvious than it once was; by many measurements, translation today contributes less to literature in English than to any other major European literature. Even so, it is hard to overstate the importance of translations in the history of anglophone culture. Its sacred books are translations for most readers, as are many of the works that are central to our literary experience, from Homer to Dostoevsky, from Plato to Nietzsche.

In the five volumes of the *Oxford History of Literary Translation in English* we aim to present for the first time a critical and historical overview of the development of this art or craft in the English-speaking world. The story of English-language translation begins in England but eventually expands to include Scotland, Ireland, and Wales, and from the late eighteenth century America, India, and all the other parts of the world where English became one of the languages of culture. Over this wide geographical area, these volumes show how literary translation has challenged, enriched, and transformed the native traditions. While we emphasize the value of such high artistic achievements as Pope's Homer or FitzGerald's *Rubáiyát*, we use the word 'literary' in the broad old sense which it has still not completely lost, to encompass something like the full range of non-technical work which has made up the reading of the literate public. And since the history of translation is also the history of translators, we explore the activities of the sometimes famous, often obscure men and women who contributed to it, the conditions they worked in, the norms and principles which governed their practice.

This is an unprecedented undertaking and has been a correspondingly challenging task. The story of English literature has been told many times, but that of English literary translation has never been accorded full-scale treatment. While certain subjects—the making of the King James Bible, the extraordinary translation work of John Dryden or Ezra Pound—have been visited by many scholars and critics, other parts of our extensive field were virtually *terra incognita*. Inevitably, then, even after the work of our host of contributors, parts of our map are still less comprehensively filled in than others. Our hope is that we have provided a helpful outline, with enough detailed critical discussion to show how richly worthwhile is the study of a kind of writing whose importance both in itself and in its immediate effects has all too rarely been acknowledged.

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List of Abbreviations

Journals, etc.

ANTS	Anglo-Norman Text Society
EETS	Early English Text Society
MÆ	*Medium Ævum*
MET	Middle English Texts
MTr	*The Medieval Translator* (9 vols. so far: volumes cited are vol. 3, ed. Roger Ellis, as *New Comparison* 12; vols 1, 2, 4–6 ed. Roger Ellis *et al.*; vol. 8 ed. Rosalynn Voaden *et al.*; vol. 9 by Marleen Cré)
N&Q	*Notes and Queries*
NM	*Neuphilologische Mitteilungen*
PMLA	*Publications of the Modern Languages Association of America*
RES	*Review of English Studies*
RS	Rolls Series
Sp	*Speculum*
STS	Scottish Text Society

Reference Works

CHMEL	David Wallace, ed., *The Cambridge History of Medieval English Literature* (Cambridge, 1999)
IoV	Jocelyn Wogan-Browne *et al.* eds., *The Idea of the Vernacular: An Anthology of Middle English Literary Theory 1280–1520* (Exeter and University Park, PA, 1999)
ODNB	*Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, ed. H. C. G. Matthew and Brian Harrison, 60 vols. (Oxford, 2004)
STC	*A Short-Title Catalogue of Books Printed in England, Scotland and Ireland . . . 1475–1640*, ed. A. W. Pollard and G. R. Redgrave, 3 vols. (London, 1976–91) (2nd edn. rev. W. A. Jackson *et al.*)

Individual Writers

Caxton, *P&E*	*The Prologues and Epilogues of William Caxton*, ed. W. J. B. Crotch, EETS OS 176 (London, 1928)
Chaucer	*The Riverside Chaucer*, ed. Larry D. Benson, 3rd edn. (Oxford, 1987). All citations are given, as appropriate, by Book (in the case of the *Canterbury Tales* (*CT*), fragment) and/or line number.

Other

AN	Anglo-Norman
BL	British Library, London
CUL	Cambridge University Library
ES	Extra Series
ME	Middle English
NS	New Series
OE	Old English
OS	Original Series
SS	Supplementary Series

Preface

Roger Ellis

This volume aims to document the many ways in which medieval English literary culture, from its beginning in 597, when St Augustine arrived in Kent, to its ending in the sixteenth century, is the result of translation. ('English' properly includes the different varieties of English written throughout the British Isles, especially Scotland, Wales, and Ireland, though only Scots English features significantly here.) The cut-off point of 1550 is, to a degree, arbitrary: translators like Douglas, Wyatt, Surrey, Tyndale, and Coverdale, all discussed in this volume, and all working before 1550, have good claims to be considered in the Renaissance context of Volume 2 of the *History*. Some overlap in the treatment of such figures is therefore almost inevitable; as far as possible, it has been avoided.

The structure of the volume broadly follows the same pattern as other volumes in the *History*. Chapter 1 offers a number of contexts for assessing translations in the period. It considers the implications, for the production of translations, of the bilingual literary culture before, and the trilingual literary culture after, the Norman Conquest; the further implications of a manuscript culture, whose habits of thought persisted even after the invention of print; and the ways in which translation responded to, and in turn helped shape, readers' ideas of nation, region, class, and gender.

Chapters 2–4 draw more narrowly to the question. Chapter 2 considers the different understandings of their craft which translators evolved; Chapter 3 considers the different roles of secular and religious authority in the production of translation, and offers a detailed account of several major translators (fuller comment will be found in the introduction to the chapter); Chapter 4 provides an overview of the shape and development of the corpus of translated material in the period.

Chapter 5 considers major areas of translational activity: the Bible and other religious writing; romance and chronicle; classical literature; literature of the Italian Renaissance; and scientific and medical writing. Much of this material came to translators in the ME period, directly or indirectly, in both insular and continental forms, from French, which was, after Latin, the most important source of texts for translation. (The cardinal role of French texts in the development of vernacular literary cultures is noted repeatedly in the contributions to this

volume.) Lastly, Chapter 6 provides short biographies of forty-five translators. These supplement the fuller case studies offered in Chapter 3, and witness to the huge range of translational activity throughout the Middle Ages.

The study of medieval translation presents a number of challenges to the reader, all of them focused in the apparently unproblematical reference, in the opening sentence of this preface, to 'medieval English literary culture'.

First, medieval writers and readers had a very different understanding from their modern counterparts of what constitutes 'literature'. This volume has therefore adopted a generous understanding of the term, and includes sections specifically devoted to the study of chronicles and scientific writing, as well as comment on books about hunting, agriculture, and warfare.

Second, though before the Norman Conquest, in the OE period, translation in England was almost invariably one way, into English, after the Conquest, and for much of the ME period, translation was as likely to be produced in an insular version of French (AN) as English: which explains regular comment, throughout this volume, on translations into AN. We need also to note the importance, throughout the Middle Ages, of the translation of Greek texts into Latin. During the reigns of Henry VII and VIII, in particular, first- and second-generation humanists produced Latin translations of Greek texts at the same time as other translations were being produced in French and English. Medieval readers and writers were hungry for translations, in any language they could read: John, Duke of Bedford, had a Latin prose translation of Deguileville's verse *Pelerinage de l'ame* made for him between 1422 and 1431 by Jean Galopes, Dean of the collegiate church of St Louis of Salaise [Salsoye] in Évreux, though he could easily have read it in the original French.

No less important, translations were often based not on their actual original but on an intermediate version. Miles Coverdale translated a French work of Calvin from a Latin version; Gavin Douglas translated his *Eneados* (1513) direct from Virgil's Latin, in part as a response to William Caxton, whose *Eneydos* (1491) had been based on a French version; Richard Whitford's translation (1531), from the Latin, of *The Imitation of Christ* by St Thomas à Kempis, was responding to an existing translation based on a French version. Translations from Greek, when Greek texts became more generally available in the later fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, were routinely based on Latin or French versions.

Third, the state of texts in a pre-print culture was necessarily fluid: which carries the consequence that, in the absence of a translator's own copy of his work, and of the actual copy of the source used for the translation, all judgements about the translation are inevitably provisional. Every copy of a translation, whether by the translator or by a copyist, was potentially a new version of the translation. Thomas Hoccleve's rewriting, in his *Series*, of his earlier translation of a chapter from the *Horologium Sapientiae* of the German Dominican Henry Suso is a case in point; so too William Langland's obsessive reworkings of his biblical translations in *Piers Plowman*: translation, in such cases, becomes almost literally

work in progress. Then, old texts might need modernizing; or texts produced in one dialect might need modifying for readers of another (inhabitants even of the contiguous counties of Suffolk and Norfolk could have difficulty understanding one another; the unintelligibility of northern speech to southerners was legendary). Intralingual translations of this sort—Peter Idley's cannibalizing of Robert Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* in Book II of his *Instructions to his Son*, for example—do not figure prominently in this volume, though they are an important part of the total context of medieval translation: witness the (probably) fictional pedigree created for John Capgrave's *Life of St Katharine*, discussed on p. 77 below.

Medieval understandings of the term 'translation' were similarly fluid. About 1520, the translators of *Terens in Englysh*, a translation of the *Andria* for schoolboy performance, write that their translation is almost as terse as the Latin, since, 'if it had a long expocysyon', it would be 'a comment and no translacyon', even if it made 'the sentence [meaning] opynly to appere'. Other understandings oppose this one, however. Between 1279 and 1290 Archbishop John Pecham produced what he called a translation into French of a Latin version of the pseudo-Dionysian *Celestial Hierarchy*; this, its editor argues, was only a 'moralizing exposition' of the text. In 1271 Rusticiano of Pisa produced for the future Edward I a French translation (his word for it) of Arthurian material: he describes his task variously as translating (three times), extracting and compiling (twice), and (once) reciting and recording.

In short, a generous understanding of the topic is called for, to match medieval translators' understandings of their own craft: almost everything written in the medieval period could be presented as a translation in one sense or another.

Conventions of Presentation

Most chapters are broken down into sections, so that Chapter 3, section 1 is referred to as '3.1'; cross-references to other sections as 'see §3.1'.

In quotations, contracted forms are silently expanded.

Each section is concluded by a list of sources, divided into 'translations and other primary sources' and 'other [i.e. secondary] sources'. These are not intended as full bibliographies of the subject of each section, but rather as reference lists of material cited in it. Contributions to volumes of essays are not listed separately if three or more essays from a given volume are cited in a section; nor are contributions to the various volumes of *MTr* or to *CHMEL*. Further guidance is sometimes provided by brief explanatory headnotes. For the sake of convenience, anthologies of extracts—especially *The Idea of the Vernacular* (*IoV*)—are sometimes cited in preference to editions of complete texts, the latter readily identifiable from the bibliographies of the anthologies. When more than half a dozen anonymous translations are being discussed in a given section, these are cited in the body of the section, and in the List of Sources, by the name of their modern editors.

Acknowledgements

A Note on the Cover Illustration

The cover illustration is very relevant to the situation of translation in medieval England. It features the opening word ('O') of the prologue to Book VIII of the *Liber Celestis* of St Birgitta of Sweden. In the top left corner of the roundel, we see Christ delivering to Birgitta his revelations for the rulers of medieval Europe. Reading the roundel anticlockwise, we then see her transcribing the revelations (translating them, in fact, though the illustration does not directly show this) into her Swedish vernacular, and handing them over to her disciple to translate into Latin (again, the illustration does not show directly the act of translation). Lastly, in an act of literal translation they are carried by a messenger to their intended recipients. The roundel offers what was throughout the Middle Ages the standard religious model of translation: the words of the source text (Christ's message) have absolute and total authority over the human agents of its transmission to readers in the target language. At the same time, the coexistence, in the one roundel, of divine source, visionary translator, disciple-editor, and first reader argues powerfully, if subliminally, for a more inclusive model of translation as the totality of the processes whereby a text in one language is carried over into another. In addition, the picture touches on several major questions: of Latinity and its relation to vernacularity; of the politics of translation; and of issues of class and gender. Missing from this account, though well documented elsewhere in Birgitta's life, is a sense of the stresses of translation: the labour, sometimes the physical danger to the translator, involved in its production.

1

Contexts of Translation

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1.1 The Languages of Medieval England

John Burrow

Before the Norman Conquest

It is possible to derive from pre-Conquest writings the outlines of a scheme ranking languages according to their dignity, as that would have been understood by many writers of the time. The highest ranks in this hierarchy are occupied by the original biblical languages: the Hebrew of the Old Testament and the Greek of the New—Greek being also the language of the first translation of the Old Testament, the Septuagint. Latin comes below Hebrew and Greek; but it counts with them as a third *lingua sacra*, since Anglo-Saxons read both testaments mostly in Jerome's Latin version, the Vulgate. It was also noticed that, according to St Luke (23: 38), the inscription set above Christ as he hung on the Cross was written in Latin as well as Greek and Hebrew. Yet Latin is the least elevated of the three. In the Second Series of his *Catholic Homilies* (990–5), Ælfric explains why the Church, during the penitential season of Septuagesima, replaces the Hebrew word *Alleluia* with the Latin *Laus tibi domine*: Hebrew, he says, is the highest of all languages, so it is more appropriate at a time of such sorrow that we should use only the humble Latin tongue ('eadmodan ledenspræce', Ælfric 1979: 51). Latin, however, counts as 'humble' only in relation to the two higher *linguae sacrae*. Below it lie the vernacular languages of these islands, four of them according to Bede in his *Ecclesiastical History* (731): British (that is, Welsh), Pictish, Irish, and English (Bede 1969: 230), a list to which Scandinavian languages would need to be added later in the period.

Knowledge of the two highest languages, Hebrew and Greek, was extremely restricted before the Conquest (see Gneuss 1993: 118–25). No one knew enough to translate texts from Hebrew (Jewish settlements hardly began before 1066). The monk Byrhtferth was able, following Bede, to explain in his *Enchiridion* (*c.* 1010) a play upon four Hebrew words in Isaiah; and the same writer also gives the names of the letters of the Hebrew alphabet, set out in parallel with the letters of Latin and Greek (Byrhtferth 1995: 166, 188). Such fragmentary knowledge mostly went back, directly or indirectly, to St Jerome, a Father described by Ælfric as 'the foremost translator between the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin peoples'. Knowledge of Greek was less limited, certainly in the seventh and early eighth centuries. Archbishop Theodore and Abbot Hadrian, who came to Canterbury in 669 and 670, were both familiar with Greek, Theodore as a native speaker; and according to Bede, who himself could read Greek, there were still in his day students of theirs 'who knew Latin and Greek just as well as their native

tongue' (Bede 1969: 335). In the centuries after Bede, however, knowledge of Greek appears to have been largely confined to what could be gleaned from the glossing of individual words. So Byrhtferth, referring to his learned work by the Greek title *Enchiridion*, adds that this is equivalent to *manualis* in Latin and *handboc* in English; and Ælfric is able to explain that *paraclitus* means the same as *froforgæst* [helping spirit] in English (Byrhtferth 1995: 120; Ælfric 1997: 360–1). So in practice neither Greek nor Hebrew could challenge Latin as, for Anglo-Saxons, the authoritative language of religion and learning, from which alone translations into the vernacular might be made.

The Latin which returned to England with the Christian missions of the early seventh century was the Latin of the Church, and throughout the Anglo-Saxon period it remained an ecclesiastical language, spoken, chanted, read, and written by monks, nuns, and priests. Evidence for substantial knowledge of Latin outside ecclesiastical circles is hard to come by. Some members of royal families evidently achieved competence: King Alfred, as is well known, translated several Latin works for the benefit of his subjects; and Æthelweard, an *ealdorman* of royal descent who died *c.* 998, produced a Latin translation of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (ed. 1962) for Matilda, Abbess of Essen in Germany—a very rare and early example, both of an English layman writing extensively in Latin, and also of the translating of an English text for an overseas reader (Matilda was of English descent, but her vernacular was probably Old Saxon). In his life of King Alfred (893), Asser gives a rather indistinct account of how the King, no longer young, came to acquire his reading knowledge of Latin. Alfred learned from Bishop Asser himself and from other scholars at his court; but Asser also invokes 'divine inspiration' to explain his success (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 75, 99). More commonly, instruction in the language was provided by the ecclesiastical schools attached to cathedrals or monasteries. As early as *c.* 700 grammar books were composed, written in Latin but designed for English-speaking students (Lapidge *et al.* 1999: 216–18); glosses added between the lines or in margins, often in English, helped with the understanding of Latin vocabulary; and separate Latin–English glossaries were also compiled (Lapidge *et al*. 1999: 207–10). Towards the end of the period, Ælfric produced one such glossary, appended to a more remarkable work of his: the first grammar of Latin written in English (*c.* 998).

Knowledge of Latin suffered a severe setback in the ninth century, when Viking assaults nearly put an end to the organized monastic life that had flourished in the seventh and eighth centuries. So Alfred, in the preface to his translation of Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis*, laments the decline of learning in England: 'there were very few men on this side of the Humber who could understand their divine services in English, or even translate a single letter from Latin into English; and I suppose that there were not many beyond the Humber either' (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 125). In the course of Alfred's reign, however, the recovery began, and this was confirmed after *c.* 940 in the Benedictine reform movement led by Dunstan, Æthelwold, and Oswald, a movement with which many Latin writings are associated. Accordingly, the history of Anglo-Latin writings falls into

two periods, separated by the ninth-century interval (for general accounts, see Lapidge 1986, 1993, 1996). The two chief writers of the earlier time are Aldhelm (d. 709) and Bede (d. 735). Their works, which continued to be studied and imitated throughout the Anglo-Saxon period, illustrate the range of purposes to which Latin was put. Both Aldhelm and Bede wrote verse, mostly in classical metres, as did their tenth-century successors, and both composed treatises on poetic metre, Aldhelm's forming part of a long Latin letter addressed to King Aldfrith of Northumbria (the *Epistola ad Acircium*) which also included his verse riddles or *Enigmata* (on Aldhelm, see Lapidge *et al.* 1999: 25–7). As well as his *De Arte Metrica*, Bede wrote textbooks on orthography, rhetoric, and the ecclesiastical computus, and also a series of influential commentaries on many books of the Old and New Testaments. The narrative writings of Aldhelm and Bede mostly concern the lives of saints and other exemplary persons. Examples are Bede's *Vita Sancti Cuthberti* and the *De Virginitate* of Aldhelm—the latter an extraordinary work in two versions, prose and verse, both composed in an obscure and mannered style (now known as 'hermeneutic') which was much imitated by writers such as Bishop Æthelwold in the later period. Bede's Latin style is quite different—it has been described as 'classical'—as can be seen in his *magnum opus*, the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Here the narrative of exemplary lives, including many saints, takes its place in a larger historical story.

What about English? As a vernacular, maternal tongue, of course, it could not pretend to rival the dignity of Latin in the linguistic hierarchy; but the evidence suggests that English came to be held in higher esteem than any other West European vernacular of the time. Little written evidence of the language survives from the early centuries, but already at that time one finds so learned a Latinist as Bede paying respectful attention to the poetry of his own native language, as in his account of the Northumbrian poet Cædmon. Cædmon's hymn has to be represented in the *Ecclesiastical History* by a Latin prose rendering; but Bede speaks highly of the sweetness (*suavitas*) of the original English verse, and apologizes for having to represent it in translation: 'for it is not possible to translate verse, however well composed, literally from one language to another without some loss of beauty and dignity' (Bede 1969: 417). Bede's treatise on metre, again, though chiefly concerned with *metrum* or quantitative verse, has a brief discussion of *rithmus* in which he notices not only Latin rhythmical writings but also the songs of vernacular poets ('carmina vulgarium poetarum'). Although *rithmus* is, Bede says, less governed by rational principles than *metrum*, yet one can see in it a certain *ratio*, 'which vernacular poets achieve necessarily without benefit of schooling (*rustice*), while the learned do so by virtue of their learning' (Bede 1975: 138–9). A later tradition records that Aldhelm composed English verses and that King Alfred particularly admired them, but these are lost. Bede himself is said to have been 'doctus in nostris carminibus' [well versed in our poetic traditions] by one of his disciples, who recorded a short alliterative poem in Northumbrian English which the master recited on his deathbed (Bede 1969: 580–3). Not long after Bede's death, and again in Northumbria, the stone cross

at Ruthwell admitted a copy of English verses, from *The Dream of the Rood*, cut in runic letters alongside Latin inscriptions on its carved surfaces; and later on, the young Alfred is said by Asser to have been attracted by the beauty of a book of English verse shown him by his mother. This volume has been lost, no doubt along with others of the kind; but from a later period, *c.* 1000, we have the four codices which preserve most of the native poetry now known to survive. These substantial collections testify to the willingness of copyists in scriptoria of the learned world to devote time, effort, and parchment to the works of *vulgares poetae*, secular as well as religious. Nothing comparable survives from other West European societies of the time.

In the same account of his last days that preserves his five lines of alliterative verse, Bede is said to have been working at translations from St John's Gospel and also from a Latin treatise by Isidore of Seville (Bede 1969: 582). These renderings 'in nostram linguam', into OE, were presumably in prose, but they have not survived. Indeed, the only considerable prose texts to have been preserved from the early period (in later copies) are the law codes, beginning with the code of Æthelbert of Kent, 'written in English', as Bede reports, as early as *c.* 605. The later laws of the West Saxon king Ine (*c.* 690) were incorporated by King Alfred in his *domboc* or law book, and this was followed by a series of other vernacular royal codes up to nearly the time of the Conquest (Lapidge *et al.* 1999: 279–80). The use of English in these documents, as in the royal writs of the time, testifies to a standing in royal and official circles which the vernacular was to lose only under the post-Conquest kings. The codes continued to be copied and studied for a time thereafter; but the translation of many of them into Latin about the year 1114, in the *Quadripartitus*, was a sign of things to come.

The dying Bede is said to have explained his desire to translate from the Latin of Isidore and St John with the words, 'I cannot have my children learning what is not true' (Bede 1969: 583). These words sum up the prime motive of later translators from Latin: to unlock the authoritative truths available in that language—religious, historical, or scientific—and so make them available to the young or the unschooled. But no English translations survive until the time of Alfred, 150 years after Bede's death. (On Alfred, see further §§3.2, 5.6 below.) Alfred certainly knew of none, for in the preface to his englishing of Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis* he asks himself why wise men of the past had made no attempts to render Latin texts into 'their own language'. The reason, he supposes, is that they never imagined it might become necessary to do so. But nowadays, although 'many people can read English writings' (whatever they may have been), knowledge of Latin has so sadly declined that the time has come to render 'certain books most necessary for all men to know' from that language into the vernacular, following the precedent, which Alfred invokes, of the translation of biblical writings from Hebrew through Greek into Latin. So Alfred proposes that, if conditions permit, 'all the youth now in England, born of freemen who have the means that they can apply to it', should learn to read English well—further

instruction in Latin being reserved to those destined for a 'higher order', that is, in the Church (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 125–6).

In this preface, Alfred is concerned to encourage, not practical literacy, but wisdom and learning ('wisdom ond lare'), and the list of texts translated by him and his clerical collaborators bears out that lofty intention: books of history (Bede's *Historia*, the *Historia* of Orosius) and of philosophy (Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, Augustine's *Soliloquia*), a treatise for bishops and other rulers (Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis*), a collection of improving miracle stories (Gregory's *Dialogi*), and the first fifty psalms from the Bible. These writings established a tradition of vernacular prose which was followed in the last years of the Anglo-Saxon period mainly by monks of the Benedictine Revival: notably Bishop Æthelwold, translator of the Benedictine Rule (on Æthelwold, see Lapidge *et al.* 1999: 19; cf. Gretsch 1999); Byrhtferth, author of the computistical *Enchiridion*; Abbot Ælfric; and Archbishop Wulfstan. These men all wrote in Latin as well as in English, and when they turned to the vernacular it was chiefly for the benefit of those who could not read, or could not comfortably read, the Latin originals. Such people, referred to as the *idiotae* or *ungelærede* [uneducated], formed a very large and varied class of potential readers, male and female, noble and common. Nor was it confined to laypeople: Æthelwold's English Benedictine Rule survives in versions directed at novices and newly professed monks and also at nuns, and Byrhtferth addressed his *Enchiridion* to young monks and country priests.

Such vernacular writings presented, of course, no challenge to the primacy of Latin. Typically, when Ælfric wished to put a matter beyond doubt or contradiction, he might switch to Latin 'so that we may be believed' (Ælfric 1967–8: 728). Yet these writers did confer upon English something of the dignity of a learned language, for they brought to it some of the disciplines to which Latin had accustomed them (on the status of English, see Godden 1992; Stanton 2002). As Dante observed, mother tongues are acquired 'sine omni regula', without any conscious learning of rules (*De Vulgari Eloquentia* I, i); but for learned monks language was a matter of *regulae*; so it is not surprising that they set about looking for order in, or imposing order on, the English that they wrote. In his *Grammar* accordingly Ælfric is primarily concerned with teaching Latin to young students; but he writes in English, and both his Latin and his English prefaces observe that the little book will provide them with some instruction 'in both languages' (Ælfric 1880: 1, 3). Giving English equivalents for Latin forms, as Ælfric does throughout, serves to display the grammatical structure of both languages. Thus, he observes that there are eight parts of speech in both, and in his discussion of personal pronouns he matches the English forms of person, number, and case with their Latin equivalents: '*ille* he, *illius* his', and so on. He also notices differences between the two languages. Discussing Latin nouns, for example, he observes that the corresponding English nouns may not agree in gender: 'we say in Latin *hic liber* [masculine] and in English *peos boc* [feminine]' (Ælfric 1880: 11, 18–19, 94–7). The many observations of this kind serve to show English as itself a

language governed by rules, albeit not always the same rules as govern Latin (see Gneuss 1990).

At one point in the Latin preface to his *Grammar*, Ælfric confesses that there are some places in the *ars grammatica* which cannot well be expressed in English and which he therefore passes over: he instances the rules of metrical verse. But such apologies are rare in these writers, who generally display a remarkable confidence in the ability of their vernacular to render even what Ælfric calls 'cræftspræc', that is, the terminology of special disciplines. One might expect that process to involve frequent recourse to the borrowing of Latin words, but such is not the case. In general, OE has a very low percentage of loan words— some 3 per cent, as against 70 per cent in present-day English—and, although Benedictine and other translators did make a contribution to the stock of Latin borrowings, they preferred to look for equivalent expressions in native resources (on loan words, see Kastovsky 1992; Gneuss 1993). They evidently shared, to a greater or lesser degree, in that regard for the independent character of English witnessed by Ælfric in the preface to his translation of Genesis, where he writes that English has its own way (*wise*), which is unlike that of Latin; so anyone who translates or teaches out of Latin, he writes, must always so arrange it that the English preserves its own idiom (Mitchell and Robinson 1992: 194). All the same, few writers accustomed to the regular and standardized character of Latin could resist the impulse to tidy up their written English; hence the vernacular, in the hands of these translators, comes to acquire some characteristics of a learned, rule-governed language. There are signs of this in the standardization of spellings and grammatical forms, and also in critical cultivation of the vocabulary. It appears that the school of Bishop Æthelwold at Winchester in the mid-tenth century established preferences for certain expressions—'Winchester words', as they are now called—recommended for use rather than their alternatives. Thus *cnapa* [boy] was to be preferred to *cniht* in that sense, and *gylt* [guilt] to *scyld* (on Winchester English, see Gneuss 1972; Hofstetter 1988). Written English was to be schooled. Accordingly, one finds in an early eleventh-century copy (Oxford Bodleian Library MS Hatton 76) a text from Alfredian times, Wærferth's translation of Gregory's *Dialogues*, revised to meet latter-day Winchester standards of correctness. English, in the form of what modern scholars call Standard Late West Saxon, was no longer *sine omni regula*; and as a written language, in royal as well as in clerical use, it had achieved a status and refinement which it was not to recover for several centuries after the Norman Conquest.

After the Norman Conquest

So far as surviving textual sources are concerned, discussion of the languages of pre-Conquest England could be largely confined to English and Latin. Knowledge of the other *linguae sacrae*, Greek and Hebrew, amounted to very little, and the Scandinavian languages spoken in the Danelaw and the north-west of England (on these, see Ekwall 1963) left behind very few written memorials. For

the period after the Conquest, the surviving evidence is much more extensive and the picture much more complicated.

In the case of Greek and Hebrew, knowledge increased significantly though fitfully. Jews, hardly known in Anglo-Saxon England, came over in the wake of the Conquest and, until their expulsion from the kingdom by Edward I in 1290, formed an influential minority group of native Hebrew speakers (on these, see Roth 1941). Their presence facilitated the study of Hebrew by twelfth- and thirteenth-century Christian scholars looking for better understanding of the Old Testament (on Hebrew scholarship, see Smalley 1952 *passim*). Among these Smalley singles out the Victorine canons, especially Andrew of St Victor, who died as Abbot of Wigmore in 1175; their tradition of Hebraic learning was carried on in the thirteenth century by friars such as the Franciscan Roger Bacon (d. *c.* 1292), who produced a grammar of Hebrew. These writers were concerned, not to translate whole Hebrew texts, but to use them in their exegesis of the Old Testament. It was to this end that the Franciscan Nicholas of Lyre (d. 1340) drew heavily on his knowledge of the Hebrew original and its Jewish exegesis in his Bible commentary, a work which maintained its place as a standard authority long after the beginnings of humanist scholarship by Tudor Hebraists (for these, see Lloyd-Jones 1983).

The study of Greek took a quite different course. In the absence of communities of native Greek speakers in England, knowledge of the language had to be acquired by consultation with foreign visitors, or else by travel abroad to the Kingdom of Sicily or to the Byzantine Empire (the latter especially after the fall of Constantinople in 1204). Unlike Hebrew, furthermore, knowledge of Greek was valued, not as an aid to biblical exegesis, but as the key to unlocking the treasures of science and philosophy stored in the works of Aristotle and other writers of antiquity. English scholars such as Adelard of Bath played a part in the production of Latin versions of such texts in the twelfth century (for fuller comment, see d'Alverny 1982); but the high point in English knowledge of Greek before the Renaissance comes in the following century, in the persons of Bishop Robert Grosseteste (*c.* 1170–1253) and Roger Bacon. Grosseteste and his team of assistants translated into Latin the mystical writings of pseudo-Dionysius and also Aristotle's *Ethics* (see further §3.3 below); Bacon promoted the reading of Aristotle in the original and wrote a Greek grammar. In the fourteenth century Greek studies seem to have stagnated in England (so Weiss 1951); and the claim by John Metham, in his mid-fifteenth-century English romance *Amoryus and Cleopes*, to have derived it with the help of a Greek visitor to Norwich from a Greek book written in gold letters (Metham 1906: ll. 57–70), evidently reflects only the high prestige attached to that language. From about this time, some English scholars with contacts in Italy did become expert in Greek (see, especially, Weiss 1967). Their interests were still largely confined to philosophical writings, and their literary tastes remained predominantly Latin. Latin continued to be the normal target language for translation from Greek, and, when English versions did begin to appear, in early Tudor times, they were filtered through Latin. John

Skelton's rendering of Diodorus Siculus derived, not from the Greek original, but from Poggio's Latin version, and Tyndale used the Latin Bible as a crib in translating the Greek of the New Testament.

What radically transformed the linguistic situation in England after the Conquest, however, was the advent of French. The language of the conquerors took its place as a second vernacular, and made up, with Latin, a new trilingual system which was to last until the fifteenth century. The three languages stood to each other in a hierarchical relationship, with Latin at the top, followed at some distance by French, and then by English (see fuller discussion in Machan 2003). The hierarchy depended in large part on the status of users: churchmen and *litterati* in the case of Latin, aristocracy or gentry in the case of French. But Latin was also considered to be intrinsically the best, in that it was first created or invented by *impositores* who were themselves profound philosophers and understood the nature of things when they 'imposed' words upon them. So Latin was better adapted for high speculation than any vernacular; as Roger Bacon noted, 'logicus non poterit exprimere suam logicam si monstrasset per vocabula linguae maternae' (Lusignan 1986: 73) [the logician would not be able to expound his logic if he were to present it in the words of his maternal language]. Furthermore, Latin was not only more philosophical but also more 'universal' than the vernaculars, offering authors the chance of writing both for all their contemporaries in the West and for posterity. In this respect, French also enjoyed some advantage over English, especially when, in the thirteenth century, it flourished as a European language of culture; for a writer in English before about 1400 could hardly hope even for an audience over the whole of England, given the regional character of English linguistic and literary activity. As late as 1400, John Gower could address his French *Traitié* to the 'université de tout le monde', in evident contrast to the English work which preceded it, the *Confessio Amantis* (Gower 1899: 391). By Gower's time things were changing; but an example from two centuries earlier will illustrate the limited circulation of English writings as against French and, especially, Latin. Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, dedicated first to Robert, Earl of Gloucester, *c.* 1136, survives in more than 200 manuscripts, having enjoyed prodigious successes in its own time and thereafter, both at home and abroad. Some fifteen years later, the Norman poet Wace produced his French version of the *Historia*, presenting a copy, it is said, to the new queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine; and this vernacular poem still exists today in more than twenty copies. But when, about fifty years later, the Worcestershire priest Laȝamon rendered Wace's *Brut* into his own Worcestershire English, his poem appears to have achieved only limited currency, for it survives in a mere two copies, both from the West Country.

The history of these three languages in relation to each other is, however, much more complex than such summary description implies. At any one time, their distribution and use will have depended upon a variety of factors such as class, occupation, and gender; and one has to reckon further with all sorts of code-switching between the languages by individual speakers and writers,

preferring one language to another for particular purposes and switching from one to another within macaronic texts and the like. There are also, as one would expect in a period of more than four centuries, substantial changes over time, especially in the status and uses of the two vernaculars. An attempt must now be made to sketch the outlines of this very complex history, taking it century by century, and starting with the years before *c.* 1200.

The relatively few foreign-speaking strangers who came over with the Conqueror presented no challenge to the survival of English as the mother tongue of the native population; but as a written language, English lost the commanding position it had gained in the last years of the pre-Conquest monarchy and Church. Texts in Anglo-Saxon—charters and religious prose in particular—were still copied in some centres such as Worcester (on copies of Anglo-Saxon texts, see Ker 1957; Swan and Treharne 2000); but Standard Late West Saxon, already in its time a conservative written form of the language, became increasingly hard for English readers to understand, and its texts began to need glossing, as by the so-called Tremulous Hand of Worcester (Laing 1993: 6–7). Meanwhile the now deregulated form of the vernacular was not yet ready to take its place as the language of written texts. Indeed, rather few new writings in English survive from before 1200 (see catalogue in Laing 1993), scholars being now inclined to date such notable early ME works as *The Owl and the Nightingale* and Laȝamon's *Brut*, along with *Ancrene Wisse*, to the early or even the middle thirteenth century. Although the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was kept up in one centre, Peterborough, until as late as 1154, Latin was by then monopolizing the genres of prose history and chronicle; and it was Latin also (not AN) which immediately after the Conquest superseded English as the language of official documents such as laws and writs (see further Clanchy 1993).

During the twelfth century, indeed, Latin enjoyed a textual dominance unchallenged by either of the vernaculars (surveys by Rigg 1992: 9–156; Baswell in *CHMEL*). This is the great age of Anglo-Latin writing, in both prose and verse. Latin is the language of William the Conqueror's Doomsday Book; of histories such as William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum* and Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*; of treatises such as John of Salisbury's *Policraticus*; of the devotional writings of Ailred of Rievaulx; of the verse epic of Troy, the *Ylias*, by Joseph of Exeter; of satirical and anecdotal writings such as the *De Nugis Curialium* by Walter Map; and of letter collections such as that of Peter of Blois. In the first century after the Conquest the authors of such works were mostly monks; but, especially from the time of Henry II, secular clerks associated with the royal administration and later with the fledgling universities played an increasing part. They wrote primarily for fellow *clerici*, at home and abroad; but knowledge of Latin could also be expected of some lay patrons, like the Earl of Gloucester to whom Geoffrey of Monmouth dedicated his *Historia*.

The maternal language of magnates such as Robert of Gloucester and their wives was French, and French was the language into which translations from the Latin were made, especially, it would appear, at the behest of great ladies. In the

early twelfth century, one 'danz Benedeiz' translated his own *Navigatio Sancti Brendani* into AN for Henry I's queen Maud (Legge 1963: 8–18); and Wace's *Brut*, as already noticed, was presented to a later queen, Eleanor of Aquitaine. Like queens and great ladies, nuns also spoke French, being commonly of gentle birth; and it was a nun of Barking who, in the 1160s, translated Ailred's Life of Edward the Confessor into French verse (Legge 1963: 60–6). In her prologue, the nun apologizes for her insular language: 'Un faus franceis sai d'Angletere, | Ke ne l'alai ailurs quere' [I know a false French of England, I have not gone to seek it elsewhere]. Yet the literature of this 'faus franceis' rivalled, in the twelfth century, that of the continental mainland (major studies are Legge 1963; Dean and Boulton 1999; Crane in *CHMEL*). Four poems, all from the later years of the reign of Henry II, illustrate its range: the *Tristan* of Thomas; Jordan Fantosme's verse chronicle of the quarrel between Henry and his son, the Young King; and the long exotic romances *Ipomedon* and *Proteselaus* by Hue de Rotelande, a Herefordshire lord (for these see Legge 1963: 45–59, 75–81, 85–96).

French was the maternal language of the lay and ecclesiastical aristocracy, and great lords or bishops might (though decreasingly so as the twelfth century progressed) have very little or no English. Henry II had English interpreted for him. On the part of those whose maternal language was English, knowledge of French was distributed very unevenly, depending upon social, occupational, and regional factors (see Berndt 1969). Bilingualism is now thought to have been less common than earlier scholars such as Vising (1923) supposed; but many speakers of English concerned with commerce, administration, or the Church had every incentive to understand and use French, 'either as a professional necessity or as a social accomplishment' (Clark 1995: 145). Furthermore, mixed marriages might bring the two languages into contact within the household. In contexts such as these, speakers must often have switched between one language and the other, a process which has left its traces already in the presence of French words in such English texts as the Peterborough Chronicle. Yet knowledge of the other vernacular among French or English speakers will often have been imperfect, and some French speakers, and most English speakers, were in any case monolingual; so there must have been many occasions which called for interpretation, sometimes even by a professed interpreter or 'latimer' (Salter 1988: 9). There is, however, rather little textual evidence of translation between the two vernaculars before 1200, though Marie de France claims to have translated her *Fables* from an Anglo-Saxon source, and the Norman poet Geoffrey Gaimar rendered parts of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in his *Estoire des Engleis* (Legge 1963: 31–2).

In the following century, England was still a substantially trilingual society. Writing in the early 1270s, Roger Bacon said that the English of his time spoke three languages, 'Anglicum, Gallicum, et Latinum' (Salter 1988: 34–5). Bacon himself presumably spoke all three as occasion required; but for him and his fellow *litterati* Latin would always be the medium for discussion or writing about learned topics. Bacon wrote his encyclopedic *Opus Maius* in Latin, and

that was also the preferred language of chroniclers such as the Benedictine monk Matthew Paris, whose *Chronica Majora* brings the history of the world up to the year 1259. Other Latin prose writings of the time include John of Garland's treatise on composition, the *Parisiana Poetria*, Odo of Cheriton's collection of fables, and the *Communiloquium* of John of Wales, a work drawn upon by Geoffrey Chaucer. The survey of the Latin verse of the period by Rigg (1992: 157–239) gives pride of place to Henry of Avranches, a professional poet who produced verse in a great variety of genres: saint's life, debate, court verse, and even Aristotelian philosophy. Two Franciscan friars, Walter of Wimborne and Archbishop John Pecham, composed Latin verse mostly on religious subjects, and the secular clerk John of Howden wrote a widely read poem on the Passion of Christ, the *Philomena*.

Not all these writers confined themselves to Latin. Howden recast his *Philomena* in French as *Rossignos* for his patroness Eleanor of Provence, Henry III's queen (Legge 1963: 232–5); Eleanor was among the great ladies for whom the chronicler Matthew Paris translated saints' lives into French verse (see further p. 108 below); and Robert Grosseteste took time off to compose an allegorical poem in French, *Chateau d'amour*, which enjoyed considerable success, being translated into both Latin and English (Legge 1963: 222–4). Translation of Latin texts into French for the benefit of French-speaking noblewomen like Eleanor of Provence may suggest that little had changed since the previous century, but in fact the thirteenth century saw significant new developments in the distribution, use, and status of French in England. One might have expected the language to go into steep decline at this time, given the break-up of the French-speaking 'Channel kingdom' of the Angevins with the loss of Normandy by King John in 1204; and indeed the number of speakers for whom French was their maternal, and often their sole, language did decline, despite the presence of French speakers from across the Channel such as Henry III's queen and his many French favourites. Yet this was also a period when many English speakers set themselves to learn French as a second language, and the thirteenth century saw the first of those Teach Yourself French books that were to become more common after 1300 (see further Lusignan 1986: ch. 3; Rothwell 1978). An early stage in this written schooling can be seen in Walter de Bibbesworth's *Tretiz*. Both Walter himself and the Lady Denise for whom he wrote evidently had English as their mother tongue; but the lady needed help with her French—less common vocabulary, homonyms, and the like—and this Walter provided (on the *Tretiz*, see Clanchy 1993: 197–200; Hunt 1991: 11–16).

The survival of French in England would hardly, in fact, have seemed precarious to a contemporary. It was still commonly spoken by what Walter calls 'gentils hommes', albeit mostly as an acquired second language, and also by such as clerics, lawyers, administrators, and businessmen. Furthermore, as a written language French actually came to be used more widely than in the years before 1200 both for literary and for official purposes. During this time, indeed, French was acquiring greater cultural prestige in England. This was in part due to

developments in Europe as a whole, for it was during the thirteenth century that French—continental French—established itself as an international 'language of culture', so that the Italian Brunetto Latini, for example, wrote in French. It never rivalled Latin among the learned, but it acquired for the time being something of the dignity of that language and came to be used for some of the same purposes. In law, the proceedings of royal courts had long been conducted mainly in French, but Latin was the written language of the law. By the middle of the thirteenth century, however, some legal treatises appear in French, and the earliest surviving law reports employ that language, which was to become usual thereafter. In the thirteenth century, too, French begins to figure along with the Latin which, ever since the Conquest, had been the language of government and record. The first legislation to be officially enacted and published in French, the Statute of Westminster, dates from 1275, and thereafter legislative acts might employ either Latin or French (on the languages used for legal documents, see Brand 2000).

The European dominance of continental French writings at this time meant that the demands of English readers for literature in French—Arthurian romances and the like—were largely met from across the Channel. Yet AN writing in the thirteenth century still exhibits considerable range and variety, from saints' lives and religious lyrics on the one hand to fabliaux and satires on the other (surveys by Vising 1923: 50–71; Dean and Boulton 1999). Of all these genres, the most distinctively insular was the 'ancestral romance', by which contemporary English lords were supplied with heroic and adventurous ancestors (on this, see Legge 1963: 139–75; Crane 1986). Two extraordinarily successful examples were *Boeve de Haumtone* and *Gui de Warewic*, long narrative poems which, as 'Bevis of Hampton' and 'Guy of Warwick', were to enjoy a long afterlife in English versions (see further §5.4 below).

The status of French as a written vernacular was as yet under little challenge from English. Neither legal nor administrative documents employ English at this time, though Henry III did, as an exceptional measure, send letters patent in both English and French to all counties during the baronial rebellion in 1258 (on these, see Machan 2003: 21–69). In any ranking of languages at that time, English would have appeared below French, as French ranked below Latin, and it is the lower languages in this hierarchy that most commonly figure as the target languages in translation: Latin to French, French to English, as when Geoffrey's Latin *Historia* was translated into French by Wace and thence into English by Laʒamon. This rule admits exceptions, however. The early thirteenth-century rule for anchoresses, *Ancrene Wisse*, was rendered twice into French and once into Latin for readers who were more comfortable with those languages; and a poet calling himself Brykhulle claims to have translated his *Blancheflour et Florence* from an English source: 'Banastre en englois le fist, | E Brykhulle cest escrit | En franceois translata' [Banastre wrote this in English, and Brykhulle translated it into French] (on Brykhulle, see Legge 1963: 334–6). Nor should talk of a hierarchy suggest that texts in the different languages are segregated in the

manuscript record, as if each had its own distinct and exclusive audience. The English *Owl and the Nightingale* keeps company with French as well as English texts in the two manuscripts that preserve it, Oxford Jesus College MS 29 and BL MS Cotton Caligula A.ix (ed. Cartlidge 2001). The Caligula manuscript also contains one of the two surviving copies of Laʒamon's *Brut*. Again, the late thirteenth-century manuscript Oxford Bodleian Library Digby 86, evidently the commonplace book of a Worcestershire layman, contains eighteen ME texts, including *Dame Sirith* and *The Fox and the Wolf*, in a volume mainly devoted to devotional and secular texts in French and Latin (for a facsimile, see Tschann and Parkes 1996). The presence of a macaronic text in that manuscript, furthermore, serves as a reminder that the languages could also appear side by side in a single text. This question of code-switching and code-mixing will, however, be considered later here, for more evidence is available for the following centuries.

English writings survive in much greater quantities from the thirteenth century than from before 1200 (see catalogue in Laing 1993), and they are also very various, as anyone turning from Laʒamon's *Brut* to *The Owl and the Nightingale* will see. There is already a substantial first crop of English lyrics (collected in Brown 1932), many of them secular and lively ('Sumer is icumen in'); there are long works of religious instruction and narrative, such as the *Ayenbite of Inwit* and the *South English Legendary*; and there are, for the first time, romances, mostly in versions of the French octosyllabic couplet. Of these last, *Havelok* and *Horn* both derive from AN sources and celebrate insular heroes; but others render into English stories from the great international Matters of antiquity and of Britain, notably the late thirteenth-century long poems *Kyng Alisaunder*, also from AN, and *Of Arthour and of Merlin*, from the French vulgate Arthurian prose cycle (see further pp. 300–2, 307, 316 below). In the prologue to the latter, the author gives what is at least one contemporary's view of the language situation shortly before 1300 (anon. 1973: 3–5). Children who are 'set to book' and learn French and Latin, he says, will have advantages, for they will be better able to understand the secrets of God; but he himself is going to write in English:

> Riʒt is þat Inglische understond
> Þat [a person who] was born in Inglond.
> Freynsche use þis gentil man,
> Ac [but] everich Inglische Inglische can [knows].

The author adds, however, that not all 'gentil' men use French, for he has seen many nobles who could speak nothing of that language; so it is for them too, presumably, that he now writes.

By the end of the following century, English had largely supplanted French as the written vernacular of England, but Latin maintained its status throughout the fourteenth century and beyond as the prestige language *par excellence*. 'The textual community still operated mainly in Latin, which was the medium

for international communications, historiography, law, science, philosophy, and theology' (Rigg 1997: 130). The Benedictine tradition of history-writing was kept up by such successors of Matthew Paris as Ranulph Higden, whose *Polychronicon* survives in more than 100 manuscripts, and Thomas Walsingham (on historical writing, see Gransden 1982; Taylor 1987). It was still a matter of course that philosophers such as William of Ockham or theologians such as John Wyclif should present their arguments in Latin. Throughout the century, too, Latin remained the lawyers' language of formal record, though the more informal law reports employ French, and French is also the main language of statutes: 'with the reign of Edward II, French becomes the predominant, but by no means the exclusive, language of legislation, but it was to be more than a century before the last legislation was enacted in Latin during the reign of Henry VI' (Brand 2000: 72–3). Latin verse continued to be composed in a variety of metres (survey by Rigg 1992: 241–309), much of it concerned with contemporary affairs like John Gower's *Vox Clamantis*, with its treatment of the Peasants' Revolt. Gower is one of the first major writers since the Conquest to write in both Latin and English, as did Richard Rolle earlier in the century, but he is also the last major writer to write in AN. So his three long poems, *Vox Clamantis* in Latin, *Confessio Amantis* in English, and *Speculum Meditantis* (or *Mirour de l'omme*) in French, both look back to an older trilingual England and also look forward to a time when English would rival Latin.

The author of *Of Arthour and of Merlin* reported that already in his time many nobles could speak no French; yet many fourteenth-century noblemen still favoured French, both in their reading and their talk. One of them, Henry, Duke of Lancaster (d. 1361), even composed a confessional treatise, *Le Livre de seyntz medicines*, in that language, albeit with the customary apology for his bad French: 'jeo sui engleis et n'ai pas moelt hauntee le franceis' [I am English and not much used to French] (Henry of Lancaster 1940: 239). Also, the insular variety of French, after the school of Stratford-atte-Bowe, as Chaucer put it (*CT* I. 125), was widely used in other circles, not only by prioresses and other religious, but also by scholars, administrators, businessmen, and lawyers, right up to the end of the century (see Rothwell 1994, 2001). Such people commonly wrote their letters and other communications in French (for a collection, see Legge 1941). Few of these people, however, had learned the language in infancy from mother or nurse. At this time, as Lusignan notes (1986: 106), French was no longer a true vernacular, but rather a second, artificial, language, maintained by the efforts of teachers— like Latin, but with less prestige. The fourteenth century, accordingly, saw an increase in the production of manuals for the teaching of French. The most substantial of these, written about 1400, is the *Donait François* of John Barton, designed, Barton says, to help Anglophones understand both continental French and also the laws of England and other good things ('bones choses') written here in French. All the lords and ladies of England, he adds, choose to write to each other 'en romance' [in French] (Lusignan 1986: 106). Modelling himself on the Latin grammar of Donatus, Barton treats orthography, accidence, and the parts

of speech; and his book, the first ever grammar of French, aligns that language with Latin as deserving the dignity of grammatical analysis, rather as Ælfric had done, more obliquely, for Anglo-Saxon 400 years earlier (see Lusignan 1986: 111–15).

The fourteenth century has left many documentary records of the use of AN for practical purposes: law reports, statutes, wills, guild and town records, and the like. Non-documentary texts, by contrast, are less numerous than in previous centuries (surveys in Vising 1923: 71–7; Dean and Boulton 1999). Yet AN pieces play a large part in BL MS Harley 2253, a big collection written in the 1330s which contains forty-three French items alongside forty-eight in English and thirteen in Latin. The French pieces range from racy fabliaux to devotional lyrics and pious prose (on the Harley MS, see Turville-Petre 1996: 192–217). Of more extended works, the most important are chronicles. The French prose *Brut*, first composed in the reign of Edward I and continued thereafter, survives in some 200 copies in its original French, in English, and in Latin (discussed in Taylor 1987: 110–32). Other prose histories include the *Scalacronica* of Sir Thomas Gray (d. 1369), the *Anonimalle Chronicle* from a Benedictine house in York, and the *Chronicles* of the Dominican Nicholas Trevet, composed for a sister of Edward II and used by Chaucer for his *Man of Law's Tale* (Legge 1963: 283–7, 288–9, 298–302). Continental taste had turned away from verse for such purposes; but the *Chronicle* of Pierre de Langtoft, a canon of Bridlington, composed in old-fashioned verse *laisses*, became popular and was drawn into English verse by a fellow canon, Robert Mannyng of Brunne, in the 1330s (for discussion, see Turville-Petre 1996: 75–103, and §§1.3, 5.5 below). The two chief AN poets of the time, however, were the prolific Franciscan friar Nicholas Bozon from early in the century and John Gower towards its end. Bozon composed a range of religious allegories, poems to the Virgin, saints' lives, and sermons in verse, but his best-known work is the prose *Contes*, a collection of fables and moralizations of nature, subsequently translated into Latin for a wider audience (see Legge 1963: 229–32). John Gower, who died in 1408, is the last of the AN poets. He wrote both up-to-date ballades, very much in the current French manner, and also an enormous old-fashioned poem in short lines about sin, virtue, and society, the previously-noted *Mirour de l'omme*.

It is a measure of how times were changing (and also of the quality of the two works) that, whereas only one manuscript of the *Mirour* survives, there are about fifty of Gower's English *Confessio Amantis*. Gower introduces the *Confessio* as 'a bok for Engelondes sake' and his presentation of it makes new claims for the dignity of vernacular verse. He divides it into Books (*Libri*) in the Latin way, as Chaucer had been the first to do in his *House of Fame*, introduces each section with short Latin poems, and supplies side-notes in Latin prose. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Elizabethan writer George Puttenham, in his *Arte of English Poesie* (1589), should have singled out Gower with Chaucer as the first English poets worthy of his respect. Puttenham finds 'little or nothing worth commendation' in English verse before the times of Edward III and Richard II

(Puttenham 1936: 60); and perhaps Gower himself would have agreed with him, for he observes that 'fewe men endite | In oure englissh'. Chaucer and Gower, in fact, aspired to the European title of honour, 'poet'—though Chaucer dares apply the title only to the Latin classics or to those Italian moderns, Dante and Petrarch, from whose writings he was the first to render passages into English (on these translations, see further §5.7 below). There is less novelty, and less ostensible ambition, about the two other great Ricardian poets, William Langland and the *Gawain*-poet, if only because they wrote in the ancient native measure of alliterative verse and had no call to discredit such of their predecessors as they knew—perhaps, in the case of Langland, *Wynnere and Wastoure*, which is the earliest survivor, from the 1350s, of the so-called Alliterative Revival. By contrast, Chaucer evidently found previous writings in his own metres, couplet or stanza, distinctly artless. His parodic tail-rhyme romance of Sir Thopas suggests that he may have known a collection such as the Auchinleck manuscript, copied *c.* 1330 (see Turville-Petre 1996: 108–41). This big volume contains saints' lives and religious poems, romances and tales, and historical and political pieces, all in the old manner, many of them translated from French or AN. Nor, one may suppose, would Chaucer have been much impressed by such long poems as *Cursor Mundi* (*c.* 1300), the *Handlyng Synne* of Robert Mannyng, or the very popular mid-century *Prick of Conscience* (on these, see further §5.2 below). Yet the chronicle-romance of the Scottish poet John Barbour (*c.* 1375) shows that Gower and Chaucer were not alone in their mastery of that common long-poem metre, the octosyllabic couplet.

The rising status of English in the latter part of the fourteenth century is reflected also in the production of prose texts. The most momentous of these was the Wycliffite translation of the Bible, produced in the 1380s and 1390s possibly by Nicholas of Hereford and John Purvey (on the Wycliffite Bible, see §5.1 below). This is also the age of the first mystical writers in English, Walter Hilton, Julian of Norwich, and the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*. At the same time, English writers begin to render what Chaucer's Friar called 'scole-matere' (*CT* III. 1272) in their own vernacular. Following in the footsteps of King Alfred, Chaucer made a translation of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*; and his contemporary Thomas Usk, in the extraordinary apologia *The Testament of Love*, translated arguments from the *De Consolatione* as well as from St Anselm's *De Concordia Praescientiae et Praedestinationis* (see further pp. 376–8 below). Towards the end of the century, John Trevisa produced a series of translations for his Gloucestershire patron Lord Berkeley (on Trevisa, see Fowler 1995). The first of these, a rendering of Higden's *Polychronicon*, is prefaced by an imaginary dialogue between a Lord and a Clerk in which the Lord invokes many precedents, including that of King Alfred, in support of his wish for translations from the Latin (Burrow and Turville-Petre 2005: 235–42; see also pp. 82–3 below). Trevisa also translated for Berkeley the *De Proprietatibus Rerum* of Bartholomaeus Anglicus, an encyclopedic work which includes much scientific and medical lore, and the *De Regimine Principum* of Giles of Rome. Trevisa's work for his patron, local and

limited though it was, may be compared with the major series of translations undertaken under royal patronage in fourteenth-century France (on this latter, see Lusignan 1986: ch. 4). It is in this period, from about 1375, that treatments of technical scientific matters begin to appear in English (see Voigts 1996 and pp. 413–14 below). In the 1390s Chaucer wrote his *Treatise on the Astrolabe* for his little son, as he says, 'in my lighte Englissh' (Prol. 51).

All the evidence suggests that, as the century progresses, English took an increasing share in more and more domains of use (see Catto 2003). In 1362 a statute ordered that all cases in the law courts should be pleaded in English, and in 1363 the Chancellor opened Parliament with a speech in English (recorded officially, however, in French). Writing in 1385, John Trevisa reported that, whereas before the plague of 1349 children learned and construed Latin ('grammar') in French, schools were by his time using English for that purpose—with the unfortunate result, Trevisa adds, that contemporary children knew no more French 'þan . . . here lift heele' [their left heel] (Sisam 1921: 149). Trevisa's observation is supported by the appearance, from *c.* 1400, of a large number of treatises on Latin grammar in English, for the first time since Ælfric (for a collection of these, see Thomson 1984). This is also the period when, most significantly, French loan words flood into English, 'the rate of new adoptions into English reaching a peak in the second half of the fourteenth century as the uses of French were eroded by English' (Burnley 1992: 431). No doubt Thomas Usk spoke for many when, in the prologue to his *Testament of Love*, he wrote:

Let than clerkes endyten in Latyn, for they have the propertie of science and the knowynge in that facultie; and lette Frenchmen in their Frenche also endyten their queynt termes, for it is kyndely [natural] to their mouthes; and let us shewe our fantasyes in suche wordes as we lerneden of our dames tonge. (*IoV* 30)

Yet the relationships between the three languages were more complex than Usk suggests; for not only did each of them adopt or adapt words and forms from the other, but also texts in one language may have words or phrases from another embedded in them. The most obvious form of such code-switching appears in macaronic verse and in texts such as *Piers Plowman* where Latin quotations from the Bible and elsewhere are irregularly introduced (see further §3.5 below); but code-switching is also a feature of many more practical types of text in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: sermons, business and municipal records, legal documents, medical and scientific writings (see Trotter 2000; Voigts 1996; Rothwell 1994). Where the languages are intertwined in this way, it can be difficult to distinguish between linguistic borrowing and code-switching. When Chaucer writes, in his General Prologue to *The Canterbury Tales* (I. 353), of the Franklin's 'table dormant', is he writing English or is he code-switching to French, as the word order noun–adjective may suggest? How would he have pronounced the phrase? A modern editor has to decide whether to italicize or not (none do); but in Chaucer's trilingual world, the switch (if that is what it was) would have passed unnoticed.

John Gower's *Mirour de l'omme* may be taken to mark the end of literary composition in AN. In aristocratic circles especially, fifteenth-century readers continued to favour writings in French (see Pearsall 2001); but these tastes were satisfied either by contemporary continental writers such as Christine de Pizan or else by works from the past (including AN: Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, owned a copy of his ancestor's *Livre de seyntz medicines*). French was nonetheless still in active use for a number of practical purposes (see Vising 1923: 77–8), most obviously as 'Law French', which long outlasted the Middle Ages. French also continued for many years after 1400 to be, along with Latin, a favoured language for government records and communications. So when in the 1420s the Privy Seal clerk Thomas Hoccleve (d. 1426) compiled a collection of more than 1,000 model documents for the benefit of his successors, the majority are in French, with Latin evidently reserved for the grander and more formal missives. There is not a single document in English.

By the 1420s, however, English was already making fresh advances as an official or documentary language, with the encouragement of King Henry V (Allmand 1992: 419–25). Towards the end of his reign, in 1417, Henry switched from French to English in his Signet letters (the Signet being a more personal office than the Privy Seal), and in the following years an increasing number and variety of government writings employ English. The royal clerks who wrote these tended to regularize their English forms (spellings, inflexions, and the like) according to what modern scholars call a 'Chancery Standard'; and in the course of the fifteenth century, derivatives of this form of London English came to be accepted as the proper way to write the vernacular (see Smith 1996: 66–77). Ever since the decline of the Late West Saxon written tradition at the time of the Conquest, English had suffered in comparison with French and, still more, with Latin from the fact that its writings reflected local dialectal usages, such that a text like *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, from the north-west Midlands, would have struck a contemporary London reader as alien and even on occasion unintelligible in its language; but by the end of the fifteenth century writers and also printers were generally conforming to what might already be called a King's English, current throughout England (though not the kingdom of Scotland).

This standardization of written English, by ensuring a potential readership nationwide, was one step towards the eventual supersession of Latin by the vernacular in these islands; but that process was very far from complete by 1550. Scholarly and technical discourse in the fifteenth century was still most at home in Latin, though English comes to figure more in scientific and medical texts (see Voigts 1996) and the lawyer Sir John Fortescue did write treatises on governance in English as well as in Latin (discussion in Simpson 2002: 225–9). Vernacular writings on religious subjects were much inhibited, in the wake of Lollard controversy, by the Constitutions of Archbishop Arundel (1409), which banned translations of the Bible and made it dangerous to write in English on theological topics (see further §5.2 below): as Bishop Reginald Pecock found to his cost, when his scholastic treatises led to a conviction for heresy. Yet

already in the fifteenth century one can see the beginnings of developments within Latin itself which were to restrict its ranges of use. Speaking of an early fifteenth-century Anglo-Latin poet, Rigg detects the start of a 'trend towards classicism which remained unbroken until "humanism" and "Neo-Latin" came into its own. Latin was becoming an object of study rather than a casually used tool; this signals the beginning of its retreat into the schoolroom' (Rigg 1992: 302). Yet what C. S. Lewis called 'the process of classicization which was finally to kill Latin' (1954: 134) was still only in its very early stages among late medieval English humanists (on these, see Weiss 1967). Thomas More's *Utopia* was far from being a schoolroom text, and so was John Milton's *De Doctrina Christiana*.

The increasing efficiency of manuscript production in the fifteenth century, together with the advent of printing in the 1470s, ensured that writings stood a much improved chance of surviving into modern times, so that one hardly has to reckon any more with what Wilson, in the title of his work (1970), called 'lost literature'. Yet there was also, certainly, an actual increase in the volume of writing in English during this period. For the first time, too, English writers and readers began to claim for their own literature, in poetry at least, a tradition of high artistic excellence. They looked to Chaucer and Gower as the founders of this great tradition, strongly supported in the next generation by John Lydgate (d. 1449). Along with Chaucer, indeed, it was Lydgate who exerted most influence upon succeeding poets ambitious of a reputation with polite readers (see Simpson 2002, *passim*), poets as various as Charles d'Orléans, Osbern Bokenham, Stephen Hawes, and John Skelton in England, and Robert Henryson and William Dunbar in Scotland. For these men, the ambition was to be associated with what George Puttenham later called the 'company of courtly makers'; so they follow their masters in, for instance, metrical forms such as rhyme royal and the decasyllabic couplet, and also in styles of writing which declare their ambition by sustained periodic syntax and, sometimes, Latinate diction of the 'aureate' kind. By no means all poets wrote like this—the fifteenth century is the age of the carol and of the ballad, as well as of the verse drama—but it is the 'Chaucerian' poets, Scottish as well as English, who best manifest the new-found confidence in the vernacular as a language of literature with its own tradition and status, rivalled by Latin, certainly, but no longer by AN.

William Caxton (d. 1492) printed and published editions of poems by Chaucer, Gower, and Lydgate, including *Troilus and Criseyde* and *The Canterbury Tales*, *Confessio Amantis*, and Lydgate's *Troy Book* (on Caxton, see further §3.6 below). Most of his many publications, however, represent that other tradition in which fifteenth-century writers excelled: prose translation. Caxton himself made many translations, mostly from French, some from Latin, one from Dutch (*Reynard the Fox*); he also printed the works of other translators, the earliest of whom are Chaucer, translator of Boethius, and John Trevisa, translator of Higden. Caxton is happy to accept the work of Chaucer, whom he describes

as 'first foundeur and enbelissher of ornate eloquence in our englissh'; but he finds Trevisa's English in need of being modernized and 'a lytel embelysshed' (Caxton, *P&E* 37, 67). Prose translation was for Caxton a current, not an antiquarian taste; so he prints mainly quite recent works, such as translations by the humanist John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, and by Anthony, Earl Rivers (see further pp. 101–2 below), and also the *Morte Darthur* of Sir Thomas Malory (see further pp. 324–7 below). This last represents a genre, prose romance, that had been long established in France but was to become familiar in English only after about 1450. Caxton was a shrewd literary entrepreneur, and his preferences for Chaucerian verse and for prose translation may be taken to represent not unfairly the strengths of English writing at the beginning of the Tudor age. English writers still drew heavily on French and Latin sources, but their prose and, especially, their verse now had their own traditions, upon which future writers such as Lord Berners in prose or, in verse, Sir Thomas Wyatt (see further §5.7 below) could draw.

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1.2 Manuscript Culture

Tim William Machan

Medieval Book Production

Like all literary works, medieval translations emerged from institutional and cultural practices whose principles made possible their every feature, and whose restrictions they everywhere made the foundation of structural design and aesthetic achievement. Medieval translations worked creatively with the requirements of medieval culture, making of them, by transformation and manipulation, some of their own most distinctive, successful accomplishments. Other contributions to this volume consider practical, theoretical, and social aspects of these accomplishments. Here the material side is our concern; it will be addressed by referring in detail to a selection of representative manuscripts from the OE and ME periods.

'Material' here means the documents in which medieval translations survive—parchment and paper manuscripts, or, as codicologists label them, books (this latter term, used throughout the section for both manuscripts and printed books, neatly collapses the distinction between manuscript and print, which, in any case, late medieval writers and readers probably would not have recognized). And by 'their accomplishments' are meant both the ways in which these books physically presented translations and the ways in which these presentations, in their variety and nuance, articulated meaning. Manuscript culture, that is, involved not only the physical production of books but also the books' production of affect and sense. Very generally, both kinds of production took place through various bibliographical codes—through the presence (or absence) of prefaces, colophons, and the like, and through elements of design, including layout, script, marginalia, and illuminations. In this way, for OE as well as ME, the context of a manuscript culture fostered the variability of document, text, and literary work that lay at the heart of late medieval translation and literature in general.

Though the venues of manuscript production and some of its methods changed, certain features of medieval manuscript culture remained constant and prominent between the beginning of the eighth century (from which the earliest OE manuscripts date) and the end of the fifteenth century (from which the latest ME ones do). In the Anglo-Saxon period, book-making was dominated by monastic scriptoria, where the Rule of St Benedict encouraged, even required, the practice, with houses at Winchester and Canterbury evolving into centres of book production. But not surprisingly, given the isolated character of many early monastic houses, nonce copying for a particular occasion was common, too, and

the Anglo-Saxon period never witnessed the development of the larger scriptoria found in the later Middle Ages (see discussion in Ker 1957). By the twelfth century, this monastic domination of book production was weakening, for at that time some houses began to contract for books outside the monastery—in effect, hiring England's first professional copyists—while the founding of Oxford and Cambridge created new and growing demands for university books (fuller discussion is in Gullick 1998). These could be met by scholars copying their own books or, through the *pecia* system, by the serial borrowing and copying of books or sections of books from a centralized location. As the ME period progressed, two other venues developed and eventually came to dominate book-making. The first of these involved what might be called the amateur copyist—literate men and women (such as Robert Thornton) who increasingly selected texts to make copies of works that interested them. The second venue was professional book-making, especially in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. On the one hand, such professional copying embraced individual scribes (such as Jean d'Angoulême's Duxworth), whom aristocratic households employed as copyists. On the other, it included the various book artisans—limners and painters as well as copyists—who formed guilds, congregated in the environs of St Paul's Cathedral, and loosely collaborated with one another to produce, mostly, bespoken books—books especially made to order for customers who specified their contents, size, and design. It is out of this community, eventually, that the early printed book trade would develop (for discussion, see Parkes 1976; Doyle and Parkes 1978; Christianson in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989).

Within these venues of production, the mechanics of book-making presented additional opportunities for variation in the contents and design of manuscripts. The fact that texts were handwritten on parchment—by authors and scribes alike—allowed for both intentional and accidental alterations of a kind not possible in today's computer age, where a text saved on disk ordinarily retains the form in which it was saved, and where copies of a book printed from disk ordinarily all have the same text. Scribal misreading of letter forms could easily produce *lene* from *leue* or *list* from *lift*, for example, and the longer a text or the more copies made from it, the greater the possibility for such divergence. One translator, indeed, who calls himself only 'MN', laments the quality of the man-uscript from which he has to work in producing his translation of the *Mirouer aux simples ames* by Marguerite Porete ('the Frensche booke þat I schal write aftir is yuel writen'), while another, translating the Birgittine Office, suggests that the exemplar's 'filia tua domino' should perhaps be emended to 'filia tu a domino' (Ellis 1982: 19–20). Further variation was rooted in the production of books through the assemblage of small parchment gatherings called booklets, for in this method the final form of a book—and its effects on the works it contained—was routinely open to reconstruction and never perfectly realized (see further Hanna 1996). A text that was itself subject to variation in transmission could always be removed from one manuscript and copied into another, in the process perhaps moving from a context of saints' lives to one of scientific treatises, or from poetry

to prose, or from a casual, unadorned personal miscellany to a professional, de luxe folio devoted to a single work and replete with illuminations. Particularly in the later Middle Ages, after the Conquest, when English was subordinated in status to Latin and (at least until the late fourteenth century) French, such physical variability was augmented by broader cultural attitudes towards works produced in it (see the contribution by Edwards and Pearsall in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989). Even as manual copying provided a means for textual transformation, that is, so did a diminished sense of vernacular authorship and of the integrity of vernacular texts provide a motive for it. When writers like the Anglo-Saxon monk Ælfric or the fourteenth-century cleric John Gower expressed anxiety over the transmission of their works, imploring writers and readers not to alter what had been written, or overseeing the production of manuscript copies, they did so with the knowledge that such alteration was the very thing that medieval manuscript culture sanctioned. Ælfric's *Homilies*, indeed, were especially subject to scribal simplification and rearrangement in design and contents as well as style (see discussion by Godden in Ælfric 1979; Swan 2000).

Manuscript Contents

As already noted, the variability that medieval manuscript culture produced and sustained manifested itself in manuscripts' bibliographic codes. With respect to the contents of a manuscript, this variability involved the context of a particular work, specifically the works bound with it (which could include the source of a translation) and a variety of marginal and interlinear glosses. Some works appear as the sole (or virtually sole) item in a codex, as with the copy of the tenth-century translation, previously ascribed to Alfred the Great, of Orosius' *Historiarum Adversum Paganos Libri Septem* in BL MS Additional 47967, or the copies of John Trevisa's translations (1387, 1398–9) of, respectively, Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon* (preserved in BL MSS Add. 24194 and Stowe 65) and Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum* (in BL MS Add. 27944), and numerous copies of the Bible. While such books bespeak a sense of the integrity of particular works, they also point to certain practical consequences of medieval manuscript production. Copies of the Bible can exceed 350 leaves (e.g. BL MS Add. 15580), and even popular works might also do so: the copy in BL MS Arundel 99 of Lydgate's *Troy Book*, a translation of the Troy story from the Latin version of Guido delle Colonne, exceeds 150 leaves. Producing manuscripts of individual translations of this length would have been expensive as well as time-consuming, precluding the inclusion of other translations in the same volume.

When several translations do appear together, the manuscript can reflect several literary and personal impulses. Strictly speaking, for example, certain works are collections of individual translations, including Ælfric's *Homilies* and Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*. Lydgate's collective organizing principle is also present in his source, Laurent de Premierfait's version of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*. In these cases, the manuscripts present a composite whole, but in

others the organizing principle is less the integrity of a multi-part work than the personal interests of a scribe, compiler, or owner. For BL MS Add. 36704, one individual played all three roles, for this is a fifteenth-century autograph copy of John Capgrave's translations of the Lives of Sts Augustine and Gilbert. More idiosyncratic is BL MS Add. 16165, the work of the late medieval bibliophile John Shirley; here, covering more than 250 leaves, translations like Chaucer's *Boece* and Trevisa's *Gospel of Nicodemus* eclectically appear alongside the *Regula Sacerdotalis Scripta*; Edward, Duke of York's *Master of Game* (see further pp. 99–100 below); Lydgate's *Complaint of the Black Knight*; and a ballade by Richard Beauchamp about Isabelle, Countess of Warwick. (On this manuscript, see further Lyall in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989: 16–19.) A less personalized and more common principle for grouping translations in individual manuscripts is thematic. BL MS Add. 23002, for example, collects several scientific treatises; treatises on agriculture (Geoffrey on Palladius) and arboriculture (Nicholas Bollard), as well as anonymous *tractatus* on natural philosophy and the making of a small ship, all in Latin, accompany Chaucer's *Treatise on the Astrolabe* (on this translation, see further pp. 138–9, 413 below). BL MS Add. 17376 contains over 200 leaves of translated hymns and prayers, while the tiny octavo BL MS Add. 10046 brings together specifically Wycliffite translations of the Psalms and Canticles with a translated commentary on the Athanasian Creed. Courtly themes join religious ones in BL MS Add. 36983, which presents the translated *Kings of Cologne* and Chaucer's original ballade 'Truth' alongside *Cursor Mundi* (a translation of biblical and related material; on this last, see further pp. 211, 247 below) and a translated verse life of St Erasmus in a 300-leaf quarto containing nineteen distinct items. Altogether, these texts suggest that readers were not always aware of or troubled by the translated status of the texts they were reading: translations, that is, were not regularly seen as a separate category to be grouped together.

Wholly different organizing principles emerge from manuscripts that group translations with their sources. Compared to the principles just discussed, this one is relatively uncommon, and is far more likely to occur for religious or academic translations than for popular ones like Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* or *Troy Book*, which never appear with their sources. Psalters and hymnals in particular benefited from this presentation, with many manuscripts intercalating, a line at a time, the Latin original and English translation—in that order—often supplementing the translation with additional commentary. Such is the case with manuscripts of Richard Rolle's translations of the Psalms, where a line of Latin is followed by a line of translation and then commentary (e.g. BL MSS Arundel 158, Harley 1806); in MS Add. 10046 (a distinct translation of the Psalter), the first line of each psalm appears in Latin, followed by its translation as the title of the psalm and then the entire psalm in translation. Such side-by-side use of Latin original and English translation continues into the era of print, appearing regularly in the printed translations of Alexander Barclay, for example.

Manuscripts of Chaucer's translation of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius have several ways of publishing the translation in tandem with its

source. One extreme is represented by Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Bodley 797 and Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 215, where the initial lines of individual proses and metres of Boethius' original function as prefatory rubrics to the English translations of the entire prose or metre. Another is CUL MS Ii.3.21, which presents a compendium of aids for reading and studying Boethius' work. This substantial volume of nearly 300 leaves opens with an alphabetized list of topoi in the *Consolatio*. After this follows the entire Latin source and English translation, intercalated a section at a time and surrounded by marginal and interlinear glosses; and the book concludes with William of Aragon's thirteenth-century commentary on the *Consolatio*. While other works, such as the OE *Exodus* (in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Junius 11) and the ME *King Horn* (in, e.g., CUL MS Gg.4.27.2; Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Laud Misc. 108; BL MS Harley 2253), offer few textual or bibliographical clues to identify themselves as translations, CUL Ii.3.21 thus foregrounds two major issues: that the *Boece* is a translation and that as a translation it participates in and even contributes to long and complex traditions of commentary and interpretation.

Translation, Glosses, Marginalia

Beginning with Augustinian views of language, which distinguish the fixed truth of an utterance or work from the potentially flawed words in which it might be represented, and eventually channelled through the explanatory strategies and institutions associated with scholasticism, these interpretative traditions developed as ways of stabilizing and articulating the meaning of works whose grammar, allusions, or ideas might be obscure in translation. More typical than the elaborate apparatus of CUL Ii.3.21 are the unobtrusive marginal and interlinear glosses that often accompany translations in medieval manuscripts. This strategy is especially common in Psalters and hymnals, as in the Anglo-Saxon BL MSS Cotton Vespasian D.xii and Cotton Julius A.vi, in which interlinear glosses in OE accompany the interpretative paraphrase that is adjoined to every psalm (Vespasian D.xii) or that stands alone (Julius A.vi). In both cases the glosses are clearly part of the original design of the manuscript—in Vespasian D.xii they are in fact written in red—but the productive nature of this interpretative strategy is clear from BL MS Add. 37517, a Psalter manuscript that utilizes Latin glosses as part of its original design but also includes sporadic glossing in OE from a later hand.

By stabilizing and in effect completing these manuscripts, glossing becomes a bibliographical strategy that partially redefines the original; the composite literary work, in other words, comes to include source, translation, and interpretation. The intrinsic relation interpretative material could bear to translations is especially clear in the Wycliffite Bible, for which it may well be that the only truly heterodox and therefore problematic features were a handful of glosses (Hudson 1988: 24). In more mundane cases, glosses—whether of the original or its translation—assist the reader by articulating the structure of a narrative,

identifying historical references, or simply clarifying grammar. For example, in BL MS Arundel 119, which contains Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*, marginal notes offer quick guides to the story and its morality, including 'The wordes of þe host to the monk', 'What availeþ to a kyng or to a prince to ben goodly and benygne of his port to his puple', and 'how þe pore puple suporten and beren vp þe estat of a kyng'. As in original works, such glosses and marginal notes function as convenient commentary on all levels of meaning, from the simplest narrative line to the most complex themes. A similar strategy occurs in the copy of the Wycliffite Bible in BL MS Add. 15580, in which marginal notations in the Gospels specify the readings for particular days in the Church calendar. Grammatical glosses vary from one-word equivalents to extended translations, a range that manuscripts of Ælfric's *Grammar* well illustrate. In BL MS Royal 15.B.xxii, a variety of individual words is glossed with interlinear translations: 'rex/kynig', 'Nomen/þis nama', 'et verbum/and word', and 'homo/mann.' The elementary nature of glosses like these, whose meanings would seem to be obvious even to a beginning student, points as much to glossing's rhetorical functions—its role in visually conveying authority—as to its semantic ones.

More ambitious glosses to Ælfric's *Grammar* than these, however, occur in Royal 15.B.xxii as well as in BL MS Cotton Faustina MS A.x. In some cases, the Royal manuscript interlinearly translates and glosses the Latin original with normalized syntax, so that 'pecuniam accepi' is rendered as 'ic underfeng feoh', 'amare vollo [*sic*]' as 'ic will lufian', and 'licet mihi bibere' as 'mot ic drincan'. The Faustina manuscript contains several layers of glossing, including Latin marginal notes to identify the topic (such as 'De adiectiuis') and interlinear translations of Latin examples, such as 'þu lufodest' for 'tu amas', where the preterite tense of the OE is in fact incorrect. Beyond these Latin and English glosses, however, the manuscript includes occasional French translations of the English glosses. To illustrate the preterite perfect, for instance, Ælfric cites 'amaui', after which occurs OE 'ic lufode fulfremedlice' [I loved completely]; above the OE is French 'io amei'. In the same vein, 'ic stande' is adjoined to 'sto' and glossed interlinearly with 'io esstois', though in a passage reading 'amabor ic beo gelufad' French 'io serai amet' occurs above the Latin and not the English. Such glossing bears witness to the multilingual vitality of England after the Conquest. But, productive and popular as glossing might have been for medieval manuscripts, it would sometimes seem to complicate rather than facilitate comprehension, particularly in instances of grammatical incongruity between Latin and English. To illustrate the masculine, feminine, and neuter forms of indefinite pronouns, for example, Ælfric cites 'aliquis aliqua aliquod'; he cites 'unus una unum' to similar effect when writing about numerals. Working in a language in which grammatical gender had become moribund, the eleventh-century glossator of Royal 15.B.xxii interlinearly glosses all three forms of 'aliquis' with 'sum' and all three forms of 'unus' with 'an'.

While glossing traditions are ubiquitous in the manuscript culture of medieval translation, many uncertainties remain about them. These arise when their

content seems superfluous ('mann' for 'homo') or obscure ('sum' three times for 'aliquis aliqua aliquod') but also from the unpredictability of their occurrence. Heavily glossed as Faustina MS A.x and Royal 15.B.xxii are, for example, a contemporary copy of Ælfric's *Grammar* in BL MS Harley 3271 is virtually free of glosses. The uncertain authorship of glosses also complicates their significance. In some cases programmes of glossing are part of both the conception of a work and its manuscript transmission; this is the case with Rolle's Psalter but also with Wycliffite translations, in which, for ideological reasons, the differentiation of original from gloss was particularly important. In the prologue to the Wycliffite *Glossed Gospels* in Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.1.38, the scribe is unusually articulate about such a distinction:

þe text of þe gospel is set first bi itsilf, an hool sentence togider, and þanne sueþ [follows] þe exposicioun in þis maner: first a sentence of a doctour declaringe þe text is set aftir þe text, and in þe ende of þat sentence, þe name of þe doctour seiynge it is set, þat men wite certeynli hou feer [far] þat doctour goiþ. (Ghosh 2000: 20)

But in other cases, not only are glosses poorly differentiated from the translation proper but the glossing seems to have arisen as an afterthought, some time in the manuscript tradition after the original copy was made. Glossing in the ten extant manuscripts of Chaucer's *Boece* thus varies from heavy (approximately 200 glosses in Bodley 797) to nearly non-existent (just seven in BL MS Harley 2421), though it is clear that a core of glosses entered the tradition fairly early in the fifteenth century, after Chaucer had died, and that these glosses began to circulate with the text of Chaucer's translation. Here again appears the variability of medieval manuscript culture, for in the case of this particular work the integrity of a translation came to include, variously, selections from the Boethian original prefacing each prose and metre, Chaucer's complete translation of each of these sections, and a gloss tradition that arose and developed independently of the translator (see discussion in Machan 1987).

Titles, Prefaces, Colophons

Turning from the contents of books to their design, we find numerous bibliographical codes that likewise manifest the variability of medieval manuscript culture, even as they contribute to the production of meaning. Literally at the outset of manuscripts, tables of contents render the structure of a volume both transparent and, at least provisionally, fixed. In manuscripts containing only one work, like Add. 47967 (*Orosius*), BL MS Add. 10340 (*Boece*), and Add. 27944 (*De Proprietatibus Rerum*), such tables itemize books and sections within them, sometimes in extensive detail; in Add. 27944, for instance, the table of contents fills six entire folios. Today, we take such tables for granted, but they were scarcely inevitable or ubiquitous in the Middle Ages, first appearing with regularity only at the end of the twelfth century. And while they articulate the integrity of an entire manuscript, enabling a reader to compare text to table and thereby

identify any omissions, by typical medieval practice they rarely include foliation and thus offer limited aid to a reader hoping to use them for quick location of particular passages. In manuscripts containing several distinct translations, the integrity established by a table of contents is that of the book in its entirety as a reflection of the particular and evolving interests of those who owned or created it. The eclecticism of Add. 16165, which includes a copy of Chaucer's *Boece*, thus well reflects the quirkiness of its compiler, John Shirley, including his vision of the book's totality in what he describes as 'þe Prologe of þe Kalundare of þis litell booke': 'if þat you list for to entendel Of þis booke to here legende' (f. 2r: for an edition of the 'kalundare', see Hammond 1927: 194–6). These same eclectic impulses were furthered by the inherently open-ended nature of medieval manuscripts, to which booklets of additional works could always be added and whose blank pages could always be filled with additional writing. Consequently, even individually designed books containing multiple texts and translations, books like Harley 2253 and its 116 items, often lack the tables of contents that would have pronounced them complete. For a work that grew through accretion over time by diverse hands, such as CUL MS Ff.1.6 (the 'Findern' manuscript), a table of contents would be even less viable.

In the absence of devices like foliation and tables of contents, prefaces and epilogues could both help to establish the integrity of a volume of translations and serve as opportunities for the propagation of variation among copies of the same work. Ælfric thus used the preface to his translation of the Book of Genesis to enjoin scribes and readers to attend to the authorial correctness of their texts:

Ic bidde nu on Godes naman gif hwa þas boc awritan wylle þæt he hig gerihte wel be þære bysne forþan þe ic nah geweald þeah þe hig hwa to woge bringe þurh lease writeras and hit byð þonne his pleoh na min. Mycel yfel deð se unwritere gif he nele hys woh gerihtan.

In the name of God I ask of anyone who desires to copy this book that he should correct it by the exemplar, because I don't have the power to prevent anyone from introducing error through false scribes, and it will then be his error, not mine. The man who miscopies does great evil if he will not correct his error.

> (Mitchell and Robinson 1992: 187; another version is appended
> to the preface of Ælfric's *Grammar* in BL MS Harley 3271, f. 7v)

By the later Middle Ages, prefaces to translations were more common (though still scarcely obligatory) and had become forums for discussion of a variety of issues, including the circumstances of a translation and its methods of composition. In the preface to the *Astrolabe*, for example, Chaucer claims to have produced the translation for his son Lewis, whose youth and unfamiliarity with Latin have led him to adopt a simple, expansive, and even repetitive style. It is the epilogue to his translation of the *Polychronicon* that allows Trevisa to address these same issues:

My worthy and worshipful lord Sir Thomas lord of Berkley, I John Trevysa youre prest and youre bedman [servant] ... holde in hert and thenke in thought and mene in mynde

youre…speche that ye speke…that ye wold have Englissh translacioun of Ranulph of Chestres bokes of [*var.*, and] cronycles. Therefore y wolde fonnde [attempt] to…make Englissh translacion of the same bokes.   (*IoV* 134)

In Add. 24194 Trevisa details the day, month, year, and regnal year on which he completed his translation: 'þis translacioun is yended [ended] in a þorsday þe ey3teþe day of Aueryl þe 3ere of oure lord a þowsand þre hondred foure score and seuene, þe tenþe 3ere of kyng Richard þe secounde after þe conquest of Engelond' (f. 262r). Trevisa's concerns are fundamentally circumstantial— identifying his patron and his source, deflecting the criticism of the pusillan- imous, and chronologically situating his own activities as a writer—but the preface to Chaucer's *Astrolabe* well illustrates the critical potential of what is essentially a bibliographical code by moving from Lewis to a discussion of the viability of translation in general and of English in particular. Even more is this potential realized in the preface to the so-called Late Version of the Wycliffite Bible, which rationalizes the translation and its 'open' methods in detail (see further pp. 78–80, 199–200 below).

   Within and between individual translations themselves, titles and colophons served much the same purpose of establishing the integrity of a work and providing opportunities for variation among copies. In their simplest forms, such devices simply announce a work's beginning or ending: 'here bigynneþ a prologue on þe salmes of þe Sauter' (Add. 10046, f. 1r); 'Here endeþe þe Apocolips of Ioon' (BL MS Add. 11858, f. 118r); 'incipit liber boicij de conso- lacione philosophie' [Here begins the book of Boethius on the consolation of philosophy] (MS Add. 10340, f. 3v). Incipits like these may well have origi- nated with the translators themselves, but scribes were just as likely to create them as part of a book's design, as with the colophon to the second recension of Ælfric's *Homilies* in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 178: 'in hoc codicello continentur duodecim sermones anglice, quos accepimus de libris quos ælfricus abbas anglice transtulit' [In this small book are contained twelve English sermons that we have taken from books that Abbot Ælfric translated into English] (Ælfric 1979: lxxvi). In manuscripts like Add. 36983, with its nine- teen distinct items, such bibliographical devices constitute an essential ordering principle of layout and design: 'Here now of the trenite dere | And makyng of þis worlde here' (*Cursor Mundi*, f. 3r); 'Incipit carmen secundum ordinem litterarum Alphabetis' (Chaucer's 'ABC', f. 175r); 'Thus begynnyth the lyffe off thre kyngys of Coleyne' (f. 179r); 'Thus endythe þe lyffe of þe iij kyngys of coloyne primo die Januare Anno domini mccccxlij' (f. 215v). As fundamen- tally practical as titles and colophons might be, they thus allowed individual expression in language, style, and form—prose or verse. Yet another such styl- istic variation occurs at the beginning of the *Golden Legend* (a translation of James of Varaggio's large collection of saints' lives, the *Legenda Aurea*) in BL MS Add. 11565, where the epigraph identifies the overall work, its source, and initial tale: 'Here bygynneth the lyfe of seyntes and this boke is called yn latyn

legenda Sanctorum, of the whiche first bygynneth the life of Seint Andrewe the apostle' (f. 34r).

By extension for titles as for prefaces, what began as a feature of design in translation manuscripts became an opportunity for literary-critical conceits, discussions, and self-consciousness that collectively advanced the objectives and achievements of English writing in general at the end of the Middle Ages. In Add. 36704 (the autograph manuscript by John Capgrave) the translator uses the epigraph as a place to identify himself along with the work being translated and the occasion of its original delivery as a sermon: 'And here begynnyth a tretis of the orderes þat be vndyr þe reule of oure fader seynt augustin drawe oute of a sermoun seyd be frer Ion capgraue at cambrige þe ȝere of our lord a mccccxxij' (f. 116r). In BL MS Add. 30031, a quarto devoted exclusively to Nicholas Love's translation of the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, there called *Speculum Vitae Christi*, an English rubric at the start announces the work, while a Latin one at the end identifies its translator: 'Here bigynneþ þe prohemie of þe book þat is clepid þe myror of þe blessid lyf of ihesu cryst' (f. 1r), and 'Explicit speculum vite christi iste liber translatus fuit de latino in anglicum per dominum Nicholaum Loue priorem monasterii de mounte grace ordinis cartusiensis' [Here ends the mirror of the life of Christ. This book was translated from Latin into English by master Nicholas Love, prior of the Carthusian monastery at Mount Grace] (f. 110r). Together, this title and colophon thus epitomize the linking of original Latin with translated English through a specific translator. In Add. 16165, John Shirley demarcates and identifies two works with a notice that is both colophon and epigraph and in which a bibliographic code becomes an occasion for recording literary history and authorial biography:

And þus endeþe þe translacion of Boece . . . translated by þe moral and famous Chaucyer which first enlumyned þe lande with retoryen [*sic*] and eloquent langage of oure rude englisshe modere tonge And filowyng [*sic*] begynneþe þe translacion of Nichodemes out of latyn into englisshe laboured by maystre Johan Trevysa doctour in theologye at þe instaunce of Thomas some tyme lord of Berkley.   (f. 94r)

An extreme but perhaps inevitable example of such rhetorical manipulation of a bibliographical code occurs in Lydgate's translations the *Fall of Princes* and the *Troy Book*, both of which conclude with envoys in praise of Henry V and several additional stanzas that are addressed to the poems themselves and that in effect use the humility topos to testify to their own achievement. In this way, a bibliographical device serves as a platform for Lydgate's advice to his prince and for the literary claims of his poetry.

Layout and Design

Within texts, a number of bibliographical codes can articulate meaning in individual manuscripts. Running titles can simply identify the work or section of work on each individual leaf, as with Add. 10340, where the heading of each

page identifies the relevant book of the *Boece*, such as 'liber primus'. Given the malleability of manuscripts, in which leaves might be added or excised, a more complex and textually stabilizing strategy is to divide the running title across the book's gutter, so that in the *De Proprietatibus* translation in Add. 27944, for example, the verso contains 'liber' and the recto 'primus'; and a similar pattern occurs in the copies of the *Troy Book* in Arundel 99 and the Wycliffite Bible in Add. 11858 (e.g. 'þe secounde' on the verso and 'to corinthes' on the recto). Useful as such a strategy could be in maintaining the integrity of a manuscript, however, like many other such strategies it was scarcely inevitable; running titles are absent from Add. 36983, despite its over 250 leaves and nineteen items.

Ink colour and script size can demarcate hierarchies within a work in several ways. In Faustina MS A.x, large capitals (the size of two lines) are used at the beginning of major sections and small capitals at the beginning of subsections, while the English glosses in Julius A.vi and Add. 37517 are significantly smaller—though still well formed—than the Latin hymns and psalms they accompany, so that original and translated explanation are visually as well as linguistically distinguished from one another. This design is further developed in Vespasian D.xii, where the English interlinear glosses are in red, and in Aberdeen, University MS 134. The latter contains a text of the earlier-noted *Myroure of Oure Ladye*, and the translator not only copies the corresponding Latin phrase of the original at the head of each unit of translation, but further promises to help readers distinguish the 'bare englysshe' of the Latin from any partnering 'exposicioun' by underlining the translation at such points in red 'þat ye may knowe þerby wher it [*sc.* the exposition] begynnethe' (Ellis 1982: 25). Colour, indeed, is a particularly prolific device for articulating the structure and meaning of translations. A simple example occurs in the *Boece* in Add. 16165: large red capitals begin the first word of each prose and metre; within the body of the text dark letters highlighted in red articulate the structure of the argument. In the text of Chaucer's 'ABC' found in the eclectic Add. 36983, a large red capital begins each of the verses that expound sequentially on letters of the alphabet. An even simpler, yet still effective, use of colour is in the paragraph marks that often mark slight shifts in sentiment or argument; in the *Polychronicon* translation found in Add. 24194, blue, red, and gold paraphs alternate with one another, while marginal textual cross-references are sometimes written in red or gold. More complex uses of colour to indicate text divisions occur in rubrics—literally, headings or titles written in red. Perhaps most commonly, rubrication is used for headings of individual sections such as the Psalms (Add. 37517) or other books of the Bible (Add. 15580). The vitality of this simple method of text division is particularly apparent in Add. 36704; here John Capgrave rubricates chapter divisions in his autograph copy of his translations of the lives of Sts Augustine and Gilbert and underscores Latin quotations in red. In a related strategy, Nicholas Love promises in the preface to *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* that he will place a marginal 'B' beside passages translated from the original and a marginal 'N' beside his own elaborations, though in the event this design is carried out only sporadically in

the manuscripts (Ellis 1982: 22; Ghosh 2000: 32–3). Like glossing strategies, uses of colour and script could thus offer semantic guidance rather than serve merely as visual decorations.

As with many features of translations in medieval manuscript culture, flexibility and variability are the most prominent features of these several bibliographic codes, which can be combined in any number of ways. The copy of the *Boece* in Add. 10340 thus includes red excerpts from the *Consolatio*, large blue capitals highlighted by red dots to begin individual proses and metres, alternating red and blue paraphs within these sections, and (sporadic) red underscoring of glosses. The Add. 30031 copy of Love's *Mirror* employs red for section headings, for marginal glosses and chapter identifications, for Latin quotations within the work, and, along with blue, for the initial capital letters of individual sections. A particularly adroit use of these bibliographical resources can be found in the Harley 1806 copy of Rolle's Psalter translation. There, individual psalms are introduced by large capitals, some of which have gold leaf. Within the psalms, a line of the original Latin begins with a large capital letter in blue or red, after which follows the English translation underscored in red and begun with a capital letter alternate to the one used in Latin: if the Latin begins with a red letter, the English begins with a blue one. A coloured paraph then introduces a lengthy commentary on the translation, and the entire layout repeats with each subsequent verse. The prominent role such bibliographical codes can play in manuscript culture is suggested by the fact that essentially this same layout appears in other manuscripts of Rolle's translation, such as Add. 17376, and that such codes effectively became standardized in the presentation of Love's *Mirror*.

The most elaborate use of colour in manuscripts of translations occurs, of course, in historiated initials and illuminations. Time-consuming and expensive, such decoration would never have been produced on speculation—on the belief that there would be a customer desiring just such a de luxe manuscript— but rather, within the bespoke traditions of medieval manuscript culture, on a custom-made basis. By the same token, the works selected for illumination are those whose cultural status designated them as significant or prestigious in various ways. Most manuscripts of Chaucer's *Boece* and *Astrolabe*, thus, are largely unadorned, embellished only with rubrication, underscoring, or enlarged capitals decorated with penwork: however long and complex, these are vernacular translations of, respectively, a school text and a scientific treatise, and not works that validate (or seek to validate) English linguistic, literary, or social practice. In this same vein is Harley 2253, the famous early fourteenth-century trilingual manuscript of lyrics and romances that also contains a number of translations; here, reflecting the book's casual status, illumination is generally limited to red paraphs, sporadic red highlighting, and pen flourishes.

Delicate pen flourishes in red surrounding a blue capital letter (for example) are common and efficient decorative devices for marking translations' structural divisions—what medieval literary theory called their *modus tractatus* (fully discussed in Minnis 1988: 118–59). In Arundel 158 and Add. 17376 such capitals

open each psalm, while in BL MS Egerton 2891 they designate the opening of each story in the *South English Legendary*. These kinds of capitals could unify the design of a book even as they demarcated the structure of the works it contained. Add. 11565, for example, opens with translations of the Life of St Bonaventura and a treatise on the Eucharist, followed by the *Golden Legend*, but one design obtains throughout: sections of the first two works and individual legends of the third all open with large, gold capitals on blue backgrounds that are surrounded by green foliated penwork. Another use of illumination to articulate a work's structure occurs in Cotton Julius A.vi, a collection of hymns that commences with two, distinct, organizational devices: a metrical calendar that is highlighted by green, brown, and gold ink and counterpointed, at the foot of the page, by line drawings of individuals performing activities relevant to a particular month (e.g. harvesting in August); and several pages of computus tables (to calculate the date of Easter) that are likewise distinguished by black, red, green, and gold ink. Here again, decoration, structure, and meaning become one.

Such formal features of a text are always relevant, on some level, to questions about the status of a translation and its relation to the source text: for a striking example, where the translator (Robert Grosseteste) imitated the very letter forms of his original, as a way of dramatizing his understanding of the relation of his translation to it, see pp. 131–2 below.

Illumination, Prestige, Variation

In most of these cases, it was a book's religious content that projected cultural prestige and therefore invited programmes of decoration. Some of the most lavishly illustrated medieval English translations, however, are decidedly secular. In these instances, it was likely that the presumptive status of vernacular literature elicited commensurate illuminations in manuscripts; this section has argued, as do all the contributions to the volume, for the importance of translation in relation to developments in vernacular language and literature. BL MS Add. 35298 is one such manuscript. Enormous in size and length, Add. 35298 contains just one work—a translation of the *Legenda Aurea*—and opens with a table of contents specifying all of the legends present in the manuscript. The initial legend is prefaced by a large, gold S with red and blue highlights, the same colours that are used for paraphs to demarcate the structure of the story itself; a red colophon concludes the first legend and introduces the second, and this pattern is repeated throughout the manuscript, with slightly smaller capitals than that which began the volume. The larger and longer Add. 27944, which contains Trevisa's translation of *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, begins with a six-page table of contents of red titles begun by gold or blue capitals and set within an acanthus border. Similar acanthus borders frame the opening of each of the work's books, which are likewise demarcated by multicoloured titles, within which red and blue paraphs serve their typical rhetorical functions. Such design programmes could

in fact become as integral to a work's appearance as the text itself. Both Stowe 65 and Add. 24194, for example, present Trevisa's *Polychronicon* translation with multicoloured pages set within elaborate borders at the beginning of each Book, and the latter even includes representation of a monk, presumably Higden or Trevisa, sitting at a desk and writing.

In this recurrence of a decorative programme in different manuscripts of the same work, translations repeat a late medieval focus on specific works and individuals as means for channelling increasing interest in English writing. Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* and Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (themselves both translations to a considerable extent) characteristically appeared in large, lavish manuscripts replete with rubrication, glosses, and illumination; San Marino, Huntington Library MS Ellesmere 26 C 9 is a prime example of the former, BL MS Egerton 1991 of the latter. By these means, lavish books imply significant literary achievement and cultural status, inviting, in turn, deferential and conscientious attitudes from readers. While he might be regarded as an original poet as much as a translator, Lydgate also produced works that participated in this aspect of late medieval manuscript culture. Thus, Add. 39659 (*Fall of Princes*), Arundel 119 (*Siege of Thebes*), and Arundel 99 (*Troy Book*) use all the common bibliographical features for articulating meaning and imputing prestige to three of Lydgate's longest and best-known translations: full-page acanthus borders at the opening of Books, enlarged capitals, multicoloured ink, penwork flourishes, coloured paraphs, and rubricated headings and glosses.

Lydgate's works are an appropriate place to conclude this discussion, for they epitomize many of its concerns: the variability of medieval textual and bibliographical codes; the potential of such variability both to stabilize works and to establish the integrity of individual manuscripts; the opportunities that basic bibliographical features like glosses, rubrics, and colophons provided for enacting metacritical issues; the conceptual dynamics that existed between medieval translations, their sources, and their manuscript copies. More generally, by producing these kinds of textual and bibliographical variability in OE as well as ME translations, medieval manuscript culture contributed to some of the most important and vexing critical issues of the period. From the vantage of manuscript representation the very distinction between OE and ME can become problematic, since many of the strategies for articulating meaning persist throughout the medieval period. This vantage complicates other common critical distinctions, too. While one of the most prominent sociolinguistic features of the Middle Ages is the gradual and sustained shift from primary orality towards primary textuality, the bibliographic variability of manuscripts recalls the individuality of oral recreation more than the regularity of modern textual reproduction. A case in point is the physical diversity among the roughly 200 extant copies of the Wycliffite Bible, which range from well-crafted folios with elaborate decorations and bindings, to casual but functional quartos, to simple excerpts of the New Testament (see fuller discussion in Hargreaves 1969).

The persistence of similar bibliographical strategies throughout all kinds of manuscripts of all kinds of translations likewise challenges easy distinctions between academic and popular translations or between secular and religious ones. Of even greater theoretical consequence, perhaps, are the ways in which the practices of manuscript culture bear upon the ontology of medieval English literary works; in layout as well as style, medieval translations sometimes aspire to far more than simply reproducing the sense of their source, thereby blurring not only lines between translation and source but also those between translation and original composition. While these issues are explored elsewhere in this volume, they are issues to a significant extent because of the material features of translation in a manuscript culture.

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1.3 Nation, Region, Class, and Gender

Helen Phillips

Medieval translations are often not exact, at times indeed hardly translations at all in the modern sense. Translators readily abbreviate or expand. Texts may include translation only intermittently; draw on several sources; alter the import of borrowed material. The freedoms of medieval translation produce texts particularly likely to reflect the interests of different groups, variously defined in terms, which sometimes overlap, of class, gender, region, and nation.

In polyglot medieval Britain translation into a particular language often meant, implicitly or explicitly, translation for a particular readership. From the twelfth century to the fourteenth, for example, English translation was often produced for uneducated, lay, and lower-class audiences, and AN translation was favoured by and for nuns, while the late medieval translators of chivalric works into English might describe their target audience as *gentil*. But, as comments in §1.1 above have indicated, the reality is usually more complicated. Medieval translators' perceptions of contemporary linguistic situations and readerships are not demographically accurate statistics; sometimes translators' prologues flattered their readers (as later printers' prologues did) by suggesting a higher social or educational level than was accurate for many in their real audience. Texts attracted readers well beyond the class or gender of their designated audiences, patrons, or dedicatees—merchants as well as lords, monks as well as nuns, clergy alongside laity. Language use and readership changed over time: for example, the affinities of French with a particular class, gender, or even national identity altered between the Conquest and the end of the fourteenth century. Statements that English translation was designed for uneducated commoners declined towards the close of the medieval era, when lay literacy increased. At the same time, understandings of education expanded among the laity to accommodate a broader idea of vernacular literature as an element in the education of the upper classes, and upwardly mobile members of the lower classes like city merchants, than the previous narrow focus on Latin learning as the property of a clerical élite had allowed for: often a selling point for translators and printers of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century books. Moreover, throughout the period more people heard texts than read them: an important proviso when considering the class, gender, and indeed the extent of actual audiences.

The Anglo-Saxon Period

Before the Norman Conquest translations, mostly from Latin to English, were undertaken at the command of civil or religious authorities, and composed by, and for, important men. Bede was translating St John's Gospel and Isidore of Seville when he died. Egbert, Archbishop of York (d. 766), advocated translating the Creed and Lord's Prayer for laypeople and clerics with limited Latin. Bishop Wærferth's translation of Gregory's *Dialogi* (*c.* 890) was made for King Alfred's own use. Alfred himself (r. 871–899) translated several texts (see further §3.2 below). In sending *Hierdeboc*, his translation of the *Cura Pastoralis* of St Gregory the Great, to his bishops, Alfred clearly assumed that even well-educated clerics would read in English, besides using translations to instruct lay people. He clearly had a national purpose behind his programme of English translations: following Charlemagne's example, he sought to create an educated ruling class for England (Discenza 2000: 100–4).

 Throughout the OE period, translation from classical and biblical sources reformulated its sources in relation to a perceived English cultural heritage and also, on occasion, in response to contemporary national issues. Alfred's translation of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae* substituted an English legendary hero Weland for a classical figure in Book II metrum 7 of the original (on this translation, see further §5.6 below), while the anonymous translations of Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* and the world history of Orosius, made at about the same time, sought to emphasize 'England's role as a glorious Christian nation' (Irvine 2001: 140–1; on these translations, see further pp. 333–4 below). The Bede translation omitted details of Roman history, references to non-English authorities, and several documents written by non-Anglo-Saxons, including papal letters, perhaps, according to Discenza 2002, to promote the idea of English cultural autonomy.

 Nearly 100 years later, similar trends are still evident. *Genesis A* (*c.* 1000), like *Exodus* and *Daniel* a loose paraphrase of its biblical source, uses the conventions of Germanic epic for its account of the wars of Abraham, and appears, when describing Abraham's defeat of northern enemies, to recall Viking attacks on England (Godden 1986: 210, 219). Ælfric's saints' lives (993–6), commissioned by *ealdorman* Æthelweard, who was responsible for defending southwest England, reflect similar national preoccupations: Ælfric described male saints as if they were Germanic military heroes (Wogan-Browne 1993a). One copy was made for Æthelweard's own use. Ælfric adds distinctively English details to Abbo of Fleury's originals. His *St Swithin*, for example, mentions crutches left at the saint's Winchester tomb, and recalls the happy age of King Edgar, when England received the homage of Welsh and Scottish kings, and rejoiced in holy men like Swithin, Dunstan, and Æthelwold. His *St Edmund* concludes by celebrating England's abundance of saints, including Cuthbert and Etheldreda, and notes that the Danish invasions in East Anglia occurred in the year when Alfred, 'afterwards…the famous King of Wessex' (Swanton

1993: 159), was 21, thus linking an earlier national disaster and a later national saviour.

Anglo-Saxon translators say less often than those working after the Conquest that they are writing for the low-born and uneducated, those lacking Latin, though such comments do surface. In the earlier-noted preface to the *Hierdeboc*, Alfred complains of a devastating decline in Latinity after the Danish attacks and envisages a lay readership for his translations, specifically the sons of the nation's upper class. In the preface to his *Catholic Homilies* (*c*. 991–2), Ælfric notes that he intends them for uneducated and Latinless readers. These might as well have been found inside as outside the cloister: the late tenth-century English Benedictine Rule of Æthelwold (904/9–984) was produced for monks and nuns, though more especially newcomers to religious life: novices, especially men who entered late in life. On the other hand, nuns, especially in the early centuries after the Conversion, were probably better Latinists than their counterparts nuns after the Conquest. Some wrote Latin letters and poetry; Aldhelm (d. 709) wrote *De Virginitate* for the nuns of Barking Abbey.

Not surprisingly, then, with such varying levels of literacy inside and outside the cloister, readership of these translations was mixed. The codices in which the Bible-based poems survive suggest they were read and valued by monastic as well as lay audiences. Ælfric directed his saints' lives to both secular and religious readers, commenting that the former might read as wonders—the miracles—what the latter could interpret symbolically (for fuller comment see Godden 2000: xx–xxix, and, on Ælfric's sources, xxxviii–lxii). Admittedly, some details seem more clearly angled at monastic readers: Ælfric's *St Eugenia* is more respectful to women than its original, which suggested to Roy 1992 that it had a readership of male religious in view and was seeking to promote an ideal of male clerical chastity. Perhaps for similar reasons, the anonymous life of *St Euphrosyne*, like Eugenia another transvestite saint, reveals concern about physical desire between men (on this, see Schiel 1999).

OE translators variously adapted their texts for lay audiences. One version of the life of *St Margaret* presents a simplified, ultra-orthodox picture; another, by contrast, sophisticates its original (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 56–71). Some hagiographical translations idealized their subjects; others bowdlerized. Alfred's *Hierdeboc*, Frantzen suggests (1997: 27–8), toned down references to homosexuality in Sodom, possibly to guard against immorality. Similarly, *Apollonius of Tyre* reduced allusions to ancient Greek sexual mores, and, as noted by Riedinger (1990), made its heroine less powerful, more decorous and domestic, than its source (on the Apollonius, see further §5.6 below). The translation of Orosius abbreviated the unsavoury narrative of Caligula's excesses, accounts of unfamiliar places, and unflattering descriptions of the Germanic tribes.

Extant translations mostly survive in Late West Saxon, a dialect which translation helped to turn into a literary standard. Loss of documents from the northern and Midland (especially east Midland) regions during the Viking invasions obscures the extent of writing in other dialects in this period. Surviving

translations in other dialects include a Northumbrian text of Cædmon's hymn. A flourishing academic culture before the Danish wars in Mercia (later the West Midlands) produced several translations, including the Mercian English Bede, a homily and life of St Chad, and perhaps Cynewulf's poems.

Hagiographical translation sometimes shows regional affiliations. Chad's connection to Lichfield is an obvious example; two others are the English Lives of Sts Nicholas and Giles, whose language indicates composition in, respectively, post-Conquest Kent and the south-west, after monks from Normandy, where these saints were popular, had been established there (Treharne 1997: 36–45, 61–78). Texts often reflect successive copying by scribes from different regions: the English of the Cotton Tiberius *St Margaret*, though basically Standard West Saxon, suggests Northumbrian, Mercian, and Kentish stages in its history (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 97–9).

Hagiographical translations also often depict powerful women from biblical and later Christian history. Examples include the anonymous *Judith* and Cynewulf's *Elene* (probably ninth century), based respectively on the Book of Judith and *Acta Cyriaci*. *Elene* shares its subject, St Helena's finding of the true Cross, with the prose *Finding of the True Cross*, based on Latin and OE sources. Two late OE prose Lives of St Margaret, a popular female virgin martyr, have Canterbury connections (Clayton and Magennis 1994: 82–3). The version now in Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, may reflect links between Canterbury and the learned Anglo-Saxon princess Margaret, later Queen of Scotland.

A type of translation particularly common in the Anglo-Saxon period is glossing of Latin texts (examples are on pp. 34–5 above). Concern for the education of novices with imperfect Latin may be one reason behind this phenomenon: glosses also occur in simplified Latin, which gives further support to the idea of pedagogic intent. They occur in biblical texts and works like the Benedictine Rule, and anthologies of scriptural and patristic quotations like the *Liber Scintillarum* and *De Vitiis et Peccatis*. Glossing was perhaps preferred to full translation to maintain respect for sacred words in scriptural texts. Some glosses appear in illuminated manuscripts for ceremonial use. One manuscript of *The Wonders of the East* alternates translation with Latin (Knock 1997), probably to explicate, rather than translate, a difficult scientific text (see further p. 409 below).

Translations of learned texts, and the programmes of English translation in Alfred's reign and the tenth-century Benedictine revival, show a confidence about vernacular writing, and a sense of the need for it, unequalled elsewhere in contemporary Europe. Anglo-Saxon translation, with the associated development of a learned vocabulary and a literary standard in the vernacular, indicates widespread respect for English.

After the Conquest

Between 1066 and the fourteenth century, with French the vernacular of the ruling classes, English itself had a negative class image. Translators' prologues

often explain apologetically that their work is not for *gentil* folk but to help
the *lewed* (lowly, uneducated). Their motives seem as often pastoral as patriotic:
concern for Christian knowledge, not just appeal to a shared cultural heritage. Yet
patriotism and pride in a shared pre-Norman past are also evident. Contrary to
modern expectations, admiration, even a claim to ownership, of the Anglo-Saxon
and British past is also common in AN writing. Admittedly a sharper, divisive,
note appears in some English and Welsh translations: the late eleventh-century
English version of Cato's *Distichs* adds a dark comment on the woes of a nation
with a foreign king. The theory, beloved by nineteenth-century historians and
epitomized in *Ivanhoe*, of English racial resentment against the 'Norman Yoke',
and located in attitudes towards the two languages, is not wholly supported
by evidence from the two centuries after 1066. Yet the Normans are certainly
sometimes characterized as enemy invaders, and translators often explain their
choice of English because of its claim to national inclusiveness.

   ME translation is translation into dialects. Replacing Latin and English with
Latin and French, in national and local administration, ended the Late West-
Saxon *Schriftsprache*, bringing an apparent fracturing of English into regional
dialects. Dialects had, of course, been present all along: the ME period witnesses
their strong re-emergence in written documents. How far regional consciousness,
pride, or perceived need were also motivations for particular examples of dialect
use in such a situation is hard to assess, though the prevalence of early ME
writings and translations in the West Midlands, between the Conquest and the
mid-thirteenth century, may indicate a distinct fostering there of regional and
English culture, far from London and the Norman court.

   Throughout the later Middle Ages the British Isles were multilingual, with
Latin, AN, English, Welsh, Cornish, Manx, and Scots and Irish Gaelic variously
in use. (As noted in the Preface, only the first three of these receive any very
detailed treatment in this volume; on Scots, Welsh, and Irish, see contributions
by Goldstein, Roberts, and Dolan in *CHMEL* chs. 7–9.) Post-Conquest condi-
tions stimulated historical curiosity, producing texts which preserved England's
British and Anglo-Saxon past for both Norman and non-Norman audiences.
Such contexts encouraged cross-cultural literary borrowings, including Arthurian
romances (see further §5.4 below) and Marie de France's *Lais* (*c.* 1180). Marie
describes herself as translating the *lais* from Breton into Norman French and
from oral narratives into written texts. She also translated from Latin (see further
below) and claims to have translated her *Fables* not from Latin, the language of
their probable originals, but a (non-existent) version by King Alfred.

   Twelfth-century England witnessed a major flowering of national histori-
cal writing, represented, among others, by the Latin histories of William of
Malmesbury and Henry of Huntingdon and, in AN, Gaimar's *Estoire des Engleis*
(*c.* 1140). This indicates a desire to pay respect to Britain's pre-Norman his-
tory and accommodate Norman rule to it. Norman-English translation went
both ways: Gaimar's Norman *Estoire* draws on the English *Anglo-Saxon Chron-
icle*; Constance, his patron, was born in England but spoke and read French.

Short (1991) sees this polyglot, multicultural England as generating considerable creative energy and innovation in AN writing, compared with contemporary vernacular writing in France. The AN *Waldef* (*c*. 1220), for example, translates a lost English original, in order to preserve 'Les granz estoires . . . Qui des Engleis estoient fetes' [the great histories composed about the English], catering for antiquarian interests among England's inhabitants, whatever their language/ethnicity. It 'opens with a foundation myth for Norfolk and the main towns of East Anglia'. In class terms Waldef is a 'figure of baronial opposition against royal rule' but also a figure in conflict with the citizens of London. This gives its Norman readers, possibly a specific Norfolk dynasty with a history of anti-monarchical politics, 'a sense of unresolved anxiety . . . [confronting] violence from below and injustice from above' (Field 2000: 34–8). What Field (1991: 168) calls a 'vogue for the Anglo-Saxon past', including interest in English regional landscapes and their historical associations, is evident in AN chronicles and romances, such as Gaimar's *Estoire*, *Waldef*, and *Gui de Warewic*. Ancestral romances and local or national history legitimized readers' sense of their own position and forged a literary continuity between English and French, pre- and post-Conquest, cultural heritages. English gentry, often racially Norman, commissioned such texts not only in French but also, and by the thirteenth century increasingly, in English.

A major contributor to the development of national historical writing in the twelfth century was of course Geoffrey of Monmouth, in a work he claimed to have translated from an ancient Welsh source, the *Historia Regum Britanniae* (*c*. 1136). This work was translated first into AN by Wace (1155), and then into English, principally via Wace's version, by Laȝamon (*c*. 1200–25; see also p. 336 below). Geoffrey's claim of an ancient Welsh source for his whole narrative is disputed, but he certainly used sources that do survive, including Bede for the English story and Gildas and Nennius for the Welsh. Speculating about likely audiences for the three makes us aware of the complexities of contemporary language use and national self-understanding. All three were clerics: Geoffrey, an Oxford canon, wrote in Latin; Wace, from Jersey, wrote his *Roman de Brut* in AN octosyllabics; Laȝamon, a Worcestershire priest, wrote his *Brut* in English alliterative verse. Were these three narratives, composed in three languages and three regions of the Norman empire, designed for different audiences, or one and the same, upper-class, one? Did they appeal equally to clerics and laity? Wace's poem was dedicated, Laȝamon says, to Eleanor of Aquitaine: did it suit particularly upper-class women, or cosmopolitan Normans without English ancestral roots? Barron and Weinberg suggest (1989: lv–lvi) that, by the early thirteenth century, the power of French, even for aristocrats of Norman lineage, was giving way to a socially wider anglophone readership. People whose grandparents had enjoyed Wace in French in the 1150s might have been the natural audience for Laȝamon by 1210; AN, though continuing as a flourishing literary vehicle, had probably declined as a true spoken vernacular by the 1180s (Short 1991: 246–8).

Underlying these questions are questions about the nature and primary audience of Geoffrey's original Latin narrative. It is the history of those who have

ruled Britain, primarily ancient British (i.e. Welsh) kings. The realm it celebrates is neither, simply, that now ruled by the Normans nor, simply, that of the Anglo-Saxons they defeated, nor that of the Britons who ruled before. Geoffrey records a story of previous invasions, conquests, and shifts in power, including the Trojans' initial victory over the original inhabitants and Saxon victories over the Britons, perhaps because the Conquest produced a desire for historical narratives that could explain or justify regime change by invoking historical precedents. His central hero, Arthur, parallels Norman kings both in fighting Saxons and in commanding an empire and alliances extending beyond England, through much of the British Isles and mainland Europe. The *Historia* reflected Geoffrey's 'links with the Norman ruling class' (Knight 1983: 45); Geoffrey inserted fictional ancestors for one of his Norman dedicatees, Robert of Gloucester, and obliquely recalled William I and Henry I's struggles for control over England.

Modern ideas of the nation can hinder understanding of 'England' and 'English' in an era that thought frequently in terms of feudal dynasties and pan-European chivalry defending Christendom. But if every nation is, in Benedict Anderson's famous term, an 'imagined community', we can still legitimately ask to whose imagined community these three authors appeal. Is it that of the now-entrenched colonizers, Norman ruling families, eager to claim links with Britain's pre-Conquest rulers? Or one that still keeps some sense of a non-Norman, even anti-Norman, Englishness or Britishness? Or one with an already unified national identity? Possibly all these constructions of national and communal identity coexisted in Geoffrey's England and Wales, and his narrative's political and moral complexities, with its multiple national sympathies, offer a history lacking clear-cut saints or sinners, about humans and human political struggles, full of conflict and fallibility: narrative patterns that match the cross-currents of national identity in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. It makes the history of the land and its noble inhabitants and heroes, rather than the interests of any one race, dynasty, or linguistic community, the real point of the work. Geoffrey, a man from the Welsh borders, working in Oxford, writing in Latin, and dedicating his history to Norman lords, represents tensions and fusions in his own society, and warns us not to reduce these to simple language divisions. William of Malmesbury provides further witness to this situation; in his *Gesta Regum Anglorum* (*c*. 1125) he writes that, having both English and Norman blood, he will take a 'temperate approach' in recording the history of both races (1998: I, 424–5).

Geoffrey's successors, including the *Brut* chronicles and Mannyng and Langtoft (on these see further §5.5 below), who translate and chronologically extend the history Geoffrey began, tend to assume a unitary nation that existed in past centuries, named as Britain (often, England), with Arthur and other early kings part of its glorious tradition: a realm continuous with the England of their own time. Arthur, the early Welsh hero fighting the Anglo-Saxons, thus becomes for many writers an early king of England. How soon did that identification begin? The Norman conquerors of Ireland were being called 'Angli' by the late

twelfth century (Short 1991: 246–7 n. 85). Wace and Laȝamon sometimes call Arthur's kingdom England; Laȝamon writes, in his preface, that his subject is 'of Engle þa æðelæn . . . , | Wat heo ihoten weoren and wonene heo comen, | þa Englene londe ærest ahten' [the noble origins of the English, what they were called and whence they came, those who first possessed the land of the English] (Laȝamon 1963–78: 2). He sees Britons, that is, as earlier versions of the English of his day. Wace concludes that the Britons await Arthur's return; Laȝamon says Merlin prophesied Arthur would return to help the *English* (750). Geoffrey's conclusion had bitterly lamented the Britons' defeat by the English and their expulsion from England; Laȝamon is more neutral. He writes how the Britons went to live in Wales and English kings thereafter ruled over 'these lands'; as for the future, may things turn out as God wills. By contrast, the Welsh or Breton author of the mid-thirteenth-century Latin version, the *Gesta Regum Britanniae*, increases the bitterness of Geoffrey's conclusion, commands the Saxons to depart, and says he writes only for the Britons, praying they will recover their lost realm (Michel 1862: 177).

Geoffrey's text allowed readers in England generally, not just those of Anglo-Saxon origins, to identify with the 'kings of Britain'; Laȝamon is pro-English, yet anti-Saxon, distinguishing the later Christian English from the pagan Saxon invaders (on this point see further p. 337 below). He enhances Geoffrey's and Wace's accounts of the Christianized English and the English saints, lengthening, for example, the account of King Oswald's martyrdom. He sometimes adds other English details. Wace's list of Arthur's commanders includes French names which Laȝamon anglicizes: Bos and Gerin of Chartres become Bos of Oxford (elsewhere in the text, 'boef', possibly a joky translation of Latin 'bos') and Gerin of Chester; he omits reference to the Angevins and Chinonois (686, 712, cf. Wace 1999: 258). He also adds local west Midland references, including one to St Milburga, foundress of Wenlock convent.

Laȝamon's englishing of his source goes further. Wace had called his text a 'romanz' (Wace 1999: 372), by which he might merely have meant a narrative in French, not specifically a work with a courtly subject. Yet, like romance writers, Wace shows more interest in love than Laȝamon. Laȝamon's work has a different emphasis: less a romance than a national epic (see also p. 338 below). Nonetheless, Laȝamon adds apparently romance-like attractions, including specifically English magic: elves protect the baby Arthur, and at his end Arthur departs in a mysterious boat to dwell in Avalon 'mid fairest alre eluen' [with the fairest of all elf-women] (750). Maybe, however, these elves are adding an *English*, rather than a romance, aura.

Laȝamon employs the poetic compounds typical of OE verse for two themes likely to arouse patriotic emotions: warfare and the kingdom. These include 'hired-cnihten' (OE *hired*, aristocratic troop of retainers; *cniht*, retainer), 'here-kempen' (*here*, army; *cempa*, fighter), and 'leod-kinge' (*leod*, nation), and may create at first sight a more warlike, Germanic, even primitive effect than the 'curteisies' of Wace's 'baruns, 'ducs', and 'vescuntes'. Wace shows more interest

in feudal, chivalric, and dynastic considerations, and the luxurious lifestyle of the upper classes, producing a fictional world arguably more romance-like and attractive to high-born women readers. But 'hired' may have evoked the same kind of setting for Laȝamon and his readers as 'la curt le rei...bele assemblee' [king's court...fine assembly] for Wace and his (Wace 1999: 260); Laȝamon's account of the 'hendest' [noblest] folk on earth (642) may not be so different from Wace's account (264) of the knights as 'de curteisie e d'enur, partout Engleterre la flur' [men of the highest honour from the whole of England]. Indeed, Weiss (Wace 1999: xxiii) suggests that 'curteis' at this period meant something closer to 'valiant' than 'courtly'; and, whatever its original meaning, 'hende' was adopted so thoroughly in romances in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries that Chaucer used the term to parody a would-be romance hero in his *Miller's Tale* (I. 3199). 'Hired' and 'cniht' did not connote what they had in *Beowulf*; French words like 'chevalier', 'curteis', or 'curt' similarly did not connote in the twelfth century exactly what they would by the fourteenth or fifteenth century after two centuries of chivalric myth-making, Arthurian romance, and pageantry.

It is English culture, then, not just English language, into which Laȝamon translates (see Le Saux 1989: 189–92, 219–25). Laȝamon's fusion of English-Welsh customs, implying shared interests between the two cultures, contrasts with his rare and hostile references to Normans. He is presenting, in fact, what Allen describes (1991: 135) as an idealized pre-feudal nation. In such a world women can find impressive role models: noble women inherit lands, function as peacemakers, and are accorded more dignity and delicacy than Wace gives them (for him their power derives from their sexuality).

Analogous indications of class, gender, nationality, and region—and of the social and sociolinguistic complexities of the period—appear in contemporary hagiographical translations. Consider, for example, the regional and gender contexts for the AN *Vie de sainte Audrée*, translated from a Latin life of Etheldreda, Anglo-Saxon abbess of Ely, by a nun, Marie of Chatteris. The Latin life is part of a larger work, the *Liber Eliensis*, designed to glorify the male monastery at Ely, founded by Etheldreda. Marie's translation, separated from that masculine context, offers Etheldreda, a woman rejecting the patriarchal feudal marriage market for dedication to God, as a female role model to nuns (on the *Vie*, see further Wogan-Browne 1993b: 65–7; 2001: 208–12). In the two centuries after the Conquest, writing for and by nuns, including translations, tends to be in AN, reflecting their upper-class origins and limited Latin. Admittedly, research into texts owned by nunneries (notably Barking Abbey) shows some post-Conquest women could read Latin well. St Anselm wrote in Latin to nuns at Wilton and Shaftesbury. Marie of Chatteris's translation shows individual Latin skills could be good. Marie de France translated *St Patrick's Purgatory* from Latin; a Barking nun translated (*c.* 1163) the Latin *Life of St Edward the Confessor* by Ailred of Rievaulx. Paralleling the Normans' interest in appropriating pre-Conquest history, AN religious foundations looked to Anglo-Saxon local saints,

including female saints, and produced hagiographical texts to enhance their own institutional and dynastic interests (Wogan-Browne 2001: 60–8).

