Brathair
Grupo de Estudos Celtas e Germânicos
Celtic and Germanic Study Group

Brathair 14 (2), 2014
ISSN 1519-9053

Translational procedures in *Cân Rolant*, the Middle Welsh translation of *La chanson de Roland*

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Recebido em: 06/06/2014
Aprovado em: 17/05/2015

Abstract

In this study we seek to present a survey of the set of processes involved in the translation into Middle Welsh of *La chanson de Roland*, known as *Cân Rolant*. The text is based on a late twelfth or thirteenth century Anglo-Norman version in assonant verse. It is very close to the Oxford version (Bodleian Library, ms. Digby 23), but also presents some traces of the Venice 4 version (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Fr. Z.4). Since it is possible to employ the Oxford Roland as the source-text for comparative purposes, we will focus on the micro-textual level, i.e. lexical change, style and syntax, leaving aside the macro-textual level of the *story*. The methodology employed is mainly based on the conceptual frame of *Descriptive Translation Studies* (DTS), especially the notion of translation as a socio-cultural event and as product and process, at the same time source-oriented and target-oriented.

Therefore, after some preliminary remarks about the generic shift and the unit of translation, we will describe and explain a group of translational procedures. We will thus discuss: 1) Techniques of translation of lexical items: substitutions (predictable, unpredictable, calques), circumlocutions and adoptions; 2) Syntax; 3) Style: terms of address and politeness, and greetings. The analysis will show that, while accommodating the source-text to his target language and literary conventions, the translator created an individual style.

Keywords: medieval translation, Middle Welsh prose, epic

Resumen

En este trabajo nos proponemos estudiar una serie de procesos involucrados en la traducción al galés medio de *La chanson de Roland*, conocida como *Cân Rolant*. El texto está basado en una versión asonante anglonormanda de fines del siglo XII o principios del XIII, y es, además, un relato muy cercano a la versión de Oxford (Bodleian Library, ms. Digby 23), aunque se pueden detectar rastros de la versión conocida como Venecia 4 (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Fr. Z.4). Dado que es posible utilizar el Roland de Oxford como texto fuente, nos centraremos en el análisis del nivel micro-textual, esto es, en el cambio léxico, el estilo y la sintaxis, dejando de lado el nivel macro-textual de la historia. La metodología empleada está basada, principalmente, en el marco teórico de los *Descriptive Translation Studies* (DTS), en especial en la noción de traducción como evento socio-cultural y como producto y proceso, al mismo tiempo orientada hacia el texto fuente y hacia el texto meta.

Por lo tanto, luego de algunos comentarios preliminares sobre el giro genérico y la unidad de traducción, se describirán y explicarán algunos procedimientos de traducción. De este modo, se discutirá: 1) las técnicas de traducción de piezas léxicas: sustituciones (predecibles, impredecibles, calcos), circunlocuciones y adopciones; 2) la sintaxis; 3) el estilo: formas de tratamiento y cortesía, y saludos. El análisis mostrará que, a medida que el traductor acomodaba el texto fuente al lenguaje meta y a sus convenciones literarias, creaba un estilo individual.

Palabras clave: traducción medieval, prosa en galés medio, épica

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ISSN 1519-9053

Text, Context, and Previous Scholarship

Narratives about the deeds of Charlemagne and his warriors were immensely popular throughout Medieval Europe. This popularity is clearly evinced by the transmission of Latin and Old French poems and tales across many different languages and cultures. Within this tradition, *La chanson de Roland* is widely attested: in addition to the assonant and rhymed versions in Old French, Franco-Venetian, and Anglo-Norman, translations into Old Norse (Af Rúnzivals bardaga, "About the Battle of Rencesvals", eighth branch of the *Karlamagnús Saga*), Middle High German (Konrad der Pfaffe's *Rolanslied*), Middle English, and Middle Welsh were produced, not to count later developments in Spanish and Italian. In Wales, a compilation was assembled c. 1275, which comprised a translation of the Latin *Historia de Vita Caroli Magni et Rotholandi* (the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*), of the *Pèlerinage de Charlemagne (Pererindod Siarlymaen)*, of the *Chanson de Otuel* or *Otinel* (an addition of 1336), and of *La chanson de Roland*, *Cân Rolant*.