Similar considerations obtain with three early ME hagiographical translations produced with women readers, including laywomen, in mind. *Seinte Margarete* (*c*. 1225) reduces its Latin source's theological elements and adds advice on combating temptations to unchastity: 'a vivid account of everyday temptation homiletically relating the values represented in Margaret's heroic virginity to the audience's lives' (Millett and Wogan-Browne 1990: xii). It celebrates a saint with strong female appeal—she was regularly invoked in childbirth—and is addressed to all women, married, widowed, and nuns. With *Seinte Katerine* and *Seinte Juliene*, it forms a trio of hagiographical translations, not originally grouped together in their Latin sources, and perhaps chosen for female readers because of shared themes: heroic virginity and martyrdom, divine marriage with Christ, and the gift of authoritative speech (Salih 2001: 51–2). The three translations employ an alliterative prose, typical of the same west Midland region as Laȝamon.

Nuns seem the target audiences for some English Benedictine Rules, the earliest such extant in ME dating from the early thirteenth century (Kock 1902: x–xi). The *Northern Metrical Rule* (early fifteenth century) says that monks and all educated men understand Latin but English is needed for women, who learn no Latin in their youth (Kock 1902: 48). Yet, as with the earlier-noted Anglo-Saxon translation of Æthelwold, some English translations of the Rule show by their use of masculine pronouns that they must have been written for monks. Caxton's translation clearly envisages male as well as female readers: 'men and wymmen of the habyte [of St Benedict], the whiche vnderstonde lytell laten or none' (Caxton in Kock 1902: 119).

Medieval writers relied on financial support from patrons, male and female. Female patrons for translations were common, most obviously for translations into AN, where we find the earlier-noted Constance, dedicatee of Gaimar's *Estoire*, and Queen Eleanor, of Wace's *Brut*. The *Navigatio Sancti Brendani* was dedicated, in succession, to Edith and Adeliza, first and second wives of Henry I, the latter also the dedicatee of Philippe de Thaon's bestiary. Alice, wife of Robert de Condet, commissioned Sanson's *Proverbes de Salemon*, *c*. 1130; Robert of Greatham's homiletic AN *Miroir* (*c*. 1230, later translated into English) was for a lady, Aline (on these, see further below pp. 108–9, 251). But acknowledgement of female patrons may sometimes sideline, into a purely complimentary relationship, a serious female involvement with intellectual life.

Translations from 1225 to 1350

Laȝamon initiated an English-language *Brut* tradition which created 'a national history of the English' (Speed 1994: 142). Several translations in this period discuss their national and class affiliations. Robert Mannyng's *Chronicle* (1338; see further §5.5 below) calls itself the history of 'Inglond', though it starts with Brutus and

a lengthy history of Celtic Britain, and claims to have been translated for the
'comonalte' and the 'lewed man' (Mannyng 1996: 123, 125–6). *Of Arthour and
of Merlin* (see also p. 307 below), an early fourteenth-century English version
of the Vulgate *Lestoire de Merlin* (*c.* 1230), has a prologue in the Auchinleck
manuscript copy (*c.* 1330) which describes the social and spiritual advantages for
children of learning French and Latin, yet says it uses English because, though
gentil people use French, the whole nation understands English; indeed, those
ignorant of French, for whom the author writes, include many noblemen. The
prologue's repetition of 'Inglische' underlines the link between national identity
and language (on this, see further Turville-Petre 1996: 11–22). English romances,
including *Sir Tristrem* (*c.* 1290) and *Of Arthour and of Merlin*, often locate their
heroes in England rather than Arthurian Britain.

The non-Arthurian *Havelok* (*c.* 1280) similarly anglicizes its hero and setting
(see further pp. 300–1 below). It translates the AN *Lai d'Haveloc* (*c.* 1200), possi-
bly composed to celebrate the conferring of the status of corporation on the town
of Grimsby. The *Lai* created a romance out of a story first found in chronicle
form (Gaimar's *Estoire*) and later recycled in the chronicles of Mannyng and the
AN *Le petit Bruit* (1310) of Rauf de Bohun. The plot of *Havelok* has national
and regional, Lincolnshire, interest: it preserves a memory of Danish rulers in
late Anglo-Saxon England (though, in common with the other authors, it is hazy
about dates) and presents a positive image of the Danish invasions. It may draw
on Lincolnshire, English, oral tales; it mentions local landmarks (Turville-Petre
1996: 144–9), whose importance, as part of the 'language', in a broad sense, into
which English translators may transfer AN and Latin narratives, has been stressed
by Speed. *Havelok* makes its regional tale more obviously national history than
did its source: the *Lai* was set just after Arthur's death, under a Danish king;
Havelok, in the reign of a mythical English king Athelwold. This change perhaps
reflects *Havelok*'s later date, further from the time when a distinctively Danish
element remained in the East Anglian population.

Contemporary national history also comes to the fore in a short poem about
the death of Edward I in 1307, 'Alle that beoth [are] of huerte trewe', which also
survives in an AN version, 'Seignurs oiez' (both ed. Aspin 1953). Comparison of
these versions—it is unclear which version is the original—is telling.

Both mourn the death of an unnamed king possessed of all the chivalric
virtues: 'un rei vaillaunt', 'a knyht that wes so strong'. The French says he secured
his territory, triumphing in military encounters; the English that his death causes
writer and readers ('us') great sorrow and injury. The English version, that is,
stresses national solidarity, and depicts Edward and England as bound by mutual
loyalty. 'Seignurs oiez', by contrast, focuses on the barons, and presents Edward
as a chivalric knight, a figure of pan-European chivalry, not a king bound to his
nation. It sees Edward I's death and Edward II's succession in feudal, dynastic
terms, constructing its readership as ruling families within the international
chivalric brotherhood. The readership and author of the English poem, by
contrast, are united in their *English* nationality.

The opening words of the two poems epitomize this difference ('alle' as opposed to 'seignurs'). The English text repeatedly combines 'Edward' and 'England', stressing the 'trewe' [loyal] bond connecting the two, and underscoring this by insistent repetition. The French, by contrast, asks Edward's 'barnage', the 'chivalers', to crown his son—no reference here to England—and contextualizes him within an international aristocratic myth of Christian knighthood. 'Sire' of England and expert in warfare, he is given the archetypal task of Christian knights, of going on crusade to Jerusalem. Now Jerusalem has lost the flower of its chivalry, a man who loved its 'seignurie' and maintained its 'baner' (i.e. the Cross). This material also appears in the English version, but there in the context of celebrating the close links between Edward and his country. Both end with a prayer that Edward II may be a worthy successor: the English version stresses the cohesion of the King and the whole people of England:

> Nou is Edward of Carnarvan
> King of Engelond al aplyht [pledged]
> God lete [grant] him . . .
> holden is [his] pore-men to ryht, [justly]
> Ant understonde good consail,
> Al Engelond for te wisse ant diht [to guide and direct].
>
> (Aspin 1953: 85)

Other translators in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries often express warm fellowship with the English-speaking mass of the population, even while, as frequently, deprecating the language in which they write. The inability of French to speak to and for the whole nation is now presented as a negative, even while translators acknowledge its social and expressive superiority. The translator of Grosseteste's *Chateau d'amour* (*c*. 1300) calls English a 'dim and derk' language which no clerk respects (Sajavaara 1967: ll.71–2). Mannyng's *Handlyng Synne* (1303–17), from William of Waddington's *Manuel des Pechiez* (*c*. 1260), visualizes a lower- or middle-class audience of 'lewde men', lay-brothers or novices, possibly pilgrims staying in his Lincolnshire priory's guest-house (at all events, a mixture of classes), whom he describes affectionately as his own 'felaushepe of Sympryng-ghame' (Mannyng 1983: 4). These, he believes, need wholesome amusement in English (see further pp. 247–8 below). Mannyng anglicizes and sometimes, so to say, east-anglicizes his material, adding tales set in Lindsey (part of Lincolnshire), Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, Suffolk; one told by Bede; and other distinctive English customs. His translation of the story of St Fursey mentions both Bede and churches in Knaresborough and Norwich. His *Chronicle* warmly describes the same audience as 'þe comonalte', his 'felawes' (Mannyng 1996: 94), who need entertainment but do not want French, or foreign and complicated styles. He offers English history to his compatriots who only know English: 'for luf of þe lewed man, | To telle þam þe chaunces bolde | þat here before was don and tolde' (25–8), addressing them politely as 'lordynges' and 'lordes lewed' [well-born laymen] (91, 94). Mannyng is even-handed in his class reference. He denounces

injustices by the seigneurial class but also urges workers to work diligently. Other translators sometimes share these social criticisms: a thirteenth-century English Body and Soul Debate adds criticism of unjust lords (Phillips 2000a: 256–7).

Mannyng's affectionate address to his readers may reflect his priestly perspective, invoking Christian fellowship with an audience conceived as his flock, but it is also claiming a shared national identity and language. This is also observable in *Cursor Mundi* (*c*. 1300), a biblical narrative drawn mainly from French sources, which presents a translator motivated by care for his readers, for whom he proposes to 'translate | In to Inglis tong to rede | For the loue of Inglis lede [people], | Inglis lede of Ingland, | For the commun at [to] understand' (Morris 1874–93: 20). One section translates a southern English original into the northern dialect of the writer and his audience: 'and turnd it haue I till our aun | Langage o [of] northrin lede [people], | þat can nan oiþer englis rede' (1148). (See further comment on pp. 211, 247 below.) *The Ayenbite of Inwit* (1340), a Kentish translation by 'Dan Michel' (Michael of Northgate) of the moral treatise *Somme le roi*, envisages a family readership: uneducated people, father, mother, other members of the family.

We should not equate language with class simplistically. Most people were multilingual in various degrees (for an overview of polyglot medieval literacy, see Catto 2003). Moreover, they saw themselves, even when writing in French, as English. Written at much the same time as 'seignurs oiez', Langtoft's AN *Cronicle* (*c*. 1307), based largely on Wace, identifies writer and reader jointly as 'nos Englays' (Pierre de Langtoft 1989: II, 208, 244). In the England of Langtoft's *Cronicle*, Normans and English are one nation (e.g. I, 476, 478), united against foreign foes, French, Scots, or Welsh. Langtoft condemns the Bishop of Durham's conspiracy with Normans against Henry I, and Robert de Beleme's rebellion with an army of French and Welsh (II, 450–5). The Normans, though justified in their invasion because of the breaking of Harold's oath to William the Conqueror, are the last of five woes to have afflicted Britain, or England as it was later called (this commonplace was first used by Henry of Huntingdon; the other 'woes' were the Romans, Picts, Anglo-Saxons, and Vikings), so that the English have lived till Langtoft's time under foreign rule, in serfdom and suffering (I, 189–90).

The themes of this subsection are further illustrated in the ME romances, often translated from AN, and regularly reformulated for new social contexts or audiences (for further comment on texts discussed in this paragraph see §5.4 below). As early as the mid-fourteenth century, English translations of romances, including chivalric narratives, indicate an expectation by the translators that audiences, including perhaps upper-class ones, already existed for English-language chivalric works. The group of early fourteenth-century romances contained in the Auchinleck manuscript and elsewhere arguably shows both compiler and authors concerned to provide such texts for an English-speaking audience, while forging a flexible, courtly, and at times witty, English style that could equal French elegance in romance writing. The mid-fourteenth-century English *Ipomadon* refines the distinctly

misogynist and risqué tone of its twelfth-century AN original, and broadens the tale's appeal by removing local allusions. The English *Bevis of Hampton* (*c.* 1300) adds more marvels, includes a St George-like dragon-slaying, and features realistic English settings, including a final fight through named London streets. The alliterative *William of Palerne* (*c.* 1350), translated near Gloucester for Humphrey de Bohun, and revealing a continuing audience in the west Midlands for such translations, adapts for later English readers an AN romance originally composed *c.* 1195 during the heyday of the Norman kingdom of Sicily. The English *Horn Childe* (*c.* 1320) embeds a patriotic story of the heroic past in a realistic and recognizable time and place, adding Yorkshire place names and a northern kingdom for Horn. Other English translations with a regional focus include Thomas Bek of Castleford's *Chronicle of England* (*c.* 1330), based on Geoffrey's Arthur narrative, which emphasizes York. *Lai le Freine* (*c.* 1330) moves its setting from Brittany to the English West Country. *Partenope of Blois* (*c.* 1350), translating a twelfth-century courtly French original, modifies snobbish attitudes, possibly indicating a bourgeois readership, or, at all events, greater class mobility, in fourteenth-century England. Several English romances seem more realistic, less courtly, than their originals, possibly reflecting the entry of merchants into the categories of those who read or owned books. Thomas Chestre's *Sir Launfal* (*c.* 1380) adds mundane details to Marie de France's original. The English *Floris and Blancheflour* has less courtly rhetoric and sentimentality and more action, with more mercantile and humorous world views. The northern *Octovian* (*c.* 1350) stresses contrasts between knights and tradesmen more obsessively than the French or southern English versions, caricaturing the tradesman Clement and his un*gentil* concern with money. Arguably, in a period of social mobility, *Octovian* uses its romance plot about a foundling to promote a conservative belief in inherited *gentil* nature.

From 1350 to 1550

This period sees increasingly assured translation into English, with the perceived audience expanding from the lower-class, lay, and uneducated groups to include priests and religious, the *gentil*, royalty, and the highly educated. Many social and technological developments stimulated English translation and book production for wider readerships: French wars and declining use of AN; increased lay literacy and interest in religious matters; later, the effects of printing and cheaper paper.

The major translation project of the period, the Wycliffite Bible, is discussed elsewhere (§5.1 below): here it suffices to say that translation after Wyclif often involved class and political issues. Using what was virtually a clerical commonplace, Knighton's *Chronicle* claimed that Wyclif had put the pearl of the Bible under the feet of swine (Hargreaves 1969: 388). Such comments express widespread clerical fears about widened access to the Bible, and a resulting loss of reverence for the sacred text and danger of misreading it if its interpretation were not officially sanctioned and clerically monitored. Once Arundel's ban on

unauthorized biblical translations had taken effect, therefore, specifically biblical translations were likely to be Bible paraphrases like Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* (discussed more fully pp. 87, 218, 259–60 below).

Contemporary with the Wycliffite Bible are the major translations of John Trevisa. Originally commissioned by Lord Berkeley, Trevisa's translations of history and general learning (including Higden's *Polychronicon*, Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, and Giles of Rome's *De Regimine Principum*) attracted, as manuscripts and printed versions show, a varied audience of aristocrats, gentry, merchants, and clergy. (On the *Polychronicon*, see further pp. 345–7 below.) Manuscripts of the English *Brut* chronicles confirm this socially widening ownership: they were read by magnates, monastic houses, ecclesiastics, landowning gentry, and, later, merchants. Based on the AN *Brut* chronicle, *c.* 1300, which was originally aimed at an upper-class audience, these English chronicles became virtually a standard national history, often undergoing later modifications to express national and regional interests. They frequently support English claims to Scotland; fifteenth-century London versions (noted by McClaren 1994) reflect class and city interests. (On the English *Brut*, see further pp. 349–50 below.)

Ricardian and Lancastrian courts encouraged translation, as Charles V's French court had earlier done, making learned texts more widely available. Chaucer's translations show regular engagement with contemporary issues of national policy. (On Chaucer, see further §3.4 below.) Chaucer's translation of the French *Melibee* of Renaud de Louens (itself translating the Latin original of Albertano of Brescia) implicitly compliments Richard II for his peace policy towards France in the 1390s, while advising him to follow counsel, and tactfully omits a biblical lament in the original over a kingdom whose king is a self-indulgent child. Chaucer's versions, in the *Monk's Tale*, of the stories of Nero and Nebuchadnezzar (in, respectively, the *Roman de la rose* and the Old Testament Book of Daniel) arguably contain veiled allusions to Richard's fatally unpopular policies (Phillips 2000b: 183–4). Chaucer's version of an Ovidian fable, the *Manciple's Tale*, mirrors the court poet's apprehensions in an era when it might be beneficial yet perilous to warn a ruler about tyrannical behaviour.

Gender issues were as important as those of national policy for Chaucer, for whom translation and feminist issues were regularly connected. In *Troilus and Criseyde*, based on Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*, Chaucer apologizes for the misogynist implications of his original by citing his role as mere translator. His volume of classical stories about tragic heroines, the *Legend of Good Women*, also presents him as a mere translator, a non-culpable conduit for other writers' opinions. In *Melibee* he cuts a misogynist comment and enhances the presentation of Prudence, so that within the *Canterbury Tales* she takes her place with other wise female counsellors like 'Seinte Cecile' in the *Second Nun's Tale* and the hag in the *Wife of Bath's Tale*. On the other hand, when he translates three *ballades* by de Grandson to create 'The Complaint of Venus', Chaucer clearly presents in his verbal changes stereotypically gendered assumptions about the more powerful

qualities of a male, while transposing the speaker's sex from male to female (see further Phillips in *MTr* 4).

Chaucer plays provocatively with the guise of translator: his Prologues to the *Wife of Bath's Tale* and (in the MS G copy) the *Legend of Good Women* are as interested in the political dimensions of translation and exegesis as the gender dimensions. In the latter he raises the ideal of the faithful, unmediated translation (which he calls the 'naked text', a phrase he shares with the Wycliffites), and the issue of the representation of women in (masculinist) literary tradition is made analogous to the issue of personal involvement and responsibility by a translator.

Chaucer's *Reeve's Tale* transfers a French fabliau to a specifically observed, regional, Cambridge setting: clerks and peasants are reinterpreted in terms of late fourteenth-century English class tensions. His reworking of a tale from the *Roman de Renart*, the *Nun's Priest's Tale*, proceeds similarly, altering the gender and class of Chantecleer's owner. The French has a wealthy peasant-farmer, whose establishment boasts an abundance of food; Chaucer substitutes an edifyingly frugal 'povre widwe', her household localized through homely English names: 'Colle oure dogge', Talbot, Gerland, 'Malkyn with a dystaf in hir hand', a domestication of detail that makes even more marked the later contrast with the mock-heroic invocation of Carthage and Roman 'senatoures wyves' when Chauntecleer is captured by the fox.

Later English translators' confidence owed much to Chaucer. His versions of the *Roman de la rose* and Boccaccio's *Filostrato* and *Teseida*, the latter reworked as his *Knight's Tale*, and poems like the *Book of the Duchess* that draw closely on contemporary French sources, forged styles for English which commanded the same elegance and diversity as Machaut, de Graunson, Dante, or Boccaccio had achieved in their own vernaculars. In style, vocabulary, and idiom, many fifteenth-century translators often translate into Chaucer: into the national poet as well as into what they were by then thinking of as the national language. 'Chaucerian' writing appears in fifteenth-century translations as diverse as that of Deguileville's *Pelerinage de la vie humaine*, the anonymous *Reason and Sensuality*, Scrope's version of Christine de Pizan's *Epître d'Othéa*, romances like the *Sowdan of Babylon* and the couplet version of *Partenope of Blois*, and Walton's translation of Boethius' *Consolation* (on this last, see further pp. 378–9 below).

Thanks partly to Chaucer and, to a lesser extent, the writings of Christine de Pizan, fifteenth-century writers show a growing awareness of gender issues, which leave some traces in their translations. Thomas Hoccleve is one of the earliest to witness to the influence. Translating Christine's feminist *Epistre au Dieu d'Amours* in 1402, a mere three years after she wrote it, Hoccleve gives the impression of thinking through unfamiliar ideas about gender, struggling to think outside familiar cultural paradigms. His version only unevenly conveys Christine's perspectives. It adds passages defending women, yet introduces voices of imaginary misogynists who bring extra anti-feminist material into his text. It offers uncritically a stereotypical view of women as humble, caring, faithful creatures, and encourages them not to be proud but rather to persevere in humble

virtue. As so often happens in medieval English translations, it anglicizes some of Christine's French references, replacing allusions to Hutin de Vermeilles and Oton de Grandson, knights who honoured women, with the Chaucer of the *Legend* (Hoccleve 1970: 85). Hoccleve translates out of a mind stocked with Chaucerian lexis and syntax, from texts where, as here, Chaucer problematizes gender relations.

Another of Hoccleve's works from *c.* 1422, the *Dialogue*, the second item in his so-called *Series*, also echoes Chaucer's *Legend*, offering to placate readers offended by his earlier anti-feminist writing by means of the Chaucerian apology that he was a mere translator (Hoccleve 1970: 137), and by providing, as items 3 and 5, two subsequent translations from *Gesta Romanorum* with positive female role models. Unfortunately these too are clumsy in their attempts to generate a non-misogynist discourse: one, *Jereslaus' Wife*, includes a misogynist jibe, the other warns boys about the perils of women, and condemns the villainous female protagonist to a cruel end. Yet Hoccleve's autograph manuscript, two leaves later, dedicates the translation to Joan Beaufort, Duchess of Westmorland. Late medieval England was neither a paradise nor a level playing field for women of letters.

Later translations confirm this picture. Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, for example, handles uncertainly the misogyny of its source, the French version by Laurent de Premierfait of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*. It abbreviates a chapter vilifying women, apologizes for its misogyny, and omits Book VIII's concluding misogynist address to women (Lydgate 1924–7: 184–90); yet it also jibes that Chaucer's *Legend* mentioned only nineteen Good Women because he could find no more (10), and attempts a lumbering joke (132), probably inspired by Chaucer's *Shipman's Tale*, about English women altering their opinions or contradicting their husbands. (For further comment on the translation, see Chapter 2 below.) Stephen Scrope's translation of Christine de Pizan's *Epître d'Othéa*, described by its editor (1970: xix) as 'an almost literal translation', distinctly obscures Christine's status as the author in his prologue and later blurs the sharpness of Christine's representation of women as sources of advice and wisdom.

Chaucer had made comedy out of women's restricted first-hand access to Latin. The *General Prologue* had mocked the Prioress's (by then old-fashioned) AN; the *Nun's Priest's Tale* had shown the conceited cock playing on his wife's lack of Latin by quoting a misogynist commonplace. Yet growing use of English and its widening readership meant that women were more active than ever before as readers, patrons, and even translators. During the late fourteenth century, as nuns' use of AN began to decline, the production for them of English books increased.

Worth brief mention in this context is the Birgittine abbey of Syon, discussed elsewhere in this volume (§5.2 below). Soon after its foundation in 1415, anonymous translations were produced for the nuns of their Office, *The Myroure of Oure Ladye;* of the *Dialogo* of St Catherine of Siena, *The Orcherd of Syon*

(*c.* 1420–40); and of the Franciscan David of Augsburg's *Formula Noviciorum*. Another translation of this last survives: each is differently modified for its different readership; one addresses a mixed-gender lay audience, not the male addressees of the Latin prologue; that for the Syon nuns omits allusions to friars' itinerant work and adds allusions to female work such as sewing. Other translations used by Syon nuns, like *Musica Ecclesiastica* (*Imitation of Christ*)—the work was translated by a monk of the neighbouring Carthusian foundation of Sheen—are not rudimentary Christian instruction but sophisticated texts with a difficult Latinate vocabulary. By the fifteenth century, we may conclude, female religious readers were highly educated (on this, see further Hutchison 1989).

Syon and Sheen both had links with many high-born and devout laywomen who valued such translations, including Lady Margaret Beaufort and Elizabeth of York, who both promoted the printing of English devotional texts. So did some of the Birgittines: Abbess Agnes Jordan was active in arranging for the *Myroure* to be printed in 1530. The close links, personal and familial as well as religious, between laypeople and professed religious, and their equal involvement in the commissioning, patronage, and readership of English devotional translations, are well illustrated by the history of the Syon community and its network of friends and associates: devout laymen and women had the same levels of literacy and taste, and capacity for devotional or learned reading, as monks and nuns.

Other, regional, networks are well illustrated in Osbern Bokenham's *Legendys of Hooly Wummen* (*c.* 1443), composed for a group of upper-class East Anglian female patrons, and these English lives of various female saints include some whose cults or relics (including Sts Faith and Margaret) were specifically connected with East Anglian religious houses. Regional and national interests are also clearly expressed in a translation by Bokenham of the greatest of all medieval collections of saints' lives, the *Legenda Aurea*. Bokenham's translation, previously thought lost, has been recently identified in the Abbotsford manuscript, and represents an important enlargement of our knowledge of his work (Horobin 2005). It witnesses to the ways in which English national consciousness was cultivated through an interest in its regions and their traditions and celebrated shrines, heroes, and heroines, a feature previously noted more than once in this section. The translation includes many English saints and saints with major regional cults, and also celebrates the landscape and, as we might now call it, the 'heritage' of English places associated with particular saints. Its regional focus seems, in terms of cultural history, to offer a significant, intriguing forerunner to the geographical celebrations of England by Elizabethan and Jacobean writers, most famously Camden, Leland, and, for his *Poly-Olbion*, Drayton. Those later writers are anxious to give protestant readers a sense of the ancient traditions and marvels of the regions that constitute England, and do so while ignoring the local saints' cults that had been so central to regional devotion and cultural identity. Bokenham's translation seems to represent a similar patriotic

programme, but one still centrally embedded in the nation's Catholic heritage of saints.

Bokenham's work acknowledges with possible pride its own regional status: in the *Legendys* he writes that, though unable to equal the eloquence of Chaucer, Gower, Lydgate, and Cicero, he will write plainly in Suffolk English (Bokenham 1938: 111): that is, he seems conscious of the dialect status of his text. In the 1440s, similarly, John Capgrave of King's Lynn writes, in the prologue to his *St Katharine*, that he is translating into 'more pleyne' English a translation by another English priest from the West Country, whose English was a 'derk langage' (209), making it hard for many readers to understand the text (Capgrave 1893: 14, 16; on this prologue, see further Chapter 2 below). As well as confirming a new consciousness of the difficulty posed by regional varieties of English—a probable reflex of the growing standardization at this period of written English— Capgrave's sense of his own, East Anglian, variety of English as more widely comprehensible perhaps refers to the fact that it shares many features with London English, whose forms were the basis of what was becoming standard English. The development of a standard, non-regional English owed something to royal encouragement (Fisher 1992), as also to the development of print technology: Waldron (1999) sees the Kentishman Caxton, in his 1482 version of Higden's *Polychronicon*, developing a standard, non-regional English; in the prologue to his *Eneydos* (*P&E* 108), Caxton discusses the problems regional variation presents to a printer aiming at a wide market. (On Caxton, see further §3.6 below.)

Bokenham's work for female patrons is suggestive of the subjects, and even the styles of writing, which might have appealed to women. Peck (1991: ix) suggests female readers and possibly female patrons for several late-medieval narratives about Old Testament heroic godly women as models of behaviour for contemporary female readers. Barratt's study of Eleanor Hull's translation of the Penitential Psalms (in *MTr* 1) disproves any assumptions that female translators inevitably use a gendered style. Female readers were not purely pious, nor were all translations associated with women devotional. The fifteenth-century *Ragman Roll* rewrites the thirteenth-century French *Ragemon le bon*, a fortune-telling game, for a female audience. A gynaecological treatise was translated (as *The Knowing of Woman's Kind in Childing*) because, according to the prologue, English women are more literate than others and will welcome information that helps them avoid having to reveal illnesses to male doctors (for an edition of the prologue, see *IoV* 157–9).

By the fifteenth century, patriotic pride can be seen in many translations of texts dealing with saints and heroes of European chivalry; these are often shaped specifically for an upper-class readership and even dedicated to princely readers. English is now less often perceived as having low social status. Romances are increasingly presented as history or morally educational, beneficial for gently-born youths and the young of the upwardly mobile mercantile classes. Late in the century, Caxton presents English translations as appropriate for gentlemen and gentlewomen.

He also argues in his prologues for a unified nationwide readership of his translations in terms that go back at least to the poem 'Alle that beoth of huerte trewe' (pp. 55–6 above): hence some of his prologues speak of 'our English' and the 'maternal tongue'. Admittedly, others repeat the other view that English translation is for unsophisticated folk and the language itself is rough. His *Reynard the Fox* (1481), from French, is 'translated into this rude and simple Englyssh' (62); the prologue to the *Eneydos*, also from French, categorizes English as a 'rude', 'rude and old' (109), a sort of country cousin, 'provincial and uncultured' (Blake, in Caxton 1973: 48). Caxton's capacity to hold simultaneously two opposed views of the class status of English, seeing its target readerships as both inclusive and limited, can be paralleled earlier in the ME period. We can, however, see unequivocal confidence in both a princely audience and the capacity of the English language to furnish an appropriately princely style in *Knyghthode and Bataile* (*c.* 1457–60), a translation of Vegetius' *De Re Militari*, by a parson of Calais, possibly (according to *IoV* 182) Robert Parker. This is dedicated to Henry VI and his 'chiualers', those warriors who fight to defeat 'Cristis and the kyngis foes' (Parker 1936: 24, 82). Parker adopts an elaborate, aureate style, and turns the military treatise into a decorative, romance-like poem, drawing analogies between earthly and heavenly hosts to please princely readers and a deeply devout king, and to further Lancastrian propaganda. He ties the work to contemporary Lancastrian national politics, urging campaigning in Normandy and France, and the preservation of the garrison at Calais. Yet the text had a wider appeal: one manuscript belonged to Sir John Paston, member of an upwardly mobile family only recently gentrified.

Increasingly translators mention youthful readers and educational aims: Caxton's prologue to the *Knyght of the Towre* (1484) says it will profit 'ladyes and gentilwymen, douʒters to lordes and gentilmen' (Caxton, *P&E* 86), who may use it to teach their children; his *Blanchardyn and Eglantine* (*c.* 1489) is for 'all vertuouse yong noble gentylmen and wymmen' (105). Barclay's *Lyfe of St George* (1515), translated from Mantuan, stresses the importance of the national saint as a model for English boys, exhorting them to ignore trivial sports and follow their patron saint in manly prowess (1955: 22).

Learned and chivalric translations were part of the world of the educated Tudor gentleman, prince, and courtier. Lord Berners translated the *Libro Aureo* of Antonio de Guevara (as *The Golden Book of Marcus Aurelius*), the romance *Huon of Bordeaux*, and, for 'the noble gentylmen of Englande' to know the achievements of their ancestors, as his introduction says, Froissart's *Chronicles* (1523–5: Bourchier 1901–3: I, 2; see further pp. 324, 356–8 below).

The degree of national acclimatization varies. Caxton's *Book of the Knyght of the Towre* (1483) cuts French references and century-old fashions. Robert Copland (1509) leaves French allusions unaltered in his translation of the *Quinze joies de mariage*; later translations anglicize and update the text, substituting Henry VIII for 'le Roy Clotaire' (Crow 1964: 577). Nicholas Udall's translation of Erasmus'

Apophthegmata (1542) introduces Robin Hood, much as Alfred had done with Weland nearly 600 years previously. National modifications may sometimes be practical: the *Book of Trees and Wine* by the (?late) fourteenth-century Westminster monk Nicholas Bollard, translating a popular German treatise attributed to Gottfried von Franken and ultimately dependent on Palladius, occasionally substitutes plants and produce common in Britain for the southern European ones that Gottfried owed to Palladius (for an edition, see Braekman 1989; for recent comment, Griffiths and Edwards 2001: 31–7, 97–103). Adaptation can also have political roots: John Gough's *Abbreuyacyon of all generall councellys* (1539), adapted from Jean Lemaire de Belges's 1519 *Traitié* on schisms and councils, is a telling case in point. The *Traitié* was composed to support Louis XII against the Pope; Gough's translation turned it into English propaganda to assist Henry VIII against Pope Paul III (Doyle 2003: no. 3).

This period also sees important translations in Scots English, overlapping with the production of major original works in the language (a recent important study is Corbett 1999: chs. 2–4). Sir Gilbert Hay is noted elsewhere in this volume (p. 179 below): so are Robert Henryson (pp. 86, 365 below), John Bellenden, and William Stewart (both in §5.5 below). We might add to this list the poet known as Blind Harry, who 'misleadingly presents himself as the translator of a Latin history' by a master John Blair (Goldstein in *CHMEL* 234), if only because his claim witnesses yet again to the enormous appeal, throughout the Middle Ages, of the *idea*—more important, sometimes, than the fact—of translation. An early anonymous Scots English translation, from about 1400, was produced of *Legenda Aurea*, supplemented by other sources, though the translator claims to be 'undoing' the source 'but ony ekine þareto' [without any additions to it] (Metcalfe 1888–96: xix). Most important of all is Gavin Douglas (see further pp. 88–9, §5.6 below). Like other so-called Scottish Chaucerians, and in contrast to his English contemporaries, Douglas does not so much translate himself into Chaucer as translate Chaucer into Scots, distancing himself from Chaucer's achievement, as Goldstein notes (*CHMEL* 247), by appealing directly to the cultural authority of Virgil. Seeking to forge 'a national identity' for himself as a writer, and a national identity for his readers, he 'shows the clearest signs of national consciousness of all the Middle Scots makaris [poets]'. He makes plain that he is writing not in 'Inglis' but in 'Scottis', and is 'the first poet to refer to the Scots language' (Cummings 1995: 148). Likewise, though sometimes he seems, as Corbett notes (1999: 32, 43), to be envisaging a restricted readership of 'gentill redaris' for his work, and excluding from consideration the 'lewyt rebaldaill' [unlettered commoners], at other times he anticipates that the latter will have the work read aloud to them.

A contemporary of Douglas, Murdoch Nisbet, may have had similar nationalist motives in a translation he undertook *c.* 1520, of the New Testament into Scots. Strikingly, he worked not from the Greek, nor even from the new Latin version by Erasmus, but from the Wycliffite version of 130 years previously.

Nisbet also knew of Tyndale's translation from the Greek, though he used it only for an appended prologue to the Epistle to the Romans. Apart from adapting the orthography of his Wycliffite source to Scots orthography, he hardly changed its vocabulary. As noted below (pp. 224–5), Tyndale's translation was also indebted to the Wycliffite one. Biblical translations after Tyndale, major and minor, are discussed below (pp. 226–9) and more fully documented in Volume 2 of the *History*. Here it suffices to note that they generated considerable and recurrent debate about who, in class and gender terms, could be allowed to read them. Anxieties about vernacular translations of the Bible, earlier triggered by the production of the Wycliffite Bible—and, 400 years before that, by the request to Ælfric to translate the Book of Genesis—always involved the fear that religious ideas would be discussed by the lower (non-clerical) classes. Opponents of biblical translation included Thomas More, who feared Bibles would be read in taverns. The 1539 Great Bible was intended for church use, and Henry VIII at first tried to ban all public reading of the Bible without permission—any other reading was to be in private and silent. The Act of Parliament of 1543 permitted a gentleman to have a Bible for quiet reading in his household; merchants and upper-class ladies could read privately. But 'no . . . women, nor artificers, prentises, . . . husband men, nor labourers' could read it (quoted by Cummings in *CHMEL* 843). This Act also aimed to police vernacular literature generally, though it permitted English chronicles and biographies, and the works of Chaucer and Gower. It contrasts strikingly with the Act passed in the same year in Scotland to license the production of the Bible 'in the vulgar toung in Inglis or scottis' (see further Corbett 1999: 55; Edington 1994: 171–2).

Of course, biblical translators positively aimed for social inclusiveness. Tyndale, in his 1530 preface to the *Pentateuch*, had hoped that the ploughboy would be able to know Scripture through translation, and Cranmer's preface to the second edition (1540) of the Great Bible visualizes reading the English Bible as a matter of morality and Christian education but also of a nation united:

Here may . . . men, women; young, old; learned, unlearned; rich, poor; priests, laymen; lords, ladies; officers, tenants, and mean men; virgins, wives; widows, lawyers, merchants, artificers, husband men . . . learn all things, what they ought to believe, what they ought to do.   (Cranmer 1965: II, 37)

Given the hostility of different parts of the country to the new faith, one of whose primary instruments this translation was to become, Cranmer's picture of a nation—all classes and professions, and both men and women—united in adherence to a single translation was almost as much a matter of faith as earlier claims by translators, whether Mannyng or Caxton, to be addressing, and helping to further the development of, a single, unified readership. Fortunately, their faith was not misplaced.

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Theories of Translation

Nicholas Watson

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2 Theories of Translation

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The Problem of Theory

Any account of medieval translation *theory*, especially one that relates theory to practice and the idea of translation to that of the literary, faces serious problems of evidence, definition, and scope. The word *literary* itself has no OE or ME equivalent, and to apply any a priori definition of it narrower than the root meaning ('about letters') to the prose or poetry of the 700 years before 1500 is anachronistic. (Like ME *lettres, litterature* refers not to books but to the knowledge gained from them.) *Theorique* and *theoreticall* join the lexicon only in 1400, one meaning 'first principles', the other as an antonym for *practicall*, but the context is scientific (often alchemical), the sense 'literary theory' far in the future: witness the relevant entries in the *Oxford English Dictionary* (*OED*) and *Middle English Dictionary* (*MED*). As to the term *translation* itself, medieval intellectuals inherit a substantial body of thought on the structure, potencies, and significance of language from antiquity, and (especially from the ninth century) Latin poetry, encyclopedias, commentaries, and summae increasingly take that thought in new directions. Hermeneutics, semiotics, linguistics, rhetoric, and grammar are medieval disciplines as well as modern, all of them with important speculative and philosophical components. But while scholarly Latin accounts of language are often relevant to vernacular writings, some of which indeed respond directly to these accounts, translation as such is seldom among their primary interests. Although Latin translations of Arabic, Greek, Hebrew, French, and even English texts were made, the academic culture of Christian northern Europe in the Middle Ages was close enough to monolingual for translation rarely to be the test case for linguistic theories that it has become over the last 500 years. For example, in the Oxford debates over Bible translation in the early fifteenth century (partially edited by Deanesly 1920: 399–431; see also pp. 235–6 below), which partly turn on the adequacy of the vernacular as a vehicle of divine truth, the story of Babel is adapted, on the one side, to argue for the equality of languages, while, on the other side, Neoplatonic theories of emanation are taken to point to the attenuated status of English. But, for all their interest, these adaptations are ad hoc justifications for political positions more than theoretical statements, and neither adaptation has deep intellectual roots.

Long identified as 'medieval translation theory' is the distinction made in many texts between 'word-for-word' and 'sense-for-sense' translation, the language of which derives from Horace's *Ars Poetica* on the one hand and the

Church Fathers, especially Augustine and Jerome, on the other (see discussions in Kelly 1979). Horace argues that the faithful *interpretes* should not translate word for word; in his prefaces to his translations of various books of the Bible, by contrast, Jerome sometimes claims to have translated 'magis sensum e sensu quam ex verbo verbum' (Stanton 2002: 111) [more sense for sense than word for word]. This distinction can have real force, as when the so-called General Prologue to the Late Version of the Wycliffite Bible rejects the translation policy of the Early Version of that Bible, arguing that 'the best translating is, out of Latyn into English, to translate aftir the sentence [according to the meaning] and not oneli aftir the wordis, so that the sentence be as opin either [clear or] openere in English as in Latyn, and go not fer fro the lettre [literal meaning]' (Dean 1996: 69). Yet although the association here between 'sentence' and 'lettre' bespeaks a careful theoretical position on the primacy of the literal (as distinct from the allegorical) senses of Scripture (treated most fully in Smalley 1983; see also Copeland 1993), so far as translation as such is concerned, the qualifier 'out of Latyn into English' suggests that practice, more than theory, is here at issue. Translation from Latin into French or from French into English, for example, might favour a different policy for emphasizing the 'lettre'.

Other uses of the 'word-for-word'/'sense-for-sense' *topos*, from Alfred's translation of Gregory's *Cura Pastoralis* in the ninth century to Rolle's interlinear translation of the Psalms in the fourteenth, concur. Stressing his own kingly emphasis on results, Alfred flexibly notes that he 'on Englisc awende' Gregory, 'hwilum word be worde, hwilum andgit of angiete . . . swæ ic hie angitfullicost areccean meahte' [translated Gregory into English, sometimes word for word, sometimes sense for sense, as I could make most intelligible sense of it] (ed. Treharne 2000: 12; see fuller discussion in Davis 2000). In his search for an English that is not 'straunge' but, while 'lyghtest and comonest', is still 'mast [most] lyke til the Latyn', Rolle says, 'I folow the lettere als mykyll as I may; and thare [where] I fynd na propire Ynglis, I folow the wit [meaning] of the worde, swa that thai that sall red it thaim thare [they need] noght dred errynge' (*IoV* 246; for further comment, see Watson 1991: 243–8). In the later passages introducing biblical translation one feels a tension between fidelity and clarity missing in Alfred on Gregory, a tension between obligations which will surface again later. But even where 'literalism' is most desirable, especially in Bible translation, the translation policies labelled 'word for word' and 'sense for sense' are conceived as interlocking pragmatic resolutions of this conflict, not as differing theoretical positions.

Recent studies—most notably, that of Copeland 1991 (see also Copeland 2001)—note how medieval academic traditions (extending back to Horace, Cicero, Augustine, Jerome, and the rhetoricians) inform the growth of the literary vernaculars as self-conscious rivals to Latinity, and to each other, in the last two centuries of the medieval period. Copeland's interest in the changing shape of the institutional structures in which rhetoric and hermeneutics were conceptualized marries with her concern with the intellectual logic of *translatio studii*, the translation of learning, as a shaping force in the rise both of Latin literature,

in the first century BCE, and of vernacular literature, more than a millennium later. At different times and in different ways, both rhetoric and hermeneutics were important to processes of cultural translation, as models, on the one hand, for an inventive, transgressive relationship between translated work and source, and, on the other, for the assimilation of a source through exegetic paraphrase. In producing literary works modelled on classical *auctores*, such as Ovid or Virgil, vernacular poets like Dante, Chaucer, and Gower capitalize on both rhetorical and hermeneutic modes at once, framing themselves now as poetic inventors, now as exegetes, in their attempts to displace the cultural authority of their sources and replace it with their own. This is at the same time a revolutionary and a conservative endeavour.

Copeland's emphasis on displacement, academic tradition, and classicizing vernacular authors runs the risk of equating translation theory as a whole with a relatively narrow range of texts and issues; less aggressive accounts of relations between translations and source texts predominate even at the end of the medieval period, and a different approach is called for here. Nonetheless, any discussion of how medieval vernacular translators conceptualized their own activity, an activity often presented as the carrying of texts and ideas not only 'across' from one language to another but 'down' from the universalizing authority of Latin to the parochial informality of the vernacular, must reckon with the issues she raises.

The following discussion is no exception. It builds its argument, though, in the opposite direction, creating its analysis of the theoretical structures expressed by the vernacular writings of medieval England, out of a study, not of academic institutions and structures, but of the vernacular lexis of translation itself, as this is deployed in the translators' prologues which introduce so many texts written in the period. (A recent anthology of such prologues is *The Idea of the Vernacular*; its findings can be supplemented by the rich repository of examples to be found under the relevant entries of *OED* and *MED*.) In some respects, this does not seem like promising material: the prologues in question are rhetorical constructs, and often pay more attention to situating their texts ideologically than to the linguistic issues raised by vernacularization; moreover, once one moves beyond the terms derived from Scholastic literary theory—*auctor, entente, sentence, matere* (source, intention, meaning, subject matter)—even the linguistic lexis of these prologues looks non-technical. In the language of prologues, translations are true, false, strange, clear, dark, light, common, plain; translators are rude, simple, busy, or lewd, while *translate* and its synonyms—OE *awendan*, AN *translater*, and ME *drawe, turne, follow*—retain many of their extra-literary associations with transferring, converting, lifting, or going.

Yet for all its apparent vagueness, this *is* a technical terminology, constituting the most important common ground medieval translators share in theorizing their linguistic and ethical activities. On analysis, indeed, the emphasis of these prologues on language drawn from the physical, ethical, and social realms offers evidence, not of the vagueness, but rather of the stability of the role translation maintains at the centre of the place of knowledge and exchange that is medieval

vernacular culture, as an essential mediator between, on the one hand, the riches of learning, the past, and elsewhere, and, on the other, the 'lewed', the now, and here. In tune with its emphasis on the particularities of language, this section builds on case studies. Moving out from, then back towards, the elaborate formulations of translation policy that introduce many fifteenth-century poetic translations, the next two parts of this discussion take as their point of departure the relative unanimity of medieval theorizations of this act of mediation, despite the wide variety of translation policies to which these theorizations give rise. Insofar as significant theoretical differences emerge, these are not differences between prose and verse, nor between different theological positions, but between earlier and later texts. In the final two parts, attention turns towards the figures who people translation prologues: authors, translators, and patrons. Here, at last, a note of anxiety about the efficacy of translation is heard, as the translators and the vernacular into which they translate are shown to be straitened, even humbled by their burdens. Yet the dominant note throughout remains one of confidence: for writers throughout the medieval period, translation names a difficult but also a profoundly constructive act.

The Object of Translation: Capgrave's *Life of St Katharine*

What is translated in a medieval translation? Not necessarily a text. In ME, flowers, bishops, captured peoples, and the relics of saints are all *translat* from one garden, see, kingdom, or shrine, to another; the soul is *translat* to God in mystical rapture or death; and learning, culture, political power, and divine covenant are *translat* from east to west, pagan to Christian, Old to New Testament, in various manifestations of *translatio studii et imperii*, the translation of learning and empire (see further Somerset and Watson 2003: introduction). Specifically textual translation can work in more recognizable ways, 'carrying across' grammatical, syntactic, rhetorical, and argumentative structures from the source text, creating meaningful equivalents of those structures in the target language, focusing, as the General Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible puts it, on the 'sentence' conveyed by the 'lettre' or literal level of a text. But translations often identify the object of translation in less familiar terms: as the underlying subject of a text (*matere*), rather than the text itself; as its intended moral (*entente*); even as the truth conveyed, not by a single text, but by a series of texts. Each of these objects can, in certain textual situations, stake a claim to be or to convey the proper meaning (*sentence*) of a text better than its *lettre*. The answer to the question 'What object is being translated?' is a determining influence on translation policy, which can vary widely even between texts which introduce themselves using similar topoi and are products of similar cultural situations. What remain largely unchanged are the ontological assumptions underlying the activity of translation itself.

A useful, if intricate, introduction to those assumptions is provided by the prologue to a mid-fifteenth-century East Anglian poem, the Augustinian friar John Capgrave's *Life of St Katharine of Alexandria*, written in five books of

rhyme royal stanzas, in homage to and competition with Chaucer's similarly constructed *Troilus and Criseyde* (see further Winstead 1996, 1997: 147–80). The prologue's opening account of the transmission history of its immediate source and its relation to that source weaves together literary and extra-literary senses of translation, juxtaposing some six senses of the word in its presentation of itself as the culmination of a millennium of efforts to make the virgin martyr's life 'more openly . . . knowe abovte of woman and of man' (Capgrave 1893: 5). Capgrave describes his work as an intralingual adaptation of an incomplete work written in 'dyrke', obscure, language (7) by an ascetic, now dead, priest of the parish of St Pancras, originally from Devon, who spends eighteen years in search of an authoritative account of Katharine's life to supplement the well-known narrative of her torture and martyrdom. Told where to look in a revelation, 'mysti and deerk', in which a shrouded man makes him eat an old book, its leaves 'dusty and rent', this priest at last goes to Greece and in a flowery meadow digs up a fifth-century Latin translation by Arrek (the figure in the revelation) of a Greek Life of Katharine by her confessor, Athanasius: a translation in which the reputation of the 'swete flovr | And martyr Kataryne', nearly destroyed by heretics after Athanasius' death, is 'newe i-sowe' (13). Several times written, hidden, and after painful effort rediscovered, Katharine's Life is translated from Egypt to Greece to England, like a relic, or (in the logic of *translatio studii*) like learning itself; transplanted from meadow to meadow like a flower; transmitted from translator to translator through revelation; translated interlingually from Greek to Latin to English; and intralingually 'opened' by Capgrave from the 'cage' of incompleteness and crabbed literalism in which the strangeness of the priest's Devon version even yet confines the work (15). Rather as the priest was assisted by Arrek in his dream, Capgrave's project continues to receive the assistance of the priest, but now in his capacity as a heavenly translator, a 'mene' (mediator) between Capgrave and Katharine, through which the 'reyn' of heavenly inspiration 'That Apollo bar abovte and eke Seynt Poule' can be made to fall on the translator-poet, so as to render more authoritative his reconstruction of Katharine's life.

The richness of this prologue, whose function is to make Capgrave's text as close a substitute for Katharine herself as possible, overrides any attempt to distinguish clearly between the senses of translation involved here. In giving Capgrave spiritually mediated access to the apotheosized figure of Katharine, as she dances in heaven beside Christ and the Virgin, the prologue equally overrides the distinction between the translator, following 'þe steppes of my faderis before' as a diligent passer-on of tradition, and the poet who—inspired like a modern-day Apollo or Paul—ambitiously sets out to 'ouer-take' his source (15, 17).

In its elisions and layerings of *translation* in its various senses, *Katharine* suggests several things about the activity and the object of translation. Far from being marked by uncertainty, inevitable incompleteness, or loss—as we might expect from this narrative of painfully achieved and continually threatened textual transmission—translation emerges here as an objective or definitive process, an action with a beginning and an end, involving a passage through space, time, or

order of being that leaves the translated object marked by traces of its passing but preserves it essentially intact. The object on which this process is performed—which is finally not the priest's translation of Arrek, nor Arrek's of Athanasius, nor even Athanasius' Life, but the words, actions, and traits associated with Katharine, the memorialization of her bodily and historical presence on earth—is an irreducible source of cultural authority or spiritual power. This source may undergo decay; the priest's dream depicts the source book Arrek insists he eat as 'ful eelde, | With bredys [covers] rotyn', and the priest's incomplete translation of this book is unable to repair this damage completely (7). But such is the importance of the *matere* in question and the *sentence* associated with that *matere* that it must finally yield to the divinely inspired, reconstructive, clarifying eloquence Capgrave brings to it, just as the whereabouts of Arrek's old book finally yields to the priest's diligent asceticism. Translation here is itself a powerful, indeed an irresistible, cultural activity effected by a combination of desire, virtue, labour, learning, eloquence, and grace.

Biblical Translation: the Wycliffite Bible and the *Orrmulum*

How far does the medley-like prologue to Capgrave's *Katharine* represent a common or normative medieval view of translation? Certainly, it seems a long way from the fictionalized account of the props that underlie Capgrave's poetic retelling to the scholarly and theologically dense defence of the vernacular Scriptures in the General Prologue of the most widely read translation of the period, the Wycliffite Bible. But, however great the gulf between the two projects with respect to practice, the differences between them arise from their different understandings of what it is they are translating, not from any fundamental disagreement as to the nature and process of translation itself. In the General Prologue, it is not the lived history of a saint but the Holy Spirit's words, delivered in Hebrew and Greek but available to the 'symple creature' who translates from Jerome's Latin, which constitute the powerful object requiring translation. Hence, the mode of translation is here literal and prosaic, not inspirational and poetic; the translation narrative involves textual criticism, the collaboration of 'elde dyvynis', and close rendering of 'sentence', rather than Capgrave's visionary ingestion of a book, assisted by saintly mediators, and his recasting of hagiography as Chaucerian romance:

First, this symple creature hadde myche travaile [took many pains], with diverse felawis and helperis, to gedere manie elde Biblis, and othere doctouris and comune glosis [patristic texts and standard commentaries], and to make oo Latyn Bible sumdel trewe . . . to counseile with elde gramariens and elde dyvynis of harde wordis and harde sentencis . . . to translate as cleerli as he coude to the sentence [according to the meaning], and to have manie gode felawis and kunnynge at the correcting of the translacioun. (Dean 1996: 69)

Although this passage develops into a technical discussion of how to render ablatives in English, and although the emphasis here is not on story but on

words—the 'symple creature' claims he would not dispense with 'the leste lettre either title', the smallest letter or tittle, of the Bible 'for no good in erthe'—the General Prologue shares with *Katharine* not only a common set of emphases on the exigencies of transmission, the diligence and virtue required of the transmitters, and the clarity of the result, but also a common confidence in the possibility, indeed inevitability, of a fully achieved translation, one that improves markedly on its immediate source. Not only is this translation a scholarly enterprise, which can be improved further by any who find in it 'defaute of the truthe of translacioun' (Dean 1996: 70; all medieval translators agree that any translation can be improved). It is an enterprise undertaken 'for charite and for comoun profyt of Cristene soulis' (70), who may rely on the Holy Spirit of charity to aid them in comprehending God's words aright. Rather as Katharine and the priest who acts as a 'mene' to her in heaven can short-circuit the difficulties of textual transmission for Capgrave, by offering direct inspiration where his source is obscure or lacking, so here the Holy Spirit is seen as completing the project of translating the Bible in the hearts of all those spiritually prepared to receive it. The General Prologue avoids claims to divine inspiration, and does not repeat the claims made for the inspiration of Jerome's Vulgate and the Septuagint. But by assuring the reader whom 'God wole have savid', in words taken from Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana*, that 'he whos herte is ful of charite conprehendith, withouten any errour, the manyfoold abundaunce and largest teching of Goddis Scripturis' (*IoV* 93), the Prologue does make a providential claim, if not for the translation, for its individual and national impact. Like *Katharine*, the Wycliffite Bible is a reconstruction of its source whose efficacy is finally guaranteed, not only by human effort, nor by the capacity of translation to find out equivalence between languages, but by the workings of God in human history.

Looked at from this angle, the Wycliffite Bible remains a major scholarly achievement, built on a demanding understanding of the relation between access to the full text of the Scriptures and human salvation. But it also emerges as more congruent with vernacular textual culture in general than is often thought. We naturally associate literal translation with the biblicism of this proto-protestant reformist movement. But non-Wycliffite translation can also be scrupulously literal, as in the anonymous late fourteenth-century translation (*Deonise Hid Divinite*) of the *Mystical Theology* of pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, where respect for the literal involves use of a double source, the Latin version of Johannes Sarracenus (*De Mystica Theologia*) and the commentary on it by Thomas Gallus, the 'sentence' of the latter offering a guide to the 'nakid lettre' of the former: 'I haue not onliche folowed þe nakid lettre of þe text, bot for to declare þe hardnes of it, I haue moche folowed þe sentence of þe Abbot of Seinte Victore' (anon. 1955: 2). For that matter, Wycliffite translation praxis is far from literal when occasion requires: witness the pointedly political translations of biblical passages in the early fifteenth-century *Lanterne of Liʒt*, whose translation opportunistically takes Psalm 9: 21, for example, as referring to Arundel's Constitutions of 1409 (anon. 1917: 17–18). What finally underpins Wycliffite translations in general is

the same confident notion, ubiquitous in late medieval vernacular culture, that, one way or another, the technical difficulties and solemn responsibilities that the work of translation represents are certain to be successfully overcome.

Even the long tradition of verse Bible translation from the centuries before the Wycliffite Bible—a tradition so alien to modern scholarly sensibilities that histories of the English Bible largely ignore it (a point well made by Lawton in *CHMEL* 454–61)—works on a similar ideal of access and sense of translation's capacities and responsibilities. Such is the case, for example, with a late twelfth-century prologue dedicating (to brother Walter) the Gospel translation named by and after its author as the *Orrmulum* (Little Orm), a title probably modelled on the word *speculum* (mirror), that popular element of medieval book titles (so Bennett and Smithers 1966: 174). The difference from the texts so far discussed is that the *Orrmulum* is undergirded by a rationalist ethic of obligation, rather than any appeal to the providential. For Orrm, whose ambitions are modest and realistic, translation is a completed act because he and all those that have to do with his text work together to make it so:

> Icc hafe wennd inntill Ennglissh
> Goddspelles hallȝhe lare,
> affterr þatt little witt þatt me
> Min Drihhtin hafeþþ lenedd.
> þu þohhtesst tatt itt mihhte wel
> till mikell frame turrnenn,
> ȝiff Ennglissh folk, forr lufe off Crist,
> itt wollde ȝerne lernenn,
> annd folȝhenn itt, annd fillenn itt
> wiþþ þohht, wiþþ word, wiþþ dede . . .
> Icc hafe sammnedd o þis boc
> þah Goddspelles neh alle,
> þatt sinndenn o þe messeboc
> inn all þe ȝer att messe.
> (ed. Treharne 2000: 274)

I have translated the Gospel's holy teaching into English, according to the small intelligence that my Lord has lent me. You considered that doing this might well result in great benefit, if English people would eagerly study it for the love of Christ, and follow it, and fulfil it in thought, in word, in deed . . . I have collected in this book almost the whole of the Gospels, those that are said at Mass found in the Office book for the whole year.

Orrm offers access not to the Bible but to the Gospels, in the form in which they are recited and preached upon at Mass, constructing his text for auditors, rather than readers. If the object to be translated, 'Goddspelles hallȝhe lare', resembles the Wycliffite term for the Scriptures ('Goddes lawe'), 'lare' seems to represent an oral version of 'lawe' such as can best be conveyed by hearing, not reading. Hence the complexity of the *Orrmulum*'s aids to its own delivery, as represented both by its sophisticated spelling system—a pronunciation guide meant to enable

French-speaking priests to preach in English ('Walter' is a French name)—and by its choice of a rhythmic verse or prose form that fits the text for performance and makes it available to memory (as argued by Lawton in *CHMEL*; Worley in Somerset and Watson 2003).

But if the means by which 'Goddspelles hallʒhe lare' is delivered aims at an audience whose capacity for study must remain limited, Orrm is as concerned as the author of the General Prologue to stress the integrity of his project and his confidence in the possibility of its completion 'wiþþ þohht, wiþþ word, wiþþ dede' by those who receive it. Literal translation is not possible, for 'whase mot to læwedd follc | larspell off Goddspell tellenn, | he mot wel ekenn maniʒ word | amang Goddspelless wordess' [whoever has to recite Gospel learning to unlearned people must interject many words among the words of the Gospel] (274): words, presumably, of explanation and gloss. Yet Orrm acknowledges the responsibility to admit 'nan word ʒæn [against] Cristess lare' into his translation, and demands careful correction by the learned, exact copying of his spellings by scribes, and full implementation by its auditors (275). Author, scribes, users, and audience thus share in a community of mutual responsibility and care formed around the possibility of rendering in verse, onto parchment, and in lives, 'Goddspelles hallʒhe lare'.

Orrm's view that the spiritual obligation he shares with his community is enough to guarantee the efficacy of his translation seems typical of vernacular translators until the fourteenth century. Perhaps his confidence in his text's auditors is unusual, a sign of his solidarity with them as members of the same dialectal community. Two centuries before Orrm, Ælfric's preface to his translation of Genesis declares unease about literal translation of the Old Testament precisely because a vernacular readership may not be able to live up to its obligation of correctly interpreting the text's meaning. A century after Orrm, the author of *The Northern Homily Cycle*, who similarly proposes 'opon Inglis' to 'undo' (translate) the 'godspells that always | Er red in kirc on Sundays', lays stress on his obligation, as a preacher, to 'schau | The god [good] that Godd havis gert [has made] him knau', and has little to say about his congregation's obligation or ability to implement what they hear (*IoV* 127–8). But in all three texts the pressure to think of translation as under divine guarantee found in the later texts is absent. There does seem to be a difference between texts written before and after about the mid-fourteenth century, one perhaps partly linked to the increasing cultural ambitions of late ME writing, partly to the pressures under which those ambitions placed authors and texts. Again, this can be expressed as a difference in the object of translation. For Orrm and his preacherly colleagues, Gospel 'lare' is a body of teaching their publicly performed texts must translate into their hearers' lives: the translated object is Christian living, not words and ideas. In *Katharine* and the General Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible, Christian living is still important, but the object of translation remains in the texts: if *Katharine* is a kind of textual reliquary for the saint, the Wycliffite Bible is a permanent repository of the teaching of God himself.

Translation and Cultural Mediation: Trevisa's *Dialogue* and Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*

But God is not the only guarantor of translation's efficacy in late ME. More useful for the production of secular texts is the figure of the patron (see further §3.1 below), one which, in later texts, almost has the force of a trope. In many late fourteenth- and fifteenth-century texts, the patron—aristocratic, cultivated, leisured, and learned—is given a mediating role which parallels, even transcends, those of the translator and his translation, substituting for the part played in many religious texts by divine providence. A wealthy arbiter of taste, admired by clerical writers and vernacular readers alike, the patron has the worldly wisdom the clerical writer lacks to assess the need for a given translation, and the cultural capital the clerical writer lacks to ensure that a translation contributes to the corpus of vernacular letters. An educated reader of at least the sorts of Latin designed for broad accessibility, the patron conversely boasts the knowledge most vernacular readers lack to guarantee a translation's quality. In principle, as Green 1980 shows, the patron is thus ideally situated to act as a symbol of the cultural imperatives that make a translation necessary and efficacious.

The figure of the patron has a long history in AN literature, where the lady of a household is the addressee of many instructional works, often written by her chaplains (this figure is surveyed in detail by Wogan-Browne 2001; for a single example, see p. 108 below). But the patron comes into prominence in ME only in 1387, in John Trevisa's *Dialogue* (see further Hudson 1988: ch. 9; Somerset 1998: ch. 3). The *Dialogue*, between a Lord and a Clerk, dramatizes Thomas, Lord Berkeley's role in commissioning his chaplain Trevisa's prose translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (on Berkeley, see especially Hanna 1989). The Trevisa figure initially resists the Lord's proposal, on increasingly feeble and snobbish grounds, all ruthlessly undercut by the capacious intellect and improbably egalitarian ethics of the Lord. For the latter, the vernacular, despite being a local language, still has the capacity to reach more readers than Latin. The Clerk's huffy rejoinder that 'hit nedith not that alle siche know the cronicles' leads the Lord to explain his preference for prose over verse—'for comynliche prose is more clere than ryme, more easy and more pleyn to know and to understonde' (for further comment on Trevisa's choice of prose, see p. 346 below)—and, more importantly, to produce a manifesto for the translation of a wide range of texts:

Speke not to straitliche [narrowly] of thing that nedeth [is necessary]. For streitliche to speke of thing that nedith, onliche thing that is, and may not faile [i.e. God], nedith to be . . . And so for to speke no man nedith to knowe the cronicles . . . Otherwise to speke of thing that nedith, somwhat [something] nedith for to susteyne [to provide sustenance] . . . and so mete and drinke nedith for kepyng and sustynaunce of lyfe. And so for to speke no man nedith to knowe the cronicles. But, in the thrid maner to speke of thing that nedith, al that is profitable nedith, and so for to speke alle men nedith to knowe the cronicles. (*IoV* 132–3)

Trevisa's more religiously oriented contemporaries prefer a fourth, pastoral sense of 'nedith' in relation to translation, the sense 'necessary to salvation', and the classlessness of the Lord's understanding of the vernacular readership of the *Polychronicon*, a secular transposition of the top-down clerical view of the laity, suggests that this pastoral sense is not far from Trevisa's mind. But by limiting the Lord's interest to secular life, Trevisa keeps the spiritual out of the immediate supervision of his patron, and the Lord here instead delineates a sphere of *cultural* necessity as the one suitable to his own role as a patron: a sphere in which need has no more to do with the exigencies of metaphysics or of human survival than it does with those of salvation, but is defined in relation to that most vaguely utilitarian of ME concepts, profit. The prologue to an early fourteenth-century verse text, *Cursor Mundi*, a lengthy account of universal history that might be thought a rough early equivalent of Trevisa's translation, takes care to distinguish the 'wisdome' of wishing to learn about biblical history from the 'foly' of being entertained by the narratives of Alexander and Julius Caesar, Troy, Greece, and the founding of England by Brutus, understanding secular literary culture in strictly moral terms: 'The wyse mon wil of wisdome here | The fole him drawes to foly nere, | The wrang to here of right ys lathe [unwilling] | The proude wit buxomnes [with obedience] is wrath' (*IoV* 268–9). Perhaps in deliberate opposition to this kind of hierarchy of reading, the Lord's adoption of the *Polychronicon* as 'necessary' to the vernacular readership he represents opens the door to the formation of an infinitely expandable canon of 'profitable' secular literature in a manner that has considerable resonance for fifteenth-century non-religious translation practice.

William Caxton, striving to expand the market for the products of his new technology, is among the more zealous promoters both of the figure of the patron and of the cultural valency of the profitable, as this word begins its slow slide towards the purely monetary. His own prologue to his edition of Trevisa's *Polychronicon* (1482) takes the Lord's argument a stage further, making the *Polychronicon*, here a secular counterpart to the *Golden Legende*, a must-own example of 'precious and . . . prouffytable' books available from his press (Caxton, *P&E* 66). But the notion of a cultural sphere to which clerks and lords contribute their talents is most interestingly articulated in John Lydgate's ambitious *Fall of Princes* (1431–8: see further Lerer 1993). This vast englishing of Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* via Laurent de Premierfait's earlier expansion of the work, *Des cas des nobles hommes et femmes*, names as its patron Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester: a man the prologue ends by praising as a mirror to his generation, 'manli and eek wis', who commissioned the work out of zeal for truth and desire 'to know hymsilff' by studying the tragic role of Fortuna in the lives of the great (on Duke Humphrey, see further pp. 102–4, 384–5, 395 below). Yet although the poem is written both 'with support of his magnificence' and 'vndir the wyngis off his correccioun' (Lydgate 1921–7: I, 12), and although Humphrey's integrity shapes the work's translation policy, requiring, as a good patron should, that 'the sentence off myn auctor' be preserved, Humphrey's role here is more nuanced and

tempered than those of the Lord in Trevisa's *Dialogue* or the aristocrats named in Caxton's prologues. For, besides translator and patron, *The Fall of Princes* introduces us to three more mediating figures, each of separate importance. The combined effect of all these figures is both to define and to expand the legitimate cultural space in which the translator can operate, opening up a view of the creative possibilities of the act of translation as capacious as those articulated in Capgrave's *Life of St Katharine*.

First, there is the *auctor* Boccaccio, here no far-off authority figure but a human mediator of the lessons of human history, whose work is partly produced in dialogue with Fortuna herself, who appears to him in a vision. Boccaccio's fascination with Fortuna as arbiter of poetic, as well as political, fame leads him to present a 'bille' (petition) to her, pleading 'that his fame myhte ferther spreede . . . | With laureat stremys [*sc.* of light] shad foorth to peeplis all' (III, 686): a display of humanistic self-promotion that stands in contrast to the moralistic rejection of Fortuna as a bringer of poetic fame that defines Laurent and Lydgate's ostensible views of their task, even as *The Fall of Princes* spreads forth Boccaccio's 'laureat stremys'. Seemingly patronless, Boccaccio's impure sense of his cultural role does not vitiate his achievement—after all, he is a mere conduit of the *matere* and *sentence* of his text—but leaves room for the reworkings accomplished by his successors.

Second, there is Lydgate's predecessor, Laurent, whose defence of translatorial inventiveness offers Lydgate a pattern for his own translation policy. Laurent argues that translators are *craftsmen*:

> In his prologe affermyng off resoun,
> Artificers hauyng exercise [being experienced]
> May chaunge and turne bi good discrecioun
> Shappis, formys, and newli hem deuyse,
> Make and vnmake in many sondry wyse,
> As potteres, which to that craft entend,
> Breke and renew ther vesselis to amende.
>
> (I, 1)

As potters, translators are responsible for *chaunging* and *turning* the form as well as the language of their originals, in pursuit of a renovation of the source material whose goal is at once to 'make olde thynges for [to] seeme newe' and to clarify the sententious import of the source for the benefit of the work's patron and the circle of readers he represents. To do their job, translators, humble craftsman though they remain before the 'magnificence' of their patrons and the profound import of their source's *sentence*, accordingly must become innovators, 'amenders' of source material.

Finally, there is Lydgate's 'maistir', Chaucer, before whom Lydgate is a mere apprentice and from whom he takes both his stanza form and his cultural authority as a vernacular poet writing in a language capable of rendering Latin and French material. For Lydgate, as for his contemporary Thomas Hoccleve,

Chaucer is the chief stabilizer of the linguistic medium in which all three poets work, the poet who 'dede his besynesse... | Out off oure tunge tauoiden [to eliminate] al reudnesse', the breadth of whose achievement in many genres defines the cultural sphere of secular 'making' (I, 8). The 'deynte' (dignity) in which 'kyngis, pryncis in euery regioun' hold writers like Chaucer (I, 10) forms the basis of a relation between poet and patron far less hierarchic than that between the Lord and the Clerk in Trevisa's *Dialogue*.

A less than authoritative *auctor* whom it is necessary to rewrite; a 'maistir' who provides the tools with which to do so, but whose death leaves room for his replacement by his apprentice; a patron ethically committed to the project and determined to help bring into being a full poetic exposure of the role of Fortuna in human affairs; and a boldly innovative predecessor with an expansionist theory of translation: all these figures combine to create conditions for translation that make this activity as similar as it can ever be to independent composition, for which the translator takes prime responsibility and credit. (Indeed, the 'donor portrait' accompanying a copy of the work shows Lydgate presenting his text either to Duke Humphrey or to Boccaccio in such a way as to complicate 'the deferential relationship a social or cultural inferior should have toward a superior': *IoV* xii.) Providence is no part of the equation here. Even though Lydgate writes as the Benedictine he is, it is the combination of personal humility and community privilege, the ability to make personal submission into a means of cultural power, that distinguishes his sense of his role in this secular context.

Above all, Lydgate's awareness of the paradoxes of his situation, of the extent to which he has manipulated *auctor* and patron into positions of relative subordination, is expressed through his naming of his poem's aesthetic and ethical ideal as one of 'plainness'. The ideal of *pleyn* translation, assumed by the Lord in Trevisa's *Dialogue*, is usually one of brevity: for the Lord, plainness implies prose, not verse. Here, however, under the influence of French *plein*, the word takes on a second, quite different meaning, that of fullness or completeness:

> For a story which is nat pleynli told,
> But constreynyd vndir woordes fewe,
> For lak off trouthe, wher thei [i.e. the words] be newe or old,
> Men bi report kan nat the mater shewe [people who merely report it are
>   incapable of opening up its subject matter];
> These ookis grete be nat doun ihewe
> First at a stroke, but bi long processe,
> Nor longe stories a woord may not expresse.
>
> (I, 3)

Merely to pass on a story told in the compressed style of Boccaccio's Latin is to betray that story's 'trouthe', at least so far as vernacular readers, impatient of 'straunge termys', are concerned. But to tell the story 'pleynli' is less to clarify it than to elaborate it into something grander than its *auctor* or patron can have imagined.

However important Humphrey remains to the poem and to (at least) the financing of its completion, Lydgate's sense of the cultural significance of his patron in *The Fall of Princes* is not so far from the mordantly gestural attitude on display in Henryson's late fifteenth-century *Fables*, based on a twelfth-century version of Aesop, where the 'maisteris' are the readers and the poet forces the patron into anonymity:

> Of this authour, my maisteris, with your leif [leave],
> Submitting me in your correctioun,
> In mother toung of Latyng [into the vernacular out of Latin] I wald preif [try]
> To mak ane maner of translatioun,
> Nocht of my self for vane presumptioun
> Bot be requeist and precept of ane lord
> Of quhome the name it neidis not record.

<div align="right">(IoV 283)</div>

Here, translators and audiences no longer need Trevisa's Lord to defend the worth or the egalitarian potential of the 'mother toung' but are capable of making cultural decisions of their own.

Translation and Abasement: Laȝamon's *Brut* and Douglas's *Eneados*

The emphasis of the preceding pages, on translation as a horizontal activity, in which the translated text is of at least the same value as its source, and in which source and target languages have equivalent value, may seem surprising to readers familiar with the gestures of humility made by many medieval translators, or with the scholarship on the self-conscious secondariness of vernacular languages, including ME (see further Lawton 1987; Somerset and Watson 2003: preface). As many contributions to this volume attest, humility is, indeed, the pose that most clearly defines the translator: one characterized by gestures of subordination, whether to the *sentence* or *matere* of a source, the needs of an audience, or the dictates of a patron. According to Lydgate, an adept wielder of the humility topos, even the heroically innovative Laurent has to take care that 'meeknesse haue dominacioun' as he reworks his source (I, 2). Lesser figures, such as Osbern Bokenham, who in his *Mappula Angliae* claims to be 'neythur auctour ne assertour'—the latter term meaning 'one who asserts something is true'—but 'oonly the pore compilatour and owte of Latyne into Ynglyssh the rude and symple translatour', present themselves as too abased by incapacity to have a choice in the matter (Bokenham 1887: 34). When Chaucer adopts the role of the penitent in the Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women*, his abjection before Alceste and Cupid, and before the work of tale-telling he must undergo, is a conventional marker of his status as a translator—albeit a translator whose fidelity to his *matere* in *Troilus and Criseyde* has just been exposed as an exemplary instance of a patronless clerk irresponsibly setting out to render a story whose *sentence* has no cultural value. In fifteenth-century texts in particular, these topoi

of inadequacy and strain can also be transferred to the English language or its readers. When Nicholas Love addresses *The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* (*c*. 1409) to 'symple creatures þe whiche as childryn hauen nede to be fedde with mylke of lyȝte doctryne and not with sadde [serious] mete of grete clargye', he performs a version of the translator's role that is far from meek, boldly 'withdrawyng of diuerse auctoritis and maters as it semeth to þe wryter hereof moste spedefull' (*IoV* 253); what in other circumstances would be his own protestations of 'simplicity' are therefore imposed on his audience.

Humility performs many functions in ME translation prologues, including that of acknowledging the secondary status of vernacular literary culture and language. But usually, expressions of humility are to be read as assertions of the completeness of a translation's rendering of the translated object, not as admissions of failure. Behind Bokenham's use of the epithets 'pore', 'rude', and 'symple' lies a programme of effacement of translator and translation process alike, one whose goal is to make immediate the reader's apprehension of the truths that pass through the translated text from its source. 'Rude' translations and translators are implicitly presented as the most transparent possible medium of *sentence*. Words like 'rude' and 'symple' belong within a larger set of terms denoting clarity (*pleynnesse*), and it is significant that their rise to prominence in late ME coincides with the tendencies towards either literal or highly literary translation. Earlier works, such as Laȝamon's late twelfth-century *Brut*, are more likely to insist on their own sophistication and the particularities of their composition. As he writes, Laȝamon presents himself as no empty translator working ignorantly at another's behest but a 'preost', with a living and a lineage, who decides he wants to relate the noble deeds ('þa æðelæn') of the English ('þet he wolde of Engle þa æðelæn tellen') and goes to find sources (ed. Treharne 2000: 360). Taking up from different parts of the country a trinity of books in all three of England's main languages—the repeated 'he nom' [he took] emphasizes both his deliberativeness and the physicality of the volumes—he pictures himself laying the books down and leafing through them ('Laȝamon leide þeos boc and þe leaf wende'), looking at them rejoicingly ('leofliche'), then taking quills and parchment and making his translation by combining all three:

> Feþeren he nom mid fingren and fiede on boc-felle;
> And the soþere word sette to-gadere.
> And þa þre boc þrumde to are.

He took feathers with his fingers and wrote on parchment [book-skins] | and set down the truer words together with one another, | and those three books were joined into one.

The authenticity of 'þeos soþfeste word' (361), these truthful words, is in part guaranteed here by the very expertise that terms such as 'rude' and 'simple' attempt in later works to efface. Despite the fact that it is the *Brut*, not its translator, which emerges here as a metonymy for the land of England and its history, Laȝamon's agency and scholarly expertise, his ability to desire, search,

judge, and love his sources, remain pivotal to the poem's claim to represent the Matter of England in 'soþfeste word'.

By contrast, Gavin Douglas's early sixteenth-century translation of the *Aeneid*, *Eneados*, makes heavy use of the language of humility even as it lays out its ambitious agenda for itself and the Scottish language. Thinking of Virgil, the 'peirless perle, patroun of poetry', Douglas is dazed:

> Quhy suld I than with dull forhed and vayn,
> With rude engyne [talent] and barrand emptyve brayn,
> With bad, harsk spech and lewit barbour [barbarous] tong
> Presume to write quhar thy sweit bell is rung
> Or contyrfate sa precyus wordys deir?
>
> (Douglas 1957–64: II, 3)

Even this beautifully crafted passage, of course, makes its implicit claim for the sufficiency of Douglas and his 'barbour tong' to the task of translation, and as a whole the prologue to Book I of *Eneados* (II, 3–17) demonstrates the intimate late medieval connection between humility topoi and high claims for success, a success that must begin with understanding the impossible scale of the challenge. The goal, to 'wryte sum [something] savoryng of thyne Eneados' can only be fulfilled once it is recognized that 'na, na, impossibill war, per de', given Virgil's monopoly on the 'sugurit tun' (sweet barrel) of eloquence and the twelve years he gave to the composition of this most profound of poems (II, 4, 6). *Eneados* is unique among the works discussed in this chapter in conceding that something is lost in translation: a concession even the General Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible, for all its sensitivity to the literal, avoids making (invoking the partly extralingual character of the Spirit's inspiration), but that follows from Douglas's understanding of Virgil's *sentence* through Boccaccio's notion of poetic allegory, in which the 'sugurit' verbal surface of a poetic text plays an important role (cited in II, 8). But if humility seems a proper attitude in which to admit to the theoretical inevitability of failure, this same inevitability can also be seen heroically, as Douglas's epic struggle to fashion a Scots vernacular out of the task of translation against all opposition:

> I knaw quhat [what] payn was to follow hym fut hait [hot-foot]
> Albeit thou think my sayng intricate.
> Traste [trust] weill to follow a fixt sentens [fixed meaning] or mater
> Is mair practike [skilful], deficill and far strater,
> Thocht [although] thyne engyne [talent] beyn eleuate and hie,
> Than forto write all ways at liberte.
>
> (II, 11)

As Douglas writes translator's prologues to book after book of *Eneados*, he keeps his exploit in the forefront of his audience's attention. Responsive though the *Eneados*'s rendering of the *Aeneid* is to that work's changing tones and moods, the collective effect of these prologues is to render this a translation uniquely concerned with its own process as well as with the text it translates. As a result,

Aeneas is translated to Scotland as well as Rome, and the *sentence* of the *Aeneid* is bent to the will of its translator and made to serve purposes for which 'humility' is hardly a proper term. (On Douglas, see further §5.6 below.)

Conclusion

According to Douglas, translating is more difficult ('mair . . . deficill') than writing 'at liberte' as an original poet. This judgement makes special sense for the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, when English and Scottish translators set about creating a general literary language by translating new lexis as well as *matere* into their vernacular: importing, as Douglas has it, 'Sum bastard Latyn, French or Inglys oyss [terms] | Quhar scant was Scottis' (II, 6), just as the Latin poets of antiquity did with Greek, and so building a literature and a language in tandem in a literal enactment of *translatio studii*. Certainly, between the times of Chaucer (Deschamps's 'grant translateur') and Douglas, translators did more visible cultural work than at any other time in the language's history. Indeed, like the translators of the centuries before them, from Alfred to Laȝamon and Orrm, translators like Trevisa, Capgrave, Lydgate, and Douglas treat translation as an objective activity, as work: the language of effort is as persistent in their prologues as the language of humility.

But where earlier writers conceptualize their translations as conduits—scripts for performances whose importance lies outside themselves, in the lives of their audiences—for fifteenth-century translators of all kinds, written language itself is the major concern: these translators are producing *texts*, and herein lies a good part of what makes their task as 'deficill' as it is. Not that difficulty is admitted to be a problem. On the contrary, as the English language self-consciously invents itself in these texts as England's sole vernacular from the late fourteenth century on, the intransigence of the medium of English, or for Douglas of Scottish, can more and more come to the fore as requiring divine providence, deep learning, or extravagant translatorial inventiveness, to overcome. As early as Thomas Usk's *Testament of Love* (1384–7) the untranslatable Englishness of Usk's version of Boethian thought is being made into a cause of nationalist pride (*IoV* 30). Hundreds of years after Usk, this sense of the particularity of the linguistic medium becomes central to Romantic language theory, with its elevation of ' "authentic" Volksdichtung' (Fairey in Somerset and Watson 2003: 192), fundamentally separate from all other vernaculars, to a place of anxious eminence. Medieval translation theory and practice, however, only begin to invent this separatist, anti-cosmopolitan, idea of vernacular language. Whatever the stress of translation for medieval translators, and however they represent themselves 'as a blynde man in the wey blondryng', authenticity lies, for them, not in the linguistic medium itself, imperfect as they often declare that to be, but in the *sentence* of the source text their translation into that medium always claims to have preserved. So George Ashby in *Active Policy of a Prince* (1470):

And thaugh all thynges be nat made perfyt
Nor swetely Englisshed to youre plesance,
I byseche you hertely to excuse it
So [provided] that I kepe intential substance [the intended meaning] . . .

<div align="right">(IoV 59)</div>

For the medieval translator, the intransigence of the medium need not compromise the 'intential substance' of the message, a substance in which their sole interest, ostensibly, lies.

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3

The Translator

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Introduction

The present chapter considers, in some detail, the activity of major figures whose work spans the whole time scale of this volume, from the late ninth century to the end of the fifteenth: King Alfred (late ninth century); Robert Grosseteste (mid-thirteenth); Geoffrey Chaucer and William Langland (late fourteenth); and William Caxton (late fifteenth). Their work, snapshots from a history of almost 1,000 years of translation, represents, in little, the great achievements of translation throughout the Middle Ages. Their translations cover virtually all the areas of interest and knowledge available. Translations by or associated with Alfred, from Latin, made available works of philosophy, religion, and world and English Church history; Grosseteste's work made available works of science and theology from Greek. Chaucer ranged yet more widely, translating, from Latin, French, and Italian, works of classical, and contemporary, literature, and works of science, philosophy, and religion. Caxton's output included works of history, religion, romance, classical literature, and books of instruction, mostly from Latin and French, though also from Dutch.

King Alfred, Grosseteste, and Chaucer are also important because they rapidly acquired the status of authorities and role models for later translators. At the end of the tenth century, during the course of a major programme of translation of religious texts, Ælfric of Eynsham acknowledged Alfred's role, though more as a political leader than as a translator (see above pp. 46–7). During the early ME period, writers credited Alfred with texts which further witnessed to his reputation as a wise ruler and a translator and supported their own practice (for a single example, that of Marie de France, see p. 49 above). At least one of Alfred's translations—that of Boethius—was still being consulted, notwithstanding the difficulties his language then presented to readers, early in the fourteenth century (see further §5.6 below). Even at the end of the century, he was still providing a role model for translators like Chaucer and Trevisa and the anonymous translators of the Wycliffite Bible. Trevisa and the Bible translators had also taken to heart the example of Grosseteste, perhaps the greatest translator in England between the Norman Conquest and the end of the Middle Ages, and cited his work as authorizing their own. In a similar way, Chaucer rapidly acquired a status and influence equal to that of Alfred and Grosseteste. Through the fifteenth century, and into the sixteenth, he was acknowledged as an authority (see further p. 177 below).

At least two periods in the history of medieval English literature were important for developments in translation: the end of the tenth century, noted above,

and the late fourteenth century. The latter witnessed a previously unparalleled increase in the production of translations: Ralph Hanna (*CHMEL* 499) describes the period 1380–1413 as 'the great heyday of…interest in vernacularizing learned Latin works' (to say nothing of translations from other European vernaculars). A simple way of demonstrating the importance of translation at this time is to consider how writers of original works frequently make translation a major element of their work, even a metaphor for its processes, and create fictional characters who can function as surrogates for the translator and reader. The cardinal instance of this practice is William Langland, whose *Piers Plowman* is full of translating voices, but the practice also figures prominently in Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales*, as well as in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*.

The translators of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries were heirs of the groundbreaking work of the late fourteenth century. Many fifteenth- and sixteenth-century copies survive of translations from the earlier period, and the arrival of print made possible an exponential increase in their numbers, as well as in the numbers of published translations produced by the printers themselves and by their contemporaries. This ferment of translation proceeded without interruption from the time of Caxton to the very end of our period, and beyond.

Grosseteste's place in this chapter needs brief explanation, since, although he was especially concerned to make the teachings of the Church available to the faithful in their own language, his major translations were from Greek into Latin. He is included here partly by way of expanding a point made elsewhere in this volume, that study of translation in English in the Middle Ages runs a risk of distortion if it ignores the wider context of translation represented by the important activity of translation into Latin.

Langland's place in the chapter needs brief comment for another reason. At least as important through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries as Chaucer's work, Langland's *Piers Plowman* is not a translation as such, though it does contain large amounts of translated, especially biblical, material, translated from the Vulgate, the Latin normally appearing alongside the translation. Since, moreover, Langland revised this material on several occasions, his translations allow us to see translation in the medieval period as, almost literally, work in progress, and provide exemplification of a point made above (pp. 30–1) about the provisionality of medieval literary production. All the case studies in this chapter include, what the other chapters generally take for granted, examples of the translators' working methods: Langland's is perhaps the most striking.

In addition to learning, translation needed a motive. Those who had the money did not often have the leisure. Alfred, Grosseteste, and Chaucer had to snatch what time they could from the performance of their public duties to produce their translations; Caxton, yoking translation to the machinery of

print publication, started to make a business out of it. With the exception of the *Legend of Good Women*, possibly dedicated to Richard II's queen Anne, Chaucer's translations address either a circle of intimates, or members of his own family. Caxton, by contrast, actively sought out (mainly noble) patrons for his publications. His example is the more common throughout the Middle Ages. The relation of translator and patron therefore provides, so to say, the prologue to this chapter.

3.1 Patronage and Sponsorship of Translation

Roger Ellis

Introduction

Throughout the medieval period translation was essentially the province, first, of the Church, and then of the nobility and gentry, since only members of these religious and secular élites had the education to translate texts from one language (principally Latin; also French) to another (English, and/or, after the Norman Conquest, AN). By the fifteenth century, widening access to education—and, at the close of the century, the advent of print culture—meant that members of the urban bourgeoisie could also become involved in the business of translation. But the tastes and interests of clerical and secular élites continued to set the agendas for translation, and fuel its practices (for important general comment, see Pearsall 1988).

In terms of sheer quantity, the translations produced by individual members of the Church dominated. Greater attention is given in this section to translations by and for lay members of the upper classes, in part because they were, from the beginning, enthusiastic supporters and consumers of translation; the Church's position was more complicated. Besides, in the frequent jockeying for power of secular and religious authority, if secular authority, in the person of the monarch, set its face unambiguously in favour of translation, translation usually happened: we might think of King Alfred, discussed more fully in §§3.2, 5.6 below. A classic instance of Church and state facing in the same direction, in the reigns of Henry IV and his successors, had disastrous consequences for the production of a Bible in English.

Aristocratic Translators: Edward, Duke of York

Royal and aristocratic involvement in the business of translation is most obvious when the nobility act as patrons and commissioners of translations. They were less active as translators, in part because learning was not a necessary part of aristocratic self-definition. As Sir Thomas Elyot notes, in the *Book of the Governor* (1531), 'some . . . dare affirm that to be a great gentleman it is a notable reproach to be well learned and to be called a great clerk' (Dowling 1986: 178); in his translation of Sallust's *Jugurtha* (*c.* 1520), Alexander Barclay had similarly complained that 'the vnderstanding of Latyn . . . [was] almost contemned of gentylmen' (Lathrop 1933: 81).

Of course, cares of state, along with the running of princely estates and noble households, generally afforded little leisure for the practice of translation (the case of King Alfred is instructive here: see further pp. 116, 366–7 below). Consequently, the nobility needed the enforced leisure of a sea voyage, or, more tellingly, imprisonment, to trigger the production of translations. It was while at sea en route to Compostela, as we shall see, that Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, produced one of his translations. Translator-prisoners include, in the late fourteenth century, William Parys, esquire to the Earl of Warwick (Parys 1878, discussed by Gerould 1914, Simpson 2002: 406–7); in the fifteenth, Charles, Duke of Orléans (see especially discussions by Arn and Crane in *MT* 1 5 and 8); in the sixteenth, Sir Thomas Wyatt, the Earl of Surrey (Fox 1989: chs. 14–15), Edward Courtenay (McConica 1965: 256–8), Sir John Harington (Lathrop 1933: 60–2), and the Duke of Somerset (*STC* 4408).

One of the most interesting aristocratic translators, to judge from the twenty-seven surviving copies of all or part of his work, is Edward, Duke of York (1373–1415). Between 1405 and 1410 Edward translated, as *The Master of Game*, a manual of hunting by Gaston Phébus, Count of Foix, dedicating the work, and offering it for correction, to the 20-year-old Prince of Wales. Gaston's prologue makes great claims for the spiritual value of hunting, and hence of the book itself: hunting keeps its practitioners busy, and preserves them from the deadly sins to which idleness otherwise exposes them (a similar defence of translation as a protection against idleness is virtually a commonplace), so that, after death, they will go, without fail, to paradise. Duke Edward, appointed Master of Game in 1406, translates this material but chooses an additional defence for the translation: he invokes the example of Chaucer, by way of a remembered detail from the Prologue of Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*, a major collection of translated narratives, since 'be wryteng haue men mynd of ymages passed, for writyng is þe keye of alle good remembraunce' (Edward 1904: 3).

Duke Edward's text gives ample evidence of first-hand knowledge and appreciation of its subject matter, as, indeed, of its author, whom it regularly identifies as 'Phebus Erle of Foys þe good huntere' (13); scribes routinely highlighted the name of the author, as also the title of the translation, and other features of the original. It introduces many new words, some of which the *Middle English Dictionary* records only here. But the Duke also modifies the original to accommodate it to local circumstances. He glosses literal translations of French terms, even when the term was probably familiar to readers of English. Scribes regularly highlighted what he was presenting as a foreign term.

A more important indicator of his desire to adapt his text to the situation of his readers comes at the end of his chapter on otters. He writes, 'the remenant of his [*sc.* the otter's] nature I remitte to Milbourne the kings otere hunte. . . . of conynges [rabbits] speke I not for no man hunteth for hem but ʒit be bisshunters [fur hunters] and þei hunte hem with ferettis and wiþ long smale haies [nets]' (40–1). That is, Edward is cutting Gaston's text at this point because its chapter on rabbits is directly relevant only to those who hunt rabbits for their fur, and

because information about otters can be more easily obtained from the valet of the king's otter hounds, William Melbourne.

To tie one's translation so specifically to the situation of its first reader might seem to condemn it to a very narrow and specialized readership. Yet copies made in the seventeenth century preserve this added material: that in BL MS Royal 17.A.lv was written for, and presented to, another Prince of Wales, the son of James I. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the text seems to have reached a readership mainly, but not exclusively, of noble birth; the copy in Royal 18.C.xviii has a miniature of a king, 'possibly Edward IV, possibly Henry VII', receiving the book from a kneeling author (Baillie-Grohman in Edward 1904: 240); George R. Keiser offers examples of its ownership 'among the landholding classes of provincial England' (in Hellinga and Trapp 1999: 475, 481).

At the same time, the copy in BL MS Add.16165, as indicated by the table of contents of the manuscript (Hammond 1927: 194–6), shows the text reaching out to a wider readership of 'þe gret and þe comune', all of whom 'may . . . hit reede'. This copy was made by the copyist-translator-publisher John Shirley (*c*. 1366–1456: on Shirley see further Connolly 1999; on the MS, p. 32 above). Shirley is a very active reader of the Duke's text. For example, he glosses, with the phrase 'regardez le voyrdyt' [see the true saying], a passage which tells how men say '*byyonde þe see in some cuntreys* whanne any womman doþe amysse þat she is lyke þe wolf'. The italicized phrase, highlighted by Shirley, was added by the Duke to his translation, as a way of reminding readers of the text's translated status; it may also have functioned to neutralize latent anti-feminism. If so, Shirley's marginal comment undoes the Duke's, and his own, good work. Yet the power relations implicit in his copy of the translation are powerfully reinstated at the end, when Shirley's epilogue invites readers to correct the text for themselves. These are now clearly identified as 'gentyle hunters . . . lordes, ladyes, gentylmen and wymmen' who know the customs and manners of 'þe hye noble court of þis realme of Engeland' (f. 189v).

Material from Duke Edward's translation was also recycled, *c*. 1460, possibly by the Prioress of Sopwell, Dame Juliana Berners, as verse dialogues between parent and child, and master and servant, in a *Book of Hunting* printed in 1486 (Berners 1975: on the question of Berners's authorship, see Hands 1967: 382). Professed female religious were often drawn from the ranks of the gently born, and a book of this sort could easily have been intended for the 'elementary education [of] upper-class children' (Barratt 1992: 232). Increasing numbers of translations were undertaken in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries for children of the gently born: notably, by Benedict Burgh (d. before 1483), of the *Distichs* of Cato in 'ballade ryal', for a young nobleman (still circulating, in print, in 1550: Lathrop 1933: 45). Caxton printed his own prose version in 1476, along with Lydgate's 'Stans puer ad mensam', a poem instructing boys how to behave at table (Pearsall 1970: 219), and itself translating a text usually ascribed to Grosseteste (Orme in Hellinga and Trapp 1999: 456). Here too we might include Robert

Whittington (*c.* 1480–1553?), schoolmaster between 1525 and 1538 of the royal henchmen, and best known as the author of elementary Latin school books, including *Vulgaria* (English and Latin sentences for translation: Whittington also produced translations of Erasmus, Cicero, and works ascribed to Seneca).

Aristocratic Translators: Anthony Woodville and John Tiptoft

Duke Edward's translation provides a more narrowly focused view of what aristocratic readers might want or need than the translations produced by King Alfred for his free-born young readers. A different view of their wants is provided by the translations produced by Anthony Woodville (or Wydeville), Earl Rivers (1442–1483), uncle and tutor of Edward IV's elder son (on Rivers see Mitchell 1938: 104–6). Three were published by Caxton between 1477 and 1479: *Dictes and Sayengs of the Philosophres*, a translation of the *Dits moraulx* of Guillaume de Tignonville; the *Moral Prouerbes* of Christine de Pizan; and *Cordyale*, from an unnamed French source. Caxton's epilogues to the *Dictes* and *Cordyale*, and the Earl's prologue to the *Dictes*, provide valuable insight into their working relationships. The epilogue to the *Cordyale* establishes the Earl's religious credentials for producing a translation of the 'four last thingis': having survived a time of 'grete tribulacion', he had gone on pilgrimage, and, 'whene he might haue a leyser', had translated 'diuerse bookes out of frensh into english' (Caxton, *P&E* 38–9). We learn from the Earl's prologue to the *Dictes* that he conceived the translation in 1473, while on a ship bound for Compostela. The translation was produced as a way of occupying moments of leisure and avoiding idleness, especially because he had been entrusted with the education of the Prince, and judged 'ful necessary to my said lord the vnderstandyng' of the work (Woodville 1877, wanting page numbers).

The Earl had another motive for translating the work: he had not seen it done before. (In fact, another translation had been made, *c.* 1450, by Stephen Scrope, stepson and secretary of Sir John Fastolf, whom Woodville knew well, and revised by another secretary of Fastolf, William Worcester.) Woodville's comment, almost a commonplace in translators' paratexts, needs to be set against another, equally conventional: he knew of other French and Latin copies of the work. Readers with access to these might find errors in his work. The Earl therefore offers his excuses and desires 'the reformacioun' of his translation by his readers.

The first such reader is Caxton. According to his epilogue, the Earl brought him the text to publish, requesting him, where he found fault, to correct it. This empowering of the reader is a commonplace of translation prologues throughout the Middle Ages, an expression of princely generosity to social inferiors analogous, say, to the Duke of Berkeley's generosity to his inferiors in commissioning from his chaplain John Trevisa the translation of Higden's *Polychronicon* (on Berkeley, see further pp. 82–3 above: usually the commonplace reflects the translator's unequal status vis-à-vis his noble reader). Yet, in the epilogue, Caxton writes that, if his editorial emendations do not please the noble translator or

other readers, they may 'wyth a penne race it out or ellys rente the leef out of the booke'; in that case *he* will beg pardon for any fault (Caxton, *P&E* 30). Where, of course, Duke Edward was both author and publisher, Caxton is merely the publisher. He and Woodville may also have envisaged different audiences for the translation (Goodman in *MTr* 3: 18.)

In 1481 Caxton undertook to publish two translations by another noble-man, John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester (1427–1470), from the Latin of Cicero (*De Amicitia*) and Buonaccorso da Montemagno (*Controversia de Nobilitate*) (on the latter translation, see also p. 396 below). Caxton published them as a single volume, along with a translation made for Fastolf by William Worces-ter, from a French version, of Cicero's *De Senectute* (Worcester 1933). Caxton's paratexts (*P&E* 41–7) show that he printed the Worcester first, then decided to add the second Ciceronian text by Tiptoft, both because Cicero had com-posed the originals in that order, and because 'ther can not be annexed to olde age a bettir thynge than good and very frendship' (45–6). The Montemagno translation was included, Caxton implies, as an exercise in Ciceronianism. The Tiptoft translations may have been added to enlarge the book, and increase its value. Caxton publishes the whole volume, in hope of recompense, 'vnder the . . . shadowe of the . . . proteccioun' (44) of Edward IV, to the encouragement of whose court and family his 'emergence, first as translator, . . . then as printer, owed a good deal' (Ross 1974: 266). He directs the Worcester translation at a noble and elderly readership, daily occupied, like the protagonists of *De Senectute*, 'in maters towchyng the publyque weal', and knowing something of 'the noble polycye . . . of the Romaynes': this text is not for 'rude and symple' men (43). The first Tiptoft translation, however, widens the readership to include readers of 'euery age estate and degree'. Tiptoft's translation of Montemagno was recycled by Henry Medwall (*c*. 1495) in his interlude *Fulgens and Lucrece* (Simpson 2002: 549).

Aristocratic Patrons: Duke Humphrey and Others

Tiptoft not only produced translations: he collected translations, mainly from Greek into Latin (see further Harris 1989: 167–9, 173, 180). Several were dedicated to him. An inveterate book collector, he donated books worth 500 marks to the University of Oxford, which wrote in thanks, in 1460, that he was truly 'Umfridi successor' [Humphrey's successor] (Mitchell 1938: 169).

'Umfridus', of course, is Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. Humphrey's role as a patron to numerous authors, many of whom produced translations for him (from Greek and Italian into Latin; from Latin into English), has been fully documented (most recently, by Saygin 1999; Petrina 2004: ch. 1). The Duke is known to have commissioned only two translations into ME. One was Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* (on this see further pp. 83–6 above). The other, *c*. 1442–3, was a translation of Palladius' treatise on agriculture, *De Re Rustica* (discussed by Petrina in *MTr* 8). This has been credited, inconclusively, to Robert Parker, later

a chaplain in Calais (Petrina 2004: 268, 280, here followed); to Thomas Norton (Howlett 1977: 250–1), another translator patronized by Duke Humphrey 'as part of [his] campaign to dignify and enrich English letters' (Pearsall 1977: 240); or to 'anon.' (Braswell 1984: 352–3). We need to pause over this question of identity: it shows, often, how central, and how well defined, is the figure of the patron, and, by contrast, how shadowy the figure of the translator, the latter's identity contingent on his position in the service of the former. Parker is also credited, *c.* 1457–60, with a translation of Vegetius' very popular *Epitoma De Re Militari* (see also p. 64 above): initially dedicated to Henry VI, the translation was later rededicated to Edward IV. (Elaborate, though not identical, stanza forms characterize the original paratextual material of both Vegetius and Palladius translations, and might suggest that the same person translated both; alternatively, they might reflect the translators' sense of the literary competence and expectations of their first readers. Interesting parallels exist with Berners's Froissart: see p. 357 below.)

Three copies of Parker's translation of Palladius survive; the copy from which Liddell printed was probably 'prepared for Duke Humphrey himself from the author's own copy' (Parker 1896: vii). The copy used for an earlier edition (Parker 1872, 1879) wants Parker's important prologue, as well as the epilogues to several Books. The former describes Duke Humphrey in glowing terms: he has donated books to the University of Oxford on physics, metaphysics, theology, and history; his donations reveal a mind so well informed in 'vche [each] lef and lyne' of writings about knighthood, husbandry, and 'clergy' [learned matters] that it is hard to write on subjects he does not already know at first hand. Parker is 'laste . . . and leest' of those employed to produce literary work for the Duke: he lists several collaborators (Parker 1896: 22). The commission, paradoxically, does not directly benefit the Duke, except as acknowledgement and expression of his worth. Other translators may speak of following in the footsteps of their originals (Douglas, for example, discussed in Chapter 2 above and §5.6 below); for Parker, the Duke himself is, so to say, the source: almost literally, since he can identify a submerged quotation from Ovid in the translation (Petrina in *MTr* 8: 323). He provides the text to be translated; he keeps a close watch on the developing work.

The epilogues regularly show him overseeing and correcting drafts; asking (161) to see each Book of the translation as it is completed. Not surprisingly, the translator gets flustered about the best form of words to use in his description of the Duke: 'or thus . . . or ellis thus . . . or y noot what' (66). The Duke's active involvement in the production of translations is well known. He commissioned Leonardo Bruni to produce a Latin translation of Aristotle's *Politics*, and asked to receive that, too, a Book at a time (Saygin 1999: 81). He asked Lydgate 'in euery tragedie [of his *Fall of Princes*] . . . At the ende [to] sette a remedie' (Lydgate 1924–7: I, 204) and to include an additional version of the Lucretia story by Coluccio Salutati (Lucas 1982: 232–3).

As with *The Master of Game*, Parker's text opens up to modern readers a way of life from which they are increasingly cut off. It differs in retaining material hardly relevant to the situation of its first English readers. It also differs in the translator's

striking expression, in his paratexts, of his literary ambitions. By contrast with the actual translation, which is metrically regular, and as accurate and fluent as translating Palladius' prose into verse allows, these are a stunning bravura performance. Stanzas are 'replete with single, double and triple internal rhyme and single and double *rime brisée*' (highlighted in MS by the use of coloured inks: Petrina 2004: 268), and the work ends with an eight-line stanza whose each line comprises eight separate elements so arranged that the whole 'reads the same down as across' (Pearsall 1977: 241). The result sometimes recalls the way Gerard Manley Hopkins had to straitjacket language to produce his verbal effects.

Parker's previously noted reference to the Duke's knowledge of chivalric manuals is also relevant. Thomas Hoccleve (1366/7–1426) projected for the Duke a translation of Vegetius, 'which tretith of the art of chiualrie', before deciding that the Duke had nothing to learn from such a source (Hoccleve 1970: 130). In the high Middle Ages, Vegetius circulated widely across Europe, both in Latin and in vernacular versions, principally French, to a largely aristocratic readership. The earliest French version is a thirteenth-century AN translation made by 'Maitre Richard' for the future Edward I or Edward II. Not until the fifteenth century were English translations produced, 'probably the result of the circulation in England of copies of the French versions' (Lester in Walton 1988: 15). The earliest of these dates from 1408, at much the same time as Lydgate and Hoccleve were separately arguing for the importance of Vegetius as an element of aristocratic self-definition (Lydgate 1906–35: I, 3; Hoccleve 1970: 14–15); the fourth and last dates from 1489–90. The first was made for Thomas, Lord Berkeley, possibly by Augustinian canon John Walton, and survives in eleven copies one of which, made *c*. 1468 for Sir John Paston, shows the work reaching out to a wider readership of local worthies, much as *The Master of Game* had done. The last occurs in Caxton's printing of his own translation, at the request of Henry VII, of Christine de Pizan's *Livre des faits d'armes de chyualrye*, which had used Vegetius as a major source (the King supplied a copy of the French, in preparation for a French campaign: Kipling 1977: 35). So wide and varied a circulation for a text argues clearly for its relevance to generations of aristocratic readers, young as well as old: it 'was considered an ideal teaching aid for the young' (Sutton and Visser-Fuchs 1997: 80).

The practicalities of warfare and peacemaking are also realized in two translations produced by Hoccleve and Lydgate with Henry V in mind, neither directly commissioned by him. In 1410–11 Hoccleve offered the then Prince of Wales a major treatise on the art of government, the *Regiment of Princes*, translating from three major sources, all hugely popular: the *De Regimine Principum* of Giles of Rome; the *Secretum Secretorum*; and 'the Ches moralysed' by Jacob de Cessolis (Mitchell 1968: 24–31). Like Vegetius, the *Secretum* was an enormously important text: it survives in numerous English versions, including those by Lydgate/Burgh (Lydgate and Burgh 1894); Sir Gilbert Hay, probably for the Earl of Orkney (Hay 1914); John Shirley; Johannes de Caritate (for Sir Miles Stapleton); and William Forrest, who produced his version for the Duke of Somerset to present

to the young Edward VI (all in Manzalauoi 1977; *ODNB* identifies the last as a translation of the *De Regimine*); and James Yonge (1898: 121–248), who produced his version, for the fourth Earl of Ormond, from the late thirteenth-century Hiberno-French version of Geoffrey of Waterford (so Dolan, in *CHMEL* 225).

Lydgate produced his *Siege of Thebes*, whose narrative translates a version of the *Roman de Thèbes*—and whose frame, like so much else by him, 'translates' Chaucer—in the immediate aftermath of the Treaty of Troyes (1420). At the end of his work he includes the 'exact terms of the important twenty-fourth paragraph of the treaty' (Erdmann and Ekwall in Lydgate 1935: 8). He must have had the victor of Agincourt in his sights when he translated this material. His hopes were, however, short-lived: not long after he completed his work, Henry V died. (For an opposing view, that the work was composed after the death of Henry V, see Simpson 2002: 56.)

Another major royal commission occurs in the context of warfare and peace-making, though this time it is the patron who has the treaty in his eye. Henry VIII commissioned from Lord Berners a translation (1523–5) of Froissart's *Croniques*, which he may have regarded as suitable for encouraging 'an actively expansionist foreign policy' (Burrow in *CHMEL* 811). The King delayed publication of Part 2, describing the close of the Hundred Years War, to coincide with the signing of a peace treaty between England and France in 1525 (Neville-Sington in Hellinga and Trapp 1999: 585–6).

Less immediately topical than any of the foregoing, but equally informed by political considerations, is the *Confessio Amantis* of John Gower (1330–1408), especially its Book VII, expressly modelled on the *Secretum* as a 'full-blown *speculum principis*' (Wetherbee in *CHMEL* 604). Whether actual or merely 'symbolic and performative' (Mahoney 1998: 36), the commissioning of the *Confessio*, as Gower reports it, is very relevant to this discussion. According to the first version of the prologue (1390), the young Richard II asked Gower for 'som newe thing . . . [to] boke [i.e. turn into a book] | That he himself it mihte loke | After the forme' (in the style) of Gower's writing (Gower 1901: I, 4). What exactly he wanted is unclear; nor, though Gower decides to meet the terms of the commission by writing in 'oure englissh' (I, 2), as if to claim their joint stake in the vernacular, is it certain that Richard expected a text in English. Gower had previously written no major work in English, and, though 'Richard II's was the first English-speaking court since the days of Harold Godwinson' (Pearsall 1977: 87), the culture of the court was still 'overwhelmingly Latin . . . and French of a somewhat old-fashioned sort' (Scattergood 1983: 36): 'Parisian French, not English, apparently [was] the main language of Richard II's court' (*IoV* 333). It is not clear, either, that Richard was asking for a translated work, though, in requiring something new, he was invoking a translational commonplace. Gower seems to have determined to produce a text which, like the major narrative collection of his friend Chaucer, might 'be wisdom to the wise | And pley to hem that lust to pleye' (I, 6): a mixture, then, of 'wisdom' and 'pley'.

An underlying seriousness of authorial intent is apparent in the epilogue's address to the young King. In him are 'justice medled [mixed] with pite | Largesce forth with charite' (II, 469); he is a peacemaker at home and abroad: almost as if, having read Book VII, he has internalized its teachings. So he can be fittingly compared to the sun, 'briht and feir | Withinne himself' (II, 471): never the worse for all that clouds may cover it, nor to blame for any resulting bad weather. In so developing the metaphor, Gower obliquely acknowledges anxieties about past, present, and possible future, storms. Within two years he revised his text, and replaced the dedication to Richard by one to Richard's cousin Henry Bolingbroke, who deposed Richard in 1399. Gower found in Henry a rather different reader from Richard: the former was 'as susceptible to didactic argument as . . . [he] believed Richard II was to fictions' (Yeager 1990: 268). By implication, the work could appeal to both the 'skipping king' and his serious-minded successor.

As implied elsewhere in this volume (pp. 379–80, 432), the *Confessio* makes much, and rich, play of its affiliation with the ideas and methods of translation, not directly relevant here. Its afterlife possibly features in an interesting encounter in 1516 between Alexander Barclay and one of his patrons, Sir Giles Allington. According to the prologue to Barclay's translation of Mancinus' *De Quatuor Virtutibus*, Sir Giles had requested an abridgement and modernization of 'a louers confession'. It is generally assumed (so Manzalaoui 1981: 181) that Allington was asking for a reworking of the *Confessio* (an instance, if so, of intralingual translation with ample parallels earlier in the period, most notably in Caxton's modernizing of Trevisa's *Polychronicon*). Barclay refused, since people might well criticize a man of his age and religious profession were he to write 'thing wanton, not sad [serious] but insolent' (Nelson in Barclay 1955: xiv). Barclay's use of what is almost a commonplace, the figure of the aged translator, itself translating a detail from Mancinus' preface, echoes Gower's declaration, in his paratexts, that age and illness had made his work more difficult: but this comment, too, turns out to be almost a translation from the *Secretum*: 'hunc quidem librum composuit in sua senectute et virtutum corporalium debilitate' [this book indeed he (i.e. Aristotle) composed in age and weakness of bodily forces] (Manzalauoi 1981: 174).

Generally, Barclay's work was energized by the need—which he shared with contemporaries—to find a patron. His version of Sallust's *Jugurtha c.* 1520 for the Duke of Norfolk (also offered to John Veysey, Bishop of Exeter) was later, in 1557, appended by Thomas Paynell, at the request of his patron Viscount Mountaigne, to his own translation (1541) of the *Catiline* of Constantius Felicius. Writing well before the unrest of the 1530s and 1540s, Barclay had envisaged his work, like his predecessor Caxton (p. 165 below) and his contemporary Berners (p. 426 below), as relevant to 'gentylmen whiche coveyt to attaine to clere fame and honour by glorious dedes of chyvalry' (against the French, of course). Paynell, by contrast, was acutely aware of the immediate political resonances of his translation. He dedicated his *Catiline* to Henry VIII with the comment that if, in pagan times,

the 'riotous rebelles' of his original had failed in their attempt 'to overrunne rulers', God would surely not allow them to prevail in the present against 'a chrysten prynce his veray image in erthe' (Bennett 1969: 132–3).

The foregoing account has treated the relationship of patron and translator, for the most part, in isolation from the important networks, family and other, in which it frequently existed. The household of the aristocratic patron often provided the focus for these relationships. We might think of Sir John Fastolf's house at Caister, where, in the fifteenth century, Scrope and Worcester both worked as secretaries and translators (cf. Griffiths 2001: 6–7), or, better still, of Sir Thomas More's London household. More was both translator (of Pico della Mirandola, for example) and, later, translated (his *Utopia*, by Ralph Robinson, in 1551; the Latin sections of his *History of the Passion*, by his granddaughter, in 1557). One of the writers in his circle was Richard Hyrd (d. 1528). Hyrd wrote the preface to Margaret More/Roper's translation of Erasmus (see p. 289 below), helping with the translation, and translated Vives' *Instruction of Christen Women*, which More checked for accuracy, dedicating it, like Vives' original, to Queen Katharine (Nugent 1956: 74–5, Travitsky 1997).

Translations in Anglo-Norman

Thus far, this section has concentrated on translations in English by—more commonly, for—named members of the aristocracy, from the late fourteenth to the mid-sixteenth centuries, when court patronage provided an important trigger for 'the marked increase in the degree of interest shown in the art of translation' (Green 1980: 149). This increasing emphasis partly reflects the decision by Henry IV and Henry V to make English central to the articulation of government policy and to create a national literature in English (on this, see Fisher 1992). It arguably explains Duke Humphrey's commissioning of the Palladius translation. Yet, contemporary with the earlier-noted translations of Hoccleve and Lydgate for Henry V, and with a major English translation of the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes*, undertaken *c*. 1409 by the Carthusian Nicholas Love (Love 1992), is a French translation of the *Meditationes*, now Cambridge Corpus Christi College MS 213 (Love 1992: xix), produced for the King by Jean Galopes, chaplain to Henry IV and later to John, Duke of Bedford (for a translation by Galopes for the Duke of Bedford, see p. 2 above).

   The French in which Galopes wrote was probably, but not certainly, the Parisian French which was 'the main language of Richard II's court'. In the two centuries after the Conquest, the French spoken and written was AN, which continued to be written and copied 'well into the fifteenth century' alongside Parisian French (*IoV* 333). At any time between the Norman Conquest and the end of the fourteenth century, French would have seemed as natural a choice for an aristocratic commission as English was to become in the fifteenth: 'French books would have formed the greatest proportion of all royal book-collections

before the sixteenth century' (Green 1980: 153). Even at the very end of the period, French was still in regular use. *A Glasse of the Truth*, published three times between 1530 and 1532, and possibly written by Henry VIII, was translated into Latin (by Nicholas Hawkins) and French (by John Palsgrave) in 1532. French translations were produced for Edward VI, and he himself dedicated to his uncle in 1548–9 a translation in French of an English text showing 'the principal places in Scripture which treat of faith in God' (King 1982: 459–60).

Given the main focus of this *History*, there is space for only a few of those who responded to aristocratic commission by writing in French (for further information about AN translators, see Russell 1936, Legge 1963, and pp. 49–54 above).

The *Estoire de Seint Aedward le Rei* (*c.* 1240) of Matthew Paris (d. 1259), translating a Latin life of the saint by Ailred of Rievaulx, has several claims on our attention. First, the Latin life was commissioned by Henry II; Paris dedicated his *Estoire* to Henry III's wife, Eleanor of Provence. Susan Crane comments tellingly on the 'symbolic bifurcation' thus revealed, 'associating kings with erudition and queens with a more nearly vernacular culture' (*CHMEL* 50). Paris insists (1983: 36–7) that he has translated 'sanz fausete e sanz barat' [without falseness or deceit], though this comment refers not so much to an original text (cf. Paris 1983: xxiii–xxiv) as to the holy life of its protagonist. Not that such comments bear directly on the translator's understanding of the Queen's levels of literary culture: Ailred had similarly vouched for his work as a translation ('transtuli'), though we might rather call it a compilation drawn from Latin chronicles (Ailred 1855: 739–40).

One element of the translation is, however, more relevant to the question. For an audience more accustomed to listening and looking than to reading, Paris, famed as an illustrator, provides another translation of his text, with every page of the surviving copy lavishly illustrated (Paris 1920). This use of images to translate texts can, of course, take the word off the page and onto other surfaces, where it can be painted or sculpted or woven. The translation of text into visual image helps to focus the economic, political, and possibly gender, relations underpinning translations produced by and for the nobility: as also the possible simplification of complex sources so translated, a sort of glorious 'dumbing-down' of the word. (An alternative is the copying of the translated text onto the wall of a building, as happened with Lydgate's translation of the 'Danse Machabre': see Simpson 2002: 35.)

The dangers of generalizing from Paris's implied view of his noble patroness are brought more clearly into focus by another, nearly contemporary, translation, the *Proverbes de Salemon*, produced by Sanson de Nantuil for Alice de Condet, probably the daughter of the first Earl of Chester (Sanson 1988–94: I, v, 17, and III, 11; see also Trotter, in *MTr* 6: 23). The translation 'may have been composed as a moral text book . . . the first work of this kind extant in the French language', for Alice's son (Legge 1963: 41). Sanson accompanies his translation of the Old Testament Book of Proverbs (to 19: 27) with a commentary, drawn mainly from

standard authorities. Sanson's attitude to his text matches, centuries later, Rolle's to his Psalter translation (pp. 40, 74 above, 222 below) and Hull's to hers (p. 286). He proceeds, verse by verse, giving the Latin and a translation (each headed by the same rubric, 'lettre', as if to stress the equivalence of translation and original), and then a commentary, headed 'glose'.

Ecclesiastics as Patrons and Translators

The role of churchmen (and, less often, churchwomen) in the production of vernacular translation—on their translation of Greek texts into Latin, see, for instance, §3.3 below—receives fuller comment below, in §§5.1–2. Such translations sometimes arose in a domestic context, when the translator was, say, chaplain to the household (Sanson, Trevisa, Walton, Galopes, Parker). At other times, the translator was approached, as a member of a religious order, by a noble patron (Paris, Lydgate, Barclay); or by a co-religionist seeking translations for other (especially female) religious. Sometimes bishops and archbishops produced translations; two bishops of Winchester, Æthelwold, in the late tenth century, and Fox in the sixteenth, produced translations of the Benedictine Rule for the nuns of their diocese.

Differences are observable between monastic and mendicant writing, a point readily seen in the insightful accounts of each by Cannon and Fleming (*CHMEL* chs. 12–13). Nevertheless, in translations undertaken by churchmen, whatever their formal affiliations, similar interests predominate: translations of saints' lives (Matthew Paris), of Boethius (John Walton: see further pp. 378–9 below), of Bible texts and biblically inspired narratives (Sanson de Nantuil, Jean Galopes). A generous understanding of the term 'religious' could also include morally exemplary writing like Barclay's translation of Mancinus, or Trevisa's and Lydgate's of their historical sources.

Although translations were produced usually for lay readers and women religious, the relation of Latinity and vernacularity is not one of simple opposition, nor can that relation be applied straightforwardly to the two estates of clergy and laity. About 1440, for example, Capgrave was approached, for a vernacular life of the order's founder, by the Abbot of the Premonstratensian house at West Dereham, a small and 'not particularly learned' *male* community (Fredeman 1974–5: 290, a view opposed by Gribbin 2001: 154). Two other saints' lives by Capgrave—a genre for which, as a result of Lydgate's work in verse hagiography, 'there was a vogue' (Seymour 1996: 221)—run truer to expected type, and were produced for women. The first (*c*. 1450) was a request by an unnamed gentlewoman, backed up with payment; born on the saint's feast day, she wanted a vernacular life of St Augustine, and supposed that, as an Augustinian friar, Capgrave would 'do it with þe bettir wil' (Capgrave 1910: 1). This translation reached the Master of the order of St Gilbert of Sempringham, who asked, first, for material to be added about the different 'relygyous þat lyue vndyr [the] reule' of St Augustine, then for a translation of the life of St Gilbert 'in þe same forme'

(61). Capgrave was unwilling to tamper with the text of his *St Augustine*, though when he joined it to his *St Gilbert* he did add, at the end, an English version of a Latin sermon he had preached years before in Cambridge on the topic (145–8).

Capgrave understood the Master to be requesting the *St Gilbert* for the Gilbertine nuns who, like the earlier-noted nuns of Winchester, could 'vnnethe [scarcely] . . . vndyrstande Latyn' and might therefore use the vernacular text in times of leisure as a pious supplement to their performance of the Office (61). He gave them plenty to be going on with, providing neologisms like 'catalogue', 'approximation', and 'neophyte', which he glossed (64, 80, 85); explaining Latin terms like 'subucula' (125); offering 'shined' as an alternative to 'shone' (83). Capgrave's etymologizing of the saint's name, at the outset, confirms the broad outlines of this picture: 'Gilbertus' is composed of the elements 'gyla', a Hebrew word meaning 'he þat passeth fro o cuntre to anothir'; 'ber', also from Hebrew, meaning 'a welle, or a pitte'; and 'tus', meaning incense: so that the whole name means 'this holy man was a walker her in erde þat passed fro þe welle onto þe swete sauour' (62). The nuns might have applied this translational metaphor to their own reading of the translation. In fact, the saint's life is the literalization of the metaphor: once baptized (in the well of the font), Gilbert's life (passing from birth to death, as from country to country) 'ran in . . . a swete sauour': his teaching becomes the source whose sweet savour the nuns themselves become (62). Like Paris's translation of the life of St Edward, Capgrave's translation witnesses to the greater translation, of Gilbert after his death, and the pious reader of his life, to God (for further comment on the translation, see p. 254 below).

Religious translation of this sort, then, does not seriously challenge the religious and linguistic status quo. It could be, and was, encouraged by religious authorities throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

We have already (p. 3 above) seen Archbishop Pecham as the AN translator of pseudo-Dionysius (Pecham 1942). Pecham's greatest contribution to the religious education of the laity lies in the Constitutions he promulgated at Lambeth in 1281 (ed. Powicke and Cheney 1964: II, 892–918; see further p. 253 below). Pecham's Constitutions, especially item 9, beginning 'Ignorantia Sacerdotum', had 'immediate and immense' influence, and 'soon became the standard manual for the instruction of the laity' (Douie 1952: 138). When in his own Constitutions of 1407–9 Archbishop Arundel banned all unlicensed vernacular translation of the Scripture, he ordered his clergy 'to confine their preaching to the matters contained in Pecham's constitutions' (Douie 1952: 139). In 1435 the Bishop of Bath and Wells had a translation made: every parish priest in the diocese was to get a copy (Douie 1952: 139; for the date, Gillespie 1989: 336 n. 4). Earlier, in 1357, John Thoresby, the Archbishop of York (d. 1373), had made extensive use of them in legislation of his own. (For Thoresby's and Pecham's texts, see Gaytrygge 1901; for comment, Gillespie 1989: 318, Copeland in *CHMEL* 397.) Thoresby went one important step further than Pecham: he had his legislation translated

into English by the monk John Gaytrygge. The translation survives in several versions and a large number of manuscripts (for discussion, see Hudson 1985); it was appealed to by the Wycliffites as a precedent for their own activities (anon. 1938: 175).

Pecham's Constitutions were hugely important, but they envisaged a limited role for the laity as potential consumers of translation. The Bible text used to argue for a programme of preaching organized about the basic elements of the faith, Lamentations 4: 4, speaks of the laity as hungry children for whom none will break the bread of the Scriptures. But Pecham does not imagine that the laity might eventually wish to break that bread for themselves; for him, the laity were like the children of 1 Corinthians 3: 2, unable to eat solid food (this biblical metaphor had the force of a commonplace in debates about Bible translation). Clerics can translate for themselves as they read; the laity are to have the word preached to them, and need not think to read it for themselves. This opposition between hearing and reading was still active in the sixteenth century, when More and Tyndale were debating about Bible translation (Cummings in *CHMEL* 835). More measured understandings, like those of Trevisa and Ullerston arguing for preaching as a form, or metaphor, of translation (Ellis 2001: 15, 25), or Bishop Reginald Pecock (*c.* 1392–1460), arguing that writing and speaking are two complementary forms of language (*IoV* 99, 101), were all too easily swamped.

Thoresby's reworking of Pecham, seventy-five years later, changed the picture only to confirm it. It cut most of Pecham's scholastic distinctions and generally simplified the text. The same is yet truer of Gaytrygge's version. Notwithstanding its use, unglossed, of a difficult neologism 'forloke' (foreknowledge)—a term, unparalleled in the sources, which looks forward to later, difficult texts like the *Revelation of Love* of Julian of Norwich (Dutton 2002: 237–8)—it keeps the basic message elementary.

Between Thoresby/Gaytrygge and Capgrave, of course, came the major upheaval of the Wycliffite translation projects (see further §5.1 below), and these brought into the open—what the earlier legislators had acknowledged only obliquely—anxieties about lay access to a Bible glossed by the clergy neither viva voce nor, as in Sanson's Bible translation, on the page. The debates on this question in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries have been extensively discussed (notably, by Hudson 1975; Watson 1995); they have regular precedent on the Continent, especially in ecclesiastical reaction there to the spread of heresy (see discussion in Deanesly 1920; Moore 1995). The defeat of heresy was a prime object of the Fourth Lateran Council; its deliberations fed directly into Pecham's Constitutions. But, since heresy is the dark underside of orthodoxy, anxieties about Bible translation could surface at any time: and did. They are tellingly apparent, even after the great restoration of learning generated by the tenth-century monastic revival, in the response of Ælfric, monk and abbot (d. *c.* 1020), to the request of his noble patron Æthelweard to translate the Book of Genesis (for an edition, see Mitchell and Robinson

1992: 182–7; a partial modern translation is in Robinson 1997: 39–40; see further pp. 81 above, 241 below).