In this study we seek to survey the set of processes involved in *Cân Rolant*. *Translation Studies*, especially the branch known as *Descriptive Translation Studies* (DTS), provides a set of analytical tools that will allow us to examine and comprehend the translational procedures employed, and the changes prompted by – broadly speaking – contextual differences such as circumstances of textual production and consumption as can be apparent in the texts (Toury 1995; Djordević 2000, 2002; Holmes, Lambert and van der Broeck 1978; Munday 2008). DTS' notions of translation as a socio-cultural event also imply the study of the communicative situation and the literary and historical background. Furthermore, any translation is, at the same time, source-oriented and target-oriented, since it has to accommodate narrative structures, ideas, and values of the source text to the target language and culture, *without* losing certain character of the source language that led to the translation in the first place. As a rendering of *La chanson de Roland*, *Cân Rolant* presents the same *fabula*, to wit, the "series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused or experienced by actors" (Bal 1997, p. 5). Likewise the *story*, that is, a *fabula* that has been given a presentational shape by means of a specific point of view and a temporal scheme: events are arranged in mostly the same order and characterization tends to follow the same principal lines. Most changes are introduced at the level of the *text*, the actual oral or written discourse produced by a narrator to tell the *story*. Hence we will focus on the micro-textual level, i.e. lexical change, style and syntax, leaving aside the macro-textual level of the *story*.

The Welsh translation of *La chanson de Roland* is inserted as the twentieth-second chapter of the Welsh rendering of the *Pseudo-Turpin Chronicle*. The text is based on a late twelfth or thirteenth century Anglo-Norman text in assonant verse. It is very close to the Oxford version (Bodleian Library, ms. Digby 23), but it also presents some traces of the Venice 4 version (Biblioteca Nazionale Marciana, Fr. Z.4). The common ancestor between α and β would explain that *Cân Rolant*, although following in the main the extant Oxford text (the sole witness of α), bears some traces of the text of Venice 4 (a representative of the γ-branch of β).[1] Since it is possible to pair passages of the Oxford

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Roland with *Cân Rolant* and a few proper names show influence of the Oxford assonance, we will consider it as the source text for comparative purposes (even though we do not know if it was the actual source). The text was translated sometime in the first half of the thirteenth century by an unknown individual probably working at the monastery of Llanbadarn Fawr (Rejhon 1984, p. 89; Poppe 2013). The account starts in *media res* like the Anglo-Norman text but breaks off in the middle of the Battle of Roncevaux, before Roland's death, where it rejoins the narrative of the *Pseudo-Turpin* (approximately at verse 1627, *laisse* 124).[2] The text is extant in eight manuscripts which, for the most part, derive from the same archetype and, ultimately, from the same source. The manuscripts can be classified in three groups according to their place in the stemma and the subsequent arrangement of the tales in each of them: 1) Peniarth 8a (XIII/XIV), Peniarth 7 (XIII/XIV), Peniarth 10 (XIV med.); 2) Peniarth 9 (XIV[1]), Peniarth 4&5 (commonly known as White Book of Rhydderch, c.1350); 3) Jesus College 111 or Red Book of Hergest (copied after 1382).[3]

The Welsh Charlemagne cycle has not received much critical attention.[4] Stephen Williams (1968) edited the entire corpus as it is found in one of the manuscripts, the Red Book of Hergest. Annalee Rejhon (1984) employed another exemplar as the base manuscript for her edition of *Cân Rolant*, Peniarth 10, which she deemed to be the closest to the archetype *g*, with only one lost testimony between them, α. Her introduction to the text brings very useful and detailed philological remarks and offers two different stemmata, one for the beginning (sections i-xi) and one for the main body of the text (sections xii-cvii), based on significant variants present in the manuscripts at the opening of the tale. She also made a critical assessment of the "art of the translator", highlighting his efforts to remain close to the source, his interest in religious matters, his avoidance of repetition, and his embellishments of the text. Regine Reck (2010) analysed *Cân Rolant* as one of several Middle Welsh prose tales that employ formulaic language in combat scenes. Here she defined a set of features that characterise this particular translation: a tendency to neglect the psychological topics present in the source and to tighten the narrative by omitting descriptions and static passages; the absence of digressions from the source text, such as descriptions of weapons or armours; more emphasis on action; a tendency to render the combats in a formulaic language; the use of similes and metaphors for embellishment. Erich Poppe (2013), in a paper of a more general tone, revised the most important changes introduced by the Welsh translator and the additions inserted by him, which demonstrated a clear interest in martial Christian values and in reciprocity and exchange of gifts. He also noted certain fluidity in the textual transmission of the tale.

The conclusions of these scholars tend to agree with what Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan (1991) proposed as general features of Medieval Welsh translations, namely: abridgement and adaptation to the literary tradition and taste of the Welsh audience; dismantling of complex narrative structures (like interlaced episodes); the divesting of abstract elements and psychological analysis; reinterpretation of the source with the aim of bringing the tale and the characters closer to Welsh audience; issues resulted from the lack of familiarity with foreign ways of thinking and behaving; finally, a native prose style in the standard

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literary language. It is thus regularly accepted that translations into Middle Welsh follow native narrative conventions instead of trying to reproduce the style of the source text.[5] This assumption needs to be revised in light of a detailed study of *Cân Rolant*.

Preliminary remarks for a study of *Cân Rolant*

First of all, there is one fundamental shift that impinges on all levels of the translation (macro and micro): the generic shift. Conceivably, all the traits that we acknowledge as 'epic' need to be considered as context-bound elements susceptible of re-elaboration by the translator, misunderstood, or simply dismissed.[6] Many of the changes that were introduced by the translator were prompted by the incompatibility of accommodating Old French epic techniques into Middle Welsh prose narrative. The first and foremost genre-related change is the shift of decasyllabic assonanced verse arranged in *laisses* into prose. All translations into Middle Welsh involve this shift, partly related to the inexistence of a narrative tradition in verse within Welsh literature, although narrative elements can certainly be found in poetry. This gives the translator a greater flexibility in the treatment of his exemplar since he does not have any metrical or prosodic constraints.

The shift to prose also affects syntax, wording and word-emphasis due to position in the line. Other genre-related changes include typical features of an epic poem, which are usually excised. Intimately related to this is the tendency to shorten the source-text. This mechanism of abridgement is apparent in the omission of proper names of characters, places, swords, horses, superfluous details, repetitions and superficial descriptions; in this way, extensive parts of the poem are deleted even when every chief episode is kept. All the epic techniques that contribute to the development of dramatic moments or nuances of characters by way of repetition alone or repetition with slight variation are perceived simply as reiterations and are 'cleansed' from the narrative. The same happens to long enumerations of names that could have evoked important meanings or stories to a French audience but failed to do so to a Welsh one. Thus, for example, the first and the last lines of the successive *laisses* 5 and 6, "Li reis Marsilie out sun conseil finét" [King Marsile brings his council to an end, v. 62] / "Li reis Marsilie out finét sun cunseil" [King Marsile concludes his council, v. 78], and "Dïent paien: 'Issi poet il ben estre'" [The pagans say: 'This can be well!', v. 61] / "Dïent paien: 'Bien dit nostre avoéz'" [The pagans say: 'Our lord speaks well!', v. 77] which constitute a case of parallelism, are excised of the narrative.[7] Likewise, the enumeration of Roland's eleven companions (Oliver, Gerin, Gerer, Ote, Berenger, Sansun, Anseïs, Gerart de Rossillon, Gaifier, Archbishop Turpin and Gualter) is replaced by the statement "Oliuer, y vydlonaf gedymdeith, ac y am hynny y Deudec Gogyuurd a doethant yn diannot attaw, ac y gyt ac wynteu Turpin Archescob…" [Oliver, the faithful companion, and the Twelve Peers went immediately to him, and with them came Archbishop Turpin, lv]. *Laisses similaires* also tend to be summarised in one section as, for example, *laisses* 40-42, the dialogue between Ganelon and Marsilie where they plot against Charlemagne, is reduced to one section, xxxvi.

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Secondly, we will consider the *laisse* as the unit of translation, i.e. the basic segment of text in which the translator broke down the entire narrative in order to accomplish his task. For that reason there are no direct correspondences between Anglo-Norman verses and Middle Welsh lines in the majority of cases. The translator certainly knew the whole tale before undertaking his task, a fact which comes into the surface in the way that he summarises passages, interprets situations, and anticipates events. The *laisse* was already the constitutive unit of the *chanson de geste* (Boutet 1993, p. 77; Zumthor 2000). It has many advantages to fulfil this role: it was the basic unit of the epic poem, a coherent set of lines that addressed a topic, an action or an episode, and just as the verse, in the syntagmatic level of the *laisse*, possesses independence of meaning by itself, likewise the *laisse* in the context of the poem represents a complete entity.[8] This also explains why one is able to pair chunks of text from *Cân Rolant* with *laisses* of *La chanson de Roland* as Rejhon did in her edition. Consequently, the *laisse* will act as the 'problem'-segment that needs to be resolved by the translator, i.e. the coupled pair of replacing and replaced segments. In those other cases where more than one *laisse* addressed the same object, due to repetition or exemplification of an important event, the translator tends to take them as only one translational segment, resulting in abbreviation.