Ælfric was anxious. In the first place, he wrote, given the divine inspiration of the text, a translator dare not add more to the English than the Latin contained, or change (*awendan*, 186) the order except to accommodate the different word order of English. Were such a translation possible, its publication would almost certainly attract scribal error, whether deliberate or inadvertent (187; for another expression of Ælfric's anxiety, see p. 36 above). Yet the creation and licensing of an accurate text would be just the beginning of a translator's problems. Read in Latin or in English, the text could be misconstrued by readers ignorant of the different cultural context in which it originated. Such readers would read literally what they should read spiritually (especially the sexual practices of the patriarchs, which, read literally, might seem to support the idea of a married clergy, 183–4). The Old Testament, in particular, must be read spiritually; the New according to its literal meaning. Failing to appreciate this difference, heretics and Jews had produced readings of the Bible differently partial but equally erroneous, the former abolishing the Old Testament, the latter rejecting the New. (Here we note a contrast with the later debates, in which both orthodox and heterodox used Judaism as a useful parallel—the former, negative; the latter, positive—with the practices of the Wycliffites.) Readers therefore depended, inevitably, on religious authorities to interpret the text for them: otherwise, they risked setting their own fallible judgement against that of the divine author. Let no one presume to ask God 'Hwi dest þu swa' (186) [why do you so?]: very like the questions Hoccleve would later, in a poem to the Lollard knight Sir John Oldcastle, put into the mouths of ignorant female heretics (Hoccleve 1970: 13). In fact, Ælfric was arguing, much as Paris and Capgrave would later do, that the only real translation to be undertaken (*awendan*) was the subjection of the reader's will to God's. The word on the sacred page was not, for them, the primary object of translation.

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3.2 King Alfred

Robert Stanton

King Alfred of Wessex (r. 871–99) is often called 'Alfred the Great', and his perceived greatness has as much to do with his literary and educational innovations as with his military and political achievements. He was responsible for the production of the first substantial body of continuous prose in English, and helped to define an English literary culture at a time when Latin was the dominant high-status language. Furthermore, he did all this while fighting for the defence of England against the Viking invaders. Alfred wanted to reconstruct a literary, religious, and educational culture after a calamitous decline that began several generations before him, and although his projects had a limited effect in the generations after him, his mingling of literary and political power was a remarkable achievement that has inspired the admiration of scholars in every generation since (for fuller comment on Alfred's political ideas, see Nelson 1993).

The Historical Context of the Alfredian Translation Project

Around the year 880, Alfred was experiencing a lull in his military campaigns. For over a decade, the Vikings had been assailing England and steadily acquiring territory within its borders. Indeed, they had conquered the ancient kingdoms of Northumbria, Mercia, and East Anglia, and established substantial settlements in these regions, which came to be known as the Danelaw. Alfred decided that if he were to rebuild an English nation using his own kingdom of Wessex as a base, he needed to do it through cultural renovation as well as through military innovation and physical infrastructure. The trajectory of English learning had been a volatile one. The late seventh and eighth centuries were (indeed, still are) perceived by many as a golden age, when the clergy was highly educated and monasteries were notable centres of literary and artistic achievement (manuscript production, biblical exegesis, music, and perhaps the production of poetry). There was close contact with Rome, and the settling of ecclesiastical controversies between the Roman and Irish churches heralded a period of relative doctrinal stability. The two great figures of early Anglo-Saxon learning, Aldhelm and Bede, dominated the literary landscape.

The ninth century marked a period of marked decline. The Church had decayed considerably, and book production declined calamitously; according to Alfred, very few people knew Latin at all. Opinions vary on the extent and causes of this decline: some scholars largely agree with Alfred's assessment of the

damage (Gneuss 1986a, 1986b), while others point to the possibility that Alfred exaggerated its extent in order to justify his own reforms (Morrish 1986). At any rate, the level of learning and scholarship had sadly fallen away since the days of Bede. Alfred's introductory letter—sometimes, for the sake of convenience, called the preface—to his translation (the *Hierdeboc*) of Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis* explains his reasons for translating and commissioning translations as he did; the letter is addressed to his bishops, each of whom is receiving a copy of the translations (for fuller discussion of the preface, see Waite 2000: items 703, 710; Discenza 1998; for a modern edition, Mitchell and Robinson 1992).

The King describes five periods of English history. The first period was the golden age of the late seventh and early eighth centuries, when there were many men of learning in England and kings obeyed God, thereby maintaining order within their territories and extending their possessions, succeeding 'both in warfare and in wisdom'; the religious orders were eager 'both in teaching and in learning', and people from abroad looked to England for teachers. (Throughout this section, translations are the author's, with cross-references for ease of reference, where appropriate, to Keynes and Lapidge 1983: here, cf. their p. 125.) Alfred contrasts this with the second period, the days of his boyhood, 'before everything was ransacked and burned', a clear reference to the Viking invasions of the ninth century; in this phase, there were many excellent books in the country, but no one could understand them. The third and worst of Alfred's periods includes the years immediately following his accession in 871: people had neither wealth (as a result of the invasions) nor any zeal for obtaining wisdom. The fourth period, the present of *c.* 890, is slightly better than the third, because there are at least some teachers in England: 'thanks be to God Almighty that we now have any supply of teachers at all!' The fifth and final period refers to the future, when Alfred hopes that England will once again possess both wealth and wisdom (Shippey 1979: 351–3).

Alfred moves from these reflections on English learning to a broader justification for translation:

Then, when I remembered all this, I wondered very much at the good, wise men who were once in England, and had fully learned all the books, and I wondered why they did not wish to turn any part of them into their own language. But then I immediately answered myself and said, 'They did not think that men would ever become so careless and learning so fallen away; they neglected this because of their wish that there would be more wisdom here in the country the more languages we knew.' Then I remembered how the law was first found in the Hebrew language, and then, when the Greeks learned it, they translated it into their own language, and also all the other books, and then Latin speakers in the same way, when they had learned it, they translated it all, through wise interpreters, into their own language. And also all other Christian peoples translated some part of it into their own language.   (cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 125–6)

Note the crucial turn from the idea of translation as a stopgap necessary only when language learning (as a function of wisdom) has decayed, to a celebration

of the transmission of Holy Scripture into Greek, Latin, and the vernacular languages of Christian countries. Alfred situates his own translation programme firmly in this tradition:

> Therefore it seems better to me, if it seems so to you, that we too should turn some books, those which are most necessary for all people to know, into that language that we can all understand, and that you and we should bring it about, as we can very easily do with God's help, if we have the leisure, that all the freeborn youths who are now in England, who have the means to apply themselves to it, be set to learning, whenever they have no other duties, until the time that they can read English writing well. Then, let those be instructed in Latin whom the teachers wish to educate further and promote to higher orders.   (cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 126)

Thus, Alfred's translations have a clear pedagogical purpose: they will serve as school texts so that 'all the freeborn youths who are now in England, who have the means to apply themselves to it' may learn English.

To help him in his literary and educational programme, Alfred assembled in the 880s a group of scholars and assistants. From Mercia, the neighbouring kingdom where traditions of learning were apparently healthier than in Wessex, he brought Wærferth (the Bishop of Worcester), Plegmund (whom he appointed Archbishop of Canterbury), Æthelstan, and Werwulf (these two were priests and chaplains, according to his biographer Asser). Alfred laments in his introductory letter that the English now have to go abroad for teachers, but he did not hesitate to do so himself: from the eastern Frankish kingdom (present-day Germany) he brought John the Old Saxon, and from the monastery of St Bertin's, through the good offices of Fulk, Archbishop of Reims, he engaged the services of one Grimbald, noted for his learning and ability. Finally, Alfred recruited the Welshman Asser, a monk, possibly bishop, at St David's; Asser later wrote the *Life of King Alfred*, an important account of the King's life and achievements (Smyth 1995 challenges Asser's authorship of the *Life*).

What books did Alfred consider the most necessary for everyone to know? Dialect and stylistic studies have established what Alfred himself probably wrote or translated in close collaboration with his helpers: a collection of laws; the previously noted translation of Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis*; Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae* (for fuller comment, see Discenza 2005, and §5.6 below); Augustine's *Soliloquia*; and a prose version of the first fifty psalms (for fuller details, see Waite 2000: sections 9–12). In addition, there are several works translated by other people and assigned, with varying degrees of certainty, to Alfred's translation programme (on this, see further Discenza 2001). Bishop Wærferth translated Gregory the Great's *Dialogi* at Alfred's request (see further Waite 2000: section 15). Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* was probably translated by a Mercian; its late ninth-century date and the fact that it was distributed to various writing centres from a single source (as was the *Cura Pastoralis*) suggest that it might well have been part of Alfred's scheme (Waite 2000: section 14). The OE version of Orosius' *Historiarum Adversum Paganos Libri Septem* is West Saxon, but is no longer attributed to King Alfred (Waite 2000: section 13). Its inclusion

among the so-called 'Alfredian' texts is less certain, but its date (*c.* 890–9) and its inclusion of a description of the White Sea, reportedly given by a sailor named Ohthere to King Alfred, leads one to suspect that the work was prepared in collaboration with the King (for the dating and authorship of the Orosius, see Waite 2000: items 177, 209; for further comment on the translation, pp. 333–4 below). Two other prose works, Bald's *Leechbook* (a collection of medical recipes: see further p. 410 below), and the OE *Martyrology* (a series of narratives and descriptions of various saints), possibly date from Alfred's reign as well, though it is less certain that they were directly part of his translation programme (for the dating and attribution of the works, see Whitelock 1966: 73–7; Frantzen 1986: 106–7; Stanley 1988: 357–8).

Alfred's attempt to resuscitate a golden age of English learning by establishing a new educational system and embarking on an ambitious translation programme involved a close engagement with the circumstances of the present. Alfred's reforms were not in the end wholly preservative or nostalgic: they involved the creation of an entirely new bilingual culture, in which the functional domain of English was substantially enlarged. The vernacular had been used for decades (perhaps longer) for laws, charters, wills, and other legal documents, and possibly for poetic texts as well. But there were virtually no pre-Alfredian texts, in OE, of philosophy, history, theology, or Scripture, those genres which Alfred principally translated or had translated (on this point, see further Davis 2000).

The unity of Alfred's identity as a translator and his own regal persona is clear both from the official, top-down character of his project and from the royal precedents on which he drew. Alfred made good use of the Emperor Charlemagne's model of the eloquent king for his scheme of educational and cultural renewal. Charlemagne's own image as a culturally enlightened ruler provided a powerful model for the creation of Alfred's own royal image. Asser, in his biography of the King, made extensive use of Einhard's *Life of Charlemagne*, borrowing many elements of Charlemagne's activities in the world of literacy and teaching. Like Asser's Alfred, Einhard's Charlemagne trained his own children in the liberal arts. Both rulers summoned foreign scholars to help them with their own education. Einhard claims that the Emperor spoke Latin and, like Alfred, enjoyed being read aloud to (St Augustine was a favourite). But Alfred did not need to look even to the Continent for the precedent of a translator-king. The seventh-century Northumbrian prince Oswald spent years in exile among the Irish during the rule of King Edwin (616–33) and was baptized by them; when Oswald took the Northumbrian throne in 634, he brought numerous Irish monks and priests, including Bishop Aidan, to preach the faith throughout the kingdom. Since Aidan was not fluent in English, King Oswald himself acted as translator.

Alfredian Translation Theory

Alfred's justification of his own work as a translator shows him wrestling with the fundamental translation problems of fidelity and rivalry. He authorizes his

own translations by invoking scriptural precedents, thereby placing his pro-
gramme on a grand scale and mitigating the notion that these works were a
mere desperate stopgap during a time of decay in Latin learning. His preface
emphasizes the role of learning and interpretation in biblical translation: both
the Greeks and Romans translate only after they have 'learned' or 'mastered'
the text, and the Romans make use of learned interpreters. Alfred and his
helpers will attempt their own translations only after they have studied the
texts thoroughly and carefully. On a deeper level, the King's description of
a series of 'originals' being translated into other languages (Hebrew to Greek
to Latin Bibles) complicates the notion of an original. Alfred knew that the
production of the Latin Old Testament was not a matter of direct translation
from the Hebrew: many early Latin Bibles were translated from the Greek
Septuagint, and even St Jerome's Vulgate had made use of existing Latin trans-
lations of the New Testament. Alfred himself, when translating the Psalms,
did so from a Latin text and not a Hebrew one. Alfred silently assumed an
original scriptural text (the literal word of God), but his emphasis on a chain
of interpretations valorizes the idea that texts, even Scripture, do not exist in a
timeless present, but are recreated and given meaning only in particular historical
moments.

Alfred's translation methodology combines fidelity to traditional norms of
interpretation with a flexible willingness to alter them as the specific translation
situation demands. The King says several times that he has translated 'sometimes
word for word, sometimes sense for sense', as he learned it from his helpers
(cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 126). He uses the same words in the preface to
Boethius, and Asser says that Wærferth translated the *Dialogi* 'sometimes sense
for sense' (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 92, 131). Alfred's source here is unclear:
most likely he lifted the formula from Jerome's preface to the Vulgate, although
he could also have been influenced by Gregory the Great, who wrote several
times that translators must work sense for sense, not word for word. Alfred
is in fact equivocating between the two poles of literality and looseness that
are staples of medieval translation theory (on the word-for-word/sense-for-sense
commonplace, see also pp. 73–4 above.)

The Genesis of the Translation Project

Alfred's own descriptions of his activities work in tandem with the powerful
image-making of his biographer Asser, whose *Life of Alfred* furthers the important
idea of the King not only as a literate, creative ruler, but as one whose literary
eloquence merges with his royal power to reform the realm. Alfred's own edu-
cational experiences join together to form a controlling motif in the *Life*, and
his own learning stands metonymically for the learning he wants England to
undergo. In every one of the scenes, an educational milieu evokes an important
experience of cultural production. In a famous passage early in the *Life*, Asser
tells a story about Alfred's boyhood experience with books:

One day, when his mother was showing him and his brothers a certain English book of poetry which she held in her hand, she said: 'Whichever of you can learn this book the quickest, I will give it to him.' Impelled by her words, and even more by divine inspiration, and enticed by the beauty of the first letter in the book, he said to his mother, surpassing his brothers who were older in years but not in ability: 'Will you really give this book to the one among us who can understand it the most quickly and recite it to you?' At this his mother, smiling and rejoicing, reassured him and said, 'I will indeed.' Then he immediately took the book from her hand, went to his teacher and read it (*legit*). When he had read it, he took it back to his mother and recited it.

<div align="right">(cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 75)</div>

Clearly, this is a primal scene of literacy. Alfred's education in written English is played out in terms of a literal 'mother tongue': it is at his mother's urging that he learns to read English. The word *legit*, a notorious crux in the passage, points to Alfred's acquisition of a crucial literary skill. Alfred *legit* ('reads') the book to his teacher, although Asser has just told us that Alfred did not yet know how to read. This probably means that, rather than listening to the teacher read the book and memorizing it by ear, Alfred learned how to pronounce the letters he saw on the page with the teacher's help; in other words, he learned the poems phonetically (Stanton 2002: 85–6). He then presumably went away and practised reading until he had the book memorized. This would accord with what we know of Latin teaching in monastic schools, where novices learned to read the Psalter phonetically before they knew the meaning of the words. With practice like this, Alfred would in fact be reading English and understanding it too: Alfred asks his mother if she will really give the book to the first one who understands it. Thus, the boy's English education seems to take a form not far removed from the way a young monk would learn Latin. Asser's portrayal not only fulfils the hagiographical motif of childhood promise, but also forges links between vernacular education and the traditions of Christian learning in England: the latter accords perfectly with Alfred's nostalgia, in the introductory letter to the *Pastoral Care*, for the golden age of English education. (For further comment on this scene, see Waite 2000: item 228.)

The next major scene of reading in Asser's *Life* concerns that miraculous day when Alfred began to read Latin and to translate: 'It was also in the same year that Alfred, king of the Anglo-Saxons, by divine urging, first began on one and the same day to read and to translate' (cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 99). Asser goes on to elaborate the scene, describing the little book (the 'handbook' or *enchiridion*) the King constantly carried. This contained numerous Latin sacred texts, including monastic offices, psalms, and prayers. The King asks Asser to copy an interesting passage into the book, but there is not enough room. Asser copies the passage onto a new quire and adds it to the book, leaving ample space in which to copy subsequent pieces of text. As soon as Asser has copied the first passage into the quire, Alfred 'was eager to read it at once and to translate it into the English language, and then to instruct many people' (cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 100). Here we see the genesis of the King's translation project.

Alfred as Teacher and Translator

When Asser says that the King began to read and translate on the same day, he probably means not that the king acquired a perfect knowledge of Latin in one day—if that miracle had occurred Asser would surely have made more of it—but that his resolve to translate Latin works into English dates from this conversation with Asser.

But Asser's assertion makes a telling point about the nature of the King's understanding. The connection between reading and translating is crucial: the word 'to read' (*rǣdan*) in OE signified not only the interpretation of words on the page, but the giving of advice or counsel and, crucially, the deciphering of something obscure (see further Waite 2000: item 235). In the introductory letter to the *Pastoral Care*, Alfred had candidly detailed his working method:

Then, amongst numerous and various other tasks of running this kingdom, I began to translate into English the book which is called in Latin *Pastoralis*, and in English *Shepherd-Book*, sometimes word for word, sometimes sense for sense, just as I learned it from Plegmund my archbishop and from Asser my bishop and from Grimbald my mass-priest and from John my mass-priest. After I had learned it, just as I understood it, and as I could most meaningfully render it, I translated it into English.

(cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 126)

The first stage of Alfred's translation process is clearly a communal enterprise: he 'learns' the meaning of the Latin from four of his scholarly helpers, presumably through oral explication. The twelfth-century historian William of Malmesbury twice notes that Asser himself explained the text of Boethius' *Consolation* to the King in 'plain words', from which Alfred made the English version. These plain words represent an intermediate stage between Boethius' somewhat difficult Latin and Alfred's absorption of the textual meaning. In fact, Alfred may have learned to read English using a process similar to that used for teaching Latin, and the use of such intermediate Latin prose versions agrees fully with what we know of the Anglo-Saxon educational system.

The second stage of translation, described in the clause 'as I could most meaningfully render it', balances the idea of understanding with that of expression: the OE word *areccan* (here translated 'render') means 'to set forth, express; recount, tell, narrate; explain'. Only twice in OE, once here and once earlier in this same introductory letter, is *areccan* ever used specifically to refer to interlingual translation: at the beginning of the letter, Alfred bemoans the fact that when he came to the throne, hardly anyone could translate (*areccan*) a letter from Latin into English. The broader, more common senses 'express' and 'explain' are a better indicator of what Alfred means in this later passage describing his own translation of the *Cura Pastoralis*.

What this means in practice is thoroughly documented, for Alfred's translation of Boethius, in §5.6 below, and, for all Alfred's translations, in the relevant entries of Waite 2000. Here a single example, from his earlier translation of

the *Cura Pastoralis*, must suffice. In this 'handbook for priests' (Waite 2000: item 685), Gregory notes Christ as a cardinal role model in respect of his avoidance of earthly power: 'hinc ipse Dei hominumque mediator regnum percipere vitavit' (Gregory 1849: 33). Alfred renders this: 'Forðæm se wealhstod self Godes and monna, ðæt is Crist, fleah eorðrice to underfonne' (Alfred 1871–2: I. 33) [therefore the mediator himself of God and men, that is Christ, avoided the taking of an earthly kingdom]. This is a clear, careful, and accurate translation, which spells out the implications of Gregory's biblical 'mediator' with the added gloss 'that is, Christ', and the equally clear explication that Christ's kingdom is not an earthly one by adding *eorð* to *rice*. Much more striking is Alfred's use of *wealhstod* to translate *mediator*. In the standard OE dictionary (Bosworth-Toller 1898) this word only once occurs with the sense mediator, in the passage under consideration. Its other uses all refer to a translator of words spoken or written in another language, or to someone who interprets/expounds a text spoken or written in any language. Alfred could have used a word which translated the first element of *mediator* more closely, like *midligend*. Instead, he makes Christ a figure of the translator/expositor, whose earthly life translated God to men (just as, after his resurrection, he translated men to God), and whose life and teaching interpreted God to men. Alfred, by implication, is taking a very exalted view of his own activity as a translator.

When Asser says, then, that Alfred began to read and translate on the same day, several processes converge. First and foremost, this 'beginning' refers to the King's resolution to translate selected Latin works into English, with the help of his stable of scholars: they will explain the meaning of the Latin works to him and he will render the meaning into English. At this point, Alfred becomes a full participant in the educational process and a producer of texts within that process: reading, understanding, and translation come together. The King has become an *interpres*, a word that meant both 'interpreter' and 'translator'. The role of an interpreter of sacred texts had an almost hierophantic quality: those who explained holy meanings to numbers of people bore a heavy mantle. Like Bible translators in particular, all interpreters, whether translators, exegetes, or preachers, had in some measure to be divinely inspired. Alfred and Asser, in creating the image of the King as interpreter and translator, drew on existing traditions of the eloquent ruler and developed them into a powerful cultural role.

Alfred's translations went hand in hand with his educational programme, and they have both an explicit and an implicit pedagogical cast. Repeated references in both Asser and Alfred to the King's own learning call attention to the role of education in passing on (and at the same time transforming) the tradition of learning. After introducing Alfred's first four helpers, Asser notes that the King 'day and night, whenever he had any leisure, used to order them to read books aloud to him' (cf. Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 93). The two central scenes of reading and learning in Asser's *Life* also anchor teaching as a central theme in the King's life: he first learns to read English at the instigation of his mother and with the help of a teacher, and later learns Latin as an adult at the moment when he

resolves to translate and begin teaching. Alfred's own teachers used the approved educational techniques of the day, including reading aloud, memorization, and paraphrase. Alfred's translations also use devices familiar from manuscript glosses, including doublets (two OE words for one Latin word).

The educational cast of the King's translations combines a practical, pedagogical approach with the powerful idea of the eloquent ruler. Alfred's idea was to educate his nation, and he presented himself as an eager pupil, anxious to learn from respected scholars. But Alfred went several steps further than his model Charlemagne. The Emperor, despite his interest in cultural reform and the skilful help of his assistant Alcuin, never learned to write. Alfred, on the other hand, is now generally acknowledged to have translated several works himself: this was most likely done in close collaboration with his scholars, but he clearly supervised the translations and put his *imprimatur* on them. No other early medieval ruler reached anywhere near this level of cultural attainment, and this is of great moment in the history of medieval kingship. Alfred as head of state and Alfred as translator and teacher combined in a figure greater than the sum of both roles. The King himself became a crucial intermediary, a transmitter of a body of knowledge, a code of behaviour, and a tradition of wisdom. Furthermore, also unlike Charlemagne, he advanced the position of the vernacular language in an irreversible direction.

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3.3 Robert Grosseteste

Philipp W. Rosemann

Introduction

Few of the great medieval theologians of the Latin West were also accomplished translators. The names of Boethius and of Eriugena come to mind. These thinkers turned to translation because their times and biographies placed them at a cultural frontier that they felt compelled to help bridge. Boethius—Christian Roman patrician who advised the Ostrogothic king Theodoric—must have realized that the Mediterranean culture of antiquity was coming to a close, and that Rome and Athens would henceforth belong to different cultural universes. John Scottus Eriugena, the Irishman whom fate, or providence, placed at the Carolingian court of Charles the Bald, lived at the propitious time when renewed contacts with Byzantium created an opportunity for the West to acquaint itself with the theological tradition of the Eastern Church. Boethius and Eriugena were both liminal figures, visionaries who exercised a profound influence upon the tradition; yet their lives and works were also not devoid of a dimension of tragic failure. Boethius' project, to render all of Plato and Aristotle into Latin and to compose commentaries upon their writings, was only in its initial stages when he was executed on charges of treason. Eriugena's chef-d'oeuvre and principal fruit of his reflection upon Eastern theology, the *Periphyseon*, ended up on the Index of Forbidden Books.

This is the company in which Grosseteste belongs. 'Greathead' too was a thinker on the threshold of a new era, a man both behind and ahead of his times. Opposed to many of the innovations in the Scholastic study of theology that came to his native England from the Continent, Grosseteste favoured a more evangelically oriented form of renewal in the Church, one centred upon a recovery of its sources in their pristine purity. Yet the same 'anti-Scholastic' Grosseteste was also an avid reader of Aristotle, central works of whom he translated and commented upon. Just as had been the case for Boethius and Eriugena, the relationship between the West and the East played a crucial role in Grosseteste's thought. Intense loyalty to the pastoral ideals of the Church paradoxically drove him into opposition to its head, so that some scholars have come to regard him as a forerunner of the Reformation.

An English or a European Life?

The complexity of Grosseteste's endeavours as a thinker and as a religious figure is reflected in the controversies that surround his biography. Grosseteste was born

around 1168 in Stowe, Suffolk. His native tongue was AN, the language in which he was, later in life, to compose his poem of pastoral edification, the *Chateau d'amour*. Although his parents belonged to the poorest class of feudal society, he received formal education from his earliest years. Evidence for the first five and a half decades of his life is scanty. We know that he worked in the employ of Bishop William de Vere of Hereford until the latter's death in 1198. The cathedral school of Hereford was a renowned centre for study in the liberal arts, theology, law, and the natural sciences; some of its masters were acquainted with Arabic learning.

The period of Grosseteste's life between 1198 and 1225 is subject to a debate that has broad implications for understanding his place in history. According to a hypothesis first advanced by Callus in 1955, and more recently defended by McEvoy (see esp. McEvoy 2000: 22–8), upon leaving Hereford Grosseteste became master of arts at the University of Oxford. When studies were suspended there between 1209 and 1214, he emigrated to Paris, becoming a student of theology. As the University of Oxford reopened, Grosseteste was made head of its schools and subsequently its first Chancellor. Southern challenged this account, claiming that Grosseteste never studied or taught outside England. Moreover, according to Southern Grosseteste's association with Oxford began only around 1225. He would thus have spent his most formative years at provincial schools (Southern 1992: xvii–lxvi).

The Callus/McEvoy account considers Grosseteste the product of a Scholastic education, centred upon theological concerns as defined at the University of Paris, and makes him a conservative theologian who cultivated other interests on the margin of his career. By contrast, Southern's revisionist interpretation regards him as a thinker whose interests were shaped by the English scientific tradition (with forerunners such as Adelard of Bath, Daniel of Morley, and Alfred of Shareshill): Grosseteste was a scientist turned theologian—a theologian, moreover, whose independent 'English mind' (thus the subtitle of Southern's book) inevitably led him into controversy with the Pope.

From 1225 onwards, documentary evidence for Grosseteste's life becomes more abundant. In 1225, he was appointed deacon at Abbotsley, in the diocese of Lincoln. Between around 1229 and 1235, he lectured to the Franciscans at their study-house in Oxford. In 1235 he became Bishop of Lincoln. Thereafter, care for the people in his diocese became a principal occupation; indeed he pronounced a scathing speech on the Church's failures in this regard at the papal curia in 1250. Nonetheless, some of his most important philosophical and theological works date from this period as well. Early in 1253, the year of his death, Grosseteste learned that Pope Innocent IV had bestowed an important ecclesiastical office in his diocese upon one of the Pope's own nephews, unqualified for the job. Furious, Grosseteste refused to accept the Pope's decision. This decision is subject to vastly different interpretations, which are, it seems, at the very heart of the controversy over Grosseteste's place in history. Was he 'a figure . . . of European and Catholic dimensions' (McEvoy 2000: 23)? Or did he, towards the end of his life, ask more and more provocatively 'whether the Pope . . . could not properly be called

Antichrist himself', thus instituting a tradition of English resistance against the excesses of the Roman papacy (Southern 1992: 294)? For Southern, his decision to disobey the Pope made Grosseteste a kind of tragically failed proto-Reformer; according to McEvoy, Grosseteste's courageous reaction convinced the Pope of the failings of his own curia.

Overview of Grosseteste's Works

Before 1235, Grosseteste composed numerous scientific writings. These treat of astronomy and its practical applications for the calculation of the ecclesiastical calendar; meteorology; comets; the tides; the understanding of natural laws in terms of geometry; light and optics. The method displayed in some of these treatises has won Grosseteste (admittedly, disputed) acclaim (so Crombie 1953) as the inventor of modern experimental science. Grosseteste did not, however, limit himself to science in his earlier years. Already before 1230, he compiled the *Tabula*, a highly original index of theological sources that attests to his detailed and wide-ranging knowledge of the field, apart from showing acquaintance with works of Greek, Roman, and Arabic provenance—works that, at this stage of his career, he consulted in existing Latin translations (for an edition of the *Tabula*, see Rosemann 1995a; for commentary, Rosemann 1995b). He wrote extensively on Scripture. His commitment to pastoral work is evidenced by his sermons and more popular theological treatises: we have already mentioned the *Chateau d'amour*, a poem designed for singing to the laity, which enjoyed considerable popularity.

Grosseteste turned to translation late in life. His elevation to the see of Lincoln provided him with the means to acquire manuscripts and to employ a small team of collaborators. From 1239 onwards, he was increasingly influenced by the mystical teachings of pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, whose writings he collated on the basis of several manuscripts, retranslated from the original Greek, and elucidated through commentaries. In 1245, Grosseteste prepared the first complete Latin translation, with commentary, of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* (ed. Gauthier 1972–3; see also Dunbabin 1972), thus taking a leading role in the rediscovery of Aristotelian works that had long been lost to the Western world. Earlier in his career, he had already prepared a detailed commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*, as well as notes on the *Physics*.

The Philosophy behind Grosseteste's Translations

In Book II of his treatise *De Doctrina Christiana*, which became the decisive inspiration for the structure of the early medieval curriculum, Augustine strongly emphasized his belief that sound exegesis requires knowledge of the original languages of Scripture. Augustine never acquired sufficient familiarity with Greek or Hebrew to read untranslated texts. The vast majority of medieval thinkers were to follow his practice rather than his theory. Therefore, no tradition of learning

foreign languages was to take root among the mainstream of philosophers and theologians in the Latin West—perhaps because their conception of language was Aristotelian rather than Augustinian. Aristotle, in fact, had maintained that words are nothing but the expression of mental concepts, which he assumed all human beings generated in the same manner. This view of language was well known to medieval thinkers through Aristotle's treatise *De Interpretatione*, which was available in Boethius' translation. As a consequence, they tended to view linguistic and cultural differences as mere accidents of the substantive core of rationality and faith. Naturally, then, there existed little incentive to take seriously ideas from other cultures, ancient, Eastern, or Islamic, in the strangeness of all their challenging details and shades of meaning; instead, such ideas were rather naively assimilated into the framework of Western Christianity.

McEvoy has argued that Grosseteste's attitude towards other cultures was exceptional insofar as he managed to find a hermeneutical alternative to this facilely assimilative bent. Grosseteste understood that language is 'something more than a mere external vestment of a thought which somehow transcends the conditions of its verbal incarnation' (McEvoy 1994a: 589). In this connection, it is useful to contrast Grosseteste's stance in the so-called *filioque* controversy with that of Peter Lombard, whose *Book of Sentences* (1158) was quickly becoming the standard textbook of theology. According to the Greek Orthodox understanding of Trinitarian theology, the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, whereas the Latin Church traditionally holds the Spirit to proceed from the Father and the Son (*filioque*). In the *Sentences* (Book I, dist. 11, ch. 2), Lombard reduces the Greek position to that of the Western Church; for him, any differences are located at the level of 'mere' words. Grosseteste's position upon this subject was much more nuanced, as appears from his *Notula super Epistolam Iohannis Damasceni De Hymno Trisagio*, later quoted by John Duns Scotus. Grosseteste, too, affirms his conviction that there must be a common faith beneath the differences in wording that divide the West and the East in their respective notions of the inner-Trinitarian processions. Unlike Peter Lombard, however, he treats the Eastern position with the greatest respect, placing the authority of the Greek Fathers at the same level as that of the Latin Doctors. For him, the reunion of the Church can be brought about only by the most careful scrutiny of the ways in which the East and the West have framed their faith (McEvoy 1994b: 42–53).

Peter Lombard's *Sentences* provide a useful contrast for an understanding of the specificity and, indeed, eccentricity of Grosseteste's theology, as well as the essential place that translation occupies within it. The *Sentences* represent the culmination of a tendency that characterized the Christian tradition from the very first centuries: namely, the desire to harmonize and systematize the texts upon which the faith is based, and to do so by means of conceptual tools and strategies derived from non-Christian sources—in the process rendering the faith itself amenable to rational investigation. The *Sentences* offer their reader the fruits of eleven centuries during which this tripartite method was able to mature; they

contain a complete system of Christian theology, from the Trinity to Last Things, articulated in the language of Scripture and the Fathers. Tensions in the textual bases of this theology are carefully weighed up and resolved dialectically.

Grosseteste took exception to this kind of theologizing. For him, its emphasis upon secondary authorities removed it too far from the text of the Bible, while its systematic bent came at the expense of contemplative depth. When the University of Oxford, which fell under his jurisdiction as Bishop of Lincoln, showed signs of adopting, in the 1240s, the Parisian practice of basing the day's principal theology lectures on the *Book of Sentences*, rather than on Scripture itself, Grosseteste addressed a letter to the regents, strongly censuring this innovation:

But the time most appropriate for placing and fitting in at the foundation the stones we have mentioned . . . is the morning hour of your ordinary lectures. All of your lectures, especially these early ones, should be drawn from the books of the New Testament and the Old. . . . No intermediary, not even the edifices built by the Fathers upon the teaching of Scripture, can be substituted for the study of the foundations; some other time can be more fittingly set aside for such reading.

(*Epistola* 123, ed. Luard 1861: 347; tr. McEvoy 2000: 163f.)

We have now established the background necessary for understanding the motives animating Grosseteste's Greek scholarship. Grosseteste possessed a fine, Augustinian sensibility for the role that language plays in expressing and forming cultural difference. This sensibility he chose to apply, first and foremost, to the texts of sacred Scripture, which, through careful commentaries, he intended to bring to his contemporaries in their original purity; for he was suspicious of the ways in which the Church was developing in his own day. Some of the texts that Grosseteste rendered into Latin were chosen by him for the witness that they gave of the life of the early Church. This is why the writings of pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite, whom the medievals considered to be a quasi-apostolic author, occupied such a central place in his agenda as a translator (for an edition of his commentaries on the *Mystical Theology*, see Gamba 1942; and, on *The Celestial Hierarchy*, McQuade 1961). Commentators (see e.g. Southern 1992: 182) agree that Grosseteste's other translation work was subordinate to this primary theological purpose.

Grosseteste's versions of Greek texts were 'not designed to be read or referred to like translations, but to be studied word by word like a text in the original language' (Dionisotti 1988: 28). Grosseteste made no concessions to his readers in his scholarly translations: he rendered texts into Latin word for word, adhering so closely to the syntax of the original Greek as to create, not infrequently, ungrammatical Latin constructions: often 'passages . . . contain no more than a sequence of unintelligible words' (Callus 1955: 60). In the commentary that typically accompanies Grosseteste's *verbum de verbo* renderings, the reader's attention is drawn to variant readings in the original texts; philological disquisitions reflect upon the exact meaning of terms difficult to capture in Latin; and notes shed

light upon references and allusions to Greek culture that would otherwise have escaped medieval Latin readers or left them puzzled. The overall effect of this style of translation is that the strangeness of the source language (and culture) is thrown into the highest relief, rather than being absorbed into the transparency of the medium of translation. Indeed, the latter is rendered opaque in order to prevent the reader from assimilating the otherness of the original text into concepts and categories with which he is already familiar. As a consequence, the translated text becomes a challenge to habitual ways of thinking, fostering a genuine questioning of established linguistic and cultural structures. That, no doubt, was Grosseteste's goal: to encourage a rethinking of the life and ideas that prevailed in the Church of his own time, and to do so by contrasting them with the faith of Christian origins.

Grosseteste's Working Method

Grossteste's work on the *corpus dionysiacum* offers a good example of his working method. It not only exhibits the typical traits of his Latin versions of Greek philosophical and theological texts, but also shows his translations as part of a larger project of cultural appropriation. In this project, three stages can be distinguished: edition, translation, and commentary.

Edition. Grosseteste based his translation of the works of pseudo-Dionysius upon a critical edition of the Greek text. He not only supervised this edition, but actively participated in its preparation. This 'first ever ... critical edition of a Greek text made by a Westerner' (Dionisotti 1988: 29f.) is preserved in Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Canonici Gr. 97. This MS contains the works of pseudo-Dionysius, preceded by the prologue of Maximus Confessor and followed by six additional items traditionally associated with the *corpus dionysiacum*, including a list of technical terms used by pseudo-Dionysius. In the margins of all the Dionysian works except for the *Mystical Theology*, the scribe has added the glosses attributed to Maximus. Symbols in the text that are repeated in the margins indicate the Dionysian passages to which the glosses refer. Also in the margins, the scribe, a corrector, and a hand clearly identifiable as Grosseteste's own have entered large numbers of Greek variants, adverted to by means of dots. For example, on f. 86v, we read 'alius liber habet $\pi\hat{\omega}s\,\check{\epsilon}\tau\iota$. alius $\check{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota$' [another book has $\pi\hat{\omega}s\,\check{\epsilon}\tau\iota$, another $\check{\epsilon}\sigma\tau\iota$] (Barbour 1958: 404). Grosseteste and his collaborators consulted three Greek manuscripts in confecting their edition. Canonici Gr. 97 was copied from Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS gr. 933, a tenth-century Byzantine manuscript that arrived at Paris in 1167, and then collated with two other manuscripts. One of these latter, Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, gr. 437, had already served as a basis of John Scottus Eriugena's ninth-century translation; the other has so far remained unidentified. Grosseteste and his assistants also introduced paragraph numbering into the text, together with subject headings.

In the preparation of Canonici Gr. 97, 'a great effort was made to produce an impression of Greek-ness' (Barbour 1958: 402). The scribe cut his pen in a

particular way to ensure that the Greek characters were written with strokes of even thickness; the text hangs from the ruled lines, thus diverging from the Latin custom of placing it upon them. Grosseteste's respect for the otherness of the Eastern tradition, that is, extended right down to the physical appearance of the text on the page.

Translation. Grosseteste was not the first to render the works of pseudo-Dionysius into Latin, and he carefully consulted the versions of his predecessors—the Carolingians Hilduin and Eriugena, as well as the twelfth-century translator Sarracenus—in preparing his own retranslation. He did not work unassisted. A certain Master Nicolaus Graecus belonged to his household from 1237 onwards. John of Basingstoke, who had studied Greek at Athens, was probably another of his helpers, as was, very likely, the Franciscan Adam Marsh, a close friend who also collaborated in the compilation of the *Tabula*. Grosseteste also had at his disposal an unidentified Greek grammar; the so-called *Etymologicum Gudianum*, a monolingual dictionary from which he derived much of his information on the etymology of Greek terms; and a tenth-century Byzantine encyclopedia known as *Suda* (fuller discussion in Dionisotti 1988, 1990).

We have already adverted to Grosseteste's extreme fidelity to the texts that he translated. Mirror translations were, of course, common throughout the medieval period; scholars generally preferred them on account of their accuracy. The degree of Grosseteste's commitment to mirror the Greek text is astonishing, however, even in its medieval context. Most fundamentally, Grosseteste systematically assigned one Latin equivalent to each Greek term, striving to apply this equivalent consistently at every occurrence of the term. He may even have compiled a Greek-Latin word list for this purpose. Wherever grammatically possible (and sometimes against the rules of Latin grammar), he reproduced the grammatical form of the original word. For grammatical categories that do not exist in Latin—such as the genitive absolute, the aorist, and the optative—Grosseteste chose the closest equivalents (in the cases mentioned, the ablative absolute, the perfect tense, and the future indicative). By having a computer mechanically apply these rules to a passage from the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Mercken (1999) generated a result that coincides with almost 88 per cent of the actual translation that Grosseteste prepared: an indication of the extent to which Grosseteste succeeded in his attempt to render the Latin text an exact image of its Greek original.

The translation of the *Mystical Theology* contains several passages that can be used to show how Grosseteste bent rules of Latin idiom and grammar in order to render pseudo-Dionysius' Greek text more faithfully. A single example must suffice (for others, see Franceschini 1976). The very first sentence of the treatise addresses the Trinity as 'τῆς Χριστιανῶν ἔφορε θεοσοφίας' [overseer/guide of the Christians' theosophy/divine wisdom] (Chevallier 1937: 565). Hilduin, the first Latin translator of the *Mystical Theology*, translated this phrase as 'Christianorum inspectrix divinae sapientiae', which mirrors the Greek word for word; only the

article '$\tau\hat{\eta}s$' has been dropped, since Latin lacks an equivalent. Eriugena, revising Hilduin's version, replaced the feminine 'inspectrix' with the masculine 'inspector', and substituted 'theosophiae' for 'divinae sapientiae'. Both moves were evidently designed to bring the Latin into even closer accordance with the Greek. Sarracenus quite deliberately moved in the opposite direction, producing a much more idiomatic version in which the genitive 'Christianorum' appears where it syntactically belongs: 'inspectrix divinae sapientiae Christianorum' [overseer of the divine wisdom of Christians]. Grosseteste, for his part, returned to Hilduin's version, judging, we may assume, that 'divinae sapientiae' was sufficiently close to '$\theta\epsilon o\sigma o\phi\acute{\iota}a s$' (mirroring as it does its etymology) and that 'inspectrix' in the feminine was necessary because 'Trinitas' is a feminine noun. But Grosseteste made one significant addition to Hilduin's phrase: he attempted to render even the article '$\tau\hat{\eta}s$'! The result is highly awkward: 'ejus quae Christianorum inspectrix divinae sapientiae' [overseer of the divine wisdom, of that which is the Christians'], a phrase that must have been unintelligible to any Latin reader unprepared for the surprises of a mirror translation.

Commentary. Grosseteste's translations clearly required commentary in order to be rendered fully intelligible to the Latin reader. Grosseteste was well aware of this need, as the following passage from the prologue of his commentary on the *Celestial Hierarchy* shows:

> It must also be realized that in a Latin translation, and in particular in one which seeks to interpret word for word, to the extent of the translator's ability, . . . a number of expressions will be highly ambiguous, and capable of many interpretations . . . not supported by the original Greek. When therefore someone who either does not have the Greek text to hand or does not know the language, is placed in the presence of such ambiguities in the course of expounding this book, he will inevitably be for the most part unable to tell what the author intended. (tr. McEvoy 1982: 83)

Grosseteste's commentaries grow around snippets of translated text, which he elucidates by building around them continuous explanations in idiomatic, standard Latin. In the language of negative theology, one could describe the lemmata as the mysterious centres of the commentary, centres from which rays of 'superbright darkness' emanate that become visible once they give rise to reflections in less concentrated language. The following passage, from the opening chapter of the *Mystical Theology*, illustrates Grosseteste's method of commentary. The passage ends with a philological reflection, which shows that, even at the level of commentary, he was unwilling to resolve the otherness of pseudo-Dionysius' Greek into seamless Latin.

The one who is beyond showing forth, that is, God, light above all light. *In the darkest place* and *completely filling the darkness*, that is to say, the intellects which are already on that peak, *with the brightness beyond all beauty*, that is to say, of the divine ray which is more than brightness and more than shining, *in the wholly intangible and invisible*; that is, in the completely inaccessible (whether by higher or by lower power) divine ray itself. For in its own inaccessibility it offers itself as accessible, and in its immensity it limits itself

to the measure of the one receiving. To the word *intellectus*, however, the author adds the Greek adjective *anommatous*, which some have translated *invisibilis*—a facile Latin translation, for it appears that the Greek word means *inoculatos*, that is to say, not having any eyes: *omma* is eye, and *a* is the Greek privative particle. Thus the meaning appears contradictory, since the whole essence of intellect is spiritual eye, and for that reason those highest intellects are called 'of many eyes' and 'with eyes on all sides.' But since the author has in mind here human intellects which have already ascended to the mountain peak we have spoken of, and who have gone into the darkness that he has referred to, in which they simply relax from every act of vision (that is, from any kind of comprehension of any sort of creature whatsoever), I consider that he called them 'eyeless' on the basis not of the privation of the power of seeing spiritually but of the privation of every act of sight, for as long as they remain relaxed in that darkness. (tr. McEvoy 2003: 69)

Other Translations

In addition to the translations mentioned so far—Latin versions of the *corpus dionysiacum* and of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*—Grosseteste translated numerous other works of Greek provenance. He revised an existing translation of John Damascene's *De Fide Orthodoxa*, an early Greek predecessor of Peter Lombard's *Book of Sentences*, and rendered several shorter writings by Damascene into Latin for the first time. Latin versions of twelve letters, authentic and inauthentic, of Ignatius Martyr are due to him. He translated Aristotle's *De Caelo* with the commentary by Simplicius. Particularly interesting is his rendering of the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs*. When he heard of the existence of the *Testaments*, Grosseteste immediately sent to Greece for a copy, which he translated in 1242 (for an edition, see Migne 1886). His excitement about this text was due to its nature: as ancient as the canonical books of the Old Testament, the *Testaments of the Twelve Patriarchs* seemed to contain 'many and unambiguous prophecies concerning Christ' (de Jonge 1991: 122f.)—later Christian interpolations, as we now know. For Grosseteste, however, these prophecies furnished precious evidence of the definitive supersession of Judaism by the Christian faith. The translation of the *Testaments* became one of his most widely disseminated works. Demonstrating his ability to adapt his translation method to his intended purpose and audience, Grosseteste rendered the *Testaments* into fluent and idiomatic Latin, leaving the text unencumbered by philological and scholarly notes.

Towards the end of his life, Grosseteste appears to have extended the scope of his linguistic and scholarly interests even further, commissioning an interlinear Latin version of the Hebrew Psalter. In this so-called *Superscriptio Lincolniensis*, a literal rendering of the Psalter is inscribed, corresponding to the original word for word, above each line of the Hebrew text (Loewe 1957). The *Superscriptio Lincolniensis* shows us Grosseteste embarking, in his final years, upon the first stages of a meticulous recovery of Jewish thought, similar to that evidenced in his earlier translations and commentaries of Greek works.

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3.4 Geoffrey Chaucer

Barry Windeatt

Introduction

The earliest surviving response to Chaucer's work, in a ballade of *c.* 1385 by the contemporary French poet Eustache Deschamps ('Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier!'), identifies the English poet's greatness with his achievement as a translator (for an edition, see Brewer 1978: I, 39–42). Deschamps unsurprisingly highlights Chaucer's translating from French: Chaucer has 'planted the rose-tree for those who are ignorant of the French language' (that is, he has translated *Le Roman de la rose* into his own *Romaunt*). Deschamps's poem probably also praises that accomplishment now represented by Chaucer's briefer translations from French (on these, see Phillips 1993): the 'ABC', his rendering of a poem in *Le Pelerinage de la vie humaine* by Guillaume Deguileville; or *The Complaint of Venus*, his adaptation of a triple ballade by the Savoyard poet Oton de Grandson, whom Chaucer names in his final line as 'flour of hem that make in Fraunce' (82). The 'ABC', excerpted from a vast original to form a new work (see discussion by Crampton 1990), and the *Complaint*, restructured and newly voiced for a different speaker (see Phillips in *MTr* 4), can represent the new entities and new unities that characterize Chaucer's interventions as translator, making it new in both form and language. Even as Chaucer overtly laments the inadequacy of the English language in matching the intricate skill ('curiosite') of Grandson's rhyme scheme, 'syth rym in Englissh hath such skarsete' (80–1), the English poem's envoy actually trumps its French model by its ten-line scheme rhyming on two rhymes (cf. Olson in *CHMEL* 581).

A chronology of Chaucer's career as translator necessarily remains as provisional as the larger chronology of his writings, based as that is upon scanty internal references and inference. If the *Book of the Duchess*—taken to commemorate Blanche, Duchess of Lancaster (d. 1368)—does not long post-date her death, this poem's familiarity with the *Roman de la rose* is one reason to posit an early date for that part of the English translation (Fragment A of the *Romaunt*) attributed to Chaucer. Attempted periodization of Chaucer's career into phases successively influenced by French and Italian models ignores both how Chaucer translates from French throughout his work, and also how any 'Italian period' (*c.* 1378–85, post-dating Chaucer's Italian journeys of 1372–3 and 1378) coexists with his project of translating the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius from both the Latin and a French version, probably in the early 1380s, judging by Boethian allusion in Chaucer's works thereafter (see further

p. 376 below). Indeed, poems with Italian affiliations—the *House of Fame* with its Dantean echoes, the *Parliament of Fowls* with its stanzas translated from Boccaccio—also draw on French and Latin sources, as do *Troilus and Criseyde* and Chaucer's account of Boccaccio's *Teseida*, later to become the *Knight's Tale* but still entitled 'Palamoun and Arcite' in the Prologue to the *Legend of Good Women*. This Prologue, datable to *c.* 1386 by its references, in both versions (F and G), to most of Chaucer's works except the *Canterbury Tales*, is not so much 'post-Italian' (it translates some lines from Boccaccio) as yet another development of Chaucer's lifelong interactions with French courtly models, by way of preface to the legends derived from Ovid (another lifelong model: see further p. 381 below) and other Latin writings. In its multiplicity the *Canterbury Tales* (*c.* 1388–1400) represents the fullest range of what translation meant to Chaucer, from faithful rendering to inventive reinterpretation, and with differing types of translation from different sources conjoined within the intertextual interactions that remake Chaucer's translations of his source texts.

Chaucer moved easily between English and the Anglo-French that was still very much part of courtly English culture (see further Butterfield 2003, and p. 105 above), but translation came to have broader cultural significance in his development as a poet. The intertextuality represented by Chaucer's diversity of poetic and intellectual interests was matched by his linguistic skills. Entrusted with diplomatic missions to Italy, Chaucer acquired a demonstrably good grasp of Italian, working directly from Italian originals for his longest poems. Although he used French versions to assist his translation from some Latin sources, he was an effective Latinist. Yet his flair as a linguist and his intertextual cultural range went along with a confidence in English witnessed by the centrality to his writerly career of translation into that language. Chaucer makes this confidence explicit when declaring in the preface to his *Treatise on the Astrolabe* that its propositions are as true in English to an English reader as they are in Greek, Arabic, Hebrew or Latin to speakers of those languages (Prol. 28–33).

In those contexts in his writings where Chaucer recollects—and so collects a list of—his own publications, he gives a prominent place to his activity as a translator. In the *Retractions* to the *Canterbury Tales* he gives thanks for 'the translacion of Boece de Consolacione, and othere bookes of legendes of seintes, and omelies, and moralitee, and devocioun' (X. 1087). Listing his writings in the revised (G) Prologue to the *Legend*, he specifies some of those 'othere bookes' as his translations (no longer extant) of Innocent III's *De Miseria Humane Condicionis* and pseudo-Origen's homily *De Maria Magdalena*, together with a life of St Cecilia, which last survives in the *Canterbury Tales* as the *Second Nun's Tale* (G 414–18). This points to how, throughout his writing career, it was evidently Chaucer's practice to work on substantial translating projects concurrently with his other works, which in their turn often involve forms of translation. Chaucer's *Romaunt*, his 1,705-line verse translation of the opening section of the *Roman de la rose*, from the first, courtly, part by Guillaume de Lorris, into octosyllabic ME couplets (see discussion in Eckhardt 1984), represents a fragment

of probably early work that informs the visuality of dream experience realized in his dream poems. Indeed, the God of Love's objection, in the Prologue to the *Legend*, to Chaucer's translating of the *Roman* 'that is an heresye ayeins my lawe' (F 330) might imply that Chaucer's *Romaunt* once included at least some of Jean de Meun's very different continuation of the poem. The *Legend* Prologue's reference to Chaucer's now-lost translation of pseudo-Origen ('goon ys a gret while', G 427) suggests that it was also an early work. The more traceable influence on Chaucer, in language and theme, of his translating of Boethius into English as his *Boece*—just before, or overlapping with, composition of *Troilus*— is pervasive not only in the *Troilus* and in the *Knight's Tale* but in many of Chaucer's later narrative poems and in his short Boethian lyrics (see further p. 377 below). The added reference, in the G version of the Prologue to the *Legend*, to Chaucer's translation of 'Pope Innocent' dates this to the 1390s, as is confirmed by use of *De Miseria* in the *Man of Law's Tale*. Internal references indicate that the *Treatise on the Astrolabe*, partly a work of translation—see further below—was begun in 1391, which means that Chaucer was engaged on his most extended translation of scientific writing concurrently with his work on the *Canterbury Tales*.

Varieties of Translational Practice

The range and status of the works that Chaucer translates—Boethius, the *Roman*, scientific writing, and some ethical and devotional staples (*Melibee*, *De Miseria*, saints' lives, penitential manuals)—amounts to an ambitious, career-long project of cultural importation. No less ambitious is the process of translation as compilation and synthesis, whereby a single new English text results from Chaucer's combination of more than one source in other languages. *Boece* derives from a process whereby Chaucer draws on Jean de Meun's French prose translation but collates and supplements this with the Latin original, while also incorporating materials from Nicholas Trevet's commentary and perhaps from the Remigian glosses on Boethius (Machan 1985 provides detailed evidence). The *Astrolabe* is put together from two treatises: Messahala's *Compositio et Operatio Astrolabii* and John Sacrobosco's *De Sphaera*, but with limited close translation (see discussion in Lipson 1983). The *Second Nun's Tale* follows one source text and then switches to follow another equally closely (see Correale and Hamel 2002: 491–9, and detailed discussion in Reames 1989–90). The *Parson's Tale* interpolates into its translation of Raymond of Pennaforte's *Summa de Paenitentia* substantial but abbreviated translated sections on the sins from two abridged versions of William Peraldus' *Summa de Vitiis et Virtutibus*; and on the seven remedial virtues from the *Summa Virtutum de Remediis Anime*, which was influenced by Peraldus' *Summa* but is substantively independent of it (Correale and Hamel 2002: 529–41; see also Wenzel 1984; Newhauser 2000). In all these cases Chaucer possibly drew on sources that had already conjoined these texts, yet no such sources survive, so that such conjoinings may well represent a characterizing feature of Chaucer's

activity as a translator, who in some sense constructs both source and translation (on this point, see Machan in *MTr* 1).

Why and for whom Chaucer ventured on such laborious and time-consuming translation projects is now unknown, apart from the translation of the *Astrolabe* for his 10-year-old son Lewis, as its preface declares. His translation of those 'legendes of seintes, and omelies, and moralitee, and devocioun' noted in the *Retractions* may have been devout exercises undertaken in a spirit of personal piety or penance. To set about translating the *Roman de la rose* or Boethius was perhaps a way for Chaucer to appropriate and make them his own, as well as showcasing his virtuosity in effecting the cultural importation of such major classics into English versions. The *Romaunt*'s fragmentary survival in one copy may indicate that this project remained incomplete despite a dazzling start. The extant *Boece* text possibly represents a late draft of work still in progress (see further p. 376 below), in which signs of a translation undertaken for private study may survive within a work prepared for the wider readership that extant manuscripts show it to have gained. Translation into a uniform English prose in *Boece* ignores Boethius' alternation of prose with poems—poems which elsewhere prompt Chaucer to his own verse translations, as in Troilus' song in *Troilus and Criseyde*: 'Love, that of erthe and se hath governaunce | Love that his hestes hath in hevenes hye' (III. 1744–5); for this, translating 'Hanc rerum seriem ligat | Terras ac pelagus regens | Et caelo imperitans amor' (II m. 8), the *Boece* gives us 'al this accordaunce of thynges is bounde with love, that governeth erthe and see, and hath also comandement to the hevene'. Similarly, in 'The Former Age', Chaucer offers 'A blisful lyf, a paisible and a swete, | Ledden the peples in the former age' (1–4) as a translation of 'felix nimium prior aetas' (II m. 5), which the *Boece* renders literally, 'blisful was the firste age of men': all which gives the *Boece* the painstaking effect of a somewhat academic translation (see further Minnis and Machan 1993). For many medieval authors—as revealed by their sycophantic dedications and prefaces, strikingly absent from Chaucer's texts—translation projects on this scale resulted from commands and commissions by patrons (see fuller discussion of this general point in §3.1 above), and Alceste defends 'Chaucer' in the *Legend* Prologue on the grounds that his offending translations in the *Romaunt* and *Troilus* may have been ordered by a patron whom Chaucer dared not gainsay (G 366–7).

In context this sounds as much of a joke as her other defence of Chaucer as translator: that he simply turned the words into English without understanding the implication of what he translated, which constitutes a much lesser offence than original composition (G 351–2). Chaucer's pose as faithful translator means that he only engages obliquely with the hoary question about whether to follow the word or the sense when translating: in the Prologue to the *Second Nun's Tale* the speaker doubly disclaims any original input by claiming to follow both 'the wordes and sentence | Of hym that at the seintes reverence | The storie wroot . . .' (VIII. 81–3). In the preamble to the *Tale of Melibee*—a close translation of the sense of its French source—Chaucer the pilgrim apologizes in advance for

adding more proverbs than his audience may have encountered previously in this tale. Yet actually there are few substantive additions, and *Melibee* differs from its source largely in stylistic refashioning and occasional realignments of value: for example, 'that thynketh me muchel agayn resoun and out of mesure, considered the power that they han yeve yow upon hemself' (VII. 1848–9, translating 'il me semble que ce seroit mal use de la puissance qu'il t'ont donnee sur eulx'). Perhaps this is why the preamble invokes the Gospels' differences in their manner of telling the same material ('And alle acorden as in hire sentence, | Al be ther in hir tellyng difference', VII. 947–8). In the proem to Book II of *Troilus* the narrator echoes Alceste's defence of the humble translator when disclaiming to compose out of any identification with the subject from experience of personal feeling ('That of no sentement I this endite, | But out of Latyn in my tonge it write', II. 13–14). Here, as so often when he claims to be translating a source, Chaucer is freely inventing, so that the pretence of being no more than a close translator ('For as myn auctour seyde, so sey I', II. 18) is as much an invention as the spurious claim to a Latin authority for a poem actually based on an Italian original.

Translation or 'Enditynge'?

This guise of the slavishly faithful translator is variously exploited by Chaucer as an enabling device. If translation includes so much, little faith is broken, and pretending to be translator rather than author can help evade problems of authority in boldly innovative adaptations. Moreover, Chaucer's classification of what constitutes translation would define the greater part of his compositions as translation in varying degrees and senses. Among his works that in the *Retractions* Chaucer revokes as sins needing forgiveness he lists especially 'my translacions and enditynges of worldly vanitees', then naming most of his surviving poems, including *Troilus*, the three dream poems, the *Legend*, and those *Canterbury Tales* that 'sownen into synne'. Even if Chaucer makes some distinction between translations and the compositional activity of 'enditynges', he evidently regards some, or some aspects, of these works as 'translacions'. In the *Legend* Prologue the pretext for listing his works lies in his defence against the God of Love's angry accusations: Chaucer has slandered lovers ('and hynderest hem with thy translacioun') in the *Romaunt* (F 324) and in *Troilus*, which he has 'mad in Englysh' (G 264), although only the *Romaunt* would nowadays be considered a close enough match with its original to be termed translation: for example,

> The tyme, that may nat sejourne,
> But goth and may never retourne,
> As watir that doun renneth ay,
> But never drope retourne may
>   (381–4)

translating

> i tenz, qui ne puet sejorner,
> ainz vet torjorz sanz retorner,
> con l'eve qui s'avale toute
> n'il n'en retorne ariere goute.

To understand how the complex development from Boccaccio's poem *Filostrato* into *Troilus* could be cast by Chaucer as a form of translation is to grasp how central to his originality is a process that embraces both 'translacions and enditynges'. As key examples of this interfusion of translation and composition, Chaucer's interactions with Boccaccio's two narrative poems, the *Teseida* and *Il Filostrato*, are the pivot around which his career moves as translator and hence as artist (see further §5.7 below). Addressing the *Teseida* as a whole for his principal narrative source in the *Knight's Tale*, Chaucer compresses and selects so radically as to 'translate' only intermittently in the sense of rendering line for line (see further Boitani 1977). Yet arresting episodes like the visit to Venus' temple or the ascent of Arcita's soul are excerpted and translated closely into the *Parliament of Fowls* or *Troilus* (see V. 1807–27 for the latter). Chaucer may match his Italian model in diction and verse movement—

> Il ciel tutte le stelle ancor mostrava,
> Ben che Febea gia palida fosse,
> E l'orizonte tutto biancheggiava
> Nell'oriente . . .
>
> > (*Teseida* VII. 94)

> On hevene yet the sterres weren seene,
> Although ful pale ywoxen was the moone,
> And whiten gan the orisonte shene
> Al estward . . .
>
> > (V. 274–7)—

yet his translation rarely fails to augment expressiveness and range of reference ('e vide il poco | globo terreno, a cui intorno il mare | girava' translated as 'faste he gan avyse | This litel spot of erthe that with the se | Embraced is', V. 1814–16). Some *Teseida* stanzas also serve as the starting point for what then develops as a sequence of narrative and complaint in the fragmentary *Anelida and Arcite*. The *Teseida*'s baggy grandiloquence tempts the translator to quarry and renew it across different works, whereas *Il Filostrato*'s elegant economy evidently determines Chaucer to absorb much of its stanzaic narrative and translate its verbal texture into his *Troilus*. However original in outcome and removed from its source in implication, Chaucer's poem evolves as if it constitutes his translated edition of *Il Filostrato*, accompanied by extensive commentary, both interlinear and more lengthily interpolated (for editions in parallel of the Chaucer and Boccaccio texts, see Windeatt 1984). *Troilus* could not, and would not, have been written without *Il Filostrato*, whose englished syntax, diction, and sentiment still subliminally

italianize Chaucer's interpretation of his story at every turn. Yet stanzas deriving from *Il Filostrato* can be interleaved with stanzas compiled from elsewhere, so that the Book V narrative is interpolated with portraits of Diomede, Criseyde, and Troilus translated from the Anglo-Latin *Ylias* of Joseph of Exeter (V. 799–840), or interrupted by Cassandra's speech, rendered from a Latin précis of Statius' *Thebaid* (V. 1485–510). Some *Troilus* manuscripts include lines from the Latin originals by way of annotation, as if less concerned to present a seamless new whole than to proclaim *Troilus*' origins in compilation and translation (for a reproduction from one such, see Windeatt 1992: 43). In view of the conjunction and interrelation of translation, compilation, and invention in *Troilus*, it becomes less surprising that both the *Legend* Prologue and the *Retractions* imply little distinction between 'translacions and enditynges'.

After criticizing 'Chaucer' for his *Romaunt* translation and *Troilus*, the God of Love proceeds in the *Legend* Prologue to blame Chaucer for ignoring the possibilities for translating such appropriate sources as are available in the 'sixty bokes olde and newe' of the poet's own library. That this diatribe only appears in the later version (G 270–312) may suggest that, by the time Chaucer had been working on the series of short narratives in the *Legend* and *Canterbury Tales*, he was especially mindful of the medieval translator's responsibilities: not only to translate, but first to select material for translation, and then to dispose and juxtapose this within series. In both the *Legend* and the *Tales*—as also in the mini-series in *The Canterbury Tales* that is the *Monk's Tale*—Chaucer assembles sequences of short narratives. These range from the relatively close following of a source's narrative line and verbal texture to instances of much freer invention, perhaps in response to cues from a remembered source or analogue. In the *Legend* Chaucer's close reading of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, in his retelling of the legend of Thisbe, sits alongside his deft synthesis, in his story of Dido, of the *Aeneid*'s much fuller account, or his narrative reconstructions of Ovid's first-person retrospects from the *Heroides*. (For further comment on Chaucer's use of Ovid, see pp. 380–1 below.) The *Monk's Tale* sequence contains a comparable range of translation modes, with 'Zenobia' and 'Nero' each modelled in response to a source, whereas other of the Monk's tragedies stand at more of a remove. Here too is Chaucer's only narrative borrowing from Dante in the tragedy of Ugolino, reworked with heart-rending pathetic detail ('Oure flesshe thou yaf us, take oure flessh us fro | And ete ynough', VII. 2451–2, translating 'tu ne vestiti | queste misere carni, e tu la spoglia', *Inferno* XXXIII. 62–3)—while misleadingly implying that Dante's original is fuller: 'for he kan al devyse | Fro point to point; nat o word wol he faille' (VII. 2461–2).

The Rhyme Royal Translations of the *Canterbury Tales*

For Chaucer, close translation was only one among the many creative possibilities that translation included, and the four rhyme royal tales in the *Canterbury Tales* may stand to represent different points along a spectrum of Chaucer's

practice in translating his sources, whether closely or more interventively. In the *Second Nun's Tale* he follows the substance of first one, then another, Latin life of St Cecilia that his narrative joins together, adding no significant incident, characterization, or interpretation, but prefacing the tale with a prologue partly (VIII. 36–56) translating a prayer from Dante's *Paradiso* (XXXIII. 1–51). In the *Clerk's Tale* the narrative line and some verbal texture derive from Chaucer's collation of his French and Latin sources, although (as with the *Second Nun's Tale*) to transfer the original prose sense into English stanzaic verse constitutes another significant choice in translation, introducing a further dimension of aesthetic divergence between source and translated text. Influenced by the French translator's responses in *Le Livre Griseldis* to Petrarch's text in his *Epistolae Seniles* (17.3), the *Clerk's Tale* represents an edited translation of both sources, to which the Clerk's own commentary has been added (full discussion in Severs 1942). In the *Man of Law's Tale* Chaucer takes his narrative outline and most incidents from Trevet's Anglo-Norman prose history of England, but without translating closely. Episodes retold in stanzaic verse with Chaucer's scenic invention and ear for speech would read differently from Trevet, even without the Man of Law's interpolated commentary in the shape of added exclamations and reflections, some drawn from *De Miseria* which Chaucer had recently translated, or was translating concurrently: 'O foule lust of luxurie, lo, thyn ende! | Nat oonly that thou feyntest mannes mynde | But verraily thou wolt his body shende' (II. 925–7, translating 'O extrema libidinis turpitudo que non solum mentem effeminat set eciam corpus eneruat': *De Miseria* II, xxi). As such, the *Man of Law's Tale* represents a step beyond the *Clerk's Tale* in a more transformatively independent, extensively interpolated use of a source (and one less worth following closely than Petrarch). Both the choices of what to translate, and how closely, represent an inventive critical act. In the *Prioress's Tale*, although Chaucer's narrative follows a well-established outline for such Miracles of the Virgin, his source text— if he had one—remains unidentified. Here the 'translation' may be that of a remembered or memorized Latin or French original. More widely, Chaucer may not always translate from a book before him but from variously remembered sources, ranging from memorized cherished passages to recollected story outlines.

Different characterizations of the translator's role and influence also distinguish the prologues to these rhyme royal tales. In the *Second Nun's Tale* the claim to follow closely both 'word and sentence' points, not inaccurately, to what ensues. In his prologue the Clerk suggests that he learned his tale personally by word of mouth from Petrarch who taught it to him, although also noting that 'with heigh stile he endieth' (IV. 41). The Clerk makes much of having pruned Petrarch's irrelevant topographical prologue, yet in specifying what he is going to omit, and in what his own opening stanza translates, Chaucer's Clerk actually cuts almost nothing of Petrarch (IV. 43–60). This ostentatious but misleading claim to know better than the safely dead 'Petrak, the lauriat poete' serves to make the point that sources are at the mercy of their translators' judgement, and in a way that aptly prefigures the uneasy translation and commentary that follow.

Different again, the introduction to the *Man of Law's Tale* spiritedly dramatizes the lawyer's disgust at Chaucer's overactive dullness in simultaneously telling, yet spoiling, so many tales (including some, named, 'Legends of Good Women' now lost, or of which perhaps translations existed only in drafts and working copies). Yet in leaving few tales for others to tell, Chaucer is fictionalized in the Man of Law's back-handed compliment as a comprehensive translator, who by implication surpasses Ovid in English ('For he hath toold of loveris up and doun | Mo than Ovide made of mencioun', II. 53–4).

Translation as Transformative Adaptation

In this third major listing of his writings in the Man of Law's introduction—where the focus is on Chaucer as a translator of women's stories—it is recorded that 'In youthe he made of Ceys and Alcyone' (II. 57). In so singling out his version of the Ceyx and Alcyone story—inventively translated from *Metamorphoses* in the *Book of the Duchess* (62–217)—without naming the work in which it forms an integral early sequence, Chaucer perhaps recollects the *Book* through his sense of how it evolved by juxtaposing translated passages (possibly pre-dating the *Book*) with sections more loosely adapted from other sources, or invented. Any characterization of Chaucer as a translator must account for just how far many of his works which are not translations of a single original may nevertheless include sections of relatively close verbal translation from particular sources, whether or not acknowledged. These translated sections may function alongside passages that represent translation more distantly. All will be disposed within structured sequences original to Chaucer, who rarely translates a source without some structural rearrangement. His poems often develop through compilation of borrowed and translated material juxtaposed into commentary on other passages and subject to commentary in themselves. Translation of such passages will usually have taken on a Chaucerian 'colour': variously sharpened, intensified, and made more vivid, both by addition and selection as in *Troilus* (see discussion in Windeatt 1983), and given English tone, as when the opening of the *Book of the Duchess* is drawn from Froissart, 'Je sui de moi en grant merveille | Comment je vifs quant tant je veille' becoming 'I have gret wonder, be this lyght, | How that I lyve, for day ne nyght | I may nat slepe wel nygh noght' (*BD* 1–3: see fuller comment in Brewer 1966: 2–3). Chaucer rarely translates without significantly adapting and recasting, because he rarely translates so as not to release new opportunities for implication and interpretation.

Against the background of an intertextual medieval culture, the boundaries between 'translacions' and 'enditynges' therefore tend to blur across the range of Chaucer's work. His inclusion of tales that 'sownen into synne' among his 'translacions and enditynges' (as distinct from the small group of his edifying translated tales) shows how for him 'translacions' went beyond the translation of mere words alone, so as to embrace his transformative adaptation of whole stories and characters, his transvaluations into English of borrowed patterns and motifs.

Translation can include his likely indebtedness to analogues where no close verbal translation from the text of a source in another language occurs. Here too would be translation as Chaucer's cultural importation of the fabliau into English (but not into England since there are AN examples), as too of various exempla, fables, and folk tales in the *Canterbury Tales*. Moreover, translation can include Chaucer's adaptive retelling of stories, his translations into new conjunctions within his poems of borrowed narrative shapes, emblematic situations, or type-scenes, as in Chaucer's uses of material from Machaut and Froissart in his dream poems (trans. Windeatt 1982; see also Wimsatt 1968, 1991). Such instances of intertextual transference do not match a modern definition of verbally based translation, but such a limited definition of translation continually proves too narrow to define Chaucer's practice.

Does Chaucer develop as a translator over his career? Nothing so tidy or linear: he does not proceed uniformly from close translations to freer ones, but explores all types of translation throughout. Chaucer always recognized what close translation entailed, and practised it comparably from different languages, in the *Romaunt* as in *Boece*. His practice responds to context and type of source: he uses a French translation of Boethius but prefers the Latin where the French diverges; he uses a French translation of Petrarch's Latin tale of Griselda, and does not privilege the Latin version. When translating a narrative from several sources, changing the language so often enables Chaucer as translator to interpret its characters' potential for change, and to release new implication in the story. Translating the original was to voice it in a different tongue and represented a mode of performance. This is very evidently so in the re-gendered translation represented by *The Complaint of Venus*, where Grandson's original is re-voiced as the utterance of a female speaker—

> Honneur la veult sur toutes honnorer;
> Onques ne vy si plaisant jeune dame
> De toutes gens avoir si noble fame . . .

[Honour wishes to honour her above all women; therefore I never saw so fair a young woman enjoy so noble a reputation among all the people]

> Honour honoureth him for his noblesse,
> Therto so well hath formed him nature
> That I am his for ever (*Complaint* 13–15)—

or in the Wife of Bath's re-voicing (and subverting) of passages translated into her Prologue from Jerome's *Adversus Jovinianum* (Hanna and Lawler 1997). When manuscripts of the Prologue to the *Wife of Bath's Tale*, the *Man of Law's Tale*, or *Troilus* set his Latin sources alongside Chaucer's vernacular lines, they highlight the nature of composite authorship through translation. In St Bonaventura's distinction between four ways of making books—by scribes, compilers, commentators, and authors—the definition of an author still assumes that his work will incorporate others' words ('but with his own in prime place and others'

added only for purposes of confirmation'). Chaucer works within a cultural tradition where translation could assume or usurp the functions of commentary or compilation, and was often inseparable from interpretation (Ellis 2000). As the *Legend* Prologue boasts, the story of Palamon and Arcite 'is knowen lite' (G 409) for, as Boccaccio's invention, the story would have been entirely novel in England in Chaucer's adaptation, while *Troilus* imports *Filostrato*'s new prequel to the old story of Criseyde. In both cases Chaucer translates and reinterprets what, in an English context, were avant-garde narratives opening up daring new topics. These were the most demanding single projects of his career, and both turned crucially on translation-as-transformation. All Chaucer's subsequent compositions in the *Legend* and the *Canterbury Tales*, however brilliantly innovative, involve projects on a smaller scale, yet these realize the potential of translation for reinterpretation that Chaucer learned in mid-career from what he translated and transmuted in the *Knight's Tale* and *Troilus.*

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3.5 William Langland

Traugott Lawler

Introduction

We know the name William Langland from a note appended to a copy of the text of *Piers Plowman* in Dublin, Trinity College MS 212, f. 89v, which says, in Latin, that Eustace de Rokayle, father of William de Langlond, was a nobleman, a vassal of Hugh Despenser, and that William wrote the book called *Piers Plowman* (Hanna 1993: 2–4). Why exactly Langland did not bear his father's surname is unclear. Of his life we know for certain only that he wrote *Piers Plowman*. It seems reasonable, however, to suppose that the 'I' of his poem, whose name is Will, and whose nickname is Long Will, resembles him. It is generally assumed, therefore, that, like Will, Langland was a cleric in minor orders, and was married, that he lived in London but was acquainted with the Malvern Hills in Worcestershire—his English is the English of Worcestershire—and that he made his living by moving among great houses and offering prayers for them and their dead. He was probably born around 1330 and was dead by 1390. He had a good education, probably including some time spent in university; he was well versed in the standard texts of the learned Latin culture of his day, though he used them idiosyncratically, and he knew law as well, perhaps from having worked at legal jobs in Westminster. Since the three versions of his poem can be dated from 1364 till well into the 1380s, it seems likely that he was obsessed with it, and spent his adult life as a writer composing and revising it. (Many of his contemporaries, such as Julian of Norwich, similarly revised their original and translated works, especially those dealing with religious matters; the most celebrated example, the different versions of the Wycliffite Bible, is discussed in §5.1 below.)

   Piers Plowman is a series of dream visions in alliterative verse in which the dreamer Will encounters a number of allegorical figures, most of whom offer him instruction in his search for Truth; the figures range from Holy Church, through mental faculties such as Reason and Conscience, to the virtue Patience, and finally the biblical figures Abraham, Moses, and the Good Samaritan, who leads Will to the climactic vision of the Crucifixion and Harrowing of Hell. Piers Plowman is one such figure, seen extensively (though not actually met) by Will in the second vision, and glimpsed elusively several times thereafter; in the crucifixion scene, Jesus 'jousts in Piers's arms'. Will, like the pilgrim Dante, is at once the poet himself and the human will, that is, any man or woman struggling to align his or her will with God's; Piers Plowman is at times an alternative representative human being. The last two visions treat in broad terms the history

of the Church, with Conscience now the protagonist, and Will reduced largely to a spectator's role, and end in a final apocalyptic scene in which the Church is besieged by the forces of Antichrist. The poem is capacious in its range and scope: its fundamental focus is on Langland's England, but it moves out in both time and space to encompass biblical history, the history of the Church, and the world beyond Christian Europe; and it looks to the future as well.

Piers Plowman has come down to us in three versions. The A version (three visions; 2,500 lines in a Prologue and eleven sections, each called a passus) is dated *c.* 1365–70; the B (eight visions, 7,700 lines, Prologue and twenty passus) *c.* 1377–8; the C (of similar scope to B, but with twenty-two passus) well into the 1380s. (For modern editions, see Langland 1975, 1988, 1997.) It is not only one of the most original poems in English, and one of the greatest; because it contains so much Latin, and so much translated Latin, it has an important place in the history of literary translation into English.

Langland lived at a time when translation of the Bible was very much in the air. The C version of his poem is contemporary with the Wycliffite translation of the Bible; the earlier versions coincide with other partial Bible translations such as those in *Book to a Mother* (1370s). Preachers regularly translated the readings of the Mass as they preached on them; a burgeoning religious literature in the vernacular was providing its readers with regular access to Bible texts. In the next generation a stricter censorship would hold sway (see further pp. 217, 237 below), but in the late fourteenth century writers and speakers translated openly and eagerly, and Langland was no different. In an early exposition of the three 'lives' (Do-well, Do-better, and Do-best) he identifies Do-better as the life lived by a professed religious who has translated the Bible and preaches to the people (B. VIII. 91–2). Though on the whole Langland expects laymen not to translate for themselves but to follow the teaching of the learned (as chickens follow the person who feeds them, B. XV. 464–80), in the famous Pardon scene (B.VII. 107–43) Piers translates from the Psalms and Luke's Gospel in the teeth of a mocking priest.

The A version has very little Latin and almost no translated Latin, almost as if Langland were initially suppressing the Latin texts that clearly inform his thinking, until Passus X, where there is a little explosion of both Latin texts and translation. In writing these earlier passus, it seems, Langland discovered his mature style, and now he gives body to his verse by bringing to the surface, via quotation and (usually) translation, his sources, especially biblical sources (for fuller comment, see Lawler 1996: 169–78; see also Mann 1994: 34, 41–6). The B and C versions feature Latin and translation everywhere, although, naturally, didactic passages are more densely Latinate than narrative passages. In its appeal to and use of Latinity the poem is unique in the history of English poetry. It is also felt by all who read it to be a 'translation' into the vernacular of the pastoral teachings, imagery, and language of the hegemonic Latin culture and especially of its foundational text, the Vulgate Bible, along with the commentary that regularly accompanied it—and, in the case of glossed Bibles, literally

surrounded it. Langland often draws on the standard commentaries as well as the biblical text itself (see Robertson and Huppé 1951 and Alford 1977): which harmonizes with the generous understanding of the Bible adopted in §5.1 below (even the Wycliffite Bible, which claimed to be translating the 'naked text', does the same).

Furthermore, more of its poetry than has been realized is not original composition but actual translation of particular sources. A single instance is B. XV. 332–41, lines that say that giving money to the rich is like adding trees to the forest or water to the Thames; this comes from a Latin proverb that goes back at least to Horace ('In silvam non ligna feras' [don't bring wood to the woods], *Satires* I. x. 34), which Langland probably drew from Peter Chanter's *Verbum Abbreviatum*, ch. 48: 'addere ligna silvis et aquas mari' [to add wood to the woods and water to the sea]. We note here, in the use of the Thames, a characteristic feature of Langland's translation: its readiness, in Venuti's phrase, to domesticate its original, and provide concrete exemplification of general points (see further p. 154 below). This feature has been earlier noted (§1.3 above, *passim*) as characterizing translation throughout the medieval period, though Langland domesticates more thoroughly, and with greater brio, than most.

A complete taxonomy of Langland's techniques of translation, including 'modes of incorporation', literal versus free translation, partial versus full translation, and the like, is provided by Lindemann 1972. Two questions not raised there will be considered here: why is some Latin translated and some not? What principles emerge to shape Langland's English when he does translate?

Practices and Principles

A few general points are worth making at the outset. Langland was writing in the vernacular in the hope of reaching, as he did, a wide range of readers. At the same time, he was addressing the more restricted audience of his peers (cf. Kerby-Fulton in *CHMEL* 532). He did not always translate his Latin texts, and those with only enough Latin to enable them to recognize quotations from the liturgy, or from the *Distichs* of Cato (a standard school-text, quoted several times) will have found themselves often at a loss. A simple instance of this difficulty is the macaronic riddle in B. IV. 143–4: 'For *nullum malum* the man mette with *inpunitum* | And bad *nullum bonum* be *irremuneratum*.' As the speaker wryly implies, this may require more learning to decipher than his listener has. Langland's decision whether to translate a given passage can be shown to depend, not on its inherent difficulty, but on the dramatic situation, that is, on the relation between the speaker and the audience. And when the speaker is the poet himself, addressing his readers, he usually keeps his largest audience in mind and translates for them.

French is never translated: a notable example is the macaronic 'qant *oportet* vient en place il nyad que *pati*' [when necessity is in place, there is nothing to do but suffer] (B. X. 445). It is assumed that 'free men' will have taught French to

their children (B. XI. 384–6). As noted elsewhere in this volume, familiarity with French characterized the upper (and upwardly mobile lower) classes, though, as Trevisa noted in the 1380s (Sisam 1921: 169), the teaching of Latin through the medium of English rather than French was assisting in the decline of French as a second vernacular.

In the A text, Latin is never translated when it forms only part of a line: when, that is, it functions almost as a tag. It is almost never translated when the speaker is Piers or Will, nor, usually, if it occurs in dialogue. It is almost always translated when the speaker is a tutor and the listener a tutee, that is, when the speaker is, or thinks she or he is, cleverer or better educated than the listener: Theology translates for Civil, Conscience for the King, Hunger for Piers; Thought, Wit, Study, and Scripture all translate for Will; in the Pardon scene (A. VIII. 89–126), the priest translates the Pardon for Piers before he realizes that Piers is literate. All condescend to their pupils: they say 'thou', the form used for addressing inferiors, not 'you'. Finally, when the speaker is nominally Will but really Langland in sermon mode, tutoring us, he usually translates. In short, only tutors translate, and tutors nearly always translate, but only when the Latin is at least a line long.

Characteristically, the translation follows the Latin. Sometimes, however, it precedes. Wit, for instance, translates all twelve passages of the Latin he quotes; in all instances but the last, the Latin comes after a rendering so free that it shows Wit thinking in English and supplying sources when appropriate, as by means of a marginal gloss. Putting the translation first 'allowed Langland to shift his attention from translation processes to the ideas contained in the text and its translation' (Lindemann 1972: 32). We might even think of the quotation as translating the English, or a portion of it, back into Latin. In the more conventional way of translating, with the Latin preceding the English, the primacy and authority of Latin, and its place in the ecclesiastical hierarchy, are formally acknowledged. Here, the conventional relationship of vernacular and Latin is redrawn, the Latin being offered almost as an afterthought, and the superiority of Latin for the expression of religious understanding may be in question: much as happens when Gower provides summaries in Latin of the stories of his *Confessio Amantis*.

In A, then, some four-fifths of the Latin quotations are translated, and in tutorial situations virtually all are translated. In the B version there is much more Latin, but the readiness on the part of the tutors to translate remains the same. The new tutors created for the B version—including Lewte, Reason, Imaginative, Patience, Anima—translate nearly all the Latin they quote. And C continues in the same vein. The key then remains the audience: both Langland and his characters translate for those who need it, and not for those who do not—and it could be argued that Langland has devoted more attention to dramatic characterization of his speakers and listeners than is commonly supposed.

Passus XIII contains a rare comment on the issue of translation:

Periculum est in falsis fratribus:
Holi writ bit [bids] men be war—I wol noȝt write it here
In englissh on auenture [in case] it sholde be reherced to ofte,
And greue þerwiþ þat [those who] goode ben—ac gramariens shul rede:
Vnusquisque a fratre se custodiat quia vt dicitur periculum est in falsis fratribus.
Ac I wiste neuere freke þat as a frere yede [came] bifore men on englissh
Taken it for his teme and telle it wiþouten glosyng.

(B. XIII. 70–5)

Langland has been talking about the way friars preach about St Paul's sufferings in 2 Corinthians 11, but prudently skip over the danger St Paul felt from 'false brethren' (2 Cor. 11: 26); his decision not to translate the whole phrase, stopping after 'be war', which translates 'periculum', makes ironic common cause with their refusal to quote it. It perhaps also reveals an awareness, shared with the Wycliffites, of the intimate links between translation and religious (and other) politics. Langland is elsewhere, however, perfectly ready to translate Latin critical of the clergy, as at XV. 119–22, where he asserts that if laymen knew what a quoted Latin passage meant, and who wrote it, they would force priests to replace their short-swords with rosaries and holy books—but in fact he has both mentioned the author, John Chrysostom (B. XV. 117), and translated the passage (B. XV. 92–102: see further Lawler 2002: 93–4, 107–13). Thus he shows little anxiety about translating the Bible, or other Latin, though B. XV. 119–22 probably shows an awareness of the potentially radical nature of his project. Later in B. XV, quoting from the Book of Job and a commentary on it, he adds that 'if lewed men knewe þis Latyn, þei wolde loke whom þei yeue . . . Er þei amortesede [signed over] to monkes or monyales [nuns] hir rentes' (B. XV. 319–21)—though here again the gist of the passage has first been given in English.

It remains to consider how Langland translates from Latin. A good place to start is the passage in B. XIV where Patience offers Haukyn a series of paradoxical Latin definitions of poverty from Secundus the Philosopher:

Paupertas, quod Pacience, est odibile bonum,
Remocio curarum, possessio sine calumpnia, donum dei, sanitatis mater;
Absque solicitudine semita, sapiencie temperatrix, negocium sine dampno;
Incerta fortuna, absque solicitudine felicitas.

(B. XIV. 276)

Haukyn asks for an English translation, and Patience replies, 'Al þis in englissh . . . it is wel hard to expounen, | Ac somdeel I shal seyen it, by so þow vnderstonde' (B. XIV. 277–9). Why does Patience find it hard? Unlike more complicated Latin, which was routinely represented as difficult to translate because of its distinctive grammatical relations and vocabulary (for one such comment, see p. 199 below), 'odibile bonum', for example, could be straightforwardly translated 'hateful good', as Chaucer translates it in the *Wife of Bath's Tale* (*CT* III. 1195). The likeliest explanation is that Langland is impatient with the compressed

quality of the Latin phrases. Writing at much the same time as Langland, Trevisa argued that a 'cleer and pleyne' translation might need to change the 'rewe [sequence] and the ordre of wordes', in particular, to replace passive forms of verbs by active (*IoV* 134); similarly, in chapter 15 of the General Prologue of the Later Version of the Wycliffite Bible, the translators claimed that the best 'translating out of Latin into English' required the replacement of certain Latin constructions, in particular, of absolute participial constructions by clauses and finite verbs, so as to produce an 'open' English translation (Hudson 1978: 68; see further Lawler 1983: 273). These ideas seem pertinent to Langland as well. A. XI. 254, for example, shows us Langland thinking over the best way to translate a Latin deponent verb, in the future tense: '*ne mecaberis,* ne sle nouȝt is þe kynde [natural] englissh'. What makes the English translation 'kynde'? Arguably, two things, besides the native English *sle*: the imperative instead of the future indicative, and the double negative. (On the apparent mistranslation 'slay' for 'commit adultery', see Alford 1992: 68.)

Of course, if like the Wycliffite translators Langland demands 'resolution'— above all, by finite verbs—he goes much further with his resolutions, and is far freer, than the Wycliffite translators; and he seems to need to be inventive, even playful. (The contrast is partly between prose and poetry, as witness the many verse paraphrases of the Bible earlier in the century; but it is very much also a reflex of Langland's poetic gifts.) And so, in the previously quoted words of Patience each paradoxical phrase defining poverty is turned into a little vignette of action: 'Wynneþ he noȝt wiþ wiȝtes [weights] false ne wiþ vnseled [unsealed/unauthorized] mesures | Ne borweþ of hise neighebores but þat he may wel paie' (B. XIV 295–6, for 'possessio sine calumpnia' [possession without risk of calumniation]). Chaucer 'resolved' this Latin phrase by 'possessioun that no wight wol chalenge' (*CT* III. 1200); the whole passage, *CT* III. 1191–200, provides an instructive contrast with Langland's method of translating. Or again, 'ye! þoruȝ þe paas of Aultoun | Pouerte myȝte passe wiþouten peril of robbyng' (304–5, for 'absque sollicitudine semita' [a path without anxiety]). There is also the urge to expand and to specify: 'remocio curarum' (removal of cares) is turned not just into 'Poverty doesn't hold office' but into 'poverty is not a judge or a mayor or a minister'. We see these habits everywhere in the poem:

> Alle þat beren baselard, brood swerd or launce,
> Ax ouþer hachet or any wepene ellis,
> Shal be demed to þe deeþ but if he do it smyþye [have it hammered]
> Into sikel or to siþe, to Shaar [ploughshare] or to kultour:
> *Conflabunt gladios suos in vomeres etc.*
> Ech man to pleye with a plow, Pykoise [pickaxe] or spade,
> Spynne or sprede donge or spille himself with sleuþe.
>
> (B. III. 305–10)

The 'etc.' at the end of the Latin line stands for 'et lancias suas in falces'; the whole verse (Isaiah 2: 4) is quoted in the C version (C. III. 461a). *Gladios* (swords)

and *lancias* (lances) become four weapons in English, *vomeres* (ploughshares) and *falces* (sickles or scythes) seven tools that cut or dig. But there is an explosion of verbs and clauses as well: the actions that come before and after the beating of weapons into tools—what you *do* with swords and lances, and what you do with ploughshares and sickles—which the Latin simply implies in the nouns, are all put before our eyes. The swordsmen bear the sword before beating it, they will be sentenced to death unless they beat it, and once it is a ploughshare they play with (i.e. use) it, or they spin or spread dung with it (in C this is replaced by 'and speke of God'), or they destroy themselves with sloth: one verb in Latin becomes seven in English.

Langland's contemporary the *Gawain*-poet, a much more literal translator of the Vulgate, shows a similar impulse to add verbs to Latin nouns, for example in *Pearl*, where the Book of Revelation 14: 2, 'tamquam vocem multarum aquarum et tamquam vocem tonitrui magni' [as the noise of many waters and as the voice of great thunder], becomes 'Lyk flodes fele laden *runnen* on resse | And as þunder *þrowes* in torrez blo' (anon. 1996: 874–5) [Like many rivers' noises run together in a torrent, and as thunder crashes in dark hills].

A Translator's Revisions

The importance of these principles to Langland is made evident in revision: in a number of places in the B and C versions, we can see him revising a translation by creating clauses, expanding, and specifying. Here is B. V. 282–3a (Repentance 'comforting' Coveitise):

> And al þe wikkednesse in þis world þat man myȝte werche or þynke
> Nis na moore to [compared to] þe mercy of god þan amyd þe see a gleede [spark]:
> *Omnis iniquitas quantum ad misericordiam dei est quasi sintilla in medio maris.*

This is reasonably literal, though Langland starts by expanding the two-word phrase 'omnis iniquitas' to an entire line; perhaps he did it for the metre, but his line is more idiomatic English than a literal translation of 'omnis iniquitas' would be, and 'werche or þynke' brings valuable specificity. Here, though, is the corresponding passage in the C version:

> Trist in his mechel mercy and ȝut þou mihte be saued.
> For al the wrecchednesse of this world and wikkede dedes
> Fareth as flonke [spark] of fuyr that ful [fell] amydde Temese
> And deyede with a drop water; so doth alle synnes
> Of alle manere men þat mid goode wille
> Confessen hem and cryen hym mercy; shal neuere come in helle:
> *Omnis iniquitas quoad misericordiam dei est quasi sintilla in medio maris.*
>
> (C. VI. 333–8a)

B's 'amyd þe see a gleede' may itself have come to seem too compressed, in need of resolution. Langland has now fully englished the image by turning it into

two actions: it fell and it died. In turn this urge to make clauses with verbs generates an explanation of the metaphor in terms of the actions of men: they confess, they cry, they never come to hell. The Latin has the single copula *est*; in the final English version, even *est* has become the action 'fareth', and there are six further verbs. This is indeed resolution 'out of Latin into English'. And of course Langland englishes the sentence another way by turning the sea into the Thames.

Humble business though it is, revising his translations of Latin quotations may well have been one of the major things on Langland's mind as he turned the A version into B, and the B version into C. A small instance is the righting in B of five places in A where translation of Latin produces an unmetrical line (Lawler 1996: 152–3). These rightings suggest that the work of making B included revising translations more generally. The example just given above shows that work going on in B, and continuing in C. Another example occurs at A. VII. 234–6. According to Psalm 127: 2, 'Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis, beatus es, et bene tibi erit' [Because you will eat the works of your hands, you are blessed, and it will be well for you]. Hunger cites the verse to prove that all must work. In the first, unmetrical version of A this appears as follows:

> The sauter seiþ in þe salme of *Beati omnes*:
> *Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis etc.*
> He þat get his fode here wiþ trauaile of his hondis,
> God ʒiueþ hem his blissing þat here liflode so wynneþ.

Langland seems to have concentrated here on undoing the metonymic compression of 'eating the works of one's hands'; this clarification is emphasized by the doublet 'get food' and 'win liflode'. He also changes from the second to the third person, and replaces the causal clause with a relative clause, but without moving the central declaration 'blessed is he' to the beginning, so that we end up with the awkward formulation 'He that…them' (made still more awkward by the shift from singular to plural).

In the B version, Langland not only corrected the metre (and used only the singular number of the pronoun), but reversed the order of text and translation, so that now what the Psalter says is in English, and the Latin is cited as a back-up:

> The Sauter seiþ, in þe psalme of *Beati omnes*,
> The freke [man] þat fedeþ hymself wiþ his feiþful labour
> He is blessed by þe book in body and in soule:
> *Labores manuum tuarum etc.*
>
> (B. VI. 250–2b)

The new order is good, but the changes made to right the metre are lame, frankly: the important image of the hands is gone, and 'blessed' is only made metrical by the addition of two worn-out phrases. The awkward formulation 'the freke that…he' remains.

So Langland tried once more in C:

> Lo! what þe sauter sayth to swynkares with handes:
> 'Yblessed be al tho that here bylyue biswynketh [earn their food]
> Thorw eny lele labour as thorw lymes and handes:
> *Labores manuum tuarum quia manducabis etc.*
>
> (VIII. 258–60a)

This is the most satisfactory of the three versions on several counts. The order remains English first, then Latin. The phrase 'swynkares with handes' gets some thematic work done in place of the idle pedantry in both A and B of naming the psalm; and saying that the words are said to workers is a nod to the second-person form of the original. 'Blessed be' is finally brought forward to the beginning of the sentence, righting the emphasis and removing the awkwardness. The undoing of the Latin metonymy 'eat your work' is completed by returning it to the 'natural' expression that underlies it, 'earn your bread'. The second line still ends in a doublet, but this time it is a genuine part of the translation. The characteristic expansiveness is definitely here, but it all supports the point. This is at once the most faithful, the most idiomatic, and the most poetic of the three versions of the passage.

The single example discussed in the previous paragraphs must do service for the very many instances of the practice, which regularly show a general move toward fuller translation in C, with a greater specificity and a deeper fidelity to the Latin. To summarize: when Langland translates, he shows himself to be characteristically ill at ease with the laconic compression that is so marked in Latin, and possibly inevitable in the quotable one-liners he likes to cite. So he expands and specifies, and creates clauses out of phrases or even single words. We see these characteristics already in A, and we see them accentuated as Langland revises in B and especially in C. And there is enough revision to make it clear that it mattered to him as a poet to rework his translations to get them the way he wanted them.

This brief account of Langland's translations ends with two examples of the way Langland keeps on rethinking them. The first is God's reflection before the flood: 'Penitet me fecisse hominem' (Genesis 6: 7; A. X. 161). In the A version, this remark is followed by formally introduced translation—appropriate, maybe, for the words of God:

> And is as muche to mene, among vs alle
> Þat I man makide now it me forþinkeþ.
>
> (X. 163–4)

B. IX. 133 sheds the formality, moving the translation before the quotation, so that now God speaks in English, and the Latin feels like an awkward appendage, Langland's reassuring gloss. In the C version, God speaks the line to Noah, in Latin, and the translation disappears altogether:

> saide God to Noe:
> *Penitet me fecisse hominem;*
> And bad go shapen a ship of shides [planks] and bordes.
>
> (X. 221–3)

Now nothing intervenes between God's expression of regret and the command to build the ark—and what took three lines in A and two in B takes just one in C.

The opposite of that deft reduction is a whole narrative created out of seven Latin words. This is not a revision, but rather an incidental moment in the course of a major change from the B version to the C: the dropping of the demurrals of the pardoner and common woman, at the end of Piers's exhortation to the pilgrims on their way to Truth's castle (B. V. 639–42), to draw instead, in C. VII. 292–304 on the Gospel story (Luke 14: 15–24) of the great feast, and the excuses of those who turn down the invitation: '*villam emi*' (I have bought a farm) and '*uxorem duxi*' (I have married a wife). The former is incorporated in the English line, and so not translated, but the latter is the occasion for Langland's most expansive, playful, and imaginative translation, a whole history of a marriage in five lines:

> Thenne was oen hihte actif; an hosbande he semede.
> 'Y haue wedded a wyf wel wantowen of maneres;
> Were y seuen nyhte fro here syhte synnen he [she] wolde
> And loure on me and lihtly chyde and sygge y louede another.
> Forthy, Peres the plouhman, y preye the telle hit teruthe [to Truth]
> I may nat come for a kitte, so a [she] cleueth on me:
> *Vxorem duxi, and ideo non possum venire.*
>
> (VII. 299–304a)

The Latin sentence is actually translated literally at the outer edges of the passage; 'Y haue wedded a wyf…I may nat come.' And in between we have a truly splendid example of 'open' translation, the opening of an entire flower from the bud of the literal.

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Standard bibliographical information on Langland scholarship is in Colaianne 1978, DiMarco 1982, Middleton 1986, Pearsall 1990, and (since 1986) in the annual bibliography in *Yearbook of Langland Studies*. For a complete listing and identification of all the Latin quotations, see Alford 1992. Nolan 1985, Machan 1994, Furrow 1995, and Halmari and Adams 2002 all treat the phenomenon of 'language-mixing' in the poem in important ways without actually focusing on translation. For succinct accounts of the poet and his poem, see Hanna 1993 and Kerby-Fulton (*CHMEL* 513–38); for a fuller introduction, Alford 1988.

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3.6 William Caxton

A. E. B. Coldiron

The Printer-Translator

When, in 1495, Wynkyn de Worde reprinted William Caxton's *Vitas Patrum*, he added a colophon which described how Caxton, 'late deed', in 1492, had translated it from French, finishing it 'at the laste daye of his lyff' (Caxton, *P&E* cxxiv). It is fitting that William Caxton spent the last day of his life engaged in what had been for him a decades-long endeavour: translating. Translation is involved in sixty or so of his roughly 110 editions of about eighty known works, covering a wide range of genres and topics (for dates of publication of works not here referred to in detail, see *STC* or Blake 1985). Most of this work he translated himself from French, in addition to one known translation from Dutch, *Reynard the Fox*, and several translations from Latin, including a *Life of St Winifred*. Some of the Latin-derived works also relied on French versions: the *Eneydos* was one such; so, too, his version of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which survives only in manuscript (for a facsimile, see Caxton 1968); others, probably, were the *Ars Moriendi*, the *Governal of Health*, and *Of Olde Age*.

Caxton also printed numerous translations made by others. From the late fourteenth century come Chaucer's translation of Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, Trevisa's translation of Higden's *Polychronicon*, and an anonymous translation of Suso's *Horologium Sapientiae*. From the early fifteenth century comes a translation by Nicholas Love (*The Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*) of the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes*, whose title Caxton latinizes as *Speculum Vitae Christi*. Judging from manuscript survivals, these were all important works, none more so than the Love: which can explain Caxton's decision to print them. (All are discussed elsewhere in this volume: Chaucer's *Boece*, in §5.6 below; Trevisa's *Polychronicon*, in Chapter 2 above and §5.5 below; the translation of Suso, in §5.2 below; Love, in §§5.1–2 below.) Caxton also printed translations by contemporaries: the *Dictes and Sayengs of the Philosophres*, the *Moral Prouerbes* of Christine de Pizan, the *Cordyale*, and the *Curial*, all by Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers; and translations by John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester, and William Worcester. (On these see further §3.1 above.)

Caxton also printed books in languages other than English: at least two in French (the *Histoire de Jason*, the *Septenuaire des pseaulmes de penitence*, both in Bruges), and at least fifteen in Latin. The latter are mostly service books and religious works, but they include both a *Nova Rhetorica* and an *Epitome* of it. Fragments also remain of a Donatus grammar (1487) and, in that same year, in Paris, in collaboration with Guillaume Maynyal, a *Legenda* and a Missal.

Earlier, in Cologne (1471–2), he may have printed, in collaboration with Johannes Veldener, two major works, the anonymous collection of moralized tales about the Roman emperors (*Gesta Romanorum*), and Bartholomaeus Anglicus' encyclopedia of natural history, *De Proprietatibus Rerum*. (The popularity of these two works is also witnessed by an anonymous ME translation of the first, and a translation by John Trevisa of the second.) The collaboration here noted seems to have characterized much of Caxton's work as both printer and translator. Caxton's corpus also features books that present text in more than one language. The Latin Missal prints music staves, to which words in English have been added by hand. Caxton also printed the first English–French conversation manual or phrase book (his *Vocabulary*, based on a French–Flemish manual; the English apparently is not his) and the Latin and English prayers of the *Fifteen Oes*. These books—his own translations, the translations of others, foreign-language books, and books in more than one language—remind us of Caxton's essentially polyglot printing practice, in which translation played a leading part.

Caxton's activities as a printer and as a translator were heavily interdependent. One could hardly overstate the importance of translation to his work as a printer, and to the development of English literary history. In any new medium the means of filling the initial content vacuum is critical. For Caxton, as for those printer-translators who preceded him on the Continent, and those in England who came after him—Wynkyn de Worde, Robert Copland, Robert Wyer, and others—translation, especially from French and Latin, was an essential tool and resource. Ringler (1992: 5–6) estimates that nearly half of the verse printed in England before 1557 was translated; Bennett lists several hundred influential translations printed in England before 1560 (1969: 277–319). In joining translation so tightly with the means of production, Caxton expanded and reshaped various aspects of the English literary field: from enriching English vocabulary and prose style to the more general absorption of Burgundian and French, and to translations in specific genres like historiography, biblical translation, and romance. As printer-translator, Caxton was ideally placed to initiate far-reaching change. (For fuller discussion of these general points, see works by Blake, Horrall, Kretzschmar, Márquez, Meale, Monfrin, Veyrin-Forrer, and Workman in the List of Sources.)

Indeed, in the epilogue to Book III of the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, the first book printed in English (1473–4), Caxton tells us that his decision to print the work came about because of demand for its distribution in English. The translation itself had been requested by Margaret of Burgundy in 1468, but, by 1471, Caxton was exhausted by his work on the text:

in the wrytyng of the same my penne is worn, myn hande wery and not stedfast, myn eyen dimmed with ouermoche lokyng on the whit paper, and my corage not so prone and redy to laboure as hit hath ben, and that age crepeth on me dayly and febleth all the bodye. . . . be cause I haue promysid to dyuerce gentilmen and to my frendes to adresse to hem as hastely as I myght this sayd book, therfor I haue practysed and lerned at my grete charge and dispense to ordeyne this said book in prynte after the maner and forme

as ye may here see, and is not wreton with penne and ynke as other bokes ben, to thende
that euery man may haue them attones.   (Caxton, *P&E* 7)

He adds that the entire work of printing 'as ye here see were begonne in oon
day and also fynysshid in oon day'. A translation that had been laborious and
slow—three years in the making—was, with the addition of this technological
innovation, ready in one day for wider, speedy ('as hastely as I myght'), and
simultaneous ('attones') distribution to his readers.

   What kind of translator was Caxton? Most critics (e.g. Despres 1991; Chaffee
1980) agree that he used a 'stencil' method that seeks to reproduce an original
text quite closely. He was the more easily able to do so because he was usually
translating from French sources, whose word order he tried to reproduce more
or less exactly and whose lexis he was able routinely to transcribe with cognates.
Compare, for example, the following, from the prologue to Caxton's translation
The Mirrour of the World (1481)—'the faites and dedes of auncyent menn ben
sette by declaracion in fair and aourned [decorated] volumes, to thende that
science and artes lerned and founden of thinges passed might be had in perpetuel
memorye and remembraunce'—with its French source: 'ont les fais des anciens
este mis par declaracion en beaulx et aournes volumes affin que des sciences
acquises et choses passees fust perpetuelle memoire' (Caxton, *P&E* 50–1). The
translation does not always reproduce the original literally: it struggles with the
ordering of the phrase 'des sciences ... fust perpetuelle memoire'; otherwise, it
reproduces the original very closely, extending the original's already inflated style
with numerous extra doublets of its own.

Caxton's Paratexts: Literary, Linguistic, and Social Contexts for the Translations

Yet this is only one aspect of Caxton's work as a translator. Caxton's paratexts
(prologues, epilogues, colophons, titles) often reveal his specific motives, pur-
poses, and practices (Caxton, *P&E*, used hereafter for quotation; see also Caxton
1973): translation is highly visible in his paratexts. He usually declares openly
that a work is a translation and notes the language of the original, often naming
its title and author, and even sometimes detailing the dates and circumstances
of its commissioning, and/or context of its composition. The large amount of
information Caxton provides in his thirty or so prologues and epilogues 'is
exceptional in the period' (Hellinga 1999: 84), and can be usefully contrasted with
the more formulaic paratextual strategies of the time (for a single example, of his
Parisian contemporary Antoine Vérard, see Winn 1997: 45–6). Caxton provides
us with invaluable information about the processes of printing, patronage, and
readership, and, of course, about translation, which we must regard as integral to
these other literary processes.

   The high visibility of translation in Caxton's paratexts deserves a moment's
consideration before examining precisely what the paratexts reveal about the

translations themselves. The announcement that a work is translated may serve several functions. Naming a work's famous predecessors from across the Channel may have enhanced its saleability and/or its status among English readers. We know that French books, in both handwritten and printed copies, were popular at the courts of Edward IV and Henry VII (see further p. 187 below), and that the book trades were heavily dependent on foreign workers, especially before the Act of 1534 rescinded the protections of the Act of 1484 for foreigners working in those trades. So in one sense the high visibility of translation gives new readers and potential buyers a familiar—that is, a foreign—context for the translated book as a known and desirable commodity.

In another sense, visibility in translation makes explicit a genealogy of authorship, of textual responsibility, not unlike those found in medieval incipits and *accessus ad auctores* (introductions to the works of classical authors, which lie behind and clearly inform translators' paratexts: Minnis 1984 is the standard work on these *accessus*). For example, the second edition of Caxton's *Game and Play of the Chesse* explains the full history of the work's sources. The *Royal Book* goes even further, and offers a date of 1279 for the composition of the original. Caxton's epilogue to his translation of the *Fayttes of Armes*, and the verses he appended as a colophon to Woodville's translation of the *Moral Prouerbes*, both name and praise Christine de Pizan as author (the epilogue to the former also identifies her sources, Vegetius and 'tharbre of bat018.atayles': 103). Several paratexts, like the prologue to the *Recuyell* and the colophon to the *Eneydos*, trace the French source Caxton used and its Latin antecedent. The prologue to his edition of Trevisa's translation of the *Polychronicon* dates the completion of Higden's original to 1357. Caxton's edition of *The Historie of Jason* even interrogates the source legends, ranging beyond narrowly defined textual sources to describe how, in the castle at Hesdin of Philip of Burgundy, there is a chamber containing murals depicting the story of the Golden Fleece (Philip had founded the Order of the Toison d'Or). And in the prologue to *Kyng Arthur*, Caxton cites, as evidence of the truth of that legend, not only the story's multiple translations (into 'Duche, Yytalyen, Spanysshe and Grekyshe . . . Frensshe . . . Walsshe . . . and somme in Englysshe but nowher nygh alle'), but also other 'survivals' of the story, like seals and swords and mantles; the Round Table; even the skull of Gawain (93–4). Multiple 'translations', then, validate the legends; translation can become a kind of additional proof. Genealogies like these, and those in Caxton's paratexts to *Caton*, the *Royal Book*, the *Fayttes of Armes*, the *Eneydos*, the *Recuyell*, and the second prologue to the *Golden Legende*, place translation alongside 'original' authorship as an important means of cultural transmission, and Caxton as an agent in these illustrious literary lineages.

Like other translators of the period, Caxton often uses the word 'reduce' to describe his procedure. We should not understand this in the modern sense of 'diminish' (*Oxford English Dictionary s.v.* 21e, 22a, 26a–b, e). Caxton does seem once, when he uses the word, to imply the superior status of the French vernacular relative to English: the prologue to the *Book of the Knyght of the*

Towre (1484) declares that he will 'translate and reduce this said book out of Frenssh in to our vulgar Englissh' (86). Yet generally he understands 'reduce' in its usual fifteenth-century senses: *to bring back*, *to restore*; more loosely, *to bring into a certain form or character* (15a), or possibly, in the mathematical sense, *to change denomination or form* or *to resolve by analysis* (16a–c); most simply, *to translate* (12a) or *to record in writing* (12b, 15b). Caxton surely also would have understood the fourteenth- and fifteenth-century theological, medical, and alchemical connotations of the word: *to lead back to virtue or to restore to God* (*Middle English Dictionary s.v.* 1); *to bring back to health, to set a bone, or to restore an organ to its natural place* (2); *to transform* (4a–b); and, of course, to produce an interlingual translation (4c). Other meanings were also used, but the modern sense of the word—to diminish—could cause us to misunderstand Caxton's thinking on translation. There is no evidence that he used the word to imply, say, the imaginative alchemies of translation or some healing of linguistic rupture, attractive as these senses might be to us. His uses of the word are more pragmatic than figurative, but they are clearly not pejorative. Caxton is most likely to have thought of translation as *reducyng* in that it is a process of restoration, clarification, recording, and ordering.

Beyond this important word, when Caxton tells us about his own translation practice, he uses fairly standard late medieval translators' topoi of fidelity and humility. He generally claims to have 'followed his author' as closely as possible and sometimes asks readers to forgive his 'simple and rude translation'. In one case, however, he deflects potential blame onto the source: the epilogue to the *Mirrour of the World* explains, a trifle disingenuously, that the translation is faithful to the original Latin, and that any errors are the fault of the French translator (58). In the *Recuyell* prologue Caxton excuses himself rather more than most translators do, explaining the limitations of his knowledge of both French and English languages (his 'symplenes and vnperfightnes that [he] had in bothe langages') as a consequence of the fact that 'in France was [he] neuer, and was born and lerned [his] Englissh in Kent in the Weeld where … is spoken as brode and rude Englissh as is in ony place of Englond' (4). This disingenuous disclaimer plays down his obvious fluency in French, his years in Bruges and Burgundian territory as governor of the English colony, and his apparently easy relations with the very highest levels of English society. (Indeed, Anthony Woodville, an accomplished translator himself, asked Caxton to oversee and correct his translation of the *Dictes and Sayengs of the Philosophres*.) Caxton's apologies nevertheless grant readers the power to judge for themselves the translation. He frequently invites readers to amend or correct his translations: so, for example, in the *Declamacion of Noblesse*, the *Polychronicon*, the *Book of the Knyght of the Towre*, *Charles the Grete*, and the *Fayttes of Armes*. This attitude is consistent with the one found in his editions of works that are not translations; the second edition of the *Canterbury Tales*, for instance, explains his errors and declares a willingness to reprint the text if corrections needing to be made are drawn to his attention. In the epilogue to the first edition of the *Dictes* he challenges the reader who finds

fault with the translation to erase the offending detail or remove the leaf in which it occurs. Caxton's use of such conventional material, readily paralleled in many early modern translations (possibly a conscious echo of Chaucer), aims to engage with his audience and to neutralize possible objection.

Furthermore, in these paratexts Caxton describes the specific actions he has taken with respect to his source texts, and explains several aspects of his translation process. More than once he tells how he obtained his French sources from his patrons. In one case, the request to translate came from the mother of King Henry VII, Margaret Beaufort, to whom he had previously sold a French copy of *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*, and who now wanted it in an English version (see further p. 287 below). While patrons' requests figure largely in his accounts of why he translates, patronage does not provide the only explanation of his practice. Often moral and didactic purposes inspire him. Several prologues, including the *Recuyell*, the *Game and Playe of the Chesse*, *Kyng Arthur*, and *Charles the Grete*, invoke St Paul's statement, in Romans 15: 4, that 'all that is wreton is wreton to our doctryne' (8). Invoking St Paul in this way is of course not original to Caxton—Chaucer most strikingly plays with the same proof-text at the end of his *Nun's Priest's Tale*—but Caxton relies heavily on this and other conventions of medieval translation. Similarly, he undertook several translations 'in eschewyng of ydlenes' (*Recuyell*, *Chesse*), which was also the professed motive of Jean de Vignay when he translated the *Golden Legend* into French, as the prologue to his version shows (Caxton translates this prologue, as part of the second edition of his own translation: 71–2). Similarly, Caxton hopes that his translations will save readers' souls (the *Mirrour of the World*, Woodville's *Cordyale*, the *Golden Legende*, the *Royal Book*). Other translations serve more secular ends: Caxton translated *Godefroy of Bologne* 'out of Frensshe into Englysshe . . . to thende that euery Cristen man may be the better encoraged tenterprise warre for the defense of Cristendom' and to recover the city of Jerusalem (48). In a related vein, he argues that the translation of the *Fayttes of Armes* is 'necessary . . . for euery estate . . . that entende to the fayttes of were' (103). Yet in the *Recuyell* Caxton laments the troubles between France and England and hopes that the Troy stories he translates 'may be ensample to all men durying the world how dredefull and ieopardous it is to begynne a warre and what hormes [*sic*], losses, and deth foloweth' (8).

Another reason for translating relates to the need to develop his readers' literary knowledge. Thus Caxton translated the *Historie of Jason* (1477) to present it to the Prince of Wales, 'to thentent he may begynne to lerne rede [*sic*] Englissh, not for ony beaute or good endyting of our Englissh tonge that is therin, but for the nouelte of the histories which as I suppose hath not be had bifore the translacion herof' (34). He is conscious of bringing new literary content into English and placing it before the young Prince (who surely also read French). A similar impulse is evident in the *Eneydos* translation which he presents to Prince Arthur in 1490. Caxton aims to broaden the reading of a wider audience, too. He translates so that readers able to read only English might have access to works

previously available only in other languages (most obviously, French and Latin). In so doing he aims both to extend the stock of the national literature and, by implication, to improve it, as the prologue to the *Recuyell* indicates:

and for so moche as this booke was newe and late maad and drawen into Frenshe, and neuer had seen hit in oure Englissh tonge . . . hit shold be a good besynes to translate hyt in to oure Englissh to thende that hyt myght be had as well in the royame of Englond as in other landes.   (4)

In *Charles the Grete* he is most explicit about the increasing monolingualism of the English and their need for books in English; he translated this version of an exemplary past, he tells us, 'to thende that thystoryes, actes and lyues may be had in our maternal tongue lyke as they be in Latyn or in Frensshe. For the moost quantyte of the people vnderstonde not Latyn ne Frensshe here in this noble royame of Englond' (97).

There is, furthermore, a striking egalitarianism in some of Caxton's expressed motives for translating. In the spiritual world, all men are kings, and so his translation of the *Royal Book*, the epilogue tells us, is not just for royalty but for everyone: it 'is callyd in Frensshe le liure royal . . . a book for a kyng. For the holy scrypture calleth euery [*sc.* virtuous] man a kyng' (102). With this explanation we might contrast the implicit condescension which appears to inform his translation of the *Book of Good Maners* (1487). The prologue to that work says that the book is intended for everyone, but it soon takes back what it appears to be giving when it describes the 'comyn people', who may read it, as 'rude and not manerd, lyke vnto beestis brute'; the translation has been produced, in fact, 'to thende that it myght be had and vsed emonge the people for thamendement of their maners' (99–100). Although the translation of Christine de Pizan's *Fayttes of Armes* was requested by the King and the Earl of Oxford, who provided Caxton with a French copy of her work, the work has a broader target audience, and is 'requysite . . . for euery estate hye and low that entende to the fayttes of warre' (103). Aiming at that broader readership, obviously, entails literary consequences, and Caxton promises that the translation will contain 'no curyous ne gaye termes of rethoryk' but will be 'entendyble and vnderstanden to euery man' (103–4). To the women whom he includes as intended readers of his translation of *Blanchardyn and Eglantine* he promises clarity rather than stylistic flourishes, and confesses himself 'not lerned ne knowynge the arte of rethoryk ne of suche gaye terms as now be sayd in these days and vsed' (105). One of the literary consequences of the broadening English-only readership and the fact of dialect diversity is that, as a translator, Caxton finds himself taking pleasure in the 'fayre and honeste termes and wordes in Frensshe' but ambivalent, stylistically speaking, in his written English. In the prologue to the *Eneydos* he writes that 'bytwene playne rude and curyous [he] stande[s] abasshed', for 'certaynly it is harde to playse euery man bycause of dyuersite and chaunge of langage' (107–9).

Finally, Caxton uses these paratexts to specify what changes he makes to his sources. He says that he follows his *auctor* but then explains what material he

has added or removed. Several examples illustrate his willingness to alter sources. In translating *The Game and Playe of the Chesse*, he amplifies a suggestion in the French prologue, adapting it to a current social topic: the French version briefly mentions bad notaries in Rome and Italy, but Caxton naturalizes this, expanding it into a long attack on lawyers in England (14–15). Likewise, he restores to Woodville's translation of the *Dictes and Sayengs of the Philosophres*, in both editions, a substantial section of misogynist aphorisms and quips about women; he explains Woodville's omission of this material as possibly motivated by a desire to represent women in as favourable a light as possible (20). Other additions do not admit of so straightforward an explanation. In translating the *Golden Legende*, he adds material to the legend of St Augustine, saying, 'I fynde hit not in the legende myn exemplar neyther in Englysshe, Frensshe ne in Latyn' (75). He adds to his *Aesop* a fable of two priests, rich and poor. He adds a Book to the *Polychronicon* translation to bring Higden/Trevisa's history up to date. Sometimes these additions are more formal, ways of explaining a work's layout and organization: 'reducyng' here includes the functions of analysis, summary, clarification. To the *Polychronicon*, *Charles the Grete*, and *Golden Legende* he adds 'tables' of sections and chapters, and to the *Royal Book* translation he adds an abstract of the contents. In his *Caton* he adds a 'rubrysshe' or table of contents, as well as a *divisio* section in the prologue explaining the book's contents.

Likewise, Caxton sometimes removes elements from a text he is translating. These can show him attending to his immediate political context. For instance, the second edition of the *Game and Playe of the Chesse* (1483) suppresses the dedication of the first (1475) to the Duke of Clarence, brother of Edward IV, since the Duke had by then met his end at the hands of another brother, the future Richard III. In the same way, the concluding prayer for Edward IV and the future prosperity of the kingdom, in the first edition, was replaced, in the second, by a more general and cautionary directive to the reader: 'late euery man of what condycion he be that redyth or herith this litel book redde take therby ensaumple to amende hym' (14–15): in the year of its publication Edward IV died and Richard seized the throne. These were certainly dangerous times: there is some evidence of Caxton's involvement in the rebellion of 1483 (Gill 1997), and certainly he and Woodville, who would be executed for treason in that same year, worked closely together, as earlier noted, on translations and imprints. Caxton survived these dangerous times, though, as witness his retention, in the 1490 edition of *The Mirrour of the World*, of a positive reference to the 'noble proteccion' of Edward IV first made in the 1481 edition of the work (58–9). As a translator, then, Caxton is quite willing to alter his sources despite what has been called his 'stencil' method, and some alterations show him keenly sensitive to the politics of his time.

Caxton's translations earned the patronage of royals, nobles, gentry, and merchants alike. Supporters of his translations included the sister of Edward IV, the mother of Henry VII, the earls of Oxford and Arundel, Anthony Woodville (Earl Rivers), Sir John Fastolf, and others. Caxton's connections to aristocrats meant

commissions and fees for translating as well as access to fine foreign-language manuscript books. But his translations were also sought by the non-royal and the non-noble. Where, in the first prologue to his *Golden Legende*, Caxton explains perhaps the most famous fee ever received for a translation, 'a bucke in sommer and a doo in wynter' annually from the Earl of Arundel, he also mentions the help of bookseller John Stanley (70). The *Mirrour of the World* he undertook not only because 'vox audita perit, littera scripta manet' [the spoken word perishes, the written word endures] but also because Hugh Bryce, alderman of London, who was to present it to the Lord Chamberlain Hastings, was willing to pay for it (50, 52). A 'mercer and marchaunt of London' requested his translation of the *Royal Book*, and the French manuscript Caxton used in translating the *Book of Good Maners* came, he tells us, from mercer William Pratt. Caxton operated both in noble and in merchant worlds, apparently, equally comfortably: his ability to cross boundaries of class and culture, as well as boundaries of language, would characterize later successful translator-printers like de Worde, Copland, Pynson, and others.

As the first English printer and the first print editor of Chaucer and Lydgate, Caxton will probably continue to be better known as a printer than as a translator. However, for him, as for the other early printers in England, the practices of translation went hand in hand with those of printing and editing. A cultural amphibian—we might so call him—who moved easily between script and print technologies, between francophone and anglophone readerships, between aristocratic and mercantile classes, between late medieval and sixteenth-century literary habits, Caxton was ideally placed to 'translate' in several senses of the word.

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4

The Developing Corpus
of Literary Translation

Edward Wheatley

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4 The Developing Corpus
of Literary Translation

Edward Wheatley

Analysing the body of writings translated into English from the beginnings of the written language to the inception of printing in Europe presents unique challenges. Numerous translated texts from the Middle Ages, especially those written by translators working outside centres of cultural and scholarly power, survive only in single copies, and each of these works that has come down to us bespeaks the disappearance of many others like it. The deliberate destruction of translations considered heretical must have dispatched numerous works— witness the burning in 1457 of almost all of the works of Bishop Reginald Pecock, an active (and entirely orthodox) supporter of the project of vernacular translation, or in 1546 of Richard Taverner's translations of Melanchthon and Sarcerius. Accidents such as the 1731 fire in the library of medieval manuscript collector Sir Robert Cotton (a conflagration that would have destroyed the unique manuscripts of *Beowulf* and the works of the *Gawain*-poet had it raged longer) have deprived us of more translated material than we can possibly know. For that matter, the texts which were most popular, especially those written or printed on paper, will have worn out soonest. Such losses tantalize. Nevertheless, a sizeable body of translated work survives in medieval manuscripts, which enables us to map out a field of translational activity, in respect both of favoured subjects, and of the places where this activity took place: scriptoria attached to monastery or university; noble households where writers functioned as chaplains or secretaries; major cities where writers could increasingly make their way as semi-professional artisans. For a few decades after the advent of printing, manuscript culture continued alongside the new technology; the texts that William Caxton and his followers chose to translate and publish give us a clear idea of which texts had a market among upper-class and middle-class book buyers.

This section is broadly organized chronologically, though the dating of works, even by named authors, is sometimes approximate. It provides an overview of some of the most important groups of texts in the history of medieval translation. Some of these reflect the work of a single translator; others emerge during a period of particular interest in a genre or type of text that had not attracted the interest of many translators earlier. These emergent groups often attest to important developments in religious, political, or social history. The section will close with an examination of the translated texts found in a selection of libraries, individual and institutional, from before 1550 for which catalogues or other records are available.

Beginnings to the Fourteenth Century

At the centre of the first period of relatively concentrated activity relating to translation, in the early eighth century, is Bede, author of the *Ecclesiastical History*. Bede translated Cædmon's hymn from OE to the Latin in which his text was written, and he supposedly worked on translations from Latin of both the Gospel of John and a treatise by patristic writer Isidore of Seville, neither of which has survived (Thompson 1935: 134). Bede's interests as both author and translator are indicative of the subjects that were to remain at the heart of translation activity (and controversies surrounding it) for the next 600 years: the doctrine, history, and Scriptures of the Church.

The next blossoming of translation, of a number of significant works from Latin into English, occurred during the reign of Alfred the Great (871–899). Alfred produced several translations himself, of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius (see further §5.6 below) and of works by the Church Fathers Augustine and Gregory, as well as of part of the Psalter. He also commissioned other translations; one gives us another named translator for the period, Wærferth. Several credited to Alfred by William of Malmesbury, including the *World History* of Orosius and Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*, are now thought to have been commissioned or requested by Alfred rather than produced by him. In sum, between the era of Bede and Alfred we see a slight broadening of types of translated texts to include political history and spiritual instruction, suitable subjects for the first concerted effort to make a body of texts available in English (for Alfred see further §3.2 above).

In the late tenth and early eleventh centuries, the first generation of texts relating to the Latin curriculum began to appear. The *Grammar* of Ælfric (*c*. 955–1010) became a standard curricular text until the Norman Conquest, and Ælfric's translation of the Heptateuch is the most significant pre-Conquest biblical translation (White 1974: 119, 126, 146). Between 1010 and 1012, Byrhtferth, a scholar at Ramsey Abbey near Cambridge, compiled and translated his *Enchiridion* into OE; the text's curious mélange of systems of mathematical computation and excurses on Latin grammar marks it as a text used for scholarly instruction. Texts such as these would be integral to the learning of Latin and the activities of future translators from that language. Another kind of instruction informs the translation of lives and tales of exemplary religious figures which appeared intermittently in pre-Conquest England. Among these are such texts as *Judith*, from the eponymous apocryphal book of the Old Testament, and, by the late eighth-/ ninth-century poet Cynewulf, *Juliana* and *Elene*, from Latin saints' lives (see further Nelson 1991); *Guthlac*, another saint's life that exists in two versions (see further Olsen 1981); *Andreas* or St Andrew; and lives of Sts Nicholas and Giles.

A tantalizing indication of translations into OE that no longer survive is a mid-eleventh-century manuscript fragment of *Apollonius of Tyre*, a romance translated from one Latin version of the text, which John Gower later translated from another Latin version in his *Confessio Amantis* (on both versions, see further §5.6

below). The existence of this translation suggests that other narratives of this sort might have been available in OE (Archibald 1991: 45–7).

Following the Norman Conquest, the translation of texts from Latin into English declined somewhat. But while the number of religious texts being translated from Latin for clerical use declined temporarily, other genres gained popularity.

As the ruling power, the Anglo-Normans generally had little interest in translating Anglo-Saxon texts into their language. Marie de France, a woman probably from the AN aristocracy, claimed to have translated a collection of Aesop's *Fables* from an English version by King Alfred, but, if such a source text existed for her use, neither it nor other mentions of it survive. The chronicler Geoffrey Gaimar translated selected sections of the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* in his *Estoire des Engleis*, ostensibly as an appropriation of episodes in English history that could be useful to the colonizers (Legge 1963: 31–2). However, the first significant historical chronicle appeared in English in the late twelfth or early thirteenth century (for this date, see Stanley 1968): Laʒamon's *Brut*, the earliest text in English to mention King Arthur. Laʒamon's sources included Wace's *Roman de Brut*, a text based on Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, which was also englished in later centuries. (For further comment on Laʒamon and chronicles generally, see §§1.3 above, 5.5 below.)

The most significant biblical translation in English to emerge in the twelfth century was the *Orrmulum* by Orrm, a translation of many of the passages of the Gospel read aloud in the Mass. Other less ambitious translations of sections of the Bible include the *Northern Homily Cycle* and *Genesis and Exodus*, the latter based on Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica.* (For these and other Bible versions see further §5.1 below; for Bible translations in AN, see Legge 1963 and, for one example, p. 108 above). With the growing popularity of the cult of saints among the laity, numerous saints' lives were translated into the languages of England. These texts were sometimes written by and for women, among whom literacy was more common in AN society. Marie de France translated *Espurgatoire Seint Patriz* from Latin into AN, Marie of Chatteris translated a life of St Etheldreda as *Le Vie de sainte Audrée*, and an anonymous nun of Barking translated into AN Ailred's *Life of Edward the Confessor*.

One of the most important translation projects undertaken in the thirteenth century, of scientific, philosophical, and theological works—from Greek into Latin rather than English—was associated with Robert Grosseteste (see further §3.3 above). Grosseteste collected a group of scholars to help him, much as King Alfred had done nearly 400 years previously, and as the Wycliffites would do in their major translation project 150 years later. Grosseteste's painstakingly literal translation of Greek texts contrasts strikingly with those that preceded him.

Grosseteste was also, as Bishop of Lincoln, concerned to provide religious instruction for the faithful in the vernacular, and insisted that his clergy provide vernacular translations of the biblical texts they preached on. This insistence witnesses to a major influence on, and spur to, the translation of religious texts

in the thirteenth century and thereafter: the deliberations of the Fourth Lateran Council (1215). Biblical paraphrases and translations produced in this context include the monumental *South English Legendary*, which mixed material from the Bible, including a lengthy Life of Christ, with material related to the liturgical calendar. The thirteenth century also saw the first wave of translations of penitential manuals directly inspired by the Council's ruling on the need for annual confession. Most of these were translated from French; such translations continued to be made in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries (see further §5.2 below).

Another major genre represented in increasing numbers in translation in the thirteenth century was romance; it remained popular with translators through the remainder of the Middle Ages. Probably the earliest example, and the only one certainly from the first half of the century, was *King Horn*, translated from an AN source. The second half of the century saw translations of *Floris and Blancheflour*, *Amis and Amiloun*, *Sir Tristrem*, and *Havelok the Dane*. Representative of what would become an increasingly important branch of romance was the translation of the first Arthurian text, *Of Arthour and of Merlin*. (For fuller comment on romance in ME, see §5.4 below.)

The Fourteenth Century and After

Beginning in the thirteenth century, interest in translations of penitential manuals grew dramatically in the fourteenth, not least among the increasingly powerful orders of friars who, like Chaucer's pilgrim friar Hubert, could hear confessions and administer penance. Among the manuals were two complete versions of Friar Laurent's *Somme le roi*, Dan Michel's *Ayenbite of Inwit* and *The Book of Vices and Virtues*; eight others are known, most partial and all less popular (Raymo 1986: 2258–62). William of Waddington's thirteenth-century *Manuel des Pechiez* was also translated repeatedly, most memorably by Robert Mannyng (1303) as *Handlyng Synne* (Raymo 1986: 2255–7). Another religious treatise, whose 104 surviving copies give it a claim to being the most popular English poem of the Middle Ages, is *The Prick of Conscience*; it was based on a variety of works in both Latin and French, including writings by Augustine, Grosseteste, Bernard, and Anselm.

The popularity of romances translated from French and its dialects that had begun in the thirteenth century gained strength in the fourteenth. In roughly the first half of the century, the following texts were translated into English: *Bevis of Hampton*, *Guy of Warwick*, *Kyng Alisaunder*, *Lai le Freine*, *Richard Coer de Lyon*, *Sir Degaré*, and *Libeaus Desconus*. The Horn legend, translated in the previous century, appeared in another English version, *Horn Childe*, *c.* 1320. Other texts drew upon more complex genealogies: for example, while the English translators of *Sir Perceval of Galles* and *Ywain and Gawain* based their work on the Old French romances of Chrétien de Troyes, they also heavily embellished and added to the material, making the resulting poems largely their own. The

translator of *The Seege of Troye* used the *Roman de Troie* of Benoît de Sainte-
Maure as his primary source, but he intercalated episodes that he translated from
the anonymous Latin *Excidium Troiae*. The sources for some ME romances that
were presumably translated (for example *Sir Orfeo*) have been lost.

The second half of the fourteenth century added to the corpus of ME such
translated romances, all from French, as the quasi-historical *William of Palerne*,
the alliterative *Morte Arthure*, two versions of the *Fierebras* story, and Thomas
Chestre's *Sir Launfal*, which traced its origins to Marie de France; *The Gest
Historiale of the Destruction of Troy* from the Latin *Historia Destructionis Troiae*
by Guido delle Colonne; and composites of French sources and original mate-
rial such as *The Siege of Jerusalem* and *Titus and Vespasian*. But these decades
also saw a flowering of original ME romances, including the popular *Gamelyn*
and the apparently largely unknown but masterful *Sir Gawain and the Green
Knight*.

Culturally related to these original romances and the public demand for them,
a remarkable flowering of secular literary translation occurred during the last
two decades of the fourteenth century. Some of the most illustrious work was
produced by writers associated directly or indirectly with the court of Richard
II. Gower translated some of the same texts as his slightly younger contem-
porary Chaucer; his major work in English, the *Confessio Amantis*, owes much
to earlier writers. Chaucer's own work consists largely of translations, and his
reputation must largely have depended on them too. But this is not always, or
even usually, a matter of formal, complete translation of one text by another:
Chaucer's activity of translation is more often a matter of assimilation and
absorption, weaving parts of a source into his own works (see further §3.4 above).
Chaucer was acknowledged even in his own lifetime by Eustache Deschamps as
a 'grant translateur'; his *Boece* and *Troilus* were both used by Thomas Usk in
his own compilation-translation *The Testament of Love* (1384–7). Throughout the
fifteenth and sixteenth centuries he was routinely invoked by translators, usually
as a model of 'crafty and sugred eloquence' (Caxton, *P&E* 90); less often, as a
model of plain English (Peter Betham, cited in McConica 1965: 202; see also
Bennett 1969: 174–5).

Many other translations were produced in this period, most of them anony-
mous, like those of the *Mystical Theology* of pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite
by the author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and the *Horologium Sapientiae* of
Henry Suso. Easily the most important was a translation from French of the
most popular travel book of the later Middle Ages, *Mandeville's Travels*. This
translation, which exists in thirty-two manuscripts, is missing the account of
Egypt, but three later translations in the late fourteenth and early fifteenth were
more complete, and seven other English versions followed in the fifteenth and
sixteenth centuries (Zacher 1986: 2239).

One of the most prolific translators of this same period was John Trevisa, who
attended Oxford in the 1360s, and held several clerical appointments in the west
of England before becoming vicar of Berkeley. He was then commissioned by

Lord Berkeley to translate the monumental world history of Ranulph Higden, the *Polychronicon*, which Trevisa completed in 1387 (see further pp. 82–3 above, pp. 345–7 below). The Duke commissioned the translation because, although he could read Latin, 'ther was myche Latyn in . . . bokes of cronicles' that, like his clerk, he could not readily understand 'without studiyng and avisement and loking of other bokes' (*IoV* 132). Next in importance to the *Polychronicon* was Trevisa's translation of the huge encyclopedia of natural history by Bartholomaeus Anglicus, the *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, completed 1398/9: both survive in numerous manuscript copies, and both were later printed. Another major translation, of the manual of medieval statecraft of Giles of Rome, the *De Regimine Principum* (1388–92), survives in only a single manuscript copy. Other translations, from earlier in his career (1362–72), were more modest in scope: they include the *Gospel of Nicodemus*. In the prologue to his 1482 edition of the *Polychronicon* (*P&E* 67), Caxton claimed Trevisa as the translator of the Wycliffite Bible, a claim, unprovable and generally contested, which witnesses to Trevisa's association in Oxford with Wyclif and those of his disciples known to have worked on the translation (Fowler 1995: 227).

Historical writing often took the form of chronicles which assimilate the material of predecessor works in a more or less methodical way; where those works are in foreign languages, translation is necessarily involved (on such translations, see further §5.5 below). Among the most popular works were Robert of Gloucester's *Metrical Chronicle* from around 1300, which survives in both long and short versions; Thomas of Castleford's 1327 *Chronicle of England*, a verse text largely indebted to Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace; Robert Mannyng's *Chronicle* (or *Story of England)*, a verse adaptation of AN chronicles completed in 1338; and the *Anonimalle Chronicle*, a northern text of the late fourteenth century that includes accounts of both the Good Parliament of 1376 and the Uprising of 1381. A new type of chronicle, focused on events from recent history, is represented by the so-called *End of King Edward III and of his Death*, written around the middle of the fifteenth century, and *The Historie of the Arrivall of King Edward IV*, a description of events of 1471 translated from a French account (Visser-Fuchs 1992: 224–6). A celebration of the victory of the order of St John of the Temple over Ottoman Turks in 1480 appeared in a Latin text by Guillaume Caoursin; via a secondary French translation, it became the English *Siege of Rhodes*, translated by John Kay at the behest of Edward IV (Sutton and Visser-Fuchs 1997: 31, 178). Chronicles of the history of Scotland appeared for the first time in Scots during the first half of the sixteenth century. Hector Boece's Latin *Scotorum Historia* was an immediate success when it appeared in 1527, and James V commissioned two translations. The more popular was John Bellenden's *The Chronicles of Scotland, Translated into Scots*, completed in 1531 and twice printed; William Stewart's *The Buik of the Cronicles of Scotland* (a metrical version of the *Historia)* survives in only one manuscript and remained unpublished until 1858.

The most politically charged translation project of the late fourteenth and early fifteenth centuries was the Lollard attempt to translate the Bible into

English (see further §5.1 below: the earliest datable copy of the so-called Early Version was produced before 1397). The Lollard leader, John Wyclif, and the first generation of his followers, expended almost as much energy justifying translation (and avoiding charges of heresy) as they spent upon actual translation. Wycliffite texts translated from Latin that justify the translation of the Bible include the late fourteenth-century *De Officio Pastorali* and the early fifteenth-century *Compendyous Treatise* (*On Translating the Bible into English*) (Talbert and Thompson 1970: 368–9). But translation of parts of the Bible was also taking place outside Lollard circles during the late fourteenth century—in the 1370s, for example, in *A Book to a Mother*—and resulted in some artful translations of the life of Jesus, including *The Stanzaic Life of Christ*, *The Prose Life of Christ*, and *The Metrical Life of Christ*. But it was the Bible translation project which took the form of cycle drama that reached the widest audience in the history of medieval biblical translation. The annual performances of these cycles by trade guilds in many cities in England and Scotland from the second half of the fourteenth to the end of the sixteenth century would have given tens if not hundreds of thousands of people the opportunity to hear Bible texts and related material rendered in English, sometimes imaginatively and sometimes quite closely. In numerous instances in the cycle drama, the playwrights engaged in what might be called simultaneous translation, requiring actors first to quote a passage from the Vulgate and then to recite an English translation of the Latin. Most commonly, Latin is given to figures of religious authority, like God; once, in the Chester *Play of the Last Judgement*, with a bold sense of dramatic irony, to one of the devils.

Other religious material was translated into lyrics. The Franciscan William Herebert, who was the lector of that order's convent in Oxford 1317–19, left a number of sermons but also twenty-three verse translations of hymns, liturgical texts, sermons, and Scripture, from both Latin and AN (see further Herebert 1987).

Secular romance continued to flourish as a genre in the fifteenth century (to the point where it spawned parodies such as *The Weddynge of Sir Gawen and Dame Ragnell*), and prose began to compete with verse as a popular form for these texts. Some translations were still growing out of AN texts that were centuries old, including *Partonope de Blois* and two *King Ponthus* translations that trace their origins via a French prose text to a twelfth-century poem related to *King Horn* (so Cooper in *CHMEL* 691). The first half of the century saw the translation of several Alexander romances: the *Scottish Alexander Buik*, the Cambridge *Alexander-Cassamus Fragment*, and Sir Gilbert Hay's *Buik of King Alexander*, all from French sources; and a prose *Alexander*, and *The Wars of Alexander*, from Latin sources. Similarly popular during these decades were translations of the Troy story from Guido delle Colonne or (his principal source) Benoît de Sainte-Maure, including the Laud *Troy Book*, John Lydgate's *Troy Book*, and a prose *Siege of Troy*. Romance retained its popularity during the first half of the sixteenth century, though translators followed the late fifteenth-century trend

of using prose instead of verse. An important translator of French romance, John Bourchier, Lord Berners (see further pp. 324, 356–8 below), worked from French printed texts for his translations *Huon of Bordeaux*, *Arthur of Little Britain*, and *Froissart's Chronicles*, which used romance conventions in its historical narrative (Blake 1971: 129). Berners also anticipated the fashion for Spanish romances later in the century when he translated the *Carcel de Amor* as *The Castell of Love* (see detailed discussion in Boro 2004).

The advent of printing in England was momentous in the history of translation. Eleven books containing nine romances, all translated from French sources, were published between 1474 and 1500 (Scanlon 1978: 143–5); printed twice were *Paris and Vienne* (1485, 1492), and a text by an imprisoned nobleman, Sir Thomas Malory, that was to exercise more long-term influence on British and world literature than any other romance. Although several important Arthurian romances appeared before Malory's *Morte Darthur*, the so-called 'Matter of England' received its crowning achievement at his hands in the 1470s. A compendium of translations from various French sources that represented an attempt to structure and unify disparate branches of the material, the *Morte* was printed in 1485 and 1498, and several times in the sixteenth century (see further §5.4 below).

In England more than other European countries, the history of translation is closely tied to early book printing, because England's first printer, William Caxton, was also a prolific translator (see further §3.6 above). While learning his trade in Bruges, Caxton published two of his translations into English, *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* and *The Game and Playe of the Chesse* (1473–4), and he then brought his printing press to England in 1476 to continue a career that would include the publication of at least nineteen of his own translations. He was an astute businessman who followed the medieval custom of seeking patrons for his books; for example, he received a gift from Margaret of Burgundy upon completion of his translation of *The Recuyell*, and the appearance of her name in his preface 'would guarantee that it was fashionable and hence make it seem worth acquiring' (Blake 1975: 23). The first printed book in English, that is, was a translation, published by Caxton with a specific marketing strategy in mind. In Westminster in the late 1470s Caxton went on to print translations of Latin texts by Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, yet another guarantor of healthy sales (see further pp. 101–2 above).

If we can say that King Alfred was the first person in medieval England to oversee a programme of translation that resulted in something approaching a literary canon in English, Caxton is probably the last. Clearly, he saw some of his work as contributing to the English canon, not only by englishing texts through translation but also by anglicizing their foreign content. Since any canon needs a foundational legend in its own language, Caxton probably chose *The Recuyell* as his first book because of the perception that London was the New Troy, founded by the Trojan leader Brutus. Caxton printed his adaptation of Malory's *Morte Darthur*, another text relating to national identity, in 1485.

Furthermore, additions that Caxton made to some compilations were obviously meant for English audiences. For example, the story of St Thomas of Canterbury in Caxton's *Golden Legende* includes the translator's speculation about the saint preaching in Strood, Kent (Blake 1975: 14), and Caxton concludes his translation of Aesop with two fables of his own, one set in Oxford (Wheatley 1999: 55–6).

Among fifteenth-century authors, one of the most popular foreign ones in England was Christine de Pizan, whose work received attention both before her death and well into the sixteenth century (for the period 1445–1540, see Warren 2004). Translations of her works appear not only in manuscripts, such as Hoccleve's *Letter of Cupid* and Stephen Scrope's *Epistle of Othea*, but also in early printed books: Anthony Woodville's *Moral Prouerbes of Christine*, printed by Caxton in 1478 and Pynson in 1526; Caxton's translation and printing of *The Book of Fayttes of Armes and of Chyualrye* (1489/90), undertaken at the request of King Henry VII; in 1521, an anonymous ME translation of *The Body of Polycye* printed by John Skot, and the printing by Pepwell of Brian Anslay's translation of *The Book of the City of Ladies*; and Robert Wyer's translation of *The C. Hystoryes of Troye, Lepistre de Othea*, printed in 1540 (Yenal 1989: 13, 21, 67, 73).

Another fifteenth-century French author has the distinction of having translated himself into English. Charles d'Orléans was taken prisoner by the English at the battle of Agincourt in 1415, and held for the next twenty-five years in luxurious captivity. During this time he continued writing, and he translated fifty-two of his own French poems into English. His example witnesses to the fluidity of geographical and cultural boundaries, and the mobility of the translator, in the late Middle Ages—a mobility evidenced yet more clearly in the sixteenth century, when Gentian Hervet and Walter Lynne travelled to England from France and Holland respectively and produced translations in English.

When the cycle drama was reaching the zenith of its social and religious importance in the fifteenth century, its monopoly on theatrical performance was challenged by a nascent genre, the morality play, which relied on allegory to communicate its Christian message. Most of these plays were apparently written in English, so it is ironic that the play that became the canonical representative of medieval English drama in the nineteenth century and later, *Everyman*, was originally written not in that language, but in Dutch, the product of a group of Dutch religious reformers, the Brethren of the Common Life. The original version includes internal rhymes in Dutch that the anonymous English translator could not have hoped to reproduce (Vanhoutte 1995: 100). Other challengers to the supremacy of cycle drama were plays based on the lives or deeds of saints; two of these, *The Conversion of St Paul* and a lengthy, theatrically ambitious *Mary Magdalene*, both loosely translations of biblical and extra-biblical material—the first handicapped by its author's 'shaky Latin' (Baker *et al.* 1982: xxiii)—survive in the Digby manuscript. Another, *Wisdom*, includes material transposed from the ME translation of Suso's *Horologium Sapientiae* (on the latter see further pp. 260, 266 below).

Important for future developments were translations of Petrarch's Italian works. Chaucer had translated a single Petrarchan lyric; the early years of the English Renaissance brought a more profound, widespread interest in the poet, as exemplified in translations by Henry Parker, Lord Morley; Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey; and Sir Thomas Wyatt (on these see further §5.7 below). Surrey and Wyatt have other claims on our attention too. Both produced Bible translations. Basing himself on Latin paraphrases of the originals by Joannes Campensis, Surrey translated (or paraphrased, according to his editor) parts of Ecclesiastes and the Psalms into English, while Wyatt used various non-Hebrew sources, particularly Pietro Aretino's paraphrases, to translate a group of penitential psalms in the late 1530s. Surrey has the distinction of having invented blank verse to translate Books II and IV of Virgil's *Aeneid* (see further Howard 1964: xx, 132).

Another translation by Wyatt, Plutarch's *Quiet of Mind*, produced in December 1527 as a New Year's gift for Queen Katharine, exemplifies a growing interest in the sixteenth century in translations from Greek. This interest in the retrieval and translation of Greek works on a wide variety of subjects—reflexes both of the recent arrival of Greek as a subject for study at the universities and of the nearly contemporaneous expansion of printing—resulted in numerous translations, mostly based on intermediate versions, usually Latin (see further §5.6 below; for detailed listings, Lathrop 1933 and Bolgar 1954: 524–55, supplemented by Nørgaard 1958).

The humanist enterprise of recovering texts from the Greek was a major influence on developments in translation during the sixteenth century. Another was the Reformation. Texts produced abroad in support of the cause of reform were rapidly translated, and reprinted. (On protestant–Catholic rivalries in print, see e.g. Bennett 1969: 70–6; Cummings in *CHMEL*.) Writings of Erasmus were similarly seized upon and, especially in the 1530s, often acquired a protestant colouring. His Paraphrases on the New Testament was probably the most important of these (see further pp. 291–2 below), and involved several translators, including the Princess Mary. Thomas Cromwell had earlier seen the value of Erasmus' work for the Reform movement, and writers like Richard Taverner, who worked under him, popularized the cause of reform through their translations of Erasmus, using the latter's *Encomium Matrimonii*, for example, to attack celibate clergy (the work resumed its original function as a rhetorical exercise in Thomas Wilson's *Art of Rhetoric* of 1553). Mostly, smaller works were translated (for two examples, of works translated by Margaret Roper and John, Lord Lumley, see further pp. 289–90, 386 below). The most important translation was undoubtedly that by Sir Thomas Chaloner of Erasmus' *Moriae Encomium* (*The Praise of Folie*, published 1549), where the force of Erasmus' original satire against the institutions of the Church was 'completely transformed' by the dramatic changes of the intervening thirty years (Simpson 2002: 342). Translations of Erasmus are also discussed in Volume 2; for a checklist of such translations, see Devereux 1983.

Patterns of Ownership

During the centuries covered by this volume, our knowledge of the ownership of individual translations—if we except those which were done, ad hoc, on commission—is inevitably patchy. Libraries extensive enough to require inventories generally belonged to institutions rather than individuals; such inventories offer, at best, a snapshot of the library's holdings at a particular moment (which may be difficult to reconstruct: witness the case of Syon Abbey, as studied by Gillespie 2000, 2001). Not all books, especially those gifted, were read by the recipients. The culling of inventories and wills to see what individuals owned is time-consuming and unrewarding. Texts are often listed in ways that make their identification difficult; even when a text originally produced in a foreign language is clearly identified, it is often unclear whether we are dealing with the text in original or translated form (this is almost as true after the invention of printing as it was before): only when the first words of the second folio are given as a catchphrase is it generally possible to be certain. (For inventories up to 1450, see Cavanaugh 1980; for inventories in the sixteenth century, Fehrenbach and Leedham-Green 1992–; for comment on private ownership of texts in manuscript, Harris and Meale, both in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989; and in print, Ford 1999.)

We can begin by noting that 'people owned books which they needed' (Ford 1999: 206): always understood that 'need' includes not simply, for example, the texts that university students were required to own, or the books needed in church for the performance of the divine Office, or the books on chivalry that were judged necessary for the knightly class to own, but those books which confirmed and publicized readers' senses of what their social standing required. A distinction can also be drawn between 'the demands of the professional, academic and clerical book-buying public and . . . those of the wider lay public' (Harris in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989: 173).

Books owned by clerics and other university-educated men are almost exclusively in Latin; translation, where it occurs, is mostly into Latin from Greek. (On the occurrence of ME in ' "university" scientific and medical manuscripts in the fifteenth century', and its implications, see Voigts in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989: 383). Notable exceptions in the sixteenth century (all from Fehrenbach/Leedham-Green) include one Bisley (1543) whose 122 texts featured, alongside a Latin Homer and a French Bible, a copy of Caxton's *Game and Playe of the Chesse*; Thomas Simons (1553) and William Brown (1558), both of whom had recent English translations by Thomas Paynell, the former his *Regimen Sanitatis*, the latter his *Catiline*; and Edward Beaumont (1552), whose 117 texts included Homer, in Latin as well as in Greek, Euripides in Greek with accompanying Latin translation, a Latin translation by Helius Eobanus of the Hebrew Psalter, and Barclay's English *Jugurtha*.

As with the students, so with university and college libraries. The three largest libraries associated with Cambridge, the University Library and the libraries

of Peterhouse and Corpus Christi Colleges, all had inventories made of their holdings in 1535 (Peterhouse had an earlier inventory of 1418 as well). By then the University Library had a collection of about 420 books, Peterhouse 480, and Corpus Christi roughly 340. Each had a single English translation, in each case of an important or popular work: the University Library, of the *Consolation of Philosophy* (Clarke 2002: 21, inv. no. 74), a translation produced in tandem with the Latin original (see also p. 33 above); Peterhouse, of the immensely popular *Brut* chronicle (Clarke 2002: 545, inv. no. 442); Corpus, of Higden's *Polychronicon*, most probably in the translation by John Trevisa (Clarke 2002: 225, inv. no. 71), which, since it came to the library only in 1525, may well have been a copy of the Caxton printing.

The inventories of monastic and mendicant libraries yield similarly meagre pickings (for the general picture, see Knowles 1957: ch. XXVI; Bell 1999). To take a single example: according to an early twelfth-century catalogue, Peterborough Abbey, where the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* was still being copied and updated as late as 1154, owned one of King Alfred's translations ('Elfridi regis liber anglicus': Friis-Jensen and Willoughby 2001: 15, inv. no. 59). A later inventory, from the late fourteenth century, included 348 volumes: only twenty-seven contained French or AN texts, and only two English, and it is not certain that either was a translation.

The very much fuller sixteenth-century catalogue for the monks' library at the Birgittine abbey of Syon (Gillespie 2002) includes 1,647 books. Only twenty-nine books, less than 1.8 per cent of the entire collection, contained English texts. Twenty-two of these texts have been identified, with varying degrees of certainty, as translations. They cluster in a handful of manuscripts, whose major items are all in Latin, and, where it is possible to judge, several of them are very short, sometimes only one or two folios long in manuscripts usually more than 200 folios long. This may explain the survival of a short text by the arch-heretic Wyclif in both Latin and English (SS1 882k), where larger texts by him in Latin were rigorously culled (Gillespie 2000: 200). Striking exceptions to this generalization are provided by two translations of medical texts: one of (probably) the *Compendium Medicinae* of Gilbertus Anglicus, left to the abbey in 1474 by the copyist of the volume, John Sperhawk (inv. no. SS1 117; Gillespie 2000: 192–3), now Glasgow, University Library, MS Hunterian 509; the other a 'dietarium rithmizatum in anglicis', possibly that of Lydgate (SS1 106d).

The relative paucity of translations in this snapshot of the libraries of male religious should not be surprising. Monks and friars rather produced translations for nuns, or their own lay brothers, or seculars, than read them themselves. There is a noteworthy exception to this generalization. Along with the Birgittines, the Carthusians played a major role in the translation and dissemination of mystical and devotional works, producing vernacular translations of important Latin texts and (less often) Latin translations of important vernacular ones. Yet they also owned vernacular translations of spiritual classics: for example, the anonymous translations of Richard of St Victor's (Latin) *Benjamin Minor* and Marguerite

Porete's (French) *Mirror of Simple Souls*. Fifteen out of sixty-six fifteenth- or sixteenth-century manuscripts traceable to Carthusian libraries are in English; twelve of the twenty-four volumes taken from the London Charterhouse to that in Hull were in English, and of those probably half were translations (Bell 1999: 251; for the full list, see Thompson 1930: 325).

Previous remarks have implied that female religious were readier consumers of translations than their male counterparts (for a detailed account see Bell 1995). A survey of fifteenth- and early sixteenth-century nuns' libraries showed that, of 144 volumes, almost half were devotional or theological: of these, 23 per cent were in Latin, 10 per cent were in French, and 67 per cent (including, obviously, translated works) were in English. Increases in vernacular literacy seem to have had 'more impact on women's houses than on men's' (Bell 1999: 250–1).

Those developments, of course, had a corresponding impact on seculars: members of the middle and upper classes, the gentry, merchants, and courtiers. About one-third of all printed books owned in the sixteenth century by such readers were in English, and these obviously included translations. Here gender differentiation is also occasionally apparent. In his will Richard Elyot (d. 1522) left his English books to his daughter Margery and his Latin and French books to his son Thomas, who went on to produce numerous translations (Ford 1999: 216).

By way of conclusion, we may flesh out these generalizations with two fifteenth-century, and one sixteenth-century, case studies: books owned by Sir John Paston and King Richard III; and the library (or libraries) of Henry VIII.

John Paston (1442–1479), 'one of the best-known collectors of the fifteenth century' (Pearsall in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989: 7), belonged to an East Anglian family recently gentrified and enjoying access to the court and to centres of learning, the latter witnessed, for example, by an inventory produced not later than 1473 (it is not certain by or for which member of the family) which includes Latin dictionaries (Huguitio and Papias), as well as works by St Thomas Aquinas and Grosseteste and, possibly in French, books of 'soffistré' (Davis 1971: II, 362). In 1468 John Paston had commissioned a 'great book', now BL MS Lansdowne 285, a sort of 'heraldic miscellany' (Lester 1984: 8), which included, along with many texts in French, a copy of the 1408 English translation of Vegetius possibly by Walton, and the English version of the *Secretum* by Lydgate and Burgh. A copy of Stephen Scrope's translation of Christine de Pizan's *Othéa* was also made for inclusion in the volume. In fact, it does not appear in the volume, though it is referred to in an inventory of John's English books compiled between 1473 and 1479. Of the dozen or so other items in this list, several were almost certainly translations: they include Chaucer's *Legend of Good Women*, *Troilus*, and *Parliament of Fowls* (the third includes translated material, if not, as such, a translation); Caxton's recently printed *Game and Playe of the Chesse*; and *La Belle Dame Sans Mercy* (two copies), probably the translation of Alain Chartier's poem by Sir Richard Roos. This last item, and several others in the inventory, confirm a predilection for romances (cf. Davis 1983: xxii); the inventory also shows John's interest in standard short classical works like Cicero's *De Amicitia*

and *De Senectute*. If we reckon these to be, as the inventory styles them, English books, they must also be translations. Translations of both had recently been produced, and would be printed in 1481 by Caxton (see p. 102 above); John was a friend of William Worcester, the translator of the *De Senectute*, and had loaned him his copy of the *De Amicitia*.

This compares broadly with what is known of Richard III's books. Records survive—either the actual manuscript, or evidence of dedications—of his ownership of fourteen books (for full details and comment, see Sutton and Visser-Fuchs 1997). Two were in French, six in English, six in Latin. Almost all of the English works were translations. They include a Wycliffite New Testament and a ME verse paraphrase of parts of the Old Testament; a translation of the *Liber Specialis Gratiae* of the twelfth-century Cistercian mystic Mechtild of Hackeborn; the 1408 translation of Vegetius; Caxton's translation of Ramon Lull's *Order of Chivalry*; Chaucer's tales of the Knight and Clerk; Lydgate's *Siege of Thebes*; a prose *Ipomadon*; and William Worcester's *Boke of Noblesse*, a work confected out of numerous sources, which could also be described as a translation. Not all of these works were necessarily commissioned or purchased directly by the King: the Mechtild translation, for example, came to him through his wife. Nevertheless, the collection as a whole is congruent with the translations that Caxton was directing to upper-class, aristocratic, and royal readers at much the same time, and has some degree of overlap in its areas of interest with the Paston inventory. History—especially history angled towards English interests, as noted more fully below, §5.5—appears in Latin, French, and English works, especially a Latin Chronicle of the history of England to 1199; romance, in the Chaucer texts, *Ipomadon*, and a French *Tristan*; warfare and chivalry, in the Vegetius, Lull, and Worcester; statecraft, in a copy of the *De Regimine Principum* of Giles of Rome. Most of these works are discussed elsewhere in this volume, which indirectly witnesses to their importance as an element of royal self-definition.

It is tempting to see Richard III as the face of the future—in respect, at least, of his predilection for books in English. The contrast with the much fuller libraries of Henry VIII is striking. In 1535, at Richmond Palace, an incomplete inventory of Henry VIII's manuscripts and printed books was made for an unnamed French visitor. Among its 123 entries, the only English translation is a Bible (Carley 2000: 9, inv. no. 19). Of the 1,450 books associated with the libraries at Westminster, in the inventory of 1542 (Carley 2000: 35–226), only sixteen are identifiably translations into English. One includes 'two bookes written in tholde Saxon tonge' (inv. no. 622), and anticipates developments later in the century, when Anglican churchmen began publishing OE texts as a way of giving the new Church a proper historical pedigree and proving its legitimacy. Also featured are translations of the three Old Testament books of Solomon and of Luther's version of the Magnificat, by Miles Coverdale (inv. nos. 196, 545), and of two other books with religious interest, by Richard Hyrd (inv. no. 254) and Thomas Paynell (inv. no. 507); two educational texts, by Christopher St German (inv. nos.

165–6) and Robert Whittington (inv. no. 552); a fifteenth-century manuscript featuring two translations of hunting manuals, one by Edward, Duke of York (see above pp. 99–100; inv. no. 235); a translation by Henry Parker, Lord Morley (see further p. 397 below); and—another abiding royal interest—a translation of a manual on warfare by Sir Richard Morison (inv. no. 434). Relating to the world of royal politics is the translation of a letter from Henry VIII to Emperor Charles V concerning the Council of Mantua of 1536 (inv. nos. 197–9), and Thomas Cranmer's of a text in support of the royal divorce (inv. no. 164; a copy of the original is inv. no. 102).

In the catalogues, the number of original works in English, mostly written by Henry's contemporaries, very slightly exceeded the number of translations. Even so, overall only about 2 per cent of Henry's books were in English; most were in Latin or French. French, as this volume has elsewhere noted, was for much of the Middle Ages an important element of aristocratic self-definition. The emphasis on French in Henry's collection relates directly to the fact that Edward IV had set up the royal library in direct emulation of the Burgundian libraries he had seen when in exile. Henry VII, who married Edward's daughter, continued the trends Edward had initiated. He and his son both appointed Flemings to the office of royal librarian, so that the 1535 inventory reflects their tastes at least as much as their masters'. The new royal tastes 'changed the direction of English poetry in the sixteenth century': witness the translations, among others, of Lord Berners (Kipling 1977: 11, 16).

Henry's library, then, is a fascinating mix of interests: hunting manuals and treatises on warfare (standard elements of royal self-definition throughout the later Middle Ages) partner writing in the latest Burgundian styles. It is, however, the two translations relating to the divorce and the new religious establishment which show most clearly the new world which the monarch was in process of creating, and of which translators of every stripe would be forced to take account.

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5

Subjects of Translation

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5.1 The Bible

David Lawton

The Bible and the Biblical

Sacred Scripture is ceaselessly mutable, in its physical forms, and in the conceptions readers have of the singularity or multiplicity of the books that compose it and the ways in which they should be read. The Bible as we most commonly experience it today, as a single portable volume with its books in a fixed order, and with chapter divisions, was the invention of Paris workshops in the 1220s and 1230s, and addressed the need of the new evangelical orders, especially Dominicans, for an individual source of authority, reference, and preaching material. To further facilitate access these Bibles displayed a variety of scribal methods, incorporating Jerome's prologues to the Vulgate, but dispensing with the twelfth-century gloss. The Paris Bible, if we may so call it, is the key moment of textual self-consciousness in Bible production since the time of Jerome himself. It influenced posterity, especially in the order and format of the twenty-one full copies of the Wycliffite Bible, the major Bible translation before the Reformation, and the major English translation venture of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries; but the Paris Bible remained merely one Bible among many until its major features, in translation, were standardized and disseminated by printing in the sixteenth century. Martin Luther and William Tyndale in the sixteenth century represent the third moment in the development of the Bible, as we now know it: heirs both of the Paris Bible and of the labours of St Jerome, they are often represented as latter-day Jeromes, struggling to unify their Hebrew and Greek source texts and translate them into their vernaculars as Jerome had done into Latin. These three moments—Jerome, the Paris Bible, and Luther and Tyndale—represent three points in over a thousand years at which one might with most justification think of the Bible in the terms to which we are conditioned, as a single and comprehensive book.

At all other points those terms would be so misleading as to blind us to the Bible's history between Jerome and Tyndale. Apart from Paris Bibles, there are indeed complete Bibles throughout this long period: called 'pandects', they are often enormous books, expensive and venerated, and they are the exception. For the rest, the Bible comes in all shapes and sizes, with or without gloss, more often in part than whole—to the extent, indeed, that the singular noun is inapposite, and one needs always to read the implicit plural *ta biblia*, 'the little books'. Nor are they so little: individual Gospels; Pauline epistles; Acts; the first five, six, or seven books of the Old Testament (Pentateuch, Hexateuch, Heptateuch); Kings; Proverbs and Ecclesiasticus; the Book of Revelation (Apocalypse)—all these,

among others, often (and especially in the later Middle Ages) with commentary, circulate independently; above all, the Psalter, both in Latin and in translation (generally with Latin and gloss), is seen, for educated layperson and cleric alike, as a synecdoche of the entire Bible, a devotional holy of holies. All these may circulate in the canonical Vulgate text, in translation, in paraphrase or summary, in pictorial versions with sometimes little text (such as the Apocalypse books of the thirteenth century), or in a plethora of retellings, such as Gospel harmonies or the numerous poetic and prose versions of highlights from Genesis. This activity varies a good deal across time and place, and needs to be studied carefully and in context. The amount of textual production is almost inconceivably vast, and in no way justifies claims that medieval people were somehow Bible-deprived. It is clear, however, that no such study can be insightful unless it recognizes that the medieval boundaries of the biblical far exceed the canonical text.

This is not, *mutatis mutandis*, a cultural situation that should strike us as historically remote. We need think back barely 100 years. The present writer's working-class grandparents, for example, were born in the industrial north of England in 1890. They had several Bibles: a great family Bible, never read nor opened except at times of birth or death, when it served as a register of the generations, a domestic intimation of the Book of Life; and more than one serviceable and portable copy of the King James Bible, which sometimes accompanied them to church. The writer's grandfather had a tiny New Testament, given to all soldiers who served in the First World War (recalling Cromwell's New Model Army, who marched with the Geneva 'Soldiers' Bible' in their knapsacks). His grandmother owned a Book of Psalms awarded her at Sunday school: since these, however, were in the King James version, she preferred to use her Book of Common Prayer, with Miles Coverdale's translation, which she habitually consulted, and she knew best the Old Testament lessons and Gospel set for the Sundays of the liturgical year. She occasionally studied a single book of the Bible using a commentary, Scripture Notes, for the purpose. She also had a fund of Bible stories, mostly learned by heart in distinctive oral versions from Sunday school or sermons, and a house full of retellings of the life of Jesus and of Old Testament highlights: these were generally essays in florid Victorian didacticism, with sternly sentimental illustrations. They were the versions she read for choice, and taught her grandchildren. Sometimes they shaded into similar works by similar authors that burst the bonds of Bible narrative; these took their place alongside the favourite book of all, *Pilgrim's Progress*, which she viewed with some accuracy as being more biblical than the Bible. All seemed to her more or less equally biblical, a continuum in which the Bible itself, while revered, was not especially privileged.

This cultural situation is quite comparable to the medieval, thoroughly biblical even when the Bible as we now conceive it is closed or absent. That late Victorian generation, not long gone, would have understood perfectly the biblical function of texts that may appear supplementary to the text of the Bible. The difference between medieval and modern is much less in the literary types of such

supplementary texts than in their currency among a mass readership, whereas their medieval precursors reached a much smaller, select or fortunate readership that passed it to others by word of mouth; and this is to be referred to the history of literacy in general rather than to that of the English Bible in particular, important though the Bible has been as a shaping force in that wider history.

A Late Medieval Instance of Biblical Supplement: the Vernon 'Disputison'

Many British medieval manuscripts have precisely this function as biblical supplement, none more important than a manuscript of *c.* 1390, the Vernon manuscript, which will be discussed more fully below. Containing not one whole text of Bible translation, Vernon is a compendium of the more broadly biblical. Among its copies of some of the great texts of fourteenth-century England—*Piers Plowman*, *The Prick of Conscience*, *The Scale of Perfection*—appears a poem in twenty sixteen-line stanzas entitled 'A disputison bytwene a Cristene mon and a Jew' (ed. Furnivall 1973b: 484–93). This poem arguably enacts both the significance and the absence of the biblical.

In it, two 'clerkes of divinite' meet to debate 'in þe toun of Parys'; in the second stanza, one is identified as an English Christian, the other a Jew ('To his trouþe hedde he tiht [held] | Trewe as þe tre', 27–8). After the Christian speaks briefly of the nativity of Jesus, the Jew replies that God had no son: 'þer is O god, and no mare' (51). The Christian responds indignantly, accusing the Jew of unbelief, not in the Bible, but rather in the Mass, and threatening him with immediate physical violence and eternal damnation. The Jewish doctor then wagers three tuns of wine that he can summon up a vision of Christ crucified: 'So const þou not do | For al þi clergye' (93–4).

The Christian prepares for the test by attending Matins and Mass, leaving with a consecrated wafer concealed on his person. The Jewish doctor and he enter, through a cleft in a hillside, a perfect palace of romance in which they find King Arthur and his knights. They pass beyond it to a grand nunnery. Here a feast is served; the Christian declines to eat or drink. Then there appears among them a Passion scene: 'þe mon þat most was of miht' (239) is hanging on the Cross; beside him, weeping, stand Mary, John, and 'oþer apostles of prys' (233–4). The Christian then holds up his eucharistic wafer: if you are God, he says, 'here þi soul mai þou se' (251). The building immediately bursts asunder, and the two doctors are returned to the hillside. The Jew confesses 'þo [those who] þer are forþ fled | Was fendes in feere [together] | Non good, but al ille' (267–9); at once he acknowledges the doctrine of the Trinity, converts to Christianity, and is reconciled with the Christian.

What has this to do with the biblical? On the face of it, not much. It is about the sacraments—penance and the Eucharist. The presence of the material Host in a tussle between Christian and Jew brings to mind later work such as the Croxton *Play of the Sacrament*, in which sceptical Jews are also converted; the meeting of Christian and infidel Other figures in other romances, for example, in *Golagrus*

and Gawain or *The Turk and Gawain* (see Lawton 2003a, 2003b). At stake here are Christian doctrines of the Trinity and, especially, of transubstantiation, both extra-biblical. Doubts of these doctrines are imputed to Jews elsewhere, as in the Croxton Play: it is not hard to realize, in fact, that the doubts are transferred from Christians who recognize the very non-biblical nature of the doctrines.

Conversion, transubstantiation, and translation are related tropes; in this linkage, we may hear a contest, first mooted in the thirteenth century, between the Bible and the Mass that resounds for centuries: in the late fourteenth century, for example, in the Lollard William Thorpe's claim that reading the one confers more spiritual benefit than partaking of the other (Thorpe 1993). How is the Jew able to provide a simulacrum of what he does not believe in, the Passion of Christ? Because his Bible allows him to do so: in the servant songs of Isaiah, notably, it looks forward, as the running titles to the King James Bible insist, to 'the ministry and passion of Christ'. Behind this, again, we hear the debates between Christians and Jews that occurred in thirteenth-century France, notably the academic engagement with Jewish teaching by Andrew of St Victor (on whom see Smalley 1952: 112–95). The setting, Paris, is marked: this is the place for major theological debate in the early thirteenth century, and also for the production of new Bibles. The subject of that engagement was not sacramental theology but biblical exegesis: how could Christianity be truer than its mainly Jewish Scriptures? The question entails close scrutiny of Jewish sources, which passes into the mainstream of biblical study and paraphrase, as in Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*, regularly quarried by translators as a biblical supplement (see further below). The answer lies not in the intricacies of exegesis but in sacerdotal practice, in the authorizing sign of the Host and what it stands for, the Body of Christ, of which the ecclesiastically sanctioned token, the wafer, is more trustworthy than an individual vision of the Passion itself.

The Bible therefore plays no formal part in the Vernon 'Disputison', but it is actually part of the poem's subject. Any revelation it may be seen to provide is under licence from the body of Christ in the form of the Church and the form in which the Church uniquely authorizes it, the Host. The Vernon poem makes its point through a sequence of codes and substitutions, but it is entirely orthodox: the body of Christ is removed from its textual place in sacred Scripture and projected through the present of the Church's sacramental practice. It does not cease to be biblical—the Bible is originary or at least indispensable to its authority; but there is a rift between the biblical and the textual. The biblical belongs to ecclesial practice and therefore primarily to its privileged community of practitioners (and interpreters), the clergy. It is not a book that can simply be opened and checked, but a key sign of sacred history subsisting in Christ's own sacrificial body. Just as that body may be multiplied and copied in the Host, simulacra that retain the identity of the original, so the Bible may be dispersed and renewed through a field of new texts that tell all or some of its story. The tiny Vernon 'Disputison' is a troubled microcosm of the whole huge

manuscript's enterprise, to be biblical in spiritual function and in vernacular translation without being, in the main, biblical text.

Late Medieval Contexts of the Wycliffite Bible

In emphasizing substitutions for the textually biblical, this discussion has so far foregrounded the later Middle Ages. No period suffers more misrepresentation in standard outline histories of the Bible and its translation. In no historiography has the myth of the dark ages, and Petrarchan ideology of the Renaissance, survived longer and more uncritically, despite the efforts of specialists. The Wycliffite Bible, the subject of this subsection, and more fully discussed below, is the major translation project of the last decades of the fourteenth century, and its influence extends to, and beyond, the Reformation. Yet it is routinely presented as the first flicker of light following the post-Conquest shutting down of Anglo-Saxon projects of biblical translation. That flicker then becomes a false dawn before the true glorious sunrise of a Renaissance recast, by virtue of Erasmus and his Greek New Testament, as the Reformation. The hero of the account then becomes Tyndale, not unjustly, but he is represented as an unparalleled and unprecedented landmark in succession to Cædmon and, with luck, Ælfric. This sketch is hardly parodic: in David Norton's *History of the Bible as Literature* (1993) the later Middle Ages are dispatched under the heading 'Slaves of the Vulgate'; by contrast, the chapter dealing with Tyndale and his successors is entitled 'Creators of English', which makes for a very crude teleology, at the expense of distorting the entire late medieval enterprise, diverse as that is, and places the weight of epistemic change on the effects of printing and of scholarly philological activity. Yet change occurs quickly when there is a readiness for it; books become popular where desirous readers already exist. There is a famous story about Essex Lollards who went to London in 1530 to see the protestant printer Robert Barnes. They aimed to persuade him to publish the Wycliffite Bible, sections of which they owned in manuscript; he sold them, instead, a Tyndale New Testament. This story is often cited to record the triumph of the new (Hammond 1995: 95); but of course it shows at least with equal force the persistence of the old, and a continuity between manuscript and printed book, 'Wyclif' and Tyndale, that has until recently been unacknowledged or, indeed, denied.

When, then, this section lays greater stress on the extraordinary persistence of the Wycliffite Bible and its importance in a properly complex historical account, this is not from any wish to derogate from Tyndale's pre-eminence as a Bible translator, though it is to acknowledge the complexity of Tyndale's relation to his Wycliffite precursors. This section argues that the Wycliffite Bible begins the history of a continuous English Bible; and the period of its translation (*c.* 1370–1400) coincides with one of the greatest flowerings of other types of partial biblical translation and paraphrase, or what Dryden called metaphrase, as well as biblically grounded imaginative writing such as *Piers Plowman* and *Pearl*. These very different forms of activity occurring together testify to a remarkable

upsurge in the vernacular, and the confidence with which those writing it turned to Scripture. It is the last historical moment at which imaginative reworking of the Bible and its close translation can be said to arise from a common culture; and if one were looking for a renaissance innocent of all others, simply in the history of English biblical translation and paraphrase, this is the generation on which one would logically focus. In it, a series of reading communities are formed that will ultimately sustain Tyndale's enterprise. It is not a false start, nor even a 'premature Reformation' (the title of Anne Hudson's magisterial 1988 account of Wycliffism). It is the beginning of the main event.

The Wycliffite Bible (WB) grows out of a late fourteenth-century culture with a consuming interest in biblical text and, especially, biblical narrative, even when many written forms expressive of that interest are far from being translations. The project of Bible translation, as the translators of WB practised it, progressively effaces its cultural affinities with other types of biblical work that nonetheless helped produce it. In this section, therefore, WB occupies an absolutely central place, both in its own right and, as we shall see, because of the abrupt, not to say brutal, transition from the relatively free intellectual environment that allowed WB to be produced to that instigated by Archbishop Arundel's ban on unauthorized English Bible translation in the Constitutions of 1409. The effect was to discourage imaginative production almost as much as textual editing and translation, and the sword of orthodoxy served to cleave a larger, more open intellectual community into anxious factions (see discussion in Watson 1995).

For all that that the medieval Bible was not a book but a collection of texts, and that 'a moderately educated man . . . a cleric by definition, seldom saw the Bible as a whole' (Shepherd 1969: 363), a project of comprehensive vernacular Bible translation was probably an inevitable response to the Paris Bible as disseminated by friars from the 1240s. The project and its suppression both came from a changing clerical or clerkly class that increasingly saw the vernacular as a language of choice; it is part of a history that includes parliamentary, legal, and bureaucratic adoption of English as a language of record in and from the second half of the fourteenth century (see further discussion in §1.1 above). The history of the ongoing project is as unstable as, over time, is the definition of orthodoxy; its production and suppression are both indicative of the conflicts and divisions within that clerical class, which ranges from priestly or episcopal theologians, whose academic debate relies on Latin, to government servants, many in minor orders, whose bureaucratic activity increasingly presumes on English. Wyclif was an Oxford theologian; Arundel a prelate and royal Chancellor; Tyndale, at the end of the period, a renegade member of the same class, the lineal descendant of Lollard scholars such as Peter Payne who took refuge in Europe. Wyclif, the academic who writes and thinks in Latin, at least sponsors or inspires vernacular Bible translation; Arundel, who suppresses it, is an ideological pillar of a regime that enhances vernacularity, and who inaugurates that regime with a biblically grounded sermon, which one chronicler, Walsingham, says he gave in English, and whose theme, from 1 Samuel 9: 17, is given in Latin by another, Adam Usk, as

'vir dominabitur eis' (Usk 1997: 68–9). The history contains many such ironies, contradictions, and paradoxes. Many of these may be gauged by comparing two key statements of principle concerning biblical text and vernacular translation: the so-called General Prologue to the Wycliffite Bible, a manifesto drawn up after the completion of the Later Version (LV) and appended to a mere handful of manuscripts (ed. Forshall and Madden 1982); and Bishop Reginald Pecock's sincere and ill-fated attempt to provide a vernacular answer to enduring Wycliffite ideas in his *Repressor* of *c.* 1443–55 (Pecock 1860).

The Question of Vernacular Translation in the Wycliffite Bible and Pecock

Wyclif was not a literalist but an 'ultra-realist' who believed that Scripture was an idea in the mind of God: *sola Scriptura*, then, was not entirely a textual principle (Simpson 2002: 474). One possibility is that 'Wycliffite Bible' is a misnomer, and that the translation becomes so only when his followers take it up and it is irretrievably associated with them. Yet a vernacular Bible is at the core of the Wycliffite movement, however defined. Chapter 15 of the General Prologue deals with the principles and methods of translation, setting out the four stages of work by the 'symple creature', the translator:

For þese resons and oþere, wiþ comune charite to saue alle men in oure rewme . . . a symple creature haþ translatid þe Bible out of Latyn into English. First þis symple creature hadde myche trauaile wiþ diuerse felawis and helperis to gedere manie elde biblis, and oþere doctouris and comune glosis, and to make oo Latyn bible sumdel trewe; and þanne to studie it of þe newe, þe text wiþ þe glose, and oþere doctouris as he miȝte gete, and speciali Lire on þe elde testament þat helpide ful myche in þis werk. þe þridde tyme to counseile wiþ elde gramariens and elde dyuynis of harde wordis and harde sentencis, hou þo miȝten best be vndurstonden and translatid. þe fourþe tyme to translate as cleerli as he coude to þe sentence [according to the meaning], and to haue manie gode felawis and kunnynge [knowledgeable] at þe correcting of þe translacioun.   (Hudson 1978: 67)

The first stage, the establishment of a reliable text, is codicological and philolog-ical; the second is the highly orthodox activity of consulting the *Glossa Ordinaria* and Nicholas of Lyre; the third is the translator's work of trying to understand cruces in the Latin text, with both grammatical and theological aids to hand; the fourth is the translator's work of rendering Latin into intelligible English. There is a short discussion, with examples, of means of translating various Latin constructions and parts of speech, such as the ablative absolute, and the chapter concludes with lexical issues 'in translating of wordis equiuok, þat is þat haþ manie significacions vndur oo lettre'. Both lexical and grammatical procedures are unexceptionable, and do not deviate much from the conventional. The lexical rule, above all, is to follow 'þe sense eiþer [or] vndurstonding of þe autour' (71) and syntactic issues give the primary rule:

First it is to knowe þat þe beste translating is, out of Latyn into English, to translate aftir þe sentence [syntax/meaning] and not oneli aftir þe wordis, so þat þe sentence be as opin

eiþer openere in English as in Latyn, and go not fer fro þe lettre; and if þe lettre mai not be suid [followed] in þe translating, let þe sentence euere be hool and open, for þe wordis owen to serue to þe entent and sentence, and ellis þe wordis ben superflu eiþer false.

(68)

The use of 'open' here follows Richard Rolle's usage in his much-read English Psalter of *c.* 1340: it is largely a question of clarifying sense by subordination where a direct transcription of the Latin would introduce a new ambiguity (for texts, see Rolle 1884; *IoV* 245–6; for comment, Lawton in *CHMEL*). Rolle does this even though lexically he seeks to stay as close to 'þe lettre' as possible. The Early Version (EV) of WB does it less, and adheres so closely to Latin construction and word-order as to be at times unintentionally opaque; LV does it more, and the Prologue presumably glosses its practice in the light of experience. Its words are merely an application of the Ciceronian rubric to follow the sense rather than the words; but, as Rita Copeland points out (1991: 51–2), the application to Scripture is in audacious breach of Jerome's notion that Scripture is an exceptional case where the word order must be observed as closely as possible (this was EV's practice, not LV's). Jerome appears in the historical defence the translator mounts of vernacular translation and the case he makes for the suitability of English for translating the Bible (into a form 'as trewe and as opin ȝea and opinliere, in English þan it is in Latin') and teaching it ('to a symple man wiþ Goddis grace and greet trauail, men miȝten expoune myche openliere and shortliere þe Bible in English þan þe elde greete doctouris han expounid it in Latyn', 68–9). As well as precedents in other vernaculars, English translators have a history dating from Anglo-Saxon:

For if worldli clerkis loken wel here croniclis and bookis, þei shulden fynde þat Bede translatide þe Bible and expounide myche in Saxon, þat was English eiþer comoun langage of þis lond in his tyme. And not oneli Bede but also king Alured . . . translatide in hise laste daies þe bigynnyng of þe Sauter into Saxon, and wolde more if he hadde lyued lengere.

(71)

All this is plausible, persuasive, and potentially orthodox. These are the well-tried commonplaces about translation, and make a good defence against 'worldli clerkis'. The polemical tone here is muted in comparison to chapter 12 of the prologue (Forshall and Madden 1982: 1. 43–9; extracts are in *IoV* 92–4), in which major damage to orthodox institutional affiliation occurs. Here the 'symple creature' is talking about interpretation, and staying mainly within the protocols of Augustinian orthodoxy. The letter of the Bible must be interpreted in charity, by Christian creatures striving to mirror their Creator. And here, in an incendiary peroration, occurs the famous address to 'symple men', who are assured that, 'with good lyvynge and meeknesse and stodyinge of the Bible', they 'moun sumdel undirstonde the text of Holy Writ and edefie myche hemself and other men', but are urged to beware 'of pride, and veyn jangling and chyding' when arguing against 'proude clerkis of scole and veyn religious', who are 'enemyes of Goddis lawe':

And evere be ye redy, whatever man techith eny treuthe of God, to take that meekely and with greet thankingis to God; and if eny man in erthe either [or] aungel of hevene techith you the contrarie of Holy Writ either enything ayens resoun and charite, fle fro him ... , and holde ye stedfastly to liif and deeth the treuthe and freedom of the Hooly Gospel of Jhesu Crist, and take ye mekely mennis seyingis and lawis onely in as myche as thei acorden with Holy Writ and good conscience and noo ferthere, for liif neither for deth.

(*IoV* 94)

This puts institutional affiliation to the sword, on behalf not so much of the individual but rather of a community, at least a spiritual community, of simple men. The idea that an angel of heaven might speak in contravention of holy writ is scandalous, the medieval equivalent of a *Satanic Verses* scenario. Beyond the commonplaces and the rhetoric of agreement is a kind of willed nonconformity that cannot be unsaid: simple men who study the Bible are set against clergy. The textual becomes, as it were, doctrinal, and a bulwark against institutional malpractice. We are only a step from that obstinate certainty, a refusal to read in any other than their way, that characterizes later Christian sects we now call fundamentalist, who read the Bible but refuse to debate it, and see difference as ungodly. Yet such certainty is at odds with the rest of the Prologue. The supreme text is not a given: it must be found, invented, and produced in the light of institutional best practice (which includes its sanctioned glosses). The translator must worry about conveying the author's intention as the interpreter must worry about reading in charity. However simple this may be, it follows Wyclif in conjecturing something antecedent to the text, something not quite inherent in it. The text itself, as the Prologue insists, is always already translated; it requires and accommodates multiple efforts to translate it; and, in most Wycliffite Bible manuscripts, exists only in part (glossing is a concession to incompleteness). Even as the Prologue raises its battle cry to divide the institution and challenge those who exercise authority within it, it recognizes that holy writ is produced within an institutional praxis. Thus, as it calls for silent dissent, it enters into a vocal struggle for power. Its Bible, however 'open' and addressed to 'simple' readers, enters into the very contingencies of history that it would like to repudiate, its shifting text not after all identical with an unchanging and inviolable Book of Life.

One might expect orthodoxy to have an easier task; but a heterodox challenge begins new processes of differentiation that bring with them discursive dilemmas. Pecock's *Repressor of Over Much Blaming of the Clergy* is a locus of these, not merely in its reception—his works were burned, and he was imprisoned—but also in its often fair-minded arguments. Pecock sets out to answer directly the Wycliffite notion that 'simple men' may safely attain salvation by reading the Bible in English, and especially to refute the General Prologue's warning against clergy who contradict Scripture. In a now familiar passage, Pecock gives the case of a 'great clerk' who studies the Bible in a library and then preaches on it. The words he cites are to be attributed to their source, the Bible in the library, not to the preacher; if the preacher's words fail to conform accurately to the said

Bible, it is his words and not the Bible's that should be glossed in order to bring them into harmony. So Pecock admits the text, and subjects the 'great clerk' to it; but the text is certainly not supreme, simply by virtue of being a text. For the most important teaching exists before it is written, in an 'inward book' that far surpasses any 'outward book':

And sithen it is so, that alle the trouthis of lawe of kinde [nature] whiche Crist and hise Apostlis taughten and wroten weren bifor her teching and writing and weren writen bifore in thilk solempnest inward book or inward writing of resounis doom [judgment], passing alle outward bookis in profite to men for to serve God . . . it muste needis folewe that noon of the seid treuthis is groundid in the wordis of writingis of Crist or of the Apostlis, but in the seid inward preciose book and writing buried in mannis soule, out of which inward book and writing mowe be taken bi labour and studiyng of clerkis mo conclusiouns and treuthis and governauncis of lawe of kinde and Goddis moral lawe and service than myghten be writen in so manie bokis whiche schulden fille the greet chirche of Seint Poul in Londoun.   (*IoV* 101–2)

It is in this sense that the book must be read in accordance with charity; and all such readings for Pecock are subject to the scrutiny of reason (Simpson 2002: 472 speaks of Pecock's 'faith in reason above revelation'). It is the Church, in its apostolic succession the guarantor of Christ's body both in the sacraments and its own incorporation, that may arbitrate on behalf of reason. All texts are 'produced' texts, including biblical ones, which are holy books among other holy books and other outward signs of inward truth. It was Pecock's very appetite for those other vernacular holy books that led to his arrest. He should have lived in the late fourteenth century, where he would have appreciated the cornucopia of vernacular holy books such as are collected in the Vernon manuscript, and understood precisely how that manuscript could be represented as *Salus Anime* or 'sowlehele', salvation. Though clergy must be textually and exegetically responsible, it is nevertheless privileged as a source of reference and indispensable as the keeper of sacramental and other, non-textual, signs. Yet, though Pecock's account subjects the Bible to divine intelligence, and disposes it in a field of other religious books and signs, it does not entirely remove its authority or its physical presence. The great clerk still needs his visits to the library. And the book in the library is of course under guard, quarantined, associating only with those qualified— according to reason, which is to say clergy—to read it. The value placed on it by such confinement is clearly greater than its subjection to 'inward books' may suggest. If this is not a dilemma, it is at least a conundrum of clerical authority in relation to the Bible.

The Biblical in Anglo-Saxon From Cædmon to Ælfric

We see this conundrum, or duality, in the very earliest account of Bible translation in English. At this point of the section, in order to give a fair account of the history before the WB and Tyndale, we need to redefine Bible translation to include paraphrase and some imaginative renderings such as the

fourteenth-century poem *Patience*, which follows the Vulgate Book of Jonah quite closely in a text that does not set out to hold a vernacular mirror to the biblical text. For there is an Anglo-Saxon tradition of such production; and its mainspring is the cowherd Cædmon. Bede's account of Cædmon (recently discussed in Daniell 2003: 40) could not more clearly privilege voice over text, for Cædmon is illiterate. Here is his hymn, as mediated by the Anglo-Saxon translator of Bede's *Historia*:

> Nu scylun hergan hafænricæs Uard,
> Metudæs mæcti end His modgidanc,
> uerc Uuldurfadur, sue He uundra gihuæs,
> eci Dryctin, or astelidæ.
> He ærist scop ælda barnum
> heben til hrofe, haleg Scepen.
> Tha middungeard moncynnæs Uard,
> eci Dryctin, æfter tiadæ
> firum foldu, Frea allmectig.
>
> (ed. Hamer 1970: 121–3)

Now must we praise the Guardian of heaven, | The power and conception of the Lord, | And all his works, as he, eternal Lord, | Father of glory, started every wonder. | First he created heaven as a roof, | The holy Maker, for the sons of men. | Then the eternal Keeper of mankind | Furnished the earth below, the land for men, | God and everlasting Lord.

This is stirring and wonderful poetry—for Bede, miraculous. It has the potency of the foundational: Anglo-Saxon poetry is born praising a God it cannot parse. Understandably, its doctrine is uncontroversial: God is creator of heaven and earth. Less predictably, Cædmon's hymn seems innocent of Christian narrative, to the extent that it does not mention a Son of the Father. And that is the point: Cædmon's hymn, subjected to the judgment of 'many learned men', is an example of an 'inward book', 'a grace from heaven and granted by God', without an inkling of an outward book. His hymn, though miraculous, is merely a basis for admission as an honorary, an ordinand, to biblical literacy. For his reward, in the gift of the Abbess Hild, is 'that he should be taught the whole sequence of sacred Scripture'. He does not know it until he has already sung of it. To receive it, Cædmon must also 'abandon the secular habit and take that of a monk', whereupon he will be both qualified and empowered, 'turning it over like a clean beast ruminating', and converting 'sacred Scripture' into 'the sweetest poetry'. Never has poetic *afflatus* been placed lower in the Adamic food chain. On the one hand, the Church encourages and endorses free play, imaginative poetry compatible with Scripture, in tune with Wyclif's 'idea in the mind of God'. On the other hand, it guards, preserves, and demands a ticket of entry to the sacred text, the Bible, on which the free play of literature is grounded and to which it serves as no more than basic admission. The biblical stands, typically of its myriad medieval forms, at once concealed and revealed: *in enigmate*.

The Christianizing of England was a physical labour. It was carried out over generations by dedicated men and women who surrounded themselves with material objects, the most sacred of which were Bibles. The Christian culture they established would long associate the lives of saintly persons with the Bible and read each as a synecdoche of the other. When St Cuthbert was buried in 687, a copy of St John's Gospel was placed in his coffin with him (Daniell 2003: 43)—probably not in some pagan-seeming hope of providing him with reading for the afterlife, but rather as a token of his value in an equation of saint's body and holy writ as objects of veneration and as examples of incarnate Word. Cuthbert's disciple Bede began an English translation of John that was cut short by his own death in 735. We know what was in Cuthbert's coffin because it was opened in 1104, in the place where it would find its final rest: after being exhumed and enshrined at Lindisfarne in 698, it was moved in 875 by monks fleeing from Viking invasion. The body roamed northern England for seven years before being received at Chester-le-Street in 882, and the monks bore with them their other key sacred possessions, including the Lindisfarne Gospels (compiled at Lindisfarne by Eadfrith, who became bishop there in 698). This is one of the greatest books of Anglo-Saxon Bible-making, part of a tradition of superlative British book-making based in special centres (like the Book of Kells, produced at Aidan's shrine), and international in its scope. The Lindisfarne Gospels bear indications of Italian production, and the equally exceptional codex, the Codex Aminiatus, made at Monkwearmouth by a team that included Bede, ended up in Italy (de Hamel 2001: 33–4). Both are part of a continuous history of material exchange and physical movement through space that allows us to glimpse how 'translation' can apply both to textual work and the relocating of saints' bodies, such as Cuthbert's. In the case of the Lindisfarne Gospels, geographic, physical translation is succeeded by linguistic. The scale and beauty of the book might lead to a conclusion that its function was to be venerated, not read; in fact, however, it seems to have served for use as well as ornament, for its famous English interlinear glosses, translating the Latin word by word, were added by Aldred in Chester-le-Street between 946 and 948. Their addition, well into the third century of the codex's history, testifies to strong intervening traditions of vernacular work, and to a growing assertiveness on its behalf. Interlinear glosses as found in Lindisfarne, or in Psalters such as Lambeth, Eadwine's, Arundel, or Vespasian, lead to, and in some cases may be contemporary with, Ælfric's prose summaries of biblical books and the verse translations of Psalms 51 to 150 found collected in parallel text (following prose translations of Psalms 1 to 50) in the Paris Psalter.

Cædmon's hymn already hints at the ease with which sacred subjects and the poetic combine. It is probably a mistake in reviewing the biblical literature of Anglo-Saxon England to insist on their separation, or to differentiate too closely between translation, paraphrase, summary, and retelling. These modes form a continuum of activities that foster and feed on one another, from the word-by-word literal glossing of Gospels or Psalters to imaginative retelling or the

supplying of presumed lacunae in biblical narrative, such as the fall of the angels, and in all of it vernacular texts are served, nourished, and supported by Latin scholarly literature, homily, and commentary. In a religious framework, biblical and secular combine and blend: *Beowulf* beside *Judith*, the free retelling of the eponymous Old Testament book, in BL MS Cotton Vitellius A.xv; three poems about Christ beside 'The Wanderer' and 'The Seafarer' in the Exeter Book. King Alfred's vernacular prose translations, broad-ranging as they are, address the cultural needs of a nascent Christian society (see further §3.2 above). The project itself is biblical, inspired by the models of judge and king he found in the Old Testament. As a lawgiver Alfred sought to found something in the order of a ninth-century Christian shariah. He was the first English translator of the ten commandments and subsequent matter from Exodus 20–3 on the subject of law and its observance. There are, in sum, four overlapping types of Anglo-Saxon activity that have a bearing on biblical translation: glossing; the giving of law, either in acts such as Alfred's or, more commonly, in preaching (*lar* and *larspell*); prose englishing of individual books or passages, mostly in paraphrase, sometimes with commentary, and commonly in summary mode; and poetic retelling, generally by way of amplification and augmentation of the Vulgate text.

The great translator of the Bible into OE prose was Ælfric, Abbot of Eynsham from 990 to 994 and before that mass-priest of Cerne, Dorset. Ælfric wrote for his extended community—monastic, priestly, and lay, the West Saxon Church. His ambitious project was to give them whatever instruction they needed by way of preaching and other teaching (*larspell*) and biblical text (*godspell*): the two activities are really one. Much of the preaching and teaching is in Ælfric's rhythmical and mnemonic prose, developed perhaps from Latin models and certainly from vernacular alliterative poetry. The *Catholic Homilies* run in an informal series through the liturgical year—material sometimes known as *temporale*, though this word can have a more informal meaning (Pickering 1973: 425–9)—and may address a text of the day which is sometimes but not invariably biblical. In this work the Bible is first among equals, set amid other texts, including historical ones. *The Lives of the Saints*, the material known as *sanctorale*, compile an extensive (and extendable) series of hagiographic narratives. Ælfric also feels pressure, and accepts the need, to translate some books of the Bible, primarily the Heptateuch (Ælfric 1922). This is not word-for-word translation: Ælfric sometimes adds a phrase or clause of exegesis and has a common tendency to summarize. But it is nevertheless close enough to the Vulgate text to be set out in its modern edition in the verse-by-verse format unknown to Ælfric, though some verses may be represented only by a clause; at times, especially in key passages, it is precise and close translation. Here, for instance, is Ælfric's version of Genesis 1: 1–4, alongside the Vulgate Latin (ed. Fischer and Weber 1983) and the version in the Wycliffite Bible:

> On angynne gesceop God heofonan and eorðan.
> Seo eorðe soðlice wæs idel and æmti, and þeostra wæron ofer ðære nywelnysse

bradnysse; and Godes gast wæs geferod ofer wæteru.
God cwæð ða: Gewurðe leoht, and leoht wæarð geworht.
God geseah ða ðæt hit god wæs, and he todælde þæt leoht fram ðam ðystrum.

<div align="right">(Ælfric 1922: 81)</div>

> In principio creavit Deus caelum et terram
> terra autem erat inanis et vacua
> et tenebrae super faciem abyssi
> et spiritus Dei ferebatur super aquas
> dixitque Deus
> fiat lux et facta est lux
> et vidit Deus lucem quod esset bona
> et divisit lucem ac tenebras

<div align="right">(Vulgate)</div>

In the bigynnyng God made of nouȝt heuene and erthe. Forsothe the erthe was idel and voide, and derknessis weren on the face of depthe; and the Spiryt of the Lord was borun on the watris. And God seide, Liȝt be maad, and liȝt was maad. And God seiȝ the liȝt, that it was good, and he departide the liȝt fro derknessis

<div align="right">(ed. Forshall and Madden 1982: I, 79)</div>

Given that Ælfric also translated other parts of the Bible in the course of his *Homilies* and in response to needs as they arose, we might easily have had a Bible in Anglo-Saxon on the model of the fourth-century Gothic Bible. Yet Ælfric takes care to contradict any such expectation, insisting that his work is ad hoc, directed at specific areas of ignorance. It caters for knowledge of the Scriptures in part only to satisfy persistent demand:

Thou hast oft entreated me for English Scripture, and I gave it thee not so soone, but thou first with deeds hast importuned me therto; at what time thou didst so earnestly pray me for Gods love to preach unto thee at thine owne house: and when I was with thee, great mone thou madest that thou couldst get none of my writings. Now will I that thou have at least this little, sith knowledge is so acceptable unto thee, and thou wilt have it rather than be altogether without my bookes.

<div align="right">(Ælfric 1922: 16, as translated by William L'Isle)</div>

The source of the quotation is the prefatory letter on the Bible written by Ælfric to his aristocratic friend or patron Sigwerd, which heads the Old Testament translation in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc. 509. In it Ælfric can be seen already linking his biblical translation and his other teaching, pointing to the reciprocity of oral and written. He puts law and Scripture together in his mention of Moses: 'we will follow the order of Moses the great commanders bookes, who wrote as God himselfe directed in their privat conference while he abode with God upon mount Sinai forty daies together, and undertooke his law.' His letter begins by emphasizing the Bible as a record of holy lives: 'and very plaine it is in holy Scripture, that holy men employed in well doing were in this world held in good reputation, and as Saints now enjoy the kingdome of heaven, and the remembrence of them continueth for ever'; and ends by continuing the process of salvation history beyond the New

Testament text to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus and Vespasian in 70 CE. The interest in history leads to his categorization of the Bible's books into the conventional seven ages of the world, of which only the seventh is extra-biblical and to come: first, from Creation to Flood; second, from Noah to Abraham; third, from Isaac to David; fourth, from Solomon to Daniel; fifth, to the Incarnation; sixth, the life of Christ to the Last Judgment; seventh, the mystic last age. This classification becomes common in English *temporale* material. It furnishes a historical road map for reading the Bible's books, most of which Ælfric lists and briefly summarizes in the letter. As usual in Anglo-Saxon England, Ælfric's account of the Gospels is centred on and suffused in John, whose rewriting of the Genesis creation account fixes Christ as the figure of the entire Bible. So God 'spræc þurh witegan, þe witegodon ymbe Crist' (l. 46) [spoke also by the Prophets, who prophesied concerning Christ]; Joshua is a type of Christ, who led his people into the Promised Land; the Holy Trinity ('seo halige þrinnis', l. 36) makes both world and Bible. The Bible, metonymically, is Christ.

   Ælfric's work of translation is consistent with his entire culture; and the limits of biblical text are extended by the culture. It is not difficult to move between his brief and intensely patriotic prose summary of the story of Judith (Ælfric 1922: 48) and the richly imaginative poem *Judith* (ed. Hamer 1970: 136–57) that amplifies it in a retelling energized by the use of traditional poetic motifs:

> on ðæt dægred sylf; dynedan scildas,
> hlude hlummon. þæs se hlanca gefeah
> wulf in walde, and se wanna hrefn,
> wælgifre fugel: wiston begen
> þæt him ða þeodguman þohton tilian
> fylle on fægum; ac him fleah on last
> earn ætes georn, urigfeðera,
> salowigpada sang hildeleoð,
> hyrnednebba.
>
>   (204–12)

At break of day itself. The shields resounded, | Loudly rang out. The lean wolf in the wood | Rejoiced at this, and the dark raven too, | The slaughter-greedy bird; for they both knew | That warriors intended to supply them | With doomed men for a feast. Behind them flew | The eagle keen for carnage, dewy-winged, | With feathers dark; the horny-beaked one sang | A song of battle.

It is still less difficult to move between Ælfric's extra-biblical interest in Lucifer, who 'nolde þa habban his Scippend him to hlaforde, ne he nolde þurhwunian on ðære soþfæstnisse ðæs soþfæstan Godes sunu, þe hine gesceop fægerne' (87–91) [would not have his Maker to be Lord over him: nor continue in the truth of the true Sonne of God, who made him so faire], and *Genesis B*, a translation of the Old Saxon *Heliand* (Bradley 1982: 10–12), whose poetic account of the fall of the angels provides the only real precedent in English for Milton's Satan:

'Hwæt sceal ic winnan?' cwæð he. 'Nis me wihtæ þearf
hearran to habbanne; ic mæg mid handum swa fela
wundra gewyrcean; ic hæbbe geweald micel
to gyrwanne godlecran stol,
hearran on heofne. Hwy sceal ic æfter his hyldo ðeowian,
bugan him swilces geonordomes? Ic mæg wesan God swa he.'

<div align="right">(Whitelock 1967: 129, ll. 33–8)</div>

'Why am I to toil?' said he. 'I need have no master; I can work as many wonders with my hands. I have great power to prepare a more goodly throne, higher in heaven. Why am I to wait upon His favour, bow before Him with such homage? I can be a God as well as He.'

<div align="right">(Gordon 1970: 100)</div>

Beowulf, *The Battle of Maldon*, and the elegies are no more than half the story of Anglo-Saxon poetry. Much of it is directly biblical or extra-biblical (imagining parts of the Bible, or continuations of it, where the Bible text is silent, as with the angels' fall), such as *Genesis* and *Exodus*, *Daniel*, *The Fates of the Apostles*, the three different poems now entitled *Christ*, an apocryphal acts of *Andreas*, and *Juliana* and *Elene*, the last named both saints' lives. *Elene* is about St Helena's search for the true Cross, and has a theme in common with the greatest of all shorter Anglo-Saxon biblical poems, *The Dream of the Rood* (ed. Hamer 1970: 160–71), a free and wonderfully realized meditation on Gospel Crucifixion narratives, primarily Matthew 27. It is built on a simple visionary conceit: a narrator who, sleeping, dreams that he sees the Cross towering over the world. This is no longer the plain Cross of the Gospel, but its giant apotheosis, ornate, covered in gold and precious jewels, attended by angels. As the dreamer watches, however, it moves through its various appearances, becoming at times the Cross of Matthew's Gospel account, 'mid wætan bestemed, | beswyled mid swates gange' (22–3) [bedewed with blood and drenched with flowing gore]. It is a creature in mid-transfiguration—a tree, a glorious beacon, and then a voice that speaks to the dreamer of its days as a tree, cut down by men who made of it a spectacle for felons. Set on a hill, it sees approach 'Frean mancynnes' (33), the Lord of all mankind. Like the Rood itself, the young hero could have overwhelmed his enemies. Yet

strang and stiðmod; gestah He on gealgan heanne,
modig on manigra gesyhðe, þa He wolde mancyn lysan.
Bifode ic þa me se beorn ymbclypte

<div align="right">(40–2)</div>

resolute and strong at heart; he climbed onto the lofty gallows-tree, | Bold in the sight of many watching men, | When he intended to redeem mankind. | I trembled as the warrior embraced me.

The Cross, already grieving, stands firm; the warrior god mounts and dies: 'Weop eal gesceaft, | cwiðdon Cyninges fyll. Crist wæs on rode' (55–6) [All creation wept, | Bewailed the King's death; Christ was on the Cross]. The lord of victories ('sigora wealdend') is taken down; his corpse grows cold. The Cross is felled and thrown in a pit, where, at last, the Lord's servants find it and give it honour.

By the simple rhetorical device of prosopopoeia, the Cross, so caught up in the human, is humanized; and the voices of Cross and narrator all but merge in the knowledge of Christ's divine lordship and the difference this makes not only to their respective natures but to all Nature. The Cross addresses the narrator-poet as its 'dear warrior', 'hæleð min se leofa' (95). When his voice returns to posit a moral of hope for a glorious heaven, it echoes the Cross's persona as fellow warrior, as last retainer of a fallen Lord—but with a hope of homecoming: 'Nah ic ricra feala | freonda on foldan, ac hie forð heonon | gewiton of worulde dreamum, sohton him wuldres Cyning' (131–3) [I have on earth | Not many noble friends, but they have gone | Hence from earth's joys and sought the King of glory]. Both first-person voices have a similar interiority that is biblical: the combination of unbearable loss and hope found above all in the Psalms.

The Norman Conquest and Lanfrancian reforms make it impossible to speak of continuity from Anglo-Saxon culture through succeeding centuries; yet there are both cultural affinities and recoverings. Copying and recopying of OE texts continues through the eleventh century into the twelfth, and in monastic houses of the west and south-west there is glossing in the twelfth century and, for longer still, at least an antiquarian interest in conserving and rereading. The writing of unrhymed alliterative poetry either survives or is reinvented from manuscripts in libraries in the west of England: *Piers Plowman* is a descendant, direct or not, of Ælfric and *The Dream of the Rood*. Then in the sixteenth century, as Anglican scholars seek and research vernacular precedents, there is a new wave of collecting OE texts and manuscripts—Archbishop Parker acquires three Ælfric manuscripts for his library (Lawton in *CHMEL* 461). Just as the desire for poetic retellings of biblical narrative persists, so do various Ælfrician priorities, such as the organizing of *temporale* and lectionary material according to the seven ages of the world; avid interest in saintly lives as a kind of biblical counterpoint; some reticence about translating biblical text, but translation of individual books nonetheless; and a veneration for the Bible as a record, and embodiment, of Christ. Given the displacement of English by French and Latin in 1066, the evidence seems at first patchy or isolated; but there is strong evidence of major sustained activity in English by the later thirteenth century, and a positive efflorescence in the fourteenth.

The Biblical in Middle English: From Orrm to the Vernon Manuscript

The first important figure after Ælfric is Orrm, who worked in the East Midlands late in the twelfth century. Orrm's work, the *Orrmulum* (Orrm 1878), is a lectionary, setting out to translate all of the Gospel readings used in the Mass and provide an extensive gloss. Most notices of the poem refer to it as containing 'approximately twenty thousand' long lines (Morey 2000: 320), a total reached by counting *short* lines; the correct figure for long lines of unrhymed septenary is a little over 10,000. The extant text extends only through the first thirty-one biblical readings: Orrm's procedure is largely invariable, a close translation of the

biblical reading followed by a copious and sometimes eclectic commentary on it. He wrote at the request of a brother Augustinian canon, Walter, in the hope of gaining a wider audience who would follow his teaching 'Wiþþ þohht, wiþþ word, wiþþ dede', and with God's help (*Dedication*, 22):

> Icc hafe wennd [translated] intill Ennglissh
> Goddspelless hallȝhe lare [holy teaching],
> Affterr þatt little witt þatt me
> Min Drihhtin [lord] hafeþþ lenedd [granted].
>   (*Dedication*, 13–16)

Orrm's orthography is distinctive and consistent. Probably no writer known to have devised his own spelling system has ever escaped some imputation of eccentricity; but Orrm's reasons for doing so are both singular and ambitious. He fears that without the guidance of the system a reader might change a word by eliding or adding a syllable; he is equally punctilious in bringing to his readers' attention the filler words he uses to meet the demands of his strictly syllabic metre, for every teacher of the Gospel to 'laewedd follc' (lay folk) must 'wel ekenn maniȝ word [eke out many words] | Amang Godspelless wordess' (*Dedication*, 55–8). Future copyists should take care to copy every word and every letter equally, for all is 'hallȝhe lare' (*Dedication*, 95–114); Orrm's work deserves and shares the reverence accorded to the text it translates.

Were there ever such future copyists? The confidence and ambition of Orrm's work contrasts with the sole surviving manuscript, which is truly extraordinary: a compendium of irregular parchment strips, themselves presumably offcuts from the making of regular folios, assembled together and covered with Orrm's additions and corrections, which often run into the margins and around the main body of text. The visual impression is akin to that of proofs revised by reclusive and obsessive modernist authors, except that the pages themselves are of such disparate size and shape as to look like an ingeniously improvised collage of random rough notes. Orrm's nineteenth-century editors merit more praise than they receive for their noble labour in making sense of a text that remains, in spite of those labours, neglected and largely unread.

Yet its medieval fate may have been different. The oddity of the manuscript may explain its survival if it passed through the hands of Leland or Bale or their flunkeys; it was more likely to survive in this haphazard form than in the form of more orthodox and less unruly fair copies if any were made. We cannot know that they were not, or that Orrm's project remained incomplete as it now appears. If the *Orrmulum* is eccentric, it is so by virtue of being stunningly innovative as a work of English biblical translation after the Conquest. It is often both learned and, to modern ears, humane: Orrm is more open than most medieval commentary to Judaism and Jews, whose need to reform and repent is made to stand for his readers'; Adam, not Eve, is blamed for the Fall; the Gospel is seen throughout as a text that demands a new way of reading, especially of biblical reading, and Orrm's commentary sets out to teach it. Its tools are both orthodox

and sophisticated. Salvation history is presented in terms of the seven ages, as in Ælfric, and the Gospel text of the Mass is seen as cognate with, or metonymic of, the body of Christ himself (for a more detailed discussion see Lawton in *CHMEL* 464–6).

There is only one comparable lectionary in ME, the later (and less distinguished) *Northern Homily Cycle*, which is generally less careful in its translation (or paraphrase) of the biblical text and more standard in the patristic exegeses it summarizes (ed. Nevanlinna 1972–4; for brief comment, see p. 252 below; for fuller comment, Morey 2000: 323–30). It is also more influential than Orrm, extending (in all in twenty manuscripts) in three versions by a process of accretion and dialectal translation across the fourteenth century, and appearing in Midland dress (*c.* 1400) in both the Vernon and its sister Simeon manuscripts. In its earliest manuscript, in the College of Physicians, Edinburgh, it is found together with possibly the best known of all ME biblical poems, *Cursor Mundi* (ed. Morris 1961–6; see also Morey 2000: 99–107). This poem, much praised and anthologized for its literary qualities, is of immense scope, ranging between 24,000 and 30,000 mainly octosyllabic lines; it exists in both southern and northern versions assembled probably from the late thirteenth through the fourteenth century (but is not as much copied as other major texts—there are nine manuscripts in all— and is not included in Vernon or Simeon). In its structural commonplace, the seven ages, and its underlying activity of biblical paraphrase it can be said to resemble the *Orrmulum*, but could not be more different in its jaunty confidence in the vernacular, its omnivorous interest in the culture of the entire world (David, Homer, and the Nine Worthies are included), and its desire to include everything and anything: 'Al þis werld, or þis bok blin [end], | Wit Cristes help I sal over-run' (121–2), itself a high-speed gloss on the poem's title, *Cursor Mundi* (or [over-]runner of the world). As a recent study has noted, 'a comprehensive study of the poem's contents would indeed acquaint one with the diversity and variety of medieval popular culture' (Morey 2000: 100–1)—though this is a work that is popular only by destination, revelling in its public display of the learning then inalienable from Latinity. For all the literary intelligence modern readers find, the activity most germane to this poem in its extant form may well be compilation more than authorship. Recent scholarship has enabled us to see the poem in its manuscript versions as an 'open compilation', the work of different compilers, 'into which separate poems were dropped and spliced' (Morey 2000: 100; see also Thompson 1991a, 1991b, 1998). Whatever the originating act or acts of individual translation, the poem's currency is as a vehicle for more. It 'over-runs' as an anecdotal omnium gatherum, accumulating both shrewdly and unselectively and lacking even the constancy of forms to which we normally grant the word 'encyclopedic'.

For a more academic and classicizing version of encyclopedic history, one would look to Higden's *Polychronicon*, written in the 1330s and 1340s, and its English translation by John Trevisa in the 1380s (on Trevisa, see further pp. 82–3 above, §5.5 below). Higden's work far exceeds biblical translation or paraphrase,

but is grounded in it, both in whole books (especially Books II, III, and IV, which are a learned and idiosyncratic résumé of biblical history) and for the notion of history as providential (rather than, as in classical history, exemplary). The particular notion comes to Higden, as to the compilers of *Cursor Mundi*, from one influential Latin source, Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica*. Comestor is the basis of much major English biblical paraphrase in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, not all of which is yet edited. The finest is generally held to be the earliest, *Genesis and Exodus*, *c.* 1275 (ed. Arngart 1968; discussion in Morey 2000: 133–8), a poem of 4,162 lines in octosyllabic couplets, surviving in only one manuscript saved for posterity by Archbishop Parker: Cambridge, Corpus Christi College, MS 444. The poem has a finely worked prologue, which begins with a defence of the vernacular as an instrument for teaching 'ðe logede man' (unlearned man), in order to bring Christian man to God's love; and it then moves to a prayer for God's blessing, and, in a distant echo of Cædmon, to creation: 'ðo bad god wurðen stund and stede, | ðis middes-woreld ðorinne he dede' (41–2) [Then God bade time and place exist, | And made this middle-world therein]. But then learning, doctrine, and narrative take over—this is the world of the ordained Cædmon's post-Lanfrancian successors, and the work of an author who sees some knowledge of sacred narrative as indispensable to individual salvation: Christian people should rejoice, he writes, when 'man hem telleð soðe tale | Wið londes [local] speche and wordes smale [simple]' (17–18). Less adroit than this version of Comestor is the late fourteenth-century *Metrical Paraphrase of the Old Testament* in twelve-line stanzas (totalling 18,372 lines), but it shows how long versifications of Comestor lasted as modes of biblical paraphrase (completely edited in instalments by Kalén 1923, Ohlander 1955–63; for discussion, see Morey 2000: 146–53). It may be that in England Comestor's interest in linear salvation history militated against more typological systems pairing Old and New Testaments as their structural principle. The most popular work of the latter kind in fourteenth-century Europe, *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, was not translated into English until *c.* 1420, and only one manuscript survives (ed. Henry 1987; cf. Morey 2000: 112–18). It too is indebted to Comestor.

The *Metrical Paraphrase* has another claim to fame, its probable influence on the York plays. The great cycle dramas of medieval England marry some interest in typology with the providential sweep of salvation history that provides their structure; their key focus, and greater part, is the life of Christ. Though public records show dramatic activity by urban guilds in the fourteenth century, when Lollards inveighed against 'Playing of Miraclis', the cycle scripts we have are of fifteenth-century date. They are built, however, on a foundation of biblical translation and paraphrase in English from the thirteenth century; and they are themselves vehicles for the ongoing circulation of protean texts they cite and assimilate. Their whole structure is foreshadowed in a poem as early as the so-called 'Trinity Poem on Biblical History' (*c.* 1250), one of three biblical paraphrases in Cambridge, Trinity College MS 323 and only 348 lines long (ed. Reichl 1973), but moving in a smooth arc from Creation to Pentecost and

beyond, to the acts of the apostles and early saints; the poem is Christocentric, and ends with four lines on the formula for finding Easter so that, as Morey puts it, in its structure 'biblical history, the sanctorale, and the liturgical year are all reflected' (2000: 93). It is no great step from *temporale* to *sanctorale* (for a simple explanation of these two terms, see above p. 205), from mystery (cycle) plays to miracle plays about saints' lives. The mystery cycles feed on, and partly incorporate, existing poems of biblical paraphrase. In the case of the York cycle, we find not only the *Metrical Paraphrase of the Old Testament* but also the *Northern Passion*, a composite text based on a French poetic source that was itself reincorporated into later French biblical paraphrase (ed. Foster 1971a, Heuser and Foster 1971; cf. Morey 2000: 265–8). The English version adds elements from Comestor and from the stanzaic English *Gospel of Nicodemus* (ed. Hulme 1976; cf. Morey 2000: 216–21): it influences Wakefield and *Ludus Coventriae* (the N-Town Plays) as well as York. In the case of Chester, the influence of Higden's *Polychronicon* is conveyed in the *Stanzaic Life of Christ*, a poetic rendering (10,829 lines long) structured upon the seven ages and drawn from Higden's first four books with the addition of material from the *Legenda Aurea* (ed. Foster 1971b; comment in Morey 2000: 256–62). In the multiple relations and affinities of these texts, we see more complex versions of the 'open compilation' noted in the case of *Cursor Mundi*: the boundaries of individual texts are porous, subject to adaptation, reincorporation, and fluid exchange. In each case, the result is a more or less omnibus version of salvation history in whole or part, highly selective in the episodes translated or paraphrased from biblical text and imbued with liturgical (and penitential) significance. This significance has to do with Christ's body in both Bible and Eucharist, with the foregrounding of biblical passages in common liturgical use, and with the feasts of the liturgical year itself, including saints' days. It is a mixture of *temporale* and *sanctorale*.

Such mixing is a major feature of English medieval biblical translation and selective paraphrase of all kinds, not just dramatic. The Vernon manuscript opens with a poem known as *Old Testament History*, based again on Comestor, that in five of its manuscript copies includes prefatory material on the Life of Mary, sometimes seen as a separate poem, 'The Conception of Mary' (ed. Furnivall 1973a; cf. Morey 2000: 142–5). But this poem is itself an outgrowth of, or is assimilated into, the long version of the Life of Christ found in the greatest of all English medieval compilations of the late thirteenth century and after, *The South English Legendary* (*SEL*). The *SEL* is a massive compilation of fluctuating length, probably originating in monastic libraries of the south-west Midlands (Worcester and Hereford), and growing throughout the fourteenth century—it is the longest text, or series of linked texts, in Vernon (ed. D'Evelyn and Mills 1956–9, 1967; comment in Morey 2000: 314–18). It brings together interest in the liturgical year, its feast days, and its calendar (including advice on the calculation of movable feasts); a huge and accumulating *sanctorale* collection; and much *temporale* material, especially connected to the life of Christ. The clustering of these elements is somewhat obscured in modern editions. There was a splendid edition of the

sanctorale and most liturgical material for EETS in 1957; since then much of the *temporale* material has been published in excellent single-text editions: of, for example, nativity material; of texts relating to the life and Passion of Christ such as the *Southern Passion* (ed. Brown 1971, Downing 1969; for comment, see Brown 1911, Morey 2000: 242–6); of texts relating specifically to the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus, such as the *Harrowing of Hell and Destruction of Jerusalem* and *The Devils' Parliament* (ed. Marx 1993; comment, Morey 2000: 224–6). The many manuscripts, however, manifest the concatenation of the three elements—liturgy, *sanctorale*, *temporale*—as in other works already described here. The biblical is enshrined in the liturgical year and distributed throughout it. The saints are our links with it and intercessors, living Bibles.

The *SEL* has another type of importance. It was widely copied in reputable centres by professional scribes, probably both ecclesiastical and commercial. In contrast to most poems discussed so far, except the *Orrmulum*, it is mainly in long-line form (rhyming septenary couplets), and this required a new page format, or *ordinatio*, to be developed for a vernacular poem. That *ordinatio* became the scribal standard for the copying of the new long-line alliterative poetry of the fourteenth century, both unrhymed and rhymed (mainly stanzaic), much of which consists of biblical translation or paraphrase. Several alliterative poems—*Piers Plowman*, *St Erkenwald*, *William of Palerne*, *Summer Sunday*—appear in manuscripts of the *South English Legendary* (see discussion in Lawton 1980).

With alliterative poetry, this account moves to a more consistently literary register: most of these works are elaborate and self-aware in their style as well as skilfully imaginative in their content. They are nevertheless steeped in biblical narrative, and at times approach translation rather than paraphrase. *Patience* (ed. Anderson 1996; cf. Morey 2000: 201–2) is a fine and surprisingly close rendering of the Book of Jonah, set in a homiletic frame that echoes those of many texts of biblical instruction. *Pearl* (ed. Anderson 1996; cf. Morey 2000: 292–4) is 'a collage of scriptural citation' (Simpson 2002: 486), based mainly on the Apocalypse but also producing a version of the parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Matthew 20: 1–16). *Cleanness* (ed. Anderson 1996; cf. Morey 2000: 199–201) gives brilliantly amplified and coloured versions of the Flood, Belshazzar's Feast, and the parable of the wedding feast. The stanzaic *Quatrefoil of Love* (ed. Gollancz and Weale 1987; cf. Morey 2000: 313–14) is a short version of the life of Christ. Vernon contains three alliterative works with biblical sources: *Susannah* (ed. Miskimin 1969; cf. Morey 2000: 198–9), a stanzaic poem based on Daniel; *Joseph of Arimathea* (ed. Lawton 1983; Morey 2000: 297–8), which links with the life of Christ, Harrowing of Hell (in the Gospel of Nicodemus), and destruction of Jerusalem (for the alliterative poem on the siege of Jerusalem, see Hanna and Lawton 2003); and, most important of all, *Piers Plowman* (Langland 1998). This is the most widely circulated of all alliterative poems and is made up of a stunning range and variety of textual sources—poetic, historical, theological, legal, and, pre-eminently, biblical. To understand it, one needs the concepts of

both authorship and compilation—there is a strong shaping literary intelligence, but at the same time the poem is open to all the texts it cites and translates or paraphrases: some scholars have argued, in fact, that it is best seen as a gloss on the quotations it includes, in French and, more often, Latin. In that sense, and in its growth through different and shifting versions over time, it can also be seen as a more sophisticated kind of 'open compilation'. Biblical quotation is crucial to the poem (see further §3.5 above). In the famous Pardon sequence, Piers quotes a verse from Psalm 23 (Vulgate 22) in Latin, and translates it. The words of the Pardon, quoted in Latin and translated into English, come via the Athanasian Creed from Matthew 25: 46. Like the New Testament, the text has a conclusion in two movements—the second, apocalyptic and fearful, the first, Christ's Passion (to which Langland joins, typical of the texts discussed here, the Harrowing of Hell from the Gospel of Nicodemus).

Christ's crucifixion is the climax of Will's spiritual quest in the poem. When he awakes from his dream of it, it is Easter morning and he exhorts his wife and daughter to go with him to Mass and reverence Christ's Cross, 'And crepeth to the cros on knees, and kisseth it for a juwel!' (B. XVIII. 430) The context is unmistakably eucharistic, and the theology is that of Roger van der Weyden's *Crucifixion in a Church*. As the priest elevates the Host, Christ looms over the swooning congregation, newly crucified. A spiritual understanding of the Eucharist is a place of personal access to biblical narrative. As Simpson says, 'Will is *part* of the Scripture at this point, as he moves dynamically through history towards a renewed understanding and vision of Christ' (2002: 682). (He also moves through exegesis: a version of the Good Samaritan realized at the level of the poem's narrative as the dreamer talks with personifications of Faith and Hope.) His vision of Christ is heroic: Christ as warrior-knight strides to fulfil his providential role, as in *The Dream of the Rood*; and, as in that poem too, which Langland can hardly have known, the individual subjectivity of the dreamer becomes here an astonished proxy for the poem's readers and auditors. Around Christ, the dreamer, and the central scene of salvation history, on this flattened narrative plane, the four daughters of God, drawn from the pseudo-Bonaventuran *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, debate the saviour's prospects—and a new personification bears witness to the scriptural significance of Christ's birth and death: Book, one with 'two brode eyen', who 'wole be brente, but [unless] Jesus rise to lyve' (B. XVIII. 254).

This Book, who would be burnt if not found to be speaking the truth, is Langland's boldest conceit, bringing together the various temporalities in play here: the past of salvation history in which he plays the part of the Old Testament prophesying the New; the present, the eucharistic moment, in which he is both Old and New Testament together bowing down before the triumphant Christ; and the future, of Langland's writing, in which he represents the poem *Piers Plowman* itself. As with Orrm, the Bible and its vernacular rewriting are equals.

In developing his conceit, Langland draws on two important traditions, both available in the ME poetry of biblical translation and paraphrase: of creation as

God's book, as in the *Charter of the Abbey of the Holy Ghost*; and of Christ's body, literally flayed, as the parchment book that redeems it, as in Rolle's *Meditations on the Passion* ('swete Ihesu, þi bodi is lijk a book writen wiþ reed enke': Rolle 1895–6: I, 97) or in *The Charter of Christ* (ed. Spalding 1914; Morey 2000: 98–9, 270–3). Christ's body is presented no longer primarily as Host but as icon and fetish book. Conversely, the book—which is equally the Bible or the many works of its vernacular translation and paraphrase—becomes Christ's body. If Christ's body is a book or charter, the seeker for salvation must be able to read it: the image promotes what Margaret Aston calls 'devotional literacy' (1984: 101–33). It follows too that a book of vernacular biblical translation and paraphrase may be an object of special reverence. I would suggest that the enormous Vernon manuscript is designed as a vernacular Bible, or its close equivalent. It is the largest and heaviest medieval English vernacular manuscript, and quite unwieldy, one might think, except as the great (or coucher) book of some community, ecclesiastical or lay (see further Robinson 1990). It anthologizes many of the texts considered here: short poems of lamentation or disputation, such as that between a Christian and a Jew, or another between child Jesus and the masters of Jewish law; devotional and mnemonic lyrics, including several by Rolle; large portions of the *Northern Homily Cycle* and of the *South English Legendary* (the *Southern Passion*); the *Old Testament History*; both the *Charter of the Holy Ghost* and the *Charter of Christ*; *Susannah* and *Joseph of Arimathea*; and *Piers Plowman*. It also includes works not so far noted: Grosseteste's *Chateau d'amour* (ed. Sajavaara 1967; cf. Morey 2000: 95–7); a *Life of Adam and Eve* (ed. Horstmann 1885; Morey 2000: 121–4); a translation by Richard Maidstone of the Penitential Psalms (ed. Edden 1990; for comment, see Morey 2000: 177–80); commentaries on Psalms 90 and 91 (ed. Wallner 1954; cf. Morey 2000: 193–4); and works of general religious instruction based on biblical sources: on the ten commandments and works of mercy; English translations of Edmund of Abingdon's *Speculum Ecclesie* (ed. Horstmann 1973; cf. Morey 2000: 300–1) and of Ailred of Rievaulx's *De Institutione Inclusarum* (ed. Ayto and Barratt 1984; cf. Morey 2000: 215–16). This only scratches the manuscript's surface, for it contains more prose works of religious instruction ranging from Rolle's *Form of Perfect Living* to Walter Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*. Vernon's sister manuscript Simeon (BL MS Add. 22283) contains most, but not all, of these texts and is almost as huge. There is no specific and concerted attempt in either to translate the Bible such as we find in the contemporary 'Wycliffite' Bible, but much of the Bible, and especially the New Testament, is translated many times over in the manuscripts' course. The most richly decorated and illuminated text in Vernon, to judge from what little of it survives, was an English translation of the *Estorie de l'Evangelie* (ed. Millward 1998; for comment, Morey 2000: 205–8)—which is not a history of the Gospels, as its title might lead one to suppose, but yet another life of Christ. Of this text, as of the entire Christocentric manuscript, one might conclude, as Lesley Smith does of medieval Bibles: 'The text *is* Christ as much as it is *about* Christ' (1994: 223).

One might even conclude that the purpose of the Vernon manuscript is to be an object of veneration, quasi-sacramental and perhaps closed. Its size surely prohibits it from being a casual source of instruction: it is more likely to be an institutional daily reader. Later on, in the fifteenth century, one might speculate about Carthusians and their all-consuming interest in matters both esoteric and vernacular. But even if the probable users of the manuscript, if any there were, were more likely to be religious or secular priests than lay, it does not follow that the manuscripts, Vernon and Simeon, were ecclesiastically produced. There has long been a scholarly consensus that this must be so; but the dialectal evidence has never coincided with the codicological to support the speculation. Time and again in such cases an imagined Church provenance has been shown to be lay and commercial: for example, it has been argued that London, BL MS Harley 2253 must have been produced in a scriptorium on the Welsh marches, for example in Wigmore Abbey, but it turns out to have been the private enterprise of a Ludlow notary; or that de luxe copies of Lydgate's works must testify to a home-based scriptorium in Bury St Edmunds, when they prove to be the work of London entrepreneurs. It would not be altogether surprising if one were to hear similar rumours concerning Vernon and Simeon: a workshop capable of producing such manuscripts should have left more palpable traces, unless perhaps we have been looking in the wrong place. Perhaps we should look again at production of the *SEL* and *Piers Plowman*, and connect the production of Vernon and Simeon both with them and contemporary manuscripts of the Wycliffite Bible. The most impressive late fourteenth-century *comparanda* for Vernon and Simeon are two contemporary Wycliffite Bibles in their full and weighty state: one produced for Thomas of Woodstock, Duke of Gloucester, and featured in his book list at his death in 1397 (Scattergood 1969); the other, the most substantial witness of the Early Version, Oxford Christ Church MS 145. It has been assumed in the main that Wycliffite Bibles are ideologically opposed to Vernon and Simeon, and that the latter represent some sort of early anti-Lollard programme of study. What if, however, both were the products of a common type of producer and, indeed, of a common biblical culture?

Arundel's Constitutions of 1409, and the debates which preceded them at the University of Oxford on vernacular biblical translation, have absorbed much recent scholarly attention (for further comment, see Watson 1995; see also pp. 235–7, 253 below). There is no doubt that the Constitutions toll the knell of cultural change. But that change is clearly foreshadowed in the statute *De Hæretico Comburendo* ('On the need to burn the heretic') of 1401 (ed. Tomlins *et al.* 1972), which adequately announces the revisionist priorities of the new Lancastrian regime. Before that, already, smart clerks will have seen the writing on the wall. Yet if one looks back a little further, to the 1380s and even the early 1390s, a very different cultural temper seems to prevail, one of vernacular enquiry and relative ease about biblical translation. Many who would never have sought to declare themselves heretics presumably participated in that culture, and the result is a profusion of texts that modern scholars find genuinely difficult to classify. In

the 1380s *Piers Plowman* was still a poem in process (and Chaucer was in mid-career); the *Pearl*-poet probably wrote *Pearl*; and translators still worked at least on the Later Version of the Wycliffite Bible. Not one but all of these activities become less imaginable after 1401. The public culture of the fifteenth century, though it endorses the vernacular and produces much fine English translation, is markedly less adventurous in relation to theology and ecclesiology; and its greatest official book of biblical substitution, Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, following its pseudo-Bonaventuran source, is already at one authoritative remove of imaginative mediation from biblical text, on which it develops meditations rather than providing summaries (Love 1992; discussion, Morey 2000: 335–43).

If indeed a common culture of biblical engagement serves to produce orthodox poems of paraphrase and part-translation, imaginative works such as *Piers Plowman* and *Pearl*, and the Wycliffite Bible translation itself, it may never be possible, or in some cases reasonable, to try to arbitrate on possible Wycliffite affiliations of late fourteenth-century texts, especially given that the borders of orthodoxy and heterodoxy are subject around 1401 to unusual instability and slippage. This applies particularly to translations of the late fourteenth century in the more specialized medium of prose.

For example, the treatise *The Two Ways* (Clanvowe 1975; comment in Scattergood 1967, Morey 2000: 310–12) is included in the Simeon manuscript (though not in Vernon). Its author, not named in Simeon, was Sir John Clanvowe, Knight of the Chamber to Richard II and, according to a persuasive but circumstantial account by K. B. McFarlane (1972), a Lollard. The treatise cites and quotes the Bible frequently, not from either version of the Wycliffite Bible: it refers to no other authority, and does not specifically mention the Church. Given its lay authorship, this silence may be suggestive, but the treatise is otherwise orthodox. Its inclusion in Simeon may more likely attest to that orthodoxy than to Lollard sympathies in the Vernon–Simeon compiler(s)—but in either case, the question of Lollard sympathies means something different, and undogmatic, before 1401. Two pairs of texts may shed further light. The *Pepysian Gospel Harmony* is found in Cambridge, Magdalene College MS Pepys 2498, and is catalogued as 'Wycliffite' (ed. Goates 1971; cf. Morey 2000: 209–15). The *Harmony* is the first item, and offers itself as 'a litel tretiȝ of divinite' to turn man from romances and *gestes*. The manuscript also contains an English Apocalypse and Psalter (with Latin text), a complaint of Mary, and Gospel of Nicodemus, so it has some pretensions to be—in the looser sense used here—a kind of Bible. Its editor sees it as 'probably intended as a guide to meditation on the Gospel story' (Goates 1971: xlix), and speaks of its remarkable powers of précis: after the Annunciation, for instance, 'þo answered Marie and þonked God and seide þe psalme of Magnificat al out' (31–2). If, as seems likely, the *Harmony* is of late fourteenth-century date, it is hardly possible to judge its possible Lollardy without knowing for whom it was made, whether lay or ecclesiastic, male or female. It does not feature in modern accounts of Wycliffite book production. On the other hand, a larger

sort of précis, the *Middle English Summary of the Bible* (Oxford, Trinity College MS 93), is taken by its editor (Reilly 1966), and confirmed by Anne Hudson (1988: 235), to be a Wycliffite reference tool, though unlike either version of the Wycliffite Bible it includes the apocryphal fourth book of Esdras (see also Ker 1960; Morey 2000: 110–11). Neither it nor the Pepysian *Harmony* could be seen as 'Bible translation' as questioned by Oxford debates and prohibited in the 1409 Constitutions.

Not all such prose translation before 1401 is Wycliffite. As critical of ecclesiastical abuses as any Wycliffite text, the *Book to a Mother* (1370s: ed. McCarthy 1981) is entirely orthodox, and translates significant portions of the New Testament (from the Gospel and epistles of John, and other epistles by Paul, James, and Peter). There are also two independent translations of the Pauline epistles before WB. The first, in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 32, is in a manuscript that also contains two glossed Gospels in English, Mark and Luke (with Latin texts). Work remains to be done on the Gospels, which are distinct from other, Wycliffite, glossed Gospels. The manuscript is generally held to be non-Wycliffite, but enables one to see how tenuous such judgements sometimes are. The second set of Pauline epistles, edited by Anna Paues in 1904 as *A Fourteenth Century English Biblical Version*, exists in five manuscripts, two of which go far to justify her title by also containing Acts and Matthew, with a prologue in the two which, like the General Prologue to WB, summarizes high points of biblical narrative from Genesis and Exodus. There is no Latin in this manuscript. Yet there is no obvious relation with WB, and the translation is distinct from it.

One would be inclined to judge the translation orthodox. All the more surprising, therefore, that the prologue expresses acute anxiety about the activity of Bible translation. The frame is that of an address by a 'brother', generally taken to be a religious superior, to a 'brother' and 'sister' (a monk and nun). The form is that of a debate. The brother and sister want their senior brother 'to techen us þinges þat beþ nedeful to þe hele of oure soules' (Paues 1904: 4)—that is, the biblical material contained in the two longer manuscripts. The request is conventional but pressing, like that in the *Pore Caitiff*, for the knowledge that 'suffiseth to alle Christen men and wommen . . . withouten multiplicacioun of many bokes' (ed. Brady 1954: 3). The response points to a date after 1401, when owning English Bibles became a capital offence: 'Broþer, y knowe wel þat y am holde by Cristis lawe to parforme þyn axynge bote naþeles we beþ now so fer yfallen awey from Cristis lawe þat ȝif y wolde answere to þyn axynges y moste in cas vnderfonge þe deþ' (Paues 1904: 4–5). He is eventually persuaded by the 'skelis' and 'axynges' of the junior brother, 'for þi love haþ overcome my resoun'. Only the senior brother's fear of death really brings the orthodoxy of this work into question, though it does so in a way calculated to assuage suspicions of Wycliffism. It is probable, however, that this frame is an interpolation, somewhat abruptly inserted into the prologue and before, during, and after the Pauline epistles (here with an address to the 'suster'): it may therefore not reflect the real circumstances of composition and reading at all.

The prologue belongs to a genre of fictionalized debate about Bible translation, of which the most famous example is Trevisa's *Dialogue between a Lord and a Clerk* (*IoV* 131–5), written in 1387 (see further pp. 82–3 above, 345–6 below). In this, the Clerk fusses about translating not the Bible but a chronicle from Latin into English; it is the Lord who introduces the topic of Bible translation in his rejoinder. This is the most lucid of all manifestos. The Bible, says the Lord, was translated by the Fathers from Hebrew to Greek and then by Jerome from Hebrew to Latin. Translation is an aid to understanding, and best written down: 'hit may not be told an Englisshe what the Latyn is to mene without translacioun out of Latyn into Englisshe. Then hit nedeth to have an Englisshe translacioun' (*IoV* 133). The major precedents are in Anglo-Saxon: Alfred, who 'translated the best lawes into Englisshe tonge, and a grete del of the Sauter out of Latyn into Englisshe': and Cædmon, who 'was enspired of the Holy Gost and made wonder poysies in Englisshe neigh of alle the stories of holy writte'. Having authorized a wide range of translation practices, the Lord requires not the best translation but a 'skilfulle' one, 'that myght be knowe and understond' (134). The question, of course, is whether Trevisa knew in 1387 of the very English Bible translation that would eventually cause the senior brother of the prologue to the Pauline epistles and Acts to fear for his life. According to John Bale, Trevisa was himself the main translator of the Wycliffite Bible. Bale's attribution had a long currency, and—with the energetic exception of David Fowler (1960, 1995; see also Daniell 2003: 93)—has failed to convince most modern scholars, who find 'no grounds' for it, even where they grant Trevisa's 'vernacular Wycliffism' (Hudson 1988: 394). Yet it comes to Bale from Caxton, who is normally a good witness: Caxton sees Trevisa as the pre-eminent translator of the previous age, and perhaps for that reason credits him with an English Bible translation (which may not, of course, be the Wycliffite Bible, a term that Caxton does not use). Trevisa's *Dialogue* is confirmation that there was an efflorescence of English vernacular prose translation in the last two or three decades of the fourteenth century, to which all the texts just discussed belong (and to which Chaucer contributed: cf. Besserman 1998): and this efflorescence brought about the cultural conditions that made a full English Bible translation, in the view of Trevisa's Lord, historically necessary.

The English Bible, 1380–1550

A complete Bible translation was therefore timely. Its textual traces originate from the 1380s, so the translation itself was probably a project of the 1370s. Given the textual resources needed to achieve it, Oxford would always have seemed a probable place of origin. That tallies with the one name securely associated with the project: Nicholas of Hereford, who may have been responsible for carrying the WB as far as Rome before resuming a career of then impeccable rectitude (de Hamel 2001: 172). Hereford was a fellow of Queen's College, Oxford, at a time of collegial upheaval and in the company of John Wyclif, and

indeed John Trevisa. The circumstantial evidence is strong, though the only safe verdict remains 'not proven'. There is nothing unusual in our being unable to determine precise provenance, nor any reason to suspect secrecy or danger to the translators during the period in which they worked. We do not even know that in the first instance they were, or conceived themselves as, 'Wycliffite'. Whatever its origin and authorship, the project has multiple phases—captured, as if in snapshot, by Forshall and Madden's brilliant deduction in 1850 of an Early and Late Version (which are like the stations of a journey, with many manuscripts between them).

The difference between EV and LV may be gauged by almost any passage for comparison. Let us take Genesis 47: 1–4 (Forshall and Madden 1982: I, 83), with the Vulgate given first:

ingressus ergo Ioseph nuntiavit Pharaoni dicens pater meus et fratres oves eorum et armenta et cuncta quae possident venerunt de terra Chanaan et ecce consistunt in terra Gessen extremos quoque fratrum suorum quinque viros statuit coram rege quos ille interrogavit quid habetis operis responderunt pastores ovium sumus servi tui et nos et patres nostri ad peregrinandum in terra tua venimus quoniam non est herba gregibus servorum tuorum ingravescente fame in regione Chanaan petimusque ut esse nos iubeas servos tuos in terra Gessen

Joseph thanne goon yn tolde to Pharoao, seiynge, My fader and bretheren, the sheep of hem, and droues, and alle the thingis that thei han, ben comen fro the loond of Chanaan; and loo! thei ben in the loond of Gessen. And fyue men, the last of his bretheren, he sette bifore the kyng, whom he askide, What han ȝe of werke? Thei answerden, Sheepherdes of sheep we ben, thi seruauntis, and we and our fadres; to pilgrimage into thi loond we ben comen, for there is noon eerbe to the flockis of thi seruauntis; hungur meche wexynge greuows in the loond of Chanaan, and we axen that thow comaunde vs to be thi seruauntis in the loond of Gessen.   (EV)

Therfor Joseph entride, and telde to Farao, and seide, My fadir and brethren, the scheep and grete beestis of hem, and alle thingis whiche thei welden, camen fro the lond of Canaan; and lo! thei stonden in the lond of Gessen. And he ordeynede fyue, the laste men of hise britheren, bifore the kyng, whiche he axide, What werk han ȝe? Thei answeriden, We thi seruauntis ben kepers of scheep, bothe we and oure faderis; we camen in to thi lond to be pilgrymys, for noo gras is to the flockis of thi seruauntis; hungur wexith greuouse in the lond of Canaan, and we axen that thou comaunde vs thi seruauntis to be in the lond of Gessen.   (LV)

Much of what is routinely said about these translations, and the differences between them, is imperceptive. It is not consistently true, for example, that EV follows the Vulgate word for word, though it seeks to do so phrase by phrase (EV has 'Joseph thenne goon yn' rather than 'goon yn thenne Joseph'). Many of the differences in LV look like improvements with an eye to the arrangement of English prose rather than the text of the Vulgate, and one need not be too surprised that many manuscripts able to choose between the two show a preference for EV, which allows a reader to follow the Vulgate more easily. If one is to save the

prose of either EV or LV from the sneers of Tyndale-worshippers ('the tone of a clever modern student from abroad on his first visit to London . . . some kind of pidgin', Daniell 2003: 84, 86), one must understand, as Daniell here apparently does not, both Middle English and the function of both types of translation as represented by EV and LV in what is already a traditional protocol of English Bible translation. The precedent is set by Richard Rolle in his English Psalter of the 1330s and 1340s, not so much in the commonplaces of Rolle's remarks but in his practice, which is essentially to translate each psalm twice: as literally as possible in the initial translation, when the reader can be assumed to be following in parallel the text of the Vulgate, and more freely when Rolle proceeds, as the WB proceeds, to give a digest of standard patristic and later authorized commentary. The double translations therefore fulfil two distinct grammatical functions, of parsing the original and of glossing it. These are presented as successive stages in the General Prologue to WB, and, as earlier noted (p. 199), successive stages in the translators' activity. Having established and parsed the text, translators consult and incorporate commentary to prepare other aids for reading such as digests and concordances; and to embed the Bible translation in a vast sermon cycle that expounds and applies it. The recourse to learned apparatus in the second phase operates as a check on naked literalism, reliance on *sola Scriptura*, in the first.

There are little more than twenty complete manuscripts of the WB, but 200 or more manuscripts of parts. Two major conclusions follow. If the aim of WB, uninhibited by the draconian legislation of Arundel, which it had served to trigger, had been to place the entire Bible at the disposal of all capable of reading English (but not Latin), it was largely a failure. Christopher de Hamel notes that, judged by the criteria of the Paris Bible of the early thirteenth century, most WB manuscripts were not Bibles at all (2001: 180). But this may cause two disparate responses in us: we may admire the effectiveness of Arundel as an early commissar, or we may doubt that we have accurately grasped the WB's aim. For many of the surviving manuscripts, written in the fifteenth century at a time when they were undoubtedly illegal, are hardly self-effacing. This may redirect us to the second major conclusion, which appears unmistakable. If the aim of Arundel's repression had been to expunge English prose Bible translation, the failure was its own. The WB was and remained the main, or even, in Hanna's phrase (quoted Daniell 2003: 92), the 'only show in town' during the fifteenth century: in spite of proscription, on the test of extant copies it was overwhelmingly the most popular vernacular text of the fifteenth century. Because of it, the stamp of high seriousness passes from poetry to prose, in spite of immensely skilled performances by Lydgate, especially his *Life of Our Lady*; poetry is no longer the main vehicle for imaginative biblical exploration in the vernacular. Caxton, though unable to publish an English Bible, follows its cultural movement to serious prose. And orthodox vernacular religious prose under Arundel's dispensation fails, on the whole, to compete, its most distinguished achievement being Nicholas Love's earlier-noted

translation of the *Meditationes*, which would hardly match the WB weight for weight.

Arundel's Constitutions were therefore a spectacular self-defeat: they failed to stop WB, and they eventually destroyed the biblical culture of the Vernon manuscript. Why? The ways of tyranny brook no interrogation, but we might look for an explanation to do not with the personal notoriety of Wyclif nor with the unacceptable nature of vernacular Bible translation but rather with the rapid spread of vernacular literacy and with power's abiding dread of the people it governs. The question is not what? (an English Bible) but who? (who owns it?). As the Duke of Newcastle put it in the 1640s, 'the Bible in English under every weaver and chambermaid's arm hath done us much hurt' (quoted in Greenslade 1963: 11). The fourteenth-century equivalent is a learned poem—in Latin, of course—alleging a causal link between Wycliffites and the Peasants' Revolt of 1381: 'monstrans Wycleffe familiam | causam brigae primariam | quæ totum regnum terruit' (Rigg 1992: 282) [showing that to Wyclif's crew | was the Rising mainly due | Which had scared the realm].

Throughout the fifteenth century, then, there was stalemate. Power pretended that the people had no English Bible, and burned a minatory few of those who violated the pretence. Wiser plebeians played along, and hoarded their Bible in the bedstraw in face of an insouciant patrician hypocrisy: Henry VI owned an ornate WB, as had his great-uncle Gloucester before him, and Sir Thomas More, later disputing with Tyndale, would insist that there was an orthodox, non-Wycliffite English Bible translation (as indeed, as we have seen, in part there were: several). Against the hypocrisy and constraints of such a world the young clerk William Tyndale (b. 1484) rose up: in order to fulfil his Cædmonian vision of every ploughboy singing Scripture, and having failed to obtain a licence from Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, he quitted England and followed the path of Wycliffite scholars like Peter Payne to Europe. He reversed Caxton's journey of the 1460s, and went to the Low Countries; and there he found a new world such as the followers of Wyclif would have yearned to inhabit, of vastly expanded technology (for the printing press) and humanist philological scholarship (for original biblical texts in Hebrew and Greek). Tyndale immersed himself in that new world, and came to unexpected and ironic conclusions, such as that the English language is in a far better position than Jerome's polished Latin to capture the quality of New Testament Greek. If this is the case with Greek, he writes, 'the Hebrew tongue agreeth a thousand times more with the English than with the Latin' (Greenslade 1963: 145). With his acquisition of technology and languages, Tyndale was endowed in ways translators could never have imagined; and, being a man of rhetorical genius, he put it to best advantage. One of the reasons why Tyndale is such a good translator is that he is a brilliant prose stylist, and one can judge this not only from his New and Old Testaments (see further below) but from his polemical works in their defence and from his astonishing glosses. Here, glossing Abraham and Isaac, he is simply following Luther in

exalting faith over works, but with what a Pauline capacity to pick quarrels while doing so:

Jacob robbed Laban his uncle: Moses robbed the Egyptians: And Abraham is about to slay and burn his own son: And all are holy works, because they were wrought in favour at God's command. To steal, rob and murder are no holy works before worldly people: but unto them that have their trust in God: they are holy when God commandeth them.

(Greenslade 1963: 146)

Tyndale's idiom is directed at ordinary lay people, and his style, like Jerome's, sets out to be modern, clear, and strong; he desires to produce a version suitable for public reading. This is not a new consideration: it had been a factor in English Bible translation since Rolle's Psalter, and was one of the factors at work in the development of EV into LV. Tyndale is pre-eminent in being an unerring stylist, a writer of superlative English prose. Yet in England, Tyndale's translations were Lutheran in tone (using 'congregation' rather than 'Church'), in their glosses, and in their layout, typography, and other format. They were suppressed and met fierce resistance, even after the so-called Reformation of Henry VIII, and it required the work of others to give them their role as the foundation English Bible translation.