Translational strategies at the micro-textual level: a survey

In this section, we will concentrate on the study of vocabulary, syntax, and style. Technical terms, special vocabulary – such as strongly context-bound words –, place names and proper names are usually the most difficult to translate and translators have a wide spectrum of possibilities to do so. Translators may or may not use a word with the same semantic range of the word that he is translating in accordance with the purpose of the translation. Misunderstandings or confusions are easily perceived particularly in proper names; unfamiliarity usually leads to omissions. Tim Machan has identified three main modes of transfer in Chaucer's translation of Boccaccio that are useful for the present study and thus we will deal with them successively: 1) substitution of a native word for a source word, which can be a) predictable, b) unpredictable, c) calques; 2) circumlocutory ways of expressing source words; 3) adoption of the source word (either as a native derivative or as a neologism. Machan 1985, p. 14).[9]

Firstly, some misunderstandings of these so-called difficult words have already been noted by Rejhon, such as the war-cry of the Franks "Munjoie", literally translated *Vrynn y Llewenyd*, "Hill or Mount of Joy", probably misguided by the war-cry being also called "enseigne", which means "banners". We can add to her comments, following Machan (1985, p. 18), that the translator actually produced a calque (1.c) after the Anglo-Norman word: he broke down the word and replaced its constituent elements with equivalents in his own language, i.e. Mun > bryn, joie> llewenyd. Note that the Norse translator completely misunderstood the word and consequently rendered "escrier Munjoie" as "blow their trumpets" (Halvorsen 1959, pp. 128-9).

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Substitutions of native or current words for source text words are thus the most common lexical translation technique. *Cân Rolant* displays both predictable and unpredictable substitutions; there is no much to say about the former, except to point towards certain decisions made by the translator, which underscore his translation skills. Unpredictable substitutions are far more interesting because they provide valuable insights into the semantics of Middle Welsh.

1.a) Predictable substitutions

The first thing to examine is the vocabulary of weaponry since war is the background and foreground of the tale.[10] The Welsh text renders *helym* (modern Welsh *helm*) for "helme". *Helym* is a borrowing from Middle English which is first attested in the White Book. The French word, "helme", is also a Germanic word, as much of the vocabulary of war in Old French. *Carbunculus*, on its part, is a learned borrowing from Latin first attested in *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn*. In both cases, then, the translator uses a borrowing already attested in Middle Welsh. The word "algier" denotes a "sorte de jovelot" which "d'or fut enpené" (439). Bédier (1927) states that it is a "[m]ot rare" given that there are only four attestations of it, three of them in *La chanson de Roland*. There are variations in its rendering into Welsh: Peniarth 10 gives the reading "ffonn drom a oed o eur", that is, "a heavy lance of gold" (xxix). In spite of the excessive weight conveyed by "drom" and the unsuitability of the meaning of *ffon* as lance in this context (the lance is used by a mounted warrior, contrary to the spear, typical of infantry), all of which goes against the idea of a throwing javelin, the identification javelot-ffon as a weapon remains reasonable. The White Book gives *wialen* at this point, a word whose primary sense is "rod" but can also figuratively mean "spear" or "arrow". The Red Book uses *chnwmp*, "club", which is also suggested by a secondary definition of *ffon*, "rod". It is clear then that the word was difficult – even in Anglo-Norman or Old French – but the translator was skilful enough to understand its basic meaning.[11]

The glove as symbolic object is consistently replaced by a sealed letter, which diminishes the effect and symbolic importance of the glove and staff as tokens of the ambassadors, a significance noted by Bédier in his glossary to the song.[12] In *La chanson de Roland*, Charles entrusts Ganelon with a sealed letter (the 'bref') which, it is assumed, contains his command. But at least the part which is disclosed by Marsilie refers only to the murder of the previous messengers Basin and Basil; thereby the rest of the letter – if it included more information – remains hidden. Scholars have thus interpreted that Ganelon's first lie consisted in stating that Roland would receive half of Spain, a fact that had not been mentioned before, presuming that the letter from Charlemagne did not bring that important element because, otherwise, Marsilie would had referred to it. However, given the role of sealed letters in Medieval France as 'writs' it seems safer to assume that it did in fact contain all of Charles' decisions, including granting half of Spain to Roland.[13] This reading is also supported by *Cân Rolant*: the Welsh tale downplays the symbolic value of the *bref* and instead states that the king´s orders were noted in a *llythyr* [letter]

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(xxi). Later Charlemagne commands Gwenlwyd to "achwaneca y neges ar dorr y llythyr o'th ymadrawd ual hynn" [supplement the message over and above what is in the letter orally thus], and then practically repeats his previous words (xxii). Therefore, when Gwenlwyd delivers the message to Marsli, he is reporting the letter and following the king's instructions. The translator was thus following this reading and interpreted that the 'bref' had Charlemagne's command when he chose the word *llythyr*.

As for animals – another field of contention given the probable unfamiliarity with certain species – a strongly context-bound word such as "camels" is replaced by *meirch*, "horses" (xliv), something much more familiar for the translator. Instead of omitting the word altogether he replaced it by another with the more or less same function in the context; after all, the reference was to a pack animal whose job was to take Marsli's treasure to Charlemagne. All in all, it is evident that the translator understood, at least in general terms, these technical words though they were culturally-bound.

1.b) Unpredictable substitutions

Within this category, we will only deal with the translation of titles of nobility, terms of address, and verbs of diction. Regarding the former, the analysis show that the Welsh translator did not intend to render them literally but, instead, preferred traditional terms even at the expense of losing specificity. In this way, "quens, cuntes", "dux", and "hume" are rendered as *gwr/gwrda* (singular) and *gwyr*/*gwyrda* (plural), retainers or noblemen. These terms, at the same time that denote someone's followers, seem to emphasise, to a certain extent, the moral qualities of high birth. Note that this term is applied for both Marsli's and Chiarlymaen's men.[14] For example: "Cil duc e cil cunte" (378) is rendered as *dwyssogeon a gwyrda Freinc* [princes and nobles of the Franks, xxv]. In this case, then, *gwyrda* seems to be a synonym for *breyr* or *uchelwr*, the legal terms to refer to the aristocracy or to free men.[15] The vast vocabulary to denote authority in Middle Welsh should be remembered, as Robert Davies pointed out: "The variety of native Welsh terms by which they were described (…), emphasizing their nobility (*boneddigion*), their superiority (*goreugwyr*, *uchelwyr*, *arglwyddi*), their leadership (*penaethau*, *penaudiriaid*, *pendefigion*), their king-like status in the localities (*tywysogion*, *brehyrion*), and the almost moral qualities of high birth (*gwyrda)*". (Davies 2000, p. 69).

Barun/barons is another term translated as *gwr* or *gwyrda* even though there was at the translator's disposal a lexical borrowing from French (in Welsh spelling), i.e. OF *barun* > MW *barwn*, attested in medieval Welsh prose tales and historical writings. As Bédier explains in his glossary to *La chanson de Roland*, the term is actually a form of address rather than a title and in this way it acquires a formulaic expression in, for example, "seignurs barons". It can also be used to qualify characters denoting, in this way, the good qualities of noblemen, especially courage; in this sense it functions like an epithet for the highest ranks of the aristocracy (1927, pp. 341-2). We might ask: Is this a case of employing a native word with a comparable semantic range, or is there a narrowing or broadening of sense? It can be argued that the overlap of meanings in the

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OF *barun* which, as a form of address also applies to all the men who carry titles of nobility, may have led to the attested generalised use. In this way, a definite broadening of sense occurred.