If Tyndale's work is the foundation of subsequent English Bibles, may WB be the foundation of Tyndale? This question, which used to be answered in the negative (most notably, by Tyndale's great biographer and advocate David Daniell), has recently been answered (again by Daniell) affirmatively: again and again, WB arrives before Tyndale at a phrase now taken to be definitive, such as the 'salt of the earth'. It does not, of course, follow that Tyndale had 'a Wyclif New Testament open on his desk' as Daniell speculates (2001: 87). Tyndale had Erasmus' Greek open on his desk, or the Old Testament Hebrew. If he had the WB anywhere, it would have been in his memory. And he surely had it there, presenting, one would have thought, a continual irritant, of the kind posed to Jerome by the Old Latin versions. The new translator knows a familiar phrase to be wrong, and require reworking, yet the familiarity is a kind of canonicity, destined to echo even in the new. Compare his versions of Mark 6: 34–5 and John 10: 11–12 with those of the WB (LV):

et exiens vidit multam turbam Iesus: et misertus est super eos, quia erant sicut oves non habentes pastorem, et coepit docere illos multa. Et cum iam hora multa fieret, accesserunt discipuli eius dicentes: Desertus est locus hic, et iam hora praeterivit   (Vulgate)

And Jhesus ȝede out, and saiȝ myche puple, and hadde reuth on hem, for thei weren as scheep not hauynge a scheepherd. And he bigan to teche hem many thingis. And whanne it was forth daies, his disciplis camen, and seiden, This is a desert place, and the tyme is now passid   (LV: Forshall and Madden 1982: IV, 104)

And Jesus went out and sawe moche people, and had compassion on them, because they were lyke shepe whych had no shepherde. And he began to teache them many thynges. And when the daye was nowe farre spent, his disciples cam unto him sayinge: thys ys a desert place, and nowe the daye is farre passed   (Tyndale 2000)

Ego sum pastor bonus, Bonus pastor animam suam dat pro ovibus suis. Mercenarius autem, et qui non est pastor, cuius non sunt oves propriae, videt lupum venientem, et dimittit oves, et fugit; et lupus rapit, et dispergit oves   (Vulgate)

I am a good scheepherde; a good scheepherde ȝyueth his lijf for hise scheep. But an hirid hyne, and that is not the scheepherde, whos ben not the scheep his owne, seeth a wolf comynge, and he leeueth the scheep, and fleeth; and the wolf rauyscith, and disparplith the scheep.   (LV, Forshall and Madden 1982: IV, 265)

I am a goode shepheerd, a goode shepheerd geveth his lyfe for his shepe. An heyred servaunt which is not the shepheerd, nether the shepe are his awne, seith the wolfe commynge, and leveth the shepe, and flyeth, and the wolfe catcheth, and scattereth the shepe.   (Tyndale 2000)

In both cases, the English versions are somewhat closer to each other than the different sources can explain. The earlier version exercises a ghostly and involuntary influence. Tyndale does better. He rarely preserves archaic usages, such as 'forth-days' or 'hyne', and in fact he goes for colourful colloquialisms (such as 'shire holiday'). Yet there is a shadowy influence on the English sentences he writes from earlier versions of the same sentences. More often than not he resists it—the passages I have quoted are slightly untypical—and he probably does not wish to reflect it, just as Jerome resents the burden of the Old Latin. Gerald Hammond (1995) makes a very powerful suggestion that Tyndale does his best to make it new, and that later English Bible translations, especially Reims and King James (discussed in Volume 2), are more susceptible than he to the pleasingly Catholic Latinity of WB. There is much more systematic work to be done here, but it is already and unsurprisingly evident that Tyndale is not the Protestant pioneer ploughing virgin soil.

In the early decades of the sixteenth century, there remain clear signs of continuous interest in WB, not least Murdoch Nisbet's 1520 reworking of LV in Scots (see further comment pp. 65–6 above). Thomas Bilney, who is said to have persuaded Hugh Latimer to support an English Bible, was probably raised on LV. Yet there was also a huge academic impetus before 1520 of a distinctively early modern kind: Erasmus was welcomed in Oxford by Colet (and More) and in Cambridge by Fisher. In the 1520s there was close contact with both Luther's Germany and Zwingli's Zurich. By that same time, identifiable English protestants of the new stamp went to Europe: significantly, they include Tyndale, Coverdale, and John Rogers (generally thought to be the 'Thomas Matthew' of the Matthew Bible of 1537). In the 1520s Tyndale lived and worked in Hamburg, Cologne, then Worms; he provided translations of Matthew and Mark, and in 1526 both an octavo edition of his New Testament translation and a quarto with prologue and glosses. These were published in Europe, and condemned to be burned in England the following year: proof that they must have reached England in quantities sufficient to worry the authorities. The authorities, of course, were Catholic, but destined to remain so for little longer: Henry's desire for divorce was already public, and the subsequent breach with Rome was followed

by Wolsey's fall and death in 1529. At first the bishops of Henry's Church restated the familiar opposition to Bible translation, but by December 1530 Latimer and others wrote to ask Henry to reconsider, and his response, to bishops already bitterly divided, is a request that convocation appoint responsible translators.

If the aim at this point was to sanction a single translation, the policy failed: Tyndale's revised New Testament, with some matter from the Old Testament and Apocrypha, arrived in the English market in 1534, where it competed with George Joye's pirate edition (the forces of virtue and commerce already in something less than perfect harmony). Neither book was a complete English translation of the Bible. The first such to be printed was Coverdale's in 1535, a generously eclectic translation drawing on German (Luther's version), Latin (versions of Erasmus and the Vulgate), as well as on Erasmus' Greek, some Hebrew, and, most heavily, Tyndale's English version. This is most often represented as a hasty response to Tyndale's 1534 version but, fast as Coverdale worked, this is barely imaginable. Much more likely, Coverdale (1488–1568) was the translator commissioned after Henry's previously noted request to convocation to appoint translators; and, if so, Coverdale was an indispensable player, for as well as retaining the King's (or Thomas Cromwell's) commission and Cranmer's confidence, he was also Tyndale's colleague, and it is thanks to him, in the year of Tyndale's death, that so much of Tyndale's work entered the new mainstream of English biblical translation. Cranmer's equally indispensable role, set out in the prefatory essay to the Great Bible of 1539, of whose publication Coverdale had been put in charge, was to represent such translation as a middle way between the extremes of Roman denial and radical protestant polemic. His characterization of the work has mostly been taken at face value: rather, it was a brilliant piece of defensive rhetoric that allowed Coverdale to carry on with his bold work.

Whereas the first Coverdale Bible of 1535 was probably printed in Zurich and the sheets sent to the English stationer Nycholson for distribution and sale in Southwark, the second Coverdale Bible of 1537 was actually printed by Nycholson in England, appearing in both folio and quarto editions under royal licence. This was a thorough revision by Coverdale, and incorporated Tyndale's New Testament, Pentateuch, and Jonah, with the remaining books in Coverdale's own translation. It appeared almost concurrently with the Bible of the apostolically pseudonymous Thomas Matthew, generally understood to be John Rogers, who had worked alongside Coverdale as Tyndale's European colleague, though, of course, a pseudonym may cover more than one real name. It is wrong to see competition as unwelcome: Coverdale, as we shall see, made a point of favouring multiple translations since he regarded the biblical text as inexhaustible. The Matthew Bible appeared in 1537, like his own, under royal licence and the sponsorship of Cranmer and Cromwell. It appealed to a somewhat different constituency from Coverdale's, with its copious and sectarian protestant annotations. Coverdale went on to appeal to a third such constituency, the corrigibly Latinate, with his parallel text New Testament in English and Latin (using the

Latin version of Erasmus), printed in 1538 under his own supervision in Paris and by Nycholson in London. Coverdale was in Paris working on the Great Bible under Cromwell's instructions. The often-repeated idea that Cromwell commissioned this new revision because of dissatisfaction with Coverdale's earlier efforts is almost certainly wrong (as is the surprise that the later Bishops' Bible of 1568 should 'look back' to the bad old Great Bible, whose 'flaws' occasioned it). Not only did Coverdale continue to receive Cromwell's commission, but the Great Bible is best seen as a further stage in Coverdale's (and Cranmer's, and Cromwell's) programme of rolling revision incorporating all new scholarship that came to hand (such as Sebastian Münster's Latin translation of the Hebrew and Greek in 1534–5). This programme was interrupted by the policy reversal of 1542, resumed under Edward VI, interrupted a second time by the Marian counter-reformation, and resumed again under Elizabeth. Coverdale continued to involve himself in new editions and translations non-sectarian (the 1549 English version of Erasmus' Latin paraphrase, to which the less than ecumenically minded Princess Mary may have contributed parts of St John's Gospel: see further p. 292 below); sectarian (he removed himself to Geneva in 1553 and appears to have worked on the Geneva Bible); and official (he lived long enough to be consulted by the translators of the Bishops' Bible). Though diverse and multiform, this project was not dictated entirely either by scholarly standards or by free market forces: other ventures like Taverner's Bible in 1539, best described as a scholarly pirate edition, by the printer John Byddell for Thomas Bartlet, formed no part of it. Though it sought powerful protectors in Church and state, the project was Coverdale's above all other.

The Great Bible of 1539 should not be seen as the first sign of a reaction against the project, nor necessarily as its culmination (since the project was interrupted), but as its high water mark: the completion of a standard edition to be set in churches and used to give uniformity to biblical reading in vernacular worship. Though it was all that those who led the late Henrician backlash permitted to survive, its aim was to cater for one more audience and context: the most public and conspicuous of all. It went through seven official editions within two years, and seems therefore to have found the constituency it sought. As a refinement of all English Bibles from 1534, it deserves more sustained and sympathetic study. Much as the Reformers would have regretted the limitation on Bibles after 1542, and the apparent proscription of most private reading (on the Act of 1543 which attempted this, see p. 66 above), the fact that the Great Bible endured at all would have struck them as the fruition of a major continuous achievement, no less from Tyndale's perspective than Coverdale's.

The history of English biblical translation is therefore one of distinct phases of alternating advances and reversals. The advances, no less under Edward VI than under Henry VIII, entail multiple publication of diverse translations, and there is little sign that these form part of a search for a single, authorized, one-size-fits-all translation. On the contrary, Coverdale is an apologist for multiplicity. Only at times of repression does restriction to a single translation appear a possible aim,

arising from the desire to limit lay access to vernacular translation of all kinds (thus Coverdale's 1537 Bible was prohibited in 1542, and reissued under Edward in 1549 and 1550). Official ventures such as the Great Bible, and the Bishops' Bible under Elizabeth, are directed at public liturgical use rather than at superseding rival translations for private reading. It was the Puritans who petitioned for a dominant single translation in the late sixteenth century. The result was the King James Bible of 1611 (KJB), and when it failed to suit they continued to use Geneva alongside it and for preference; the KJB merely superseded the Bishops' Bible in the role pioneered by the Great Bible in 1539.

The history is routinely misrepresented as a turning away from Latinity. Tyndale somewhat apart, all sixteenth-century English translators consult the Vulgate and the ongoing Latin textual scholarship of the Reformation. Cranmer's general preface to the Great Bible quotes all its biblical texts in both English and Latin. Tyndale's case is more difficult to judge: there is no knowing how he would have responded to Münster's Latin or contributed to the vigorous revisions of the later 1530s. His disagreements with More are about the theology embedded in Latin (especially as glosses on or transliterations of the Greek, as in *ecclesia* or *penitentia*). Bishop Gardiner, for the Catholic party, lists thirty Latin words that should be left in their Latinate form in English translation; Coverdale claims to respect them, though his translations vary. Beyond such sensitivities, however, Reformers in England and on the Continent maintain a close investment in the Latin Bible. The translators of Reims in 1582, with what strikes modern readers as preposterous Latinity, are as much linguistically avant-garde as they are ecclesiastically reactionary. The translators of KJB are markedly more Latinate than Tyndale, but their choices are often anticipated by one or more version of Coverdale's.

In truth, Coverdale is the major figure in the history of English Bible translation in the crucial years from the 1530s to the 1560s. Tyndale deserves all the honour he has received, but Coverdale should not be undervalued at his expense: the English Bible is shaped at least as much by Coverdale as by Tyndale. His dedication and preface to the 1537 Bible is one of the major monuments of vernacular apologia, and deserves to be set beside the General Preface to the LV of WB, various writings of Tyndale, and Miles Smith's preface to the KJB. It is as uncompromisingly protestant as anything of Tyndale's, seeing the 'word of God' as 'the only truth that driveth awaye all lies', specifically those of the Pope: 'Therefore were it more to the maintenance of Antichrist's kingdom, that the world were still in ignorance and blindness, and that the Scripture should never come to light.' In following Cromwell's policy of transferring all power over to the Church of Henry, Coverdale places the monarch's body in the privileged place of cohesion formerly assumed by the eucharistic Host. Since all must obey their sovereign, Coverdale submits his translation to Henry 'to correct it, to amend it, to improve it, yea and clean to reject it, if your godly wisdom shall think it necessary'. But he is careful to note that he 'never wrested nor altered so much as one word for the maintenance of any manner of sect:

but … with a clear conscience purely and faithfully translated this out of five sundry interpreters'. The invocation of exegetical authority is reminiscent of the General Prologue to WB, and the resemblance may be relevant. The prologue follows the dedication, and is addressed not to Henry but 'unto the Christian reader', and outspokenly defends not only Bible translation but diversity in both translation and interpretation: 'One seeth more clearly than another, one hath more understanding than another, one can utter a thing better than another, but no man ought to envy, or despise another' (including Coverdale himself as a reader of 'other man's translations'), 'for among many as yet I have found none without occasion of great thanksgiving unto God'. In his moderate but principled embrace of diversity, Coverdale stands out in the history of English Bible translation, setting a tone for the KJB translators to follow in 1611. Coverdale began his career in the habit of a friar and ended it sixty years later in a simple black cassock, rejecting the vestments that would have allowed him to resume his episcopal see of Devon and Cornwall. He is the bridging figure in the history of English Bible translation that allows a claim of some continuity between the English Bible of the 1380s and Miles Smith in 1611.

In short: the English Bible has a continuous history from 1380, and it may be time to abandon the ubiquitous modifier 'Wycliffite' for its earliest full versions. The only exception is the Psalter, which has an older but somewhat less continuous history from the 1330s with Richard Rolle's *English Psalter*. Literal and learned as it is (it is overzealous learning, surely, that determines the translation of 'infantium' as 'noght spekand'), Rolle's is the major precursor of the 1380 Bible, whose translators simply allow his work to stand in their new setting. His Psalter inspires a fine poetic version of the Penitential Psalms in the 1380s by the Carmelite Richard Maidstone, another by Thomas Brampton, and a major commentary by a fifteenth-century laywoman, Eleanor Hull (see further pp. 285–7 below). In the mid-sixteenth century, translations by Wyatt and Surrey stand out from a culture of doctrinal controversy by virtue of their personal but generalized gravity (see also p. 182 above). Tyndale did not live to translate the Psalms; the major sixteenth-century versions were those by Coverdale, and they became standard by virtue of their inclusion in the Book of Common Prayer: in which form, until the second half of the twentieth century, they mediated the religious subjectivity of Anglican churchgoers, through their three great registers of faith, longing, and fear. They are the layperson's Bible, the works freely given over to vernacular translation even at times of greatest inhibition, and in their minority history we hear what Rolle would have seen as the flames of vernacular desire, a beacon across millennia.

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5.2 Religious Writing

Vincent Gillespie

Mother Church and Mother Tongue

Complex and often unacknowledged concepts of authority, utility, and cultural pragmatism underlay the decision to translate religious materials into the vernaculars of England. Drawing on and participating in an ancient and rich pan-European tradition of Christian writing in Latin, such translations formed part of a supranational confederation of cultural and spiritual values. Translation developed a translingual canon where texts moved between sub-registers of the same dominant cultural and spiritual hegemony; movement between languages had none of the appropriative or imperial flavour of translation in the classical Roman period. Vernacular versions of Latin texts remained part of the same ideological framework, whose linguistic articulation could be changed to reflect changing cultural circumstances. Medieval translation, especially of texts drawn from the core Christian tradition of catechesis and exegesis, did not 'posit any historical rupture in the reception of texts, and so [was] unembarrassed about explicitly locating the presence and interests of the writing reader in the present' (Simpson 2002: 64).

In a recent essay on the experience of translating *Beowulf*, Seamus Heaney discusses 'the liminal situation of the translator . . . standing at the frontier of a resonant original, in awe of its primacy, utterly persuaded . . . called upon to utter a different yet equally persuasive version of it' (1999: 14). Comparable awarenesses are often revealed in the prologues to religious texts translated in the Middle Ages:

> Yt is not light . . . to drawe eny longe thyng from Latyn into oure Englyshe tongue. For there ys many wordes in Latyn that we haue no proper Englyssh accordynge therto. And then suche wordes must be turnyd as the sentence [meaning] may beste be vnderstondyd. . . . Many wordes . . . haue diverse vnderstondynges . . . some tyme . . . taken in one wyse, some tyme in an other . . . Dyuerse wordes also in dyuerse scryptures ar set and vnderstonde some tyme other wyse then auctoures of gramer tell or speke of. Oure language is also so dyuerse in yt selfe that the commen maner of spekyng in Englysshe of some contre [region] can skant be vnderstonded in some other contre of the same londe.
>
> (Blunt 1873: 7–8)

This comment, from the anonymous fifteenth-century (*c.* 1430) translation of the Birgittine Office (*The Myroure of Oure Ladye*), displays most of the anxieties expressed by translators in medieval England, especially of religious texts. The problems of translating into English from Latin cluster around the perceived poverty of the former's lexis; the differences of its syntax and grammar; and the

interpretative choices forced upon the translator in selecting which of the complexly compounded senses of Latin vocabulary to foreground in the translation of a particular sentence, with the inevitable loss of ambiguity and nuance that might follow. English also suffered, as this passage makes clear, from its striking dialectal variety and range. In religious texts, such problems could have particular significance. The Lollards were not alone in desiring to express complex theological ideas in the vernacular, nor in feeling that the problems encountered in the struggle for such expression often resulted from the complexity of the intellectual freight as much as the limitations of the linguistic vehicle.

Recurring throughout the history of translation into English, such issues were most crisply and urgently debated in the period 1400–30. In 1401, in particular, an important debate was staged at the University of Oxford on vernacular biblical translation. Fragmentary evidence of this debate survives from disputations and *quaestiones* staged in and around 1401. The debate has received much attention (see, in particular, Hudson 1975; Watson 1995; Somerset 2004), in the context of the later banning in 1409 by Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, of all unlicensed Bible translations made in England since the time of Wyclif (Minnis 2004 reflects recent critical consensus on the impact of the decrees). On one level, this was a Scholastic exploration of the dimensions and topography of an issue in pastoral theology. On other levels, it staged a much larger struggle, between two very different ideas of how to respond to the growing threat of heterodox ideas circulating among the laity and parochial clergy. William Butler (Franciscan) and Thomas Palmer (Dominican), both edited in Deanesly 1920, argued against any extension of the use of the vernacular for theological discourse, and in particular against the sanctioning of the translation of the Bible into English. Richard Ullerston, a secular cleric, argued for the pastoral and spiritual advantages to be gained from a cautious and moderate extension of the use of the English vernacular, then widely establishing itself as the nation's linguistic common denominator. In the event, the Arundelian Constitutions marked the apparent triumph of the more conservative, even repressive, attitude to vernacular theology. But in 1401 there still seems to have been everything to play for. (A contemporary English version of Ullerston's contribution has been edited by Bühler 1938; the fullest version, in Latin, in the National Library, Vienna, MS Vindobonensis Palatinus 4133, remains unedited. The first modern discussion was Hudson 1975; see also Watson 1995: 840–6; Ellis 2001: 20–31; Somerset 2004. On recent sociolinguistic approaches to vernacularity, see Machan 2003.)

Both sides looked back over the history of the English Church and, though reaching different conclusions, shared much common ground in their analyses of the historical role and didactic importance of native vernaculars in the formation of what was already coming to be called *ecclesia anglicana*. Both accepted the methodological precedent of vernacular preaching; moreover, material recorded in Latin might usefully be delivered in the vernacular. Both accepted the many precedents for vernacular translation of the Bible (an argument first made in England, in Latin, by Bede and, in English, in his preface to Genesis, by Ælfric).

Both sides recognized the long-standing use of the vernacular in catechesis, a habit encouraged by the Lateran councils and by successive reforming bishops, especially Robert Grosseteste, and, more recently, Thoresby (see above pp. 110–11, 127–8): both were appealed to by the Lollards to support their case. Both sides acknowledged Latin as a linguistic 'gold standard' in matters of theology. But whereas the opponents of translation argued that it would precipitate a collapse in learning through neglect of foreign languages, and a decline in respect for the clergy, Ullerston's defence created a thoughtful model of an English Church at ease with its national linguistic identity, where a well-informed laity would gratefully receive vernacular instruction from a clerical cadre newly freed by the wide availability of authorized and authoritative translations to exercise imaginative pastoral work. In what might be considered a coded defence of vernacular theology, he suggested that the process of moving theological and scriptural truths from one language to another, and of expounding them in the vernacular, could involve a process of theological explication and exploration analogous to the agendas and procedures of academic theology. The resulting clarity would therefore provide more effective teaching when clergy expounded doctrine to the laity in oral or written form.

After Ullerston, the voice of moderate reform largely fell silent. But many of his arguments are repeated in texts carefully positioned between outright Lollardy and reformist orthodoxy. For example, the first of the vernacular treatises in favour of translation collected together in CUL MS Ii.6.26 (ed. Hunt 1994) mounts several such arguments. The programme of this text, although reflecting the same kind of exchange between layman and clergy staged in *Dives and Pauper* (ed. Barnum 1976, 1980), with which it shares material, envisages no radical extension in the ownership of religious books beyond that emerging class of gently born and mercantile readers who were already reading such materials long before the end of the fourteenth century, and who continued so to do after the imposition of Arundel's Constitutions. It argues, rather, 'þat it is leefful and spedful to hem þat kunne rede, and nameliche to gentellis, to haue goddis lawe writen in bookis, þat þei mowon red it and so þe better kunne' (Hunt 1994: 278). This quietly clerical treatise cites chapter and verse of canon law and episcopal decrees to demonstrate how problems of clerical illiteracy have hindered the efficient delivery of the Church's teaching. It argues that many priests 'kunnen not construe ne expowne' the basic catechetical syllabus (258); grammar schools have been established precisely so that children who 'ben disposed to be men of holy chirche schulden lerne what Englische answeriþ to what Latyn' (262). The author carefully lays the ground of his argument: Latin remains the master language of the Church; the clergy remain the primary vehicle for religious instruction. Admittedly, the most difficult issues ought to remain the preserve of academics: but parish priests must not only instruct the laity, but also be ready to answer questions about what they have heard or read. (Material interpolated into Mirk's *Festial* suggests that such questions were becoming more frequent and troublesome around the turn of the century, with priests often ill equipped

to answer them: see further Young 1936.) Considering the needs and abilities of their audiences when they speak or preach—reacting possibly to attempts to enrich the vernacular by lexical borrowing and aureation, possibly to stilted word-for-word translation—he warns clerics to 'turne Latyn into Englische not Englische into Latyn currup [corrupt] as men don þeise days to blende [blind] þe peple and to magnifien hemselfe' (269).

With the other treatises in the volume, this one broadens the debate from questions of Bible translation to consider most of the major popular genres of vernacular religious writing in circulation in England in the early fifteenth century: catechetics; sermons; saints' lives; lives of Christ; Gospel harmonies and commentaries. At stake was the viability of any religious text that used scriptural materials directly (through citation and translation) or indirectly (by paraphrase or retelling). This was, in effect, a battle for the soul of the English Church, not just for the integrity of the Bible text.

Opposition to Arundel's hard line on translation was by no means limited to Lollards and their sympathizers. Arundel's strict regulations for the licensing of preachers, possibly the most thoroughly and visibly implemented part of the legislation, were widely resented by orthodox clerics of a reforming bent. Thomas Gascoigne, a fiercely if eccentrically conservative figure at Oxford in the 1420s and 1430s, and a staunch friend of the austerely conservative Birgittine house at Syon (on which, see pp. 270–4 below), complained bitterly (1881: 34–5, 180–1) that, as a consequence of the decrees, orthodox preachers were silenced but not the heterodox, who disregarded the new rules. Ullerston, the Cambridge tracts, and Gascoigne all share one important opinion: the clergy remain central to the development, delivery, and interpretation of any successful programme of translation in the field of religious books. This is the major fault line separating Lollard and orthodox opinions on the matter of translation.

Arundel died in 1414. In that same year, the Oxford *articuli*, drawn up by the university to assist the English delegates attending the reforming Council of Constance, contained a section 'de anglicatione librorum' [on the englishing of books], complaining that inept and incompetent translation was hindering and misleading the 'simplices idiotas', and asking the King, Henry V, to legislate for the confiscation of English books until proper scholarly translations were available (Wilkins 1737: III. 360–5). This probably reflects the aspiration in chapter 6 of Arundel's decrees for a university-based system of examination and distribution of such texts through exemplars held by university stationers (Wilkins 1737: III. 314–19). The Oxford *articuli* argue only for a deferral of translation, not a prohibition of it, and, in calling for proper scholarly translations under orthodox supervision, in effect concede the cautious case outlined by Ullerston in 1401. Neither Arundel's proposed system of stationers, nor the Oxford call for authorized translation, seems to have produced any legislative response. But the recognized need for the institutional Church to make provision for orthodox translation shows that the issues of translation and the status of the vernacular were never far away from the intellectual agenda in the decade

after Arundel's decrees. These issues may have become more acutely visible as the English Church began to re-engage with the pan-European Church in the years of conciliar debate and reform after the ending of the Great Schism. The Councils of Pisa (1409), Constance (1414–18), and Basle (opened 1431) made a whole generation of English Church leaders aware not only of their connectedness to a universal Latin Church, but, acutely, of the national distinctiveness and linguistic identity of the English Church (see esp. Catto 1985, 1992; Gillespie in Barr and Hutchison 2005: 136–9; Gillespie 2007). At such conciliar meetings the character of the English 'nation' (as the delegates were known) was defined on the grounds of its linguistic difference from the German and French nations (Crowder 1977: 110–26).

Within the overarching Latin ecclesiastical culture to which the English Church felt a new connectedness in the early fifteenth century, then, translation is best seen as one of many possible rewritings, reworkings, and reshapings to which a text might be subjected during its long transmission. It is a particular aspect of broader issues of textual *mouvance* or *variance*, an aspect signalled by signs of code-shifting and linguistic transformation. The choices of a translator are often those of a compiler reworking a text. But, unless it is overtly and consciously heretical, that reworking always operates under the aegis of the teaching authority of the universal Church.

Because the readers targeted as the audience of vernacular translation are usually assumed to be less educationally advantaged than those with access to culturally élite languages, the process of translation (especially into English) can sometimes be presented as a reductive and patronizing activity. Translations can appear to constitute the target audience as marked by a dynamic of need and disadvantage. The audience 'lacks' access to something that must be provided for them, and by implication lacks the attainment and cultural sophistication to profit from the text in the original. In such a hierarchical model, the translator can appear to police and enforce an ideological and linguistic hegemony. The target audiences participate in an inferior, second-order engagement with the ideas and strategies of the original text. Apart from the guerrilla activities of the Lollards, it is easy to construct a narrative of religious translation as constrained to provide milk for the laity while restricting the meat of high doctrine to the Latinate élites.

But the history of vernacular theology in England argues otherwise. Sophisticated and challenging religious texts moved easily between Latin, French, and English. Ambitious vernacular texts, like Hilton's *Scale of Perfection* or the *Cloud of Unknowing*, were translated into Latin, perhaps to allow a wider European dissemination (as discussed by Hussey 1973 and Clark 1982). Ambitious Latin texts, like Rolle's *Incendium Amoris*, were translated into English. High-grade Latin exegetical and academic materials were quarried and redeployed in new vernacular contexts; Latin sermons reappeared in vernacular clothing. These moves speak more of the pragmatic literacies of different target audiences than of the status or cultural worth of the different languages. And if the bulk of

vernacular translation is of texts aimed at catechetic or devotional situations, that partly reflects the breadth of the available audience for such texts, and the number of environments in which they might be used. Ullerston and the Lollards shared a recognition that the translation of religious texts into English would benefit poorly educated parish clergy as much as the laity. The implied audience of many translations (often addressed as 'lewed' or lacking linguistic competence in Latin or French) frequently bears little or no relationship to their actual achieved audience, as witnessed through marks of ownership. It is important not to flatten or caricature the likely audience for religious texts in the vernacular into the needy and ignorant laity: the history of vernacular theology and what the Latin commonplace calls the voices of the pages ('voces paginarum') tell a very different story.

The Anglo-Saxon Period

Medieval English comments on the act of translation routinely present it as driven by a sense of cultural inferiority and nostalgia for a lost golden age of learning. Despite the fact that the earliest surviving literary works in English are stylish translations of Latin religious texts, one of the earliest recorded comments on translation in the Anglo-Saxon period observes its apparent absence from the historical record of English textual practice. The late ninth-century 'Alfredian' preface to the translation of Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis* expresses puzzlement that the learned men of earlier generations 'did not wish to translate any part of [their books] into their own language' because 'they did not imagine that men should ever become so careless and learning so decayed; they . . . hoped that there would be the greater knowledge in this land the more languages we knew'. Against this lost world of polylingual polymaths, Alfred constructs his own people as an intellectually exiled race wandering through an impenetrable landscape: 'One can see their footprints here still, but we cannot follow after them and therefore we have lost both the wealth and the knowledge because we would not bend our mind to that course' (Swanton 1975: 31–2). Instead of the clear *swæð* [track] of the ancestors, Alfred notes the swathe of loss and destruction left by Viking invasion, compounded by the indolence of latter-day scholars. For Alfred, as for Ælfric in his Latin *Grammar*, English literacy constituted an ancillary, pragmatic form of discourse that would, for the few, provide supported access to the true language of learning and culture. Alfred is clear that the wise teachers of the next generations will have been promoted to 'higher [i.e. clerical] orders', and learned Latin, the language of universal knowledge. So Alfred's translation project (see fuller discussion in §3.2 above) views itself as a work of intellectual and national reconstruction, rebuilding wealth and wisdom from the scorched earth of an impoverished inheritance of learning. The preface to the OE version of Augustine's *Soliloquia*, part of the same Alfredian translation project, comments that the translator's engagement with the Latin text has been like a man gathering timber to build a house for himself. It encourages the reader to

'load his waggons with fair branches so that he can weave many a neat wall and construct many an excellent building and build a fair town' (38). For the Alfredian translators, then, the vernacular is not necessarily stigmatized as an inferior or inadequate medium, provided the final cultural end is not confused with the local linguistic means. Translation into 'Englisc' is merely the first step in the construction of a bridge that would eventually reconnect the English people to the Latinate intellectual highways of Europe. As R. M. Liuzza puts it, 'men wrote books in English out of necessity, and only secondarily, if at all, as a matter of national pride or literary ambition: translations, particularly of the major liturgical or monastic texts, are concessions, not accomplishments' (1998: 7). But such concessions carry with them no sense of inferiority or embarrassment: such texts consciously contribute to and participate in a stable and assured pan-European Christian cultural matrix. Alfred observes in the preface to the *Pastoral Care* that the spread of the Bible across the known world entailed its translation into new vernaculars: 'the law was first found in Hebrew', and then the Greeks and Romans 'translated it all into their own language . . . and all other Christian nations also'. As Ullerston would later argue (citing Alfred as an exemplar), translation is an adjunct of learning and interpretation. It is the semantic manifestation of a process of exegesis and study which establishes the 'wise translator' (including the King and his team of learned clerical advisers) as the guarantor of the doctrinal authenticity and continuing worth of the new text that results.

Alfred is stressing the translated text's continuity with and fidelity to the intellectual community and ideological system from which it has come: different in mode, not in kind; a translation theory concerned 'with recuperating the signified beyond the accidents of human linguistic multiplicity' (Copeland in *MTr* 1: 20). St Augustine had prayed for an intuitive, supralinguistic understanding of Moses' meaning, 'a truth that is neither Hebrew nor Greek nor Latin nor any barbarous tongue' (*Confessions* X. xx. 29, quoted Cole 2002: 1132), and his checklist of linguistic slippage and semantic transference established the characteristic rollcall of language shifts in western Christendom. It is later alluded to by Trevisa and Chaucer, in the prologues to their translations of, respectively, the *Polychronicon* and *Astrolabe*, and powerfully expressed in the general prologue to the Wycliffite Bible translation. But the concept is already embedded in the assumptions of Anglo-Saxon translation theory and practice.

So when Ælfric discusses the literary heritage of his *Life of King Edmund*, he makes no distinction of status between Abbo's Latin book and his own translation (Swanton 1975: 97). The bookishness of the story ('we read in books') matters more than the language of those books. Ælfric's anxieties about translating Genesis into English lie not in the principle of the act but rather in the hermeneutic and exegetical problems generated by his text. Indeed, apart from the often-quoted comments of Alfred and Ælfric, OE religious texts reveal remarkably little linguistic self-consciousness. The coterie clerical culture of Anglo-Saxon England produced an environment 'where English and Latin had different . . . functional

domains' (Stanton 2002: 1–2). But the difference is one of strategy rather than status.

The Latin prologues to Ælfric's collections of *Catholic Homilies*, for example, explain in the language of learning his strategy in the following vernacular texts. He has presented his material 'not with garrulous wordiness or unknown speech but in [the] open and pure words of . . . this people . . . the usual English speech' (Stanton 2002: 145; cf. Ælfric 1979: 1). He is not apologizing for the act of translation, but rather explaining the register and level of style deployed, driven by an appropriate rhetorical sensitivity to the needs and competencies of his audience. For those educated only in their native English, the vernacular 'may the more easily reach the heart of the readers and hearers'. In other words, Ælfric is developing a vernacular version of *sermo humilis*, using devices from the rhythms and lexis of ordinary speech and adding to them heightening elements from the poetics of oral performance. He seems to have envisaged his sermons being preached to a lay congregation in the presence of the monastic community. So his use of the vernacular is not a concession to the limited abilities of his 'lewed' audience. Ælfric's translations from learned Latin exegetes and homilists would also have provided material of intellectual interest to his clerical hearers. His use of English is a gesture of inclusion: the listening audience is the family of Christians bound together by a common ideology and liturgical framework, addressed through the medium of a linguistic common denominator. Later in his career, Ælfric wrote more complex and demanding vernacular sermons, apparently for a monastic or clerical audience, which also suggests that the vernacular was not considered an inferior mode of expression.

Ælfric did have anxieties about the danger of error being spread by badly translated books. The preface to series 1 of the *Catholic Homilies* testifies that he 'geseah and gehyrde mycel gedwyld on manegum engliscum bocum, ðe ungelærede menn ðurh heora bilewitnysse to micclum wisdome tealdon' [saw and heard much error ('mycel gedwyld') in many English books which unlearned people through their innocence took to be great wisdom] (Ælfric 1997: 174). But in the vernacular prologue to the *Lives of the Saints*, intended for private reading or listening rather than for formal preaching, he stresses that his work is bringing to a new audience the timeless wisdom of the universal Church: 'ne secge we nan ðincg niwes on þissere gesetnysse | For þan ðe hit stod gefyrn awriten on lædenbocum þeah þe þa læwedan men ðæt nyston' [we say nothing new in this setting, because it stood written as given in Latin books, although ignorant men did not know it] (Ælfric 1881: 4). Ælfric is, in effect, tapping into an educational resource encoded to ensure its transmission in a universal language, which, now decoded, becomes available to his contemporaries. His translations are windows into the universal Church's treasure house of learning.

Although the first recorded poem in English, Cædmon's lyric in praise of the Creator, was ostensibly produced by an illiterate lay brother of Whitby Abbey, it must have been members of the carefully constructed Latin intellectual élite who produced most of the remarkable body of learned, sophisticated, and

self-referential verse that survives in the four great poetic codices of Anglo-Saxon England. (All contain religious verse: the contents of Vercelli and Junius are exclusively, and those of the Exeter Book largely, religious; even the manuscript mainly devoted to *Beowulf* also includes a poem on the Old Testament heroine Judith.) In this verse the use of the vernacular shows no signs of any implicit recognition of a sedimentary culture, where English exists only as the language of inferior instruction or of lower orders. The poems draw freely on the imaginative resources of classical, Christian, and Germanic lore, constructing themselves as cultural synapses and creating in their muscular verse imaginative compounds of great versatility and finesse. For many of these texts, the process of cultural assimilation through translation generates an eloquent conversation between thought worlds that emerge from the poetic crucible as linguistically and ideologically isomorphic. These texts carefully conjure imaginative places that require as much hermeneutic skill to explore as any contemporary Latin texts, and relate to the same universe of learning in philosophy, theology, and history. The chosen modes of expression in OE texts imply equally deliberate choices about the appropriate form for particular modes of thought. As Anne Savage observes, writing about the OE *Phoenix*, 'translation . . . involves expansion . . . [to] draw . . . a reader or audience more closely into the personal significance of the Latin base text— which has already been processed by the poet's own ruminations' (*MTr* 1: 134): here, the *Carmen de Ave Phoenice*, attributed to Lactantius. The *Phoenix* (see also p. 411 below) goes beyond the *Carmen*'s allegory of the death and resurrection of Christ, creating a fascinating hybrid where native forms of verse interact with the rhetorical tropes of the Latin grammatical schools, the Latin *Physiologus*, and a commentary by St Ambrose. It culminates in a final section of macaronic verse in Latin and OE, an elaborate interplay between source and target language where culturally neither has the upper hand.

Most OE texts participate in a similarly rich and diverse field of hybridized interlingual resonance and translation. *The Seafarer* invokes the image of strewing a grave with gold, and burying the dead with 'maþmum mislicum' [various treasures], implying a pagan tradition of grave goods, but also an artful invocation and translation of elements from Psalm 49 (Vulgate 48): the poem becomes the meeting place where the varied voices of Anglo-Saxon England come together. Many of the OE poems are marked by an intense and meditative attention to core images that suggest their origin in monastic environments. In such cases, translation both requires and is part of rumination. Cynewulf, who names himself in embedded acrostics in his poems, celebrates the rich and challenging nature of his verse in the epilogue to *Elene*, a poem whose primary source is a Latin recension of the Life of St Judas Cyriacus:

Thus miraculously have I . . . gleaned and woven the craft of words and . . . pondered and winnowed my thoughts painstakingly at night. . . . The mighty king granted me knowledge in lucid form . . . revealed its radiance, at times augmented it, unshackled my body, laid open my heart—and unlocked the art of poesy [leoðcræft].   (Bradley 1982: 195)

Cynewulf claims that his inspiration and enlightenment follow the kinds of meditative thought and rumination characteristic of Latin monastic life, and yet his celebration and expression of his inspired understanding pours out in vernacular verse of beauty and sophistication.

OE verse and prose, then, is often as demanding, allusive, and synthetic as its Latin siblings, and in many cases draws on a wider cultural, stylistic, and linguistic range. Although the Norman Conquest complicated the linguistic hierarchy by the addition and privileging of another vernacular, later English writers on translation never forgot the role of Alfred, Ælfric, and Bede in forging a praxis for translators of religious texts.

Translation Between 1066 and 1300: 'Lewed Clergie'

In the early thirteenth century, a scholar working in Worcester, one of the strongholds of continuing interest in Anglo-Saxon books, copied a text that looks back thoughtfully at the vernacular theology of Anglo-Saxon England. The *First Worcester Fragment* reflects particularly on Anglo-Saxon translating and glossing of the Bible and patristic theology, transforming the latter into homilies and other didactic texts (see the discussion in Cannon 2004 and Donoghue 2006). The Anglo-Saxon translators provided for their own language group: Bede 'was iboren her on Breotene mid us | And he wisliche bec awende | þet þeo Englise leoden þurh weren ilerde' (Donoghue 2006: 81–2) [was born here in Britain with us, and wisely translated books through which the English people were taught]. Similarly, Ælfric's Scripture translations provided the means by which 'weren ilærde ure leoden on Englisc'. Now, the writer laments, perhaps consciously echoing Alfred, past teachings are abandoned and the 'folc' is 'forloren' [destroyed]. The people are taught by 'oþre leoden', and the old 'lorþeines' [lore-thanes/teachers] have passed away. In this fragment, poised linguistically between OE and early ME, the writer looks back on a passed golden age where the English *folc* received instruction from people of their own language grouping. The rupture is either that brought about by the renewed Viking raids at the end of the Anglo-Saxon period, or the wholesale changes resulting from the Norman Conquest. The 'oþre leoden' are most likely members of the relatively new Anglo-Norman hierarchy. The Worcester scribe is not lamenting a loss of religious teaching, but rather a linguistic rupture, the loss of a common tongue, and the creation of a pastoral environment that constitutes the English people as passive and needy recipients of the homiletic largesse of a conquering (and linguistically alien) culture, even if the teaching they provide is still delivered in English.

The riches of the Anglo-Saxon Church's religious inheritance remained as valued and efficacious relics of a lost age, but early medieval English readers became increasingly unable to rise to their linguistic challenges. In the third quarter of the twelfth century, for example, the West Midland scribe of Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 343 copied a group of OE sermons originally composed (in the late West Saxon literary dialect) by Ælfric and others. There

are signs of linguistic confusion in his scribal practice, reflecting the growing obsolescence of late West Saxon. Despite his apparent desire to be faithful to his source texts, and his continuing interest in their original language, the range of alterations found in his copies suggest that he was, perhaps unwittingly, engaged in a process of translation and acculturation by bringing his materials into the complex and labile linguistic environment of post-Conquest Britain (Irvine 1993: l–lvi). English was becoming a service dialect, rarely used as the language of choice for the recording or transmission of sophisticated literary or religious materials. That role had passed to AN, and the primary cultural interface had been reconfigured to allow Latin and AN to engage in mutual knowledge transfer and intertextual referentiality.

The religious environment in which vernacular books were produced, circulated, and read was changed dramatically in the course of the thirteenth century. Canon 21 of the Fourth Lateran Council of 1215 required all men and women to confess their sins to their own parish priest at least once a year. Part instrument of social control, part genuine attempt to improve the continuity of spiritual care at parish level, these changes placed the parish priest in the role of spiritual physician. These conciliar teachings were systematized and codified by the Scholastic theologians in the universities of Europe, especially Paris. A new pastoral theology emerged, a culture of penitential self-examination, and a deeper devotional literacy at parish level. The new pastoral thinking was popularized and implemented in England and Wales by bishops who issued decrees for their dioceses, and sometimes produced their own handbooks to educate parochial clergy (men of often limited education) in the exercise of their pastoral and penitential duties (for fuller comment, see Cheney 1973, and, in Heffernan 1985a, Boyle and Shaw). The priest was required to offer instruction to his parishioners four times each liturgical year on the principal elements of the faith, usually 'vulgariter' or 'in lingua materna': vernacular mnemonics soon began to be recorded as headings for sermons or areas for discussion in confession (for examples, see Russell 1962–3, Gillespie 1980).

Throughout the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, priests were often required to copy the episcopal decrees 'in libellis suis' [in their small books] and to bring them for inspection at diocesan synods (Gillespie in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989: 317–18). These diocesan prescriptions therefore encouraged the development of a new and influential kind of book, the clerical miscellany, into which priests would copy not only the local legislation but also other texts that might assist them in the execution of their office. Such books, mainly in Latin until the fourteenth century (and later), frequently included sermons, didactic treatises, moral verses, proverbs, hymns, mnemonic tags, and other texts thought useful in the public instruction of the laity in the catechetic syllabus. Thoresby's decrees for the province of York (issued in 1357) were also partly translated into English verse, at his command, by the York monk John Gaytrygge (de Cateryk) to facilitate their wider transmission and easier comprehension (for fuller discussion, see Powell in Minnis 1994). According to the rubric in one

fragmentary copy (BL, MS Harley 1022, f. 73v), the work ('ista predicacio' [this preaching]) was 'transumpta...in nostram maternam linguam' [adopted into our mother tongue], and the text was to be 'shewed | Openly on Inglis opon sonnondaies' (Simmons and Nolloth 1901: 6).

This gesture is often repeated in texts preserved in clerical books. It appears, for instance, in *The Instructions for Parish Priests* by the Augustinian canon John Mirk, which draws heavily on William of Pagula's *Oculus Sacerdotis* [*Eye of the Priest*], a major Latin handbook for parochial clergy produced early in the fourteenth century. Copies of the *Instructions* often describe it as 'Oculus sacerdotis in lingua materna' (BL, MS Royal 17.C.xvii, f. 68v) or 'tractatus qui dicitur pars oculi de latino in anglicum translatus' (BL, MS Cotton Claudius A.II, f. 154v). Mirk is seeking, in popularizing Pagula's teachings, to ensure that the exercise of the sacraments at parish level is being properly and efficaciously conducted. He addresses three main topics: 'How thow schalt thy paresche preche | And what þe nedeth hem to teche | And wyche þou moste þy-self be' (Mirk 1974: 17–19). He is aiming to reach the least educated strata of the clergy, and envisages a situation where his work may be the only guide they possess: 'hyt ys I-made hem to schowne | þat haue no bokes of here owne' (ll. 1,923–4). The text encourages its own free circulation through loan, even to laymen and 'oþer þat beth of mene lore | þat wolde fayn conne more' (ll. 1,925–6). This poem often survives alongside materials probably emanating from grammar schools on the rudiments of Latin, or on the construing of Latin hymns, suggesting its use by priests who needed help with their Latin.

The 'library' of the average parish priest probably consisted of one or more such texts, bound in one volume or kept loose in booklets, and a whole stratum of spiritual texts in the vernacular functioned and circulated similarly (see further Doyle in Griffiths and Pearsall 1989). Priests copied into their books texts they had encountered in their own training (especially at grammar school), or had happened across in the course of their reading. Proverbs, epigrams, and *sententiae* were widely used for training students in translation into Latin, versification, imitation, and augmentation. Many would have become embedded in the student's memory. The collection of grammar-school set texts was always headed by the *Distichs* attributed to Cato, a series of sententious and hugely popular couplets, often thought to teach the four cardinal virtues (see further Woods and Copeland in *CHMEL*; Gillespie 2005a: 150–60). These were several times translated into English, and collections of other proverbs in Latin and in English also survive. The prologue to one late medieval collection of proverbial couplets explains that the 'ordyner' in assembling them has provided the Latin 'for clerkes that Latyn can' and the English version 'for ylke a lewde man'. This collection dramatizes the interface between the sententious commonplaces of the Latin tradition and their equally formulaic vernacular equivalents:

> *Si quis sentiret, quo tendit, et vnde veniret,*
> *Numquam gauderet, sed in omni tempore fleret.*
> Who would thynke of thynges two

> Whens he came and whyther to go
> Neuer more ioye should se,
> Bot euer in gretynge [weeping] be.
> <div style="text-align:right">(Horrall 1983: 359)</div>

Such bilingual clichés are the building blocks of much of the period's moral verse.

By the end of the thirteenth century, the poems studied in grammar schools included even more sententiously moral texts. Their common theme is unequivocally *contemptus mundi*; they address the catechetic fundamentals of Christian doctrine with vigour and muscular relish. Such books provided the mental furniture for generations of students. In a text like the *Liber Floretus*, the attributes of a good sermon and the necessities for a good death jostle with the rules for a good life, all listed in chugging hexameter couplets. So it is not surprising to find verse texts of an avowedly pastoral or penitential nature as fellow-travellers in such collections. Parish priests trained in grammar schools, and in increasing though always modest numbers at university as well, often relied on such verse texts as aide-mémoire in the execution of their pastoral duties.

Translation 1300–1380: 'To wirke sum god thing on Inglisse'

As literacy began to expand among the professional and mercantile classes, these collections of moral and catechetic texts spread into lay hands. But getting the catechetic and pastoral message across in confession to a laity still largely illiterate and dependent on memory was often a struggle. Although the early printed verse text known as *How the Plowman Learned his Paternoster* (a translation from the French: ed. Sisam 1970: 514–21) is clearly fanciful, it does illustrate the ingenuity and inventiveness that might be deployed in such didactic situations. It recounts how an illiterate farmer, unable to remember his prayers, is told by the parish priest to sell corn to a series of visitors, to remember their names, and to report them to the priest who will then pay him. The names of his customers, of course, spell out the Lord's Prayer, and, as a good businessman, he is able flawlessly to recite them to the priest at his next confession. Usually the level of invention in such catechetic texts is much lower.

In the period 1300–80, long vernacular verse treatments of the catechetic syllabus, such as the hugely popular northern poems *Cursor Mundi*, *The Prick of Conscience*, *Handlyng Synne*, and the *Speculum Vitae*, explored moral and penitential issues in muscular and effective couplets that on occasion aspire to the intensity and power of lyric expression (see especially Hanna 2003). Such texts routinely borrowed from earlier AN and Latin materials, and are routinely preserved in books owned or made by priests. This reflects partly the priest's need for appropriate teaching materials, and partly the appetite of preachers and catechists for episcopally sanctioned vernacular materials useful in pastoral contexts. These texts recognize the functional utility of English as linguistic common denominator, and often imply or explicitly address an audience of 'lewed' listeners even when preserved in clerical books. The penitential handbook

Prick of Conscience, one of the undoubted best-sellers of pre-1400 vernacular theology (Lewis and McIntosh 1982 provide fuller details), addresses itself to a monoglot audience (though, as earlier noted, the construction of that audience as 'lewed' is not simply borne out by patterns of ownership in the manuscripts):

> Namly [especially] til lewed men of England
> þat can noght bot Inglise undirstand;
> þarfor þis tretice drawe I wald [wished to translate]
> In Inglise tung þat may be cald
> Prik of conscience.
>
> (Morris 1863: 257)

By contrast, borrowing from largely Latin historical and legendary sources, *Cursor Mundi* (*c.* 1300) shows some recognition of its place within a functionally trilingual culture, but also suggests the suitability of the different languages for different forms of discourse: 'Sanges sere of selcouþe rime [different songs of various rhyme] | Ingeles, Frenche and Latine | To rede and here ilkan ys prest | The thinges that ham likes [please them] best' (Morris 1874: 10). Perhaps because of its historical subject matter, this text is more aware of linguistic variety and of the code-specific forms (and emphases) that had developed in the literary languages of post-Conquest England (for fuller comment, see Horrall 1989; Thompson 1998). *Cursor Mundi* preserves the most explicitly nationalistic of all the verse prologues to these didactic texts:

Ofter [after] haly kirkis state | þis ilke boke ys translate
Vntil Ingeles tonge to rede | For þe loue of Englis lede [people],
Englis lede of Engelande, | þe commune for til vnderstande.
Frenche rimes here I rede | Communely in iche a stede
þat mast [most] ys worþ for Frenche man. | Quat ys worþ for hime nane can [who knows none]?
Of Engelande nacioun | Ys Englis man þar-in commoun [English men are most commonly found in the nation of England],
þe speche þat man with sone may spede | Mast þarwit to speke ware nede. [it would be most necessary to speak in the language that men can soon profit by]
Selden was for any chaunce | Englis tong praysed in Fraunce.
Gif we ilkane þaire langage | me þink þen we do nane outrage.

(Morris 1874: 20, 22)

Not all such texts were anti-French. When, *c.* 1303, Robert Mannyng translated William of Waddington's AN *Manuel des Pechiez* as *Handlyng Synne*, he was consciously changing the target audience as well as the linguistic codes of his source. 'Waddington wrote for an intellectually diverse group of clerical readers, Mannyng wrote for a socially diverse group of intellectually limited listeners and readers' (Sullivan 1990: 137).

> For lewed men y vndyr-toke
> On Englyssh tunge to make þys boke
> For many beyn of swyche manere,

> þat talys and rymys wyle bleþly [gladly] here . . .
> For swyche men haue Y made þys ryme
> þat þey may weyl dyspende here tyme,
> And þere-yn sumwhat for to here,
> To leue [leave] al swyche foul manere.
>
> (Mannyng 1983: 4)

This issue here is more the form ('haue y made þis ryme') than the language, and
the text sets itself up (forlornly) in opposition to 'gamys and festys . . . at þe ale'
when men 'loue . . . to lestene trotevale' [to hear idle tale-telling]. In other words,
Mannyng is using the vernacular to create a generic challenge to vernacular
entertainment, whose orality and pace his style therefore apes. But Mannyng
also seems to envisage a reading audience for his text.

> Whedyr outys þou wylt opone þe boke
> þou shalt fynde begynnyng on to loke:
> Oueral ys bygynnyng, oueral ys ende;
> Hou þat þou wylt turne hyt or wende,
> Many þynges þeryn mayst þou here;
> Wyþ ofte redyng mayst þou lere;
> þou mayst nouȝt wyþ onys redyng
> Knowe þe soþe of euery þyng.
>
> (6)

Here is the characteristic ambivalence of such texts. The style is oral and popular,
but the work requires 'oft redyng'. There are two intended audiences: groups of
listeners and private readers. Possibly the work was originally intended for the
lay members (and perhaps some of the clerics) of Mannyng's own community
at Sempringham (for discussion see Sullivan 1992–5). Far from seeing his task as
one of vulgarization and simplistic paraphrase, Mannyng sometimes feels that
the most complex theological issues could benefit even learned priests by being
expressed and restated in the vernacular:

> Be þou neure so gode a prest
> Ne so grete wyt yn þy brest
> Y rede þe here how þe propertes are shewed
> þogh þat þe langage be but lewed.
>
> (251)

He also provides a separate booklet on the Eucharist, designed to be read aloud
separately from the rest of the text. Here the audience is more explicitly config-
ured as lay and listening: 'ȝe lewed men Y telle hyt ȝow | þese clerkys kunne hyt
weyl y-now' (269).

Here and elsewhere in Mannyng, the 'lewed' are either monolingual (most
of the laity), or pragmatically multilingual but more comfortable in English
than in other languages (clergy of lesser education and limited literacy). Like
the author of *Cursor Mundi*, though less militantly, Mannyng sees his audience
as lacking fluency in Latin or French (but not literary sophistication); so the
transparency of his English is justification enough, using a form and style 'lightest

in mannes mouth'. Such gestures might seem reflections of social fissures between the anglophone and francophone elements of English society. But such a view would be misleading, given both an accelerating decay in francophone competence during the thirteenth century and abundant evidence that French was an acquired rather than native language within a few generations of the Conquest. Read carefully, such prologues usually reveal signs of a more nuanced attitude to issues of language and translation.

The *Speculum Vitae*, for example, is a grand synthetic commentary on the catechetic syllabus, probably dating from the 1350s and drawing on the popular French didactic handbook the *Somme le roi* and an array of Latin sources including William Peraldus (as noted in Allen 1917). Explaining his decision to write in English, the translator/compiler provides a battery of translational commonplaces.

> Na Latyn I wylle speke na waste
> Bot Inglysche that men uses maste.
> For that es oure kynde langage . . .
> That canne ilk a man understand
> That es bornne in Inglande. . . .
> Latyn, als I trow, canne nane
> Bot thase that it of scole haves tane,
> Som canne Frankes and na Latyn
> That haves used courte and dwelled ther-in,
> And some canne o Latyn a perty
> That canne Frankes bot febely
> And some understandes in Inglysce
> That canne nother Latyn na Frankes.
> Bot lered and lewed, alde and yonnge
> All understandes Inglysche tonng. . . .
> Thare-fore I wyll me haly [wholly] halde
> To that langage that Inglysche es calde.
> (*IoV* 336–7)

This important prologue implies that an author wanting to maximize the reach and impact of his text would find English not linguistically the lowest common denominator, but rather the highest common factor between social subsets, the linguistic register 'maste of usage'. Its popularity (over forty extant manuscripts) and influence—two later prose redactions exist, *The Mirror for Lewd Men and Women* (ed. Nelson 1981) and *Jacob's Well* (ed. Brandeis 1901; see also Carruthers 1990)—suggest that *Speculum Vitae* hit its market. Texts such as these reflect a complicated cultural and practical awareness of the status of English in religious writing before 1380. Not all contemporary versions of AN texts felt it necessary to remark or reflect on their linguistic status: neither *Of Schrifte and Penance* (a translation of the *Manuel des Pechiez*: ed. Bitterling 1998) nor *The Book of Vices and Virtues* (a version of *Somme le roi*: ed. Francis 1942) addresses issues of translation or inscribed audience. Although English often seems to have been regarded as a low-status language in non-religious milieux, translators of religious

texts, driven by issues of communicative efficacy, seem to have embraced it as a universal linguistic medium that could best reflect the catechizing priorities of the English Church.

The Art of Preaching

In parallel with the developing interest and expertise in techniques of catechesis, there was also a striking 'technologizing' of preaching. Encyclopedias and handbooks provided exemplary material, and model sermons began to circulate. Sermons became formally more systematic, with lists and subdivisions (or *distinctiones*). Manuals for the clergy appeared with such lists and tables, often rhymed to assist remembrance, and the verses were often translated in part (i.e. macaronics) or whole; the sermon notebook of the friar John of Grimestone is full of *distinctiones* and rhyming tags that thrive on such intralingual play (Grimestone 1973).

Another influential source of sermon-related vernacular verse is the *Fasciculus Morum* (ed. Wenzel 1989), a Latin text produced in an English Franciscan environment very early in the fourteenth century (for full discussion, see Wenzel 1978). It is organized by topic, in full awareness that its material would most usually be deployed in vernacular sermons. Vernacular verses and tags, or schematic accounts of popular and exemplary vernacular stories, abound. The *Fasciculus* displays a remarkable range of cultural reference. Citations from the *Aeneid* and lines from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* rub shoulders with short ME lyric versions of the liturgical reproaches from the Good Friday liturgy (Wenzel 1989: 204); we learn that noble bandits in England are called by special names in the vernacular: '*shaueldours* et *ryfelours*' (340).

Sermon texts could enjoy a written circulation in both Latin and English. The 1406 sermon by Richard [?] Alkerton survives in a ME version, in London, BL MS Add. 37677, and a Latin, Oxford Trinity College MS 42 (see further O'Mara 1994). Another of Alkerton's 1406 sermons, in defence of clerical possessions, was preached and disseminated in response to a sermon attacking them by a Lollard 'clerk of Oxenford', William Taylor (Taylor 1993). The sermon, we learn, 'is writun boþe in Latyn and in Engelisch, and many men haue it and þei setten greet priys þerbi' (Thorpe 1993: 85).

The survival in manuscript of macaronic sermons suggests that preachers were capable of instantaneous translation not only in performance, but also in writing up their texts, and were thinking in both languages simultaneously, choosing the idiom or turn of phrase that best suited their purposes. The extraordinary macaronic sermons in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Bodley 649, apparently aimed at a clerical audience, are especially noteworthy in this connection (see discussion by Haines 1976; see also Wenzel 2005: 84–7).

A little over twenty collections of English vernacular sermons survive (see especially Spencer 1993; Spencer in Edwards 2004). Many, though not all, were translated from Latin. Robert of Greatham's mid-thirteenth-century AN

verse sermon cycle, the *Miroir*, was also quarried. This influential witness to francophone concern for religious instruction consists of fifty-nine sermons and one non-sermon text, draws heavily from Gregory the Great's forty homilies on the Gospels, and structures itself more simply than contemporary Scholastic sermons. Perhaps Greatham thought that this monastic style might be easier for his target audience. Like later English sermon cycles, the *Miroir* consciously positions itself outside the linguistic footprint of Latin texts. The AN prologue effaces any concern with the language of the text in favour of an overriding concern with meaning or intent. Robert will make his text as linguistically transparent as possible:

> Point de latin metre n'i uoil, | Kar co resemblereit orgoil;
> … | Co dire a altre qu'il n'entent.
> E si est co mult grant folie | A lai parler latinerie.
>   (Duncan and Connolly 2003: 4)

I won't put any Latin here, for that would look a mark of pride … to say a thing to someone he didn't understand. So it is great foolishness to speak Latin to the laity.

Greatham's text set an influential benchmark for vernacular preaching texts, and, like other thirteenth- and early fourteenth-century AN religious texts, was soon translated and adapted into English. A careful prose translation of the whole was made in London and emerges as one of the most important shapers of civic literary and religious outlook and preoccupations, to judge from its frequent and consistent presence in surviving fourteenth-century books from the city (Hanna 2005 *passim*, esp. 177–202). In the English prologue, the compiler's comments on procedure and translation follow the French text closely, but with some elaboration:

Whan ʒe han wil for to reden, draweþ forþ þis boke. þe goddespelles ʒe schul finden herein, first þe tixt and þan þe vndoinge schortlich. And wit ʒe wel þer nis nouʒt on word writen in þat it nis in holi writ and out of þe bokes þat þis holi men þat were toforn vs han made. Latin ne wil Y sette non þerin for it semeþ as it wer a pride for to telle anoþer þat he vnderstondeþ nouʒt. And so it is ful gret foli to spek Latyn to lewed folke.

Carefully anonymous, the English translator also effaces references to the original target audience (a noble patron called 'trechere dame Aline'), and opens the text to a wider readership. He follows Robert in stressing content over language:

Ne ʒeueþ no kepe to þe letter ne to þe speche, bot vnderstondeþ wel þe reson [meaning]. . . . Better is for to saie þe soþ boustouslich [roughly] þan for to saie fals þurtʒh queyntise, for al þat acordeþ wiþ soþnesse, al is is wel said befor God.

                          (Duncan and Connolly 2003: 5)

This attitude contrasts with the rhetorical floridness often found in romance narrative and is even more pointed in the translation, which undertakes an unusually early process of *derimage* from the verse form of the AN original. The text stresses the need for laity to show respect to the clergy, but also implicitly gives the laity persuasive reasons for holding clerics to account for the efficacy

of their pastoral office. Such issues became steadily more prominent during the fourteenth century: in, for instance, the popular English verse *Northern Homily Cycle*, dated *c.* 1315, and surviving in twenty manuscripts, three recensions, and two versions, which also borrows heavily from the *Miroir* (see further Heffernan 1985b). The *Cycle*'s prologue engages thoughtfully with issues of language and translation.

> For laued men havis mar mister [need], | Godes word for to her,
> Than klerkes that thair mirour lokes | And sees hou thai sal lif on bokes.
> And bathe klerk and laued [lay] man | Englis understand kan
> That was born in Ingeland | And lang haves ben tharin wonand.
> Bot al men can noht i-wis | Understand Latin and Frankis.
> Forthi me think it almous it isse | To worke sum god thing on Inglisse.
>
> (*IoV* 127–8)

'To worke sum god thing on Inglisse' becomes the primary thrust of religious writing in the decades following the composition of the *Northern Homily Cycle*. The *Festial*, composed in the late fourteenth century by the Augustinian canon John Mirk at Lilleshall Abbey, Shropshire, is the most popular and influential ME sermon collection of the later Middle Ages (Mirk 1905; see also Powell 1982, 1991, 1997b). Mirk wrote other works for parish priests: in Latin, a comprehensive handbook, the *Manuale Sacerdotis* (for comment, see Fletcher 1981; Ford 2006); in English, a simpler verse epitome of the parochial catechetic syllabus, the *Instructions for Parish Priests*. The linguistic variety of his output suggests that he was seeking to address a range of audiences and needs, all apparently encompassed within the single class of parish priest. Mirk acknowledges in his prologue to the *Festial* that he has drawn the collection 'owt of legend aurea with more addyng to' for the use of those who have 'defaute of bokus and sympulnys of letture' (Powell 1991: 86). In its original form the *Festial* provided model sermons for the major feast days. It underwent later revisions, one clearly targeted at a private reading audience. Sermons from the collection were still being adapted and excerpted in manuscript anthologies in the early sixteenth century, and it was one of the first collections of sermons to be printed (by Caxton: see Powell 1997a, 1998).

The fourteenth-century *Speculum Sacerdotale* advertises itself explicitly as a crib text for canonically required public preachings:

Sires myn, taketh here youre . . . besynes that ye mowe haue therby a . . . better matere . . . of the pronunsyng of solempnitees and festyuall tymes, right as ye haue hadde and saide sermons . . . here afore endytid to youre honde in Latyn or Romayne tonge.

(Weatherley 1936: 3)

The procedure for a sermon in English, that is, is the same as for similar collections in French and Latin. Only the language of the text has changed. The later Lollard instantiation of this view in the *Tractatus de Regibus* shows that this

apparently uncontentious argument could develop polemical teeth in the debate about translation and vernacularity which this section began by considering:

Sythen witte stondis not in langage but in groundynge of treuthe, for þo same witte is in Laten that is in Grew or Ebrew, and trouthe schuld be openly knowen to alle maneres of folke, trowthe moveþ mony men to speke sentencis in Yngelysche that thai han gederid in Latyne, and her fore bene men holden heretikis.   (Genet 1997: 5)

Arundel reasserted and tightened the rules concerning the licensing of preachers, and restricted the syllabus of instruction to that catechetic framework previously outlined by John Pecham in his provincial decrees of 1281. Pecham's decree, usually known by its opening words as *Ignorantia Sacerdotum*, acknowledged that priestly incapacity was impacting on lay religious knowledge, and sought to establish a compact catechetic syllabus as the minimum kit required by all Christians. Arundel's use of the same decree was intended to rein in those who had engaged in speculative and often heterodox discussions of non-catechetic matters, particularly the mysteries of the Eucharist, especially peripatetic and errant (particularly Lollard) clergy. This seems to have had an impact on the subject matter and style of English vernacular preaching, but it also brought it into new prominence and significance.

   The manuscript popularity of Mirk's *Festial* probably owes much to this post-Arundelian emphasis on preaching in the vernacular, but the evidence suggests that, in the half-century after Arundel, preachers found it prudent to record sermons in Latin, and there is a corresponding slackening in the rate of production of new vernacular collections in this period. Certainly the heterodox preacher of the sermons recorded in Longleat House MS 4, probably the author of the contentious dialogue *Dives and Pauper* (Barnum 2004: xviii–xxxi), defiantly trumpets his decision to continue to use the vernacular in the face of the legislation, arguing that the legislation is aimed primarily at the clergy, and at possession of books, and not at scriptural knowledge received through oral instruction or preaching:

Alþouʒ somme prelatis han defendyt me to techin þe gospel and to writin it in Englych, ʒet non of hem hath defendit ʒou ne may defendin ʒou to connyn þe gospel in Englych þat is ʒoure kendely language.   (Hudson and Spencer 1984: 232)

   Surviving vernacular sermons suggest that fifteenth-century preachers routinely turned to authoritative older preachers like Nicholas de Aquavilla, and borrowed and translated materials from them. English clerics who developed significant reputations as preachers, such as the London rector William Lichfield (who allegedly preached over 3,000 sermons) and John Felton, vicar of St Mary Magdalen in Oxford, presumably preached in English much of the time, but their sermons survive only in Latin versions (Sharpe 1997: 243–5, 781–2; cf. Wenzel 2005). Preaching in the vernacular was a persistently and consistently interlingual activity.

The habitual reading of Latin texts and the tradition of recording them in Latin may have influenced the vocabulary of many sermons and may account for the recurring complaint that the preachers used 'English Latin' (Spencer 1993: 118), as when New Gyse says to Mercy in *Mankind*: 'Now opyn yowr sachell with Laten wordys | Ande sey me þis in clerycall manere' (Eccles 1969: 158). Sometime before 1419—possibly at the end of the fourteenth century—the translator of the early fourteenth-century German Dominican Henry Suso's *Horologium Sapientiae* comments that he has suppressed 'many wordes in clergiale termes þe wheche wold seme vnsaverye so to be spokene in englische' (Horstmann 1888: 325); fifty years later, John Metham complained about 'halff-chongyd Latyne' (Metham 1916: 180). But the membrane between the registers and lexis of clerical Latin and the English vernacular seems to have become increasingly permeable in the early fifteenth century. This 'clerycall manere' powerfully assisted in enriching the religious vocabulary of English with loan words and calques from Latin. Possibly the newly orthodox and internationally self-conscious English Church of the early fifteenth century consciously fostered aureation in its own writings and those of its vernacular propagandists (like Lydgate, Audelay, and Hoccleve) as part of a self-aware (re)turn to Latin and to a Latinate English vernacular in the face of Lollard calls for a wholesale translation of religious materials.

Saints' Lives

Sermons frequently showed great versatility in their written transmission, often metamorphosing imperceptibly and easily into stand-alone treatises. When the East Anglian Augustinian friar John Capgrave (d. 1464) was asked to augment his translated Life of St Augustine with an account of those orders that lived according to the Augustinian Rule, he commented, 'if men like for to knowe þis matere diffusely þei may lerne it in a sermon þat I seid at Cambridge the yere before myn opposicioun, whech sermon I wil sette in Englisch in þe last ende of this werk' (Capgrave 1910: 61; for an edition of the sermon, 145–8). Celebrations of the lives of saints provided a rich seam of preaching material and of safely edifying reading material for increasingly voracious vernacular readers and listeners, clerical and lay (see discussions in Görlach 1998; Pickering in Edwards 2004). Lydgate's hagiographic texts, all translations of one sort or another, often fuel popular pride in the achievements of the English Church. His various Lives and Legends help to establish the saint's life as a characteristic genre of a national church eager to reform itself and, by fostering right religion and proper devotion, to mark out the orthodox from the heterodox.

Religious orders, often feeling threatened by Lollard attacks on private religions, used the saint's life similarly, as a vehicle for promotion of their orders and for the education of nuns, lay brethren, and interested laity. Capgrave's *Life of St Gilbert* (1451) is presented as a sequel to his *St Augustine*. Struck by the latter's success and utility, the Master of the Gilbertine order asked Capgrave to compose a Life of St Gilbert 'for the solitarye women of ȝour religioun whech vnneth

can vndyrstande Latyn' (p. 61). Capgrave shows a proper caution in handling material of canonical and political significance, drawing on the Latin records of the process of Gilbert's canonization, and keeping close to the authorized version of his life. (On Capgrave, see also pp. 76–8 above, and Seymour 1996; for the St Gilbert, pp. 109–10 above.)

Slightly earlier, his co-religionist, the East Anglian Osbern Bokenham, set about his *Legendys of Hooly Wummen* (1443–7) in an unusually (and untypically) analytical manner. In a verse prologue acknowledging Latin literary theory, Bokenham gives two reasons for undertaking 'thys translacyoun': first, 'to excyte | Mennys affeccyoun to haue delyte' (Bokenham 1938: 4) in the miracles of St Margaret; second, the request of a friend, perhaps the Cambridge Augustinian Thomas Burgh, to whom the prologue is addressed. Bokenham's principal source was the *Legenda Aurea*, which was intended to provide basic legendary and hagiographic materials for preachers (see further Edwards in Minnis 1994). The translation of *Legenda* material is, therefore, no act of popularization, and suffers no sense of linguistic or generic inferiority by comparison. Bokenham's command of the language of Latin literary theory in his prefatory address to a confrère at one of Europe's leading universities implies that he sees his own literary compositions as susceptible of analysis using a hermeneutic template that tacitly links his work to a broad spectrum of writing encompassing both Latin and the vernacular. (On the *Legendys*, see further p. 62 above.)

The *Legenda Aurea* was the dominant collection of saints' lives in medieval England. It was the first port of call for many sermons and exemplary narrative discourses in all three literary languages. It was routinely quarried by *The South English Legendary* (*SEL*), a popular verse collection of lives and legends (see further Jankofsky 1986, Görlach 1972, 1974). Jankofsky notes (1992) four major patterns at work in *SEL*'s translations of this material: simplification; expansion; concretization or dramatization; acculturation to an English audience. These changes are partly a function of genre change and of the implied performance environment. As with the other long verse texts and manuals considered already, the compiler-translator has undertaken a deliberate rhetorical re-targeting of the source materials to compete with romance and geste-like texts. The emergent tropes of a vernacular hagiographical tradition are being shaped and inflected by reference to the perceived competition from other, more secular forms of oral performance. Later in the fifteenth century the *Legenda* was faithfully translated as the *Gilte Legende*, with added lives drawn from more recent hagiography (ed. Hamer and Russell 2000). It was also supplemented by a new, specifically English, group of lives, the *Nova Legenda Angliae* (ed. Horstmann 1901), of which a vernacular précis was printed in 1516 and addressed to the 'peple of this realme . . . that vnderstande not the Laten tonge, that they atte theyr pleasure may be ocupyed therwith and be therby þe more apte to lerne the resydue when they shalle here the hole legende' (Görlach 1994: 43). This collection may have been produced under the auspices of the Birgittines at Syon (the initials of the Abbess are hidden in the border of the Birgittine woodcut at the front of the book).

Extracts from a Latin collection of early eremitic male lives, the *Vitae Patrum*, also circulated in various permutations in ME, possibly from the end of the fourteenth century. The two vernacular versions seem to have originated from a booklet of hagiographic materials produced in Yorkshire. These are, like other ME renderings of Latin, 'expansive', needing 'many words to communicate grammatical inflections' and making regular use of doublets for 'individual Latin words' (Hanna 1987: 426). Some aspects of the translation, notably the sense of being able freely to add to the text without expressing a compilatorial self-awareness, suggest a freer attitude to the act of translation. Elements from *Vitae Patrum* were included by the Oxfordshire gentleman Peter Idley in his redaction of most of *Handlyng Synne* in the fifteenth century as part of his *Instructions* for his son (see Sullivan 1994).

As the century progressed, these collections of legendary lives were powerfully supplemented by smaller, bespoke collections of lives, often of holy women recently living, of interest to a vernacular readership, and usually characterized by contemplative aspirations or visionary experiences (see the essays in Voaden 1996). Many were, or aspired to become, vowed religious, and their lives record at great length their developing mystical relationship with Christ. The English market for such lives seems initially to have been circumscribed by (and, always, largely supplied from) the great contemplative orders the Carthusians and Birgittines. But they soon circulated more widely, at first among pious and well-born laypeople. This spread coincided with a more engaged and active lay interest in the cultivation of the kinds of interior spiritual growth exemplified in books written for nuns and anchorites, a process of creating an interior para-monastic spirituality that the *Abbey of the Holy Ghost* (itself translated from the French) calls 'relygyon of herte' (Blake 1972: 89; cf. Conlee 1975; Rice 2002: 239).

The Carthusian interest in this kind of women's spirituality can be vividly observed in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Douce 114, a fascinating if idiosyn-cratic volume of translations from Latin, containing a life of Catherine of Siena and the lives of Elizabeth of Spalbeck, Christina Mirabilis, and Marie of Oignies (ed. Horstmann 1885). In addition, the book contains *The Seven Points of True Wisdom*, the English redaction of Suso's *Horologium Sapientiae* (on this work, see especially Lovatt 1982). The manuscript was produced in Rutland, a linguistic and geographical boundary between north and south, and the 'shorte Apologetik of þis Englisshe compyloure' following the life of Catherine of Siena apologizes for any 'variauns of stile and alle-so vnsuynge of Englyshe, as vmwhile soþeren, oþere-while norþen'. He appeals for the good will of the men and women 'þat in happe rediþ or heriþ þis Englyshe', and asks:

lettird men and clerkes if þey endeyne to see þes bokes þat þey wol be fauorabil and benigne reders or herers of þis Englysche and forgif hym alle defautes þat he haþ made in compilynge þere-of, raþer arettynge his lewdnesse to symple ignorauns and obedyens þanne to pryde or presumpcyone.   (195)

The same translator also feels the need to advertise his tentative engagement with the quasi-technical lexis of the Latin original:

Nota pro ancilla cristi verti Cristes mayden et pro superlatiuo gradu vt optimus verti ful gode et sic in similibus. [note, for 'ancilla cristi' I have translated 'Christ's maiden', and for the superlative, like 'optimus', I have translated 'full good' and so for other things].

(196)

The book itself carries a classmark linking it to the Charterhouse at Beauvale in Nottinghamshire. Latin versions of these lives are preserved at the Augustinian house at Thurgarton in Nottinghamshire, where Walter Hilton eventually became prior; others are associated with John Blacman, sometime chaplain to the contemplatively inclined Henry VI, and eventually himself linked with the Carthusians (Pickering in Edwards 2004: 257). These lives of holy 'moderni' clearly had some spiritual cachet among the contemplative orders.

Douce 114 provides a fascinating series of vernacular exemplars for a new kind of intense and expressive spirituality. Such lives become both models for emulation for aspirant contemplatives and also cautionary tales of the need for clerical guidance. This dualism is perhaps one of the reasons for making these materials available in the vernacular: their carefully orthodox, if often racily mystical, lives are acted out within the context of the nurturing and validating ethos of the institutional Church. Elizabeth's Life is prefaced by an interesting 'apologe of the compilour':

As seint Jerom . . . seiþ in a bibil þat he made: hit is harde to turne a language into a noþer worde for worde, but oftentymes hit byhoueþ to leue and take diuerse wordes . . . propur to on tunge and not to a noþer: wherfore þis Englysche . . . heere is turnyd oute of Latyn, to þe . . . edificacyone of deuoute soulles . . . not leeryd in Latyn tunge, and þerfore þe wryter . . . neiþer can ne purposis to folowe þe wordes, but vnneþis . . . þe sens, neiþer puttynge to nor doynge aweye any clauses þat schulde chaunge þe substaunce of þe story, but oþere-while leuyng . . . auctoritees of holy writte . . . ful dymme to vndirstonde, if þey were turnyd in to Englisshe with-oute more declarynge of glose. (107)

This represents a shift of genre: the 'substaunce of þe story' is being privileged over the legends and authorities of holy writ. Narrative is winning out over theology: the text will not engage in theological evaluation; religious actions speak louder than theological words.

Multilingual and supralingual abilities mark another of these lives. Christina Mirabilis's near-death experience of judgement and return to life is blended with her charismatic ability to produce what is described as angels' song, grounded in her ability to sing complex Latin hymns and chants, and to expound Scripture, although 'sche neuer knewe lettir syþen she was borne' (129). Unlike those 'great reasoners in Scripture' among the Lollards, who claimed the authority and the ability to engage in exegesis, Christina's Life (translated into English at much the same time as the Lollards were making such claims) stresses her reluctance to exercise her gift. She also corrects clerics, when necessary, with tact, 'esely and priuely with a wonder reuerens'. Christina's authority comes not just from

her charism but also from her willingness to exercise that charism within the confines of the institutional Church. Such lives, therefore, even when critical of the Church, add lustre to its claims of spiritual hegemony. Subliminally, such translations argue that spiritual aspiration is best expressed in and through communion with the *magisterium*. Subversive and radical as such lives might appear, they in fact provide templates for orthodox contemplation. As with the fifteenth-century East Anglian visionary Margery Kempe, who translates many of the tropes of these continental visionaries into her own spiritual praxis, the texts dramatize spiritual ambition, love of the Church and its sacraments, eagerness for a properly functioning clerical cadre, and desire for discernment, approval, and approbation.

Even more like Margery, unsurprisingly, is the life of the great weeper Marie of Oignies. Marie's vernacular Life also comes with a prefatory comment from the translator confessing that he has chosen to omit much of the original Latin prologue because its language demands extensive exegesis:

And amonge his writynge as clerge and rhethorik askeþ, hee puttiþ legeauns and figuratif spekynges . . . not lighte to be turnyd in to Englische langage wiþ-outen moor expounynge; and if a man wolde take summe of þe same proheme, þe sentense wolde not weele accorde; and þerfore I leeue alle þat proheme, excepte þis shorte ouerly touchynge. (134)

Marie's life comes with its own warning against too ready an imitation of her excesses. She too has a remarkable ability to remember and interpret Scripture, even expounding new teachings on her deathbed 'in rime and Romayne tunge'. Like Margery, Marie is eager always to be in earshot of preaching: 'often she herde Goddes wordes and kepte and bare in hir herte wordes of holy writte, and hauntynge holy chirche she hidde holy hestes wysely in hir herte' (163). The translator may well have found appealing this stress on hearing (rather than reading) the words of Scripture, and 'haunting' the church building, rather than abandoning it for private conventicles. His translation simultaneously approves Marie's independent access to the divine through revelation and endorses her continued dependence on the word of God mediated through priests. Both processes require her to listen with humble obedience and open faith, like the other holy women in the volume, and validate the ecclesiastical status quo by showing its efficacy in developing a person's spiritual and contemplative potential.

Lives of Christ

Such stories clearly interested readers familiar with the impulse to imagine themselves physically present at the events of the Passion encouraged by the many lives of Christ written in or translated from the pseudo-Bonaventuran tradition of the *Meditationes Vitae Christi*, probably by the Franciscan Johannes de Caulibus. The same kinds of imaginative engagement are also encouraged in *Book to a Mother* (ed. McCarthy 1981; see comment by Watson 2000; Rice 2005), *þe Holy Boke Gracia Dei* (ed. Arntz 1981; comment, Keiser 1981), and

the vernacular version (probably by Walter Hilton) of the *Stimulis Amoris* of James of Milan (Hilton 1983). All borrow from a technique of imaginative focusing and re-enactment well established in affective psychology. Although the *Meditationes* comes from a Franciscan milieu, the order was a declining force in fourteenth-century Europe, and the Carthusians became powerful advocates for this mode of devotional engagement. The Carthusian Ludolph of Saxony produced a Latin *Vita Christi* with carefully structured levels of *lectio*, *meditatio*, and *oratio*; it was rapidly translated (see Salter 1964). The English version in London, BL MS Add. 16609 closely translates a French version, including its preface:

thise holy deedis wreton in the gospellis, expounide by the devoute monke of the charterhouse, I may into comen langage from Laten transpose soo that bothe clerkes and lay men in redyng such high deedis may them knowe and folowe. (f. 3v)

The two longest vernacular engagements with the pseudo-Bonaventuran tradition are also Carthusian in origin: Nicholas Love's *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ* (*c.* 1409); and the *Speculum Devotorum* or *Mirror to Devout People*, composed some time later by an anonymous Carthusian of Sheen, founded in 1415 as part of Henry V's re-establishment of monasticism and re-energizing of the English Church (see Salter 1974; Johnson in *MTr* 1; Sargent 1994; Keiser 1996). Love's *Mirror* paradoxically highlights the peculiarities of the post-Arundelian religious environment (see esp. Ghosh in Edwards 2004). Like the standard Gospel harmonies of the period, which synthesized the different Gospel accounts of the life of Christ, interspersing this account with directed meditations and prayers, the *Meditationes* offered Love a way of engaging with the biblical narrative without direct translation or citation of the text of the Bible. In this respect, his translation obeys the letter of the Arundelian law (though probably he was working on his text before Arundel's decrees were promulgated). Love calls himself 'þe auctour and þe drawere oute þereof...in English to þe profite of symple and deuoute soules', and pitches his text at readers of limited understanding who 'as childryn hauen nede to be fedde with mylke of lyȝte doctryne and not with sadde mete of grete clargye and of hye contemplacion' (Love 2005: 10, 13).

Carefully positioning his translation in the spectrum of religious books, Love comments that 'with holi writte also bene wryten diuerse bokes...of devoute men not onelich to clerkes in Latyne but also in Englyshe to lewde men and women...of symple vndirstondyng', for whom Bonaventura's text 'semeþ...souereynly edifiyng'. The lay readers are, it seems, spiritual infants, as Love's description of his editorial and compilatorial work acknowledges:

to edification of suche men or women is þis drawynge oute...wryten in Englysche with more putte to in certeyn partes and wiþdrawyng of diuerse auctoritis and maters as it semeþ to þe wryter hereof moste spedefull and edifyng to hem þat bene of simple vndirstondyng. (10)

Sometimes he radically reshapes his text:

Of þis matere seynt Bernard . . . makeþ faire processe and deuout, þe whiche for als miche as it longeþ . . . specialy to gostly folk and . . . is writen sufficiently in diuerse tretees of contemplacion we passen ouere here . . . lest þis processe of Cristes blessed life sholde be tedyouse to . . . symple soules to þe whech it is specialy written.   (105)

Love here shows some awareness of his place in the market for religious books, the supply of books addressing more advanced contemplative audiences, and the rather different needs of his own target audience. Arguably, therefore, he seeks to carve out a new trajectory through the source text to produce a fresh perspective, and to address (rather than suppress) a fresh audience. Of course, Love operates well within the comfort zone of the institutional Church (his work received, and invariably travels with, Arundel's certificate of doctrinal approval). He provides clear parameters beyond which the meditative reader or hearer should not stray, and explicitly targets key aspects of his book 'contra lollardos' [against the Lollards]. But, while seeking to confute heresy, Love also looks to empower his audience by giving them rich imaginative spaces into which they can project themselves through meditation. This is implicit in the way that he allows (and indeed encourages) devout 'ymaginaciouns' to fill in the gaps in his narrative. Such 'ymaginaciouns' ought, he urges, to remain guided by the teaching of the Church; yet Love knows well that the imagination is not susceptible to easy control or constraint. In the original farewell to the audience, for example, he implicitly empowers them to engage with the text in any way that they find profitable: 'wherefore it semeþ to me beste þat euery deuout creature þat loueþ to rede or here þis boke take þe partes þerof as it semeþ moste confortable and stiryng to his deuocion' (220). He stresses devotion, not contemplation or instruction: he knows his niche in the book market and fills it effectively.

That market had changed considerably in the course of the fourteenth century. In the *Horologium Sapientiae*, known and used by Love, Suso's disciple (as translated in the *Seven Points*) comments that

þere beþ so manye bokes and tretees of vyces and vertues and of diuerse doctrynes þat þis schort lyfe schalle raþere haue an ende of anye manne þanne he may owþere studye hem or rede hem.   (Horstmann 1888: 328)

For Suso, the plethora of books was narrowly focused on vices and virtues, the stock-in-trade of thirteenth-century didactic and catechetic literature. By the time of the ME translation, produced at Love's own house, Mountgrace, we sense a new profusion and greater range of contemporary books: the translator of Suso hesitated before undertaking his translation 'consideryng þe multitude of bokes and tretees drawne in Englische, þat now bene generale cominede [published]' (326), fearing that his work would be wasted.

Suso is also one of the sources of the second Bonaventuran translation, *Speculum Devotorum* (partially edited by Hogg 1973: most recent discussion is

by Edwards in Mann and Nolan 2006). Addressed to a 'gostly syster in Ihesu Cryste' (Hogg 1973: 1), most probably a Syon nun, with limited command of Latin, the work purports to fulfil an earlier promise made to her to provide a meditation on the Passion of Christ (see further Gillespie in Mann and Nolan 2006). Like Suso's translator, the Sheen Carthusian has had some problems with his own translation. His main textual debt, he writes, is to 'Bonauenture a cardynal and a worthy clerke' (2): he had often put off beginning his own work in part because he had heard that a co-religionist (Love) had already translated Bonaventura into English; he claims no first-hand knowledge of Love's book, notwithstanding its wide circulation and popularity. Instead he asks advice from 'spiritual and goode men' and accepts the counsel of his prior (and possibly the Syon brethren) to continue with the work of his independent translation as best he can. In addition to pseudo-Bonaventura, he cites the *Historia Scholastica* of Peter Comestor; Nicholas of Lyre's literal Postills on the Gospels; sermons and other works by John Chrysostom, Clement, Augustine, Bede, Gregory, Bernard; the first book of Hilton's *Scale of Perfection*; Suso's *Horologium* (often the same passages as occur in Ludolph's *Vita Christi*); *Legenda Aurea*; *The Three Kings of Cologne*; *Mandeville's Travels* (probably in English); one of the infancy Gospels; Richard of St Victor; the Carthusian Adam of Dryburgh; Miracles of the Virgin; and other materials. In addition, he draws on certain revelations of 'approuyd wymmen' (10), namely Mechtild of Hackeborn, Elizabeth of Töss, Catherine of Siena, and, most extensively, St Birgitta of Sweden. Despite this formidable array of sources, some shared with pseudo-Bonaventura, the author is fearful of his own 'vnkvnnynge and vnworthynesse' (3), but hopeful that he may be excused by the merits of those who have profited by his 'sympyl traveyle'. He treats the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ in thirty-three chapters, one for each year of Christ's life on earth.

Early in the prologue he is already extending his inscribed audience beyond his ghostly sister, to readers who may ask why he bothers to retranslate Bonaventura. Unlike Love, he has avoided adding 'ymagynacyonys' appealing to carnal souls, and has added nothing of his 'owen wytt' except what he hopes may be conceived by 'opyn resun and goode conscyence' (10). He often steers his text towards the ascetic and pragmatic and away from the affective and imaginative. As a compiler, augmenting pseudo-Bonaventura, he has relied most heavily on Peter Comestor and Nicholas of Lyre: 'For they goo neryste to the storye and to the lettural vndyrstandynge of eny doctorys that I haue red notwythstandynge I haue browgth inne othyr doctorys in diuerse placys as to the moral vertuys' (9). Love's *Mirror* and the *Speculum* preserve two radically different, independent takes on pseudo-Bonaventura. The *Speculum* may have been commissioned by Syon for the use of its nuns, and then released by them into a wider, if limited, circulation among its powerful lay supporters. It survives in two copies, but while one remained in a religious milieu, the other was made for high-born laywomen who belonged to two famous book-loving families in the north of England.

The Revelations of 'Approuyd Wymmen'

The revelations of the 'approuyd wymmen' used by the author of the *Speculum Devotorum* are an important new vector in the translation of religious texts after 1375. Thus, for example, the *Speculum* closely translates extracts from a Latin text of Birgitta's revelations that record how Christ himself showed her the distinctive manner of his crucifixion (Book VII, ch. 15 in Latin: Birgitta 1967: 164–5; ch. 16 in ME: Ellis 1987: 480). The translator leaves this passage in Birgitta's own words: 'sche tellyth hyt in here owen persone as sche seygth hyt doo', turning them 'into the forme of medytacyon' for his readers to appropriate for themselves (ch. 22; Hogg 1973: 267), and encouraging them to 'behold . . . with the forseyde holy lady'. The cult of Birgitta in England burgeoned after her death in 1373. Her revelations, and the devotions associated with her and her order, became an important part of the texture of English devotional writing. Vernacular versions of her life were composed by one, possibly two, of the Syon brothers. Two complete ME versions of her *Liber Celestis* survive (Ellis 1987: xvi); more significant are the many extracts from her work in devotional miscellanies (discussed in Ellis 1982), several in circulation before Syon was established. These often distort her revelations through inept translation, and bowdlerize her spirituality, presenting her as orthodox, pious, sacramental, Christocentric, and minimally scriptural.

Catherine of Siena, who had met Birgitta in Rome, rode on the coat-tails of Birgitta's vernacular popularity in England (see especially Grisé in *MTr* 8). Her *Dialogo* was translated (probably from a Latin version of the text) and reworked sometime before 1430 for the particular needs of the Syon nuns. The new version, known as *The Orcherd of Syon*, allowed casual and ruminative consultation of the original by rearranging it into sections easily accessed by the reader. The translator, perhaps a Birgittine brother, 'vnworþi to bere ony name', dedicates his work to the worship of God and 'to ȝoure gostly lernynge and confortable recreacion' (Hodgson and Liegey 1966: 17). He presents the text as an orchard divided into seven parts, each with five sections, producing thirty-five different pathways that allow the reader to wander through the textual garden and taste its fruit at will.

The visionary sayings of Mechtild of Hackeborn had a fragmentary and episodic circulation. The title of her major work, the *Liber Specialis Gratiae*, was often mistranscribed from contracted Latin as the *Liber Spiritualis Gratiae*. Hence the English translation, probably also closely associated with Syon, calls itself *The Book of Ghostly Graces*. Less political than Birgitta, Mechtild and Catherine propounded an ambitious but essentially obedient spirituality of self-immolation and dependence on the grace and love of God. Revelations attributed to Elizabeth 'of Hungary' (probably of Töss) also had a limited circulation in manuscript, but enjoyed a new prominence when another translation was printed by Wynkyn de Worde as part of his move into the market for printed devotional books (see further pp. 168 above, 269–70, 273 below). The manuscript version is preserved in a collection of Marian materials possibly linked to the nunnery at Bruisyard

(Suffolk), home to several other volumes of devotional prose. Both versions press familiar buttons in the machinery of devotional instruction. Their editor argues from 'the skill with which the Latin syntax has been rendered into English', in the de Worde version, for a clerical translator with 'considerable practice in translation' (McNamer 1996: 17). As in the *Speculum Devotorum*, Mary is presented as a paradigm contemplative. In one vision, she offers Elizabeth the merits and rewards of various martyrs and saints in a passage that suggests how traditional martyrdom stories might be reconfigured and reinterpreted for a late medieval audience. She asks: 'Woldyst þou for ys [his] loue be flawin [like St Bartholomew] and rostyd [like St Lawrence] and drynke vonown [like St John the Evangelist]?', and when Elizabeth is unable to reply, explains that: 'ȝyf þou wyt be mad nakyd of all wordly þyngis and fro þe appetyth of þy propyr wyl so þat þou wyt no þyng haue ne coueyte in þys word, I schal gete þe þe mede of my sone þat Seynte Bartholomew hadde for ys flawyng' (ed. McNamer 1996: 84).

Texts like this may help to explain the popularity and utility of martyrdom stories, like those in the thirteenth-century Katharine group, their AN peers, and the subsequent collections of such narratives in legendaries (most notably the *Gilte Legende*) and homiliaries in the later Middle Ages (major discussions are Winstead 1997; Lewis 2000; Wogan-Browne 2001). Elizabeth's revelation encourages her (and her readers and hearers) to think metaphorically about such narratives: to translate these literal martyrdom narratives into paradigms for the martyrdom of religious observance. Carefully articulated in conformity to the teaching authority of the Church, and dependent for their authority, their transcription, and much of their circulation on male clerical supporters, interpreters, and apologists, these 'approuyd wymmen' stand in contrast to the more dangerous and independent-minded spirituality of Marguerite Porete. Viewed in certain suspicious lights Porete could be—was—thought guilty of arguing for the enlightened spirit to be regarded as freed from all religious constraints; she, and her book, were burned in 1310. The vernacular translation of her work, *The Mirror of Simple Souls*, a dialogue between the soul and Love, made by a translator known only by his initials as MN, had clearly caused him some troubles (see further Sargent 1997):

This boke, ... þe Myrour of Symple Soules, I, moost vnworþi ... many ȝeeris goon wrote it out of French into Englisch ... in hope þat ... it schulde profite þoo deuout soules þat schulden rede it. ... I am stired to laboure it aȝen newe, for bicause I am enformed þat some wordis þerof haue be mystake. þerfore ... I schal declare þo wordis more openli; for ... it is but schortli spoken and may be taken oþirwise þan is iment of hem þat reden it sodeynli. ... þerfore suche wordis to be twies iopened it wole be þe more of audience and so ... it schal þe more profite to þe auditoures.   (MN 1968: 247)

The first translation had given rise to some confusion and dismay, so MN's decision to 'twice open' some parts of his text was in part an act of theological exploration, seeking to unpack and explore the density and elliptical quality of Porete's French. Moreover, he adds, he has had to struggle with a poor exemplar,

and has decided to add glosses, which he will distinguish from the original text by the use of his initial in the margin:

The Frensche booke þat I schal write aftir is yuel writen and in summe places for defaute of wordis and silables þe reson is aweie. Also in translatynge of Frensche summe wordis neden to be chaunged or it wol fare vngoodli not acordynge to þe sentence. Wherfore I wole folowe þe sentence acordynge to þe matere . . . obeiynge me euere to þe correcioun of hooli chirche, preiynge goostli lyuers and clerkis þat þei wole fowchesaaf to correcte and amende þere þat I do amys.   (249)

Unsurprisingly, the *Mirror*'s vernacular circulation in England was tightly controlled, the translations apparently expressing the Carthusian interest in recorded contemplative experiences that led the order to collect a version of Julian of Norwich's text and the unique surviving copy of Margery Kempe's *Book* (for discussion see Gillespie in Glasscoe 1999; Cré 2006). However, the Mountgrace Carthusian Richard Methley seems to have found relatively little to complain of or criticize in Porete's book when he translated it into Latin later in the fifteenth century alongside his Latin version of the *Cloud of Unknowing* (in Cambridge, Pembroke College MS 221; see also Hogg in Hogg 2002: 73–90).

Widening Readerships: 'Relygyon of Herte'

Textual longevity is one of the hallmarks of vernacular books of devotion in England. Texts originally written for the limited needs of enclosed communities were adapted, translated, and quarried to supply the needs of a wider clerical and lay audience, and classics of spirituality from the twelfth century enjoyed new leases of life in the fourteenth and fifteenth (earlier discussions in Constable 1971a, 1971b). Religious rules, designed for specific communities, were, through translation, transferred to wider (often lay) audiences keen to incorporate some of the rigour and rhythm of monastic life into their own (also noted in Rice 2002). A most striking example is the text usually known as *Speculum Ecclesiae*, by Edmund of Abingdon (Rich 1973). This circulated widely in its Latin, French, and English versions. Originally composed for monks as a *Speculum Religiosorum*, it was reworked by Edmund into French and then repeatedly quarried by English translators and compilers. In its vernacular manifestation it achieved very considerable lay popularity, especially in the metropolis (see further Forshaw 1971, 1972).

The developing textual history of a major early thirteenth-century spiritual guide for anchoresses (hence its title, *Ancrene Wisse*, or *Ancrene Riwle*) offers another interesting illustration of the widening community of readers that the various revisions to the text sought to address (noted by Wada 2003; Millett in Edwards 2004). Text and audience are both subject to *mouvance*: from the small single group of the original, through the larger and more spatially scattered (but imaginatively unified) group envisaged in the so-called Corpus version, to the more amorphous and probably lay audience of the *Pepys Rule* (ed. Zettersten

1976) and the *Symple Tretis* (ed. Baugh 1956). The *Pepys Rule* reorders the original text of *Ancrene Wisse* into a series of ruminative glosses on the Latin biblical quotations used as proof texts in the original. These quotations are refocused as the main organizing principle of the new text, and presented as lemmata, glossed with material from the original text. Ralph Hanna has recently argued (2005: 201–12) that this rearrangement works by analogy with the biblical commentaries found elsewhere in the same (probably London) manuscript. So the anchoritic text is, on one level, being translated into a more academic form of biblical commentary. Effectively, this heightens the biblicalism of the text, which now proceeds *from* the scriptural citations rather than arguing *towards* them. A new vernacular paraphrase of material from the Book of Revelation (21: 9–22: 9) completes the work, celebrating a new Jerusalem without churches or priests, with all enjoying unmediated access to the Lamb. Together with the evangelical reordering, this added emphasis has often suggested Lollard influence, but it is more plausibly seen as an example of the orthodox but radical discomfort with the institutional Church that emerged alongside full-blown Lollard views. The revised text argues that the theology of enclosure, previously restricted to those under formal vow, is in fact a plausible spiritual strategy for all Christians, not just the canonically enclosed. Yet the text is clearly still wedded to orthodox forms of sacramental action soon rejected by the Lollards: a confessional formulary is added at the end.

The *Pepys Rule* shows how textual and linguistic *mouvance* can go hand in hand. So too *The Doctrine of the Heart*, an early fifteenth-century reworking of a hugely important, highly clericalized thirteenth-century Latin guide for beguines, the *De Doctrina Cordis*, probably by Hugh of Saint-Cher (d. 1263). The ME version survives in four copies (ed. Candon 1963; recent comment is in Renevey 2003; Batt *et al.* 2005: 198–214). Manuscript and testamentary evidence shows that it was owned and read by Franciscan nuns from Bruisyard (bequeathed them by a laywoman, Margaret Purdans), and the minoresses at St Botolph without Aldgate in London. John Waynfleet, Dean of Chichester (d. 1481), owned another copy.

The ME prologue (one of the translator's most significant additions to the text) configures the textual space of the work in a very distinctive way:

Intelligite insipientes in populo et stulti aliquando sapite. [Ps. 93: 8] As Seynt Austyn seith, þes wordes ben vndirstonde in þis wyse. Ye that been vnkunnyng in the noumbre of Goddes peple inwardly vndirstondith; and ye that ben vnavysed, yif ye haue grace of ony gostly kunnyng, sumtyme sauorith sadly in herte. Might not wel þes wordes be vndirstonde of suche that ben vnkunnynge in religyon þe whiche also nowadayes ben moche vnstable in þeire lyvnge folowyng rather the ensample of secular folk than the ensample of sad gostly religyous folk? I trowe yis.

<div align="right">(Cambridge, Trinity College MS B.14.15, f. 1r; cf. Candon 1963: 1)</div>

Starting with the Psalmist's call to understanding, the translator recognizes that even the 'vnkunnyng' and 'vnavysyd' may 'sumtyme sauor . . . sadly in herte' 'yif

[they] haue grace of ony gostly kunnyng'. The recognition that many religious are 'vnkunnyng' and 'vnstable' and follow secular example destabilizes both the text and its audience, encompassing both professed religious who want to improve spiritually and seculars who want to imitate them. The surviving manuscripts testify that the text appealed to precisely these two audiences. Despite the passing addresses to a 'gostly sister', *The Doctrine*'s real target audience is 'simple soules'. In fact the translator explicitly reconfigures his textual space by refusing to align his text with those that offer only an external rule of life: 'many I wot wel þer ben þat speken to þe bodi outward but fewe to þe hert inward of simple soules and þat is pite'. (f. 1r)

Other texts also show how translators could re-present monastic materials with a clear and relaxed knowledge that they would be read by outsiders. One of several vernacular versions of David of Augsburg's *Formula Noviciorum* (also translated for the Syon nuns: see further Pezzini in *MTr* 6; Marshall 2003) neatly shows how translators increasingly realized the growing isomorphism of the tastes and abilities of women religious with those of the literate laity:

And for as moche as the langage of Latyn is vnknowen to many religiouse and namely to wommen, therfore I haue purposed . . . to translate the seyd booke in to Englysche to the edificacioun of the symple people in religion and of all other that desireth to be seruantes of god. . . . And thought yt so be that thys booke . . . towche principally the religious persons, neuer the later euery seculer man or woman that desyreth to be the servand of god may fynde here in sufficient instruccion.   (Jolliffe 1974: 274)

Some commentators and translators intervened more overtly in their source text to refocus the material for the new audience. The translator of Suso's *Horologium* radically reordered and substantially cut the Latin text, because he knew the tastes and interests of his noble patroness. The inscribed audience dictates the shape of the text; the implied (and envisaged) wider readership has less impact:

Butte for als miche as in þe forseyde boke þere beþ manye maters and long processe towchynge him þat wrote hit and oþere religiouse persones of his degre, þe whiche . . . were lytel edificicacione to wryte to ȝowe my dere ladye and to oþere deuowte persones þat desyrene þis drawynge owt in Englische: þerefore I . . . take onelye þat me þinkeþ edifiyng to ȝowe; and also I folow not þe processe of þat boke in ordere, but I take þe materes in-sindrye as þei acordene to mye purpos.   (Horstmann 1888: 325)

The translator's prologue directs the work to a mixed audience of lay noble-women and female religious ('my moste worschipful lady . . . and derrest loued douȝhter') and configures his own relationship to them ('ȝowre trewe chapel-leyne') in ways that are paradigmatic of the broadening but still hierarchically configured (and usually clerically supervised) textual communities producing and reading such works in the fifteenth century. (This subject has been extensively studied: see Riddy 1996; Erler 2002; Krug 2002; the essays in Renevey and Whitehead 2000; Wogan-Browne 2001; Olson and Kerby-Fulton 2005.)

Similar *mouvance* is observable in the various versions of *De Remediis Contra Temptationes* (Flete 1967), written by the Augustinian hermit William Flete probably between 1352 and 1358 (see further Hackett 1961; Hackett *et al.* 1964). Because of his long self-imposed exile in Italy, Flete's name had probably faded from English memory during his own lifetime. But his best-known text had considerable circulation in Latin and English, the latter undergoing at least three recensions. Augmented over a century, it provides a useful barometer of devotional taste and pastoral need. From its Latin origins as a work to be used in the diagnosis and treatment of temptation and despair, through its increasing elaboration in English, the *De Remediis* is found in manuscripts used by professed religious seeking confirmation of their own spiritual feelings; parochial clergy offering spiritual guidance to others; and devout and literate laymen diagnosing their own spiritual symptoms. It is an important part of the textual hinterland of the late medieval manuscript transmission of writers such as Rolle and Hilton (whose own writings were used to augment the final vernacular version). Flete's text was not just translated from Latin: it was in almost continuous movement and development for many decades (see discussion by Diekstra 1995).

Contemplative Classics: 'Hid Diuinite'

Another fourteenth-century eremitic writer whose œuvre was in constant flux was Richard Rolle, whose death in 1349 meant that he escaped Arundel's ban on unlicensed vernacular writing 'by John Wyclif or anyone else, composed in his time, or newly since'. Rolle's name became a flag of convenience under which all sorts of ill-assorted devotional materials could safely sail (see further Hanna in Edwards 2004; for a major collection of such pseudonymous texts, edited alongside Rollean originals, see Horstmann 1895–6). London, BL MS Arundel 286, for example, ascribes two epistles to Rolle's authorship (actually anonymous translations from Bonaventura and Anselm), but the colophons clearly flag the compiler's view that in this context the *intentio auctoris* is less important than the *intentio lectoris*: for example, 'her bygynneþ a pistle maad of Richard Hampul as somme men supposen but who euer made it myche deuout þinge is þerinne' (f. 82r). Typically these colophons both acknowledge the status of Rolle as a spiritual teacher and draw attention away from the authorizing name towards the text in its new context. The problematic and contested act of translation from Latin paradoxically here becomes a marker of the translator's confidence and independence: 'þe Latyn book by which y translatide was ful fals in þe lettre and poyntinge also and þerfore I had þe more trauel to come to þe open and trewe sentence' (f. 99v).

Other readers of Rolle found his northern language challenging and in need of its own form of translation: 'Here endith the informacioun of Richard the Ermyte [extracts from *The Form of Living*] . . . translate oute of Northern tunge in to Sutherne that it schulde the bettir be vnderstondyn of men that be of the selve countre' (CUL MS Ii.4.9, f. 197v). Rolle's status was such that some

readers wanted his Latin epistles in English. Margaret Heslington, a recluse of York, commissioned the Carmelite Richard Misyn to translate Rolle's *Incendium Amoris* in 1435, and there are seven separate translations of his short and succinct monastic handbook *Emendatio Vitae*, including one by Misyn (Misyn 1896). Misyn's translations are distinguished by their extreme literalism: almost as if he were attempting to produce in English an equivalent of Rolle's highly wrought Latin, and—as Rolle's own writing had done (on this point see Watson in *MTr* 1)—to dramatize a conviction of the divine inspiration of Rolle's life and work.

Translations often made much play of the status of their sources. The *Stimulus Amoris* of James of Milan, for example, was probably translated by the cautiously orthodox contemplative Walter Hilton, a one-time junior colleague of Thomas Arundel at Ely (Hilton 1983; for comment, see Hughes 1988: 179–87). As preserved in CUL MS Hh.1.12, the translation declares itself the product of a powerful conjunction of theological forces:

Here after folowen diuerse chapters of a treetys callyd þe prikk of loue whiche was made of a hyȝe clerk and a deuoute doctour of deuinite called Boneauenture . . . and syþin þe same tretys was translate oute of Latyn in to Englissh by . . . maister Waltir hilton chanon and gouernaire of þe house of Thurgarton. (f. 80v)

Other figures were less confidently invoked. Jan Ruusbroec was sometimes suspected of heterodox teaching and the ME version of his *Treatise of Perfection* cagily presents itself as a working copy intended only to supply the research needs of the translator, probably a Carthusian (see further Colledge 1952; Sargent 1976), who carefully guards against any unauthorized wider circulation of his text:

I intende to transpose for myne owne lernynge a tretesse frome Latyn in to Englysche compiled bi dan John Rusbroke . . . Wherfore ȝif ony man happen rede it or ȝit here it redde whiche approbately can defete it, mekely I beseche þame to withedrawe the defawte and gyffe stede to the trowthe. (Bazire and Colledge 1957: 229)

But in other contexts, compilers and translators do not seem to have been uncomfortable in using his work. *The Chastising of God's Children* (probably written in the 1390s) is one of the most successful of the original ME devotional compilations (see Sargent 1982; Sutherland in Barr and Hutchison 2005). It draws together material from Suso; the *Stimulus Amoris* of James of Milan; the *Epistola Solitarii* of Alphonse of Pecha; translated extracts from Book II of a Latin version of Ruusbroec's *Spiritual Espousals*; and from *Ancrene Wisse*, this last via Latin extracts known as *Quandoque tribularis* (cf. Allen 1923; Sargent 1984: 156–8) which were themselves retranslated and widely disseminated in devotional miscellanies, including the third recension of Flete's *De Remediis*. *The Chastising*'s success may be gauged not only by the care and coherence of its manuscript transmission but also by its influence on other compilations (especially *Disce Mori*) and the almost inevitable accolade for any orthodox compilation of a contemporary scribal ascription to Hilton. As with other English adaptations

from continental sources (especially Suso's *Horologium*), the *Chastising* moves the emphasis from speculation to pragmatism and from abstract contemplation to ambitious devotionalism. Perhaps one of the best examples of non-mystical 'vernacular theology' in England, it uses its sources to make a sober and considered contribution to contemporary debates about heresy, clerical authority, and Bible translation. On translating Scripture, for example, the compiler puts devotional utility ahead of the more scholastic and academic concerns expressed in the contemporary debates on the subject:

Many men repreuen it to haue...þe gospels or þe bible in Englisshe, bicause þei mowe not be translated...worde bi worde as it stondiþ, wiþoute grete circumlocucion.... Naþeles...I repreue nat to haue hem on Englisshe, ne to rede on hem where þei mowen stire ȝou more to deuocion...but uttirli to usen hem in Englisshe and leue þe Latin I holde it nat commendable.   (Bazire and Colledge 1957: 221)

Equally noteworthy is the text's translation of Ruusbroec's condemnation of heretics in the Low Countries earlier in the century so as to allude to and delineate the social impact of Lollardy in its own times. It does so with a recognition (and hope) that these heretics may be reformed and returned to the discipline of the Church: 'I hope to God þer bien ful fewe, but sooþ it is, þer han bien such but late in our daies, and aftir haue bien turned and come aȝen into þe riȝt wei' (141–2). This is typical of the sober, moderate, and careful teaching of *The Chastising*, balanced between encouraging spiritual self-help and stressing the continuing intermediary and magisterial role of the Church. With its idiomatic ease and lucidity of exposition, and its stylish blending together of a range of translated materials, *The Chastising* deservedly achieved the status of a classic, and retained it throughout the fifteenth century and into print.

Wynkyn de Worde's printed text of *The Chastising* often survives bound with another devotional compilation, the *Treatise of Love*, an anthology of ten paramystical tracts printed *c.* 1493 and translated from French 'by a persone...vnperfight in suche werke, wherfor he humbly byseche the [*read*: bysechethe] lernyd reders with pacyens to correcte it where they fynde need' (Fisher 1951: 1). De Worde invested very heavily in religious translations from both Latin and French (see especially Keiser 1987; Alex Gillespie in Edwards 2004). The *Treatise* compilation uses material from a (probably French) version of *Ancrene Wisse*, and probably also derives at least five of its tracts from French. (Similar materials survive together in French in Brussels, Bibliothèque Royale MS français 2292, a book transcribed by David Aubert in 1475 for Margaret of York, the Duchess of Burgundy.) At the end of the remedies against the Deadly Sins, the translator offers this colophon: 'And all ye that rede or here this, pray ye for hym that made it and for theym that wrote it and for hir that was the cause that it was made, and...for theym that translated it and wrote it out of Frensshe into Englisshe' (103). Author, scribe, patron, translator, and printer are all invoked here as part of the complex network of connections that come into play when books are made. In de Worde's case that network involved various

patrons and translators. A particularly important subset of relationships linked him with Lady Margaret Beaufort, herself a translator and commissioner of translations—most notably that late medieval spiritual classic *The Imitation of Christ* (see §5.3 below)—and with the Birgittine house of Syon.

Translations Associated with Syon Abbey

Syon, where this section ends, represents a textual community important for the history of translation in England. The large community of up to sixty nuns created an immediate and substantial audience for vernacular works of spiritual guidance and instruction, often by their priestly co-religionists (see further Hutchison 1995; Grisé, in Glasscoe 1999, Jones 2004, and *MTr* 8; and Krug 2002). One of the best-documented synapses in the textual history of (especially vernacular) religious books encompasses Syon and its sister foundation, the Charterhouse at Sheen. From the outset, Syon's and Sheen's textual and spiritual lives were profoundly intertwined (see discussions by Sargent 1983; Gillespie in Glasscoe 1999).

A major Syon text is the earlier-noted *Myroure of Oure Ladye*. It talks about the nuns' need for supported access to the Latin of their liturgy, and provides careful versions of the core texts of the Office. Referring to Arundel's restrictions on Bible translations, the author comments that they can consult Rolle's vernacular exposition of the Psalms and 'Englysshe bibles if ye haue lysence therto'; he has 'asked and ha[s]e lysence of oure bysshop to drawe suche thinges in to Englysshe to your gostly comforte and profyt' (Blunt 1873: 3, 71). The *Myroure* also provides an account of the kinds of books that the nuns should be reading, and the manner in which such reading ought to be undertaken. Singled out for comment are books 'made to enforme the vnderstondynge, and to tel how spiritual persones oughte to be gouerned in all theyr lyuynge' (68). Other books are made 'to quyken and to sturre vp the affeccyouns of the soule' by generating affective and meditative responses of dread or love, but the list also includes guides to the cleansing of conscience, the acquisition of virtues, the withstanding of temptations, and the suffering of tribulation, which collectively teach the ascetic form of 'gostly exercyse' associated with Birgittine spirituality (see further Ellis 1997; Gillespie in Jones 2004). This repertoire encompasses pretty much the full spectrum of the religious books being translated into English in the fifteenth century.

By the end of the century, the reading needs of the nuns were increasingly being served by printed books. Wynkyn de Worde sent the house sixty copies of *The Image of Love* (enough for each nun to have her own copy). But from the outset works, including many translations, were composed explicitly for the community (such as the *Myroure* and *The Orcherd of Syon*, both later printed; possibly the *Speculum Devotorum*); others may have been composed for them by, or commissioned by, the brethren. In the sixteenth century we have names of several Syon translators: Thomas Prescius (on his translation of the *Formula*

Noviciorum, see Jolliffe 1974), Thomas Betson, Richard Whitford, John Fewterer, and William Bonde (for these, see Hogg 1983, Rhodes 1993).

Arguably Syon emulated the example of the mother house (Vadstena), a notable centre (so Wollin in *MTr* 2) of vernacular translation of Latin religious texts. The translator of the *Myroure* refers to 'eny other [boke] of oure drawyng' (8) suggesting it was part of a series of works by him or his team. Translations of or from Latin works of guidance, perhaps made at or for Syon (such as *The Manere of Good Lyuyng* in Oxford, Bodleian MS Laud Misc. 517, or *The Doctrine of the Heart*, or *Disce Mori*), are worth attention, as are works whose circulation is shared between Syon and other nunneries but which may have been circulated through Syon agency. *The Manere of Good Lyuyng*, still unedited, offers a translation of the *Liber de Modo Bene Vivendi ad Sororem*, usually attributed to St Bernard. The translation paints a starker contrast between the cloister and the world than many of those earlier studied here. With its description of secular women as servants of Satan whose 'song of þe marmaydes' and 'fabulacons' will seduce nuns from the right way, and its strident denunciation of 'the felyship and disseytys of men' (ff. 142r–3r), it might have been harder to place in wider circulation. It certainly offers no rosy-hued view of religious life. But in this respect it suits well the Birgittine austerity and asceticism that was a major reason for the popularity of the saint and her order in fifteenth-century England.

Many of the textual productions by or for the nuns of Syon found their way in due course, by accident or design, to readers outside the enclosure. A notable early instance is the translation of the *Life of St Jerome* by Simon Wynter (d. 1448), for his particular friend, benefactor, and spiritual client Margaret, Duchess of Clarence (d. 1439), instructing her: 'þat hit sholde lyke youre ladyshype first to rede hit and to doo copye hit for youre self and syth to lete oþer rede hit and copye hit, whoso wyll' (quoted Keiser 1985: 41; Bartlett and Bestul 1999: 233). The Life included material from the revelations of St Birgitta, and its prologue also translates material from Suso's *Horologium*. All surviving copies have associations with Syon (Pickering in Edwards 2004: 266). The mid-century *Disce Mori* was probably written at Syon for a postulant or female spiritual client of the nuns (see comment by Jones 1996, 2000). It draws on the Latin contemplative compilation *Speculum Spiritualium*, probably composed at Sheen, and strongly featured in the Syon brethren's library.

Later, *Disce Mori* was itself quarried for a handbook for parish priests, as yet unedited, which provides a gloss and translation for the Pecham/Arundel catechetic programme as elaborated by the canon lawyer William Lyndwood in his collection of canon law texts *Provinciale* (quotations are in Hodgson 1948; see also Jones 1998). The compiler, characteristically 'nameles', but probably one of the graduate brothers of Syon, reports that he finds Lyndwood's text 'diffuse intricat with lawe and hard of intellecte to suche symple lettred men, nameli in lawe, as I am, though þat I therin be aggraduat'. Working with *Disce Mori*, which he marks up in one of the two surviving manuscript copies, showing which portions he intends to use in his new text, he comments:

I presumed . . . to drawe oute of the seid glose and other werkes of hooli doctors this ensuyng rude werk made in oure modre tunge . . . bi whiche I entende after such auctours as I haue seen to distribute forth to simple curates [r]urales or upplandisshe hou thei shal haue hem afore god and man in their demenyng ayenst hem self as wel inward as outward and also hou thei shal declare vnto theire parisshens the matieres conteyned in the seid constitution. (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Eng. theol. C.57, f. 3r)

Here English is being used as a clarifying medium for someone who, although a graduate in canon law, finds Lyndwood's gloss hard to follow. The usual invocation of an inscribed audience of 'symple lettred men' is here carefully glossed and complicated ('nameli in lawe') before the translator goes on to construct a further target audience of non-metropolitan 'simple curates'. This is an unusually direct example of material being published outwards from Syon to other audiences, though such publication (properly described) becomes more common after Syon embraces printing technology to address a wider English audience. Usually the route of transmission is less well signposted.

Nevertheless, the strong links between Syon and the powerful London parishes and their influential rectors (many of them benefactors or later brothers), and the popularity of the house for study and retreat, added to the undoubted influence of the public preaching by the brethren, illustrate the extent to which the house became a trend-setter in popular spirituality (see further Gillespie in Jones 2004 and in Barr and Hutchison 2005). The religious life of London between 1415 and 1450 was marked by a notable campaign to improve the standard of parish clergy (by the establishment, for example, of in-service training facilities at Whittington College), and to improve the quality of preaching and teaching in the city (see esp. Catto 1992). Syon seems implicated in all these developments. There is also mounting evidence of probable links between Syon and the fraternities and sodalities out of which emerged the so-called 'common profit books' (on these, see Scase 1992). One of these, for example, is a clone of a manuscript known to be in the library at Syon (Gillespie in Hogg 2002). These books are important tokens of lay initiative in, or support for, the making of religious books among the mercantile and professional classes of mid-fifteenth-century London. This is substantially the same group for whom Reginald Pecock was slightly later to seek to provide instructive and edifying vernacular books, drawing on his own experiences as Master of Whittington College and as a London rector (on Pecock, see Scase 1996; Simpson in Edwards 2004). Pecock was himself named in the foundation charter of the Guild at Syon (Aungier 1840: 459–64; Sutton and Visser-Fuchs 1996: 242–6), and his views on the translation and circulation of religious texts may well have been honed in such a milieu. In the *Book of Faith*, Pecock urges prelates and 'othere myȝty men of good' to cause books 'to be writun in greet multitude, and to be wel correctid, and thanne aftir to be sende, and to be govun or lende abroad amonge the seid lay persoonys' who must 'take long leiser forto sadli and oft overrede tho bokis unto tyme thei schulen be wel aqueyntid with thos bokis . . . and not forto have in oon tyme or ii tymes a liȝt superficial overreding or heering oonly' (Pecock 1909: 116–17).

Although Pecock's campaign was to founder on the rocks of political and institutional censure (see Taylor 2001; Ball 1997), evidence clearly shows that merchants, gentry, and nobility (and their wives, widows, and daughters) shared a common appetite for devotional books: which often meant translated books (documented in Doyle 1958; Sutton 2000). The prosperous, urban literate laity wanted exemplars for an evolving form of spiritual life in the world (see the London books discussed by Murray 1970; Morgan 1973; Connolly 2003; Jones in Barr and Hutchison 2005). One of the unintended consequences of Arundel's decrees may have been a new impetus to the translation into English of older texts with an impeccably orthodox pedigree or an unimpeachable authorial reputation, and Syon was probably a leading centre in the production of such texts. It had the library resources, the connections with lay and ecclesiastical opinion formers, qualified and intelligent members, access to scribal, textual, and translatorial resources at Sheen, and the status and brand name to guarantee it as a centre of orthodox spirituality and devotion.

Syon 'appears to be the only English religious institution whose espousal of the new technology of printing is extensive enough to be described as adapting a continental model' (Erler 1992: 204). Printed Latin books entered the brothers' library soon after the invention of the new technology (see further Gillespie 2005b). The house seems to have been involved with printed vernacular books (including translations) from at least as early as the 1483 *Quattuor Sermones*, issued with an edition of Mirk's *Festial*. In 1499, Wynter's life of Jerome appeared in print. In 1500, Wynkyn printed Betson's *Ryght Profytable Treatyse*, the first printed work by an identifiable Syon brother, made up of translations of ascetic and patristic materials, and carefully aimed at an audience 'that ben come and shall come to relygyon'. The book seems to have initiated a substantial and ongoing commercial relationship between Wynkyn and Syon, which may have supplied him with materials to print and commissioned editions from him and later printers. The size of the Syon community would have guaranteed a minimum sale, and printers and importers of books may have used an association with Syon as a valuable advertising aid (on books with Syon-related woodcuts, which seek to associate them with the reputation of the order and its foundress, see Driver 1989, 1995).

In the sixteenth century, the most notable and prolific of the Syon translators, often published by Wynkyn and other printers, was Richard Whitford (self-styled 'wretch of Syon': see Hogg 2005, Lawrence in *MTr* 4). A man of cultured experience, friend of Erasmus, and an early figure in the development of the New Learning in England, Whitford's many original and translated works continued to appear in print even after the suppression of the community in 1539.

The sense that his prologues give of sharing vicariously in the spiritual life of a vibrant and prestigious house like Syon—no doubt a major part of the appeal of his books—is well witnessed in his *Worke of Dyuers Impediments and Lettes of Perfection* (1541):

But late I sende forth a lytle worke of the lyfe of perfectyon. . . . And here nowe one of my brethren brought vnto me a treatise or lytle draght in Latyn of an vncerteyn auctor whiche he founde by chaunce of certen impedimentes or lettes of . . . spirituall profite . . . whiche tracte or draght I thought shuld frame wel vnto the same worke. And therefore I put hyt into Englysh and added thereunto many thynges that I thought conuenient for the same.

(Whitford 1991: 107)

Whitford became a brand name himself, a metonymy of the merits of his house. Here the fact that the text he has translated was 'of an vncerteyn auctor' (and therefore of uncertain authority) is controlled and turned to advantage by stressing Whitford's role as translator and advocate. In one of his later publications, issued in 1541 by Myddleton, Whitford's prologues allow the reader glimpses of the processes by which his texts come into being and of the internal dynamics of the recently suppressed Syon at work: in his *Instrucyon to Auoyde and Eschewe Vices (*1541) he writes,

Here be many . . . profetable lessons ascribed vnto saynt Isodor whiche may be rather . . . taken for notes gadred then for any worke digested and ordered. . . . A deuout brother of ours . . . forsed me to translate the mater which I haue done more after the sens and meanyng of the auctour then after the letter, and somewhere I haue added vnto the auctour rather than mynished any thynge. (Whitford 1991: 141)

The authority of Isidore is reinforced by Whitford's editorial reordering and augmentation, which give the work added value. His translation of the Rule of St Augustine despairs at the ineptness of the previous translation he had to work with, 'olde, scabrouse, rough, and not of the Englysshe comynly vsed in these partyes' (Whitford 1525: title page).

   Whitford's œuvre and experience as a translator are in some ways familiar and in others novel. Familiar are his frequent laments over the poor quality of his source and the difficult processes of translation; so also his frequent recognition that materials originally produced for his co-religionists would, by virtue of his translation, soon reach a much wider audience. Relatively novel is his decision, as a religious translator, to put his name to his authentic translations as a guarantor of their worth: hence *A Deuoute Worke of Pacience* warns readers:

And that I . . . gyue you warnyng to serche well . . . that none suche other workes be put amonge them that might deceyue you. For . . . I founde . . . very late a worke . . . bounde with my pore labours and vnder the contentes of the same volume and one of my workes that was named in the same contentes lefte out in sted wherof was put this other worke that was not myne. . . . And the other worke hathe no name of any auctour and all such workes in thys tyme be euer to be suspected for so the heretykes do vse to sende forthe theyr poyson . . . couered with suger. . . . Be you ware therfore of all suche fatherless bokes that nother haue the name of the auctour nor of the translatour. (Whitford 1991: 4)

The day of the nameless and unknown translator was over. The day of the translator as *auctour* had arrived.