On its part, *tywyssawc* (variant spelling *dwyssoc*) usually translates the Latin "princeps" and in this case is used with reference to two characters only: Gwenlwyd and Naim ("quens" and "dux" respectively in the Anglo-Norman poem). During the second half of the twelve century the Welsh *tywyssawc* becomes more usual and its sense is specialised: from the traditional notion of leader or chief, it comes to designate, in this period, the highest ranks of aristocracy, a lower level than the king but above the *gwyrda*. Welsh kings called themselves *tywyssawc* and this was the privileged way with which the leaders from Gwynedd's dynasty referred to themselves during the thirteenth century (Crouch 1992, p. 70; Jenkins 1974-6). In *Brut y Tywysogion*, for example, *tewyssavc* usually renders "dux". It seems, then, that the Welsh translator highlights the special status of these characters, placing them in a superior level than the rest of the Franks. Therefore, he acknowledges the important role that they fulfil as the head of a household and kinsman of Charlemagne (as is the case of Gwenlwyd) and as intercessor to the king (in the case of Naim). They are both older men than the young *gwyrda* like Rolant or Oliver.

Finally, it is worth pointing out that other titles mentioned in the Anglo-Norman poem such as "vezcontes", "almaçurs", "almirafles" (variant "almurafles", v. 894) (849-50), all of them referred to the Saracen army, are part of a enumeration absent from the Welsh tale; so is Roland's title of "marquis" (630). We could argue, none the less, that they would not have been easily interpreted by the Welsh translator since OF "algalife", i.e. caliph, is seemingly understood and employed as a proper name for Marsli's uncle, who is called Algalif. The lack of the definite article allows for this interpretation, accepted by the editors of both the published versions (Peniarth and Red Book): "Ac erchi y mineu, dros y rei hynny, anuon Algaliff idaw ef, vy ewythyr" [And he orders me, in recompense for them, to send Algaliff, my uncle, xxxiii], "Ac ymlith y rai hynny, yd oed Algaliff, ewythyr y brenin" [And among those were Algaliff, the king's uncle, xxxiv].[16] It all points to the rendering of the Saracen title as a proper name. What is also interesting to note here is that in the Red Book there is another instance of this word. In the Anglo-Norman poem, Gerers attacks the "almurafle", which is in turn rendered as *algaliff* whilst the rest of the versions bring the name "Lannalis" (Peniarth 10 LXXX and White Book 205.23). All in all, there was a great variety of spellings of the name in all the *chansons de geste*: algalife (s), augalie (velarization l>u), laugalie, lagaillie, lagalie, largalie (Moisan 1986, p. 134). The Norse translation brings a similar reading, "Langalif" (Halvorsen 1959, p. 114, 148-9). It is impossible to know if this reading was already present in the source text, the prototype used by both of the Welsh and Norse versions, or if it is a scribal error.

A semantic field of great richness is constituted by verbs of diction which express a particular nuance. Whereas the Anglo-Norman poem employs an inflected form of the verb "dire", (to say), usually the third person singular simple past "dist", *Cân Rolant* tends

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to employ a much more specific verb which denotes the particular illocutionary force of the speaker, i.e. his intention. The following is a list of such verbs:[17]

(i) *annoc/annog* [encourage]: "fierement cumencet sa raisun et dist" [Angrily he begins his speech, vv. 219-220] > annoc gwrthwynep [urge opposition, xiii]

(ii) *canmol* [commend, praise]: collective discourse of the Franks > "ymadrawd Rolant a ganmoles pawb o'r Freinc" [every one of the Franks praised Rolant's speech]

(iii) *ymliw* [chastise]: xx / v. 286

(iv) *amouyn* [inquire]: l / v. 740

(v) *annoc ac hyvyrydu* [encourage and console, lxxiv], "dire sermun" (v. 1126)

(vi) *agreifftiawd* [*anghreifftiaf*, challenge scornfully, 1346] < "dire de mals moz" (v. 1190)

(vii) *hoffi* [praise]: lxxx / v. 1274

(viii) *cerydu* [rebuke]: lxxxvi / v. 1360

In all cases, the translator extracted the illocutionary force from either the context or the speech which the verb introduced and opted for a specific verb instead of the unmarked Anglo-Norman "dire". It stands to reason that this procedure is greatly due to the change in performance.

Lastly, we are unable to discuss here two very interesting cases, since the analysis would go very far beyond the scope of this study. Let us just note what we consider to be an unpredictable substitution from the target language perspective, that of Anglo-Norman *empereur* as *brenin* (king) instead of *amherawdyr* (emperor), and the complete absence of the term *teulu* (followers, *comitatus*) which could be used to describe the twelve peers. We think that these calculated replacements not only draw a distance from the source language and culture but also reveal a set of values that could be especially attractive for a Welsh aristocratic audience in a thirteenth-century context.