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5.3 Women Translators of Religious Texts

Alexandra Barratt

Introduction

Women translators into English in this period—those, that is, who have been positively identified, and are not still waiting to be discovered, concealed in library catalogues under 'anon.'—make up a small but surprisingly homogeneous group. They can easily be counted on the fingers of two hands; all were either members of, or closely associated with, the royal family. All were pious but, unlike most of their AN counterparts in the late twelfth century (see above pp. 16, 53), not technically 'religious'; all but one were married at least once. And they all translated devotional texts. The similarities are the more remarkable as these women probably knew very little, if anything, about their predecessors. As they were neither commissioned to translate particular works nor hoping for patronage or some other temporal reward, we must assume that these women had personal reasons for choosing to translate certain texts. Translation is a time-consuming and intellectually demanding activity which, while rewarding, does have its *longueurs*, and so the texts chosen, most of them contemporary or near-contemporary with their respective translators, and some of them relatively controversial, become particularly interesting.

Translation constituted a significant literary outlet for women, most of whom did not have the motivation, skills, opportunity, or leisure to write in any form. Translators occupied a liminal position as mediators of others' work, an ancillary role which the occasional woman might safely adopt (often with suitable apologies) in a spirit of self-effacement. Beilin comments (1990: 348) that translation in the period 1500–1640 'was both an opportunity and a limitation for women. As translators, women could demonstrate their learning and interest in such subjects as Scripture and religious doctrine.' This applies to earlier periods as well. As almost all the texts translated for a female audience before 1550 are religious in nature, there is a real congruence between women's reading and women's writing. Beilin's further comment, however, that translation 'did not ordinarily prepare women for further literary development', is slightly less true: at least two of our six women translators (Princess Elizabeth and Katharine Parr) went on to write original texts.

There were no known women translators in the OE period; in the early post-Conquest period the few women translators known to us worked in AN. It is not until the mid-fifteenth century that a woman translator working in English is known to us.

The Fifteenth Century

Eleanor Hull (*c.* 1395–1460), a royal servant who had been born and married into families devoted to the Lancastrians, translated two texts from Old French or AN originals: *Prayers and Meditations*, a collection of devotions partly structured on the days of the week, and *The Seven Psalms*, an elaborate commentary in the monastic manner on the Penitential Psalms. Both texts, and their attributions (a simple statement that 'Alyanore Hulle drowe out of ffrenche all this before wreten') are preserved in a single manuscript: CUL MS Kk.1.6. The *Prayers and Meditations* are also found, unattributed and in slightly different form, in University of Illinois MS 80. Part of this text was translated from a late thirteenth- or early fourteenth-century AN 'series of prayers and meditations drawn from the Fathers and the Bible', which survives in four manuscripts (Dean and Boulton 1999: 473–4). A detailed comparison of source and translation shows that Hull was careful but not slavish; she did adapt her material and seems to have edited it quite extensively on occasions (Barratt 2003: 278–96). This source, however, accounts for only a small proportion of the text. Possibly further research may uncover others; at least we now know that Hull showed some independence in splicing together more than one source to make a coherent whole. The *Prayers and Meditations* (Hull 1995b) is probably the earlier of the two translations: the individual items are relatively manageable in length and include some quite attractive pieces of affective devotion. It does not, however, have the air of an apprentice piece, though it is a moot point whether she, the AN compiler, or Bernard of Clairvaux (the ultimate source) can claim the credit for the measured prose here:

Yf we wryte þer is no sauer; but if I rede þe name of Jhesu, Jhesus is hony in the mouth and in þe ere melodye, in þe hert gladnes aboue mesure, þat is to sey, swetter to vs þen any hony if we our-self speke of Jhesus, and more swetter þan eny instrument if we here anoþer to speke to hym.   (f. 151r)

In contrast, the source text of *The Seven Psalms* remains untraced. From internal evidence it must have been written between 1189 and 1307 and is probably late thirteenth century (Barratt in Hull 1995a: xiii). Hull is thus exceptional among these early women translators in choosing considerably older texts. As her translation wants explanatory prologue or other commentary, we do not know why the original attracted her attention. It must have been a tough nut for any translator to crack: it was long (the translation is over 200 pages long in a modern edition) and not obviously attractive, the arguments often convoluted, the material intractable. It may have been undertaken as a spiritual exercise: it would certainly have made an excellent penance.

Possibly Hull was inspired or encouraged by examples of scriptural paraphrase and commentary translated specifically for women. A hundred years before,

Richard Rolle had glossed the Psalter in English for the recluse Margaret Kirkby. An anonymous versifier explained the need for commentary as well as translation:

> Bot for þe psalmes bene ful derke in many a place whos [whoever] wol take hede,
> And þe sentence is ful merke, euery row [line] who so wol rede,
> Hit nedeth exposicyon written wel with monnes honde,
> To stirre to more deuocyowne and hit þe betture vndurstonde.
>
> <div align="right">(Rolle 1884: 1)</div>

In his prologue, Rolle had even suggested that a reader might use the translation to learn some Latin: 'In þis werke I seke na straunge ynglis, bot lightest and commonest, and swilk þat is mast lyke til þe Latyn, swa þat thei þat knawes noght Latyn by þe ynglis may com til mony latyn wordis' (4).

Given the popularity of Rolle's translation—nearly forty manuscripts survive (Watson 1991: 242)—it is by no means impossible that Eleanor Hull knew it, or knew of it. There is also a late fourteenth-century New Testament paraphrase (completed before 1408) of the Epistles, Acts, and St Matthew's Gospel, which survives in one complete and three partial copies. This was 'undertaken at the urgent request of the inmates of some religious house, more especially, to judge from the repeated references to the "Suster" at the beginning and end of the various Epistles, of a woman vowed to religion' (Paues 1904: xxiv; see also p. 219 above).

Naturally Hull knew contemporary French, having been lady-in-waiting to Henry IV's French wife. It is, however, interesting that a fifteenth-century lay Englishwoman was able to translate thirteenth-century AN, though just before the Dissolution it was noted that the Augustinian canonesses of Lacock Abbey had texts 'written in the Frenche tonge which they understand well...albeit that it...is moche like the Frenche that the common law is writen in' (Chew 1956: 309). Hull also understood at least some Latin. She carefully blends the Latin quotations incorporated into her translation (and presumably present in the source text of *The Seven Psalms*) into the syntax of her English, as here:

þe noble maystrys of þe holy ospytal...schynyn by þe whyte crosse that betokenyth pure charyte and ioyful loue that God þe fader schewyd ous, *qui pro nobis omnibus proprio filio suo non pepercit* but delyueryd hym to þe dethe of þe crosse, in whos worchyp þes worchypful champyons cleryddyn [cleared] þe soulys *caritate dei patris, dealbatas* of þys rede blode of þe lambe.   (Hull 1995a: 51: for further examples see n. to line 759)

The manuscript containing Hull's works can be quite precisely dated to the period 1449–54 (Barratt in Hull 1995a: xxii). Eleanor Hull, who died in 1460, may never have finalized her work. In half a dozen places she offers alternative words where she had presumably not quite made up her mind: for instance, in the commentary on Psalm 37 she writes: ' "I am", seyd our Lord, "made as a man that heryth not and as he that had no repreue (reprehencyon) in his mowthe"' (89–90). There is therefore little reason to think that her

translations circulated in fifteenth-century England or that she had any fame as a translator. She might, however, have met the next woman translator known to us, Lady Margaret Beaufort (1443–1509), when the latter visited the court in 1453 at the age of 10 (Jones and Underwood 1992: 38). Indeed, if we allow for the obvious differences between them, the two women seem, as far as we can tell, to have been rather similar: pious, learned, and in the world if not of it.

It is unlikely, however, that the younger woman knew of Hull's translating activities. Eleanor Hull was a member of the gentry rather than an aristocrat, even though she and her family had close ties of service to the crown. 'Politic and subtle' (Jones and Underwood 1992: 3), Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby (1443–1509), was far more aristocratic. The daughter of John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset, she was the great-granddaughter of John of Gaunt and therefore belonged to the same generation as Henry VI. Her only son, by her second husband, was Henry Tudor, later Henry VII. Beaufort married four times altogether and took two vows of chastity, one during the lifetime of her fourth husband and the other after his death (Jones and Underwood 1992: 153, 188). If women translators were not so scarce, one would unhesitatingly declare that Beaufort's primary importance was as a patron of learning and a commissioner of others' work (see further Summit 1995). She prompted Caxton to translate two works of very different cast, the romance *Blanchardyn and Eglantine* and a set of prayers linked with St Birgitta of Sweden, *The Fifteen Oes.* Henry Watson claimed to have written through her 'entysement and exhortacyon' a translation of Brant's *Narrenschiff* (1509). She also encouraged Hatfield's translation (*c.* 1509) of *The Life of St Ursula* (Boffey 1998: 112). But she did carry out two translating projects of her own: part of the *Imitatio Christi* in 1504, and the whole of the *Speculum Aureum Animae Peccatricis* by Jacques de Gruytrode *c.* 1506.

The Latin *Imitatio* was put into circulation anonymously in 1418 and first printed in 1471–2. Lady Margaret translated Book IV 'out of Frenche into Englysshe' (Beaufort 1893: 259), to complement the first three books that William Atkynson (*c.* 1465–1509), fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, had translated at her 'speciall request and commaundement' (Beaufort 1893: 153). There was an earlier translation of Books I–III, but not of Book IV (Biggs 1997: vii). Lady Margaret knew little Latin (Jones and Underwood 1992: 184–5) and therefore used a French version, probably the first, published in Toulouse in 1488 (Ingram in Beaufort 1893: xxvii). The combined translation, printed by Wynkyn de Worde, went through several editions from 1504 to 1519 (*STC* 23955–8) and was the first printed version of this devotional classic.

No translator necessarily endorses every last phrase in her source text. Nonetheless, Beaufort's choice is suggestive. Book IV of the *Imitatio* promotes frequent, pious, and humble reception of the sacrament of the altar, an object of pronounced female attention in the Middle Ages. It is strictly orthodox, although, in the spirit of the movement which inspired the *Imitatio*, and in

which the *Imitatio* originated—*devotio moderna*—it places more stress on personal devotion than on eucharistic doctrine. But the text is also conspicuously sacerdotal, placing a high value on priests and the priesthood. For instance, in chapter 5 it exclaims:

O the great mystery and the merueylous dygnyte of prestes, vnto whom is gyuen that that is nat graunted vnto the aungellys. For the prestys only duly ordred in the churche of Cryste haue power to doo and to consecrate the holy body of Iesu Cryste ... Take good heed than, and se from whom this mysterye is gyuen vnto the, and that is by the puttynge to of the handes of the Bysshoppe thou arte admyttyd vnto that hye rometh [office]. Beholde nowe thou arte made a preste and sacreyd to doo this holye mysterye.

(267)

    The Mirror of Gold to the Sinful Soul, translated from the French and published a few years later (*STC* 6894.5), was more conservative. The source text by the Carthusian Jacques de Gruytrode (*c.* 1400–75) had been printed at Nuremberg among the works of Denys the Carthusian in 1495. Beaufort had a particular interest in their order, having been admitted as a 'sister' of the London Charterhouse in 1478 (Jones and Underwood 1992: 147). The Latin was translated into French as early as 1451 by Jean Miélot, and this version was printed several times from *c.* 1482 (Bousmanne and Van Hoorebeeck 2000: 300–1; Pellechet 1905: 4326–9).

    The Mirror consists of seven sections, on human misery, sin (especially lechery), penance, rejection of the world, the vanity of human wishes, death, and hell and heaven. It claims to be structured 'after the vii. dayes of the weke. To thentent that the synfull soule solyed [*sic*] and defowlyde by synne maye in euery chapitoure haue a newe mirrour, wherin he maye beholde and consyder the face of his soule' (Beaufort 2001: A2v). This seems to be merely a rationale for its seven chapters and is not mentioned again: presumably it is sheer coincidence that Eleanor Hull used a similar structure in her *Prayers and Meditations*. Verbrugge's comment (in Hannay 1985: 39) that *The Mirror* is 'definitely a medieval work' is certainly true, particularly in its copious quoting of 'authorities' such as Aristotle, Boethius, Isidore, Jerome, Bernard, and Augustine, and in its extravagant expressions of contempt for the world and the human body: the following is a typical passage: 'O vile noughty condicion of man, beholde and consider the herbes and trees. They bringe forthe of theym braunches, flores, and frutis. And thou bringest forthe nyttis and stynkynge vermyn' (A5r). The opening of the English exactly follows the French printed version:

This presente boke is called the Mirroure of golde to the sinfull soule, the which hath ben translated at Parice oute of Laten in to Frenche, and after the translacion seen and corrected, at length of many clarkis, doctoures, and maisters in diuinite.

ce present liure est appelle le miroir dor de lame pecheresse le quel a este translate a paris de latin en francoys et apres la translation veu et corrige au long de pluseurs clers maistres et docteurs en theologie.

(Pellechet 1905: 184)

The major obstacle to a just appreciation of Beaufort's achievement as a translator is the inaccessibility of her intermediary French texts. Her nineteenth-century editor, who generally disliked the Beaufort–Atkinson version of the *Imitation*, noted the 'errors' in her contribution, but he was comparing it to the Latin, not the French, source (Ingram in Beaufort 1893: xxvii). Nor are there good modern editions available of her writings. Beaufort suffers from the apparent convention that incunables can be satisfactorily studied from facsimiles, digital images, or even from microfilm, and do not need the sort of careful presentation, annotation, and glossing that is devoted to medieval texts preserved in manuscript.

The Sixteenth Century

The unreconstructed late medievalism of *The Mirror* contrasts (so Verbrugge in Hannay 1985: 35) with the early humanism of the translation by Margaret Roper (1505–44) of Erasmus' *Precatio Dominica* of 1523 (for Roper's translation, alongside the Erasmian original, see Marc'hadour 1965). *A Devout Treatise on the Pater Noster* appeared in 1524 (*STC* 10477), fifteen years after Margaret Beaufort's death in 1509 and five years before the translator's father, Thomas More, became Henry VIII's Lord Chancellor. This is the very first translation by a woman where the translator's gender (as also, incidentally, her youth, learning, and social status) becomes an issue. Described on the title page as 'a yong vertuous and well lerned gentylwoman of .xix. yere of age' (Roper 2001: A1r), in the opening epistle she is given a glowing reference by Richard Hyrd, the More family's physician or possibly tutor: 'she hath shewed her selfe nat onely erudite and elegant in eyther tong, but hath also used…wysedom…dyscrete and substancyall iudgement in expressynge lyuely the Latyn' (B2v).

Hyrd also takes the opportunity to defend women's right to study the classics as well as French and English, while implicitly linking this (for 'women abyde moost at home') with their domestic role: 'and the Latyn and the Greke tonge, I se nat but there is as lytell hurt in them as in bokes of Englisshe and Frenche, whiche men bothe rede them selfe…and also can beare well ynoughe that women rede them if they wyll' (A3v). Although the monasteries were still in existence, he connects learning with married status, declaring that Roper's learning contributes to her happy marriage:

with her vertuous, worshipfull, wyse, and well lerned husbande, she hath by the occasyon of her lernynge, and his delyte therin, suche especiall conforte, pleasure, and pastyme as were nat well possyble for one vnlerned couple eyther to take togyder or to conceyue in their myndes what pleasure is therin.   (B1r)

A Devout Treatise itself has received some scholarly attention, perhaps as much because of the translator's father as for her own sake. It is certainly significant as the first translation made by a woman direct from Latin, and from a contemporary text. John Archer Gee commented (1937: 260) on both its early date and its quality, which he saw as evidence of the efficacy of humanist educational

techniques. More recently it has been praised as showing 'the care and concern for a responsible translation that belonged to the ideals of the early humanists' and as possessing 'a natural gentle rhythm using straightforward diction' and a 'simple, straightforward, and unpretentious' vocabulary (Verbrugge in Hannay 1985: 40).

It is possible, however, to overstate the novelty of *A Devout Treatise*. A knowledge and understanding of the Lord's Prayer were fundamental aims of medieval religious instruction, and there were several ME treatises on the subject, including a widely disseminated Wycliffite exposition and, significantly, one specifically written for a woman, *Þe Pater Noster of Richard Ermyte* (anon. 1967). Erasmus' meditative treatment rises well above the elementary level but is nonetheless in the catechetical tradition (Verbrugge in Hannay 1985: 34–5). It even uses the medieval device of relating the seven petitions of the Pater Noster to the seven days of the week—its full title is *Precatio Dominica Digesta in Septem Partes, Juxta Septem Dies*—though no trace of this remains in the translation. It is also arguable that Roper medievalizes Erasmus: Verbrugge (in Hannay 1985: 42) makes a strong case for her 'personal expression', which she locates particularly in 'a stress on the unworthiness of man, as well as an emphasis on the loving kindness of God'. This would in fact be in keeping with the pronouncedly penitential cast of those translations so far studied in this section.

But Roper was also a faithful translator: her original was clearly written for a male audience and she does not change this, keeping for instance a reference to 'that whiche we haue moost dere, as our fathers and mothers, wyues, chyldren, and kynsefolke' (D2v). She also faithfully reproduces some typically Erasmian anticlerical passages, such as: 'amongest those, . . . father, that walke within the cloyster of thy churche and seme as chefe in thy realme, there are nat a fewe (alas) which holde on their aduersaries side, and as moche as lyeth in them abate, shame, and dishonest the glory of thy realme' (D3r).

In spite of the commonplace that Erasmus laid the eggs that Luther hatched, there is little that is doctrinally controversial in the original. Ironically, however, we would not know the authorship of the translation had not its publisher Thomas Berthelet fallen foul of early attempts, in which Thomas More himself was involved, to censor Lutheran writings. Berthelet was summonsed for failing to obtain episcopal approval for a translation of an imported book and in the process revealed that the translator was Roper's wife (Verbrugge in Hannay 1985: 35–8).

In contrast, after her conversion by Cranmer in 1544, Katharine Parr (1512–48) was more overtly reformist in her sympathies. The sixth wife of Henry VIII briefly played an important cultural role in the 1540s and King argues (in Hannay 1985: 43) that, under her auspices, a 'group of powerful women broke with traditional modes of . . . devotion which had flourished at the Tudor court'. He identifies 'grace, faith, penitence, and worldly vanity', however, as both 'pervasive concerns' of Parr's writings and 'major themes of courtly piety'

(Hannay 1985: 48): a list that could just as aptly define the concerns of Eleanor Hull and Margaret Beaufort. Jonathan Gibson has also recently argued (2004: 25) for a continuity in women's devotional writing, although he focuses more on a tradition of Christocentric piety.

Mueller describes Parr as 'the earliest woman writer in English to see original works reach print and bear her name on the title page as well' (in Parr 1996: ix). Parr's claim to be an intralinguistic translator (in the sense of adaptor) rests on her *Prayers or Medytacions*, printed in 1545 (*STC* 4818). The title page admits to being 'collected out of certain holy workes'; Hoffman showed (1959: 355) that the sixty-page 'meditation' preceding the prayers, 'except for the adjustment of pronouns and many minor alterations, comes from Richard Whitford's translation (published *c.* 1530) of the *Imitation of Christ*, Book III, Chapters xv–l, abbreviated by fairly judicious skipping'. Hoffman goes on to comment that 'no credit is given to the translator or the original author. Only the title page shows that Catherine did not mean the work to be accepted as her own.'

Judgements vary on the resulting text. King argues (in Hannay 1985: 47) that Parr's 'haphazard selection destroys the methodical character and evocation of inward dialogue which characterize the original'. A more nuanced, and sympathetic, reading by Mueller (1990: 174, 177) suggests that Parr was attempting to produce a voice 'with the generic human accents of a pious Christian soul', like that found in the Psalms; she could not overtly feminize the *Imitation* material but worked to produce 'a degendered, generically human speaker who yields self to God in a posture of total dependency and in utterances drawn from God's own Word'. These comments are the more interesting given that Mueller could not have known about the existence of Hull's lengthy psalm commentary, translated 100 years before.

That Parr turned to the *Imitation* is also significant. This entirely orthodox text was a product of the *devotio moderna*, a movement that had profoundly influenced Erasmus, educated among the Brethren of the Common Life. The 1530 translation, which superseded the earlier Atkinson–Beaufort version, was probably made for the nuns of Syon Abbey (Rhodes 1993: 15–16) even if not by the Birgittine monk Richard Whitford. It is anonymous, and the 'wretch of Syon', as Whitford called himself, usually acknowledged his literary progeny. Parr's reworking of it, therefore, demonstrates its inclusive appeal to women of diverse religious persuasions: the late medieval Catholic Lady Margaret Beaufort, the Birgittine nuns of the 1530s, shortly before the Dissolution, and the reforming-humanistic Queen Katharine.

Katharine Parr may also have translated some of Erasmus' New Testament paraphrases from the Latin (Devereux 1984: xxxi). She certainly coordinated their translation, involving her stepdaughter, the Princess Mary, and oversaw the publication of the first volume in 1548, after Henry's death (STC 2854). She was also the recipient, and probably the instigator, of the Princess Elizabeth's 1545 prose translation of Marguerite of Navarre's poem *Le Miroir de l'âme pecheresse*. The French original was published in 1531 and briefly condemned by the Sorbonne in

1533, possibly for Lutheran tendencies, though Marguerite has been judged 'an Erasmian and Gallican Catholic' by a modern scholar (Prescott in Hannay 1985: 62). Princess Elizabeth translated the poem as 'The glasse of the synnefull soule', and in 1548 John Bale, ex-Carmelite friar and protestant exile, published it in Germany as *A Godly Medytacyon of the Christen Sowle* (*STC* 17320).

A great deal has been made of the choice of text, its original author and her supposedly heretical ideas, its unsuitable subject matter, and its strange family imagery (e.g. Shell 1993; Prescott in Hannay 1985: 68–72). As the Princess Elizabeth was only 11 at the time, one has to treat such theories with some scepticism. Parr could well have been responsible for choosing a text mildly reformist in flavour and reputation, although the title was reminiscent of the extremely orthodox work of the Princess's great-grandmother, Lady Margaret Beaufort. Yet again, its penitential themes and use of biblical texts—Prescott comments on the numerous lines that 'cite or paraphrase Scripture'—place it firmly in a tradition of female translating.

Also in 1545, as part of her scheme to have all Erasmus' Paraphrases translated into English, Parr wrote to Princess Mary (1516–1558) in Latin, asking for her 'extremely beautiful and useful' translation, corrected by her chaplain Francis Malet, of the paraphrase of St John's Gospel (Devereux 1969: 351). The Paraphrases, which 'were no doubt intended to be orthodox' but were 'much more popular among the reformers than among conservative theologians', had appeared between 1517 and 1524. They were essentially a 'layman's [and laywoman's] guide to Scripture' (Devereux 1969: 348–9): which locates Parr's project, and Princess Mary's contribution, squarely within a female tradition of translations designed to elucidate Scripture.

The printed version of the Paraphrases, which could not appear until after Henry VIII's death (Devereux 1969: 353–4), was preceded by an embarrassingly fulsome dedicatory epistle addressed to Parr by Nicolas Udall. In it he praises Princess Mary extravagantly 'for takyng suche great studie, peine and trauaill, in translatyng this paraphrase of . . . Erasmus vpon the gospel of John' (Tudor 2001: AAA.2r). He relates how she had undertaken a task that would have alarmed lesser men (in fact the translation occupies 130 folios in the printed edition). After falling sick, 'to the intent that the diligent Englishe people shoulde not bee defrauded of the benefite entended and ment vnto them', she entrusted it to Francis Malet. Udall is sure that if she had had time to revise it herself, it would 'none otherwise haue glyttered, then clothe of golde enpowdred emong patches of canuesse, or perles and daimoundes emong peoblestones' (AAA2v).

The two princesses produced other translations, too: according to Lord Morley, Princess Mary, aged 12, translated a prayer by Aquinas (possibly that found at the end of a Book of Hours, now BL MS Add. 17012: Dowling 1986: 228); and Princess Elizabeth, who belongs more properly in Volume 2 of the *History*, dedicated to her father a French translation of Erasmus' *Dialogus Fidei*, and a version in Latin, French, and Italian of Katharine Parr's *Prayers or Meditations* (now BL MS Royal 7.D.x: Dowling 1986: 235).

Our final translator, Anne Cooke Bacon (1528–1610), was, like Eleanor Hull, closely associated with the royal court: her father, Anthony Cooke, was tutor to Edward VI. In 1548 five sermons that she had translated from the Italian appeared in *Sermons of Barnardine Ochine of Sena* (*STC* 18764). Writing as the anonymous 'Interpretour', she requests the inevitable 'gentle reder' to 'pardon my grosse tearmes as of a begynner, and beare wyth my translation, as of a learner' (Bacon 2000: A3v–r). She declares her willingness 'to turne mo godly sermons of the sayd mayster Barnardine into Englische'. Two volumes subsequently appeared, probably in 1551: *Fouretene Sermons of Barnardine Ochine . . . Translated out of Italian in to Oure Natyue Tounge by A.C.* (*STC* 18767), and *Certayne Sermons of the Ryghte Famous and Excellente Clerke Master B. Ochine* (*STC* 18766). Nineteen of the twenty-five sermons were her work, and the reprint, probably 1570, identified the translator as 'A.C.' Overall, the publication history is complex, if not confusing, but Stewart is right to stress that 'all the Ochino sermon translations' were 'issued to the English reading public as translations *by a woman*' (his emphasis, 2000: 90).

Bernardino Ochino (1487–1564), renowned for his eloquent and moving preaching, became a protestant in 1541 and lived in England between 1547 and 1553 (Cross and Livingstone 1997: 1172). Anne Cooke Bacon, therefore, is translating theological texts professedly protestant and contemporary—one set deals with predestination and election—and is slightly apologetic about her temerity. In the dedication of *Fouretene Sermons* she writes to her mother:

But not meanynge to take vpon me the reache, to his hygh style of thealogie, and fearyng also, least in enterprisynge to sette forth the bryghtnes of hys eloquence, I shuld manyfest my selfe vnapte, to attaine vnto the lowest degre therof. I descend therefore, to the vnderstanding of myne own debilitye.   (Bacon 2000: A4r–v)

Anne Cooke Bacon's translations significantly extend the range of languages from which women worked in this period: she is the first Englishwoman to publish translations from two languages, and the first to translate from Italian. Apparently the dedicatee objected to her daughter's study of the latter, for in her dedication Bacon writes, 'it hath pleased you, often to reprove my vaine studye in the Italyan tong' (A3r–v: cf. Lamb in Hannay 1985: 112). 'B.B.', too, who identifies the translator in his address 'To the Christen reader' as 'a wel occupied Jentelwoman, and verteouse meyden', is clearly worried that her knowledge of Italian might seem not decently come by: 'If oughte be erred in the translacion, remember it is a womans yea, a Jentyl womans . . . a maidens that never gaddid farder than hir fathers house to learne the language' (A2v).

Like those of all the translators discussed here, Bacon's translations are 'confined to religious material' (Lamb in Hannay 1985: 109). But most contemporaneous texts—originals and translations, made by men and women—are religious, so if this is 'confinement', it is a state shared with many others. When however we read 'B.B.' excoriating the imaginary detractors of the Ochino sermons as 'pretty pryckemydauntes', finical persons who may object that 'it is meeter for

docters of divinitye to meddle with such matter then meydens', we appreciate that translating religious texts was not necessarily a harmless female occupation but could be interpreted as an act of transgression. Perhaps, then, we are fortunate to have as many women translators as we do in this period.

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5.4 Romance

Rosalind Field

Introduction

The very term 'romance', referring originally to language not genre, distinguishes the foundation texts of the genre from other writing in the English language, and the history of English romance has always been seen as predominantly a history of translation. At least since 1804, when Sir Walter Scott claimed, in the introduction to his edition of *Sir Tristrem*, 'There exists no English Romance, prior to the days of Chaucer, which is not a translation of some earlier French one', the discussion of ME romance has always involved the consideration of the cultural processes of translation, adaptation, and appropriation. This section aims to look more closely at the assumptions that have accompanied this since the time of Scott. The consideration of ME romance in terms of translation presents problems and perspectives different from those found in other descriptions of the genre in England (Pearsall 1965; Barron 1987; Field in *CHMEL*).

There are two slippery terms here, romance and translation. '*Romance* is one of those terms, like *liberty* or *love*, that everybody uses and no one can define' (Benson 1980: 77): the term was used flexibly by ME writers (Strohm 1971: 354–6). If we adopt Pearsall's straightforward definition, 'the principal secular literature of entertainment of the Middle Ages' (Pearsall 1985: 42), there are well over a hundred works that comply with modern, if not medieval, understandings of the genre. For the purposes of this section, narratives that would have appealed to medieval readers as primarily histories are also included. The tales of historical or quasi-historical figures and events, of Alexander, the Trojan War, Charlemagne, and Arthur, are now seen as an intrinsic part of the corpus of medieval romance, but, as we shall see further below, stake their claim to the audience's attention as representations of genuine history. Medieval authors and their more educated readers were quite aware of the boundary between historical truth and fiction (see the discussion in Green 2002: 140–1), but the boundary was, by modern standards, permeable. Inevitably, therefore, some of the material in this section overlaps with that in §5.5, and readers will be referred at various points in this section to that later one.

Translation here is at its most medieval—including rewriting, adaptation, modernization. However, if too many ME romances are classified as translation, in the narrowest sense of the term, an obscuring of the creative vitality of ME fiction can result: we need rather to remain alert to the process of translation as an active appropriation of significant material. In what follows, therefore,

a distinction is made between 'translation', the change of a text into a target language, and *translatio*, a movement of ideas, cultural markers, place, which does not necessarily assume a textual relationship.

Translation of romance is a negotiation: between linguistic cultures, from Latin into vernacular, from one vernacular into another; between social groups; between the courtly and the popular; between past and present. The most obvious movement for ME romance is the translation from French into English, but this is affected by the complex relationship between the two vernacular cultures of medieval England. The translations considered here are all primarily from French into English, and this section aims, where possible, to differentiate between the 'French' of the Continent and the 'French' of insular literature. This is a cultural, rather than a linguistic, difference, but one too often overlooked by editions and discussions of individual texts. If we are to assess translation activity in England we need to distinguish between inter-vernacular and inter-national translation. English-language texts are negotiating both the developments that were accompanying change in language use amongst the literate classes and the growing awareness of national linguistic identity. Furthermore, recent recognition of the importance of AN culture for the development of the genre of romance in medieval Europe invites a reassessment of the activities of translators of AN material into ME, material which, as we shall see, provides an ongoing vernacular resource as late as the fourteenth century.

The translation of these texts involves three factors: availability of source texts; demand for translations; and competence of the translators. The availability of source texts or models can vary in quite arbitrary ways, and an author can work only on texts readily to hand. Hence, as we shall see, the importance and scale of the Auchinleck project, and later of Caxton, both with access to a wide range of material for commercial use. Demand includes patrons and audience (actual and potential): the level of demand and type of audience are evident in the number and quality of surviving manuscripts and references to a work. Demand is also responsive to external factors, such as revived interest in the crusades or dynastic change as well as literary fashions in chivalric verse romance or Burgundian prose. Competence as a factor has received the most attention: the best work will only be as good a translation as the writer can make it. The level of competence, in terms of language ability in the trilingual culture of medieval England, is generally high; in terms of literary ability, rather more patchy.

The translation status of ME romances involves larger issues affecting medieval and modern perception and assessment of these texts. Any assessment of the scale and achievement of ME translation activity needs to take into account the complex textual history of many individual romances. Even where clear sources exist they may not survive in the precise version(s) known to, and used by, the translator, and some ME works indicate a direct source no longer extant. In some cases, multiple copies of a ME work are better regarded as several independent translations; in others, the process of transmission has irretrievably obscured the relationship between versions of a text and source (see further

Pearsall 1985; Edwards 1991; Djordjević in Weiss *et al.* 2000). Then there is the definition and status of the genre: in medieval as in more modern terms, 'romance' can be used as the Other by which serious literature defines itself. So this section, arranged according to modern perceptions of the division between romance and history, will include discussion of works which present themselves as non-romance. Some of the most thoughtful and influential comments about romances are by authors of historical or quasi-historical works who denigrate romance as an inferior literary type by comparison with which their own work is the more serious and substantial (for examples, see Burnley 1999: 88–9; *IoV* 266). A claim to authenticity can be enhanced by reference to the authoritative source or the antiquity of the genre, as with works claiming to be Breton *lais*; such a claim, however spurious, carries with it the aura of authority attaching to the idea of translation. One of the ways in which vernacular romance claims status is its insistence on being read as a translation. Source text and translation gain status symbiotically. To translate is always to reach back into the past for material, which is thereby established as material worth retrieving and transmitting. That past, of course, is not usually written (or spoken) in English: the claim by the author of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* to have found his source written in 'lel lettres loken', where 'loken' is sometimes taken to refer to earlier alliterative poetry written in English, would constitute a notable exception.

This denial of the values of fictionality and originality obscures our perception of the creative activity that ME romance represents. Nineteenth-century editors could not accept originality: 'I cannot persuade myself that it [*Torrent of Portyngale*] is of the poet's own invention, as that would be the only instance of a Middle English romance not being taken from foreign originals' (Adam 1887: xxi). The larger question of verbal accuracy versus sense-by-sense medieval translation haunts the assessment of these texts. It is evident from the editors' prefaces of numerous individual editions of ME romance that for every one praising the redactor's fidelity to his source there are a dozen finding a praiseworthy independence in his lack of fidelity.

The characteristics used to organize and classify this large corpus of texts include length, verse form, and subject matter, all with important implications for translation. Length (discussed by Mehl 1968: 36–8) relates both to resources available and to audience status; the techniques of amplification or abbreviation in translation relate directly to the horizontal placing of source and text. Verse form has been persuasively linked to subject matter and tone, with couplets expressive of the chivalric, tail rhyme—the preferred form for much ME popular romance—expressive of the edifying, and alliterative verse expressive of the heroic. Tail rhyme may need brief comment here. In the typical tail-rhyme stanza, four-stress rhyming couplets are followed by single three-stress lines, which set up another rhyming pattern throughout a stanza of variable length and constitute the tail rhyme (see discussion in Mills 1973: viii–ix). The result is often inflationary and pedestrian, but can be both flexible and dramatic when handled by a competent writer, as in the following quotation from *Horn Childe*:

He bad þe harpour leuen his lay
'For ous bihoueþ [we need] anoþer play,
Buske [prepare] armour and stede.'
He sent his sond [messenger] niȝt and day
Also fast as he may,
His folk to batayl bede [bid].
'Bid hem þat þai com to me
Al þat hold her lond fre,
Help now at þis nede.
Better manly to be slayn
þan long to liue in sorwe and pain
Oȝain outlondis þede [against a foreign people].'
(Mills 1988: 157–68)

Verse form also affects the quality of translation. When couplets are common to both French-language source and English text, a smooth transition between languages results. Tail rhyme inflates the length of a text, and poses problems in the effective translation of the original. Alliterative verse carries an implication of earlier traditional verse, weighty subject matter, and intertextuality, resulting in an independence of approach. The choice of form, its suitability to subject matter, and the perennial techniques of the translator—abbreviation, amplification, modernization, structural reorganization—are all issues in the discussion of individual texts and of the larger picture of cultural *translatio*.

The study of ME romance has benefited from a long-established tradition of textual scholarship. Nearly all the romances are available in editions that meticulously chart the sources, analogues, and, where appropriate, translation methods of each text. This section does not aim to repeat such work but to consider ME romance as a locus of translation activity and cultural change. The development of English literary culture from the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries reveals the processes by which the reading of narrative in English moves from being acceptable to being respectable, from fashionable to inevitable.

In this section, romances will be organized, as in most romance handbooks from Severs 1967 to Barron 1987, according to subject matter, a method in tune with most modern approaches which have adopted Jean Bodel's twelfth-century list of 'Matters' (Green 2002: 138). The section begins with the ME romances drawing most directly on insular tradition—the romances of English heroes.

Romances of English Heroes

The loose grouping of the Romances of English Heroes includes some of the earliest ME romances. These are tales dealing with the legendary history of England—not Britain—showing charismatic heroes returning from hardship and exile to claim lands or kingdoms. They emphasize hereditary rights and the tensions of kingship at the expense of the more individualistic values of the chivalric romance; love is a component of dynastic expansion, not an

emotional *aventure*. For earlier critics, such narratives expressed an essential 'Englishness', emerging in the fourteenth century as England found its identity and its voice.

However, although language and subject matter may seem well suited, most if not all such romances derive from originals written in AN in the Angevin period, and present the earliest evidence of a programme of translation between the vernaculars of medieval England. In the majority of cases, versions in both AN and ME survive, and in several instances there are two or more ME versions. These romances provide a good test of two assumptions: that a change in language denotes a change in target audience; and that language was perceived as carrying national identity.

AN romance provides a corpus of insular narratives written from the mid-twelfth century to the mid-thirteenth. Characteristically, they depict a legendary pre-Conquest England and explore concerns about good rule, law, and feudal rights, which give a particular slant to their interpretation of romance motifs (see further Field in *CHMEL* 159–62). The romances were apparently written in the interests of a family or a locality—Arundel, Attleborough, Warwick (for a full account, see Legge 1963: 139–75). The authors may claim, not always genuinely, to be working with pre-existent material in English; like Marie de France, they present themselves as concerned to capture fleeting oral tales and translate them into the more durable form of written French narrative. The stance they project is one of translation and any inventiveness is underplayed: a kind of reverse plagiarism.

The surviving copies are all later, dating from the thirteenth or first half of the fourteenth centuries. The period of their production overlaps with the first appearance of ME translations from AN, indicating that translation into ME is not simply a consequence of the desuetude of AN as a literary language. The subject matter does indeed construct a view of the English past, but with a few exceptions any expression of patriotic feeling or national identity is present in both AN and ME versions. Nor is there a clear expression of what modern readings would identify as class differences—translators do not invariably render courtly French-language originals into coarser popular English versions. Instead of trying to impose later patterns of expectation upon these texts, it is more useful to look at the variety and range of achievement they represent. The diachronic shift is as important as the linguistic; these romances mark a conscious *translatio* from Angevin baronial society to the urban and rural audiences of fourteenth-century England.

Havelok the Dane is a good example of indirect translation and cultural appropriation, being the English version of a tale earlier available in AN (for details see Smithers 1987: xxxii–lii). Its literary antecedents are two twelfth-century texts in different genres—Gaimar's *Estoire des Engleis* and the anonymous *Lai d'Haveloc*. Gaimar's source for the tale of lost heirs and the establishment of an Anglo-Danish kingdom is unknown, but it seems that he was working with a local tale, in whatever language, so his version is itself to some extent a translation. The

Lai is a reworking of this chronicle material into a fashionable short narrative. The ME version was written before 1310; while the relationship between the AN versions and the extant *Havelok* remains unclear, *Havelok* has evidently been translated from AN to ME—and possibly back again into the AN *Brut* (Smithers 1987: liv–lxxi). The transfer from twelfth-century chronicle to fourteenth-century narrative is more than a matter of language; the ME author has created a piece of English history from a feudal account of mini-kingdoms, stressing the legal rights of the heiress and the involvement of all levels of society in restoring the rightful rule of two kingdoms. (On *Havelok*'s Lincolnshire/Grimsby associations, see above p. 55.)

At 3,002 lines *Havelok* is significantly longer than either of its predecessors; it uses *amplificatio* to create a patterned and serious narrative that is noticeably wider in its interpretation of society than is usual in the genre. Its celebration of that society (30–4) need not represent the actual audience of the work; indeed, it has been said that it represents 'not so much what the lower classes thought of the upper, as what the upper classes liked to think the lower classes thought of them' (Hirsch 1977: 343). Not even on its apparently simple lexical level is its Englishness completely convincing—Grim and his peasant wife feed the young Havelok an unlikely meal of 'pastees' and 'flaunes' (645), both delicacies here making their first appearance in written English, and Havelok's coronation feast is modelled on similar scenes in Wace's *Brut*. The awareness of Englishness—of place rather than language—is explicit in the account of the reign of Athelwold and the usurpation of Godric. The ideal king and feudal traitor, familiar in established *chanson de geste* and insular tradition, are now shown operating on an identifiable body politic, an 'Engeland' which can respond emotionally and feel pain (59, 277–9). The political sophistication of the ME *Havelok* has long been recognized (so, recently, by Speed and Turville-Petre in Meale 1994); that it is expressed in English is probably a sign of its belonging to a context of clerical and historical discourse, rather than the romance genre to which modern scholarship has rather hesitatingly consigned it. Significantly, it is through the chronicle tradition that Havelok becomes a national figure at the Renaissance (see Cooper in Weiss *et al.* 2000).

The relative freedom of ME adaptation of AN material is further apparent in *King Horn* (*KH*). Although often considered in tandem with *Havelok*, it is in fact a very different narrative type, its spare synecdochical style (see further Spearing 1987: 34–43) contrasting with the material solidity of *Havelok*. Nor can its 1,545 short couplets be seen as the result of abbreviation of the 5,240 long lines of the only extant predecessor, the AN *Romance of Horn* (*RH*) by Thomas. If, as seems likely, both *RH* and *KH* were descended from a common ancestor, they show very different narrative procedures, *RH* producing a full-length, novelistic, even suspenseful, account of the career of Horn, and *KH* a lyrical, allusively symbolic text that relies for its effect on the familiarity of romance motifs. That the common ancestor was in English is indicated both by the pun on the hero's name, which is ineffective in French (Dickson 1996: 46), and by Thomas's reference to

an earlier romance of Horn's father Aaluf, a tradition attested to by the AN *Waldef* and the ME *Horn Childe.* Both AN and ME versions are courtly in setting—there is none of *Havelok*'s representation of the lower orders—but both depict the hero as motivated primarily by territorial ambition, only secondarily by love, although the brevity and song-like quality of *KH* gives more emphasis to the love theme than does the crusading vigour of *RH*. It is the slightly later ME version, the tail-rhyme *Horn Childe*, that shows a convincing closeness to *RH* (see Mills 1988: 44–81), and this is the version found in the Auchinleck manuscript's collection of romances translated from insular sources.

The complex interrelationship between the surviving Horn romances, which is further complicated by the ballad of *Hind Horn* and the traces of lost intermediaries, provides a useful measure of the difficulty of charting a clear development of early romance in English. It also demonstrates that the process of 'translation' is complex and two-way. Each version offers a different narrative handling of the basically simple exile-and-return story of Horn, there is no defining verse form (*laisse*, couplets, and tail rhyme are all used), and the defining quality is rarely linguistic. Any explanation for the shifting shapes of the story of Horn needs to look to probable audience and cultural context—*RH* being written for AN adventurers in Ireland, *KH* for a London merchant audience (as suggested respectively by Weiss in R. Field 1999 and Allen 1998), and *Horn Childe* as a contribution to the Auchinleck manuscript's construction of English history.

Romances of the Auchinleck Manuscript

Our picture of the ME translation of these romances relies heavily on the associated understanding of the early fourteenth-century Auchinleck manuscript (National Library of Scotland 19.2.1). Romance provides eighteen items out of the manuscript's total of forty-four and is easily the most important genre in terms of quantity. Eight are in unique copies—stanzaic *Guy, Reinbroun, Of Arthour and of Merlin, Lai le Freine, Roland and Vernagu, Otuel a Knight, Sir Tristrem, Horn Childe*; with the exception of *Floris and Blancheflour*, the remainder are in their earliest versions—couplet *Guy, Bevis of Hampton, Kyng Alisaunder, Sir Orfeo, King Richard, King of Tars, Amis and Amiloun, Sir Degaré, Seven Sages of Rome.*

This collection of romances shows a deliberate process of acquisition and translation of material already available in vernacular narrative as well as the adaptation and writing of new narratives. The editor or compiler moved material from one text to another, made connections between texts, and copied key episodes to do duty in new contexts. Some of the material collected may have been taken from earlier ME versions now lost, but may also represent a programme of direct translation from French language originals; the modern editors envisage 'the shelves of the Auchinleck bookshop whence the "master" of the bookshop dispensed source-texts to his team of translators' (Pearsall and Cunningham

1977: x). There is room for disagreement as to whether the volume is the result of such collaboration or (so Hanna 2000: 94) the work of a single practitioner with additional piecework contributions; either way, it indicates the pragmatic bilingualism of versifiers and scribes. Moreover, as most of the traceable originals are AN, it shows a noticeable insular bias in the source material, suggesting that the compilers were engaged in a process of inter-vernacular translation.

Auchinleck is unique amongst the several manuscript compilations of the period in that it is entirely in English and it is this, as much as the nature of the contents, which marks it as a significant witness to the growing acceptability of English as a literary language. Modern scholarship has noted the expression of patriotic feeling and the arrangement of the contents to focus on the central figures of the 'knights of England' as explicitly stated in the prologue to *King Richard* (7–8, quoted by Smithers 1949; see also discussion in Turville-Petre 1996: 114–38). The manuscript gives its readers a coherent and dignified sense of the past of England, drawing on available cultural capital and presented through the medium of English verse. It brings together the English and British histories, partly by englishing the Celtic and exotic, so that Arthur becomes an English king and Tristan an English hero, and Orfeo of Thrace rules from Winchester; its historical bias is clearest in its central focus on the figures of Guy and Bevis.

There are five distinct ME redactions of the AN *Gui de Warewic* descended from two versions of the original surviving in three manuscripts and two fragments (Mills in *MTr* 2: 209, updated in Wiggins 2007). The striking characteristic of these translations is their overall closeness to the original. It is worth emphasizing this; many studies inevitably attend to the small but telling details that show a translator taking control of his material. The runaway success of the story of Guy of Warwick, with its sequence of young love, overseas adventures, male friendship, marriage, penitence, championship of England, and saintly death, is calculated to appeal to the nearest thing to a mass audience available in a manuscript culture. This success is attributable to the author of the early thirteenth-century *Gui de Warewic*, of which there are sixteen extant manuscripts or fragments. ME translators made this available to an English-speaking audience from the early fourteenth century onwards, but this audience is not necessarily any less discriminating or socially aware than that for *Gui*.

Most attention has been given to the earliest translation in the Auchinleck manuscript. The most significant change made by the editor of the manuscript is to rearrange the 13,000 lines of the original, its different narrative elements interwoven in the characteristic French form known as interlace, into three separate but sequential romances—Guy before marriage (6,898 lines in couplets), Guy's career from marriage to death (3,580 lines in tail rhyme) and the story of Guy's son, Reinbrun (1,520 lines in tail rhyme). There is little change in total length, the ME being only some 1,000 lines shorter, but it does involve— typical of ME translation—the unravelling of interlace, the disentangling of the linked stories of the source. It also emphasizes the change of tone with the

change in verse form when Guy's career moves into its penitential phase. The separation of the Reinbrun material, with its celebration of worldly success, increases the piety of the other ME versions (so Hopkins 1990: 74; Price in Weiss *et al.* 2000). Moreover, the translator works closely with his original text (see detailed discussion by Mills in *MTr* 2). Differences between the original and the translation in handling issues of piety or feudal morality can be seen as responses to the changing world—rather as two film versions of the same novel will differ over the passage of time. One of these changes, a growing sense of English national identity, can be traced in the changing expressions of ideological motivation; Gui fights for feudal rights and possessions, Guy for king and country (Crane 1986: 65–6). But the parallel structure of Guy's career, carried over from the AN original, still raises problems concerning the clash of feudal, amatory, and religious systems that sit uncomfortably within popular chivalric romance. In being translated from chivalric lover to penitent pilgrim, Guy strains the generic bounds of romance. This may well account for some of his appeal: he becomes all things to all audiences. It has been shown that the fifteenth-century translation in the Caius manuscript of *Guy* uses the techniques of *abbreviatio* on its originals (two redactions of *Gui*, one shared with Auchinleck) to excise the controversial, morally problematic elements of Guy's career, rendering him a straightforward chivalric hero (see Wiggins 2007; Price in Weiss *et al.* 2000). This resembles the ME approach to the *Ipomedon* of Hue de Rotelande, discussed below (p. 322). If Auchinleck shows that an early thirteenth-century romance translates comfortably for a fourteenth-century audience, Caius shows that to adapt that romance for a fifteenth-century audience requires more radical treatment.

Another Angevin romance that produces one of the most enduring figures of English romance is *Boeve de Haumtone.* The AN romance is a spurious history written to flatter the family and honour of Arundel and drawing on already established motifs in romance and *chanson de geste* to give a lively ancestral romance laced with Saracen adventures. It dates from the late twelfth century and is written in the *laisse* form of the *chansons*, as were other AN narratives of the time. It survives in two incomplete versions and a fragment, all copied between the second half of the thirteenth and the early fourteenth centuries. It is translated into ME between the late thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries, with a change in verse form and some sizeable interpolations, apparently from intermediary material in AN or ME, so that the 3,800 lines of the original become 4,620. There are eight ME manuscripts, Auchinleck the earliest, the latest dating from the turn of the fifteenth century. None of these versions is clearly closer than the others to the presumed lost AN original. Five of the ME versions show a change in verse form, from tail rhyme to couplet at around line 475, apparently as a response to the difficulties of dealing with the change from short to long laisses in the original (so Djordjević 2005). The complexity of the relationship between the various AN and ME versions is deepened further by the interpolations in the ME—most notably, Bevis's fight against the dragon of Cologne and his battle against

the Londoners. In the absence of a clear line of descent between source and translation, it is impossible to determine at what stage in the transmission such additions were made; however, they do seem to represent two different responses to the material. The dragon fight raises the status of Bevis as a Christian hero, linking him to Guy and St George in the Auchinleck manuscript, and providing some of his most lasting fame, leading eventually to the Red Cross Knight in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* (also noted in Fellows 1993). The London battle, with its accurate setting amid the streets of medieval London, implies a contemporary relevance, whether its source is in memories of de Montfort's actual skirmishes (so Weiss 1979) or the comparable anti-London episode in the AN *Waldef* (see Field in Weiss *et al.* 2000: 37–8). Bevis is a rather different figure from Guy, subversive of clear English patriotism and less pious, a much more awkward figure to fit into developing romance paradigms. However, the ME does give him a dragon to kill and this, as much as any of his other achievements, seems to guarantee his fame. He becomes a founding legend for Southampton and is long associated with the castle of Arundel.

Bevis follows the Guy of Warwick trilogy in Auchinleck and the reputations of the two continue to be linked together. In their many and enduring manifestations, *Guy* and *Bevis* are the most successful examples of long popular romances (Cooper 2004: 31–2). In both cases, the reasons for popularity are self-evident: local feeling, love interest, lively adventures, piety and crusading fervour, companion animals. All add up to an undemanding exploitation of the romance genre; a leisurely, episodic structure ensures easy accessibility. Translation into English facilitates this popularity and transmission down the centuries, but it does not necessarily mark a popularization of the AN original. We need to allow for the possibility of popular fiction in the other vernacular of medieval England, to move away from the assumption that French-language texts are inherently courtly and élitist, and also from the deeper assumption that the francophone sections of medieval society would necessarily have refined or sophisticated literary tastes. So while in *Bevis* the narrator's appeal for drink is noted (Mehl 1968: 219) as indicating some convivial social gathering—'Ac er þan we be-ginne fiȝte | Ful vs þe koppe anon riȝte!' (Kölbing 1885–94: ll. 4107–8)—it is rarely noted that the AN narrator is even more blatant in his commercial milking of his putative audience: 'Issi com vus me orrez a dreit conter | Si vus me volez de vostre argent doner, | Ou si noun, jeo lerrai issi ester' [as you will now hear me recount truly, if you will give me some of your silver, or if not, I will now leave it be] (Weiss 2007: ll. 434–6). This indicates not so much the vertical movement from élite French vernacular to widespread English, but the inter-vernacular switching of popular literature from one vernacular to another as the external language context changes—giving pairs of texts which are horizontal in terms of literary type and status. In terms of the definitions of popular literature, the versions in both languages are conventional narratives, with similar normative values, both addressing a low-context, open, audience (as defined by Hudson 1989).

It is also possible that the change in language carries a patina of antiquity. It is not 'foreignness' that AN French signifies, but an association with the early years of feudalism, with the legendary past created out of the silences of invasion by the AN writers. Guy and Bevis are not being naturalized by translation into English, but are cultural ancestral figures made accessible across two vernaculars. It may be for this reason that they continue to be the vehicle for a developing sense of national identity with a political ballast somewhat at odds with their fantastic careers.

Toward the end of the Auchinleck collection—significantly, among chronicle texts—are the romances of *Horn Childe* and *King Richard*, the latter also known as *Richard Coer de Lyon*. *Horn Childe* is the most heroic of the ME versions of the story of Horn and may have been written specifically for inclusion in this manuscript. Comparison with the earlier versions of the Horn story provides useful confirmation of the tastes of the Auchinleck redactor and his public—heroic action, anti-pagan warfare, local history, undemanding love interest. *Richard* survives in seven manuscript versions, none evidently the source for any of the others, and the Auchinleck version is both the earliest and, at a fragmentary 1,046 lines of short couplets, one of the shortest. It represents the version closest to the original English version of a lost AN work and shows the pervasive influence of the *chansons de geste*. The different versions of *Richard* suggest that the crusader king is gradually translated from historical figure to romance hero as he fades further into the historical past (so Finlayson 1990: 178–9).

The predominant manuscript context of *Richard* is with historical and heroic texts—partnering, in Cambridge, Gonville and Caius College MS 175, the unique copy of another romance of English 'history', *Athelston*. This is perhaps another example of the influence of *chanson* narratives, although to somewhat different effect. There is no known source for this exemplary tale of wilful kingship and hagiographic miracle, but it does read like the *translatio* of a *chanson*-type plot to a legendary event in the English past. It explores the tensions between king and noble, and the treachery that delivers a king's faithful supporter and kinsman to death, and in Alryke creates its very own English Turpin (see further Trounce 1951: 6–33).

Matter of Britain

In the preface to his edition (1485) of Sir Thomas Malory's *Morte Darthur*, Caxton wrote of his disappointment that 'many noble volumes' were made of Arthur and his knights in French and Welsh, which he had read 'beyonde the see', but 'nowher nygh alle' in English (*P&E* 94). The lack of a coherent Arthurian romance tradition in English has similarly disappointed modern readers. Of the two main source areas for Arthurian material in English, one, the *Brut* chronicles of Geoffrey of Monmouth and his vernacular followers, which give to Arthurian material its perceived identity as 'British', is dealt with in §5.5 below. The development of Arthurian romance in English follows well behind

the growth of the Arthurian legend as a foundation myth. Romance is not a genre that claims historical veracity, and it was in France that Arthurian romance could develop with the 'fictional contract' that gives it its defining qualities (see Green 2002: 1–17). English authors had therefore, in the first instance, to import the matter of Arthurian romance, and translate it for their own audience. Their recognition of the particular interests of that audience led to an increasingly independent approach to the material, so that straight translation in the early fourteenth century had given way to bold originality by the end of the century. English Arthurian translations are characterized by their dependence on French source texts, the use of *abbreviatio* to reduce the length of the originals, and the production of verse texts, whether from verse or prose originals. They may appear a scattered, incomplete, and apparently arbitrary collection of narratives drawing on discrete episodes from the large corpus of French Arthurian romance in prose and verse, but this perception needs to be modified in the light of what we know about their cultural context. First, the best of these romances survive in single copies, as with *Ywain and Gawain*, *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, *Morte Arthure*, and *Le Mort Arthur*; these are amongst the most ambitious, subtle, and challenging of Arthurian romances in any European language, and the loss of any one would radically alter our sense of the achievement of English authors: we do not know what comparable works may have been lost. Secondly, the presence of French Arthurian romance in England throughout the ME period provides chivalric romance for those most likely to appreciate it (see Archibald in Wheeler 2004: 211–12); the availability of this material in one vernacular may lessen the demand for it in the other. Thirdly, the vacuum left in insular narrative tradition by the evident avoidance of Arthurian material by romance writers in AN means that there were no insular precedents for writers to draw on (so Field 1982: 64–5). Finally, the strong presence in English culture of the chronicle version of the Arthurian legend meant that romance writers had to negotiate a generic space for their narratives (for fuller discussion of this point, see Kennedy in Wheeler 2004). At the same time, it is evident that, as French material is taken up by English authors, Arthur changes from the legendary figure of ancient British history into an English king whose reign is significant for the developing perception of Englishness (see Riddy 1991).

The two earliest Arthurian romances, *Of Arthour and of Merlin* and *Sir Tristrem*, both dating from the later thirteenth century, are found in the Auchinleck manuscript. *Of Arthour and of Merlin* draws on a compilation of the *Estoire de Merlin* and related material to give a 10,000-line couplet version of the early career of Arthur, and its place in the Auchinleck manuscript is consistent with that manuscript's compilation of famous heroic figures: Arthur here becomes an English king. *Sir Tristrem*, a stanzaic poem of 3,500 lines, is the only English treatment of that legend outside Malory, although it does draw on an insular source, the *Tristan* of Thomas of Britain, of which six fragmentary manuscripts survive from the thirteenth century. Although its rendering of Thomas's

original is so unimpressive as to ask to be read as parody, it has a significant place in English literary history as the first ME romance to be edited, by Sir Walter Scott in 1804 (see assessments by Lupack 1994; Hardman in Wheeler 2004).

The quest for the Grail and the romance between Lancelot and Guinevere are both narratives new to English tradition, having no part in the *Brut* account, and there is little evidence of interest in the Grail prior to Malory. *Sir Perceval of Galles*, found in the northern Thornton manuscript, dates from the earlier fourteenth century, and is the only treatment of its material in English. It reduces its source material, from the First Continuation of *Perceval*, from 9,234 to 2,288 lines in tail rhyme to produce 'that most extraordinary of works, a Perceval romance without the Grail' (Busby 1987: 596). It does, however, keep the essential characteristics of the *enfances* romances and puts in more Saracens, presumably to meet the demand for romances with a crusading theme. Dated 1340, *Joseph of Arimathea*, a short alliterative poem of some 700 lines, drastically abridges its *Estoire* source material to provide a saint's life dealing with the conversion or slaughter of unbelievers in preference to the wider aspect of the Grail. Its preservation among the devotional and hagiographic items of the Vernon manuscript serves to further question its modern classification as a romance.

However, in the following century a lay author, Henry Lovelich, skinner of London, translated two large sections from the French prose *Estoire* into English couplets, the *History of the Holy Grail* (Lovelich 1874–1905) and the *Merlin* (Lovelich 1904–32), the first 23,974, the second 27,852, lines long. Lovelich picked up on the Glastonbury aspect of the Grail material with the addition of Joseph's burial there, but otherwise the Grail quest was subsumed into an anti-infidel missionary narrative that resembles *Joseph of Arimathea* more than the spiritual questing of Malory and his source. Lovelich's *Merlin* stresses the link between Merlin and the Grail. His lengthy and often clumsy works have not received much attention, but do offer a recognizable voice and a civic context for an ambitious attempt to translate earlier works into the language and milieu of fifteenth-century London (see discussion by Dalrymple in Weiss *et al.* 2000).

If ME attempts to handle the Grail legend are less than enthusiastic, English translations and adaptations of French chivalric romance indicate a serious interest in reworking the material for a new cultural context.

Ywain and Gawain, a northern couplet romance from the second half of the fourteenth century, is the only direct English translation from the works of Chrétien de Troyes. In a sweeping abbreviation of *Yvain* it reduces 6,800 lines to 4,000. The result is a smooth, consistent, and complete narrative showing the expected qualities of English translation of chivalric romance—clarity, concreteness, an abbreviation of passages of sentiment, and a concern to modernize its material, in this case in relation to English law and to the localities in which the action is set. Why should only this one of Chrétien's romances be accorded

this treatment? Probably because Gawain can get equal billing with the main hero, possibly because it has the clearest narrative structure and theme, plausibly because it contains a sympathetic lion (already imitated by *Guy of Warwick*). Although it survives in a single manuscript, the widespread knowledge of at least one burlesque episode from *Ywain* is later attested in misericords (Rushing 1995: 210).

The stanzaic *Morte Arthur* does address the final stages of the story of Arthur in a translation of a (lost) variant version of the French prose *Mort Artu*, introducing the romance between Lancelot and Guinevere to English literature. Originating from the north Midlands in the late fourteenth century, it translates French prose into a stanza form unique in French or English, totalling some 3,500 lines. It has found critical favour for its combination of direct simplicity with thematic complexity, and while the translation cannot be precisely evaluated in the absence of a source, it provides a powerful version of the tragedy of Arthur, which proved vital to Malory's fuller account. *Lancelot of the Laik*, a late fifteenth-century stanzaic romance in Scots, unfinished at 3,487 lines, translates part of the French prose *Lancelot*, the only poem in Scots or English to draw on this source. The story of Lancelot is linked to the situation of the narrator by a dream framework, and the love theme is, uniquely, kept clear of association with the fall of Arthur.

The chronicle version of Arthur's final years is reworked into a free-standing narrative in the alliterative *Morte Arthure*. Like its close northern contemporary *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*, it demonstrates its position at the end of a long narrative tradition without being itself a translation or even a close retelling. The author, evidently widely travelled and knowledgeable about European affairs, had access to a number of texts and developed the narrative of Arthur's European wars to chime with contemporary concerns about kingship, warfare, and crusading (Hamel 1984: 59–62). There is a *chanson de geste* element in the global scale of action and the violence of that action as well as in some of the episodes. Its realization of the potentialities in Arthurian chronicle for a *translatio* into a new genre of medieval tragic narrative is remarkable and, as with *Sir Gawain*, our interest in translation has to give way to a recognition of genuine originality. Part of it was later translated into prose, rather clumsily, by Malory, who did not use the powerful tragic ending, although Vinaver has argued (in Malory 1947: I. xli) that its sharply applied political reading of Arthur's fall influenced Malory's reworking of the French *Mort* (see further below pp. 325–6).

The Gawain romances from northern England and Scotland, dating from the late fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, present a more independent and coherent grouping than the other ME reworkings of French Arthurian romance. These are less likely to be direct translations from the French, more likely to be original compilations or the reworking of familiar motifs.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight has largely resisted attempts to explain its achievement by reading it as a translation, even though analogues in French and Celtic literature can be identified (see Brewer 1973). It is rather appreciated as

'the original work of a single organizing intelligence in control of every element in the composition' (Barron 1982: 87). Clearly, it can be read as a *translatio* that modernizes its significance and provides recognizable localities. The same goes for the later Gawain romances that respond to that poem—all evidently building on Gawain's reputation as a local northern hero, and all, in their different ways, translating 'Gawain' back again from his French identity, of womanizing and immoral foil to Lancelot and other Arthurian knights, to a hero in his own right, the eldest of Arthur's nephews and his right-hand man. Presented as the saviour of Arthur's reputation and kingdom, this Gawain is a figure used to reconcile the insular mistrust of Arthurian monarchism with the fashion for Arthurian chivalric romance.

The Awntyrs off Arthure is an experimental and unusual composite romance in which materials from Arthurian tradition and moral exempla form a diptych narrative exploring the moral basis of the Arthurian world, and, by implication, the world of the audience (see Spearing 1982). It draws on both *Sir Gawain* and the alliterative *Morte Arthure* to give well-informed and non-deferential response to both French romance and the *Brut* tradition. Its 714 lines are arranged in linked alliterative stanzas and the alliterative style creates its own distinctive patterns of echo and reassessment, as when the ghost prophesies Arthur's fate in terms set by the *Morte Arthure* (Mills 1992: 265–310). We move here beyond translation and even adaptation into an original and subversive remaking of Arthurian tradition that requires of its audience the ability to recognize a dense interweaving of reference, not only to traditional material, but even to particular texts. The fifteenth-century Scottish poem *Gologrus and Gawain* similarly shows the influence of both *Awntyrs* and *Morte Arthure* in its radical redaction of material from the First Continuation of Chrétien's *Perceval*. It is another short poem in alliterative stanzas (1,362 lines) and takes up the critical examination of Arthurian imperialism under challenge from expressions of local independence. Similar concerns and a similar verse form are found in the *Avowynge of Arthur*, which draws on French and Irish analogues. Material from the First Continuation is used again in *The Jeaste of Sir Gawain*, one of the few English treatments of Gawain to carry over his womanizing profile from the French. A cluster of later Gawain ballads and folk tales testify to the ongoing popularity of Arthur's nephew in insular tradition.

This suggests that, by the fifteenth century, some aspects of Arthurian romance, particularly those concerning Gawain, had become naturalized into material that could be adapted by romance writers for their own particular purposes without any awareness of or reference to their ultimate sources. Arthur and Gawain have become figures whose actions dramatize the concerns of provincial England and the Scottish kingdom as feudal certainties give way to new nationalist tensions and social challenges.

One subset of Matter of Britain material is the Breton *lai*. It is a genre that defines itself as translation; indeed in the classic works of Marie de France there are repeated discussions of language and translation (see further comment

pp. 16, 49 above). For Marie, particularly in her *Lais*, the quality of otherness and antiquity allows room for magic and an avoidance of moral strictures, and the generic lyricism results in narratives of delicacy, allusiveness, and symbolic depth. The extant ME translations of Marie's *lais* do not show a strong grasp of her essential qualities (see further Spearing 1990). Of the two *lais* translated into ME, *Lanval* is Marie's only explicitly Arthurian narrative, which may account for its choice as a text for translation, and *Le Freine* is a version of the widespread folk tale of the two sisters; neither taxes the translator as much as some of Marie's more problematic narratives might have done. There is manuscript evidence of more *lais* circulating in England and now lost, so the apparent selectivity may well be misleading (see Archibald in Weiss *et al.* 2000). The first ME translation of *Lanval* is lost but gives rise to three extant ME versions, the most noted of which, *Sir Launfal*, provides a named author, Thomas Chestre, to add to the list of known lay authors in the fourteenth century. Not that Chestre is the ideal translator of Marie; he turns the couplets of his ME original into a longer tail-rhyme romance; with 646 lines becoming 1,044 and material added from the analogous Old French *lai* of *Graelent*, his version is padded out with action and chivalric incident (Chestre 1960; see Stokes 2000). The other versions of the *Lanval* story are all written in couplets, without Chestre's expansions. *Sir Landevale* has a less critical view of Arthur's court than its original, the hero being ruined by ill-advised largesse rather than court spite, and like other ME *lais* gives more prominence to the magical. *Lai le Freine*, the other ME translation of one of Marie's *lais*, is a clear and competent rendering of the French, most noted for its preface, which apparently provided the prologue for the Auchinleck *Sir Orfeo*. It sounds an unusual note of the feminine amongst the Auchinleck MS's romances of heroic males, and indeed may belong rather with the pious exempla in that collection than with the romances (see discussion by Archibald 2000).

It is typical of the complex situation of ME romance translation that the most successful English Breton *lai*, *Sir Orfeo* (ed. Bliss 1954), has no known source and thus cannot be assessed as translation. However, both explicitly and implicitly it reveals a process of multi-layered *translatio*. The classical tale of Orpheus had long been the subject of differing interpretations, some of which offered a precedent for *Sir Orfeo*'s optimistic ending. The move from classical tale to Breton *lai*, emphasized by the lengthy prologue, provides the opportunity for modernizing, for a lyrical expression of marital love, and for naturalizing the supernatural. Some additional influence from the romances of England gives both the theme of the testing of the loyal steward and—in the Auchineck version—the localizing of the action in Winchester, the ancient capital of England. The success of this process shows that compilation and reworking can lead to narrative strength rather than wooden imitation. In its examination of marital fidelity and wider social bonds, *Sir Orfeo* provides a context for Chaucer's *Franklin's Tale*, which is itself a response to the Breton *lai* and claims the status of translation.

The Matters of France and Antiquity

The two other 'Matters' of medieval narrative present contrasting problems when it comes to an assessment of ME translation. The Matter of France spreads across Europe in various languages, its appeal widening as texts, such as those of the Latin Pseudo-Turpin tradition, develop and modernize the crusading theme. By contrast, classical material involves authors in the *translatio* from pagan to Christian, not the power clash between them. The Matter of Rome or Antiquity is more consciously Latinate, although in the *romans d'antiquité* it had provided some of the earliest (twelfth-century) French romances. Both Matters retain an authoritative historical claim and in the iconic figures of Charlemagne and Alexander, of Hector and Geoffrey de Bouillon, they contribute to the parade of the Nine Worthies and the celebration of power and military might.

The two Matters in ME relate to the trilingual culture of medieval England in very different ways. All ME versions are self-conscious translations drawing on authoritative texts in other languages. The difference in achievement and ambition is such as to indicate widely different approaches and cultural situations.

The most intriguing cultural *translatio* gives rise to one of the least satisfactory groups of romances, the ME romances of the Matter of France. The quality of the surviving ME versions of Matter of France material is generally considered unimpressive, particularly by comparison with that covering the other Matters of Rome or Britain. There are two possible explanations for this. First, an evolutionary explanation sees ME translators at work in the period of the decadence of the *chansons* across Europe (Barron 1987: 213). Secondly, the *chanson de geste* material was available in England, in good versions and good texts—but still in the French language. The register for Old French epic remains the French language until well into the fourteenth century when crusading interests among the reading public create a wider demand for such material. Furthermore, as we have seen, the creative response to the drama and tension of the *chansons de geste* may be encountered in texts as different as the alliterative *Morte Arthure* and *Athelston*.

There are ten extant ME verse romances drawing on Matter of France material, dating from the early fourteenth century to the mid-fifteenth. The earliest occur in the Auchinleck manuscript: *Roland and Vernagu* and *Otuel a Knight*. Two romances in the Fillingham manuscript (BL MS Add. 37492) date from 1375–1400: *Firumbras* and *Otuel and Roland*. The version of *Sir Ferumbras* in Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Ashmole 33 dates from *c.* 1380; roughly contemporary is *Duke Roland and Sir Otuel*, in the London Thornton manuscript (BL MS Add. 31042), together with *The Sege of Melayne* and a short *Song of Roland*. *The Sowdan of Babylon* dates from the first half of the fifteenth century. Also discussed here as Matter of France, although not a Charlemagne romance, is the fourteenth-century *Chevelere Assigne*.

AN evidence for insular interest in, and production of, Matter of France material provides an informative context for this activity in ME. There are

extant insular versions of nine *chansons de geste*, ranging from the authoritative Oxford manuscript of the *Chanson de Roland* of the twelfth century to two fourteenth-century copies of the *Fierebras*. With the exception of the twelfth-century fragment of *Gormont et Isembart* and the unique copy of *La Chançun de Guillaume*, all belong to the Charlemagne cycle, and the largest number relate to Pseudo-Turpin and the Fierebras-Otinel material (Otinel routinely becomes Otuel in the ME versions); there is little sign of insular interest in the other cycles of the Matter of France, the Rebellious Vassal cycle or the wider Guillaume cycle. This is also about cultural translation; AN versions are 'products of the bi-lingual culture of England in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries', the French ancestry of such texts being 'so faded as not to be important culturally' (Sinclair 1993: 377). The AN scene provides several versions of the Fierebras material, including *Fierebras* and *La Destruction de Rome* (in BL MS Egerton 3028); two versions of the prose translation of the *Pseudo-Turpin*, one imported, one insular (for these, see Short in William de Briane 1973); a version of *Otinel* in Bib. Bodmeriana 168 (the Phillips manuscript). There is no Matter of France material in ME that does not have its extant equivalent in AN. Even allowing for lost material, this looks like complementary production, aiming at different audiences and running concurrently in the first half of the fourteenth century.

There is a complex network of interrelationships between the various ME versions of the two groups of romances—the Otuel group and the Fierebras group. The Auchinleck romances would originally have been preceded by a general prologue setting out the context of Charlemagne romances, which now survives in the Fillingham *Otuel and Roland*. The Auchinleck *Roland and Vernagu* and the Fillingham *Otuel and Roland* are considered to derive from a lost ME romance of *Charlemagne and Roland*, drawing on the *Estoire de Charlemagne* and the *Pseudo-Turpin* material in Latin (Cowen 1996: 155). The other romances of the Otuel group, *Duke Rowland* and the Ashmole *Otuel*, contain material derived independently from the AN *Otinel* in the Phillips manuscript. The Fillingham *Otuel* also incorporates two dramatic scenes from the *Chanson de Roland*. The ME *Song of Roland* draws on various versions of the *Chanson de Roland* and the Latin *Pseudo-Turpin*, which also provides material for the *Sege of Melayne* (see Shepherd in *MTr* 1).

Of the Fierebras group, *Sowdan* shares a source with the AN Egerton manuscript *Fierebras*, which also, as previously noted, contains the prequel, *La Destruction de Rome*; the Fillingham *Firumbras* and Ashmole *Otuel* are on the same branch of the stemma (as described by Ailes 1999). *The Sege of Melayne* also bears a general resemblance to the Fierebras group.

This complex series of interrelationships and rewritings would seem indicative of redactors and translators making the best of material to hand. The concept of 'exemplar poverty' (as defined by Hanna 1996) is useful here; what may appear to us to be odd choices may have been dictated by availability of source materials. Translators are perhaps not even aware of the full range of over one hundred continental *chansons de geste* but are drawing on pre-selected

areas and an inherited perception of the material. The main figures of the *geste du roi* are familiar, but the focus of interest is on dramatic encounters with the Saracens and a demonstration of the validity of the relics of the Passion (so argued by Cowen 1996; Hardman in R. Field 1999). Such lofty concerns are often assisted by the more immediately enticing topics of the grotesque figure of the giant Vernagru and the illicit attractions of the Saracen princess Floripas. The main acknowledged source is the Latin chronicle attributed to Archbishop Turpin, another favourite figure. These preferences were established a century or so earlier by the translators—cultural, not linguistic—into AN of the French *chansons*.

With the exception of the prose version of the *Pseudo-Turpin*, all the French-language originals are written in the long-line *laisse* characteristic of *chansons de geste*. Amongst the ME versions, there is no favoured choice of verse form—they are equally divided between tail rhyme and couplet, with *Sowdan* in quatrains. Only if we include the *Chevelere Assigne* here do we find an instance of an alliterative rendering of Old French *laisses*, although editors have repeatedly remarked on the use of localized alliteration to translate heroic action. The main translation technique is *abbreviatio*; except for the Fillingham *Otuel and Roland* (2,786 lines), the Ashmole *Ferumbras* (*c.* 6,000 lines), and the *Sowdan* (3,274 lines), none of these romances is over 2,000 lines long. This brevity can give a glimpse of narrative purpose (so Davenport 2002), but more often results in a failure to reproduce the quality of the source.

However, it is not only the linguistic translation but the cultural *translatio* that is significant, requiring the reworking of *chanson* material into something acceptable to English audiences at a time of war between England and France: as Ailes suggests (2002: 188), the translation of French texts in England was not a straightforward compliment but also an act of defiance. This is in part achieved by a steady diminution in the Frenchness of the French heroes as the versions develop from the fourteenth century into the fifteenth. Even in the earlier part of the period there may be a similar process observable in the prologue to the Fillingham *Otuel and Roland*, the basis for the lost introduction to the Auchinleck Matter of France romances. This prologue is not quite the informative introduction it has been made out to be (by Pearsall and Cunningham 1977: x) but is in itself an audacious *translatio* of the Matter of France that deprives Charlemagne and his peers of any association with France. The emphasis is on crusading activity, and the authoritative source cited is 'Turpin' writing in Latin. The famous list of narrative material in the *Cursor Mundi* similarly presents Charlemagne as a champion of Christendom and silently excises his Frenchness: 'How Charles kyng and Rauland faght | Wit sarazins wald þai na saght [reconcilement]' (quoted by Thompson in Meale 1994: 109). Thus deracinated, the *chansons de geste* become acceptable entertainment, even inspiration, for the generations of the Hundred Years War.

So the ME romances dealing with the Matter of France can perhaps best be seen not as fragments quarried from the huge resources of the continental

traditions of the *chansons de geste*, but as translations derived from, or aspiring to, the pre-existent and limited selection of material available in AN from the twelfth century through to the mid-fourteenth century. And this AN selection is strongly influenced by the pietistic, crusading strain that derives from the *Pseudo-Turpin* tradition. The scrappiness and shallowness perceived in the ME translations argue less for the decadence of the type than for the longevity of the AN tradition. It is not until Caxton that the Matter of France gets dignified englishing.

If the Matter of France material in English seems inappropriately lightweight, there is ample compensation in the texts treating the subjects of Alexander and Troy—sheer length argues for a recognition of their inherently epic status. The difference may be less to do with subject matter as such than with its relation to popular religious sentiment. The Charlemagne romances offer an easy access to crusading fervour and popular devotion to relics. The great stories of antiquity have always to negotiate their claim on the attention and sympathy of Christian readers, requiring a much more serious and sustained process of cultural alignment and thus a greater investment of time and effort. Chaucer articulates this in *Troilus and Criseyde*, but it is not only Chaucer's problem. However, the Matter of Antiquity does not present a problem for national sentiment; Alexander is a European figure, and the story of Troy had a particular resonance for the self-styled descendants of Brutus.

Material derived from classical sources was available to pre-Conquest authors, and there are OE prose versions of *Apollonius of Tyre* (see further pp. 373–5 below), *The Wonders of the East*, and *The Letter of Alexander to Aristotle*. In ME there are two main subject areas: Alexander; and the siege of Troy. There is no comprehensive ME treatment of the story of Aeneas before Caxton, perhaps because it is subsumed into the larger area of British legend, and only Lydgate treats the story of Thebes.

Insular antecedents in AN provide a precedent for this selection, with two important twelfth-century works, Thomas of Kent's *Roman de toute chevalerie* (*RTC*) and the *Roman de Troie* of Benoît de Sainte-Maure (a continental author writing for the court of Henry II). The four surviving AN fragments of Benoît date from the twelfth or thirteenth centuries, but two of the five extant manuscripts of the *RTC* are from the early fourteenth century and the unique manuscript of the prose *Estoire le roy Alexaundre*, which includes the letter of Alexander to Aristotle, dates from the mid-fourteenth century. This overlap between the production of copies of AN Alexander material and that of the first of the ME translations, as with the Matter of France, indicates concurrent audiences for the two vernaculars.

However, the relationship between the Matter of Antiquity material in AN and ME is not close, with the exception of *Kyng Alisaunder*, which is a translation of *RTC*; it suggests rather that ME authors are aware of a range of sources and show a more scholarly preference for Latin 'historical' sources than French-language, courtly ones. This relates to perceptions of genre; long, substantial works dealing

with historical subjects and drawing on Latin authorities are more likely to have been seen as histories than as romances (so Strohm 1971: 350).

The earliest ME translation is *Kyng Alisaunder* (*KA*), a 400-line fragment of which survives in the Auchinleck manuscript. The route by which such material reaches Auchinleck seems consistent with other romances in the volume—competent translation of insular French-language originals. In its full version *Kyng Alisaunder* translates the 8,054 eponymous alexandrines of the *RTC* into 8,020 lines of octosyllabic couplets. Its other manuscript contexts indicate that it is to be seen less as a romance than as a biography with historical and geographical significance (Mehl 1968: 228–30). Analysis of the translator's methods shows an independent adaptation of his source with additional epic features, apparently derived from OF epic, including the famous 'headpieces', twenty-nine lyrical insertions in the text, usually of seasonal description and apparently marking new episodes (see detailed discussions by Smithers 1957: 15–28, 37–9; Mehl 1968: 235–9). The author explicitly enhances his material with a Latin source, Walter of Chatillon's *Alexandreis*—'for þe latin seiþ' (3511)—and there is some evidence that he also draws on Arthurian romance, the *Roman de Thèbes*, and even the *Roman de Renart* (Smithers 1957: 59). Opinions are divided as to whether the same author is responsible for *Of Arthour and of Merlin* and *Richard Coer de Lyon*; Smithers's claim for this (1957: 60) has recently been challenged (Hanna 2000: 101).

Other ME versions of the Alexander story—the three alliterative poems, *The Wars of Alexander* (sometimes known as *Alexander C*) and the two short fragments, *Alexander A* and *B*—are different in medium and approach. *The Wars of Alexander*, a northern work from the first half of the fifteenth century, breaks off after 5,600 lines. It is a close translation of the *Historia de Preliis* that embellishes and enlivens its source material to give a powerful and lively version of the Alexander story. The poet is conscious of his Latin source, but, as with several of these alliterative works, the poem wears its learning lightly for a lay audience, adopting a fictive guise of oral culture to carry what is in fact considerable learning in both Latin and the vernacular (noted by Hanna in *CHMEL* 500). The two alliterative fragments show signs of a similar scholarly approach, A (1,247 lines) supplementing the *Historia* with material from Orosius, and B (1,139 lines) providing a self-contained account of the Alexander–Dindimas correspondence, 'one of the most interesting of all Middle English debates' (Lawton 1982: 4).

The ME *Seege of Troy* dates from the first quarter of the fourteenth century, the same period as *Kyng Alisaunder*, and one copy is found together with that romance in London, Lincoln's Inn MS 150. It is also written in couplets, but is shorter at 2,060 lines. It uses a combination of courtly and learned sources, ultimately Benoît and Dares with some further material from the Latin prose *Excidium Troiae*. It may have been composed from memory, rather than by direct textual translation, and designed to appeal to an audience 'with little learning and less time' (Barron 1987: 118). At the end of the century there is the first of three translations of the 'historical' authority on the Trojan War, Guido delle Colonne,

drawing on the 'eyewitness' accounts of Dares and Dictys. It has been persuasively suggested (Benson 1980: 136) that Chaucer may have been the inspiration for this development, creating a demand by his instruction to his audience to search out the authoritative historical material—'Rede Dares, he kan telle hem alle ifeere' (*Troilus* V. 1771). Whatever the case, the audience existed to support such a sizeable project, not once, but three times, and the three works, the *Gest Historiale of the Destruction of Troy*, the *Laud Troy Book*, and Lydgate's *Troy Book*, mark a sustained programme of vernacularization of Guido's Latin prose *Historia*.

The *Gest Historiale of the Destruction of Troy* (Panton and Donaldson 1869, 1874), dating some time after the mid-fourteenth century, is, like the *Wars of Alexander*, a lengthy alliterative work of some 14,000 lines, translating a Latin source and showing the influence of *Troilus and Criseyde*. Anonymous when first edited, its author was recently identified by Turville-Petre (1988) as a John Clerk of Whalley in Lancashire, writing for an unnamed knight, presumably one of the local gentry. It is a faithful translation of its original which exploits the resources of alliterative style, particularly in scenes of action or storm, and, as a translation from a prestigious Latin source, it provided a model for other alliterative poets (so Lawton 1982: 5). It is also alert to the cultural distance between its own world and the pagan past, moralizing on the faults of the pagans while glancing at the chivalric ambitions of its own age (see Barron 1987: 111–17). Modern interest in the corpus of alliterative poetry and its context may lead to a neglect of comparable achievements in rhymed verse; certainly the *Laud Troy Book* of *c.* 1400, comprising some 15,000 lines of couplets, is an equally ambitious translation of Guido. There are signs here of an awareness of the generic ambiguity of the Troy material, although the author's evident learning is played down in favour of chivalric excitement and the praise of his hero, Hector. If, finally, the author emerges as a historian of Troy rather than as a romance writer (Benson 1980: 90), he has shown more willingness than other authors to exploit the romance potential of his material.

Finally, there are two poems dealing with the point at which the history of antiquity meets that of early Christianity; the alliterative *Siege of Jerusalem* and the couplet poem *Titus and Vespasian*. The popularity of the material is shown by the number of surviving manuscripts, nine of *Siege* and thirteen of *Titus*, and is doubtless due to the combination of legendary history, crusading fervour, and anti-Semitism. The *Siege* is one of the shortest alliterative narrative poems (1,340 lines), and draws heavily for its stylistic techniques on the achievements of earlier alliterative poets. However, its combination of sources argues for an ambitious and learned project—the biblical apocrypha *Vindicta Salvatoris* in both Latin and Old French, Higden's *Polychronicon*, and Josephus (Hanna in *CHMEL* 500). Its manuscript contexts indicate that it was variously viewed as crusading poetry (London, Thornton MS), classical history (CUL, MS Mm.v.14), or salvation history (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Laud Misc 656).

Antiquity thus provides material for two types of translation: first, an accessible and competent rendering of élite insular French-language material into English

couplets; then, from the later fourteenth century and through the fifteenth, a more scholarly group of serious alliterative and rhymed translations of a range of sources in both Latin and French. The *Siege* moves into the area of popular biblical and crusading material and resembles the Charlemagne romances in its partisan fervour, but for the most part this group engages creatively with the *translatio* of pagan to Christian values. The authors are competent linguists, trained rhetoricians, and, in some cases, good poets. With this material, more clearly than with that dealing with any of the other subject areas of medieval narrative, we are clearly dealing with trilingual authors able to seek out authoritative material from wider sources or, frequently, to amplify French material by using Latin. The self-presentation of the narrator-author as a simple entertainer must, as Hanna has argued (*CHMEL* 502), be seen as a fiction; perhaps these fifteenth-century authors have taken this position too, from the author of *Troilus*.

Their explicit claims to translate from Latin define these works as belonging to a serious historical or moral genre rather than to romance. These writers are engaged in the ambitious large-scale translation of important works, making available in English essential material from the European past and, in so doing—notwithstanding later realization of the falsity of the witness of Dares and Dictys—creating works that are histories rather than romances. This would seem to be a programme of vernacularization rather than of popularization, making the material accessible to a new audience, but not necessarily a wide audience if the number of manuscripts is any indication. Something is known of these patrons and audiences, northern gentry perhaps with connections with local monasteries and receptive to edifying entertainment (Hanna and Lawton 2003: li–liv).

The historical and exemplary status of the great myths of the antique world is clear in Lydgate's ambitious reworkings, the *Troy Book (*1998) and the *Siege of Thebes* (2001). Both works show Lydgate's knowledge of the established Latin and French textual traditions and his creative engagement with the Chaucerian exploration of classical themes for the present age. It is also evident, not least from Lydgate's account of the royal commission of the *Troy Book* (Prol. 111–18), that English has now become the vehicle for serious vernacular writing that promotes the ambitions and interests of the new Lancastrian dynasty.

The *Troy Book*, written between 1412 and 1420, a vast work of over 30,000 lines, translates Guido's Latin prose with Chaucerian influence on both structure and poetic diction and with added learned information. For Lydgate, as arguably for the authors of the earlier lengthy translations of the story of Troy, this work is not a romance or fictive poem, but a true history with exemplary action relevant to the present and a legendary history that establishes the origins of Britain (see further discussions in Pearsall 1970: 125–51; Edwards in Lydgate 1998).

The Siege of Thebes, written *c.* 1421–2, is less ambitious at 4,716 lines. It is both an addition to the *Canterbury Tales* and a response to the underlying narrative of the *Knight's Tale* (see Pearsall 1970: 151–6: Lydgate 2001). Its direct sources are the prose redactions of the Old French *Roman de Thèbes*, *Roman de Edipus*, and *Hystoire de Thèbes*. As with the *Troy Book*, Lydgate's classical poem is as much

about his relationship to Chaucer as his culture's relationship with the classical past. Here again Lydgate takes on a long, complex narrative, responding to Chaucer's more allusive use of the Theban material, and finds in classical material an exemplar and warning for the present and material in keeping with his career as unofficial court poet for the new dynasty. Both poems appear, sometimes together, in de luxe volumes probably intended for a court or royal audience. By mid-century, however, both are in manuscripts indicative of merchant or gentry ownership.

Non-Cyclical Romances

The narratives of Alexander, Charlemagne, and Arthur lend authority and seriousness to the programme of translation. But the ME romance corpus has as many, if not more, examples drawn from material which does not belong to the major cycles of medieval narrative. These romances provide more evidence of a sustained programme of *translatio* as writers of English romance, particularly in its idiosyncratic manifestation of the tail-rhyme stanza, take on the widespread European traditional tales of frustrated love, calumniated queens, moral testing, and divided families.

Only a minority of these texts can be definitely identified as translations; these vary in terms of date, poetic form, and tale type, and, for that reason, provide a useful indication of what processes are at work in other romances for which no source can be identified. The sources that can be identified are both continental and insular. The established insular vernacular tradition is represented by romances with predecessors in AN, copies of which survive from the thirteenth or fourteenth centuries: *Floris and Blancheflour*, *Amis and Amiloun*, *Octavian*, *Ipomadon*, *Le Bone Florence of Rome*. The exception that would seem to prove the rule is the fourteenth-century *William of Palerne*, a translation of a continental original with no known earlier insular version.

Floris and Blancheflour, one of the earliest ME romances, is a couplet romance of the thirteenth century. It is found in two thirteenth-century manuscripts and also in the later Auchinleck and Trentham manuscripts; all four versions are independent derivations from the French-language source, their textual complexity arguing for the work's popularity (so Barron 1987: 183). The lengths of the ME versions range from 850 to 1,000 lines, a considerable abbreviation of the 3,000 lines of the French *Floire et Blancheflor*. That it was translated into ME so early may be due to the existence of an AN version, of which an early thirteenth-century fragment survives. As with many of these free-standing romances, it is a popular story with versions across Europe (see Loomis 1959: 184–93). The English version derives from the so-called 'courtly' branch of the continental tradition and handles its material with delicacy and humour to give a lightly sentimental tale of young love which, with its favourable depiction of the East, seems a long way from the Saracen-baiting of the *chansons* and their derived romances. In some respects it seems an odd choice for the Auchinleck compilation, although,

as with *Sir Orfeo* and *Amis and Amiloun*, there is an underlying seriousness in its theme of fidelity against all odds.

Amis and Amiloun, a late thirteenth-century tail-rhyme romance, is found in Auchinleck and three later manuscripts. The four texts are independently derived from a lost AN original and, at some 2,500 lines, double the length of the source. The extant AN *Amis e Amile* is closely related and survives in manuscripts of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the latest of which shows the influence of the ME version (Weiss 1992: xxix–xxxv). The tale, widely popular across Europe, displays the intensity of the hagiographic romances without the predictable moral compass of their religious dimension. The willingness of one friend to heal his fellow of leprosy by sacrificing his own children is a challenge to any adaptor or translator. The insular versions handle this differently, the AN providing a spare, emblematic narrative and the ME expanding the naturalism and thematic complexity of the tale (see comparison in Dannenbaum 1983). Like *Floris and Blancheflour*, if for different reasons, it suggests a sophistication that is belied by its verbal simplicity; this is not easy, normative, popular fiction.

Two ME versions of the romance of Octavian, called Octovian in both the so-called southern and northern versions of *Octovian*, derive from a mid-fourteenth-century northern archetype, although widespread references to Octavian suggest it was a popular romance in England, in one or both vernaculars, prior to this. The source is a French couplet romance of *Octavian* which survives in one AN manuscript of the late thirteenth century that describes itself as a translation 'de latin en romanz' [from Latin to French] (quoted Dean 1999: 101). There is evidence that a manuscript containing another AN copy, together with two Charlemagne romances, was in Dover in the fourteenth century. The southern *Octovian* is attributed to Thomas Chestre (for fuller comment on the two versions, see McSparran 1986: 48–53; for an edition of Chestre's version, Chestre 1979). The 5,700 lines of French couplets are reduced to 1,800 lines arranged in six-line stanzas (Chestre) or twelve-line tail-rhyme stanzas (northern version). Critics are generally agreed that the anonymous author of the northern version is Chestre's superior when it comes to narrative handling, translation, and elaboration of his original. The tale itself is a complex composite of motifs of the calumniated queen, the divided family, and the lost heir, and the setting is the traditional geography of such romances—the Europe of the empire and the lands of Outremer. The most unusual feature is the character of Clement, the Paris bourgeois and foster-father of the lost prince, who embodies the uncomfortable clash of nature and nurture with effective comic pathos.

Unlike treatments in France of the Octavian cycle, English authors did not develop the cycle through three generations (McSparran 1986: 40), and thus missed the opportunity of presenting the heroine of *Le Bone Florence of Rome* as the direct descendant of Florent. This late fourteenth-century ME romance is translated from the Old French *Florence de Rome*, one copy of which is found in a thirteenth-century AN manuscript. It reduces 6,000 lines of alexandrine *laisses* into 2,000 of tail rhyme to give a fast-moving and dramatic narrative, omitting

elements of the supernatural and marvellous in favour of greater coherence and realism (see discussion in Lee 1974). The tale of the emperor's daughter who preserves life and chastity in the face of powerful foes belongs to the larger group of 'Crescentia' tales (for these, see Loomis 1959: 12–21).

William of Palerne is an unusual alliterative romance in its independence from the larger cycles. It is an early text of the so-called 'Revival', written in the mid-fourteenth century for the household of Humphrey de Bohun, Earl of Hereford, or at least those members of the household 'þat knowe no frensche' (Bunt 1985: 5533). The source is the late twelfth-century *Guillaume de Palerne* and the English poem is 'as close to routine translation of a French source as any alliterative romance-writer was to come' (Barron 1982: 80). As a tale of a disinherited heir, of young love triumphing over obstacles, and with the additional bonus of a friendly werewolf, it provides lively entertainment of a type represented else-where in ME, although not in the alliterative corpus. It shares with the story of Ipomedon its geographical setting in the southern Italian kingdoms of Apulia and Sicily.

Apart from those romances with direct predecessors in insular or continental French texts, there are many ME romances, especially from the second half of the fourteenth century, that have no identifiable source and do not assume or imply one. These are not, strictly, translations, but criticism has always been reluctant to describe them as original. Typical of the tail-rhyme romances are the hagiographical romances of the *Isumbras* type and the romances of enduring heroines, such as *Emare.* The tale types are widespread and we cannot be sure which of these texts may have been translations (see Purdie 2002: 119–20). Unmistakable is the creative energy evident as the fourteenth century progresses, with a large number of romances appearing in English without recourse to real or claimed authoritative sources. The range, interests, and themes are wider and more modern than anything in previous insular literature, in either vernacular. What critics in the past have dismissed as conventional, the work of 'hacks', is now being recognized as the underlying strata of popular writing without which the work of Chaucer and others would have been the poorer (see discussions by Cannon 1998; Bradbury in R. Field 1999).

Later Verse Romances

Its southern Italian setting distinguishes the twelfth-century romance of *Ipome-don* by the AN cleric, Hue de Rotelande, from those AN romances set in an English past. *Ipomedon* is usually read as parodic or burlesque, but it contains some telling criticisms of the society and culture within which it was written. It is one of the most personal of the insular romances, with an awareness of its coterie audience and an idiosyncratic humour. All this provides a particular set of problems for a later translator, but it is the direct source of no fewer than three ME translations. Of the four extant AN manuscripts, one is mid-thirteenth

century, the other three are from the first half of the fourteenth century; none of these is the exemplar for the ME versions (Purdie 2001: xiv).

The earliest and most ambitious ME translation, *Ipomadon*, survives in one manuscript and dates from the end of the fourteenth century. It is a long northern tail-rhyme romance (of 8,890 lines, from Hue's 10,578 lines of couplets), generally considered one of the most successful ME chivalric romances. The English poet has not only translated closely from a manuscript of Hue's poem, but transformed his original into a depersonalized, genteel, and courtly romance that adapts Hue's work for a more polite, less blasé, audience (see further discussions by Hosington 1989; Field in *MTr* 1). This process is unusual, the nearest comparable case being that of the Caius *Guy*; if the source text had been lost it is unlikely *Ipomadon* would have been recognized as a translation.

The other ME verse rendering of *Ipomedon*, the fifteenth-century couplet *Lyfe of Ipomydon* (B), is an independent translation of Hue's text (Purdie 2001: xv) in BL MS Harley 2252, and although, at 2,346 lines, it is a shorter and simpler rendering of its original, it may have been aimed at a similar audience (so Meale 1984). The fifteenth-century prose *Ipomedon* (C) in Longleat MS 257 shows similar development to *Ipomydon B*, although in some respects it is closer to the AN original, of which it is a direct translation (Purdie 2001: xvi). The late fourteenth-century *Generydes* suggests a similar process at work, although its source is lost. It survives in two independent versions, in couplets and rhyme royal, both long composite romances (10,086 and 6,995 lines respectively) of exotic setting, divided family, and young love. Probably the source was insular and influenced by the AN *Ipomedon* (so Meale 1991: 89), and the fame of Generydes himself was established in some form early enough to be mentioned in *The Parlement of the Thre Ages*. The fifteenth-century *Partenope of Blois* is a romance of over 12,000 lines from a twelfth-century French-language original of some 11,000 lines. This too has been claimed for AN—it survives in an AN fragment and two of its continental manuscript copies have insular associations. However, these romances also show that from the early fifteenth century onwards there is a marked response to the work of Chaucer. Translations such as *Partenope* enhance their work with Chaucerian flourishes and echoes, even with self-conscious narrators, and rhyme royal appears as a metre available for narrative (see Windeatt 1990).

Of the two fifteenth-century versions of the ancestral myth of the Lusignan family, the *Romans of Partenay or of Lusignan* is in 6,600 lines in rhyme royal. This family history is quite different from the ancestral romances of English heroes with its appeal of the exotic and magical, not the geographical and local. The translator is painfully conscious of his inadequacies and the difficulties of his task—'For frenshe rimed or metred alway | Ful ofte is straunge in englishe to display' (Skeat 1866: 13–14)—and his capabilities in English are certainly stretched by his line-by-line translation method (so Hosington 1999: 418). The late fifteenth-century Middle Scots romance of *Clariodus* marks a reversal in the more usual processes, translating French prose into English

stanzas and modelling its poetic on Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* (so Cooper in *CHMEL* 693).

These romances are long, not appreciably abbreviating their originals, modified with an eye to their new audience, and under the influence of Chaucer. They lay less claim to significant historicity or local geography than the long romances of a century earlier, and are more governed by an appeal to contemporary literary fashions. In the fifteenth century several of these romances, like the prose works discussed below, appear in de luxe manuscripts evidently owned by the highest in society (see Meale 1991: 90). It is this, rather than the innate literary quality or characteristics of the text, which argues for the acceptance of English as a vehicle for sophisticated, fashionable fiction.

Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Prose Romance

The fifteenth century sees a marked change in literary medium and fashion with the move to prose romance, which has its effect on translation activity. Translation into verse peters out, although the copying of earlier romances carries on strongly: 'the fifteenth century . . . is the great age of fourteenth-century romance' (Pearsall 1976: 58). The verse translation of insular or continental French romance is now superseded by translation into prose, giving additional and independent versions of material previously translated into English verse. So *King Ponthus and the Faire Sidone* is translated, once or twice, into English prose (*c.* 1400–1450), from a fourteenth-century French prose rewriting of the AN *Romance of Horn*; *Ipomedon C* is a prose translation taken directly from the AN *Ipomedon*; the prose *Merlin* provides a prose translation from the *Estoire*, broadly equivalent to the earlier *Of Arthour and of Merlin*; prose versions of the *Siege of Troy* and the *Siege of Thebes* provide a *derimage* of Lydgate's poems; and the prose *Alexander* offers a version of the *Historia de Preliis* in the new form.

But this is a period 'in which romance flourished with vigorous new growth and did not merely feed on its own past' (Riddy 1987: 10), one marked by new activity in the translation of fashionable continental romances. These may address the new anxieties about confrontation with the Turks; earlier material was recycled to provide exemplary fiction for a new crisis for Christendom. About 1500 *The Three Kings Sons* translates a French prose romance set in Sicily with Turkish adversaries; the prose *Melusine* has pointed contemporary reference to the siege of Rhodes (Cooper in *CHMEL* 698). Other prose romances, such as *Valentine and Orson*, are translated from lost sources.

The situation has become more recognizably modern, with an English public receptive to foreign material once it has been translated, although the purpose of translation may not have been simply to reach a larger and monolingual public but also to enhance the status of English (Boffey and Edwards 1999: 574). Continental prose romance also offers a fresh resource to fuel the new programme of printing.

The continuing appeal of prose translations of fashionable continental romances is demonstrated in the following century by the translations of Lord Berners. A Tudor courtier with the ear of Henry VIII, Berners found time, in a busy public career, to translate two French romances, as well as the more functional works of Froissart (see further pp. 356–8 below). *Arthur of Little Britain* is translated from the early fourteenth-century *Artus de la Petite Bretaigne*: the diminutive indicates that this is not a work about King Arthur, but a fantastic account of the career of the prince of Brittany. *Huon of Bordeaux*, which occupies 782 pages of the modern edition (1882–7), translates a mid-fifteenth-century French prose romance, beginning with a Charlemagne romance originating in the thirteenth century, and with four later sequels added. Exotic and eclectic, *Huon* introduces Oberon, king of the fairies, to English literature, as well as a sexually transgressive episode between Ide and Olive (see discussion by Archibald in R. Field 1999). Berners later translated two works by Spanish authors, although through the medium of French versions: *The Castell of Love* from Diego de San Pedro's *Carcel de Amor*, and *The Golden Book of Marcus Aurelius* (1532) from the *Libro Aureo* of Antonio de Guevara. (He translated the latter at the suggestion of his nephew Sir Francis Bryan, himself a translator of a work by Guevara.)

But it is at the end of the fifteenth century, with Caxton and his most illustrious author, that this section must conclude. Caxton's career and output as publisher and translator is dealt with elsewhere in this volume (§3.6 above), but here it is pertinent to note the selection and apparent motivation behind his programme of translation of romance material from continental sources into English prose. Caxton translated eight romances from French into English prose—*Charles the Grete*, *The Foure Sonnes of Aymon*, *Godefroy of Bologne*, *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, *The Historie of Jason*, *Eneydos*, *Paris and Vienne*, *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*. For Caxton, as for many of his predecessors, the romantic was less significant than the historical aspect of such material, particularly the history of Christendom providing exemplary Christian heroes to appeal to a generation newly aware of the Saracen threat (see discussion by Fichte in R. Field 1999). The lasting appeal of the Matters of medieval narrative and the tradition of the Nine Worthies is as evident here as the fashion for the prose romances of the Burgundian court. As a translator, Caxton was pragmatic and hurried, and given to mistakes in translation due to speed: 'he follows his original closely, with an unashamed transference of French words and idioms into English' (Blake 1969: 126).

Malory

Caxton's most significant success was as publisher of Malory's translation, the *Morte Darthur*. He followed the procedure of improving on his original, so that we have two *Mortes*, that of Caxton's edition and that of the Winchester MS (see Lerer in *CHMEL* 731), and he provided Malory's work with its 'striking but inaccurate title' (P. Field 1999: 227). It provides a fitting conclusion to this

section, reaching back as it does to the translation—spurious or otherwise—by Geoffrey of Monmouth and his successors of British history, and incorporating later English versions as well as collecting, organizing, and rendering coherent the mass of French prose romances on the Matter of Britain. The scale of Malory's achievement—eight volumes of prose, according to Vinaver's arrangement—is equalled by his grasp of thematic development and structure so that, despite Vinaver's edition of the *Morte* as a series of discrete narratives, recent scholarship has recognized the evidence of Malory's own attempt to create a 'hoole book'; prophecy, anticipation, recapitulation, thematic and symbolic patterning all weave a net of coherence across his material. From a wide range of source material, French and English, Malory creates a work which finally seems unified and purposeful: 'adventures that had seemed when they happened to float in a romance world free of time and space, are suddenly re-visioned as milestones on the one-way road to the "day of destiny" on Salisbury Plain' (Cooper in Malory 1998: xxii).

The presence in England of numerous copies of the French prose romances of Lancelot, Tristan, the Grail, and the death of Arthur is attested by wills and other documents (Batt and Field 1999: 69). By translating these versions of the full Arthurian narrative into English, Malory is making available to an increasingly monolingual audience a rich and varied account of the romance version of Arthurian legend to enrich and modernize the Arthurian chronicle material readily available in English. Malory's merging of his sources to give a largely coherent account of Arthurian Britain from both the chronicle and romance traditions, and his choice of prose as the medium for his work, give his version an authoritative status which was not to be challenged in its telling of the Arthurian legend until the twentieth century.

But this achievement is a conscious process of translation; like the ME romances he was familiar with, and like the AN romances before them, Malory presented his work as gaining status and deserving of attention from its relationship to its sources rather than as the new version of received material that he was in fact providing for a new monolingual, prose-reading public. Malory's main sources were the French prose romances: for Book I, the *Suite de Merlin*; for Book III, the prose *Lancelot* and *Perlesvaus*; for Book V, the prose *Tristan*; for Book VI, the prose *Queste del Saint Graal*; for Books VII and VIII, the prose *Mort le roi Artu* (Shepherd in Malory 2004).

His technique with dealing with these texts is to 'reduce' them (the word is Caxton's, though see above p. 164 for further comment)—the French *Tristan* is six times the length of his Tristan book—and also to unravel the intricacies of their interlace by separating their linked stories. Malory's grasp of French may not have been as good as he wanted his readers to believe, and he can be found making some elementary mistakes (P. Field 1998: 44–7), but the confidence and creativity of his translation build as the work develops. This is not a steady progression; whereas he seems content to reproduce, albeit in an abbreviated form, the Grail quest or the chronicle accounts of Arthur's early wars, he exercises

his choices and his skills to the full when dealing with chivalry, knighthood, and the ethical problems of Arthur's rule and its doomed implosion. The repeated citing of his 'Frensshe bokes', largely as a means of occluding his own invention, shows Malory presenting himself primarily as a translator, but increasingly, as the work goes on, a translator who questions his sources, and draws his audience's attention to the relevance of this received narrative to their own times.

Many of the most well-known episodes and phrases in Malory's *Morte* are his own addition to his source material or a creative merging of different sources, French and English. Already in the early books he freely adds significant passages, such as the Round Table oath (III. 15). Amongst his additions to the final books are the episode of the Healing of Sir Urry, the tense dialogue between the Orkney brothers and Arthur over Guinevere's execution, and Ector's threnody over the body of Lancelot. These three additions alone can demonstrate Malory's development of the theme of fellowship and his grasp of his entire narrative, his ability to write the tragedy of human character, and his commitment to Lancelot as his hero and to the values of chivalry. As far as we know—the precise manuscript sources are not available—none of these additions owes anything to French romance. But his 'translation' is not only from French to English; his rendering of the great last scenes of his book brings together English verse and French prose. Malory's use of the ME stanzaic *Morte* provides some of the most powerful moments in the account of Arthur's death: the adder on the heath that provokes the final battle; the pillagers that roam the battlefield killing the wounded for their plunder; the description of the lake with its 'watirs wap [lapping] and wawys wanne'; and Arthur's farewell speech to Bedivere. The elegiac tone of the English romance has been adopted by Malory to deepen the mystery and pathos of Arthur's final scene. Lancelot's death draws on a different strand in the English tradition; Ector's threnody over his dead brother deepens the scene provided by the *Mort Artu* by adopting the cadences of another lament, that of Modred over his fallen brother Gawain in the alliterative *Morte Arthure*.

At the point at which Malory's French source, *Le Mort Artu*, is content with describing the scene of mourning, Malory provides speech:

Thou sir Launcelot, there thou lyest, that thou were never matched of erthely knyghtes hande. And thou were the curtest knight that ever bare shelde! And thou were the truest frende to thy lovar that ever bestrade hors...the trewest lover of a sinful man that ever loved woman, and thou were the kindest man that ever strake wyth swerde. And thou were the godelyest persone that ever cam emonge prees of knyghtes, and thou was the meekest man and the jentyllest that ever ete in halle emonge ladys, and thou were the sternest knyght to thy mortal foo that ever put spere in the reste.

The voicing of the lament over the fallen hero, with its accumulating superlatives and its evocation of the dual nature of heroic fellowship, is adopted by Malory to express the paradoxes of chivalry. The concept derives from the chivalric

romances that were Malory's French sources, but the expression looks to his English predecessors. Readers from Caxton to the present day have recognized in this the quintessential expression of medieval romance, but it is a complex product of translation and cultural interchange. Malory is the clearest exemplar of the processes of ME translation by which careful selection from a wide range of available source material, a clear sense of audience, and a working competence in both languages creates something new out of inherited material while exploiting the status conferred by its antiquity. English fiction has become the inheritance and the product of the trilingual culture of medieval England.

LIST OF SOURCES

Essential reference sources, not separately noted in this section, and listed under 'Other Sources', are: Barron 1987, 1999; Dean and Boulton 1999; Guddat-Figge 1976; Hartung 1972; Severs 1967. Translations are itemized here only when they receive detailed comment in the body of the section: for all others, Barron 1987, Hartung 1972, and Severs 1967 may be consulted.

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5.5 Chronicles and Historical Narratives

Thea Summerfield, with Rosamund Allen

'Listen, all who are here assembled, to the story of England, not in French or Latin, but in English, so that all who live in this country will be able to enjoy it and be comforted by it.' In the 1330s, Robert Mannyng, the beginning of whose *Chronicle* prologue is here paraphrased, was well aware that translation into English meant ending the exclusion from knowledge about the past previously available only in French, or Latin, or in ephemeral oral traditions. At an earlier time, before the Norman Conquest, translation into English had been stimulated by King Alfred and his circle for similar reasons: to spread knowledge about the past despite the decline in the proficiency in Latin, the usual medium for historical writing.

As previous comments will have shown (pp. 296, 316, 318 above), in the Middle Ages knowledge about the past might be imparted by different types of narration, for example by writings now regarded as romances. Though treated as far as possible separately in this volume, there were considerable areas of overlap between romances, chronicles, and other historical narratives. This section discusses the latter two categories: it excludes narratives about a remote, exotic, semi-legendary past, like the Charlemagne and Alexander cycles, the legends of King Arthur, and stories of the fall of Troy, which have been discussed in §5.4 above (see also Ainsworth 2003; Field 1991).

Medieval translations of historical narrative present modern readers with quite distinct hermeneutic obstacles resulting from a twofold alterity embedded in different perceptions of the nature of histories and of translations. Modern *histories* aim to present their readers with new facts and insights; they are original works of scholarship. Modern *translations* generally reflect the view that translators should aim for 'the closest natural equivalent of the source-language message' (Nida and Taber 1969: 12): in content, form, and style the target text should, as much as possible, preserve the originality of that text; the translator is subservient to the author and aims at becoming 'invisible' (as Venuti 1995 puts it). Source text and translation are thus closely linked. Medieval practice is, in effect, the opposite: medieval historians habitually followed authoritative sources, and medieval translators tended to add or excise material at will. These divergences from modern practice have more than once led to adverse estimates of the value of medieval histories, and of historical texts in translation, as too derivative to be of value to modern scholarship. However, many translators of historical texts used their source text(s) as means to a new ideological end, to be reached by the rhetorical means of *inventio*: they 'transfer past works to the medieval present by rewriting',

thus adapting the knowledge and wisdom of the past to contemporary conditions (Kelly 1997: 48). This practice validates their procedure: many medieval histories are a patchwork of translation, adaptation, and compilation, even though information provided by the author/translators in their prologues may suggest otherwise. In medieval Britain, where social and linguistic divisions coincided for many centuries, we must take into account translated as well as original historical narratives.

In the course of the medieval period 'the matter of the past' underwent a number of different 'translations': from oral to written forms, from Latin to more and less prestigious vernaculars, from manuscript to print, from prose to verse and—sometimes—back. However, all such translations represent an appropriation of knowledge about the past by a new linguistic community. The focus in this chapter will primarily be on the translation of written texts into English, with a discussion of the motives underlying translations, the strategies used by translators and the readers or audiences envisaged by them, and the comments on the translation process offered by medieval translators of historical works.

All the texts here discussed, a representative rather than comprehensive group, are translations of texts on historical subjects offering a descriptive explanation of the past, or of events in the past. Many contribute to the development, change, or construction of a community or society; they frequently have a political, hortatory, pragmatic, utilitarian, or exegetical function.

'Her onginneð': Historical Narrative in Old English

In the last decade of the ninth century, the appearance of translations from Latin into OE of Orosius' *Histories against the Pagans* and Bede's *Eccleciastical History of the English People* gives substance to King Alfred's complaints about the decline of scholarship based on a knowledge of Latin. Orosius' history was long thought to be the work of King Alfred himself (see further §3.2 above). It is now thought to be part of Alfred's educational scheme, and the work of an anonymous scholar collaborating with the King (Stanton 2002: 63 and n. 33). The Latin work was hugely popular: 250 manuscripts survive, against four of the translation. The translation is always referred to as *Orosius*, in accordance with the first line of the text in one of the manuscripts: 'Her onginneð seo boc þe man Orosius nemneð' [Here begins the book called Orosius] (Bately 1980: 1).

The translator curtailed his source by about four-fifths, while retaining its order and arrangement, and expanding or rewriting some sections. As a result, a Latin polemic by historical example is transformed into a survey of world history from a Christian standpoint. The translator recognized in the Latin *Orosius* a chance to offer his reader an example of God's plan with the world through the oft-repeated word *anweald*, the God-given authority to rule in a particular

territory. As Orosius had shown, this had taken place through linear succession, until the sack of Rome. However, the translator makes it clear that he does not consider this event the 'end of history', or of God's involvement in it. By adding the comment that God is still steering events in all *onwaldas* and kingdoms according to his will, the translator extends Orosius' concept to include his own time (Kretschmar 1987: 142).

The *Orosius* translation may have been envisaged as the first part of a tripartite series of vernacular historical works plotting the transfer of *anweald* to Alfred's time (Keynes and Lapidge 1983: 33; Kretschmar 1987: 142–5). The other two were the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* and the translation of Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. The *Ecclesiastical History* mixes passages where the translator aimed at near equivalence, to the point of producing a stiff, literal text, and episodes where his translation is much more lively (Whitelock 1962: 61), which suggests a man 'capable of vivid writing when his interest was stirred [but] unable to shed the habits of a school of interlinear glossing' (Whitelock 1962: 76–7). For example, in the translation the shine is entirely taken off Bede's glowing account of the varieties of shell-fish in British waters, the beautiful colours of their 'excellent' pearls, and the usefulness of whelks for making 'a scarlet-coloured dye . . . a most beautiful red which neither fades through the heat of the sun nor exposure to rain' (Bede 1969: 15). It is dull, noting only that the shell-fish often yield 'the finest pearls of every colour' ('þa betstan meregrotan ælces hiwes'), and giving the scarlet dye its common name, 'shell-fish red' ('se weolocræda tælgh': Miller 1890–8: 26–7).

Information judged alien to the interests of the translator's public, such as sections on geography, chronology, or etymology, precise source references, accounts of foreign saints, Roman history, and the affairs of the Celtic Church, are excised. This results in a more insular focus. On the other hand, aspects of the Latin text familiar to the original audience—allusions to the Bible; meteorological phenomena—are carefully explained in the translator's interpolations. In short, just as the translator 'is inferior to Bede, so are those for whom he is writing inferior to the readers Bede had in mind. . . . the Old English Bede supports Alfred's complaints of the decline of scholarship' (Whitelock 1962: 74–5).

The third text in Alfred's possible historiographical programme is the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle* (*ASC*). *ASC* is remarkable in north-west Europe as a vernacular history written at a time when history elsewhere was composed almost exclusively in Latin. The occasional use of Latin in some *ASC* manuscripts (Garmonsway 1953: 59, 270–2), and the fact that some parts were translated into Latin (Kennedy 1989: 14), are minor instances of Latin in an otherwise English textual tradition. One manuscript, however, presents an exceptional and more complicated linguistic situation. Usually referred to as the 'Domitian Bilingual' (F), this manuscript contains a Latin chronicle text, followed by an English version of that text. According to its most recent editor, it was probably written between 1100 and 1107 (Baker 2000: lxxvi; for a facsimile, Dumville 1995).

The text was based on an exemplar of manuscript E of *ASC*, but filled out 'with more than a hundred annals from more than twenty sources, including histories, chronicles, charters and saints' lives' (Baker 2000: lxix). The surviving manuscript is 'a compact book, which the scribe could easily have carried with him'; it may have served him as 'a historical *vade mecum*, always ready to receive an entry or two if he should encounter any interesting history or chronicle while stealing a moment in the library of Worcester, Ramsey, or some other establishment' (lxxv). Entries are mostly given in English first, with a Latin translation immediately following. OE and Latin texts do not always contain exactly the same information; the scribe 'does not appear to have required that his Old English and Latin texts match precisely' (lxv). Several Latin documents included as part of the text or as insertions were also translated (lviii). However, one Latin insertion at the beginning of the text, deriving from the *Historia Brittonum* attributed to Nennius, was left untranslated, although space was provided for such a translation. The inclusion of this passage is particularly interesting as it affords early evidence for a new fashion in historiography.

The text in F begins in OE with a description of Britain, the peoples living there, their origins, and the arrival of the Romans. The information is evenly spaced and fills two pages of twenty-one lines each (f. 30r–v). It is very close to the text in E. This information is repeated in Latin, in a fairly close translation with a few clauses added, each taken verbatim from Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. These explain that the Picts landed first in northern Ireland because that was the way the wind blew, and moved to an island that could be seen on clear days; that there was a shortage of women, and that preference should be given to succession in the female line in cases of uncertainty (cf. Bede 1969: 18). The passage ends with the statement that among the Picts this practice is still customary.

Between the four lines at the top, where this passage ends, and the three lines at the bottom of the page that mark the beginning of the annalistic section with the arrival of Julius Caesar in Britain, a large space was left open in the manuscript. Into this blank space, but not filling it completely, the scribe inserted a passage in Latin in tiny handwriting extending beyond the margins on either side. It tells the story of *Brutus exosus*, hated Brutus, who, as prophesied, killed both parents, fled Italy, and eventually landed in what came to be called Britain after him. The insertion has verbal echoes throughout of the 'Harleian Recension' of the *Historia Brittonum* (cf. Nennius 1980: 19, 60), with some confusion and abbreviation; some passages have been copied verbatim, among them the brief topographical description of Britain that ends it.

The scribbled addition in the Domitian Bilingual manuscript of *ASC*, and the use of two languages, turn the text into a bridgehead from the Anglo-Saxon historiographical tradition in the vernacular to the Latin historiographers of the early twelfth century. The combination of the Bedean topography of England and Nennian foundation myth of Britain, also found in the early- to mid-twelfth-century works of Henry of Huntingdon and Geoffrey of Monmouth, heralds an entirely new kind of vernacular historiography. It was Geoffrey of Monmouth,

however, who used the tale as the foundation for an account of the early, Celtic, rulers of Britain, most prominent among them King Arthur. Subsequently his Latin history spawned an entirely new, vernacular, tradition: the rhymed *Brut*.

History in Verse: Laȝamon

Although in the twelfth century the writing of history in Latin about England and the English flourished, no complete vernacular translations, whether in AN or English, were made of such major works as William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum* or Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*. It was Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, the history of the kings of Britain, written *c.* 1136, that was translated, summarized, adapted, and paraphrased in English and AN—here used as a shorthand for all texts in French produced in medieval England—throughout the medieval period. It offered an ethnically and linguistically fragmented country, *inter alia*, a founding father, a legendary conqueror feared and celebrated from Norway to Rome, and etymological roots. It provided for many a satisfying prequel to existing historiography.

The instant popularity of the *Historia* is attested by the fact that, within a few decades, various translations of the text into French or AN in a variety of metres were made. Most survive only as fragments or, like the *Estoire des Engleis* written by Gaimar (*c.* 1135–40), were partially lost (for listings see Arnold in Wace 1938: xcviii n. 1; see also Grout 1985; Blakey 1961). However, one major translation of the complete text, made within two decades of the *Historia*, survives in seventeen complete and nearly complete manuscripts, and twelve fragments (Wace 2002: xxviii–xxix), the *Roman de Brut* (hereafter *Brut*) by Wace, completed in 1155, a work widely read and translated into English in the following centuries. This versified translation of Geoffrey's text augmented the influence of the Latin original on the writing of history in English in the thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries. Henceforth, English historical writings in this period, whatever their dialectal and metrical differences, were consistently verse translations and compilations, while the authors' awareness of the unusual nature of their choice of language and metrical form often elicits explanatory comment.

The earliest verse translation based on Wace's *Brut* was made in Worcestershire where, in the twelfth century, writing in OE continued and developed (Lerer in *CHMEL* 27–8). Laȝamon's *Brut* numbers over 16,000 long lines of alliterative and rhyming verse (Laȝamon 1963–78). It was written between 1185 and 1216 (Le Saux 1989: 10); perhaps during the Interdict of 1208–12 (Allen in Laȝamon 1992: xvii). This was the first ME version of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, and the first extant English account of the Arthurian myth. It was composed, as Laȝamon's prologue declares, in Areley Kings in north Worcestershire, an area where Anglo-Saxon was studied in the twelfth century (Frankis 2002: 56–60). Apart from Wace's *Brut*, Laȝamon claims to have used two other sources: Bede in English, and 'Albin and Austin' in Latin. Since Albinus supplied Bede with material, and Books I–II of the *Ecclesiastical History* recount Augustine's

conversion mission, these may refer to the Anglo-Saxon translation and Latin original respectively of Bede, much copied in the twelfth century, or to a lost manuscript containing works by Alcuin and Augustine of Hippo (Stanley 1969: 31–2). Laȝamon is not subservient to Wace but in control (cf. *IoV* 8–9, 376). His stated aim is 'amalgamation' and accuracy; he both expands and reduces Wace.

The two extant manuscripts, BL Cotton Caligula A.ix (C) and Cotton Otho C.xiii (O), are dated late thirteenth century and differ in length and style. C presents archaic native words, compounds, and nonce-formations in the style of OE, with about half of the French derivatives found in O, which is usually accepted as a modernized revision, not necessarily later, possibly for a different, higher-status audience (Grant and Moffat 1994: 22). However, much of Laȝamon's lexis was current at the time of writing (Roberts 1996). The archaic compounds and extensive use of formulaic repetitions of C contrast strongly with Wace's original, which 'was up to date when written' even with 'possible neologisms . . . far in advance of normal usage' (Stanley 1969: 30; cf. Woledge 1951: 16). Laȝamon may have been writing for a racially mixed audience (on this, see p. 50 above); his knowledge of AN is unusual (Short 1980: 473–6).

Wace expected his *Brut* to be heard. C is also well suited to a listening audience; the *mise en page* of O directs interpretation by readers (Allen 1996; Bryan 1999: 95, 106). Both manuscripts address a learned readership: C has Latin marginalia by the main scribe, many from Henry of Huntingdon's *Historia Anglorum*, including rubricated kings' names (Weinberg 1994: 103–20). Evidently, both manuscripts have been treated by their successive readers as presenting historical fact: sixteenth-century antiquarian readers of O underlined references to warfare, arms, and place names (Bryan 1999: 129–76).

Laȝamon's focus is the land and changes in population and language (*leod*). As a historian he presents a segment of human history from the time of Noah's Flood to an unspecified future. There is a 'serious historical intent' in the *Brut* (Salter 1988: 59); Laȝamon creates a believable yet remote and strange past, adding an 'English' touch to Wace's account of the transfer of dominion to the Saxons (on this, see further p. 52 above). Laȝamon's moral is the importance of a strong ruler who maintains peace and keeps his knights under control. He expands his source from Vortigern to Arthur's conquest of the Saxons, but compresses the conquest of France and Rome which, for Wace, had privileged status. He thus enhances Arthur's contest with pagan opponents and is intolerant of paganism but is intrigued by pre-Christian ritual. He lacks the modernizing circumstantial detail in Wace, and Wace's highlighting of human emotion, especially love (on this, see above p. 52). Laȝamon has sometimes been seen as a translator who introduced an 'aggressive' or 'violent' tone into his source, which is considered to be in marked contrast with Wace's urbane and practical 'eye for the realities of war' (Pearsall 2003: 17). However, the violence is not gratuitous: it serves to maintain order.

Laȝamon's aim is 'truth', though readers must determine this for themselves. Wace had identified a grain of truth in the fables of the Arthur of history;

Laȝamon says Arthur's exaggerated ('seolcuðe') deeds reflect British bias, yet he elaborates Arthur's conquest of the Saxons with seven 'long-tailed' similes and a metaphor, all within 600 lines, not found in Wace and probably his own. These may derive from a now lost English epic on Arthur, but are more probably imitations of Latin neo-epic (Davies 1960, but see also Salter 1988: 63–6). Similarly epic is Laȝamon's developement of Wace's mention of the creation of the Round Table into an account of the inter-racial fight in the royal hall which caused it, which recalls the OE *Battle of Finnsburh* (Davenport 2004: 125).

Apart from his use of Bede and Geoffrey's *Prophecies of Merlin* and *Life of Merlin* (probably in French translation), Laȝamon may have had recourse to Welsh and English oral tradition for his sources, including the legend of Augustine's punishment of the English by giving them 'muggles' (fish tails). Moreover, like Robert of Gloucester and Robert Mannyng, he was influenced by the post-Wace development of romance narratives. Galarne in the Brian episode, for example, resembles a romance heroine, in marked contrast to her meagre, nameless counterpart in Wace.

Laȝamon imitates Wace's pervasive use of anaphora and exploits punning to heighten rhetorical impact (Wickham-Crowley 2002: 66–7). His syntax is Latinate and logical, with more complex sentences than Wace (Allen 2002). He selects the older, elevated register of literary tradition rather than evolving a 'popular' one (Millar 2002: 239).

As noted earlier (p. 53 above), Laȝamon opted for 'full translation', transposing all elements into the sociolinguistic norms of the target audience He both adds to the pastness of the narrative, with archaic diction and formulaic constructions, and dramatizes the action by adding specific detail, names, and voices to the agents of the narrative—unlike Wace, who prefers to focus on one central character in each episode—thus reinstating history in his romance-orientated narrative (Le Saux 2005: 123).

History in Verse: Robert of Gloucester and Thomas Castleford

Laȝamon's archaic metre and language were not adopted by any later chroniclers; verse, however, continued to be used for translations into English between *c.* 1290 and 1340, when the linear, episodic structure of Geoffrey's *Historia*, or, for those who preferred it, Wace's *Brut*, was extended to include translated passages covering subsequent historical events from Latin and/or AN histories. Such translated histories survive both as long poetical works, here referred to as verse chronicles, and as much shorter works, generally of some 1,000 lines, the 'short metrical chronicles'. All are '*Bruts*', sharing the dynastically and chronologically linear structure of the *Historia* and including Brutus among the eponymous founders. Translation practice in these works is various; yet each has its own integrity, and must be studied as a manifestation of a historical consciousness in its own right.

Written *c.* 1300, probably a century after Laȝamon's *Brut*, also in the south-west Midlands, Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle* is the first of the verse chronicles in English to present a continuation of history beyond 689. It survives in long and short versions, which run parallel from Brutus to the death of Henry I in 1135. Seven manuscripts of each version are extant (Kennedy 1989: 2617–22). In the fifteenth century, when verse as a medium for historical narrative had gone out of fashion, it was retold in prose. Robert's name occurs only near the end of the longer continuation, but close links with the earlier section suggest his authorship of the whole work (Kennedy 1989: 2618; Pickering 2001: 10–13). It is a compilation of a large number of translated episodes from a wide range of Latin and English histories and saints' lives, some written by regional authors, like the episodes on Sts Kenelm and Dunstan also found in the *Early South English Legendary* (*SEL*) (Pickering 2001) and, in the additions made to the common section of the *Chronicle*, episodes from the longer version of Laȝamon's *Brut*. According to Turville-Petre (1996: 105), the *Chronicle* author also used the so-called *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle*. (For a survey of sources used see Gloucester 1887: xv–xxxvi.)

Unlike the verse chronicles translated and compiled by Laȝamon or, later, by Mannyng, that of Robert of Gloucester does not limit itself to genealogically organized information on the reign of kings, but also includes a large number of concisely reported facts on noblemen and bishops, all referred to as 'heiemen'. The information is frequently limited to short statements on martial conflicts, marriages, or deaths, often of a markedly judgemental nature; typical is the comment, after a hanging, 'so hii miȝte lerni. traitour to be' [that will teach them to be traitors] (Robert of Gloucester 1887: 10,693).

The intellectual level of the audience (and perhaps the author) is indicated by some of its omissions. Generally references to the Old Testament are retained; those to Greek and Roman history are excised. For example, where the *Historia*, the source used for the episode, refers to the prophet Samuel, Aeneas Silvius, and Homer as coeval with King Maddan, Robert limits himself to Samuel. He also simplifies the text routinely by not translating long catalogues of names.

A key aspect of Robert's translation is his comments about the Normans and the consequences of the Norman Conquest. The Normans are presented as living among 'us' even at the time of writing (55) and as usurpers of language, identity, and social status. By means of his construct of translated episodes, Robert gives expression to the fear, widespread at a time of popular mistrust of Henry III's foreign counsellors, that history will repeat itself and that the true, indigenous population of England, the 'kunde' [native] English speakers, will once again be reduced to social and linguistic inferiority. Similar fears inform other verse chronicles written at this time. Robert based himself on Henry of Huntingdon, who had presented the Norman Conquest in his *Historia Anglorum*, *c.* 1135, as the last of five 'scourges' or expressions of divine wrath, and on the description of the battle of Hastings in William of Malmesbury's *Gesta Regum Anglorum*, *c.* 1125, with its details of Harold's treachery, English debauchery as well as bravery, and

Norman moral and social superiority. Thus the account of the Norman Conquest becomes, in Robert's translation, a warning of what might happen again as a result of contemporary sinful behaviour and political circumstances, rather than an account of the past.

However, the *Chronicle* is not only a story of 'al þis wo' (56); it is also a celebration of England. The first line of the *Chronicle* sets the tone: 'Engelond is a wel god lond ich wene ech londe [of all lands] best.' It is a land 'þat ioye hit is to sen' (12), rich in all kinds of produce, the home, also, of saints whose stories have been incorporated from the *Legendary*, and defenders of the people like Simon de Montfort, extolled in the *Chronicle*. The glorification of de Montfort constituted an act of defiance at a time when supporters of his cult were being persecuted (Valente 1995), and recalls accounts in the *Legendary* (Oxford, Bodleian Library MS Laud 108) of Bishop Wulfstan's defiance of William the Conqueror, and of the praiseworthy support of St Dominic by de Montfort's father (Mitchell 1999; Thompson 2003: 52–3).

The translation of episodes from a variety of Latin sources, and the incorporation of English saints' lives, result in a metrically and linguistically unified construct edificatory in its conventional moralism, informative on key events and personages in England's history, joyful in its celebration of England, and indignant in its complaints about the social and linguistic inferiority of the indigenous English. However, the ultimate message is again moralistic: such misfortunes result from divine wrath at bad kingship and sinful people.

A similar mixture of indignation and pride is found in the verse chronicle earlier thought to be by Thomas Bek (fl. 1269: see Gillmeister 1995) but now credited to Thomas (of) Castleford, near Pontefract in west Yorkshire, because that name occurs in the manuscript heading (Castleford 1996). Thomas compiled it in or soon after 1327, when Robert of Gloucester's *Chronicle* was still being copied and Mannyng was producing his work. Castleford wrote some 40,000 lines in regular if wooden octosyllabic couplets. His is the first Yorkshire chronicle in English and fourth oldest ME chronicle (Taylor 1961: 18). After describing Thomas of Lancaster's beheading at Pontefract, and Edward II's current imprisonment in Berkeley castle, the unique manuscript ends abruptly and probably incompletely with Edward III's coronation (XII, vi); Castleford might well have included the miracles at Lancaster's tomb, as in the prose *Brut* (Brie 1906: 229–30). The chronicle was probably actually compiled later than 1333 (Turville-Petre 1996: 75–6).

Castleford's main source for the first eight books is Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*. Wace's lively descriptions and human detail are not presented, but his Round Table is. Book V is entirely devoted to a translation of Merlin's Prophecies. Miracles of saints, translation of relics, and deaths of popes, kings, (arch)bishops, and earls figure prominently; King Oswald receives extended treatment. Apparently Castleford wrote for a listening, possibly youthful, audience, almost certainly lay and not clerical (Taylor 1961: 19), unless possibly monastic postulants. His repetitious style suggests an insistent pedagogue, and his reticence

on sexual matters might point in a similar direction. Where the prose *Brut* highlights King John's sexual depravity, Castleford focuses on his cruelty, especially to children, and his quarrel with the Pope.

The *Chronicle* opens with a prologue telling the story of Albina and her sisters, derived from an English metrical version of *Des Grantz Geanz* or the almost identical opening of the English prose *Brut* (Taylor 1986: 253). If the latter, Castleford was probably working in the late fourteenth century, when religious houses in Yorkshire had copies of the French prose *Brut* (Taylor 1987: 119). He progresses to a close translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth, with additions from Langtoft and other sources. The last four books cover the period from the Saxons to the reign of Edward II. Some of this material has parallels in other English texts like the *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicle* in BL MS Royal 12.c.xii, and may therefore be translating from a now lost source (O'Farrell-Tate 2002: 341–411): the account of Becket's quarrel with Henry II is long and confused, apparently translated from Latin. The reigns of Edward I and Edward II in Books XI and XII, though, are probably independent (Taylor 1961: 19). Castleford is much concerned with the suppression of English ethnic identity ('English blood', in his often-repeated phrase) by the 'Normans'. He has a strong interest in the nation and its past. Like Mannyng (and Robert of Gloucester) he considers 'Brutayne the best' (255), and he dislikes Welsh and, especially, Scottish insurgency and raids into England. His humanity is evident in his account of times of famine. In his version, the maiden raped by the giant of Mont St Michel is only 13 years old, a detail not found in the *Historia*.

Although he mentions events in Europe, Wales, and Scotland, Castleford, writing in west Yorkshire, throughout emphasizes York, especially in competition with Canterbury (e.g. 28,345 ff.). York and its surroundings were a major centre of vernacular writing in the fourteenth century: the French prose *Brut* shows northern influence, the *Northern Homily Cycle* (*c.* 1315) was 'perhaps written by an Augustinian canon near York' (*IoV* 335), and the *Anonimalle Chronicle*, a work containing the fullest version of the Short Continuation of the French prose *Brut*, was also compiled in York (Taylor 1986: 121, 144).

History in Verse: Pierre de Langtoft and Robert Mannyng

Whereas Robert of Gloucester and Thomas Castleford used a 'pick and mix' method for their chronicles from a multitude of texts, Robert Mannyng, whose *Chronicle* was finished, as he records, on 15 May 1338, started translating much more like a modern translator, with a single source text in front of him, and a request from a certain Robert of Malton to translate it into English (Mannyng 1996: I, 142). This source text was the AN *Chronicle* in verse—to give it its modern name—which was completed *c.* 1308 by Pierre de Langtoft, an Augustinian canon of Bridlington Priory in east Yorkshire (Langtoft 1866, 1989). This was a very popular northern production. Twenty manuscripts are extant; nine contain the complete *Chronicle*, six were produced before 1350; two fragments represent

a later, inferior redaction (Langtoft 1989; for comment on the two redactions, see Summerfield 1998: 23–7). It is famous for its hatred of the Scots and the violently anti-Scottish political songs embedded in it. The work is modelled on well-known Latin sources as well as official documentation; it sought to further the claims and campaigns of Edward I and to get Edward II off to a good start (see further Summerfield 1998: 15–98; 2005). The emphasis lies on recent events and policies; early history, based on the *Historia*, is dealt with summarily.

Like a modern translator, Mannyng started by reading the text he had been given. As he tells us in his prologue, he was disappointed by the first part of the work, done better, he thought, by Wace. He solved the problem by substituting Wace's *Brut* for Langtoft's version of British history, picking up Langtoft's thread where Wace ends. Unfortunately he does not record where, or how, he obtained a copy of Wace. Mannyng may have been influenced in his decision by a scribal comment in the Langtoft manuscript that he used, BL Royal 20.A.xi, dated variously to the first half of the fourteenth century (Langtoft 1989: 44–5) and the second quarter (Tatlock 1934: 135). From Mannyng's point of view, then, the text was a recent production, largely dealing with recent events. He treats it as such, incorporating the anti-Scottish sentiments, though less abusively, as well as the anti-Scottish political songs that Langtoft had merged seamlessly with his monorhymed *laisses* (Summerfield 1997: 139–48). However, Mannyng also freely voices his disagreement on political issues. For example, when Langtoft states tendentiously that at the time of writing, towards the end of the reign of Edward I, the Scottish problem has been all but solved, Mannyng repeats the statement, but disagrees with it, adding that Langtoft's words are very strange: 'Now tells Pers on his maners a gret selcouth [wonder]' (Mannyng 1996: II, 6,827). The comment illustrates Mannyng's critical attitude towards his source, which is noticeable throughout, but also, by his initial retention of Langtoft's claim, his tendency to add to it rather than make major changes.

Mannyng was an experienced translator, having (*c*. 1303) translated William of Waddington's AN metrical homiletic handbook, the *Manuel des Pechiez*, as *Handlyng Synne* (see further pp. 247–8 above). In it, he proved capable of writing in an entertaining manner appealing to a wide audience. His duties in the Gilbertine order may have had an effect on his language use (Coleman 2004); certainly the prologue to the *Chronicle* shows that he had given the difficulties of translation much thought, and was aware of his position as the continuator of a tradition, running from 'Dares þe Freson' and his story of Troy, through Geoffrey of Monmouth and his mysterious ancient source, to Wace and Langtoft (I, 145–98). He also has well-defined notions on the language and style needed to make this tradition available to an audience of 'lewed' men: simple, colloquial English, 'lightest in mannes mouth' (I, 74), presented in straightforward metres, rather than the obscure language and convoluted metrical forms he criticizes, for which he may have had the ME romance *Sir Tristrem* in mind (see Coleman 2003: 1214–24). Like Laȝamon, Robert of Gloucester, and Thomas of Castleford, Robert Mannyng laments the results of the Norman Conquest, using the francophone

terminology *seruage*, *taliage*, *bondage* found in various Latin, French, and English writings in the early fourteenth century to complain of the ever-increasing royal demands for taxes and goods. Mannyng invokes it partly as a matter of convention, partly to underline the importance of supporting royal policies and averting a new invasion from France.

So skilful and faithful is Mannyng's rendition of his two sources that his *Chronicle* is frequently taken (for example, by Gransden 1974: 73, 220) to be the English, interchangeable equivalent of Langtoft. However, Mannyng's differences in tone and content are too frequent and too important for this. He successfully unifies the different metres of his sources, occasionally adding metrical flourishes of his own, and gives vent to his own concerns in the course of the translation process. The beginning of the *Chronicle* is his own: he adds a genealogy which links Brutus with Noah, visually supported in the Lambeth MS by marginal roundels. Old Testament (and, by extension, Christian) roots are thus added to classical ones. He also relates the story of Troy in some detail, thus giving Brutus' discovery of Britain a logical prequel. Elsewhere in the text, legends are rehearsed—how England got its name, for example—and sometimes dismissed as nonsense, like the popular story that England was named after a maiden called Inge. Throughout, there are numerous interpolations, sometimes with precise references, as when Mannyng lists the reasons for the downfall of the Britons, citing Gildas, Bede, Geoffrey of Monmouth, and Latin psalms, or when he praises Richard I's care for the common soldier, referring to the *Romance of Richard*. Occasionally he adds gossipy details about affairs that had caused a great stir, like the capture of the spy Thomas Turberville and of William Wallace 'þat maister was of theues' (II, 8,039). He also speaks lovingly of the two baby girls raised by his order in Sempringham after their fathers Llewellyn ap Griffith and his brother David were killed. In short, his 'apparently humble stance [in the prologue] is belied in practice by the performance which follows' (Johnson 1991: 134).

None of the four long ME verse chronicles so far discussed in this section represents a straightforward translation, yet, for all their differences, their authors skilfully unified in English verse a large amount of disparate material. All worked in geographically peripheral areas and wrote in their own, regional, dialect. All four texts were produced in regions where translations of homiletic material had established the use of English for translation. The authors use the English language self-consciously, even defiantly; one, perhaps two, were already experienced translators when they started on their chronicle translations. All give their histories roots in a Christian English context, rather than a pagan British one, manipulating Latin narrative to make it answer the needs of speakers and readers of English, foregrounding English heroes (not necessarily English-born or English-speaking), and adding new *origines gentium* legends, heroes, and heroines. Thus they make the past a comment on the present and a guide for the future. They illustrate the extent to which translation is never, as has been claimed, 'a simple "turn" from one linguistic mode to another' (Cannon in *CHMEL* 330), but is

always an appropriation, by a new community, of concepts previously outside the experience of its members, and a response to changed circumstances.

The emotive comments in these chronicles express anxiety, widely shared, about the influence of Henry III's foreign counsellors, and the current political situation, when invasion from across the Channel regularly seemed imminent, and was presented as such in official writs (Prestwich 1980: 167–8; Hewitt 1971). The fears are real enough, then, but they are presented in a highly charged manner. It is, as Turville-Petre points out, the 'polemic of nationalism' needing 'to over-simplify and to exclude; to target the "other" and to define the self against it' that informs the verse chronicles of this period (1996: 97). However, that polemic needs to be located within the trilingual culture of the period in which many trilingual manuscripts were produced, bi- and trilingual macaronic songs were written, and the chronicler Langtoft felt confident enough of being understood to incorporate a handful of abusive songs in English into his AN text. Moreover, the authors/translators of the verse chronicles in English are themselves trilingual, and thus proof of a more complex linguistic situation than that presented.

The appearance in these decades of works in AN prose showing largely similar content and bias, such as *Le Livere de reis de Brittanie* and *Le Livere de reis de Engleterre*, with continuations made in Norwich and Sempringham, the much shorter *Le petit Bruit* by Rauf de Bohun, and the equally short anonymous *Le Brute Dengletere abrege*, also testify to a communal interest that transcends linguistic limitations. The *Brute Dengletere abrege* appears very closely related to the *Anonymous Short English Metrical Chronicles* surviving in five complete and two fragmentary versions dated between *c*. 1300 and *c*. 1432, though the precise relationship is obscure (O'Farrell-Tate 2002: 17, 43–6). Compared with the short AN text, the English poem has relatively longer episodes on King Arthur, King Alfred, Earl Aylred (who, having seen how his wife suffered in childbirth, never went to her bed again), and Athelstan. The AN text refers, in some detail, to the origin story of Inge, who gave her name to England. It was a well-known story, apparently; Mannyng, as earlier noted, refers to it, but dismisses it as nonsense. The English text does not mention it, nor does it contain laments about the 'Normans' or the prevailing linguistic situation. William is referred to as 'bastard of Normandye', and it is Edward I who is called 'Conqueror'. In this the short metrical *Bruts* appear closer to the prose *Bruts* discussed in the next section.

Prose Chronicles from 1290 to 1400

In the five decades from *c*. 1290 to *c*. 1340, writing in English as well as translating into English elicited explanation and justification (see Baugh and Cable 1951: 143–50). The use of verse, however, was taken for granted and did not need comment. Hence, when, in the fourteenth century, prose translations into English of Latin chronicles appeared, their very novelty gave rise to explanations of the superiority of prose to verse. According to a scribal comment in one manuscript of Mannyng's verse *Chronicle* dated *c*. 1425–50, the French, unlike the English,

wanted their stories about King Arthur in prose rather than verse, 'þe bettere til vnderstande and wyten' (Mannyng 1996: II, 10,774a/b). John Trevisa, too, states his preference for prose as being more easily understood: 'for comynliche [commonly] prose is more clere than ryme, more easy and more pleyn to knowe and understonde' (*IoV* 134).

Written in different phases from the 1320s onward, Higden's *Polychronicon* offered English readers information on the structure of the universe, geography, and world history. Although Higden also includes the history of England, the emphasis is on the remote past (Kennedy 1989: 2658). The text was revised by its author several times, resulting in three recensions: a short one now lost (to 1327), an intermediate one, ending in the 1340s, and a final version, ending about 1352.

At least three translations were made: Trevisa translated Higden's intermediate recension and added a short continuation. The work was completed on 18 April 1387. Secondly, in the fifteenth century an anonymous translator translated and excerpted the text using highly Latinate vocabulary, while a third and 'fuller version of the *Polychronicon* in an earlier translation than Trevisa's', a translation 'not extant in any other form or attributable to a known author', must also at one time have existed, as a number of medieval scribes copying Trevisa's translation used it to fill a large lacuna in Book VI of their exemplar (Waldron in Trevisa 2004: xii, lvi).

About 1387, when John Trevisa had completed his prose translation of Ranulph Higden's massive Latin *Polychronicon* (the only modern edition is in Higden 1865–86), he added a prefatory *Dialogue between a Lord and a Clerk* as well as a dedicatory *Epistola*, in which he outlined his ideas about what translation, and, more broadly, linguistic communication, entail (*IoV* 130–8). The Lord speaks with Trevisa's voice; the Clerk voices perennial prejudices about translators and their craft. Their discussion of the barriers to understanding that speakers of different languages experience are commonplace, but the Lord's rejection of the Clerk's remarks, and Trevisa's intentions expressed in the *Epistola*, offer insight into the ideas and practices governing Trevisa's translation. (The *Dialogue* has received regular comment; see, in this volume, pp. 82–3, 220 above.)

The prefatory *Dialogue* opens with a speech by the Lord on language in general, the usefulness of Latin as a lingua franca, and his desire to have Higden's 'bokes of cronicles' translated, so that more people 'shuld hem understonde and have thereof kunnyng [knowledge], informacioun and lore' (*IoV* 132). He virulently dismisses a series of objections raised by the Clerk: 'This resoun is worthi to be plonged in a plodde [thrown in a puddle] and leyde in powder [cast in the mire] of lewedenesse [ignorance] and of shame' (133), reminding him that in sermons English is used; that in the past King Alfred, Bishop Wærferth, Bede, and many others were involved in translations; that no translation is perfect; and that it should be in prose, rather than verse, as prose is easier to understand.

In his *Dialogue*, Trevisa placed himself in a tradition of famous translators from Latin into OE prose, who, like him, had endeavoured to unlock knowledge about God's creation, and about human history, from the very beginning. His stance

recalls the way Mannyng placed himself in a tradition of legendary, genealogical history in verse, including Geoffrey of Monmouth and Wace. The fact that Trevisa ignores entirely this kind of history, though he was conversant with it, as his interpolated comment on King Arthur's conquests shows (see below), suggests that to his mind the two kinds of historical narrative—verse chronicles on secular rulers of Britain and prose historiography, disclosing knowledge of the whole world, the subject also of pre-Conquest translators—were in different categories.

In the dedicatory *Epistola* Trevisa voices a number of strong, personal opinions. He expresses his firm intention to take no notice of evil gossip—'for blame of bakbiters wol Y not blynne, . . . [nor] for evel spighting and speche of evel spekers' (134)—but to proceed as requested by his patron, Thomas, Lord of Berkeley. In comments recalling those of St Jerome (cf. Ellis 2001: 12, 32–3, 43), Trevisa assures his patron that, wherever possible, he has 'sette word for word and actif for actif' though he occasionally has been forced to make changes, and that he has taken care that the meaning has remained unchanged: 'the menyng shal stonde and nought be ychaunged' (134–5).

The *Dialogue* and *Epistola* together display Trevisa's practical and pragmatic attitude towards his task (see Ellis 2001: 12–16; for a more theoretical reading, *IoV* 323–5), as well as his conviction that his translation will serve to remedy what he regards as 'a grete mischef' (*IoV* 132): that knowledge useful to all should remain hidden in an unfamiliar tongue.

Evaluations of Trevisa's ability as a translator by modern scholars have varied, possibly as a result of the selection of the samples. As Lawler has shown, Trevisa clearly found Higden's obscure text in Book I and the beginning of Book II difficult, whereas in the final books 'one struggles . . . to find even the slightest paraphrase, much less error' (Lawler 1983: 272): high praise indeed, considering the scope of the work.

Trevisa's aim to render the Latin faithfully and yet 'make this translacioun cleer and pleyne' (*IoV* 134) is achieved by the occasional use of doublets, and familiar vocabulary. How successful he was is immediately obvious when Trevisa's text is compared to the anonymous fifteenth-century translation, surviving only in BL MS Harley 2261 (ed. in Higden 1865–86). One example must suffice. Higden comments on the linguistic mediation between the dialects of the north and south by the people in Mercia thus: 'Mercii . . . collaterales linguas arcticam et antarticam melius intelligant.' Trevisa translates: 'Mercii, þat beeþ men of myddel Engelond . . . vnderstondeþ better þe side langages, norþerne and souþerne, þan norþerne and souþerne vndestondeþ eiþer oþer.' This is clear. It contrasts strongly with the anonymous translation: 'Englische men of the Marches of the mydelle partes of Englonde . . . vnderstonde the langages collateralle arthike and anthartike better then the extremities vnderstonde theyme selfe to geder' (Higden 1865–86: II, 163).

Trevisa's desire to inform leads to a fair number of interpolations. He feels free to explain, comment, or disagree, but always marks interpolations with his own name or an explanatory phrase, thus adding a second voice to the narrative, that

of a commentator who respects the integrity of the source text. Trevisa's stance is that of the explicator; he does not appropriate the text. The interpolations serve as a vent for Trevisa's emotive involvement and as a service to the readers of the translation, reflecting an awareness that readers of the translation may not share Higden's knowledge or bias. For example, after Higden's account of how Emperor Lucius Comodus fought in amphitheatres with men armed with short swords, Trevisa adds: 'Amphitheatrum is a hiʒ round place y-made for to see aboute' (V, 36–7). Rhymes found in Higden on, for example, Thomas Becket, Richard I, or Llewellyn are retained in Latin and provided with a translation, clearly indicated by a phrase like 'þat is to menynge' (VIII, 44–5, 168–9, 268–9; Trevisa 2004: lix). However, when Higden makes sceptical comments on King Arthur's conquests, Trevisa counters indignantly that the four Gospels also do not tell exactly the same story, but that this does not make them any less true (V, 337–9): much the same defence that Chaucer advances in the prologue to his *Melibee* (see p. 141 above). Clearly, for these authors the truth did not 'have to be monolithic, monological' (Ellis 2001: 9). However, when, in 1482, Caxton published Trevisa's *Polychronicon*, Trevisa's endorsements of Arthur's historicity were not included: 'Caxton unleashed on his public a *Polychronicon* which dismissed the country's greatest hero largely as a work of fiction' (Sutton and Visser-Fuchs 1997: 156).

Sometimes Trevisa shows himself to be a mild, tolerant man, as in the comment on the death of Paternus, an anchorite. Higden had presented the man's decision to remain in his burning hut as an act of true martyrdom. Trevisa considers the man nothing but 'a lewed goost', an ignorant person without any perception of what true martyrdom means; he hopes nevertheless, charitably, that the man 'be nouʒt i-dampned for his blynde devocioun' (VII, 205). Many interpolations concern language, including the rightly famous complaint that in Trevisa's own time English children knew about as much French as their left heel (II, 160–1). Other additions concern the description of the English language after the invasion of the Danes and Normans (II, 158–9) and the dialectal nature of the French spoken and written in France (II, 160–1). However, such statements do not have the subtext of complaint, linking the use of English with social discrimination, found in the verse chronicles.

Trevisa's translation never became as popular as the Latin original: Higden's *Polychronicon* survives in more than 120 manuscripts, against fourteen of the translation. It was printed, with a number of editorial changes, by William Caxton in 1482 and Wynkyn de Worde in 1495. (See further Waldron in Trevisa 1988: 287; 2004: xiii, xxiii–xliii; Kennedy 1989: 2866.)

In the epilogue to his edition, Caxton writes how he has 'endeuoyred . . . to wryte fyrst ouerall the sayd book of *Proloconycon* [*sic*]', 'somwhat' changing its 'rude and old Englyssh, that is to wete certayn wordes which in these dayes be neither vsyd ne vnderstanden' (Caxton, *P&E* 68). Caxton probably first introduced his revisions into a working copy, now lost, which he made of the manuscript (BL Harley 1900) available to him; his changes contribute to making the work more modern and closer to the emerging formal standard of the English

language, as well, in places, as more suitable for courtly readers (Waldron 1999: 281). However, the changes are less drastic and less numerous than the comment in the epilogue would suggest. A comparison of Trevisa's language and Caxton's convoluted prose in his prologue—'Grete thankynges, lawde and honoure we merytoryously ben bounde to yelde and offer unto wryters of hystoryes' (Caxton, *P&E* 64)—sharpens our sense of the clarity and easy flow of Trevisa's translation.

At roughly the same time that Higden started writing his universal history in Latin, a similar, but shorter and more modest, enterprise was begun in AN by Nicholas Trevet. His *Cronicles* was written probably between 1328 and 1335, in the first instance for Princess Mary of Woodstock, fourth daughter of Edward I, a nun; copies for wider distribution were also made. Mary of Woodstock did not live a cloistered life; most of her time was spent at court, and she lived an extravagant, possibly dissolute, life (Prestwich 1988: 126–8). Knowing that this lady and other royal and aristocratic readers tended to be 'enoiez de la prolixité d'estoires' [bored by the prolixity of histories], Trevet wrote a short and memorable history in their preferred vernacular (Dean 1976: 39). The history is enlivened by extended Arthurian passages, and material that might be expected to appeal to a royal nun with expensive tastes, such as the romance of Constance, later used by Chaucer in his *Man of Law's Tale* and Gower in his *Confessio Amantis*, in which sensational happenings and exotic environments are combined with near-martyrdom and missionary zeal. The story is dressed as historiography by reference at the beginning to 'les aunciene cronikes de Sessouns' in which Trevet says he found the tale, and the list of burial places of the protagonists at the end (Trevet 1958: 165, 181). The shorter of the two surviving redactions, ending in mid-sentence in the 1330s, was translated into English in the fifteenth century by an anonymous translator who is said to have followed his source fairly closely. An edition has yet to be published. The single surviving manuscript of the translation is associated with the prose *Brut*, which serves as a continuation, following it 'without a break, beginning in the midst of a line' (Matheson 1998: 325). Sections of Trevet's *Cronicles* were also used for interpolations in a number of prose *Brut* chronicles (Matheson 1998: 283, 331).

The desire for vernacular histories in prose, rather than verse, led during the fourteenth century in AN, and from *c.* 1400 in English and Latin, to the production of *Brut* chronicles, prose histories of England from legendary to more recent times, in the linear, chronological, and genealogical pattern established by Geoffrey of Monmouth. The author of the first of these works in AN, and subsequent compilers of later recensions and translators into English, generally remain unidentified. One translator appears to have worked in Herefordshire; another was tentatively identified by Brie as a 'John Maundevyle' (see Matheson 1984: 210; 1998: 6, 328–34).

Forty-nine AN *Brut* manuscripts survive. In its original form the text covered history from Brutus to 1272; subsequently a continuation to the death of Edward I in 1307 was added. Continuations made *c.* 1350 led to revisions and additions,

notably of a prologue. In the so-called 'short version' this prologue was in verse, in the 'long version' in prose. Both tell the foundation myth of Albina and her sisters, also found in Castleford's *Chronicle* and the AN poem *Des Grantz Geanz*, thus providing a logical prequel to the Brutus myth, including the giants, and an etymology of 'England'. With the exception of the so-called Oldest Version of the AN *Brut* (up to 1272), now available in an edition based on two complete and two defective manuscripts and a fragment (Marvin 2006), little of this material has been published in full: the same is true of material discussed in the next two paragraphs.

In the late fourteenth century it was the 'long version' of the AN prose *Brut*, running to 1333, that was translated into English, thus giving rise to the entire family of ME *Bruts* that survives today in 181 manuscripts and thirteen early printed editions (for detailed comment, see Kennedy 1989 and 2000; the only edition is Brie 1906). Together they represent a cluster of composite texts 'cobbled together' (Matheson 1998: 6) from texts of different types and with different continuations to bring the narrative up to date.

A Latin version also survives in nineteen manuscripts. One group translates the AN short version up to 1066, with added information derived from Latin chronicles; a second, deemed a 'sophisticated historical compilation' (Matheson 1998: 5), derives its basic framework and some content from the ME *Brut*. One subgroup was translated back into English, thus initiating a new category of ME *Bruts* extending to 1437.

In their linear, dynastic organization, legendary starting point, and dependence on Latin and AN historiography, prose *Brut* chronicles resemble the verse chronicles written earlier in the fourteenth century. However, there are important differences: translators, compilers, and continuators of the ME prose *Brut* are anonymous, and the prose texts were written in what may be regarded as an emerging standard of the English language, rather than the regional dialects of the verse chronicles. The style is matter of fact, yet lively: there is direct speech, but none of the rhetorical flourishes that characterized the verse chronicles. The prose texts also largely lack the polemical quality of the verse chronicles; comments on the social inferiority of English speakers or the enduring hardship brought by the 'Normans' are no longer found in them. Expressions of xenophobia, however, persist: the Lancastrian rebellion and the battle of Boroughbridge are attributed in both the English and AN *Brut* to the mixture of blood among the great lords: if the great lords had only been married to English women, there would have been peace (Brie 1906: 220; Maxwell 1995: 247).

In recent years there has been considerable interest in extending the knowledge gathered by Brie and Matheson, and in exploring the complex relationship between these texts, their sources, and the people who bought, read, or listened to these histories or added marginal comments (see, for example, Marx and Radulescu 2006). These researches, and editions and translations of complete AN *Brut* texts rather than extracts, may enable future analysis of the complex relations of versions and texts. However, that so many texts of a work that

went out of fashion in the sixteenth century are extant implies that an even greater number has not survived, a conclusion borne out by textual comparisons. It is rare, though not unknown, that direct links between manuscripts can be established, and each manuscript remains its own cultural artefact and cultural witness.

Occasionally extraneous matter is incorporated into the prose *Brut*. For example, in the English *Brut* continuation known as *An English Chronicle* (previously *Davies' Chronicle*), translated episodes have been incorporated from official documents, a Latin *Brut*, and the Continuation of the Latin *Eulogium Historiarum* (for comment, see Marx 2003: xi–ciii). Another example, surviving in an AN and an English version, is the intrusive text of a letter by Queen Isabella, sent to the citizens of London in 1326 (for the AN text, see Childs and Taylor 1991: 124–7; for the English text and commentary, Matheson 1998: 62–3). In the original French, the Queen asks Londoners, apparently having received no reply to earlier missives, for their assistance in her quarrel ('querele') with Hugh Despenser. The letter is translated as literally as possible, and retains the doublets typical of official correspondence in French: 'od bon arraye et en bon manere' becomes 'with good array and in good maner'; 'nous mandoms et prioms', 'we praye and charge', etc. The only difference concerns a slightly more threatening tone in French: the phrase 'qe nous neioms cause de vous grever' [(we hope) that we will not have reason to harm you] is not rendered in the English translation. However, this may be due, more simply, to eye-skip. Otherwise style, contents, and even cadence are as nearly identical as is possible in a translation.

Reports

Apart from translations of compendious histories like the prose *Bruts* or the *Polychronicon*, there appears to have been sufficient public interest in recent political events for the separate publication of relatively short accounts in Latin or French, and for their translation into English. Occasionally it may have been in the interests of one particular side in a political struggle to have such works translated. A political motive certainly lies behind the rapid translation and elaboration of an account, originally in French, of the momentous events of 1471, when, after a period of exile in the Low Countries, Edward IV returned to England and successfully reinstated himself. This account features in various forms in French, Latin, and Flemish manuscripts, among them Jean de Wavrin's *Anchiennes Chronicques d'Engleterre*. Known in ME as the *Historie of the Arrivall of King Edward IV*, it survives in a short and a long English version. The relationship between texts and manuscripts, and the identity of the person whose name appears at the end of the French version, was long unclear; the detective work of Livia Visser-Fuchs has, however, made a reconstruction possible. (For an edition of the French text, see Visser-Fuchs 1992; of the short English version, Green 1981. Thomson 1971 was written before the discovery of the latter; see also Kennedy 1989: 2704–5.)

At the base of the English texts lies a newsletter, called by its author a *mémoire à papier*, written in French for Edward IV by his Clerk of the Signet Office Nicholas Harpisflete (on whom, see Visser-Fuchs 1994–6). With a covering letter, the newsletter was sent to Duke Charles of Burgundy, thanking him for supporting the exiled Edward IV. A similar letter, also in French, but without the newsletter, was sent to the people of Bruges and Louis de Bruges, lord of Gruuthuse, who had made Edward welcome. The details about Edward's return were in this case, as the letter and the reply from the Bruges notables make clear, related by the messenger, 'le porteur' of the letter. Surviving copies of the newsletter came to be known as the 'short French version' of the *Historie*. Subsequently the newsletter was translated into English (the short English version, surviving in two manuscripts), no doubt to support Edward's case, and elaborated into the long account surviving in a transcript by Stow. Both long and short English versions were probably written within a year: the letter accompanying the newsletter sent to Charles of Burgundy is dated 28 May 1471; Green concludes that the English translations were probably written before the end of April 1472 (1981: 334–5).

In the French newsletter, Harpisflete, who had been in the Low Countries with Edward IV, shows himself aware that in different countries people do things differently. For that reason the author refers, for example, to 'xviii milles de noz milles' [eighteen of our English miles]. Throughout there is a strong identification with England and with Edward's cause; the tone is one of deference and personal strong feeling. The short English version shows a greater emotional distance from the events. It is less wordy: 'venir ne saillir' is translated as 'come', 'habitans et demeurans' as 'habited'. The later, longer English version also incorporates material from additional sources. As factual and lexical details show that it is more closely related to the French than to the earlier, short translation into English, the translator probably worked directly from the French (Green 1981: 332). Some of the information contained in the short versions in French and English, such as the date of Henry VI's death, appears to have been deliberately modified in the later, long version to remove any suspicion of Edward IV's possible personal involvement in Henry's death: in it, Edward is said to have already left London when Henry died in the Tower. The gradually decreasing authorial involvement in tone, and the factual changes of what had become politically sensitive information, illustrate a flexible, pragmatic attitude towards translation.

Historical narratives on topical subjects were increasingly written in English, and, where this was not the case, the language of the original may be uncertain— as with the 'English Rous Roll', which also exists in Latin (Kennedy 1989: 2708)—or untraceable due to loss of material. This is the case, for example, with the long prose account known as *The End of King Edward III and of his Death* (ed. Amyot 1829: 204–84; Kennedy 1989: 2714). Only the translation into English survives; the original Latin has been lost. However, as the editor notes, whenever the translator is in doubt, he makes a note in the margin of the original

Latin word. This suggests that he aimed at a faithful rendition of his source text. According to *The Index of Middle English Prose*, the text dates from the fifteenth century.

The account of the *End of Edward III* was written so that 'the posteritye may knowe what councellors the kynge used' (Amyot 1829: 224). The author, and presumably the translator with him, was driven by concern and fury at the possible influence of what he regarded as the corrupt, evil, and immoral counsellors (including a woman) who surrounded Edward III in his last days. The King, described as increasingly confused—ultimately virtually speechless—is nevertheless expected to be the fount of justice and right rule. Modern readers may well experience an emotive 'translation' on reading this text, and find that pity, rather than the moral indignation originally intended, prevails.

A very different topical prose narrative concerns affairs outside England. Guillaume Caoursin, Vice-Chancellor of the order of St John of the Temple, described in Latin, soon after the event, the siege in 1480 by the Ottoman Turks of the castle of Rhodes, and its successful defence by the order. The order was clearly well aware of the advantages of the printing press for propaganda purposes; Caoursin's *Obsidionis Rhodie Urbis Descriptio* was printed in the same year in Venice, and later elsewhere in Europe, including Odense (1482, by Johann Snell) and Ulm (1496, in Caoursin's collected *Works*, with a woodcut of the author presenting the volume to the Master of the order at Rhodes). Subsequently the story of Rhodes's successful defence was translated 'so often that it has been called a "European bestseller"' (Sutton and Visser-Fuchs 1997: 177–8); a translation into French was in the possession of Louis van Gruuthuse in Bruges (see Lemaire 1981: 216) and a translation into English, *The Siege of Rhodes*, by John Kay, was made for Edward IV. Although the editor claims that the (undated) work was printed by Caxton, it was more likely produced by Machlinia, publisher also of a ME *Brut*, after 1483, when Machlinia's partnership with John of Lettou, printer of law books, ended (but see also Kennedy 1989: 2713). The confusion is probably due to the remarkable similarity in style between Kay and Caxton.

Kay introduces himself as follows: 'To the most excellent, most redoubted, and most Christian King; King Edward the IV, John Kay his humble Poet Laureate and most lowly servant kneeling unto the ground saith salute' (1926: 1). Nothing is known of John Kay, whose frequent use of doublets reflects the current fashion: they are found in dozens on every page (for example, 'and when it was told and shown to George, he answered boldly and with shrewd language', 28). As Blake notes, 'it was a simple way of making one's style appear elevated' and 'as it was fashionable to heighten one's style, the simplest way of doing it was used unceasingly by the less competent authors' (1969: 141–4, 180). Otherwise the translation offers a lively, detailed, and understandably partisan account of the victory of the order. Its dissemination merits further investigation.

Later Historical Narratives in Prose and Verse

The interest in long metrical histories in English which characterized the period 1290–1340 was by no means entirely displaced by the later preference for prose. Among the translations of historical narratives towards the end of the period are two long ones in verse: *The Fall of Princes* by John Lydgate, and William Stewart's verse translation of Hector Boece's history of the Scots. Lydgate and Stewart are especially interesting for the way in which medieval conventions persist among inklings of new, humanist, concepts and fascinations.

In the huge *Fall of Princes*, Lydgate's most voluminous work, written at the request of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, between 1431 and 1438/9, Lydgate undertook to translate Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*. He did so at two removes, using the second version of a translation already much amplified by the original translator, Laurent de Premierfait. (On the general relation of Lydgate, his patron, and his sources, see further Chapter 2 above.) Premierfait's version, completed in 1409, became hugely popular; clearly the members of the French aristocracy who bought the text in often luxurious manuscript or (later) printed form did not share the modern opinion that Premierfait had effectively ruined what had once been 'the work of a great man' (Bergen in Lydgate 1924: xiv–xvii). Lydgate in turn added to the narrative: 'the process that Laurent had begun, that of inflating the *De Casibus* into a universal encyclopaedia of history and mythology, is continued by Lydgate, who amplifies, in much the same manner as Laurent, an already well-padded original' (Pearsall 1970: 232). Lydgate's translation of 36,365 lines of verse ranges from Adam and Eve to King Jean le Bon, and demonstrates how the sins and shortcomings of historical, mythological, and biblical personages led to their fall, as an exhortation to the reader to better himself. The work was very popular, both in its complete form— as 'coffee-table' manuscripts, prized possessions rather than books for reading from—and as extracts to be read for solace and moral exhortation (Pearsall 1970: 250–1). The advice is often commonplace, as is the cause-and-effect reasoning. Both the mentality informing Lydgate's translation and the procedure followed in the translating process are deeply medieval, and the profusion of stories from classical mythology does not make it any less so.

Earlier, in 1427, Richard Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, had commissioned Lydgate to translate a poem on a subject advancing a secular, political claim, 'The Title and Pedigree of Henry VI' (Lydgate 1934: 613–22). The poem had been written in French four years earlier by Laurence Calot at the request of John, Duke of Bedford and Regent of France, to defend Henry VI's claim to the throne of France. Lydgate, who at the time had 'assumed a sort of unofficial laureateship', followed Calot closely, turning out a translation whose message was 'skilfully angled, extremely explicit, and insistent' (Scattergood 1971: 72). However, it is also repetitive and not always easy to follow. Interestingly, the French poem had been intended to receive the support of a genealogy which was 'apparently hung alongside the poem in Notre Dame in Paris' (Scattergood

1971: 73–4) and reproduced in manuscripts (Pearsall 1970: 189 n. 14). It was not unusual for poems on dynastic subjects to be supported by such 'visual aids'—another form of translation—in the course of recitation; these might take the form of specially designed tableaux or of existing sculptures (Scattergood 1971: 74–5; Dragstra 2002: 65–77). If histories were to serve as guidelines, they had to be remembered, and words supported by 'visuals' would be more easily retained.

Moral guidance through the medium of written history and the education of the young—in this case a young king—about his country's history was also the motive for the translators of Hector Boece. In 1527 Boece had completed his *Scotorum Historia*, telling the story of Scotland from its origins to the death of King James I in 1437 (Boece 1527). The work, written in humanist Latin, with a learned, European audience as well as educated Scottish readers in mind, was published in Paris, where Boece had studied and known Erasmus, whose 'humanist interests and enthusiasms' he shared (MacQueen and MacQueen 1988: 236). Yet conceptually his history belongs to the Middle Ages through its lengthy account of a Scottish origin myth, its claim to knowledge of an ancient source, possibly 'a forgery which he had been misled into adopting' (Webster 1975: 19–20), and its emphasis on legendary rather than recent history.

The *Scotorum Historia* was instantly popular in Scotland and France. A French translation and three different Scots translations were made a few years after its publication. One of the Scots translations was by an anonymous author, the so-called Mar Lodge version (ed. Watson 1946); the other two, in prose by John Bellenden and verse by William Stewart, were made at the request of James V. Bellenden's translation was presented to the King at the end of October 1531. Curiously, a few months earlier, in April 1531, also at the King's request, William Stewart had begun his verse translation, completed September 1535.

Bellenden had held a position in the King's household between 1515 and 1522 as clerk of expenses. Later he appears to have been precentor of Glasgow Cathedral and, from 1542 to 1555, Rector of Glasgow University. His translation survives in a printed edition and eleven manuscripts, some of them copies of the printed edition. The relationship of the manuscripts to one another and the printed edition, and the question of Boece's possible involvement in the revision of the printed version of Bellenden's translation, remain unresolved (Royan 1998: 136–7); the STS edition, followed here, is based on the luxurious manuscript made for King James V, now in the Pierpont Morgan Library (Bellenden 1938, 1941). Bellenden's continued revisions show that, like Trevisa, he knew that 'no synful man ... makith so god a translacioun that he ne myght make a better' (*IoV* 134). The revisions often appear to be made 'in the interest of prose style rather than accurate translation' (Sheppard 1941: 442).

Bellenden's translation, as presented to James V, starts with a preface evoking Erasmus, and is followed by seventeen 'books' and an envoy, called by Bellenden a *ballat*, headed by the phrase 'The Translator sayis to his buke as follows' (Bellenden 1941: 403–9). Both preface and *ballat* stress the educational value of the work. Bellenden followed Boece's text closely, but also added, omitted, or

condensed material, albeit on a modest scale. A more fundamental change is his introduction of chapter divisions and chapter headings outlining the contents of each chapter. As a result, the work becomes less a sustained patriotic treatise than a reference work where information can be found easily, with readers prepared beforehand for what they are to hear. Incidentally, the chapter divisions have made the work much easier of access for modern scholars. Combined with the faithfulness of the translation and the absence of a modern edition of Boece's Latin original, this has resulted in the widespread but erroneous use of Bellenden's text as an exact vernacular equivalent of the Latin (on this, see Royan 1998; Mapstone 1998).

William Stewart, who was requested to make a metrical version of Boece's *Scotorum Historia* before Bellenden's prose translation was quite finished, also held a position at court. He is thought to have become James's tutor in 1525–6, and to have belonged to a group with a shared 'professional interest in the moral and political education of the king' (MacDonald 1996: 187; cf. McDiarmid 1988: 36). The metrical translation survives in a single, rather damaged manuscript (Turnbull in Stewart 1858: vi).

Like Bellenden, Stewart subdivided his text, but did so much more frequently than Bellenden: Stewart's rubrics, summarizing the contents of what is to follow, mostly occur every few dozen lines. Stewart's narrative unfolds at a leisurely pace in simple language. Stopgaps to fill in a rhyme, like 'as my author writis' or 'as I haif tald', are frequent, but also cause the author's/translator's presence to be felt throughout. Stewart has an entirely independent prologue (surviving in a somewhat defective state), in which an unnamed woman requests a translation of the book by 'Hector Boyis of nobill fame' (73), as the King is 'nocht perfite | in Latyn toung' (112–13), so that he may 'tak exempill baith of ill and gude' (51). The general educational and uplifting effect on the human spirit of listening to 'old stories' is stressed: 'Thair is nothing moir gudlie to avance | No auld storeis put in rememberance' (120–1). Approaching the end of his translation after 61,260 lines, William Stewart states that he began his long labour on 18 April 1531 and wrote every day till 29 September 1535, when he can write at last 'Adew, fairwell, I haif no moir to sa' (61,277).

Stewart emphasizes that he set out to write a history 'in plane termis' (152), since it is tedious to read books one cannot understand (115). It would seem that he had in mind from the start his primary reader, young King James V, aged 19 at the time of the commission. The King was not known for intellectual interests, although he was a good musician; he preferred chivalric activities like jousting and hunting. Even his ability to read English has been questioned (Easson 1947: 29–31). Stewart translated accordingly, by *re*lating rather than *trans*lating his source text, concentrating on matters of human interest, and skipping lengthy descriptions of the deployment of armies and strategic measures, lists of names, or anything that he considered 'difficult'. For example, Bellenden, like Boece, mentions quite briefly how King Uther Pendragon is poisoned and then proceeds with a long passage on coeval important persons and events,

among them Boethius and Scottish saints, each preceded by the phrase 'The samyn tyme' (365–7), thus positioning events in Britain in a wider framework. Stewart mentions none of these people, but gives a much longer, more dramatic account of King Uther's illness and death (26,681–700), simply stating the year in which Uther's death took place. In this way the scope of his narrative, which has been embellished with sensational details, is limited to Britain, while its content has been adapted to appeal to a public with an interest in romance rather than scholarly disputation.

Whereas Bellenden offered the King an attractive, readable account of Scottish history in the vernacular, comparable in standard to its Latin original, Stewart presents his King with something completely different. His verse history may perhaps be dubbed 'A Young Person's Guide to Scottish History', offering a lively, anecdotal account of all important events, and underscoring its memorable moments with considerable visual and empathetic detail. The two translations illustrate how, in the early sixteenth century, several options were open to translators: Bellenden's moderate adaptation and repeated revisions, possibly with Boece's own involvement, signal a clear respect for textual integrity, while Stewart operates as a medieval metrical chronicler, using a source text as a basis for an almost independent work with a strong, personal imprint.

The last translation to be discussed in this chapter is the version (1523–5) of the *Chroniques* of Jean Froissart, undertaken at the request of Henry VIII by John Bourchier, Lord Berners. Like all the translators of historical matter discussed so far, Berners combined his work as a translator with other occupations in the King's service. (On Berners's other translations, see p. 324 above; on his other duties, p. 426 below; on the royal commissioning of the Froissart translation, p. 105 above.)

Berners's Froissart was popular from the start; the first volume was printed three times between 1523 and 1563, the second twice (1525 and 1563). Records of ownership show that many aristocrats were interested in having this book in their libraries, with its descriptions of fourteenth-century chivalric warfare. An extant fragment of a manuscript copy of the translation, probably based on an (unknown) printed edition, suggests that some of Berners's noble readers still preferred to read about the past from handwritten rather than printed books (Boro 2004: 242).

In his preface, Berners tells readers that whenever he remembered 'the many-folde comodyties of hystorie', he would start reading all kinds of histories again: 'and ever when this ymaginacyon came to me, I volved, torned, and redde many volumes and bokes, conteyning famouse histories' (Berners 1901: 5). Although Berners mentions by name only the four volumes of Froissart's chronicle here, echoes in sentiment and in vocabulary suggest that he also read Caxton's *Poly-chronicon* and other histories.

Like Caxton in the prologue to the *Polychronicon*, Berners begins by prais-ing 'writers of historyes', asking who else 'have done so moche profyte to the humayne lyfe?' (Berners 1901: 3). Caxton had similarly pointed out that all

humankind ought to be grateful to 'wryters of hystoryes, which gretely haue prouffyted oure mortal lyf', as they plainly set before posterity 'ensamples of thynges passyd what thynge is to be desyred and what is to be eschewed', and how the 'grete jeopardyes' of our ancestors 'have enseygned [taught], admonested and enformed vs' (Caxton, *P&E* 64). This is rendered thus by Berners, outdoing Caxton in the accumulation of (near) synonyms:

They shewe, open, manifest and declare to the reder, by example of olde antiquyte, what we shulde enuere [honour], desire, and folowe; and also what we shulde eschewe avoyde, and utterly flye: for whan we (beynge unexpert of chaunces) se, beholde, and rede the auncyent actes, gestes, and dedes, howe and with what labours, daungers, and paryls they were gested and done, they right greatly admonest, ensigne, and teche us how we maye lede forthe our lyves.   (Berners 1901: 3)

Berners's assurance, towards the end of the preface, that he has not followed his author 'worde by worde' but trusts that he has transferred the 'sentence of the mater' correctly (6), echoing Jerome's dictum, suggests familiarity with Trevisa's discussion, in his *Epistola*, of the proper way to translate. These phrases may, however, have become common, almost proverbial, knowledge. Possibly commonplace, too, is the example used to alert his readers to cultural and historical relativities: like the author of the newsletter source of the *Historie of the Arrivall of King Edward IV*, Berners warns that when the word 'miles' is used in the translation, it may not refer to the distance familiar to English readers, since 'every nacion hath sondrie customes' (6).

It is not known which Froissart text Berners used, whether in manuscript or in print, or both. The advanced stage of corruption of French place names and proper names in Berners's translation suggests one or more texts well removed from one of Froissart's redactions of the *Chroniques*.

A remarkable feature of Berners's translation is the discrepancy between the language he uses in his independently written prologue and in the text of the translation. As the quotations used so far show, however eloquent, ornamental, and rhetorically impressive it is intended to be, the language of the preface strikes the modern reader as almost parodic. Certainly the translation would not have remained so popular for so long if Berners had refashioned into this rhetorical style Froissart's lively story with its easy flow and its realistic, almost cinematographic attention to the details of colours, the weather, terrain, dress, and much more. Fortunately this did not happen; in W. P. Ker's words, 'it is really Froissart in English, and in English that sounds like Froissart', an English about which 'there is nothing remarkable . . . except that it cannot be bettered' (Ker in Berners 1901: xii, xxi).

There is general agreement that Berners succeeded admirably in transmitting a 'true reporte of the sentence of the mater' (6). Even though his translation is not, strictly speaking, always very accurate, he has been praised for the fact that it 'never has the taste of a translation' (Anderson and Anderson 1963: x). Rather than becoming 'invisible' in his rendition of Froissart's prose, Lord Berners became 'the

English Froissart', almost an author in his own right, of a text that was reprinted for centuries—even to this day—in a variety of forms, as full text, selections and adaptations in modernized spelling, and as children's literature (Croenen 2005). No other translation discussed in this chapter has had such a long life; other translations featured here are now mainly enjoyed for their value as objects of research. Some, however, had a longer life than is immediately obvious by their incorporation in sixteenth-century histories and, through that medium, as Bullough (1957–75: IV, 1–15) and Kingsford (1913: 253–74) have shown, in Shakespeare's history plays. In this way the work of many medieval translators of chronicles and historical narratives lives on.

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5.6 Classical Authors

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Introduction

The relationship of medieval English literature to classical authors was of tradition rather than translation. As long as to be literate normally involved belonging to the clergy, whose language was Latin, the Latin classics were a literary heritage to be retold, continued or imitated, like the *Aeneid* in Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia Regum Britanniae*, but there was no great point in translating them. Nor indeed did the *Aeneid* or the works of Ovid, Lucan, or Statius have the status accorded them in the Renaissance, of works whose meaning and style needed to be recovered. They were rather the heads of streams flowing down the centuries through such works as the *Gesta Romanorum*, and of which even the first writers in English, from Laȝamon to the 'Ricardian' poets of the late fourteenth century (Chaucer, Gower, and the author of *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*), were part. Moreover, the immense sacred authority of Latin as the language of the Vulgate and the liturgy gave a special weight to the feeling which, as late as 1515, Gavin Douglas expressed when he apologized to Virgil for translating the *Aeneid*: 'that thi fecund sentence [meaning] mycht be song | In our language as well as latyne tong | Als wele, na, na, inpossible war, per de' (Douglas 1957–64: II, 4).

This general picture, however, is fully true only in the high Middle Ages. The linguistic situation is different in the periods before and after, when a flourishing vernacular literature testifies to the existence of a large number of readers happier with English than with Latin: that is, the period between the late ninth century and the Norman Conquest, on the one hand, and the late fourteenth century and the Renaissance, on the other. In the intervening centuries, Latin largely elbowed aside both English and the Norman French which was the first language of the upper classes, and we find in consequence little translation from classical Latin into either.

The overwhelming dominance of Latin as the language both of learning and of the Church, moreover, probably acted as a deterrent to the study of Greek. In the ninth century, John Scottus Eriugena translated a number of works of Plato and his followers into Latin. Thereafter, we hear of little until the thirteenth century, when Robert Grosseteste, Roger Bacon, and Richard of Bury all urged the importance of learning Greek. Important as Greek philosophy was in Latin translation, it was not till the late fifteenth century that the study of the Greek language made headway at Oxford and Cambridge, and not till about 1530 was there any direct translation from Greek into English. When it comes, as we shall

see briefly at the end of this section, it is a symptom of the Renaissance and a principal cause of the Reformation.

A further paradoxical deterrent was the dependence of secular Latin literature itself on Greece. The medieval English authors derived a great deal of the literature they knew ultimately from Greece: but the Greece they knew was the image of an image, whose derived power proved a wall against direct acquaintance with Greece itself. Of the authors principally treated in this section, Virgil's *Aeneid* was modelled on Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica*, the *Odyssey*, and the *Iliad*; Ovid and Statius took their tales from Greek mythographers now mostly lost; *Apollonius of Tyre* is probably the translation of a Hellenistic romance whose genre the *Odyssey* established; and Boethius in his *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, the principal work to be studied in this section, represents the distillation into Latin of a tradition of philosophy which goes back ultimately to Plato and Aristotle. Paradoxically, the further an author was removed from direct acquaintance with Greece, the more powerful became the image of Greece.

It is partly a matter of freeing the imagination, and partly a matter of the magical power of certain myths and stories and images of cities (Troy; Thebes; Athens) when stripped to their essentials. The extreme case, perhaps, is *Sir Orfeo* (see also p. 311 above). The story, already known to Euripides (*Alcestis* 357–62), was mediated to the Middle Ages by Virgil (*Georgics* IV), Ovid (*Metamorphoses* X–XI), and Boethius (*Consolation* III m. 12): in *Sir Orfeo* it has become a Breton fairy story, and, in one of the three surviving copies, Thrace, its original setting, has become Traciens, a name, we are told, for Winchester. In Robert Henryson's *Fables*, which he ascribes to Aesop, a number go back to Greek sources: to Babrius, Phaedrus, and perhaps Aesop, although as early as we hear of them they are floating tales for anyone to put into words. Henryson's principal source is probably the Latin elegiacs of Gualterus Anglicus (Henryson 1981: xlv); Henryson thinks of Aesop, when he dreams of him, as a Roman. In Henryson's retelling his sources flourish again with an elegance, point, and life rivalling La Fontaine.

Chaucer's image of Greece is clear and powerful: we remember, in *Troilus and Criseyde*, the walls of Troy, Greece's Other, from which Troilus watches for Criseyde's return, or the house of Criseyde outside which he lingers (V. 533–9, 666). If the *Iliad* had never been composed, these would probably never have been imagined: but they are the product of Chaucer's imagination working on what he received from Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato* and perhaps from the *Aeneid*. Behind Boccaccio's Troy lie the *Historia Destructionis Troiae* of Guido delle Colonne and the *Roman de Troie* of Benoît de Sainte-Maure, to which Chaucer adds the Latin poem of Joseph of Exeter, based on the Latin prose chronicle of the war, the *De Excidio Troiae* of Dares of Phrygia (Windeatt 1984: 11–18). It is only behind these that we reach the multifarious Greek sources (including the *Iliad*) which Chaucer never read.

The case is similar with the ultimately Greek myth and legend which Chaucer takes from Statius' *Thebaid*. In *Troilus* Chaucer gives to Cassandra a summary of

Statius' history which is glossed by a Latin epitome, to explain why Diomede appeared as a boar in Troilus' dream. Tracing Diomede's ancestry back to Meleager, who killed a boar sent by Diana, is one of the many ways in which Chaucer adds depth to Boccaccio's story (V. 1450–1519; cf. Windeatt 1984: 538–43). At least as vivid as Chaucer's Troy is his Athens in the *Knight's Tale*, which he takes from Boccaccio's *Teseida*, itself an outgrowth and continuation of the *Thebaid*; but he supplements it by direct evocations of Statius for the homecoming of Theseus and the temple of Mars (I. 859–1004, 1967–2050: *Thebaid* XII. 519 ff., VII. 34–75).

In both *Troilus* and the *Knight's Tale* Chaucer's Greece receives its philosophical foundation, through Boethius' *Consolation*, from the Greek philosophers on whom Boethius drew. Consequently, it is Boethius whom we must first, and principally, consider, to find how this main conduit of Greek and Roman thought began to flow in England, since, by contrast with the other major Latin classics, four full translations were made of the *Consolation* during the Middle Ages in England. (Medieval receptions of Boethius are themselves a major field of study: see further Minnis 1993.)

Alfred's Boethius

R. W. Chambers, recommending the study of the Dark Ages just before the Second World War—very movingly, because in the Dark Ages the choices of particular individuals certainly changed the general fate of nations—quoted from the OE translation of Boethius, 'I say as do all Christian men, that it is God's purpose which rules, and not Fate.' And, commenting on the assumption, almost certainly correct, that Alfred was the translator, he added, 'on this belief the Danes broke' (Chambers 1939: 79). The quotation is not only a key to the character of Alfred and his achievement in defeating the Danes, but a good starting point for the study of Alfred's intention as a translator (see further §3.2 above); it comes from a passage where Alfred makes plain his conviction of what Boethius' work ought to be saying: which is not quite the same as the word-for-word meaning of the Latin text. In what follows, translations of Boethius' Latin are based on those of 'I.T.' in Boethius 1918; Alfred's Boethius is cited by chapter number alone, in the edition of Sedgefield, whose modern translation is also followed (Alfred 1899, 1900). Waite 2000: section 10 provides a comprehensive bibliography (to 2000) of relevant secondary literature.

The books which, in the words of the preface to his translation of the *Cura Pastoralis* of St Gregory the Great, Alfred considered most necessary for all men to know—including, most obviously, the *Consolation*—are concerned with good government at a time of tribulation, with the means of knowing God, with the glory of God's creation, and with the immortal destiny of the soul. They probably date from the 890s, during or just after the last wave of the Viking attacks, when Alfred's building of ships and establishment of a system of fortified *burhs* was proving effectual against them, part of that same attempt to re-establish a

strong, well-governed, and Christian country after the ruin caused by the Danish invasions.

It is therefore tempting to contrast Alfred's situation at the time of translating the *Consolation* with Boethius' at the time of writing it, imprisoned on a charge of conspiring against Theodoric, the Gothic king of Italy, to reunite Italy with the continuing Roman Empire under Justinian at Constantinople, and expecting what he received in 525, the death of a traitor; and to interpret the different stresses of the two versions in the light of this contrast. If, therefore, where Boethius (II pr. 2) stresses the need for the wise man to rise above the vicissitudes of fortune, Alfred stresses the necessary involvement of man in the world (VII), we might interpret this as a contrast between the inheritor of Stoic philosophic tradition in a falling world, and the founder and defender of a well-organized kingdom in an age of resurrection and growth. The author of a major study on their relation drives this contrast so far as to deny Alfred the name of translator: as a 'Christian existentialist', Alfred is using the framework of the *Consolation* to attack Boethius' Stoic idealism (Payne 1968: 143). But this obscures how much the two have in common. They share a conviction that, although we seem to live among tribulations, we live in a world created and sustained by a good God, and therefore all fortune is good; and they end with the same appeal: 'there is, if you are willing to avoid pretence, a great necessity for virtue imposed upon you, since you act under the eyes of the Judge who beholds all things' (V pr. 6).

And most certainly Alfred is a translator in the sense defined in the Proem to the *Consolation*: 'hwilum he sette worde be worde, hwilum andgit of andgite.' It is probably misleading, with modern views of translation in mind, to translate this 'sometimes he put down word for word, sometimes sense for sense'. For when Alfred speaks of the absolute rational vision of angels in XLI, he uses the same word *andgit* in contrast to the fallible reason of man: so that perhaps we should render his phrase 'sometimes word for word, sometimes insight for insight'. Although Alfred is certainly interested in the historical circumstances in which Boethius came to write the *Consolation*—he outlines them at the beginning—he is not interested in the book as the opinions of Boethius, as a translator in a more historicist age would be. Where it is clear to him that what the book ought to have said differs from the actual words, he sets down the insight. This suggestion returns us to his contrast of God's purpose with fate, with which we began.

In IV pr. 6, Boethius, expounding the contrast between fate and God's providence, and the fact that, while all things are under God's providence, some are above fate, uses the image of a circle. He probably has in mind the heavens, since everything in his image turns about a centre or axis. The further things are from the centre, the more they are subject to fate: things directly joined to the centre are above fate. These latter may mean eternal truths, but later development of the argument suggests they would also include good men. The sequence of fate, which moves, is related to the stable simplicity of God's providence not only as a circle to its centre, but also as discursive intellect (*ratiocinatio*) to understanding (*intellectus*), as what becomes or is produced (*gignitur*) to what is, and as time to

eternity. In the following sentences, however, Boethius stresses that the sequence of fate governs the heavens, the relations of the elements, and all living things, and constrains the acts and fortunes of humanity by an indissoluble connection of causes. For things are best governed when the divine simplicity brings out an order of causes which cannot be deflected, although this order may seem confused to those who have not the capacity to consider it.

Alfred begins and ends this passage (XXXIX) as Boethius does. But for the circle he substitutes the more homely, concrete, and detailed image of a cartwheel, of which God is the axle, the things nearest to God the nave, and the whole wheel fate, which Alfred translates as *wyrd*. The outermost parts of the wheel go on the earth, and wobble: so Alfred stresses here, like Boethius elsewhere, the double nature of men, who, like the spokes, refer themselves both to the axle and the earth, except for the very best who refer themselves only to God. The meanest are confused, as by the wobbling of the wheel, by the world's tribulations.

Further, the image of the cartwheel and its axle enables Alfred to modify the relation of providence to Wyrd. In particular, he preserves the contrast of *intellectus*—his *gearowita*, full understanding—and *ratiocinatio*, which is both examination (*smeaung*) and discrimination (*gesceadwisnes*); and ends by stressing that in the contrast of wheel and axle it is the wheel that governs the whole cart. Just so God's providence governs the movements of the heavens, the relations of the elements, and the growth, death, and renewal of all things. Here Alfred reveals that he is aware of stressing the immediacy of God's will more than Boethius, who sees providence as mediated by fate. For, says Alfred, 'some philosophers'— presumably he includes Boethius—'say that Wyrd governs the happiness and unhappiness of every individual. But I say, as all Christian men say, that . . . divine foreintention . . . governs them, and not Wyrd. And I know that it governs all things very rightly, though it does not seem so to undiscriminating men.' Thus, from the immediacy of God's will, Alfred arrives at the same conclusion as Boethius' from the mediation of providence by a chain of causes.

A number of the pervasive transformations of Boethius' text by Alfred appear in this passage. The most obvious is the difference in material culture. Alfred is writing a *Consolation* for his own time. The circle conjures up the whole tradition of which Boethius gives the conditions at the beginnings of his book, when he describes his library (I pr. 4) as the place where he learnt from Philosophy the knowledge of nature and the mathematics of the stars. This passage Alfred omits. The cartwheel, by contrast, suggests several passages where Alfred assumes a less sophisticated and more robust civilization than Boethius'. Thus, in what Helen Waddell (1934: xxvii) singles out as the tenderest passage in the *Consolation* (III m. 2), Boethius imagines a bird in a cage that, having seen the shadows of its native forest, scatters its food with its claws, singing in longing for the trees. Alfred substitutes a hawk which, taken into the woods, resumes its former life, and makes the trees echo to its voice (XXV).

More crucial to Alfred's thought is his use of the word *wyrd*. In the present passage, he uses it to translate *fatum*, and, in opposing it to God's foreintention

('seo godcunde foretiohhung'), seems to be influenced by the old pagan sense, found in *Beowulf*, of a dark force independent of God, which he may overrule. But earlier and later in the chapter, where Boethius stresses the dependence of fate on God's providence (IV pr. 6), Alfred (XXXIX) interprets *wyrd* differently. Boethius stresses that fate is the unfolding in time of what in God's providence is a simple unity, and that 'fate, inherent in changeable things, is a disposition by which Providence connects them in their due order'. Here Alfred puns or etymologizes *wyrd* and *wyrcð*, rendering 'but that which we call *wyrd* is God's work that he works every day. . . . But divine providence ['foreþonc'] restrains all creatures, so that they do not relax out of their order.' Later, Boethius, picking up on the incapacity of the unphilosophical to understand the causes of things, speaks of 'that noteworthy wonder of the order of fate ['fatalis ordinis'] when what is done by Him who knows stupefies the ignorant'. Alfred, tacitly identifying himself and his readers with the ignorant, seems to note the different weighting in Latin and English of *fatum* and *wyrd* by returning to his earlier play on *wyrd* and *wyrcð*: 'we call it *wyrd*, when the discerning God, who knows every man's needs, does or allows ['wyrcð oððe geþafað'] what we do not expect'. In both passages, the pagan tinge to *wyrd* is eliminated.

But the play on different treatments of *wyrd* enables Alfred, in the next chapter, to use it to translate *fortuna*, when Boethius argues that because of the universal reign of God's purposes every *fortuna*, whatever we think of it, is good. With this doctrine, stressing the immediacy of God's care, Alfred is in full agreement, and translates faithfully (XL). Early in the *Consolation*, however, in his chapter VIII (corresponding to II pr. 2), Alfred had made another alteration concerned with the role of Fortuna in the world, whose scale and tone demonstrate a deliberate departure from Boethius.

Here fortune is displaced by Wisdom, Alfred's masculine interlocutor throughout the *Consolation*, replacing Boethius' feminine interlocutor Philosophy. In Boethius' original text, Fortune is given by Philosophy a speech of self-defence: she gave Boethius honours and riches never truly his, and then took them away, acting according to her nature. Boethius should have known her nature from the story of Croesus, brought low by Cyrus but saved by rain from death by fire.

All this is deftly and thoroughly transformed by Alfred, who will no more ascribe the course of this world to fortune than to Wyrd. Wisdom, he says, gave worldly honours and riches to Boethius, and then took them away after he had enjoyed them, to prevent him from trusting them. They are not the true honours and riches which accompany Wisdom, and which Wisdom has not taken from Boethius. Wisdom would always fulfil his own nature, were it not that wicked men pervert to their own uses the skills and crafts which come from him. Wisdom raises the lowly to the heavens, above the storms of the world, and brings them down to earth again to help good men in need. Wisdom sent the rain from Heaven that rescued Croesus (Alfred is closer here to the source of the story, Herodotus, who attributes the rain to Apollo, than Boethius was).

Boethius should change with the world, knowing that Wisdom is always with him.

After this speech, by way of proving that Alfred knows what he is about, Wisdom puts into the mouths, not of Fortune but of a group representing her, the Worldly Prosperities ('Woroldsælða'), a much shorter speech reproaching Boethius for putting them in the place of God, and so preventing them from performing the will of their maker, to be enjoyed according to his commandments.

In this chapter, as elsewhere in his translation, Alfred's understanding of Wisdom owes much to the Book of Proverbs, especially Proverbs 8 (although there Wisdom is feminine). In Proverbs, Wisdom cries out to men to receive her, gives them riches and honour, knows by acquaintance the ways of God in creation, and nurses and supports kings, especially Solomon, the book's dedicatee. One sees how important it was for Alfred to transfer from fortune to Wisdom the act by which 'I received thee foolish and untaught when first thou camest among men' (VII, cf. II pr. 2).

It is also in praise of Wisdom that Alfred allows the voice of a king to break through Boethius' less authoritative voice. When Philosophy has enlarged on the theme of the wickedness of office given to wicked men (II m. 6), Boethius allows himself one sentence of self-defence (in II pr. 7): 'thou knowest that ambition in mortal affairs had almost no power over me; but I desired matter for active government, so that my strength should not sink silent into old age.' Alfred enlarges this 'matter' into the tools that a king needs: the three classes of men of prayer, of war, and of work. To this generically medieval list, which Clemoes (1995: 334–5) finds its first recorded use, Alfred adds a well-peopled land, gifts, weapons, food, ale, and clothes. Yet even with these, the king's craft will soon grow old and be forgotten, without wisdom. This most royal scope is succeeded, however, as is Boethius' apology, by a meditation on the insignificance within the total universe of even the greatest and most deserved fame (XVII).

In transposing Philosophy into Wisdom, Alfred is fully aware of how much he is deepening what Philosophy said to Boethius. He is also consciously straightening out and rendering Boethius' text into the ideal form it ought to have as Wisdom's voice; apparently he takes a hint from Philosophy's first lyrical address to Boethius—'Heu quam praecipiti mersa profundo | Mens hebet' [Alas, sunk in what a headlong deep your mind grows dull] (I m. 2)—to give to Boethius, from a little earlier in this chapter (III), the name *Mens*, rendered as *Mod*. Alfred continues the practice until XXIV: Boethius simply uses the first person pronoun, as does Alfred from XXIX on.

Neither *mens* nor *mod* has an easy equivalent in modern English: both are wider than 'mind', may include 'will' in the sense of determination, and perhaps are best thought of as the whole determined part of personality. But Alfred's choice of Mod to represent Boethius makes this first third of his translation, predominantly concerned with Boethius' loss of power, wealth, and earthly felicity, more of an universal dialogue between Wisdom and Mod.

Who or what, then, is Alfred's Wisdom? In the *Consolatio* (I pr. 1), Philosophy is elaborately visualized, young in appearance yet apparently from an earlier era; sometimes having the stature of a man, sometimes piercing the heavens; in clothes never needing renewing, but tattered and torn by those who took what pieces they could get; with both books and sceptre, driving away the poetical Muses who cluster around Boethius' sickbed. Of this allegory Alfred leaves only Wisdom's learning, torn by his disciples, and Wisdom's command to worldly cares to cease troubling his servant's *mod* (III): nothing is further visualized. Yet it could be argued that, as Clemoes says (1995: 382), Wisdom is livelier than his 'stiff and formal' Latin counterpart.

It is tempting to identify Wisdom with the figure on the Alfred Jewel, itself related to the figures both of Sight, on the Fuller Brooch, and of Christ in the Book of Kells (Campbell 1982: 137). In XLI, enlarging on Boethius' teaching (in V pr. 4) that we understand things more by our capacity to understand than by their nature, Alfred asserts that Wisdom, which men can only partly understand through individual insight (*andgit*), is God, and draws an analogy between the primacy of wisdom and that of sight among the senses.

The place of Wisdom in creation is most apparent in the passages where Alfred finds Boethius expressing his delight in God's creative love. He exultantly enlarges the four hymns in which Boethius describes those things which most constantly and evidently pour forth God's creative love: the movements of the stars and the seasons; the relations of the elements. Yet II m. 8, where Boethius takes occasion from Philosophy's observation that ill fortune shows a person's most precious treasure—faithful friends—to praise love as the ruler of the universe, Alfred transforms in XXI into another paean to the power and skill of God, and omits all mention of love as a general guiding principle, except at the end, which refers to the *clænlic luf* of marriage and the harmony of friends. It is a startling contrast to Chaucer's version of the same hymn at the end of *Troilus and Criseyde* Book III, although natural enough when one considers how little part romantic love seems to have played in the literature of the earlier Middle Ages, how much in the later. The end of III m. 9 is one of Alfred's closest and noblest translations, the prayer for light to see and rise to God. If, to the prayer here that the eyes of our mind (*mod*) be enlightened with 'thy light, because Thou art the brightness of the true light', we join the acclamation, at the beginning of XXXVI, of Wisdom as the herald and forerunner of the true light, it seems as if Alfred would be happy to see spiritual light, Wisdom, and God as representing one another, and, by implication, as united in Christ. In his last two chapters XLI–XLII, when he says that Wisdom is God, Alfred is in most exalted mood. These represent the greater part of Boethius' Book V, much abbreviated. Alfred abbreviates, not because he is incapable of the abstract arguments of Book V (witness his analysis of the threefold soul in XXXIII). But as with the cartwheel replacing the circle, he prefers concrete exemplification. More importantly, he changes Boethius' main emphasis. The *Consolation* is a work deliberately of philosophy, the last fruit of

the pure classical tradition. Alfred's book, however, or Alfred's reading of the ideal form of Boethius' book, is one of wonder and worship.

Granted, Alfred could not have read the *Consolation* in the Neoplatonic tradition in which Boethius wrote it. Conspicuously, when Boethius (III pr. 12) invokes Plato's doctrine of anamnesis, or recollection of what is obscured by our entry into bodies, to explain our knowledge of the good, Alfred (XXXV) understands this as a knowledge lost through the sluggishness of the body, and the confusions and occupations of the mind. He implies—only by analogy with a man born with perfect sight who goes blind shortly before middle age—that even the wicked possessed this knowledge in childhood (XXXVIII, developing a hint from IV pr. 4).

Other instances show that it is not through philosophical inadequacy that Alfred differs from the Neoplatonists. Boethius' most audacious philosophical conclusion, that since good men are blessed (*beatus*), they must participate in beatitude, and since *beatitudo* is God, then, by what geometricians call a 'corollary', men must by participation become gods, is argued Neoplatonically from the doctrine that qualities are a participation in forms. This doctrine Alfred is presumably unfamiliar with, but he grasps intuitively what Boethius is at, substituting for the corollary of the geometricians the sort of analogy (*bisn*) which philosophers (*uðwitan*) use: just as by reflection the stars and moon receive varying degrees of brightness from the sun, so all forms of good come from God. So both Boethius and Alfred contrive a philosophical path to the doctrine that every blessed man is in some sense a god. But a crucial difference remains: Boethius (III pr. 10) receives this conclusion with philosophic calm: Alfred (XXXIV) with astonishment and fear ('agælwed and swiþe afæred').

Alfred also omits the metaphysics by which Boethius in Book V leads up to his most original contribution to philosophy, the distinction (V pr. 6) between infinite duration and eternity, because the latter holds a past without beginning, a present, and a future without ending, in one simultaneous moment ('interminabilis vitae tota simul et perfecta possessio'): but, again, he does so not through philosophical disagreement nor even philosophical inadequacy. For although, at one point, Alfred states that men and angels differ from God because the former have a beginning but no end, while the latter has neither, he does not leave the matter there. With a flash of humour unparalleled in the *Consolatio*, Alfred says that if we were to riddle out thoroughly this difference, we should come late to an end for this book, or never (XLII). Crucially, we know the past only by memory or enquiry, and the future still less, for only what is, is present to us. But to God 'everything is present, whether what was before, or what now is, or what shall be after us: all that is present to him'. All three are present to him, and he enables them all, as Alfred points out in an image of his own of a skilful steersman who furls the sail and makes all fast to prevent his ship being injured by a storm (XLI). His repeated 'al þæt is him andward' demonstrates his grasp of Boethius' more technical point (V pr. 6): we do not speak of God's 'foresight' or 'previdence' but only of his providence.

This doctrine, difficult and paradoxical, enables Boethius and Alfred to assert free will within their common sense of the fulness of God, and to end their books—existentially, as Payne would say—with an exhortation to prayer ('humiles preces in excelsa porrigite', 'biddað hine eadmodiglice' [pray humbly to him]), and, as if the whole book had existed only to deepen our sense of what is due to God's presence, with a call to action.

Consistent with this ending, indeed in a sense consequent upon it, is a sentence added by Alfred at the end of his disquisition on the ambitions of a king, relating his own past and present to the time after his death. As Clemoes points out (1995: 127, 398–9), Alfred's sentence, in contrast with the exhortations of heroic literature 'to rise actively to each occasion', harmonizes private effort and public estimation in terms of a consistent moral will. Past and future, private and public, are balanced; 'to be brief, I may say that it has been my will to live honourably while I was alive, and after my life to leave to the men who should come after me my memory in good works' (XVII). Paradoxically, Alfred's awareness of being on the same path to eternity as Boethius frees him to deepen and straighten out Boethius' book. He writes as Boethius does under the eyes of God, whom he addresses in his noble version of III m. 9: 'Thou art the way, the guide, and the place to which the way leadeth: to Thee all men tend' (XXXIII).

Apollonius of Tyre

The romance of *Apollonius of Tyre*, translated a century or so later, is in marked contrast with the *Consolation*, in its sense of time and human destiny, and consequently in the way in which it renders its Latin source. The *Apollonius* is set wholly in time, within the temporal world of fairy tale, of chances that try men's characters, of illusions and mistakes: the world through and beyond which Boethius and Alfred intend to draw their readers. In more radical contrast with Alfred, though not with Boethius or Chaucer, the characters' constancy is that of romantic love. It is the unique survival of what must have been a much larger body of literature.

The surviving fragment of the translation represents the more elaborate of two versions of the story popular throughout the European Middle Ages and through most European languages. The OE version is close to being consistently *wordum be wordum*, though modified by a certain reticence both in diction and in ethics to produce a prose style hardly paralleled in OE or ME for charm and simplicity. It is the only piece of prose apparently written for pure entertainment to survive in OE, and that only because it occurs in a manuscript along with homilies by Bishop Wulfstan and other documents with a better chance of survival. The manuscript is of the mid-eleventh century, and the translation may have been made half a century earlier. (For the OE version, see Thorpe 1834, here used, or Goolden 1958; for a modern translation, Swanton 1993; for the Latin original, Archibald 1991.)

The story is best known today as reworked by Shakespeare in *Pericles Prince of Tyre*. It begins with the rape of the daughter of King Antiochus by her father, who then makes a riddle to conceal their incest. Solving the riddle, Apollonius must flee for his life. Eventually he arrives at Pentapolis, where he wins the hand of Thasia, Princess of Cyrene. She apparently dies at sea while giving birth to a daughter, who is then separated from her father and later reported to him as dead. But neither is dead, and the story ends with Apollonius' amazed recovery of both daughter and wife. The OE version lacks the middle part, after Apollonius wins the hand of Thasia; all that remains, after the opening sections, is Apollonius' recovery of her at the end.

The Latin text, which may have had a Greek original, is one of several romances originating in the Hellenistic world under the Roman Empire. They recount love affairs, dangerous journeys to far countries, and brushes with and recoveries from death. *Apollonius* introduces into Anglo-Saxon literature, perhaps from these romances, the need 'to exercise personal responsibility when undergoing experience' for which no heroic convention provides a pattern (Clemoes 1995: 361).

This theme of personal responsibility appears in the text's treatment of romantic love. The very phrase 'fall in love' is first recorded in English in *Apollonius*, apparently inspired by the Latin *incidit in amorem*. It describes Antiochus' incestuous love of his daughter and the Princess of Cyrene's love for Apollonius ('þa gefeol hyre mod on his luf', Thorpe 1834: 1, 17). The strangeness and irresistibility of love in its various forms which the Latin text connotes are chastened by the narrator as part of the developing experience. The narrative of Antiochus' rape of his daughter is necessarily violent. But whereas the Latin tells the fury of his lust ('stimulante furore libidinis diu repugnanti filiae suae nodum virginitatis eripuit', Archibald 1991: 112) [the fury of lust aroused him, and from his daughter, though she long resisted, he took the knot of her virginity], the English, after introducing the sentence by the heroic *hwæt*, is deadly quiet: 'hwæt, he þa on þære manfullan scilde abisgode and þa ongean winnendan fæmnan mid micelre strengðe earfoðlice ofercam' (Thorpe 1834: 2) [*Hwæt*, he then busied himself at that wicked sin, and hardly overcame that struggling woman with his greater strength].

In both Latin and OE, the story of Thasia is as delicate and subtle as the other was violent. But even here in the Latin the phrase *incidit in amorem* is amplified by *infinitum*, and introduced by a reminiscence from the *Aeneid*, of Dido after the feast at which she fell in love with Aeneas, 'vulneris saevo carpitur igni' (Archibald 1991: 128) [she suffers the fierce fire of a wound]. These words the English omits. But at the girl's first action of love, when she persuades her father to restore to Apollonius all he lost by shipwreck, the Latin merely states that she looked at Apollonius and said what her father allowed. The English adds the phrase 'þa sweoðe bliðe uteode and cwæth' (Thorpe 1834: 17) [then she went out very blithely and said]. Next, in the Latin she persuades her father to give Apollonius lodging, 'timens ne amatum non videns torqueretur' (Archibald

1991: 130) [fearing lest she should be in torment, not seeing her beloved]: in the English, 'ða adred þæt mæden þæt heo næfre eft Apollonium ne gesawe swa raðe swa heo wolde' (Thorpe 1834: 18) [then the girl was afraid she might never again see Apollonius as readily as she would like]. The compassionate irony is as if Jane Austen were rehandling a passage from one of the Brontës.

Because of the huge gap in time and culture represented by the Normans, between the late eleventh century and the mid-fourteenth, we cannot very securely generalize from *Apollonius*, in particular about English prose, best represented in the early ME period by devotional literature (as noted by Chambers 1932). But, as we shall see when we come to deal with Chaucer's and Gower's handling of love, and particularly with Gower's translation into verse of the Apollonius story, something of the Anglo-Saxon compassion and irony is going to reappear. What continuity there may have been with the OE period in this respect is wholly obscure.

Versions of Boethius and the Apollonius Story in Middle English

In the century following the Norman Conquest translation from Latin into the vernacular lapsed. One might regard this as a cultural disaster: but the readership was, to a large extent, transposed into Latin, so much so that, in the twelfth century, William of Malmesbury 'comes pretty close to a smile at the idea of translating Boethius at all' (Patch 1935: 46): in Alfred's time, he writes, it may have been necessary, but in his own time the idea is laughable ('labore illis diebus necessario, nostris ridiculo'). There are two conspicuous exceptions to this general rule, both to do with Boethius. One is a free version of the whole of the *Consolation* into AN (*c.* 1194–7) by Simund de Freine, apparently at Hereford. Under the name of *Roman de Philosophie*, it renders both prose and metres alike into verse and enriches them with moralizations and illustrations from natural science (Legge 1963: 183–4). The other is the continued use of Alfred's translation itself. The later of the two surviving manuscripts of his *Consolation* was copied in the twelfth century; the translation resurfaces, before 1303, in the commentary on the *Consolation* by Nicholas Trevet, a Dominican friar (in the following paragraphs, information about Trevet's commentary is indebted to Donaghey 1987).

Trevet's commentary draws on a wide variety of commentators, particularly the twelfth-century William of Conches. It uses Alfred's translation at a number of points, notably at *Consolation* IV pr. 6, to rebut William's assertion that when Boethius says that Fate is operated by providence 'through a soul' (*anima*), he means the world-soul, since Alfred says 'monna sawla' [the souls of men]; and, in the same prose, to interpret Boethius' passage about concentric circles as an image of the relation of the world to Fate and God's providence. Trevet actually translates into Latin the whole relevant passage, where Alfred transposes the circles into a cartwheel, introducing the double nature of men who may refer themselves either to the axle, which is God, or to the earth on which the

wheel goes. Trevet's gloss is of further interest to us because it seems to influence Chaucer's translation of Boethius at this point in his *Boece*: which demonstrates that when later translators like Chaucer, Trevisa, and the authors of the Wycliffite Bible appeal to Alfred's translations (on this, see Ellis 2001: 10–16) they are genuinely appealing to a developing tradition.

Chaucer preserves a literal rendering of Boethius' words at IV pr. 6, and does not overtly adopt either the image of the wheel or the interpretation that the best people are so united to God, the axle, by love (which Trevet renders 'per affectum') that they are indifferent to the wandering course of fate. But he then glosses his version so that it reads

In so moche is the thing more fre and laus fro destyne as it axeth and hooldeth hym neer to thilke centre of thingis (*that is to seyn, to God*), and gif the thing clyveth to the stedfastnesse of the thought of God, and be withoute moevynge, certes it surmounteth the necessite of destine.

'As it axeth and hooldeth hym neer' represents Boethius' abstract 'vicinius petit', and 'thought of God', 'supernae mentis'. Together with the gloss 'to God', these phrases bring 'the thing' within a hair's breadth of being 'the man', and Boethius' purely dynamic image to something approximating to Alfred's love of God.

It seems possible that Chaucer has this interpretation of Boethius in mind in his description of how, in the *Man of Law's Tale*, in response to Custance's prayer, God enables her to surmount her destiny by means that are dark to us who 'ne konne noght knowe his prudent purveiance' (II. 483, cf. Curry 1960: 190), although the turn to prayer in the last words of the *Consolation* may be equally responsible.

Chaucer probably began his *Boece* in the early 1380s along with *Troilus and Criseyde*. Before then his more Boethian thoughts are, as in *The Book of the Duchess* or *The Parliament of Fowls*, general; thereafter, they are regularly precise and even verbal. He evidently meant the *Boece* for a general readership, since a scrap of verse ('To Adam Scriveyn') rebukes his scrivener for not copying it and the *Troilus* more faithfully, and in fact some ten manuscripts survive in whole or in part, as well as the early prints of Caxton and Thynne. But since there is no dedication or direction to a particular patron or reader, he may well have begun it for himself. It is debated whether it is a finished work or merely a draft. The principal evidence in favour of the latter—the existence in the text of alternative translations (so Machan 1985: 117–18)—really points the other way. For the first translation is regularly literal and ambiguous, the second clearer and more idiomatic. In most modern translators, or indeed in most stylists other than Chaucer, this might point to an intention to substitute the second rendering for the first. But when one considers the habitual and delighted irony of Chaucer's own natural style, the case is reversed. For example, at the opening of Book II pr. 1, in Boethius' Latin, 'post hec paulisper obticuit atque ubi attentionem meam modesta taciturnitate collegit', it is ambiguous whether the modest taciturnity is Philosophy's, by which she attracts Boethius' attention, or Boethius',

by which she infers it. Chaucer renders the ambiguous phrases 'After that sche hadde ygaderede by atempre stillenesse myn attencioun . . . (as who so myghte seyn thus . . . whan sche aperceyued by atempre stillenesse that I was ententyf to herkne hire . . .)'. Thus in his first rendering he respects Boethius' ambiguity and the reader's freedom of interpretation, but in the second, following Trevet, and perhaps attracted by his moral and physiognomic point that appropriate silence shows a good listener, he offers the reader a preferred but not finally determined sense. And so it continues throughout the translation.

Yet the lyrics in which Chaucer renders Boethius freely—'The Former Age', 'Truth', 'Gentillesse', 'Lak of Stedfastnesse'—are among his least ironic works, and his finest renderings of the *Consolation*—Troilus' song to Love at the end of Book III of *Troilus*, rendering II m. 8, and Theseus' speech at the end of the *Knight's Tale*, which draws variously on II m. 8, III pr. 10, IV pr. 6, and IV m. 6, are ironic only dramatically. Troilus' song is motivated by his love for Criseyde, and Theseus' speech by two wishes, to make a treaty with Thebes, and to unite Palamon and Emily: but the song does not express Troilus' mistake of thinking that Criseyde's love, like the love that moves the universe, will be everlasting, and Theseus' speech explicitly applies Boethius' philosophy only to Palamon and Emily, for whom it is perfectly valid.

Theseus' speech and the ending of *Troilus* both suggest that we act rightly and set our ends on true felicity only if we look at the whole universe in its relation to the Creator. Contrast the ironic passages which express views that Boethius' protagonist eventually abandons as partial: Arcite's outcry about our blindness in choice (*CT* I. 1251–67, from III pr. 2), Criseyde's thoughts about false felicity (III. 813–33, from II pr. 4), and Troilus' agony over freewill (IV. 958–1078, from V pr. 3). Both *Troilus* and the *Knight's Tale* implicitly, and the ending of *Troilus* explicitly, contrast the ambiguity and false felicity of this world with 'the pleyn felicitee . . . in hevene above' (V. 1818–19) and return to Chaucer's first extant brush with Boethius, in his translation of the *Roman de la rose*, the possible motivation for the *Boece* (Jefferson 1917: 113):

> 'In erthe is not oure contre'
> That may these clerkis seyn and se
> In Boece of consolacioun,
> Where it is maked mencioun
> Of oure contre pleyn at the ye,
> By techyng of Philosophie,
> Where lewid men might lere wit,
> Whoso that wol translaten it.
>   (*Romaun*t B 5659–66)

Two works seem to depend on Chaucer's translation—*The Testament of Love* of Thomas Usk, completed before 1388, and the translation of Boethius by John Walton (1410). (For fuller comment on Usk, see Medcalf in *MTr* 1 and Medcalf

1997; and, on Walton, Johnson 1987.) Usk's *Testament*, though written in the tradition of courtly love of the troubadours, of Dante, and of the *Roman de la rose*, and presenting *Troilus* as dealing with the problems of the relation of man to God 'at the ful', is in prose which, building on Chaucer's *Boece*, is the first attempt in English at high prose, *Kunstprosa*, rivalling poetry. At one point (II. ii) Usk professes to be translating into prose what he can remember of a Latin song. Presumably he is here evoking Boethius' form, but he has no other songs: this one is professedly an intermission in the argument, but also a point where Usk turns a consideration of a personal predicament, shared with Boethius, into a lamentation by Love about her rejection in the world. For Usk takes the opposite path to Alfred: where Alfred transforms Boethius' interlocutor from Philosophy to Wisdom, Usk transforms her to Love. He does so very consistently; when he most draws out of the *Consolation* the discussion of men's substitution of partial goods for the ultimate good, he makes it a discussion of four false ways—riches, dignities, power, and renown—of achieving Love. His prologue professes to be gleaning after Boethius in this respect, and the *Testament* does so for some two-thirds of its length, often using stretches of the *Consolation*, with the *Boece* to help him. But, by the time he makes his last ascription to Boethius (II. xiii), Usk is already turning to another source, St Anselm's treatise *De Concordantia Praescientiae et Praedestinationis Necnon Gratiae Dei Cum Libero Arbitrio*, which in Book III he follows closely: more closely than he did Boethius. He weaves the two together finally into a profound meditation on the analogy between human love and divine love and grace in the terms of Chaucer's distinction, in *Troilus*, between feigned loves and false felicities and the 'pleyn felicite' and love of God.

Like Simund de Freine, John Walton, an Augustinian canon of Oseney Abbey, Oxford, translated the whole *Consolation* into verse. He once changes verse form: the first three Books are in eight-line stanzas, the last two in rhyme royal, the stanza form of *Troilus*. The change, as Walton explains in the prologue to Book IV, reflects the shift to more excellent subject matter. In both metres, the form gives the writing an elegance and point which neither Chaucer's nor Usk's prose achieves. Were it not for nearly contemporary works in prose by Hilton, Julian of Norwich, the anonymous author of *The Cloud of Unknowing*, and the anonymous translator of Suso, one might simply say that philosophical and contemplative prose had not developed a proper discipline of order and clarity to replace the discipline of verse. One can see the contrast clearly in the last sentence of V pr. 3, where Boethius concludes his profound struggle about the impossibility of prayer and our loss of power to unite us with God if belief in its efficacy is destroyed by belief in predestination: 'Quare necesse erit humanum genus, uti paulo ante cantabas, dissaeptum atque disiunctum suo fonte fatiscere.' Chaucer conscientiously overtranslates: 'for which it behoveth by necessite that the lynage of mankynde, as thou songe a litil herebiforn, be departed and unioyned from his welle, and failen of his bygynnynge (that is to seyn, God).'

Walton has

> And all oure labour is not worth a bene
> But all mankynde stant disioyned clene
> As fro theire heed departed alwey wrong
> Right as whilere ye seiden in youre song.
>   (Walton 1927: 299)

At times, of course, the opposite happens, and the pointedness of Walton's verse betrays him into overt error where Chaucer's extended literalism keeps within the bounds of ambiguity, as when the caged bird of III m. 2 is let out of her cage by Chaucer through an overtranslation of *saliens* (*skipping about*) as 'skyppynge out' but still 'desyrynge the wood'. Walton disastrously destroys the pathos by following the line of escape:

> If he may ones skyp out and be fre
> Hys lusty mete he casteth vnderfote
> And to þe wode ful faste sekiþ he
> And croweþ wiþ a wonder lusty note.
>   (135)

Walton had the lay reader steadily in mind: he acknowledges his commission by a figure of 'noble excellence' in the first stanza, identified in the Tavistock edition (1525) of Thomas Richard as Elizabeth Berkeley, the daughter of Thomas, Lord Berkeley, for whom John Trevisa had translated Higden's *Polychronicon* and Bartholomaeus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum*. Father and daughter were, then, representatives of the revived readership for translations from the Latin. Through the fifteenth century Walton's version remained, so far as one can judge from the surviving number of manuscripts (22), more popular with such readers than Chaucer's.

For the new readership of the late fourteenth century, two further versions of the Apollonius story were produced, one surviving only in fragmentary form (see comment in Archibald 1991: 193), the other the crowning tale, in Book VIII, of John Gower's *Confessio Amantis* (Gower 1901: II, 393–440: see further Yeager 1990: 216–29). Unlike the OE version, both are retellings more than word-for-word translations. Gower claims as his source the Latin version in Godfrey of Viterbo's twelfth-century chronicle of world history, the *Pantheon*. Perhaps Gower specifies the *Pantheon* for the effect of grandeur and historicity, for he certainly also used one of the original Latin versions, or at least a text with details in it deriving from one of them. He rehandles his sources thoroughly in his own mode, which is as apparently simple in its didacticism as subtle in its verse-craft and concrete detail. More overtly than any other version, he asserts the moral of the excellence of honest love, the condemnation of unkind love. The part played in the incestuous relationship by Antiochus' pride is as much stressed as his lust.

Over against this moral pattern is that of Fortune's wheel, bringing Apollonius
down until the moment when, having recovered his daughter, he rises with the
upward motion of the wheel. All is treated—a favourite phrase of Gower's—'at
a softe pas'. Even in the rape, committed 'with strengthe', Antiochus still 'hath
leisir at his wille'. No phrase like that in the OE, of falling in love, is used of
him or of the Princess of Cyrene. Although the latter favours Apollonius for his
love and *gentillesse* from the outset, the process of her loving him is gradual as he
teaches her music: after some undefined length of days she finds that when she
thinks of him she is alternately hot and cold in her heart, and red and pale 'after
the condicion of her ymaginacioun' (Gower 1901: II, 409).

 The quick, smooth movement of Gower's verse underlies the powerful but
never violent handling of the story, and the part played in it, as in all versions, by
the sea as emblem of fortune. The storms which must occur are passed over in few
words, but where the Latin text has 'navigat ad Pentapolim Cyrenaeam; pervenit
feliciter', the English has 'The wynd was good, the see was plein, | Hem nedeth
noght a Riff [to unfurl a sail] to slake | Till they Pentapolim have take' (II, 439).

Translations of Ovid and Virgil

In the person of his Man of Law, Chaucer gives a catalogue of his own story-
telling, and rejects the idea of telling the story of Apollonius as too 'horrible'.
The Man of Law further says that Chaucer 'hath told of loveris up and down | Mo
than Ovide made of mencioun' (II. 53–4). Most of these are in fact derived, at one
distance or another, from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides*, and in some, as of
Ceyx and Alcyone, Thisbe, or Philomela, Chaucer and Gower run parallel. (For
comment on Chaucer's use of Ovid, see Fyler 1979; on Gower's, Yeager 1990: ch.
3; comparing both, Schmitz 1989, Dimmick 2002: 280–5. A good general account
of Chaucer's relation to the Latin classics is Harbert 1974.)

 What Chaucer and Gower particularly share is a feature of the style of their
age, an eye for significant concrete detail, and when they find this in their sources
they give it all the value it has in the original, or more. Thus Gower, taking
from Ovid Alcyone's transformation into a bird when she finds her drowned
husband Ceyx, focuses on her attempt to behave like a human wife (in Ovid's
words, 'Dilectos artus complexa recentibus alis | frigida nequicquam duro dedit
oscula rostra', *Met*. XI. 738–9), but he removes the chilliness of her kisses and the
chilling mockery of the stress on limitation (*nequicquam*), to give one of his most
charming imaginations,

> And him so as sche mai suffise
> Beclipte and keste in such a wise
> As sche was whilom wont to do:
> Hire wynges for hire armes tuo
> Sche tok, and for hire lippes softe
> Hire harde bile . . .
>
>   (V. 3103–8)

moving easily into the happy ending when the constant love of Ceyx and Alcyone fulfils itself in their new form as seabirds.

Chaucer denies himself this possibility: for in his telling of the story of Ceyx and Alcyone in *The Book of the Duchess* (ll. 62–230), as in fact in all the stories he takes from the *Metamorphoses*, he removes what Ovid uses to weave them together, the supernatural changes. But in other parts of the stories he may overgo Gower in his translation of detail, as for example in the story of Thisbe in *The Legend of Good Women*, with details varying from the *coctilibus muris*, walls 'of hard tiles wel ybake' built in Babylon (*Met*. IV. 58, *LGW* 709), to the *ore cruentato*, the 'blody mouth' with which the lioness marks Thisbe's wimple (*Met*. IV. 104, *LGW* 820).

A translation of a complete Ovid text, the *Metamorphoses*, was produced before 1483 by William Caxton. Based not directly on Ovid's Latin but on one or other of the French moralized Ovids, it may have been intended for publication, but it survives only in manuscript, and leads nowhere (recent discussion is in Lyne 2002: 250–2). Ovid is better represented in the piecemeal translations of Chaucer and Gower, which blend sense for sense with word for word at will and according to sensibility.

But it is with an author whom Gower does not translate that Chaucer's use of this piecemeal technique is most striking: Virgil. (For comment on Chaucer's translations of Virgil, see Rudd 1994: ch. 1; and, comparing Chaucer with Caxton and Douglas, Burrow 1997: 21–4, Desmond 1994: 166–76.) In rendering Virgil, Chaucer unwittingly stands at the beginning of the tradition of full translation. More than any other classic, Virgil's *Aeneid* stands at the fountain-head: admired and read too much to be translated. Yet in reading it as a classic, few medievals probably appreciated what we have learnt to regard as its distinctive features: its re-creation of epic as subjective by means of handling of viewpoint; Virgil's own presence in it; and the delicate interaction of quantity and stress in his metric (see further Otis 1964: 41–96). Arguably, Chaucer did understand these things; Gavin Douglas, though inspired by Chaucer, was probably able to achieve the particular grandeur of his own version only because he did not (see further Lewis 1942: 32–8).

Virgil's transformation of the objectivity of Homeric epic has affinities with the way in which Chaucer transformed traditional English narrative: each did so by making overt the play of subjectivity. Virgil defers until line 8 the invocation of the Muse which Homer had set in line 1 of both his epics, and asserts instead, in the third word, his own presence as poet ('arma virumque cano'). In his *House of Fame* Chaucer reasserts the subjectivity while, rightly or wrongly, suggesting a modesty in the claim: 'I wol now synge, yif I kan, | The armes and also the man' (HF I. 143–4). A little later, when Venus appears to Aeneas disguised as a huntress ('venatrix dederatque comam diffundere ventis'), Virgil gives a wonderfully mimetic flow to the wind in her hair in the second half-line by placing the main caesura between two short syllables, instead of after a long syllable, and supplementing it with two lesser caesuras, the first after the three

long syllables of 'venatrix', the second before the natural lilt of 'diffundere ventis'. Chaucer creates the same effect with 'as she had been an hunteresse | With wynd blowynge upon hir tresse' (HF I. 229–30). How subtly Chaucer give us some qualities peculiar to Virgil can be recognized by comparing these two examples with Gavin Douglas: first, 'The batalis and the man I wil discryve', and second, 'As scho had bene ane wilde hunteres | With wynd waving her haris lowsit of tres'. Both are entirely subdued to Douglas's own straightforward narrative style and rhythm: the contrast is particularly striking in the second case, copied from Chaucer, but without the subtlety.

Douglas was partly prompted to his translation of the *Aeneid* by emulation of Chaucer's variations on it: partly, by reaction against Caxton's versions, *The Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye* (1469–71, printed 1474, reprinted 1503) and *Eneydos* (1490). The former he respects, because it does not claim to be a translation: the latter, he says, does not 'translait' but 'pervert' Virgil. Caxton admits in his prologue to the latter that he is translating Virgil not directly, but from a French version (that published in Lyons in 1483). But Caxton omits Virgil's Book VI, calling it 'fayned, and not to be byleuyd' (Caxton 1890: 120)—possibly Chaucer's reason for omitting the transformations of the *Metamorphoses*—extends Book V, and, like Chaucer, who followed Ovid in this respect, portrays Aeneas as Dido's betrayer: almost a medieval norm, though not all medievals condemned Aeneas (see fuller discussion in Desmond 1994). Douglas is reacting against this norm.

Insofar as he is following a medieval pattern, it is that of Chaucer's *Boece*. He incorporates into his translation material from classical and more recent commentaries on Virgil: but he respects the original text and the intention of the original writer, whom he devoutly admires. For all his scholarship and concern to give Virgil's full sense, though, the result does not sound like Virgil. (Many of the following examples are shared with Bawcutt 1976.) Probably Douglas did not recognize the quantitative basis of the Latin hexameter. Some evidences of false quantities in his translation suggest as much, as when he renders 'manibus et cineri si qua est in cura remitto' (X. 828) as 'Onto thy parentis handis and sepulcre | I the belief to be enteryt quod he' (III, 283), as if the first syllable of the line were short, unthinkable in a quantitative hexameter, and the word meant *hands*, rather than the spirits of the dead.

Probably, then, he read the *Aeneid* as if written in a roughly stressed metre like his own. This enabled him to see it as a poem of vigorous sound patterns, swift narrative, and vivid pictures. Quite often, he echoes Virgil's sound patterns of alliteration and onomatopoeia, as for example when he gives, for 'sonitum dat stridula comus' (XII. 267), 'The sovir [safe] schaft flaw quhisland with a quhir [whir]' (IV, 94). Yet even here the concision of Virgil is gone, and Douglas produces, as always, the loose vigour of late medieval alliterative verse. He omits 'the architectural pleasure' of Virgil, 'when one takes delight, not only in what is said, but in a sense of…an obstreperous medium…masterfully subdued' (Barfield 1928: 86–8).

As we have said, Douglas tends to reverse Virgil's subjectivization of epic. In Book V, for example, where the games are transformed by a continual change of viewpoint, each incident seen through the eyes of one of the contestants, Douglas blurs the supporting movement of the verse, to give an overall picture of events. When Gyas throws his steersman Menoetius overboard and Menoetius struggles up on a rock, Virgil gives an already farcical description, which keeps Menoetius at the centre, partly through the heavy quantity and elisions of the first of two lines, partly through the heavy-sounding but violent actions in the participles which refer to him: 'illum et labentem Teucri et risere natantem | et salsos rident revomentem pectore fluctus' (V. 181–2). Douglas gives three instead of two descriptions of the Trojans' laughter, expanding their terseness, adding rhyme and an easy narrative movement: we see the Trojan crowd rather than the unfortunate steersman and join with the multiplied farce:

> The Troianys lauchys [laugh] fast seand hym fall,
> And, hym behaldand swym,thai keklyt all,
> Bot mast, thai makyn gem [game] and gret ryot,
> To se hym spowt salt watir of hys throte.
>
> (III, 204)

Ezra Pound, who disliked the architectural pleasure of verse, thought Douglas better than Virgil (1951: 58); and C. S. Lewis, who admirably praises Virgil's secondary epic (1942: 32–8), somewhat overpraises Douglas (1954: 84) with the double-edged metaphor of cleaning a picture. Lewis gives us the revelatory side of such cleaning when he cites Douglas's description of Venus, 'her nek schane like unto the roise in may', for Virgil's 'rosea cervice refulsit'. But Douglas's gaudy introduction of colour words to Virgil's descriptions demonstrates the destructive side, as in the case of the dead Lausus. Virgil has 'et terra sublevat ipsum | sanguine turpantem comptos de more capillos' (X. 831–2) and Douglas

> The ded body vplyftis fra the grond
> That with red blude of his new grene wond
> Besparklyt had hys ȝallow lokis brycht,
> That ayr [previously] war kemmyt and addressyt rycht.
>
> (III, 284)

Douglas, one might say, followed the principle of word-for-word translation, or perhaps tried to transcend the distinction between it and sense for sense, by including in the meaning of each word not only its immediate sense but all that is implied in it. Thus, well aware that languages attach different spreads of meaning to their words, Douglas often includes, sometimes mistakenly, the etymology in his rendering. In his prologue to Book I (ll. 349–50) he highlights *oppetere*, for which he says he must use three words instead of one. For he has learnt from the classical commentary of Servius—wrongly—that *oppetere* is derived from *ore terram petere*; accordingly, when he comes to *Aeneid* I. 96, where this etymology

is attached, he makes Aeneas say that those who died at Troy were fortunate because they 'deit in thar faderis syght, bytand the erd' (II, 26).

Douglas's intention to give Virgil his full rights was of the Renaissance: what he produced was a medieval poem. By contrast, a generation later, Surrey, although he used Douglas as an authoritative crib, produced something that sounds much more like Virgil, but had to create a new form of verse, blank verse, to do it. He translated only Books II and IV of the *Aeneid* (published in 1557, ten years after his death); but they remain among the best renderings of Virgil in English. (Surrey's *Aeneid* belongs to Volume 2 of the *History*.)

In one main theme, his presentation of Aeneas as a model of virtue, Douglas is solidly of the Renaissance. He had not always thought so well of Aeneas. In his *Palice of Honour* (1501), he had spoken of Dido and 'hir fals luf Enee' (l. 564), a view he shared with Chaucer: but in the prologue to his *Eneados*, he says that Chaucer 'gretly Virgill offendit' in saying that 'Eneas to Dido was forsworn' (II, 14–15). He also firmly rejects the allied tradition, found for example in Guido, that Aeneas betrayed Troy as well.

In this positive portrayal of Aeneas, Douglas is probably following the commentaries of Cristoforo Landini (1487) and Jodus Badius Ascensius (1501), and the added thirteenth book of the *Aeneid* by Maphaeus Vegius (1476), which, as an afterthought (he claims), he includes in his translation (for fuller comment on this Virgilian supplement, see Cummings 1995). In these he found Aeneas presented as not merely a hero but a model of 'wirship, manhed and nobilite | With euery bonte belangand a gentill wycht | Ane prynce, ane conquerour or a valʒeand knycht' (II, 12).

John Bellenden's translation of the first four books of Livy (1534) is indebted to Douglas's *Eneados*, if for nothing else, for the statement, in Bellenden's dedication to James V, that not only good men, but rulers in particular, could find matter of instruction in his Livy: 'ʒe may also be mony stories see | Quhat besynes may proffitt or avance | ʒoure princely state with ferme continuance' (quoted Bawcutt 1976: 85, 194–5).

Translations from Greek into English

Douglas and Bellenden followed the fashion of translations not only from Latin but from Greek during the late fifteenth and first part of the sixteenth centuries. In them three characteristics may be observed, which seem to have impelled their resort to the Greeks as well as the Romans: a concern for education and what Stephen Greenblatt (1980) calls Renaissance self-fashioning for the gentry; an interest in providing advice for rulers; and an interest in rhetoric, conceived both as a matter of manners and as a means of persuasion.

These developments seem to have got going earlier in the fifteenth century with Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester. An accomplished Latinist himself, Humphrey modelled himself on Italian princes and, attracted by Leonardo Bruni's Latin translation of Aristotle's *Politics*, commissioned several Latin

translations from the Greek, and was sent others unsolicited: of Plato's *Republic*; of 'three orations of Socrates'; of Plutarch's Lives of Artaxerxes and Marius. In 1430, similarly, he proposed reforms to the University of Oxford, leading to greater study of rhetoric and classical antiquity (Vickers 1907: 352–75; Parkes 1992: 426, 474). One of the first to turn Greek authors into English was John Skelton in the 1480s with Diodorus Siculus' *Bibliotheca Historica*, less for the sake of history in itself than because of Diodorus' belief that it 'frameth vs vnto maners and to vertue addressith' and 'soueraynly assistith lusty eloquence' (Skelton 1956–7: I, 7–8). He used Poggio Bracciolini's Latin abbreviation of Diodorus, but enormously expanded it into aureate rhetoric, partly with the aid of Reuchlin's *Vocabularius Breviloquis*, published in 1478 (Skelton 1956–7: II, xx–xxvii). Caxton praised Skelton's translation in the preface to his *Eneydos* (1890: 109), but it did not achieve print in its own time, and survives only in one imperfect manuscript.

Skelton's use of a Latin version to translate a Greek was, for the next fifty years, as much as a Greek author could hope to achieve in England. Noteworthy instances are associated with the circle of Sir Thomas More and Erasmus. More produced Latin versions of Lucian's *Menippus*, *Cynicus*, and *Necromantia*. All were translated anonymously into English, the first, possibly, by More's brother-in-law John Rastell, who printed it about 1530 (Laine 1972: 141–2). The edition of the *Necromantia* included both the translation and More's Latin version, on facing pages, 'for the erudicion of them which be disposyd to lerne the tongis' (Lathrop 1933: 37). Another example of a Greek text translated by way of a Latin version is Proclus' *De Sphaera*, translated into Latin by Thomas Linacre and thence into English, in 1550, by William Salesbury, whose major translations were into his native Welsh.

Meanwhile, the teaching of Greek was penetrating the universities. Greeks taught at Oxford from 1462 (Catto 1992: 780–1). William Grocyn lectured there on Greek literature in the 1490s. Erasmus began lecturing in Greek at Cambridge in 1511, and there were official lectures in Greek at Oxford in 1512 (McConica 1986: 21). But direct translation from Greek was not so much motivated by humanist concerns as driven by the wish to translate the New Testament for every Christian to read or hear.

Of course, it would be misleading to separate the two currents of Humanism and Reform. Probably in 1523, when William Tyndale was seeking permission and patronage for his proposed translation of the New Testament of 1525, he offered Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, his translation of 'an oration of Isocrates' as a sample of his abilities. The translation is lost (Daniell 2001: 47). It nevertheless ranks as the earliest instance of translation directly from Greek, before the two candidates normally advanced for the honour, Gentian Hervet's version of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus* (*c*. 1531–2) and Sir Thomas Elyot's of Isocrates' *Letter to Nicocles* (*c*. 1531–4).

In this context, another 'first' merits brief mention, the translation of Euripides' *Iphigenia in Aulis* by Lady Jane Lumley (1537–68): the first play in English by a woman, and the first play translated from Greek into English. Lumley also

translated orations of Isocrates into Latin, so she may have translated Euripides directly from Greek—the Attic Greek of both Euripides and Isocrates offered 'good texts for beginners in Greek translation' (Purkiss 1998: 168)—though she also used the Latin translation of Erasmus as well, working from a copy which came to her father from Cranmer, after the latter's arrest in 1553, in which the Greek text partnered the Erasmus translation (Hodgson-Wright 1988: 129–30; see also Findlay *et al.* 2000: 16–24). If, then, her translation does not pre-date 1553, it does not, strictly speaking, belong in this volume of the *History*. Previously dated to 1550, it has been dated as late as 1558 (Hall 1999: x), though consensus favours 1553–4. Whenever produced, it is a considerable achievement. In 1553, Lumley was just 16 years old, and the equal of her husband, who had translated the *Institutio Principis Christiani* of Erasmus in 1550 at 17 (see further p. 182 above). If she did translate from the Greek, Lumley was among a very select group of women who could read Greek, including Margaret Roper (on whom, see pp. 289–90 above, p. 439 below).

Elyot's version of Isocrates (*The Doctrinal of Princes*) accords with the general pattern of interest in self-fashioning revealed by other of his translations, notably Plutarch's *On the Education of Children* and—for long stretches almost an anthology of brief translations—his *Book Named the Governor*, the very type of Renaissance self-fashioning in England. Elyot perhaps opens the floodgates for humanist translation into English, from which we might pick out as examples William Barker's version of Xenophon's *Education of Cyrus* (1537) and J. Wilkinson's of Aristotle's *Ethics* (1547), the latter from the medieval Italian version of Brunetto Latini. How much Elyot represents the new age of Renaissance and Reformation we can see on the one hand, in relation to Latin, in his *Dictionary* (Elyot 1970), and, on the other, in relation to Greek, in the preface to the *Doctrinal*, where he writes: 'The forme of speakyng, vsed of the Greekes, called in Greeke and also in Latin phrasis, muche nere approcheth to that whiche at this daie we vse than the order of the Latine tonge, I meane in the sentences and not in the wordes' (cited in Lathrop 1933: 42). How much the vernacular has established its ground we may see by laying this sentiment alongside William of Malmesbury's (earlier-noted) amusement at the very idea of translating Boethius into English.

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5.7 Writers of the Italian Renaissance

Karla Taylor

Introduction

The early history of Italian literary translations into English is a broken-backed narrative. At the end of the fourteenth century, Chaucer translated and adapted material from the three pre-eminent poets of the *trecento*: Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio. Although others may have read Italian literature, Chaucer was probably the only English writer among his contemporaries to travel to Italy and consult manuscripts of Italian literary works; he was certainly their only English translator. For 150 years after Chaucer, there were no known translations directly from Italian, and very few via Latin or French: not until 1550 was an Italian grammar produced in English, by William Thomas, 'with a dictionarie for the better understanding of Boccace, Petrarcha and Dante' (Bennett 1969: 96). When Italian literary material reappeared in English in the 1520s, however, it caught hold. Translations of Petrarch and other lyric poets by Sir Thomas Wyatt (1503–42) and Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey (1517–47), having circulated within the Henrician court in the 1530s and 1540s, subsequently reached a wider audience through *Tottel's Miscellany*, the influential compilation of more and less recent English verse made by the printer Richard Tottel in 1557 (see further below p. 403). The *Miscellany* initiated the first significant tradition of lyric poetry in English and introduced its characteristic form, the sonnet. This section will survey Italian literary translations into English before 1550, and suggest what changed to make Italian literature newly available and acceptable to English writers and readers in the sixteenth century.

The Fourteenth Century: Chaucer

In the trilingual culture of late medieval England, translations from French and Latin generally expanded the functions that could be performed by English, as monolingual readers increasingly sought access to prestigious, fashionable, or classical works available in these languages. Because boundaries between languages were blurred and flexible, this expansion tended to stress translation as continuity.

Translations from Italian, on the other hand, stressed rupture. Outside Italy in the fourteenth century, vernacular Italian literature offered neither fashion nor the venerable authority conveyed by vertical translation from Latin. Linguistically, it was comparatively inaccessible to English writers, although the Italian merchants and bankers living in London made some contact possible.

Nevertheless, given its limited availability and prestige, we may ask what drew Chaucer to Italian literature at all. In part, it offered a cover story in the difficult conditions of an increasingly absolutist court (cf. Simpson 2002: 131–4). The characteristic double voice of translation could serve as an unusually effective mask. Chaucer represents the perils of court in the *Legend of Good Women*, written between 1386–8, the Prologue later revised (G). He is charged by Cupid with the treason of translating the *Roman de la rose* and Boccaccio's *Il Filostrato*: 'Hast thow nat mad in Englysh ek the bok | How that Crisseyde Troylus forsok, | In shewynge how that wemen han don mis?' (G 264–6). Alceste argues for clemency because Chaucer 'nyste what he seyde', and could not refuse the command to translate; besides, translations are less culpable than original compositions (G 338–52). In short, translation shields the poet through the argument of diminished responsibility vis-à-vis the overwhelmingly prior source. This defence silently passes over the likelihood that the choice of unfamiliar Italian writings was the translator's, and ignores any changes resulting from adaptation to a new audience. The protective double voice of Italian translation offered the court poet a measure of discursive freedom.

Behind this shield, Chaucer brought an ambitious, classicizing form of literature into English. Since translation and original composition were not habitually opposed, it is perhaps not paradoxical that Chaucer found his voice by adapting Italian ones. Each Italian poet offered him a different resource: short passages, usually without narrative context, from Dante; from Petrarch, a single complete sonnet; and, from Boccaccio, long sustained narratives.

Translations from the *Divine Comedy* first appear in *The House of Fame* (*c.* 1379). In this exploration of poetic craft and influence, Chaucer invokes the muses for the first time in English (520–8, 1091–109; cf. *Inferno* II, 7–9; *Paradiso* I, 10–27). Asserting the common medieval priority of sense-for-sense over word-for-word translation, he calls on 'ye . . . that on Parnaso duelle, | Be Elicon, the clere welle' (521–2), with a gloss introducing the unfamiliar figures of 'thought, that wrot al that I mette', and the 'God of science and of lyght, | Appollo' for help in writing the vision 'that in myn hed ymarked ys' (1091–2, 1102). Revealingly, even as he translates some Dantean phrases word for word, he transposes Dante's parallel appeal to 'alto ingegno', exalted poetic skill, into the less elevated 'thought', or memory. Chaucer disclaims all similarities between Dante's otherworldly journey and his own, in the talons of an eagle who plummets into his vision from the *Divine Comedy*. 'I neyther am Ennok, ne Elye, | Ne Romulus, ne Ganymede', the dreamer avers, imitating 'Io non Enëa, io non Paulo sono' (588–9; *Inferno* II, 32). *The House of Fame* sporadically fits Burnley's definition of medieval translation as 'the art of finding correspondences between two systems' in a range 'from word level to the level of narrative scene' (*MTr* 1: 46, 52). The correspondences Chaucer devised significantly expanded the repertoire of the English literary system.

The *House of Fame* typifies Chaucer's Dantean translations, which involve short passages, often perspicaciously synthesized from disparate sections of the

Divine Comedy (see the detailed comparisons in Schless 1984), and large ideas, treated with great independence (for examples see Taylor 1989; Ginsberg 2002). Among the latter, two stand out. First, Dante vastly enlarged the range of the modern vernacular. The consequences may be felt everywhere in Chaucer's works, beginning with *The House of Fame*. Second, Dante (along with Boccaccio) showed Chaucer the possibility of a poetic craft not defined by the social conditions of court: witness the frequent Chaucerian appeal to a 'gentillesse' resulting not from birth but from character and behaviour.

In addition to translating short passages, Chaucer also handled more extended passages, often significantly transforming them. *The Parliament of Fowls* (1380–2), for instance, appropriates hellgate's ominously repeated 'Per me si va' (*Inferno* III, 1–3) as the double inscription on the gate to the garden of love, each side of which intones 'Thorgh me men gon' to invite the dreamer into love's bliss or warn of its sorrows (127–8, 134–6). Chaucer also used Dante's prayer for the beatific vision (*Paradiso* XXXIII, 1–39) not just in the expected religious context of the tales of the Prioress and the Second Nun in the *Canterbury Tales* (VII. 467–80, VIII. 29–56), but also, more surprisingly, as Troilus' praise of erotic love in *Troilus and Criseyde* (III. 1254–74). Chaucer's longest translation from Dante comes from the Ugolino story (*Inferno* XXXIII–XXXIV), included in the *Monk's Tale* (VII. 2407–62: discussed in Boitani 1976; Neuse 1991). Here terror is transformed into pity; just as he did in *The House of Fame*, Chaucer's translation narrows the scope of the Dantean material.

Although Chaucer praised Petrarch as a modern 'lauriat poete' (IV. 31), he translated only one vernacular lyric by him: the sonnet 'S'amor non è' (*Canzoniere* 132), rendered into the three rhyme royal stanzas of the 'Canticus Troili' in *Troilus and Criseyde* (I. 400–20). The first sonnet translated into English, it would remain the only one for 150 years. Chaucer follows the sense closely, often translating verbatim Petrarch's refined exploration of the morally and ontologically paralysing effects of love on the mind. Assigned a limited character in a larger narrative, however, the lyric becomes an ironic revelation of Troilus' emotional paralysis. The opening line's conditional, qualitative 'S'amor non è, che dunque è quel ch'io sento?' becomes Troilus' more fundamental 'If no love is, O God, what fele I so' (I. 400). Petrarch expresses his elegant, painfully unresolved introspection in oxymorons ('o viva morte, o dilettoso male') and a final antithesis ('e tremo a mezza state, ardendo il verno'). These become a series of predictable rhetorical oppositions culminating in Troilus' more conclusive 'For hote of cold, for cold of hote, I dye' (I. 420). Knowing his bark is 'd'error sì carca', Petrarch cannot settle on any desire or action: 'i' medesmo non so quel ch'io mi voglio'. This self-division between knowledge and will becomes Troilus' characteristic passivity in the grip of an external force (Contini 1970: 169–92; Kirkpatrick 1995: 52–6). Formally, the expansion from fourteen to twenty-one lines dilutes the sonnet's intensity, further distancing the 'Canticus Troili' from Petrarch's introspection. Chaucer translated, but he did not endorse.

A notable statement on translation introduces the 'Canticus Troili'. Chaucer asserts that he reproduces 'naught only the sentence' (sense) of his source, 'But

pleinly, save oure tonges difference…every word right thus' (I. 393–7). The author named here, however, is not Petrarch or Boccaccio, but the fictional Latin chronicler Lollius. Chaucer was not only linguistically and technically adept in his translations from Italian, but also fully aware of the cultural implications of horizontal translation from a quite separate literary system. Lollius bestowed Latinate authority (however fictional) on material chosen for its vernacular difference.