2) Circumlocutions

Few cases of circumlocutory techniques can be counted and they are very problematic since various answers can be given to explain them. First, the patronymic of Blancandrins, "de Castel de Valfunde" is translated as a relative clause: "Balacawnt, yr hwnn a oed lyweawdyr ar arglwydiaeth a holl gedernyt y glynn issel" [Balacawnt, who was ruler over the domain and the whole stronghold of the low valley, ii]. Here, "glynn issel" literally renders "valfunde". This could be a literal understanding of the place name or its complete misunderstanding as such. Either way, the translator used a rather convoluted procedure to translate a simple phrase.

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Another example is a case of doublets, i.e. the use of two words to translate a single one. They help to capture the semantic range of the word. The cases to be examined belong to a very particular field: emotions. Falsaron, Marsilie's brother, feels "doel" when he sees his nephew lying dead in the battlefield: "Asez ad doel quant vit mort sun nevold" [He is aggrieved to see his nephew die, v. 1219]. *Doel* denotes a "chagrin violente causé par une affection blessée, l'indignation ou la honte" (Bédier 1927). Maybe due to the polysemy of the word or to the adverb "asez", "too much", or to both, the translator employed two nouns at sentence-initial position: "Dolur a gorthrwm vu gan Falsaron gwelet agev y nei" [lit. Saddened and oppressed was Falsaron to see his nephew's death, lxxviii]. Further on, when Roland sees Samson dead, the narrator comments that "Podez saveir que mult grant doel en out" [you can well know he feels very great grief, v. 1538] which is in turn rendered as "A dolur a llit a gymryth Rolant o welet Samson yn varw" [lit. And grief and anger felt Rolant at seeing Samson dead, c]. Again, the feelings are moved to sentence-initial position, fulfilling the role of topic, thus drawing attention to them. Note the modifiers of "doel", "mult" and "grant". The translator is very consistent in these cases, for a third occurrence happens nearly in the end. With the pagan's victory, Rolant hears the Franks lamenting and "Si grant doel ad que parmi quïet fender" [he feels such grief, he thinks he will split apart, v. 1588]. Context hinders the translator for choosing sentence-initial position for Rolant's feelings because he needs a reference to the previous statement to indicate the reason for them: "A'r kwynuaeu hynny a gyfroassant clustyeu Rolant ar dolur a llit" [And those lamentations moved Rolant's ears to sorrow and wrath, civ]. The same pair of nouns than in the precedent case, used to render the same Anglo-Norman word, in the presence of magnifiers such as "si grant".

3) Adoptions

In the translation of proper names, despite that quite a lot of spelling variation occurs, they are usually rendered by adopting the same word. A sample will show this:

La chanson de Roland	*Cân Rolant*
Mahumet	Mahumet
Carles / Carlemagne	Chiarlymaen / Chyarlys (Red Book)
Blancandrins	Balacawnt
Marsilie	Marsli
Valdabruns	Maldebrwn
Climborins	Kilbrwm / Cilborus / Cliborin (Red Book)
Bramimunde	Braimwnt
Malquïant	Malquidon / Malkwidon (Red Book)
Anseïs	Gansel
Grandonies	Grandon
Gerier	Gereint
Berenger	Brengar
Guiun	Gwimwnt

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There are certain regularities in the translation of proper names: on the one hand, the ending -wn(t) for either male or female names. Also the standardization of the Anglo-Norman names which, it needs to be remembered, are subject to the whims of the assonance. However, exceptions occur such as the use of a familiar Welsh name Gereint for Gerier. Moreover, in all the versions Mahumet is an unassimilated loan word from the source (the -u- does not even change to -w-). The name of Oliver's sword follows the same reasoning of *welshification*: AN Halteclere > Hawtykylyr (LXXXVI, variant Hawtklyr XCVIII, Hawtcler White Book).

Syntax

When dealing with his source-text syntactical features, the translator basically faces grammatical problems: to naturalize the word order of the source and to translate constructions which may be outside of the formal possibilities of his own language. That is, he may face the challenge of accommodating the source text into the possibilities offered by his language. In the following section, we will only discuss three features: (a) the use of the demonstrative pronouns *yr hwn(n)*, *yr hon(n)* as relative pronouns to introduce adjective subordinate clauses; (b) syntactical patterns and verbal forms; (c) narrative connectives.