Chaucer's translations from Boccaccio provided the material for extended verse narratives in *Troilus and Criseyde* (*c.* 1385), adapted from *Il Filostrato* (*c.* 1335); and the *Knight's Tale* (*c.* 1386), from the *Teseida* (*c.* 1339–41). These poems introduced classicizing narratives on antique epic subjects into English. *Troilus* has been called 'a translation in name but an original work in fact' (Machan in *MTr* 1: 60). It ranges from word-for-word rendering through wholesale recasting of scenes and characters; amplifying, abbreviating, or omitting sections; and, in sum, transforming the represented antique world and the role of the representing poet (for detailed discussions see Wallace and Windeatt, both in Boitani 1983; Wallace 1985; Edwards 2002). *Troilus* both exemplifies the agonistic rhetorical tradition of translation as responsive displacement (Copeland 1991: 27–36), and illustrates the inadvisability of distinguishing firmly between translation and original composition. Studies of Chaucer's compositional procedures demonstrate his gifts as a translator even as he adapted his source to its target literary culture. Through close translations, Chaucer summoned a new language for amatory experience into English, as with Troiolo's lament:

> Ma quella per cui piangi nulla sente
> Se non come una pietra, e così stassi
> Fredda com'al sereno intero ghiaccio,
> ed io qual neve al foco mi disfaccio.
> (*Filostrato* I, 53)

This becomes Troilus' compressed apostrophe:

> But also cold in love towardes the
> Thi lady is as frost in wynter moone,
> And thow fordon as snow in fire is soone
> (I. 523–5)

Transposed entirely into native English wordstock, this passage demonstrates astonishing linguistic awareness.

A gifted technician, Chaucer compresses, dilates, and transforms the sometimes lax, sometimes vigorous popular Italian stanzaic narrative into the style and conventions of the English courtly tradition (Wallace 1985: 158–9). The roughly pentameter lines and rhyme royal stanza of *Troilus* (adapted from Boccaccio's *ottava rima*) accommodate the complex syntax and narrative extension of classicizing poetry; it became the dominant courtly form of the fifteenth century. Windeatt's parallel-text edition (Chaucer 1984) graphically demonstrates Chaucer's free adaptation, both in the texture of stanzas and unfolding narrative,

and in passages interpolated from other sources. At the end, for example, Chaucer borrows Arcita's apotheosis (*Teseida* XI, 1–3) for Troilus' posthumous fate. He also appropriated Dante's company of poets and prayer to the Trinity (*Inferno* IV, 70–147; *Paradiso* XIV, 28–30) to submit his poem to the two great forces of poetic tradition and transcendent divinity (V. 1786–869). Both additions magnify the seriousness and scope of *Troilus*. As here, Boccaccio frequently led Chaucer to Dante; the result is not only translation but also a profound synthetic response.

In contrast, the *Knight's Tale* abbreviates the grand sweep of Boccaccio's *Teseida* to a quarter of the original length, and shrinks its scope by omitting the epic otherworldly journeys of Theseus and Arcita. Key to Chaucer's representation of the antique world, the *Teseida* joined the traditional vernacular subject of love to classical martial epic. He returned to it throughout his career as one of his most important narrative and stylistic resources, the model for high style and 'an intermediary . . . between contemporary and classical poetry' whose abstract, rhetorical register he nevertheless rewrote into a more concrete, associative narrative imagination (Boitani in Boitani 1983: 190, 196–8). The *Knight's Tale*, his most extensive adaptation, nevertheless departs from the *Teseida* in both style and characterization. Chaucer reorganizes his original into an evenly balanced erotic competition between Palamon and Arcite, and, most broadly, transforms Boccaccio's martial epic into a critique of chivalric ideology (Patterson 1991: 230; Edwards 2002: 17). Displacing the *Teseida* with a quite different cultural formation, Chaucer adapted classicizing Italian literature to its new social context in the fourteenth-century English court.

Boccaccio's prose narratives also expanded the social reference of Chaucer's poetry. The Franklin's and Clerk's tales (1392–5) come closest to translation. The Franklin's free adaptation from the *Filocolo* (*c*. 1336–8) challenges English aristocratic values with the less exclusive Tuscan version of 'gentillesse' (for sources see Rajna 1903; for the cultural translation of 'gentillesse' see Taylor 2000:75 and Edwards 2002: 172). The influence of the *Decameron* (1351) is both ubiquitous and elusive in the *Canterbury Tales* (for the most sustained discussion see Thompson 1996). The *Clerk's Tale*, closely rendered from Petrarch's unusual translation into Latin of Boccaccio's Griselda story (X, 10), is both more complex and more influential. Aided by a French translation, Chaucer returns Petrarch's Latin (*Seniles* XVII, 3–4) to the vernacular (for literary relations see Severs 1942; for detailed discussions, Kirkpatrick 1995: 234–44 and Wallace 1997: 261–98). Linguistic translation mirrors the social mobility by which Griselda, noble in character despite her peasant birth, 'translated was in swich richesse' (IV. 385) through marriage to the marquis Walter, only to be stripped of clothing and status through his unwarranted tests. It also mirrors interpretative mobility as the tale travels from Boccaccio's 'provocation to literary understanding' to Petrarch's allegory of conduct toward God and the French marital exemplum (Edwards 2002: 133). Chaucer thus makes translation itself a metaphor for complex literary and social experience. The cultural appropriation evidently succeeded, for the *Clerk's Tale* was read widely in the fifteenth century.

The Fifteenth Century

Chaucer's translations did not lead fifteenth-century writers to seek out more Italian literature. Translations from vernaculars other than French were generally rare; in addition, cultural factors conspired to make Italian literature both less available and less acceptable in the English context from the 1390s until the 1520s. Through most of the fifteenth century, prestigious new Italian literary production was dominated by neo-Latin humanism, which also shaped the reception of fourteenth-century vernacular writing. Dante's *Divine Comedy* attracted commentators but no imitators. Boccaccio had turned to encyclopedic Latin humanist productions in his later years. Petrarch, the most influential literary figure, was best known for his Latin works in the century after his death. The leading writers of the Italian fifteenth century were humanists like Leonardo Bruni and Poggio Bracciolini, whose fame was based exclusively on their Latin writings. Vernacular literary activity did not cease, but, in this polarized context, it became increasingly restricted to popular genres least likely to travel well. In the fifteenth century, Italy exported a great deal of literary culture—but very little in the vernacular.

There was considerable literary contact between Italy and England during the fifteenth century. English kings and princes employed Italian writers, and Englishmen sought Italian educations, especially from the school of Guarino at Ferrara (Simpson 2002: 230). Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester and youngest son of Henry IV, assiduously patronized Italian humanism. He commissioned Antonio Beccaria's Latin translation of Boccaccio's *Corbaccio* (Weiss 1967: 46) and John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* (1431–8), which used Laurent de Premierfait's French translation (*c.* 1415) of *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium* to help with Boccaccio's Latin and to adapt his republican politics to the English monarchical system— but no translations from Italian into English. Duke Humphrey donated a library to the University of Oxford in 1444 (see further p. 103 above). It included many Latin works by Petrarch and Boccaccio, and, most notably, a copy of the *Divine Comedy*, with partnering Latin commentary by Giovanni da Serravalle (Weiss 1936: 357). Both have since vanished, although Leland noted that the commentary was still in the Oxford library 100 years later (Toynbee 1909: xvii).

Serravalle also translated the *Divine Comedy* into Latin prose (1416–17) at the request of two English bishops, Nicholas Bubwith and Robert Hallam, with whom he had attended the Council of Constance. Leland saw a copy of this text in Wells Cathedral library, though it does not appear to have been used, and has since disappeared (Toynbee 1909: xvii). Dante's career in fifteenth-century England attests not only to the interest of a few scholars, but also to the barriers interposed by the Italian vernacular. Unmediated contact with vernacular Italian works was scanty at best.

The few adaptations of Boccaccio's vernacular works were from the prose *Decameron*, to which fifteenth-century English readers had indirect access through Latin and French intermediaries. The Tancredi and Ghismonda story

(*Decameron* IV, 1) reveals much about linguistic and cultural constraints governing translations from Italian. Like the Griselda story, this isolated tale gained international currency through Latin translation. Leonardo Bruni's prose *Tancred*, via a French intermediary, became the basis for two fifteenth-century English retellings, one by Gilbert Banester. Banester (*c.* 1420–1487) was a musician and poet. In the earlier of two manuscript witnesses (*c.* 1440–5), his translation is appended to the *Legend of Good Women* (Banester 1937: 2–36). In translating only indirectly from the Italian, and in claiming a Chaucerian origin for the translation, Banester was typical of his time.

Banester's legend also exemplifies the ideological and artistic constraints on Italian translations into English. The heart of Boccaccio's story had been Ghismonda's argument for nobility defined by character and conduct rather than lineage, asserted against Tancredi's aristocratic objections to her base-born lover Guiscardo. In the tragic outcome, Tancredi protects his lineage from aspirant new blood by murdering Guiscardo, only to suffer its death with Ghismonda's suicide. Her ancient idea of ethical nobility, a touchstone of Italian humanism, had permeated Chaucer's Italian translations, and would resurface when John Tiptoft (1427–1470), the Earl of Worcester and Yorkist Constable of England, translated Buonaccorso da Montemagno's Latin dialogue *Controversia de Nobilitate* as 'The Declamacion of Noblesse' (*c.* 1459–60; Kirkpatrick 1995: 91–3). No trace of Boccaccio's socially potent vernacular *gentilezza*, however, survives Banester's translation. Perhaps for political reasons—the arguments of lineage raged throughout the fifteenth century's dynastic wars—Banester's legend transforms the conflict between aristocratic and ethical nobility into a generational conflict between father and daughter. In the royal Lancastrian contexts within which Italian literary material was translated indirectly into English, there was little place for Boccaccio's radically disturbing ideas.

The Sixteenth Century

Comparatively low prestige and differences in social ideology limited the translation of Italian vernacular literature into English until the beginning of the sixteenth century, when momentous shifts altered both literary cultures. Chief among these were the advent of printing, with the wider availability of literature across many kinds of borders, and the reassessment of the prestige of vernacular literature within Italy. Starting in 1470, the vernacular works of Dante, Petrarch, and Boccaccio were printed, fostering their status outside the linguistic boundaries of Tuscan. Petrarch, whose *Trionfi* was now read more widely than his Latin works, attracted most admiration and imitation. The *Trionfi* and *Canzoniere* were often printed together in annotated editions; the new commentaries addressed the old vernacular problems of temporal decay and regional variation. With the political ruin visited upon Italy from 1494, its cultural prestige was increasingly relocated in its vernacular literary tradition, now no longer local but national and

authorized by influential humanists. Petrarchan imitators abounded in Italy and abroad by the end of the fifteenth century.

A major influence on the creation of the canon of Italian vernacular literature in the early sixteenth century, and thus very important for literary developments in England, was Pietro Bembo. Especially important, in his *Le prose della volgar lingua* (1525), was his elevation of vernacular Italian models—Petrarch in poetry, Boccaccio in prose—as counterparts to Virgil and Cicero. Bembo's stylistic standards—seriousness, eloquence, harmony, *dolce varietà* (sweet variety)—defined court tastes, at first in Italy, then abroad, and were embodied in the refined vocabulary, metaphors, and prosody of Petrarch's vernacular poetry, of which the Aldine Press had published Bembo's edition in 1501 (Thomson 1964: 167).

The absolutist court of Henry VIII was the social context for the first Italian literature translated directly into English in 150 years. Facility in Italian and familiarity with its literature were increasingly widespread accomplishments for the educated Henrician courtiers, as were translation and literary composition. The cultural politics of court promoted short lyric poetry over long verse narrative or prose, and prestigious older works over the more recent or popular (Simpson 2002: 122). Dante's *Divine Comedy* had been exiled to the literary cold by Bembo, who found his poetry too rough and colloquial; Dante was also theologically unacceptable after the English Reformation. It was primarily through Petrarch's works, then, that the writers of the Henrician court—Henry Parker, Lord Morley (*c.* 1481–1556); Wyatt; and Surrey—sought to remake the English lyric tradition.

Morley's *Tryumphes of Fraunces Petrarcke* was the first direct translation from Italian into English since Chaucer. Morley was an occasional attender of the Tudor court, and his translation can be understood as a form of court conduct. Originally a New Year's gift to Henry VIII, probably in the early 1520s, it remained unpublished until 1553–6 (for dating and patronage see Axton and Carley 2000: 33, 41–2, 173–4). French literary culture mediated the transmission; Morley was inspired, he wrote, by a French courtier (probably Simon Bourgouyn) who was royally rewarded for translating the *Trionfi* into French (Morley 1971: 78; Axton and Carley 2000: 54). Seeking to renovate English letters, he asserted the capacity of English to aim above 'dongehyll matter' like Robin Hood, and prove itself the equal not only of Latin, but also of French. Since each vernacular is best suited for writing to its own kings and princes, he wrote, 'I beynge an Englyshe man, myght do as well as the Frenche man, dyd translate this sayde worke into our maternall tounge . . . to that moost worthy kynge . . . Henrye theyghte' (77–8). Morley thus contributed to the Tudor representation of Henry VIII as the ideal humanist prince, a new Augustus under whom the cultivation of literature and imperial power was mutually sustaining (Simpson 2002: 161). (For Morley's many translations from Latin, including a Latin version of Plutarch's *Life of the Good King Agesilaus*, see Dowling 1986: 197.)

The *Trionfi*, Petrarch's most widely read work in the early sixteenth century, harmonizes the *Canzoniere*'s love for Laura with the moral framework of

De Remediis Utriusque Fortunae. Its six dream spectacles reveal that Laura had indeed loved Petrarch, but could not show it without misdirecting him toward the transient mortal body. The dreamer is consoled instead with poetic fame and reunification with Laura in the afterlife. Annotated editions, especially that of Alessandro Vellutello (1525, printed 1552), interpreted the *Trionfi* as an allegory of the progress of the soul. It was in this form that Morley probably encountered it.

Although aware of allegorical commentaries on the *Trionfi*, Morley read the work more literally, in a context shaped by the love poems 'to the laude of hys Ladye Laura, by whome he made so many a swete sonnet' (77). He sought to follow 'the letter'—translating closely rather than freely, literally rather than allegorically—but tried neither to duplicate the original *terzine* nor to 'touche the least poynt of the elegancy that this elegant Poete hath set forth in his owne maternall tongue' (78). Long derided for diffuseness and linguistic infidelity, the *Tryumphes* fares better if viewed as an instance of cultural rather than as a strictly linguistic translation. Debts to commentaries and the illustrative tradition, brief explanations for new English readers, and frequent tags expand the poem from 1,953 to 2,750 lines. It is readable, even skilled in rendering visual transformation and mood:

> Even as a swete lyght that commeth to decay
> Lytle and lytle consumyng awaye.
> When that the byrth lycoure is past and gone,
> The flame extincte, then lyght is there none.
> Not pale she laye, but whyter then the snow
> That the wynde agaynst the hyl doth blowe
> As he that wery is, and woulde have rest,
> So she laye when death had hyr oppreste.
> And as one that slepeth softe and quietlye,
> So myght they all then and there espye
> Dreadful death (that fooles have in disgrace)
> Fayre and beautifull in that swetest face.
> <div align="right">(Death I; 122)</div>

Morley omits, adds, and reorders to lay Laura gradually to rest. Lacking a strong English lyric tradition, he does not try to match Petrarch's compressed syntax and imagery; nevertheless he sometimes captures not only the sense but the very movement of the Italian, as in 'Not pale she laye, but whyter then the snow', echoing 'Pallida no; ma piú che neve bianca'.

Rather than reproducing Petrarch in English, Morley sought to english Petrarch by translating him into the existing repertoire of literary forms and practice. Thus he rendered the *Trionfi*'s hendecasyllabic *terza rima* (a challenge in rhyme-poor English) into the variable couplet Gascoigne called 'riding rhyme'. Thought to be Chaucerian, it was actually an artefact of form persisting through rapid linguistic change, so that Chaucer's flexible pentameter became the broken-backed line common throughout fifteenth-century verse. Morley's conservative

prosody contributed to the obscurity of his translation, since in not touching 'elegancy', he renounced the very quality for which Petrarch was so highly valued. Within a decade, Wyatt and Surrey would seek a different way.

Morley also translated from Italian Paolo Giovio's *Commentarys of the Turk* (a copy was in the royal library: see Carley 2000: inv. no. 997), and the forty-ninth tale from Masuccio Salernitano's *Novellino* (1476). He was the first to translate a novella directly from Italian. The novella relates Pope Alexander's attempt to betray the honourable Emperor Barbarossa by having the Sultan of Jerusalem capture and put him to death. But the Emperor impresses the Sultan with his virtue, and instead imprisons the evil Alexander. Dedicated to Henry VIII in the 1540s, the translation had an obvious appeal after the King's break with Rome. Masuccio's original becomes a platform for melodramatic amplifications: 'tanto tradimento e scelo' becomes 'so pestyferouse a prelate and so abhomynable a treason' (Morley 1910: 56); Catholic doctrines like transubstantiation, 'the whiche was of suche force at that tyme in his thought' (48), are consigned to the past. Although the translation was the performance of a loyal Henrician subject, Masuccio remained generally unknown to English readers.

Boccaccio's novellas, in contrast, continued to come into English indirectly. Printed editions in Latin had brought the stories of Tancredi and Ghismonda (*Decameron* IV, 1) and Tito and Gesippo (*Decameron* X, 8) wide international currency by the end of the fifteenth century; in 1532 Wynkyn de Worde printed William Walter's English verse translations of them, both from Latin versions, the first by Leonardo Bruni, the second by Philippo Bertoaldo (Wright 1937: lviii, lxxviii). In addition, the story of Tito and Gesippo gained enduring popularity through Thomas Elyot's free adaptation (possibly also from Bertoaldo) in *The Governor* in 1531 (Wright 1937: xci). Direct translations of Italian literary prose proliferated only later, with William Painter's *Palace of Pleasure* (1566) and William Hoby's 1561 translation of Baldassare Castiglione's *Cortegiano* (1532). The history of Italian literary prose in English thus belongs chiefly to Volume 2 of the *History*.

Wyatt

Wyatt was the first English poet to translate a significant number of Petrarch's lyrics into English. A diplomat versed in continental literary resources, he translated some thirty poems from the *Canzoniere* between his first Italian visit in 1527 and his death in 1542. With them he also introduced the sonnet, the signature verse form of the new English lyric tradition. Although he also adapted *strambotti* by Giovanni Serafino, penitential psalms from Pietro Aretino's paraphrase, and a satire by Luigi Alamanni, it was above all the Petrarch translations that 'greatly polished our rude and homely maner of vulgar Poesie' with 'the sweete and stately measures and stile of the Italian Poesie', as George Puttenham wrote in Part I, ch. 31, of his *Arte of English Poesie* (1936: 60). In fact Surrey bore greater responsibility for introducing the elegant refinement so admired by Bembo, and

thus transforming the formal possibilities of English poetry. Wyatt's rougher, plainer translations brought something else: the double voice of the diplomat negotiating the perilous straits of the absolutist Henrician court. The social context of Wyatt's literary productions is crucial to understanding the role Italian translation played. Its double voice offered Wyatt a way to sidestep the inimical dynamic of power that twice, in 1536 and 1542, resulted in his imprisonment and threatened execution. The structural contrasts, suspended states, and divided self of Petrarch's sonnets became the quite different division between discourse and intention of Wyatt's lyrics (Greenblatt 1980: 154). Through Italian translations, Wyatt invented the courtier's voice, with which he could both mask and say what he meant.

Wyatt's translations from Petrarch include close, literal renderings of whole poems (fifteen); free imitations or adaptations (eight) and fragmentary translations (five); and adaptations in which the original is only the point of departure for a quite different poem (two). Avoiding the most introspective poems, he preferred those with sharp conceits, which enabled him to introduce and develop English versions of the structural and metaphorical possibilities of the Italian forms (for detailed comparisons see Baldi 1953; Hietsch 1960; Wyatt 1969). English had seen nothing like 'The longe love that in my thought doeth harbar' (from *Canzoniere* 140), with its warlike God of Love; 'I fynde no peace and all my warr is done' (from *Canzoniere* 134), with its characteristic antitheses; and 'My galy charged with forgetfulnes' (from *Canzoniere* 189), with its allegory of the storm-tossed ship of love. In these sonnets Wyatt usually followed the wording, conceptual development, and structural divisions of the originals closely; deviations are often due to his use of Vellutello's annotations (for an example see Baldi 1966). 'My galy', for example, renders the concentrated allegory of the ship with striking success. It opens with a verbatim translation of 'Passa la nave mia colma d'oblio' that precisely captures Petrarch's polyvalent, mysterious burden of self-forgetfulness. Wyatt substitutes economy for specific detail; thus 'fra Scilla e Cariddi' becomes 'Twene Rock and Rock'. In 'And every owre a thought in redines' (from 'A ciascun remo un penser pronto e rio') the thought—its cruelty transferred to the hostile God of Love—is transformed from oarsman to oar. The new end differs characteristically:

> Celansi i duo mei dolci usati segni,
> morta fra l'onde è la ragion et l'arte
> tal ch'i' i' 'ncomincio a desperar del porto

becomes

> The starres be hid that led me to this pain;
> Drowned is reason that should me confort,
> And I remain dispering of the port.

For Petrarch, Laura's eyes—the metaphorical stars that usually guide him—are temporarily hidden, and his incipient despair seems a temporary phase in his

shifting emotional state. Wyatt has no Laura, and no constant lodestar. His stars signal instead the determinations of a hostile, inscrutable fate; his despair, a constant state.

Constancy marks the beleaguered speaker Wyatt translated from Petrarch's mobile, divided lyric self. He remains steadfast in the face of betrayal, whether political or amatory. Thus in 'The longe love', although its subject remains the conflict of desire and restraint seen in 'Amor che nel penser mio vive e regna' [Love, who lives and reigns in my thought], Petrarch's political metaphor for love rebuffed also acquires literal potency in the plight of the courtier deserted by the untrustworthy lord he serves. Wyatt's ragged decasyllables strain under the speaker's untenable devotion to his lord. The lady is less the object of his desire than his moral compass:

> She that me lerneth to love and suffre,
> And will that my trust and lustes negligence
> Be rayned by reason, shame and reverence,
> With his hardiness taketh displeasure.

In an otherwise close translation, the pronoun shift ('nostro ardir' becomes 'his hardines') severs the God of Love from the speaker and relocates the drama to his fraught subjection to his lord. Although the lord has fled the battlefield, the speaker can imagine no alternative 'but in the felde, with him to lyve and dye'. The translation stresses his resolute faith first and last: 'Amor' becomes 'the longe love'; the final line omits love altogether, 'ché bel fin fa chi ben amando more' becoming 'for goode is the liff, ending faithfully'. There is a submerged bitterness in the speaker's sacrifice to his irresolute, undeserving lord. The sonnet transforms Petrarch's internal divisions into the courtier's plight: to suffer betrayal by a powerful, and very real, ruler.

This plight is Wyatt's recurrent subject. Petrarch's self-divisions, embodied conceptually in antitheses and structurally in the octave-sestet of the sonnet, afforded Wyatt the tools to express both the courtier's masked voice and the stubborn constancy it paradoxically discloses. This paradox animates 'Caesar, when that the traytour of Egipt' (from *Canzoniere* 102). Although Vellutello constructed Petrarch's 'Cesare, poi che'l traditor d'Egitto' as a love poem (Muir in Wyatt 1969: 264), its interest for Wyatt seems to have been its deflection of the 'fayned visage' through classical examples. Just as Caesar covered his gladness with outward tears, and Hannibal 'Laught to his folke whome sorrowe did torment', the speaker laughs 'bicause I have nother way | To cloke my care but vnder spoort and play'. The English translation follows the Italian sonnet in word, sense, line, octave, and sestet. Only l. 11 deviates from Petrarch's strict text; 'with fayned visage, now sad, now mery' translates 'or chiara or bruna', following Vellutello's interpretation ('hor allegra hora mesta'), and makes the theme more explicit by adding 'fayned'. Most remarkably, Wyatt's sonnet enacts its theme. His faithful translation reduplicates Petrarch's appropriation of distant classical examples to achieve the speaker's deflected self-expression; just as Petrarch had used

Caesar's tears and Hannibal's laughter, Wyatt appropriates Petrarch's linguistically and temporally distant words to clothe his speaker's steadfast integrity. The translation both masks and expresses Wyatt's own imperilled position, as Surrey recognized when he referred to 'Cesars teres uppon Pompeius hedd' in his elegy commemorating the older poet.

Translation serves as a mask in 'Whoso list to hunt', which freely adapts 'Una candida cerva' (*Canzoniere* 190) into an entirely new English poem on the erotic and political entanglements of court. Little remains of Petrarch's visionary white hind, the inscription on whose collar 'Nessun mi tocchi' [Let no one touch me] recalled both Caesar's white stags and, echoing John 20: 17, Christ's resurrection. 'Whoso list' is commonly read as a transparent allegory in which Wyatt renounces his pursuit of the hind Anne Boleyn, the inscription on whose collar announces Henry VIII's ownership: 'Noli me tangere for Cesars I ame,|And wylde for to hold though I seme tame.' Yet the poem is remarkable for its restraint and suggestiveness. Wyatt both intensifies the theological implication (aided by Vellutello's explicit association with Christ's command 'Noli me tangere') and brilliantly apprehends the instability of court intrigue. The speaker's erotic displacement is mirrored in the displacement of translation; Wyatt's adaptation, though distant, shares Petrarch's capacity to establish an 'alternative to the disconcerting gaze of an ungraspable truth' (Kirkpatrick 1995: 134), and thus suggests Petrarch's value to the court poet seeking to preserve both his head and his integrity. 'Whoso list to hunt' is hard to imagine without the mask of translation.

Wyatt invented his doubled courtier's voice, both masked and steadfast, through other translations from the Italian as well. His seven Penitential Psalms—with their discomfiting comparison between David's anguished repentance and the unrepentant English monarch—were cushioned by their status as translations, not only from the Bible but also from Aretino's Italian prologues and paraphrases. Ranging from close to very free adaptation, they condense the prose narrative settings into terse *ottava rima* stanzas; the psalms use *terza rima*. Italian source and verse forms create the distance from which Wyatt could tackle the subject of a king who dangerously mixed eros and politics.

Wyatt's most remarkable appropriation of an Italian original is his first satire, 'Myne owne John Poyntz', largely translated from Alamanni's tenth satire. The explicit subject of this verse epistle is court hypocrisy. Imitating the rhetorical structure and *terza rima* of the original, Wyatt omits its Dantean allusions (which would have meant little to English readers) and stresses linguistic hypocrisy, masked voices, and obligatory disguises. He translates (sometimes closely, sometimes freely) Alamanni's repeated 'Non saprei' into his inability to alienate his tongue from his intentions:

> My Poyntz, I cannot frame my tonge to fayne
> To cloke the trothe for praisse, withowt desart,
> Of them that lyst all vice for to retayne.
>
>   (19–21)

The speaker builds an identity from his refusals: 'I am not he . . .' (43). His cat-alogue of courtier language culminates in the resounding declaration: 'I cannot, I; no, no, it will not be' (76). This added line defines an authentic voice and integrity in emphatic English monosyllables. Subsequently adapting Alamanni's poem to English places, weather, and habits, Wyatt transforms borrowed words into his own distinctive voice, speaking from home: 'But here I ame in Kent and Christendome | Emong the muses where I rede and ryme' (100–1). From an Italian satire written in exile in France, Wyatt constructs a fuller version of the steadfastness hidden under Caesar's tears, resolute despite the necessity of masked speech. His self-conscious voice as an English poet would not have arisen without Italian translations.

Surrey

Wyatt translated the 'deep form' of Petrarch's sonnets, but his rough-hewn lines and deliberately drab vocabulary did not aspire to elegance. Only with Surrey's five poems from Petrarch—three translations and two imitations—was this pol-ish translated into English. Surrey was instrumental in establishing the signature forms of early modern English literature, inventing both the 'Shakespearian' sonnet and 'Marlowe's mighty line', blank verse. His translations adapted the standard Italian octave-sestet structure into the English sonnet, which comprises three quatrains and a couplet. Borrowing from the end-weighted epigrammatic *strambotto*, he created the almost detachable epigram of the English sonnet's final couplet. Likewise, his translation from the *Aeneid* inaugurated the unrhymed iambic pentameter line of later heroic and dramatic poetry, adapted from Giangiorgio Trissino's Italian Virgil (Kirkpatrick 1995: 158). Through Surrey, English lyric poetry achieved the formal smoothness and metrical regularity required for prestigious vernacular literature.

Moreover, it was Surrey's prestige that introduced Wyatt's poetry to a wider readership through *Tottel's Miscellany*, the most significant anthology in English publishing history. Its 271 poems are presented as *Songs and Sonnets Written by the Right Honorable Lord Henry Howard Late Earl of Surrey and Other*, although Surrey's nine do not match in importance Wyatt's ninety-seven. Wyatt's rough-hewn vigour, however, had been rewritten to resemble Surrey's polish. Fifteen years after his death, Wyatt's poetry was already perceived as crude; English poets and readers wanted the classical grace and elegance Bembo had set as the standard for poetic excellence.

Surrey captured this grace, lightness, and technical virtuosity. His three Petrarch translations follow Petrarch almost line for line with confident regularity in 'I never saw youe, madam, laye apart' (from the *ballata Canzoniere* 9), 'Love that doth raine and liue within my thought' (*Canzoniere* 140), and 'Set me wheras the sonne dothe perche the grene' (*Canzoniere* 145). Surrey characteris-tically preferred simpler, less concentrated poems with clearly marked conceptual structures. In 'Set me wheras . . .', the speaker's constant love persists through

all possible states—proud or base; clear weather or fog; earth, heaven, or hell; enslaved or free—with regular antitheses catalogued by the repeated phrase 'set me' ('pommi'). Surrey combined these straightforward, static structures with simplified, literal versions of Petrarch's metaphors (Thomson 1964: 203). His free adaptation 'The soote season' drastically alters the structural antithesis in 'Zefiro torna', in which the unrequited lover is alienated from spring's rebirth (*Canzoniere* 310). Surrey dilates the list of spring joys into three quatrains and reduces the misery of Petrarch's sestet to the last half-line: 'And thus I see among these pleasant thinges | Eche care decayes, and yet my sorow springes.' Reduced to an absolute, the speaker's alienation from his natural surroundings becomes starker and more elusive. It intimates Surrey's distinctive inwardness, which, like Wyatt's double voice, addresses the social experience of the Henrician court. Where Wyatt responded to accusation and danger with a beleaguered constancy, Surrey (the 'poet of imprisonment' executed for treason in 1547) creates solitary speakers isolated from their world (Burrow in *CHMEL* 815). Here and in his other imitation ('Alas! So all things now doe holde their peace', *Canzoniere* 165) he transforms Petrarch's mobile, divided self into speakers alienated from familiar but evocatively described natural landscapes. Technically adept, gallant, and elegant, Surrey's courtier translations substitute brittle surface for Petrarch's introspection.

On this surface, Surrey's 'Love that doth raine and liue within my thought' reproduces 'Amor, che nel penser mio vive et regna' more faithfully than does Wyatt's 'The longe love'. The first line is 'not only metrically perfect but sublimely true to Petrarch's emphasis' (Thomson 1964: 178). But verbatim fidelity, especially in Surrey's nimble pentameter line and strong rhyme, fails to capture the seriousness of a conflict better captured in the desperation of 'The longe love'. Whereas Wyatt recast Petrarch's conceptual framework into a poem in which it is impossible to dissever political from erotic betrayal and constancy, Surrey mirrors the erotic rejection:

> But she that tawght me love and suffre paine,
> My doubtful hope and eke my hote desire
> With shamfast looke to shadoo and refrayne,
> Her smyling grace convertyth streight to yre.
>
> (5–8)

The lady's restraint is not a moral compass, but the graceful courtly manners with which she rebuffs an equally conventional lover; the God of Love disappears altogether. The military metaphor—a mode of thought in Petrarch and Wyatt—becomes a more easily translatable form of speech in Surrey. For the integral development of thought, Surrey substitutes an epigrammatic, detachable couplet: 'Yet from my lorde shall not my foote remove: | Sweet is the death that taketh end by love' (13–14). Made for commonplace books, the couplet portrays a simpler, more decisive loyalty than Wyatt's, whose 'ending faithfully' intensifies the unsettling inconclusiveness of Petrarch's 'amando more' (Wyatt 1969: 3, l. 14).

Beginning and ending with 'love', the bounded space of Surrey's more predictable poem seems designed to hold such inconclusiveness at bay.

'Love that doth raine and liue within my thought' casts Petrarchan metaphor and thought as court convention, their predictability enacted in the regularity of Surrey's metre and phrasing. It is this quality that makes his translations from Petrarch significant: they import fashionable poetic and court conventions not as new, but as already established forms of speech and conduct. They are not only more polished, but also more domesticated. As such, they begin a new page in the translation of Italian literature into English.

Most English literature before 1550 was translated from Latin and French. Twice, however, vernacular Italian texts played decisive roles in the dynamic linguistic and cultural appropriations that shaped the English literary system. In the fourteenth century, Chaucer invented ambitious, classicizing narrative poetry in English by translating fourteenth-century Italian literature. In the sixteenth century, Henrician court poets transformed the verbal, formal, and technical resources of English lyric poetry by translating Petrarch, and more broadly by situating their writing in relation to dominant Italianate tastes. In each case, the context was a court culture potentially or actually absolutist in character; the main translator was a poet skilled in the double voice of diplomacy. By disrupting the familiar, the earliest Italian literary translations played a disproportionate role in reshaping the English literary system.

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5.8 Scientific and Medical Writing

Paul Acker

The texts covered in this section preserve not so much science as *scientiae*, or ways of knowing. Medieval herbal medicine, for instance, is scientific from a modern point of view only if the chemical properties of the herbs can be isolated and their putative effects duplicated in clinical trials. Medieval writers for their part collected medical prescriptions or 'recipes' compendiously and unscientifically, although on occasion they annotated a particular recipe *probatum est*: it has been tested, 'proved' by experience, if not by scientific method. Accordingly much of this section treats what modern readers would consider pseudo- or even occult sciences, which nonetheless have proved to represent quite durable forms of discourse, such as astrology, palmistry, and physiognomy. (The need for a generous understanding of this section's terms of reference has been well argued by Voigts 1989: 345–8.) Much of this *scientia* was transmitted from late antique and Arabic texts through literary translation, most often from Latin intermediaries (and later from new, medieval Latin works) into the target languages of OE, AN, ME, and early modern English.

Old English

OE translated scientific prose can be viewed along a continuum ranging from occasional and collected glosses, to interlinear and continuous translations, and compilations and adaptations. To begin on the level of glosses: it has been suggested that an 'original English collection' of *glossae collectae* [batched glosses] was assembled in the schools of Canterbury under Archbishop Theodore (602–690), a Greek-speaking monk originally from Tarsus in Asia Minor (Lapidge 1986: 45). Theodore's scholars would read through the late antique texts they deemed worthy of transmission, including scientific works like the *De Rerum Natura* of Isidore of Seville (d. 636), and make occasional interlinear and marginal glosses in OE and Latin. These glosses were then collected into 'batches' and either left in the order they were collected in or else sorted into (partial) alphabetical order. This 'original English collection' of glosses is most clearly revealed in the late eighth-century Leiden glossary (so called because its manuscript is preserved at Leiden University; Lendinara 1999 has bibliographical details) and less directly in other early glossaries such as Épinal-Erfurt. Shortly after this earliest reading project, glosses from Anglo-Latin authors such as Bede, Aldhelm, and the anonymous *Liber Monstrorum* were compiled and then combined into ever growing bilingual glossaries (discussed in Lendinara 1999: 113–38).

More interesting for scientific purposes, however, are the 'class glossaries' that organize their material into subject categories such as animal, plant, and mineral names, parts of the body, farm implements, and seafaring terms. These were widely used in schools, particularly with the advent of the Benedictine Reform. Examples include Ælfric's *Glossary*, the Brussels Glossary (ed. Wright rev. Wülcker 1968: I, 284–303), the Cotton Cleopatra Glossary (II, 257–83), and (for plant names) the Durham and Laud Herbal Glossaries.

Interpreting the translated material in these glosses can involve difficulties peculiar to the genre. If the original context of the gloss is not known, the particular connotation of the term can be impossible to determine. Consider, for instance, the use of OE 'bodan' to gloss Latin 'fundus', where the Latin term can mean either 'bottom' or 'piece of land'. The OE dictionaries elected for the second meaning in defining *bodan* (*botm*); Lendinara recovered the original context from a class glossary of *nomina vasorum* [names of vessels], however, and showed that both mean 'bottom (of a cask)' (1999: 94–5). A second type of difficulty arises when the glossary lists are copied inattentively; the glosses can slip up or down a line or two from their original lemmata. This explains how an OE plant name 'uudubinde' ('woodbine') glosses 'lignarium'; the Latin lemma, originally 'Ignarium' ('tool for producing fire'), has accidentally displaced the proper term, 'Involvulus' [woodbine] (Lendinara 1999: 88–9).

As modern medieval Latin dictionaries expand their coverage, formerly opaque lemmata can be illuminated. A bird name gloss 'Faseacus: *reodmuþa*' seemed obscure in both terms until the *Dictionary of Medieval Latin from British Sources* reached the letter F and cross-referenced *faseacus* to Phasiacus, that is, from the valley of the River Phasis in ancient Colchis. The bird named for its origin along the Phasis is the pheasant. But it remains somewhat doubtful that the OE term, meaning 'red mouth', was the earliest term for a pheasant, since no native or imported English birds are named for their 'mouths'. New solutions for problematic glosses have been found by scholars focusing on the whole range of OE bird names (Kitson 1997–8) and plant names (Bierbaumer 1975–9).

There are three known instances of continuous interlinear glosses to OE scientific known texts. The first, *Lorica* ('Breastplate', attributed to Gildas), is properly a charm or poetic prayer, in which the petitioner asks to be shielded from evil. The second half of the charm itemizes all the parts of the body to be protected from head to feet, including the internal organs, and thus functions secondarily as a glossary of anatomical terms (Grattan and Singer 1952: 130–47). The second set of interlinear glosses is to Ælfric's *Colloquy* (1939), properly a Latin pedagogical dialogue but one containing much practical vocabulary pertaining to the occupations assigned as roles to the monastic students, for example hunters and fishermen. Finally, a run of prognostic texts in BL MS Cotton Tiberius A.iii (*c.* 1080), including a Latin thirty-day lunar prognostic, also contains an interlinear gloss. This sequence may have been glossed because the bulk of the MS contains a text of the sort more customarily deemed worthy of a complete interlinear gloss, the Benedictine Rule. Förster edits the Latin with the OE above

it (1944: 79–129) and comments on a few errors of translation (54–8): for example, the glossator knew the Latin word *sacramentum* only from Christian contexts and so glossed it 'offrunga'; however, the Latin word in this context meant 'oath' (92).

Occasionally Latin and OE versions occur together in other manuscript formats. Cockayne (1864–6: III, 150–1) prints a diagram (elsewhere called a *Sphera Apulei* or *Pythagori*) followed by tables with Latin in one column and OE in the next, for the thirty days of the lunar cycle. Each brief item predicts the medical prognosis for an illness caught on that day. A more substantial text written down 'in parallel' is *The Wonders of the East* in BL MS Cotton Tiberius B.v (another version is found in the *Beowulf* manuscript, but in OE only). Each section, describing some monster or monstrous race of people, consists of a Latin text, an OE text, and a coloured illustration (McGurk *et al.* 1983). Surprisingly, the OE version does not always match up with the Latin one, nor with some of the details in the illustrations, which in a sense constitute a third translation. Each version seems to have had a separate line of transmission.

Many OE prognostic texts have survived that predict the future based on a variety of factors: the calendar (which day Christmas or New Year falls upon); the weather (which month thunder occurs in); and dreams. Förster edited many of these texts (see Liuzza 2001: 212 for full bibliography). He usually printed corresponding Latin texts, but, since these could be from as late as the fifteenth century, it is not always clear that they represent sources for the OE versions. A fifteenth-century copy of a Latin prognostic by winds (Förster 1912: 56) cites an OE word: 'quodam morbo, qui appellatur *odle*' [a certain sickness, called 'odle' ('disease')]. Conceivably the wind book originated in Latin, was translated into OE, and then was translated back into Latin when the OE was becoming difficult to comprehend.

OE translated medical texts exhibit a wide range of relationships to Latin originals: from faithful renderings to compilations to adaptations. In 754 Cyneheard, Bishop of Winchester, observed: 'we have some medical books, but the foreign ingredients we find prescribed in them are unknown to us and difficult to obtain' (Cameron 1993: 29). Some scholars have criticized the OE translation of the *Herbarium* of pseudo-Apuleius (ed. de Vriend 1984) for transmitting herbal medical lore about Mediterranean plants not native to England; the work would then be an impractical, academic exercise. More recently, though, scholars have defended the utility of the translation from several points of view. Cameron notes that since many herbs worked for the same ailments, the user of the *Herbarium* would only have to locate recipes using ingredients at hand (1993: 102). Further, the climate in Anglo-Saxon England before the Little Ice Age that began *c.* 1200 was warmer and drier, and many Mediterranean plants could have been grown in sheltered monastic gardens in southern England (see Voigts 1979: 262–6). Plant ingredients that could be dried, for example pepper, were eminently importable. The *Herbarium* occurs with the *Medicina de Quadrupedibus* in a 'complex' of texts that may have been reorganized in part by the OE translator (de Vriend 1984: liv).

Latin originals can be found for most of the medical recipes (they are included in de Vriend 1984) and the translator's task can be examined in detail. Errors in the OE version turn 'a remedy for the genitals into one for the breasts' (mistaking *pecten* for *pectus*) and 'a remedy for clearing the head into one for baldness' (D'Aronco 1998: 61). Translating the plant names posed particular difficulties; the author tries to give OE equivalents but writes his entries based on the Latin names. These texts also illustrate early attempts to develop a medical vocabulary in English; already we see the Latinate influence that makes physicians' medical and anatomical terms so opaque to their patients. Euphemism is particularly evident in the reproductive vocabulary. Rather than employ a blunt 'Anglo-Saxonism' for a Latin word like *natura* for the male genitals, the OE translator adopts 'gecyndlimu' [kindly limbs] (de Vriend 1984: 245), a calque on Latin *membra genitalia*.

One of the more important scientific works in OE, Bald's *Leechbook*, is a medical compilation made from known Latin sources: judging by the Latin sources and analogues, the compiler omitted some recipes requiring unavailable ingredients (Cameron 1993: 104). He arranged the recipes in a head-to-foot order (according to what parts of the body were affected), and then divided them into two books, one for external, and the other for internal, conditions.

As usual with compilations, we cannot be sure what editorial work had already been done previous to the version at hand. The scribe of another medical book, *Lacnunga* (Grattan and Singer 1952), was less careful in copying an exemplar that contained some translated and some native material, including charms and diseases attributed to the influence of witches and elves (Cameron 1993: 46–7). In another compilation, *Leechbook III*, 'we come as close as we can get to ancient Northern European medicine' (Cameron 1993: 35), judging by its greater reliance on native ingredients and the fact that only about a third of its recipes are paralleled in Latin compilations. The language of one additional medical book, the *Peri Didaxeon* (Cockayne 1864–6: III, 82–145), is on the borderline between OE and ME. It derives in part from the Latin *Petrocellus*, which may have been compiled in England in the ninth century. Lapidaries are often classified with medical texts, since the stones and gems are said to possess healing properties. According to Kitson (1977–8: 35), the first half of the *Old English Lapidary* was based on a set of glosses to the gems occurring in the Book of Revelation 21: 19–20.

One of the more technical areas of Anglo-Saxon science was the *computus*, or time-reckoning, of particular importance for the Church in determining the date of Easter. The homilist Ælfric composed a treatise in OE on the subject, *De Temporibus Anni* (*c.* 993), drawing heavily on Bede's *De Temporum Ratione*. Henel prints the Latin parallels in his edition (Ælfric 1942), and comments (lv) that Ælfric 'omits Bede's calculations [and] eschews argument'; he 'intended to present not comprehensive instructions for using the calendar, but rather a general treatise on time and the nature of the world' (Baker and Lapidge in Byrhtferth 1995: xc).

More extensive and detailed is Byrhtferth's *Enchiridion*, written in 1011. Byrhtferth's primary source is himself, that is, a series of Latin computistical texts he compiled during the years 988–96, themselves drawing on Bede, Hrabanus Maurus (d. 856), and other authors. The *Enchiridion* is only partly in English, however. Sometimes Byrhtferth will give a Latin text, such as Bede's verses on the months, followed by an OE paraphrase. At other times he leaves long sections in Latin. Byrhtferth prefaces his OE treatment of 'concurrents, regulars and epacts' with a paragraph in Latin in which he urges 'lazy clerics' to 'ease up on the dice and acquire some knowledge of this science', having 'said various things which it is a pleasure to repeat in my own language, so those who cannot take in the sense of Latin may at least understand our discussion in the vernacular' (Byrhtferth 1995: 53; see also pp. 7–8 above).

Verse was not the medium for scientific texts in OE that it would become in ME, although the Anglo-Saxon Poetic Record prints twelve charms that it considers to be 'in metrical form' or to 'contain verse passages of sufficient regularity' to pass as poetry (Dobbie 1942: cxxx). These charms occupy an unusual space between pagan and Christian magical practices, and employ an unusual mixture of OE, Latin, bits of Greek and Hebrew, and (so far as we can tell) gibberish. For example, the 'Æcerbot' charm [Field-remedy, or For Unfruitful Land] gives a Latin formula with OE glosses: '*Crescite*, wexe [grow], *et multiplicamini*, and gemænigfealda [and multiply], *et replete*, and gefylle [and replenish], *terre*, þas eorðan | [the earth]' (Grendon 1952: 172–7). The portions in alliterative verse invoke Saint Mary (*sancta Maria*) as well as Erce, 'eorþan modor' [mother of earth]. OE charms (more of which are in prose than in verse) can incorporate Latin formulae, and Latin charms can have OE headings and directions; they represent an early instance of code-switching or language alternation (Pahta 2004: 88–9). A charm against theft in one manuscript of the OE Bede uses the phrase *per crucem Christi*, where another copy has 'þurh þa haligan cristes rode', showing that the 'language barriers are rather porous' (Olsan 1999: 408).

Bestiary lore is represented in three poems from the Exeter Book (transcribed *c.* 970–90): 'The Panther,' The Whale', and 'The Partridge'. A recent editor appends comparable passages from two Latin versions and one reconstructed Greek version of the *Physiologus*, adding that the OE 'is not a translation but an artistic creation with its own structure and rationale' (Squires 1988: 21). Also related to bestiary lore, but more particularly to the *Carmen de Ave Phoenice* of Lactantius (?*c.* 300), is the OE poem *The Phoenix*, also from the Exeter Book. The OE poet 'made his work explicitly Christian' by omitting Lactantius' references to classical gods and adding a Christian allegorical interpretation as the second half of his poem. Further, he 'tried to relate it to the Old English heroic background, as exemplified in the earlier poetry' (Blake 1990: 27). The poem begins with 'Hæbbe ic gefrugnen' [I have heard], a typical epic formula comparable to those that initiate the poems *Beowulf* and *Andreas*. The poem ends with eleven macaronic lines, with an OE half-line followed in each case by

a Latin one, for example, line 667, 'Hafað | us alyfed *lucis auctor*' [*The author of light* has granted us].

Anglo-Norman and Middle English

After the Norman Conquest, the genre of Latin–(Middle) English glossaries continues but is now supplemented by AN–English glossaries, some classed according to subjects of practical or scientific interest (for glossaries containing AN, see Dean 1999: 166–74; Hunt 1989, 1991; for Latin–ME glossaries, Wright 1968). One such glossary (*c.* 1275; Acker 1993a) treats names of trees and birds; it also illustrates the influence of Scandinavian on the vocabulary (e.g. *scarf* [cormorant]) which began in the late OE period but proliferates in early ME documents. An AN language learning text of *c.* 1275, Walter of Bibbesworth's poem *Le Tretiz* (Walter 1990), has a partial interlinear gloss in ME, is addressed to an English noblewoman, and tells how to speak in French about aspects of manorial life such as farming, fishing, weaving, building, and the names of animals and birds. The poem was adapted for teaching (continental) French in the fourteenth century, with English couplets following the French ones.

Medical recipes (and charms) proliferate in AN England, often in bi- and trilingual collections. For the most part, these are no longer based on previously compiled Latin compendia; indeed, Hunt maintains (1990: 101) that a Latin version of the recipe collection called the 'Letter of Hippocrates' is translated from the AN version. The *Circa Instans*, a twelfth-century Latin herbal arranged alphabetically, was, however, translated into AN (for comment on this unedited work, see Dean 1999: 225), as were medical and surgical treatises such as the *Chirurgia* of Roger Frugardi, the *Practica Brevis* of Platearius, and a gynaecological treatise in verse based on the first treatise in the 'Trotula' ensemble (all in Hunt 1994).

Types of prognostication familiar from OE include predictions by the calendar; new types (ultimately from Arabic) include chiromancy (palmistry) and geomancy (catalogued in Dean 1999: 198–207, 233–4). Lapidaries became quite popular in AN England; twelve versions (six in verse) probably originated there (Dean 1999: 192–7; ten are edited in Studer and Evans 1924). Most derive from the Latin *De Lapidibus* by Marbode, Bishop of Rennes (1035–1123); two in verse are attributed to Philippe de Thaon, who also translated, *c.* 1130, a verse bestiary based on the Latin *Physiologus*.

A number of AN scientific treatises remain as yet unedited or with their sources unidentified. Ralph of Lenham's verse *computus*, *Art de kalender* (1256), is one such: it states that it is 'de latin . . . translaté' (l.936), but its editor remarks only that 'the material is entirely traditional' (Hunt in Rauf 1983: 1). Like the earlier *Comput* (dated 1113 or 1119) of Philippe de Thaon, it may be a compilation drawing on Bede's *De Temporum Ratione* and other sources. Karpinski and Staubach (1935) edited an AN verse 'algorism' (*c.* 1350) or introduction to the new, Arabic arithmetic. Karpinski mentions its similarity to two other French

algorisms; in fact it follows fairly closely the *Carmen de Algorismo* of Alexander de Villa Dei (*c.* 1200; Steele 1922: 72–80). Dean (1999: 205–6) mentions an unedited, unsourced AN treatise on chiromancy; judging by its incipit, 'Treis natureles lignes sount en la paume', it probably derives from one of the Latin treatises beginning 'Tres sunt naturales linee omnis chiros' indexed in Thorndike and Kibre 1963: 1585 (and see also ibid. 830).

For ME scientific texts, the extant number is so large that their range can be characterized only provisionally. Keiser's 1998 survey of them (focusing on, but not confined to, texts that have been published) describes over 500 items. Voigts and Kurtz's listing on CD-ROM for OE and ME scientific texts, which attempts to cover published and unpublished texts as fully as possible, records incipits for 232 OE texts and 8,032 ME texts; these totals involve a good bit of reduplication, however, since incipits that vary only slightly (but appear to be for the 'same' text) are given separate item numbers. Many, perhaps most, of these scientific texts are translated from Latin or French, although these sources are often not printed or fully identified. AN texts translated into ME include the cookery book *Diversa Cibaria* (*c.* 1325, Hieatt and Butler 1985: 43–58); the hunting treatise *La Venery de Twety* (*c.* 1400, Tilander 1956); and *Walter of Henley's Husbandry* (late 15th century, Lamond 1890). The *Lapidaire de Philippe* was translated into two different ME dialects in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, as was also the *Second Anglo-Norman Prose Lapidary* (Evans and Serjeantson 1932; see Keiser 1998: 3676–8, 3882–4). Works from French include Edward, Duke of York's *Master of Game* (Edward 1904), a hunting treatise translated *c.* 1410 from the *Livre de chasse* of Gaston Phébus (see above pp. 99–100).

Prognostications remain popular in ME, including thunder books and wind books (ed. Acker 2005), which constitute a little-studied area of continuity from OE to ME (even if Latin and AN versions may intervene). Post-Conquest genres of divination continue, such as palmistry, physiognomy, and geomancy (ed. Means, in Matheson 1994). *The Syens off Cyromancy* was translated, from an unedited Latin palmistry, by John Metham (fl. 1449), known also as a writer of romance (Metham 1916). *The Boke of Pawmestry* (ed. Acker and Amino in Matheson 1994) and *The Wise Book of Physiognomy* (Krochalis and Peters 1975: 218–28, supplemented by Acker 1985) are translations of Latin texts that fortunately have been printed in modern editions.

Translation into ME of Latin technical treatises begins in earnest at the end of the fourteenth century, and continues unabated thereafter (cf. Voigts 1989: 352). Sigmund Eisner, in assessing Chaucer as a 'technical writer', notes that, where the main source for his *Treatise on the Astrolabe* (the *Compositio et Operatio Astrolabii* of Messahala) provides only 'bare essentials' on how to use this astronomical instrument, Chaucer amplifies each description and uses particularly apt similes, thus introducing 'the unfamiliar by means of the familiar' (1985: 190, 193). The translation is addressed to his little son Lewis; Chaucer apologizes for any repetitiveness because 'sothly me semith better to writen unto a child twyes a good sentence, than he forgete it onys' (Prol. 28, 47–9).

Other late fourteenth-century translations relating to astronomy and astrology are *The Newe Theorik of Planets*, from the *Theorica Planetarum* of Andalò di Negro (for discussion, see Schmidt 1993: 213–82) and the *Exafrenon*, from the Latin treatise by Richard of Wallingford (North 1976: I, 183–243). Academic medical treatises, surgical treatises, and herbals translated from Latin also begin to occur at this time, among them a tract on phlebotomy (blood-letting) edited (along with its Latin source) by Voigts and McVaugh (1984); Lelamour's 1373 translation (unedited) of Macer and other herbals; and Henry Daniel's *Liber Uricrisiarum*, based on Isaac Israeli's *De Urinis* (for an edited excerpt, see Hanna in Matheson 1994). *The Crafte of Nombrynge*, an arithmetical treatise translated *c.* 1400, glosses the *Carmen de Algorismo* of Alexander de Villa Dei (*c.* 1200); the manuscript edited by Steele (1922) quotes the Latin poem followed by the English gloss (see further Acker 1993b).

Scientific translations from Latin proliferate in the fifteenth century, among them translations of the *Chirurgia Magna* of Lanfranc (d. 1306; ed. Fleischhacker 1894); of the *De Probatissima Arte Oculorum* of Benvenutus Grassus (ed. Eldredge 1996); of the plague treatise attributed to 'Canutus' (Pickett in Matheson 1994); and of the *Compendium Medicinae* of Gilbertus Anglicus. The manuscript version of Gilbert edited by Getz (1991) excised anything relating to diseases of women, perhaps because it was aimed at a monastic audience; this gynaecological material however was translated separately as the *Sekenesse of Wymmen* (Hallaert 1982).

One interesting feature of the longer translations at least is that they sometimes exist in two main stages, a literal rendering and a revised, more fluid rendering. The Wycliffite Bible provides a salient instance of this practice (see further above p. 221). Translators of the Bible may have felt a particular responsibility for adhering as closely as possible to the Latin translation but scientific translators, at home in a Latin, academic idiom, often began their task in much the same way. Edwards has argued (in Edwards 2004: 121) that such was the case with John Trevisa's translation (*c.* 1398) of Bartholomaeus Anglicus' encyclopedic work *De Proprietatibus Rerum*; for evidence of Trevisa's stages of translation, however, one must look beyond the published edition (Trevisa 1975–88) to the various manuscripts. Similarly, the earlier version of the translation of Guy de Chauliac's *Surgery* (ed. Wallner 1964–88, lacking Books VI–VII) is in a far more literal, Latinate style, although comparison between versions remains difficult since only the later version (Ogden 1971) has been fully edited, and the Latin source has only recently become available (Chauliac 1997). Variants from the first version— so far as can be judged from citations in the *Middle English Dictionary*—often reveal a preference for a more Latinate vocabulary. The native word 'strouting' [protrusion], for example, was used in the later version (Ogden 1971: 52), where the earlier version had 'eminence', corresponding to the Latin *eminentiam*. As Wallner points out, the translator of the earlier version often gives the Latinate borrowing followed by a more familiar alternative, e.g. 'aperture *id est* opnynge' (1987: 287).

Some treatises were translated several times by different translators. Jones compares passages from four versions of John of Arderne's *Practica* to show their levels of Latinity; one version, for instance, renders the Latin ablative absolute 'quo facto' as 'this done', where another has more idiomatically 'and whane this is done' (1989: 82). Barratt (2001) edits and examines in detail two ME translations of a gynaecological treatise (the source is partly in French, partly in Latin). She finds that one version has a more romance vocabulary for sexual intercourse ('drewery' versus 'the naturall deede', for example). The encyclopedic *Secretum Secretorum* was translated several times in the fifteenth century (Keiser 1998: 3601–10), with two versions from Latin and two from French (see further pp. 104–5 above).

Some scientific texts provide prefaces that comment on the purpose, patronage, and audience of the translation. A medical compendium translated for Thomas Plawdon, a London barber-surgeon, aims at providing some tenets of academic medicine in a 'tyme of lakkyng of wise fysicians' (Voigts and McVaugh 1984: 15). Henry Daniel offers a uroscopy in English because 'I haue noȝt mynde that I haue redde ne harde neyþer þis science giffen in English' (Hanna in Matheson 1994: 188–9). Thomas Moulton was asked to translate a medical text 'for the sake of charity . . . [to] help poor folk that fall sick and are unskilled to help themselves' (Getz 1990: 11; see also Kaiser 2003b: 292–311). A gynaecological treatise is translated into English, according to its preface, because women can read that language better than any other, and in order that literate women might help illiterate women understand their maladies 'with-owte shewynge here dishese to man' (Barratt 2001: 43). Similarly, a palmistry treatise is translated for a 'worschepful ladie, for clere knowynge of þe treuthe,' since Latin and French palmistries are often full of 'faire, feyned lesyngis [lies]' (Acker and Amino in Matheson 1994: 158).

Tony Hunt has remarked: 'In medieval England there was scarcely any matter, however technical, that might not be treated in verse' (1996: 311). The early ME *Physiologus* (?*c.* 1250) was derived from the Latin poem of that name by Theobald (?*c.* 1100). It 'translates' Theobald's five different quantitative metres into four ME ones: alliterative long lines; three- and four-stress couplets; ballad stanzas; and septenaries (Wirtjes 1991: lii–liv). *De Re Rustica* of Palladius was translated *c.* 1442 (Liddell 1896), at the request of Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, into rhyme royal stanzas in a Latinate style (see further pp. 102–4 above). The presentation manuscript is a de luxe production, yet its careful layout and indexing bespeak a concern for practical use (de la Mare 1985). A translation by Nicholas Bollard of a treatise on arboriculture is noted on p. 65 above. The *De Re Militari* of Vegetius was translated (and updated) in prose and verse (see further pp. 64, 103–4 above). Many other sorts of scientific texts such as phlebotomies, lunaries, prognostics, dietaries, and astrological and alchemical texts occur in verse, but their Latin sources (if they had them) have not been identified. Keiser (2003a) discusses scientific texts in prose that have introductions and/or epilogues in verse. One of the better-known examples is found in Trevisa's *On the Properties of Things*; in his

introductory poem, Trevisa invokes God who has helped him in his endeavours ever since he first learned his ABCs.

1500–1550

The final part of this survey is dominated above all by the introduction of printing, even if many of its technical advantages (such as the consistently accurate transmission of scientific diagrams and illustrations) were not always taken advantage of at first: and even if, as has been argued, printing had 'a retardative influence on the development of scientific thought', so that early printings of scientific and medical texts can be contrasted, in respect of the 'popular and debased material' presented, with 'many scientific and medical codices' produced at the same time (Voigts 1989: 351–2). For a preliminary survey, see Bennett 1969: 97–120. One third of the scientific and medical texts printed in the sixteenth century were translations (Slack 1979: 242). Many of the scientific English translations from this period were printed versions of the same texts that had been so popular in manuscript form (Jones 1999: 447). Readers continued to enjoy agricultural works such as *Walter of Henley's Husbandry* (Wynkyn de Worde *c.* 1508, *STC* 25007); herbals like John Lelamour's *Treatise of Macer* (R. Wyer *c.* 1535, *STC* 17173); Henry Daniel's *Liber Uricrisiarum* (Peter Treveris 1527, *STC* 14886; this, as Hanna notes in Matheson 1994: 188, lacks the prologue and opening chapter); and encyclopedias like John Trevisa's *On the Properties of Things* (Wynkyn de Worde *c.* 1495, *STC* 1536), the manuscript copy-text of which survives in Columbia UL, Plimpton MS 263. While these works were reissues rather than new translations, the editors and printers did update the language of the texts to accommodate the changes of early Modern English (see Mitchner 1951: 12 for a list of examples from de Worde's printing of Trevisa). Printing did not immediately put a stop to manuscript production, however, as individuals (rather than trained scribes) continued to copy scientific texts, with alchemy exerting a particular fascination (see Voigts and Kurtz 2000: indexes).

As previous comments imply, the translators were usually 'men of diverse accomplishments and interests, not professional scientists' (Slack 1979: 255). Among the medical best-sellers of the period were *The Castel of Helth* of Sir Thomas Elyot, a text which, while not strictly a translation, borrows heavily from earlier authors (1536–9; sixteen editions before 1595); *The Regimen of Life* of Thomas Phaer (1543: nine editions before 1596), a translation of a work by Jehean Goeurot (Keiser 2003b: 311–13); and the *Regimen Sanitatis* of Thomas Paynell (1528; eleven editions to 1634), a translation of a commentary by Arnold of Villanova on a medical text by John of Milan. All three produced other translations of a very different cast: Elyot, of Isocrates and Plutarch (see above p. 386); Phaer (though strictly outside our period), of Virgil's *Aeneid*; Paynell, of the *Catiline* of Felicius (see above p. 106).

Since translation of scientific texts had developed comparably on the Continent, this final period also shows an increase in translation from one European

vernacular to another. Almanacs, which included various kinds of prognostications, were translated from Flemish and French into English (Jones 1999: 442). The medical *Buch der Cirurgia* and the alchemical *Kleines Destellierbuch* by Hieronymus of Braunschweig were translated from Low German into English (London, 1525, 1527; *STC* 13434, 13437). The latter was translated by Laurence Andrew, who also translated bestiary lore from a Flemish version of the *Hortus Sanitatis* (Antwerp, 1527; *STC* 13837.5).

The so-called scientific revolution, after which science becomes more recognizably modern, traditionally begins with the publication in 1543 of both Vesalius' *De Humani Corporis Fabrica* and Copernicus' *De Revolutionibus Orbium Caelestium*. In 1553 Nicholas Udall produced a translation of a 1543 abridgement of Vesalius by way of a 1545 pirated version by Thomas Gemini (the *Compendiosa Totius Anatomie Delineatio*); translation and pirated abridgement 'rank among the most important works of the sixteenth century' (Bennett 1969: 108). Similarly, an English translation of part of Copernicus' first chapter was appended to a set of prognostications in 1576 (*STC* 435.47). An account of the dissemination in English of such scientific material belongs more properly in the next volume of the *History*.

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6

The Translators: Biographical Sketches

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The Translators: Biographical Sketches

This chapter provides a basic account of forty-five named translators and their works, offering a further context for their study to supplement the larger contexts—literary, cultural, historical, political—which have framed the discussion throughout the volume. *ODNB*, a primary source for information biographical and, sometimes, bibliographical, has not been listed separately among the suggestions for further reading. Included here are cross-references to sixteenth-century translators who published before 1550 but whose main activity lies in the second half of the century, and who are therefore studied more fully in Volume 2 of this *History*.

These mini-biographies do not provide a comprehensive list of translators active in the period, desirable though such a list would be. Many important translations could not be considered because their authors remain anonymous; of others, we know little more about their authors than their names. But those who are included here collectively witness to the enormous range and vitality of translation in the medieval period: as does regular incidental reference to other translators, who are included, in part, as a way of suggesting the networks of relationships within which translators operated.

Contributors are represented by their initials, and may be identified by referring to the full list at the head of the volume. Where not otherwise indicated, entries were written by the editor.

ÆLFRIC of Eynsham (*c.* 955–*c.*1010), Benedictine monk. A disciple of Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, Ælfric went first to Cerne Abbas, and then to Eynsham, where his patron Æthelmær, who founded the abbey, made him abbot. Like Æthelwold, Ælfric was a key figure in the tenth-century Benedictine Revival, which re-established and reformed the monastic system and made strong ties between Church and royal government.

Translation was as important a feature of this revival as it had been 100 years previously in Alfred's reign. Drawing on an impressive range of patristic Latin sources, Ælfric translated and adapted many homilies into English (the so-called *Catholic Homilies*). He did the same for liturgical hagiography in his *Lives of Saints*; and he translated several books of the Old Testament. All are extant, as is his *Grammar*, written in English, the first Latin grammar in any vernacular. His works were still being read in the twelfth century.

See further: Joyce Hill, 'Ælfric's Authorities', pp. 51–66 in Elaine Treharne and Susan Rosser, eds., *Early Medieval English Texts and Interpretations: Studies*

Presented to Donald G. Scragg (Tempe, AZ, 2002); Clare Lees, *Tradition and Belief: Religious Writing in Late Anglo-Saxon England* (Minneapolis, MN, 1999), 46–77, 93–101, 115–20; Jocelyn Wogan-Browne, 'The Hero in Christian Reception: Ælfric and Heroic Poetry', pp. 215–35 in R. M. Liuzza, ed., *Old English Literature: Critical Essays* (New Haven, CT, 2002).   RS

ALFRED, King of Wessex (848/9–899, r. 871–899), also known as 'the Great'. He translated, from Latin into English, St Augustine's *Soliloquies*, the first fifty psalms, Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, and Gregory the Great's *Cura Pastoralis*. Under his direction, Bishop Wærferth translated Gregory the Great's *Dialogues*, and other writers translated Bede's *Historia Ecclesiastica* and Orosius' *Historiarum Adversum Paganos Libri Septem*. He also produced his own set of written laws; and he probably supported the production of *Bald's Leechbook* (a collection of medical texts) and the *OE Martyrology*.

   With the help of several scholars from England, Wales, and the Continent, Alfred accomplished all this while fighting against the incursion of the Vikings into England. With partial success, he revived English learning after a period of decline (caused partly by the Viking invasions) following on from a perceived golden age of the seventh and eighth centuries. Alfred's Gregory was still being read and glossed in the twelfth century, and his Boethius was used *c*. 1300 by Nicholas Trevet.

   See further: Janet M. Bately, 'Old English Prose before and during the Reign of Alfred', *Anglo-Saxon England* 17 (1988), 93–138; Allen J. Frantzen, *King Alfred* (Boston, MA, 1986); Simon Keynes and Michael Lapidge, *Alfred the Great: Asser's Life of King Alfred and Other Contemporary Sources* (London, 1983).   RS

BACON, Anne Cooke, *see* Volume 2.

BARCLAY, Alexander (*c*. 1484–1552), priest and poet. Barclay was priested in 1508, probably after a period of lengthy travel and study abroad. He joined the Benedictines of Ely before 1513, leaving them between 1521 and 1528 to join the Franciscans. For most of the remainder of his life he remained an adherent of the Catholic faith, though he embraced the new faith the year before he died (or in 1546, according to *ODNB*). Contemporaries, themselves translators, spoke approvingly of his learning (John Palsgrave called him a 'studious clerke') and literary achievements (Henry Bradshaw compared him to Chaucer, Lydgate, and Skelton).

   In 1509 Barclay translated, via a Latin version, Sebastian Brant's satiric *Narrenschiff*; then (1512), as *The Gardyners Passetaunce* (1512), a Latin tract supporting Henry VIII's proposed attack on Louis XII. Most of his translations were produced during his time at Ely. These include: the *Eclogues*, translations of three works by Pope Pius II and two by Mantuan, the first major pastoral poems in English; and translations of Sallust's *Jugurtha* (*c*. 1520) and a Life of St George,

also based on Mantuan. Barclay also wrote an *Introductory to Write and Pronounce French* (1521).

See further: Alistair Fox, *Politics and Literature in the Reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII* (Oxford, 1989), 37–55; R. J. Lyall, 'Alexander Barclay and the Edwardian Reformation 1548–52', *RES* NS 20 (1969), 455–61.

BEAUFORT, **Lady Margaret** (**1443–1509**), mother of Henry VII and patroness of letters. After Henry Tudor became king in 1485, the Lady Margaret, who was already wealthy, became extremely influential. She was a prominent promoter of the feast of the name of Jesus, and in 1494 was made official patron of the feast by the Pope. She was a leading benefactress of the University of Cambridge: St John Fisher called her a 'veray patronesse' to 'all the lerned men of Englande'. She commissioned translations by William Caxton (1488) of *Blanchardyn and Eglantine*, by Henry Watson (1509) of Sebastian Brant's *Narrenschiff*, by William Hatfield (?1509) of a Life of St Ursula, and of the first three books of the *De Imitatione Christi* of St Thomas à Kempis, by William Atkynson (d. 1509). John Skelton probably produced, at her request, a lost translation of the *Pelerinage de la vie humaine* of Guillaume Deguileville. Atkynson's translation was published, together with her own translation of Book IV of the *Imitation*, in 1504. Like this latter, her *Mirror of Gold to the Sinful Soul* was based not on the original Latin of Jacques de Gruytrode but on an intermediate French version, which had just appeared. She possibly undertook her two translations as a spiritual exercise: both are in the traditions of affective piety.

See further: M. J. Jones and M. G. Underwood, *The King's Mother: Lady Margaret Beaufort, Countess of Richmond and Derby* (Cambridge, 1992); Susan Powell, 'Lady Margaret Beaufort and her Books', *The Library*, 6th ser. 20 (1998), 197–240.   AB

BERNERS, *see* BOURCHIER, John.

BOKENHAM, **Osbern** (*c.* 1393–*c.* 1467), Augustinian friar. Bokenham was born, and lived much of his life, in Suffolk. Awarded a doctorate in theology, probably from Cambridge, he was by 1427 a friar at the convent of Stoke Clare, Suffolk. He travelled to Italy twice (1423, 1438), and to Compostela once (1445). In the 1460s he was twice a vicar-general for his order's provincial chapter. He completed his major work, the *Legendys of Hooly Wummen*, *c.* 1447, based on James of Varaggio's *Legenda Aurea*, for several well-born East Anglian ladies; the work offers insight into patterns of patronage of devotional literature in East Anglia. His more extensive translation of the *Legenda* has been recently discovered. His *Mappula Angliae* (*c.* 1440), describing the history, towns, and geography of England, draws on Higden's *Polychronicon*. Possibly he also produced an English translation of Claudian's *De Consulatu Stilichonis* (1445), dedicated to Richard, Duke of York, and another work supporting the Yorkist claim to the throne, the *Dialogue at the Grave* (1456).

See further: Sheila Delaney, *Impolitic Bodies: Poetry, Saints, and Society in Fifteenth-Century England: The Work of Osbern Bokenham* (Oxford, 1998); A. S. G. Edwards, 'The Transmission and Audience of Osbern Bokenham's *Legendys of Hooly Wummen*', pp. 157–67 in A. J. Minnis, ed., *Late-Medieval Texts and their Transmission: Essays in Honour of A. I. Doyle* (Cambridge, 1987). ʜᴘ

Bourchier, John, Second Baron Berners (*c.* 1467–1533), courtier and soldier. Berners was in the King's retinue at Calais in 1513, Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1514, and an envoy to Spain in 1516; he attended Henry at the Field of the Cloth of Gold in 1520. He became Deputy of Calais in 1520–6 and again in 1531, dying there in 1533. An inventory of his goods recorded that he owned eighty books at his death.

He was an accomplished translator of French. His first three translations—*Arthur of Little Britain* (during the period 1510–20), *Huon of Bordeaux* (*c.* 1515), and Froissart's *Chronicles* (*c.* 1521–5)—were of chivalric romances and histories of the type popularized by Caxton. The Froissart, for which he is best known, was begun at the request of King Henry VIII, and aimed to remind the nobility of their ancient right to France. On his return from France in 1526 he translated two more up-to-date works by Spanish authors: *The Castell of Love* (printed *c.* 1548), from Diego de San Pedro's *Carcel de Amor*, in a French version (though he also consulted the Spanish); and the *Golden Book of Marcus Aurelius* (1532), from the *Libro Aureo* of Antonio de Guevara, also by way of a French version. His work can be seen as evidence both of the continuing appeal of medieval romance in literary circles and of a development of interests more typical of Tudor humanism.

See further: N. F. Blake, 'Lord Berners: A Survey', *Medievalia & Humanistica* NS 2 (1971), 119–32; Joyce Boro, ' "This Rude Labour": Lord Berner's Translation Methods and Prose Style in *Castell of Love*', *T&L* 13 (2004), 1–23, and 'Lord Berners and his Books: A New Survey', *Huntington Library Quarterly* 67 (2004), 236–49. ʀꜰ

Bryan, Francis (d. 1550), courtier. Affectionately known by Henry VIII and Cromwell, for his dissolute life, as 'vicar of hell', Bryan had close links with other writer-translators of the period: with his uncle Lord Berners, who translated the *Libro Aureo* of de Guevara at his suggestion; and with Wyatt, who dedicated to him his third satire, an imitation of Horace, and addressed an epigram to him from prison. Robert Whittington, translator of works by Cicero, Erasmus, and pseudo-Seneca, dedicated a translation to him in 1547. Bryan's principal translation was the *Dispraise of the Life of a Courtier* (1548) by Antonio Guevara, based, since he could not read Latin, on a French version. His 'Proverbes of Salmon' are an instance of intralingual translation: they versify, in *ottava rima*, large parts of the prose *Bankette of Sapience* of Sir Thomas Elyot.

See further: Susan Brigden, ' "The Shadow That You Know": Sir Thomas Wyatt and Sir Francis Bryan at Court and in Embassy', *Historical Journal* 39

(1996), 1–31; Greg Walker, *Writing under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford, 2005), 318–34.

CAPGRAVE, **John (1393–1464)**, Augustinian friar. Priested in 1417, Capgrave studied in London (1417–20), then attended Cambridge (BD 1423, DD 1425), eventually becoming English prior provincial of his order (1453–7). He spent most of his life in Lynn.

Capgrave was a prolific writer in Latin, and produced commentaries, still extant, on Genesis, Exodus, and Acts (the first two dedicated to Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester), as well as a *De Fidei Symbolis*, and the *Liber de Illustribus Henricis*, dedicated to Henry VI. He also delivered a Latin sermon on the orders that followed the Rule of St Augustine (1422) which survives in a revised English version (1451). His English works—all translations in one sense or another of the word—can be divided into hagiographies and historical and travel writings. In the first category are the verse *Life of St Katharine* (1441–5) and the prose lives of Sts Norbert (mostly composed before 1422), Augustine (before 1451), and Gilbert of Sempringham (1451), all concerning saints connected with Capgrave's order or with East Anglia. In the second are a guide to Rome, *The Solace of Pilgrimes* (*c.* 1451), and *The Abbreuiacion of Cronicles* (presented to Edward IV in 1461).

See further: John Lucas, *From Author to Audience: John Capgrave and Medieval Publication* (Dublin, 1997); M. C. Seymour, *John Capgrave* (Brookfield, VT, 1996).   NW

CAXTON, **William (1415/1424–1492)**, mercer, diplomat, and printer. Caxton owes his place at the forefront of medieval English translators to numerous contacts acquired abroad, principally in the Low Countries. He translated from Latin, Dutch, and, most commonly, French. In 1471, already involved in the production and marketing of books, he went to Cologne, where he purchased his first printing press. Even before his return to England in 1475–6 he had begun to publish translations in English. The first of these, his version of the Troy story (the *Recuyell*), was produced *c.* 1472, and printed 1473–4, for Margaret of Burgundy. Like the *Recuyell*, many of his translations were formally commissioned by, or dedicated to, members of the aristocracy, though he shrewdly marketed his books, as well, at lower-class, upwardly mobile readers. They cover a wide range of subjects of proven interest: history (for example, *Recuyell, Kyng Arthur, Charles the Grete*), religion (*The Golden Legende*), chivalry (*The Fayttes of Armes, Godefroy of Bologne*), romance (*Blanchardyn and Eglantine*), classical legend and literature (*The Fables of Esope, Historie of Jason, Eneydos, Metamorphoses*), and books of instruction (*Caton, The Game and Playe of the Chesse, Book of the Knyght of the Towre*). Caxton also published translations by predecessors (Chaucer, Trevisa, Gower, and Lydgate), and contemporaries (Burgh, Malory, Tiptoft, Woodville, and Worcester).

See further: N. F. Blake, *William Caxton and English Literary Culture* (London, 1991), and *William Caxton*, Authors of the Middle Ages III.7 (Aldershot, 1996).

CHALONER, Sir Thomas (1521–1565), diplomat and humanist. Chaloner was a servant of successive English monarchs: as ambassador to Queen Elizabeth, he served principally in Spain, where he wrote most of his Latin poetry, and gained a considerable literary reputation among the cognoscenti in England.

His major translations, all from Latin, were produced before 1550, and reflect his associations with a humanist circle which included John Cheke and Walter Haddon. These include *Of the Office of Seruauntes* (1543), from Gilbert Cousin's *Oiketes Siue de Officio Famulorum* (1534); a homily of St John Chrysostom (1544) from a Latin version by Cheke (1543); and *The Praise of Folie* (1549), the first English version of *Moriae Encomium* of Erasmus, which he also consulted in the Italian translation of Pellegrini. Other surviving translations—of metres of Boethius, and of Ovid's *Heroides* 17—cannot be precisely dated; lost translations of verses from Ariosto and (in English and Latin) of a French poem by Mary Queen of Scots were composed a few years before his death.

See further: 'The Life of Sir Thomas Chaloner', pp. xxix–xlix in Clarence H. Miller, ed., *Sir Thomas Chaloner: The Praise of Folie*, EETS OS 257 (1965).

CHARLES, Duke of Orléans (1394–1465), French nobleman and poet. He spent twenty-five years after the battle of Agincourt (1415) as a prisoner of the English. Charles wrote in English, French, and Latin, using Latin for his religious poetry, which is influenced by Franciscan writing and witnesses to his association with the London Franciscans. He is better known for his secular poetry, which he wrote in French and English. Among the latter is a translation of a poem by Christine de Pizan, and English versions of several of his own French poems, the English usually held to be a reworking of the French. Such reworkings sometimes involved radical transformation and neutralizing of the political reference of their originals to a more conventional amatory reference. On his return from captivity Charles sought to popularize English religious writing.

See further: Mary-Jo Arn, 'Charles of Orleans: Translator?', *MTr* 4: 125–35; Susan Crane, 'Charles of Orleans: Self-Translation', *MTr* 8: 169–77; John Fox, *The Lyric Poetry of Charles d'Orléans* (Oxford, 1969).

CHAUCER, Geoffrey (*c.* 1340–1400), civil servant and poet. Chaucer was born into a prosperous merchant family, and spent his life in the service of the crown. His most important posts were as Controller of Customs for the Port of London (1374–86) and Clerk of the King's Works (1389–90). He also undertook many missions abroad for the crown; especially important for future literary developments were trips to Italy in 1372–3 and 1378. Chaucer's decision to write almost exclusively in English had important consequences for the development of English literary culture. Except for the fabliaux for which he is possibly best known today, his works are mainly translations, and cover almost

every genre currently available: science (*A Treatise on the Astrolabe*, based on Messahala and Sacrobosco); philosophy (*Boece*, translating Boethius' *De Consolatione Philosophiae*, which Chaucer used throughout his work as a major source); romance and courtly literature (principal works include the *Romaunt*—from another major source, the *Roman de la rose*—and *Troilus and Criseyde* and the *Knight's Tale*, both from Boccaccio); saints' lives (the Second Nun's and Man of Law's tales, from James of Varaggio and Nicholas Trevet respectively); other religious works (the *Clerk's Tale* and *Melibee*, from Petrarch and Albertano of Brescia respectively). He ranges from close translations like the *Boece* and *Melibee*, to works which embed translated material in otherwise original works. A striking feature of his work is its readiness to use intermediate (French) versions alongside Latin originals.

See further: Roger Ellis, 'Translation', pp. 443–58 in Peter Brown, ed., *A Companion to Chaucer* (Oxford, 2000); Derek Pearsall, *The Life of Geoffrey Chaucer* (Oxford, 1992).

Copland, Robert (fl. 1505–1547), printer. Copland started his career under Wynkyn de Worde, who published five translations of light reading from French by him. Spanning forty years, his translation activity comprised a wide range of materials, mostly from French, and including the romances *King Apollyn of Thyre* (before 1510) and *The Knyght of the Swanne* (1512); a dance manual (1521); a manual of statecraft, the *Secrete of Secretes* (1528); and texts on surgery, including the first printing of Galen in English (1542). He played a central role in the dissemination of popular French literature. His translations made up-to-date information readily available, including two commissioned by the Grand Master of the Knights of Malta in 1524 about the recent history of the Hospitallers. More conventional interests were met by his most popular work (thirty-six editions between 1529 and 1556), the *Maner to Lyue Well Deuoutly*; also, possibly—his authorship is not certain—by a translation of the *Speculum Ecclesiae* of St Edmund of Abingdon (three editions in the 1520s). In his original writing he seems to have favoured pastiche and parody.

See further: F. C. Francis, *Robert Copland: 16th Century Printer and Translator* (Glasgow, 1961); Helen Phillips, 'Aesthetic and Commercial Aspects of Framing Devices: Bradshaw, Roos and Copland', *Poetica* 43 (1995), 37–65.

Coverdale, Miles (1488–1569), Protestant preacher and polemicist. Next to Tyndale he was the most important sixteenth-century translator of the Bible into English. As an Augustinian friar in Cambridge, he was influenced by his reformist prior, Robert Barnes, burned as a heretic in 1540. In some danger himself at different times for his protestant convictions—his books were burned in 1546; he was under house arrest in 1553—Coverdale was abroad 1528–35, 1540–47, and 1553–9 (he spoke of the second period as an exile). His 1535 Bible, published in Antwerp, was the first complete printed Bible translation in English, though not directly from Hebrew (which he started learning in 1544) and Greek (which he

studied in the 1530s) but from Latin. His translation was used by John Rogers, for the second half of the Old Testament, to supplement Tyndale's incomplete translation in 'Matthew's Bible' of 1537, which Coverdale was commissioned to revise for official use in churches, and which became the Great Bible of 1539. Coverdale, following Rogers, therefore mediated Tyndale's translation into the mainstream of the English Church. After his return to England in 1547 he became involved in Queen Katharine Parr's projected English translation of the Paraphrases of Erasmus. After a spell as Bishop of Exeter (1551–3), and the accession of the Catholic Queen Mary, he fled to Geneva, and probably played a role in the ongoing translation of the Geneva Bible (completed in 1560). Coverdale was most comfortable as a Latinist; nevertheless, his English translations captured much of the quality of Hebrew parallelism. His version of the Psalms entered the Anglican liturgy in the Book of Common Prayer.

See further: James Andrew Clark, 'Hidden Tyndale in OED's First Instances from Miles Coverdale's 1535 Bible', *N&Q* 45 (1998), 289–93; J. F. Mozley, *Coverdale and his Bibles* (London, 1953).   DL

DANIEL, Henry (d. 1379), Dominican friar and student of medicine and horticulture. About Daniel little is definitely known. He probably had a medical career before entering the Dominicans. Possibly connected with the Dominican friary at Stamford, murdered in 1379, Daniel was one of the first to undertake scientific translation in the 1370s. His *Liber Uricrisiarum* (1376–79), a thorough compendium on urines translating from Isaac Israeli's *De Urinis*, survives, in whole or in part, in more than twenty copies, and was printed virtually complete by Treveris in 1527. He is also known for a herbal, *Aaron Danielis*, begun soon afterwards, which includes an almost complete translation of the *Circa Instans* of Platearius. The *Aaron* survives in two copies, the first incomplete but more detailed and revealing considerable local knowledge. Lastly, he translated a treatise on the virtues and cultivation of rosemary, surviving in ten copies, to which he added an original supplement on the herb's cultivation. He was a pioneer in the field of botanical observation and experimented in the cultivation of exotic plants.

See further: Ralph Hanna III, 'Henry Daniel's *Liber Uricrisiarum* (Excerpt)', pp. 185–218 in Lister M. Matheson, ed., *Popular and Practical Science of Medieval England* (East Lansing, MI, 1994); John Harvey, 'Henry Daniel: A Scientific Gardener of the Fourteenth Century', *Garden History* 15 (1987), 81–93.

DOUGLAS, Gavin (*c.* 1476–1522), Bishop of Dunkeld. Douglas was a son of the Earl of Angus. He attended St Andrews 1489–94, and was ordained in 1494, becoming provost of St Giles, Edinburgh, in 1501 and remaining in Edinburgh for the next ten years, during which time all his works were written. Repulsed from the archbishopric of St Andrews in 1514—Henry VIII had written to the Pope in his support, praising him for his learning and probity—he became Bishop of Dunkeld in 1515, two years after the battle of Flodden devastated the Scottish

crown and aristocracy. His tenure at Dunkeld began with a year of imprisonment in Edinburgh and ended when he fled to London in 1520 to seek refuge with Henry VIII, where he became friends with Polydore Vergil. He died there of plague.

Douglas produced major original poems: *The Palice of Honour* (*c.* 1501), a dream vision exploring the nature of honour; *King Hart* (though his authorship is contested); and a witty poem on Church corruption, *Conscience*. His major work, *Eneados* (completed in 1513), was a sophisticated translation of the *Aeneid*, and the first English translation of a classical epic direct from the Latin, which it supplemented with a commentary by Ascensius (1500), and the spurious Book XIII of Mapheus Vegius (1428). Each of the thirteen Books of the translation was preceded by an original prologue. It was produced in reaction to Caxton's translation from a French version. Its early popularity is witnessed by the survival of five complete manuscript copies. He was admired by Scots writers like Bellenden and Sir David Lindsay, and English writers like Surrey, who used the *Eneados* for his own translation of Virgil. As published in London in 1553, the text occasionally incorporated protestant revisions.

See further: Priscilla Bawcutt, *Gavin Douglas: A Critical Study* (Edinburgh, 1976); Robert Cummings, '"To the Cart the Fift Quheill": Gavin Douglas's Humanist Supplement to the *Eneados*', *T&L* 4.2 (1995), 131–56.   NW

Elizabeth, Queen of England, *see* Volume 2.

Elyot, Thomas (*c.* **1490–1546**), public servant and humanist. Reckoned by contemporaries one of the most learned men of his day, he had close links with More and his circle. He served on the council of Henry VIII, as assistant clerk, 1526–30; as a loyal public servant he was sent abroad in 1531, as ambassador, to the Emperor Charles V, to promote the King's position regarding the divorce. His failure in this mission led to his subsequent dismissal from office. In the 1530s he produced many translations and original writing. His major works were *The Book of the Governor* (1531), on statecraft, designed to impress Henry VIII with his merits as a potential counsellor, and *The Castel of Helth* (1538), on health and hygiene; sixteen editions of the latter before 1595 make it his most popular work, and a sixteenth-century medical best-seller. Both include significant amounts of translated material.

Elyot's translations from the classics, which did much to popularize them, include, from Isocrates, *The Doctrinal of Princes* (?1533), one of the first English translations direct from Greek; *The Education . . . of Children* (?1533), which used a Latin version of Guarino to supplement the Greek original of Plutarch; a sermon of St Cyprian; and *Rules of a Christian Life*, from a work by Pico della Mirandola which More had earlier (1504) translated in rhyme royal verse. In the prologue to his Isocrates he identified English as fitter than Latin for the translation of Greek word order. He also introduced many new words into English from Latin and Greek.

See further: Alistair Fox and John Guy, *Reassessing the Henrician Age: Humanism, Politics and Reform 1500–1550* (Oxford, 1986), 52–73; Stanford E. Lehmberg, *Sir Thomas Elyot, Tudor Humanist* (Austin, TX, 1960), especially 72–94, 125–47; Greg Walker, *Writing under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford, 2005), 123–275.

GOUGH, John (d. 1543/4), bookseller and religious reformer. Gough was one of the first figures in the English book trade to be directly associated with heterodox beliefs. His first translation (1525) was *The Ymage of Love*, from a work, by Franciscan John Ryckes, whose anticlerical colouring got him into trouble with religious authority and led to attacks by More. Gough edited and translated several reformist texts, and published original and translated texts by other Reformers: in the period 1541–3 he published at least two dozen. Several of his works show the lengths he was prepared to take, in manipulating and misrepresenting his originals, to advance the cause of reform: when he published the general prologue of the Wycliffite Bible, he modernized it by adding references to the protestant doctrine of justification; in 1539, he reworked the *Traitié* of Jean Lemaire (1515), a work supporting conciliar, and attacking papal, authority so as to advance the Henrician cause.

See further: Jennifer Britnell, 'John Gough and the *Traitié* . . . of Jean Lemaire: Translation as Propaganda in the Henrician Reformation', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 46 (1995), 62–74.

GOWER, John (*c*. 1330–1408), esquire and poet. Of Kentish origins, Gower was probably trained in the law. He lived in Southwark possibly from 1377, when, as a trusted friend, he was appointed one of Chaucer's attorneys. He dedicated his *Confessio Amantis* first to Richard II, and then to Henry Bolingbroke, the future Henry IV, from whom in 1393 he received a gold collar, and, in 1399, an annual grant of wine: his *Cronica Tripertita*, a work written after the deposition of Richard II, strongly supports Henry's claim to the throne. Gower wrote in all three of the languages available to an educated man of the time. He seems to have conceived of his three main works as thematically linked expressions of social criticism: *Mirour de l'omme* (*c*. 1376–9), *Vox Clamantis* (before 1386), and the *Confessio* (by 1390). Gower's stance on social issues was conventional and conservative.

All three works reveal clear debts to earlier writers, but only the *Confessio* can be called a translation, and then more for the many narratives embedded in the work, as part of a parodic lover's confession, than for the frame itself. Nevertheless, the work regularly addresses the question of its own status as a translation. For example, it translates the Bible story of Dives and Lazarus, at a time when vernacular Bible translations were falling under suspicion, since, though the story was read and sung in Latin by 'clerk and clergesse', it was good to have it in English as well 'for the more knoulechinge of trouthe'.

See further: John H. Fisher, *John Gower: Moral Philosopher and Friend of Chaucer* (New York, 1964); R. F. Yeager, ed., *Re-visioning Gower* (Asheville, NC, 1998).

Grosseteste, Robert (*c.* 1168–1253), scholar, theologian, and Bishop of Lincoln. Grosseteste was born in Stowe, Suffolk. In his early years, he was associated with the cathedral school at Hereford. His career between 1198 and 1225 is subject to conflicting interpretations, there being some doubts as to whether he studied theology in Paris as well as in Oxford. In 1225, Grosseteste received his first benefice, at Abbotsley. Between *c.* 1229 and 1235, he lectured to the Franciscans at their study-house in Oxford. In 1235, he was made Bishop of Lincoln. As bishop, he clashed with Pope Innocent IV over a papal appointment in his diocese.

Grosseteste is best known for his cosmological treatise *De Luce*, his translation into Latin of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, and his commentary on Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics*. He composed many other scientific writings, commentaries on Scripture, and works of a pastoral nature (including the AN *Chateau d'amour*). Moreover, Grosseteste prepared a Greek edition of the pseudo-Dionysian corpus, which he also rendered into Latin. Late in life, he took up the study of Hebrew.

See further: James McEvoy, *Robert Grosseteste* (Oxford, 2000); Richard Southern, *Robert Grosseteste: The Growth of an English Mind in Medieval Europe*, 2nd edn. (Oxford, 1992).   PR

Hoccleve, Thomas (*c.* 1367–1426), civil servant (clerk in the Privy Seal). Hoccleve was intensely interested in his own authorial status: late in life, he produced holograph copies of his minor works and one of his major narrative collections, the *Series*. He also wrote obsessively about his misspent youth and (*c.* 1414) nervous breakdown. His writing witnesses to the damage to public life caused by the deposition of Richard II (1399) and the spread of Lollardy.

Hoccleve's earliest datable translation (1402) is of Christine de Pizan's *Epistre au Dieu d'Amours*; in 1412 he wrote *The Regiment of Princes* for the future Henry V, a work which included much translated writing on statecraft; sometime before 1413 he translated a poem from Deguileville's *Pelerinage de l'ame*, subsequently included in an anonymous prose translation of this work with other poems once thought to be Hoccleve's. Translations included in the *Series* (1421–2), a work planned for Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and dedicated to the Duchess of Westmorland, are two stories from *Gesta Romanorum*, and a chapter from Suso's *Horologium Sapientiae*.

See further: John Burrow, *Thomas Hoccleve* (Aldershot, 1994); Ethan Knapp, *The Bureaucratic Muse: Thomas Hoccleve and the Literature of Late Medieval England* (University Park, PA, 2001).

Howard, Henry, Earl of Surrey (1516/17–1547), nobleman, soldier, and poet. He was a rare member of the old aristocracy in the Henrician court, a member

of the powerful Howard (later Norfolk) family, and cousin to Henry VIII's fifth wife. As a young courtier, he was companion (later brother-in-law) to Henry VIII's illegitimate son Henry Fitzroy. His career as a soldier began in 1536, when he helped to suppress the Pilgrimage of Grace. It ended in 1546 when, as commander of Boulogne, he was defeated in battle and replaced. Accused by the Seymour faction of aspiring to the throne, he was beheaded for high treason.

Surrey wrote poetry and translations in several genres, introducing (with Wyatt) Petrarchism into English poetry, and pioneering blank verse and what is now known as the Shakespearian sonnet. The metrical regularity, lightness, and technical virtuosity of his Italian translations from Petrarch successfully bring into English the grace for which Petrarch was valued in the sixteenth century. Surrey also produced verse paraphrases of the Psalms and other Old Testament texts. His major translation was, in blank verse, of two Books of the *Aeneid*. He promoted Wyatt's reputation through commemorative elegies collected in 1542. His name also lent prestige to Tottel's *Songs and Sonnets* (1557), a compilation dominated by Wyatt's poetry.

See further: Colin Burrow, 'The Experience of Exclusion: Literature and Politics in the Reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII', in *CHMEL* 793–820; Alistair Fox, *Politics and Literature in the Reigns of Henry VII and Henry VIII* (Oxford, 1989), 286–99.   KT

LOVE, Nicholas (d.1423/4), Carthusian prior. About his life almost as little is known as about his origins. He was Prior of Mount Grace from 1410, and translated, as his *Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, the Franciscan *Meditationes Vitae Christi* (attributed in the Middle Ages to St Bonaventura). Love's translation, made for 'simple creatures', was approved by Archbishop Arundel, following his Constitutions of 1409, as an aid to vernacular devotion and a counterblast to the Lollard heretics, who were demanding, among other things, Bible translation in English. The *Mirror*, in an English prose both assured and idiomatic, was both influential and popular. It survives in fifty-six manuscripts, and was printed twice by both Caxton and Pynson, and five times by de Worde. Its emphasis on the inner re-enactment of Christ's life and Passion marks, for example, the Passion writings of the East Anglian mystic Margery Kempe in her *Book*.

See further: Nicholas Love, *A Mirror of the Blessed Life of Jesus Christ*, ed. Michael G. Sargent (New York, 1992).   DL

LOVELICH, Henry (fl. 1425–1440), member of the Company of Skinners. Lovelich was the author of two long Arthurian verse translations, the *History of the Holy Grail* and *Merlin*, each surviving in a single copy in Cambridge, Corpus Christi College MS 80. A marginal note, in the hand of John Cok, a friend of the translator-scribe-publisher John Shirley, identifies Lovelich as author and Henry Barton, a fellow Skinner and twice Lord Mayor of London, as having requested

the work: so it may be that Lovelich's translations related to a nexus of mercantile literary interest.

Dismissed as amateurish and pedestrian, his works are interesting, for their place in both Arthurian tradition and their own cultural milieu. Lovelich's is the earliest and fullest English version of the early part of the Grail story, and introduces the significant misreading 'sang real' for 'san greal', so that the Holy Grail becomes the 'holy blood'. His identification of Arthurian 'Logres' with London (in *Merlin*) is typical of his mercantile and civic interests. Presumably he wrote for an audience requiring Arthurian material in English: which suggests that translation was widening the audience for Arthurian romance a generation before Malory.

See further: Roger Dalrymple, ' "Evele Knowen ȝe Merlyne, jn Certeyn": Henry Lovelich's *Merlin*', pp. 155–68 in Judith Weiss *et al.*, eds., *Medieval Insular Romance: Translation and Innovation* (Cambridge, 2000).   RF

Lumley, Lady Jane, *see* Volume 2.

Lydgate, John (*c.* 1370–1449/50?), Benedictine monk, inheritor of Chaucer's poetic mantle. Born in Lydgate, Suffolk, Lydgate entered Bury St Edmunds at the age of 15, and was ordained a priest in 1397. From 1406 to 1408 he attended Gloucester College, Oxford, where he may have met the future Henry V, for whom he wrote several works 1413–22. Prior of Hadfield Broad Oak in Essex 1423–30 (with a visit to Paris in 1426), he had returned to Bury by 1434.

Much of his enormous oeuvre (200 works comprising 145,000 lines of verse) consists of amplified translations, including several of his longest works: for Henry V his *Troy Book* (1412–20), adapted from Guido delle Colonne's *Historia Destructionis Troiae*, and *The Life of Our Lady* (1416–22?); for Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, *The Fall of Princes* (1431–8), adapted from Boccaccio's *De Casibus Virorum Illustrium*. Other translations and independent works include dream poems (*The Temple of Glass*), epic histories (*The Siege of Thebes*), and religious poems (*Saint Albon and Amphibalus*, *The Dance of Death*), besides many occasional works. His last work is *Secrees of Old Philosoffres*, a poeticization of the pseudo-Aristotelian *Secretum Secretorum*, completed by Benedict Burgh (d. before 1483), translator, canon of Lincoln, and Lydgate's self-declared disciple.

See further: Maura Nolan, *John Lydgate and the Making of English Public Culture* (Cambridge, 2005); Derek Pearsall, *John Lydgate, A Bio-bibliography* (Victoria, BC, 1997); Larry Scanlon and James Simpson, eds., *John Lydgate: Poetry, Culture, and Lancastrian England* (Notre Dame, IN, 2006).   NW

Malory, Thomas *(c.* 1415/18–1471), knight, of Newbold Revel (Warwickshire) and author of *Le Morte Darthur*. Malory was a member of a gentry family, knighted by 1441, and elected MP in 1445. He embarked on a career of violent crime in 1450, was imprisoned 1452–60, and then pardoned by Richard, Duke of

York. In 1462 he was at the Yorkist sieges of Alnwick and Bamburgh. Returned to prison in 1468, and freed by the Lancastrians in 1470, he died in 1471.

Imprisonment gave him opportunity for his translations, as well as access to an impressive library, possibly that of Anthony Woodville, Earl Rivers, also known for his translations (published posthumously, like Malory's *Morte*, by Caxton). As the prose translator of the French and English Arthurian tradition, Malory is a major literary figure. There has been much interest in the relationship (or lack of it) between the man revealed by the records, and the chronicler of an idealized chivalric world. Equally interesting is the cultural context which equipped a layman to recognize the potential of the French texts he read while in prison, and to develop a prose style and sense of narrative impetus which translated them into an English Arthuriad for his own time and centuries to come.

See further: P. J. C. Field, *The Life and Times of Sir Thomas Malory* (Cambridge, 1993), and 'Malory's Life Records', pp. 115–30 in Elizabeth Archibald and A. S. G. Edwards, eds., *Companion to Malory* (Cambridge, 1996); Felicity Riddy, *Sir Thomas Malory* (Leiden, 1987).	RF

Mannyng, Robert (*c.* 1283–*c.* 1340), Gilbertine canon, native of Bourne (Lincolnshire). Mannyng possibly studied at Cambridge (1298–1302). He became a Gilbertine canon, possibly novice master, and had links with Lincolnshire Gilbertine houses at Sempringham, where he began *Handlyng Synne*, and Sixhills, where he completed his *Chronicle* in 1338.

Handlyng Synne (1303–17) survives in twelve manuscripts, representing four earlier versions and a 'revised' version; it is one of three extant translations of William of Waddington's *Manuel des péchés* (*c.* 1260), and, like the *Manuel*, responds to the directives of the Lateran Council and later episcopal legislation for a more religiously educated laity, including among its teaching many lively and edifying stories. Mannyng's *Chronicle* translates Langtoft's *Chronicle*, bringing it up to his own time. Criticizing Langtoft for abbreviating one of his principal sources, Wace, Mannyng translates his own first book from Wace. Probably he also translated St Bonaventura's *De Coena et Passione Domini* (as *Meditations of the Supper of Our Lord*). In the range of his materials, his pro-English sentiments, and his linguistic self-consciousness, he points forward to later fourteenth-century writers like Chaucer and Trevisa.

See further: Robert Mannyng, *Handlyng Synne* and *The Chronicle*, both ed. Idelle Sullens (Binghamton, NY, 1983, 1996); Thea Summerfield, *The Matter of Kings' Lives . . . in the . . . Chronicles of Pierre de Langtoft and Robert Mannyng* (Amsterdam, 1998).	HP

Palsgrave, John (d. 1554), teacher and grammarian. Palsgrave was schoolmaster successively to Henry VIII's sister Mary (1513) and illegitimate son Henry (1525), and a group including Thomas Cromwell's son. In 1532 he translated into French *A Glasse of the Truthe* (1530), widely supposed, at the time, to have been written by Henry VIII. Palsgrave's other works were both dedicated to the King.

L'Esclarcissment de la langue francoise (1530) contains the first French grammar and French–English dictionary. His translation (1540) of *Acolastus* by Fullonius (1529) was offered to the King in hopes it might achieve, as a partnering model translation, a circulation similar to that of the single Latin grammar authorized by the King for all schools. The text includes the Latin, keyed in the margin to both literal and freer translations, and marginal notes.

See further: P. L. Carver, 'John Palsgrave's Translation of Acolastus', *The Library* 14 (1933–4), 433–6, and 'John Palsgrave: A Personal History', pp. ix–liv in *The Comedy of Acolastus . . . by John Palsgrave*, ed. P. L. Carver, EETS OS 202 (1935); Gabriele Stein, *John Palsgrave as Renaissance Linguist: A Pioneer in Vernacular Language Description* (Oxford, 1997).

PARKER, Henry, Lord Morley (1480/1–1556), nobleman. He was a loyal servant of the crown, though his loyalty was put severely to the test when the Boleyns, with whom he was connected by his mother's second marriage, fell from favour, and he had to sit on the panel which convicted of treason his son-in-law, Lord Rochford. Worse still, in 1542, his own daughter, who had regained royal favour after her husband's death, was caught up in the proceedings against Queen Catherine Howard, and condemned and executed with her. Less than a year later, Morley sent Henry VIII, as a New Year's gift, his translation of forty-six of the lives in Boccaccio's *De Claris Mulieribus*. This translation shows, as clearly as any, the inescapable links of politics and literature in this period. Several of Morley's other translations were also directed to the King, including the *Trionfi* of Petrarch (1520s; printed 1553/6); selected lives of Plutarch, translated from Latin versions; and two translations from Italian. Cromwell received from him a translation of a Xenophon text, again from a Latin version; and Princess Mary, with whom he had a close relationship, was given several of his own translations, including the *Somnium Scipionis* from Cicero's *De Re Publica*, and a hymn to the Virgin by Erasmus.

See further: M. Axton and J. P. Carley, eds., *'Triumphs of English': Henry Parker, Lord Morley, Translator to the Tudor Court* (London, 2000); Henry Parker, *Forty-Six Lives from Boccaccio's De Claris Mulieribus*, ed. Herbert G. Wright, EETS OS 214 (1943), 160–90; James Simpson, *Reform and Cultural Revolution. The Oxford English Literary History*, Vol. 2: *1350–1547* (Oxford, 2002), 409–14.

PARR, Katharine, Queen of England (1512–1548). From her earliest years she was being prepared for a life of scholarship, and, after her marriage to Henry VIII in 1543, she took an active interest in the education of Henry's children, all of whom later produced translations. She financed the publication in 1544 of the Bishop of Rochester's Latin Psalms or Prayers, and translated them a week later; her translation was still reprinting in 1608. Her *Lamentacion of a Sinner* (1547) became a Tudor devotional classic.

Her major contribution to English translation was the commissioning of Nicholas Udall to oversee the translation of the Paraphrases on the New

Testament by Erasmus. Translators involved included Nicholas Udall, Miles Coverdale, Thomas Key, John Olde, Princess Mary, Edmund Allen, the Queen herself, and (by way of his 1534 version of Titus) Leonard Cox. Twenty thousand copies were printed between 1548 and 1551; copies were to be placed alongside the Bible in every parish church.

See further: E. J. Devereux, 'The Publication of the English *Paraphrases* of Erasmus', *Bulletin of the John Rylands Library* 51 (1969), 348–67; James Kelsey McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1965; repr. 1968), 228–34, 240–8.

Paynell, Thomas (d. ?1564), priest and religious reformer. Originally an Augustinian friar, Paynell accommodated himself with some success to the successive Tudor regimes of Henry VIII and his three children: he was chaplain to Henry VIII and orator to Queens Mary and Elizabeth. While still an Augustinian canon he produced dietary and medical works, one of which (*Regimen Sanitatis*) was reprinted as late as 1634. His translations include Erasmus' *De Contemptu Mundi* (1532); a volume of sermons by St Augustine (n.d.); and, by Felicius, an account of the conspiracy of Catiline (1541). The latter, dedicated to Henry VIII, was turned into popular history with contemporary reference. A translation of St Bernard (1545) was dedicated to Princess Mary. His commonplace book includes translations from Ovid and Luther. During the reign of Mary, he prepared the Index of More's English works.

See further: James Kelsey McConica, *English Humanists and Reformation Politics under Henry VIII and Edward VI* (Oxford, 1965; repr. 1968), 55, 61, 138–40, 173, 202; George R. Keiser, 'Two Medieval Plague Treatises and Their Afterlife in Early Modern England', *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 58 (2003), 318–24.

Phaer, Thomas (1510?—1560), *see* Volume 2.

Rolle, Richard (1305/10–1349), hermit and visionary. About Rolle's life little is known. He studied at Oxford, but, after a religious conversion, left without taking a degree, and returned to Yorkshire. There he spent the rest of his life as a hermit, preaching and writing about the gifts of the spiritual life, with which he understood himself to have been singularly blessed (spiritual experiences which he had as a young man of 22 remained normative for the rest of his life). He ended as spiritual adviser to the Cistercian nuns of Hampole, who prepared an Office after his death in hopes, unrealized, of his canonization.

Rolle wrote many works in Latin and English, and many more have been ascribed to him. The Latin works show him operating in the more conventional role of scriptural exegete and commentator, but always adapting his sources so as to accommodate them to his own spiritual experiences. This also occurs in his English works. Only one of these is, strictly, a translation: in his most popular work, the Psalter, he accompanies a literal translation of the text with his own

thoroughly developed commentary on it, reading the Psalms in the light of his own experiences. The Psalter survives in nearly forty manuscripts and was used for upwards of 150 years: Wycliffites used its authority to interpolate materials supporting their own understandings; in the sixteenth century, Henry Parker gave a copy of the Psalter, describing it as an 'olde' and 'rude' book, to the Princess Mary.

See further: Jonathan Hughes, *Pastors and Visionaries: Religion and Secular Life in Late Medieval Yorkshire* (Woodbridge, 1988), 203–17, 264–75; Nicholas Watson, *Richard Rolle and the Invention of Authority* (Cambridge, 1992).

Roos, Richard (*c.* 1410–1482), courtier. Roos served principally under the Lancastrians Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, and King Henry VI. In 1444, he went as part of the royal entourage, along with another poet-translator, Clerk of the Signet George Ashby, to witness the proxy wedding of Henry and Margaret of Anjou, and to bring the Queen back to England. In 1448 he was one of the promoters of the establishment of Queens' College, Cambridge. His interest in courtly literature is revealed by his 'grete booke called saint grall', now BL MS Royal 14.E.iii. His major translation (*c.* 1450), commissioned possibly by Queen Margaret, possibly by his wife's brother-in-law Sir John Stanley, was of Alain Chartier's *La Belle Dame Sans Mercy*, a fashionable contribution to the debate about courtly love triggered by the *Roman de la rose*. The translation, ambitious and fluent, became rapidly popular among aristocratic and other upper-class readers, as well as members of powerful merchant families; it was printed in early editions of Chaucer's works as an appendix.

See further: Ashby Kinch, 'Translation and Subjection in the ME *La Belle Dame Sans Mercy*', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 105 (2006), 415–45.

Roper, Margaret (1505–1544), scholar and humanist. She was the eldest child of Thomas More and his first wife Jane Colt, and an intimate of the brilliant humanist group collected about More, all of whom undertook translation as readily as original work, in Latin and English. More hired a number of tutors to educate Margaret, among them Richard Hyrd, who translated Vives' 1523 treatise on the education of women. Margaret excelled at Latin and Greek and was known as a gifted scholar: she emended a corrupt passage in a text of St Cyprian; Erasmus dedicated to her his commentary on a Christian hymn of Prudentius. In 1521 she married William Roper, to whom she bore five children, and in 1524 she translated Erasmus' *Precatio Dominica in Septem Portiones Distributa*. Achieving three editions by the early 1530s, her work was one of the earliest examples of Erasmus in English. She was a constant visitor of her father in prison and retrieved his head from Tower Bridge after his execution in 1535. Her second daughter Mary Bassett, as learned as her mother, translated from both Greek and Latin. Mother and daughter stand out among the (mainly male) translators of the age.

See further: Elizabeth McCutcheon, 'Margaret More Roper's *Devout Treatise upon the Pater Noster*', pp. 659–66 in Stella Revard *et al.*, eds., *Acta Conventus*

Neo-Latini Guelpherbytani (Binghamton, NY, 1989); E. E. Reynolds, *Margaret Roper: Eldest Daughter of St Thomas More* (London, 1960).   AB

Scrope, Stephen (1397–1472), and **Worcester**, William (1415–1480/5), secretaries. Scrope spent his adolescence in Normandy as secretary to his stepfather Sir John Fastolf (1380–1459). Himself an author, Fastolf patronized several other writers, including William Worcester, who entered Fastolf's service as secretary in 1438, and with whom Scrope collaborated in the production of translations for him: these were possibly based on books (especially French translations) purchased from the library of Charles VI by the Duke of Bedford, whose chief steward Fastolf was. By means of their translations, Scrope and Worcester created for the Fastolf household a sort of educational programme of military ethics. Scrope's translations were *The Epistle of Othea* (*c.* 1440), translating a work by Christine de Pizan, and *The Dictes and Sayengs of the Philosophres* (1450). Worcester revised the *Dictes* and translated Cicero's *De Senectute*, presenting the latter to Bishop Waynflete in 1473 (Caxton printed the work in 1481). Worcester also wrote *The Boke of Noblesse*, a work aiming to persuade Edward IV to reconquer France: redrafted several times between the 1450s and 1472 to modernize its political comment, this includes much translated material.

See further: Jonathan Hughes, 'Stephen Scrope and the Circle of Sir John Fastolf', *Medieval Knighthood* 4 (1990), 109–46; K. B. McFarlane, 'William Worcester: A Preliminary Survey', in *English in the Fifteenth Century: Collected Essays* (London, 1981), 199–225.

Skelton, John (*c.* 1460–1529), priest. Born possibly in Yorkshire, Skelton studied at Cambridge. In 1488 he entered the service of Henry VII; he was tutor of Prince Henry, the future Henry VIII—the high point of his career—between 1496 and 1502/3, and produced for him a surviving Latin work, *Speculum Principis*. He was priested in 1498. When Henry became heir to the throne in 1502, he was dropped from the royal household; in 1504 he was appointed to the parish of Diss in Norfolk. From 1512 he styled himself 'orator regius', writing light court entertainments and propaganda supporting the King.

In the 1490s Skelton received favourable comment from other writers: he was a second Orpheus (Erasmus) and a model of 'polysshed and ornate' style (Caxton). Caxton was responding to Skelton's translations; at least two were produced before 1490, Cicero's *Letters*, now lost, and the *Bibliotheca Historica of Diodorus Siculus*, from Poggio Bracciolini's Latin version of the Greek original, rendered into extremely florid English. He is now best known for his later original work, particularly his satires and invectives, which were earning him a reputation as early as 1510. Several of his poems use a metre of his own devising ('Skeltonics') in which Latin and English jostle together in ways that recall the macaronic poetry of the late Middle Ages.

See further: A. S. G. Edwards, ed., *Skelton: The Critical Heritage* (London, 1981); Greg Walker, *John Skelton and the Politics of the 1520s* (Cambridge, 1988), esp. 35–52.

Surrey, *see* **Howard**, Henry.

Taverner, Richard (?1505–1575), Reformer. Taverner was linked with other Cambridge scholar-translators Martin Tindall and William Marshall, and later became a major supporter of Thomas Cromwell's programme of religious reform, functioning apparently as general editor of a group of royal apologists associated with Cromwell. He translated several texts by continental Reformers, including Melanchthon (1536, condemned in 1546) and Capito (1539), but his first major translation, which he probably used to attract Cromwell's notice, was of Erasmus' *Encomium Matrimonii* (1532); he was rewarded with the clerkship of the Privy Seal. After Cromwell's fall in 1540, he turned again to Erasmus: he was the first English translator of the *Apophthegmata* (selections appeared, along with selections from Erasmus' *Adagia*, in his *Garden of Wisdom*, 1539). A prolific translator/popularizer of Erasmus, Taverner gave Erasmus in translation (so *ODNB*) 'a Protestant face'. His major achievement is his contribution to the development of the English Bible; in the Matthew Bible (1537) John Rogers had revised Tyndale, and Taverner was called upon to revise Rogers, suppressing Rogers's more virulently anti-Catholic additions. His work was displaced in the year it appeared (1539) by the Great Bible.

See further: Margaret Christian, ' "I Knowe Not Howe to Preache": The Role of the Preacher in Taverner's Postils', *Sixteenth Century Journal* 29 (1998), 377–97; J. K. Yost, 'Taverner's Use of Erasmus and the Protestantization of English Humanism', *Renaissance Quarterly* 23 (1970), 266–76.

Tiptoft, John, Earl of Worcester (1427–1470), nobleman and classicist. Tiptoft was educated in the arts at University College, Oxford (1441–4), succeeding his father in 1444 as Lord Tiptoft, and later (1449) becoming Earl of Worcester. In 1458 he went on pilgrimage to the Holy Land; between 1458 and 1461 he was in Italy. While there, he attended lectures given by the foremost humanists of the day, and collected large numbers of classical and humanist texts: he was famous for his learning and his love of books. Returned to England in 1461, Tiptoft was promoted to high offices by Edward IV, whom he served loyally throughout the 1460s. As Constable of England, he was infamous for his cruelty and the summary justice he dispensed; in 1470, with the brief return of the Lancastrians to power, he was himself executed.

Various ordinances survive by him, as well as a few letters; he is possibly to be credited with a compendium of English history. His major surviving translations, from Cicero (*De Amicitia*) and Buonaccorso da Montemagno (*Controversia de Nobilitate*), were printed by Caxton in 1481. A translation of Caesar's

Commentarii on the Gallic wars, which was printed by Rastell, has also been attributed to him.

See further: H. B. Lathrop, 'The Translations of John Tiptoft', *MLN* 41 (1926), 496–501; R. J. Mitchell, *John Tiptoft 1427–1470* (London, 1938); R. Weiss, 'The Library of John Tiptoft, Earl of Worcester', *Bodleian Library Quarterly Record* 8 (1935–7), 157–64.

TREVISA, John (*c.* **1342–before 1402**), priest and scholar. Trevisa was born in Cornwall; his first language was probably Cornish. From 1362 to 1369 he studied at Exeter College, Oxford, apparently earning the degree of Master of Arts, then resided at Queen's College until perhaps 1387. There he probably knew Wyclif and came under his influence, as his translation of Fitzralph's *Defensio Curatorum* and the *Dialogus Inter Militem et Clericum*, and some of his interpolations in the *Polychronicon* translation, suggest. He was ordained in 1370 and (though he seems to have continued to live mostly in Oxford) made vicar of Berkeley, Gloucestershire, probably in 1374, and the Berkeley family chaplain; he at some point also became a canon of Westbury. He made his two major translations at the behest of Lord Berkeley. These are Ranulph Higden's *Polychronicon*, completed in April 1387, and Bartholomaeus Anglicus' *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, completed in February 1399. He also translated the apocryphal Gospel of Nicodemus and Aegidius Romanus' *De Regimine Principum*, may have had a hand in the making of the Wycliffite Bible, and wrote a brief *Dialogue on Translation*.

See further: Anthony S. G. Edwards, 'John Trevisa', pp. 133–46 in *Middle English Prose: A Critical Guide to Major Authors and Genres* (New Brunswick, NJ, 1984); David C. Fowler, *The Life and Times of John Trevisa, Medieval Scholar* (Seattle, WA, 1995); Traugott Lawler, 'On the Properties of John Trevisa's Major Translations', *Viator* 14 (1983), 267–88.   TL

TYNDALE, William (*c.* **1494–1536**), Bible scholar and religious Reformer. Tyndale was the first and greatest English translator to respond to the Greek New Testament of Erasmus. Educated at Oxford, Tyndale worked in his native Gloucestershire as priest and teacher. Having failed to win the support of Bishop Tunstall, he concluded that 'to translate the New Testament . . . there was no place in all England', and left England for Germany and the Low Countries, where he remained for the rest of his life. Arrested for heresy by the Emperor's agents in 1535, he was burned at the stake in December 1536.

Tyndale's translation of the Greek New Testament (printed Cologne, 1525; Worms, 1526) soon circulated in England, where it was banned and burned by Tunstall's agents. Meanwhile, Tyndale was learning Hebrew and discovering that it 'agreeth a thousand times more with the English than with the Latin'. His Pentateuch was published in 1530, and he continued translating until his arrest. This translation, with Tyndale's revised New Testament (1534) and Coverdale's

translation of the remainder of the Old Testament, was issued after Tyndale's death by John Rogers, in the guise of 'Matthew's Bible', and formed the basis of the Great Bible of 1539, and, through it, the core of the Authorized (or King James) Bible. Tyndale's numerous other writings provided the polemical foundation for its study and use.

See further: David Daniell, *William Tyndale: A Biography* (1994).   DL

Wace (b. after 1100, d. 1174/83), cleric. Born on Jersey, Wace was educated at the abbey of Caen. Returning there before 1135, he devoted himself to a literary career in AN, undertaking two major translations. The *Brut*, a translation of Geoffrey of Monmouth's *Historia*, also possibly using other written sources, was, according to its first ME translator, Laȝamon, presented on completion in 1155 to Eleanor of Aquitaine, consort of Henry II. It is the first work to mention Arthur's Round Table, perhaps from oral Welsh or Breton tradition. The *Roman de Rou*, an unfinished history of the dukes of Normandy (Rollo, 'Rou', was the first Duke), also using Latin sources, was dedicated to Eleanor and Henry II. Part III records the gift by Henry II of a prebend in Bayeux. About 1174 Wace interrupted his work on the *Rou* on learning that Henry had commissioned Benoît de Sainte-Maure to do a verse chronicle of the Normans. Earlier in his career, between 1130 and 1150, he translated two saints' lives (Margaret and Nicholas) and a popular work on the conception of the Virgin, parts of which were translated in the ME *Cursor Mundi*.

See further: *Wace's Roman de Brut: A History of the Britons*, ed. and tr. Judith Weiss (rev. edn. Exeter, 2002); Françoise H. Le Saux, 'Wace's *Roman de Brut*', pp. 18–22 in W. R. J. Barron, ed., *The Arthur of the English* (Cardiff, 1999); Françoise H. Le Saux and Peter Damian-Grint, 'The Arthur of the Chronicles', in Glyn Burgess and Karen Pratt, eds., *Arthur of the French: The Arthurian Legend in Medieval French and Occitan Literature* (Cardiff, 2006), 93–111.   HP

Walton, John (fl. 1410), Augustinian canon of Osney, Oxford. Of Walton virtually nothing is known beyond the fact of his translation in verse of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae* of Boethius, which survives in twenty-two full copies and a 1525 printing. The translation mostly appears alone in manuscripts, though once it partners a copy of the Latin original, and, twice, a marginal commentary (that in the 1525 printing cites Trevet's earlier commentary). Manuscripts of Chaucer's *Boece*, which Walton used, share these features of the translation (though their marginal glosses are in Latin). The commentary both contextualizes the translation and, since such commentary is a regular feature of authoritative Latin works, like the *De Consolatione*, claims for the translation the same authority as the latter enjoy. The translation also acknowledges Gower as a literary model. It seems to have reached a wider audience than the *Boece*. The translation was undertaken for Elizabeth, daughter of the Duke of Berkeley, who himself commissioned several translations by Trevisa, and may possibly have

commissioned from Walton a translation of Vegetius, completed in 1408, which survives in eleven copies.

See further: Ian Johnson, 'Walton's Sapient Orpheus', pp. 139–68 in A. J. Minnis, ed., *The Medieval Boethius: Studies in the Vernacular Translations of 'De Consolatione Philosophiae'* (Cambridge, 1987); A. J. Minnis, 'Aspects of the Medieval French and English Traditions of the *De Consolatione Philosophiae*', pp. 343–7, 350–1 in M. T. Gibson, ed., *Boethius: His Life, Thought and Influence* (Oxford, 1981).

WHITFORD, Richard (d. *c.* 1543), monk and humanist scholar. Probably from Flintshire in Wales, he is recorded at Cambridge University in 1496–7, studying abroad with William Blount (fourth Baron Mountjoy) in 1497 and receiving his BA in 1498 and MA in 1499. As part of the Mountjoy household, he came to be admired by Erasmus, Thomas More, and other English protagonists of the New Learning. Between 1498 and 1504 he was a fellow of Queens' College, Cambridge; between 1504 and *c.* 1507 he may have served as secretary to Richard Fox, Bishop of Winchester. Later, possibly in 1511–12, he joined the Birgittine abbey at Syon. At Syon he began to translate Latin works of conservatively orthodox religious instruction and exhortation, enthusiastically embracing the marketing potential of print. Fifteen vernacular works are securely attributed to him, with publication dates ranging from 1525 to 1541. Many were primarily targeted at the sisters of Syon but with a secondary readership outside the house. Whitford referred to himself in later life as 'the wretch of Syon'. After the suppression, he probably returned to the Mountjoy household with an annual pension of £8.

See further: James Hogg, 'Richard Whytford: A Forgotten Spiritual Guide', *Studies in Spirituality* 15 (2005), 129–42; Veronica J. Lawrence, 'The Life and Writings of Richard Whitford', Ph.D. diss. (University of St Andrews, 1987).

<div align="right">VG</div>

WORCESTER, *see* SCROPE, Stephen

WYATT, Sir Thomas (*c.* 1503–1542), courtier, diplomat, and poet. Wyatt entered Henry VIII's court in 1516 after education at Cambridge. In 1527 he travelled to the papal court as a diplomatic assistant; subsequently he undertook missions to France and the Netherlands, and was ambassador to the court of Spain. Accused of adultery with Anne Boleyn, he was nearly executed in 1536. When his protector Thomas Cromwell fell in 1540, he was again charged with treason; only Surrey's intervention and his own confession secured his release.

Wyatt is now regarded as the most significant poet of the Henrician court. Although during his lifetime he published only a translation of Plutarch's *Quiet of Mind* (for Katharine of Aragon, in 1527), a substantial body of his verse in many genres circulated in manuscripts. His translations from Petrarch, Serafino, and other Italian writers introduced European verse forms into English, triggering a revolution in English poetics. His friend and colleague the Earl of

Surrey promoted his reputation posthumously through commemorative elegies collected in 1542. Richard Tottel published his poems in more polished, regular form (now regarded as inauthentic) in the influential *Songs and Sonnets* (or *Tottel's Miscellany*, 1557).

See further: Kenneth Muir, *Life and Letters of Sir Thomas Wyatt* (Liverpool, 1963); Patricia Thomson, *Sir Thomas Wyatt and his Background* (London, 1964); Greg Walker, *Writing under Tyranny: English Literature and the Henrician Reformation* (Oxford, 2005), 279–334.   KT

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NOTE: References in bold figures denote major discussions, those in italics refer to the biographical sketches of Chapter 6.