Regarding (a), D. Simon Evans posited that "The demonstratives yr hwnn, yr honn, &c., commonly occur before a relative clause, especially in translated works, and it appears that they were sometimes regarded as proper relative pronouns" (1964: §74, N. 1-2). These relative pronouns are fairly common in *Cân Rolant*, a fact which goes against the characteristic paratactic style of the epic and also renders the syntax of the text quite strange. But are they triggered by the source language? Do they translate an equivalent relative pronoun in Anglo-Norman? A sample of phrases analysed revealed that the answer to those questions is no.[18] Even though it is sometimes quite complicated to assess the 'coupled pair' of replaced and replacing, we can deduce from the above that the demonstrative used as relative pronoun can translate a wide variety of Anglo-Norman words, fulfilling and not fulfilling the same function, and that it can also be employed in expansions, where there is no correspondence in the source-text. Therefore it is safe to dismiss this syntactic trait as a feature of translation.

As for (b), syntactical patterns, there are no sentences introduced by *sef*, which is quite common in Middle Welsh prose tales. The translator uses mostly one type of construction in main affirmative statements: *adverbial or nominal clause + y/a + verb + (subject)*(e.g., *ac yna yd aeth X*, *ac X a welei*) which is, according to Poppe and based on statistical data, "the dominant pattern" of the literary language in Middle Welsh (2000, pp. 43-4; Charles-Edwards 2001). More precisely, the translator employs the (traditionally called) 'abnormal order' – which is not abnormal at all – especially of the type *adverbial phrase + particle y + finite verb*.[19] Regarding verbal forms, alongside the principal use of finite

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verbs, *gwneuthur* periphrases are also employed, though to a lesser extent. This is completely in line with Middle Welsh prose style. The text is also punctuated by connective phrases such as:

(i) conjunctions (*a/ac*), which is the most common conjunction to link clauses in Middle Welsh prose, in all types of texts (the *Mabinogion* corpus, religious, and historical texts), and points to the oral narrative tradition (S. Davies 1995, p. 101)

(ii) prepositional connectives (e.g. *a gwedy* + nominal clause / verbal noun) which, according to Poppe (1991), define the situational frame for the rest of the sentence combining intra-and extra-sentential functions of topics

(iii) time connectives (*trannoeth y bore, ac yn diannot* + verb noun (*tynnu a oruc*), a *phan, ac ar hynny, ac odyna* + pre-verbal particle + verb).

All these are part of the repertoire of connectives within Middle Welsh literary tradition, which also includes others not employed in this text. They have a double functionality: intra-statement and inter-statement. Therefore they contribute to the conjunctive cohesion of the narrative. Moreover, they provide the framework for the subordination of clauses and the account of simultaneity of action, which is accomplished, for example, by the temporal connective *A phan* [And when…]. Conjunctions and prepositional and temporal connectives such as *ac*, *yna*, *trannoeth*, present the events in chronological order and connect them together. Sioned Davies has shown that a set of formulas is employed to separate sub-episodes and that the authors "yn defnyddio'r diwrnod fel uned amseryddol gan roi amlinelliad o weithgareddau o un dydd i'r llall" ["use the day as temporal unit giving an outline of the activities from one day to the other"] (1995: 101) in the *Mabinogion* corpus.

Given the above, it is safe to argue that the Welsh translator worked within the regular parameters and possibilities of Middle Welsh literary prose and accommodated its source to it. This fairly brief analysis confirms that the syntactical patterns employed by the translator follow regular traits of Middle Welsh. More importantly, it is arguably a person well aware of the range of possibilities afforded by his own language.

Style

In this section we will examine the style of *Cân Rolant* in the light of the *crefft y cyfarwydd* or the storytelling tradition of Medieval Wales (S. Davies 1995). Therefore this part of the chapter will be broken down in categories that shape style, such as the use of tags in dialogue, terms of address, politeness, and greetings.

Terms of address and politeness

Terms of address are basically translations from the Anglo-Norman *chanson de geste* and usually follow the pattern *noun + adjective.* Marsli addresses his men as *wyrda dosparthus* [wise noblemen, ii] a rendering of the neutral "seignurs" (v. 15). Charlemagne

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starts his discourse in the first council scene in exactly the same way, by calling his men *wyrda dosparthus* (xi, “Seigneurs barons”, v. 180). On his part, Charlemagne is addressed by his people as *brenin dosparthus*, *brenin arderchawc* (xii, Rolant), *brenin bonhedic* (xiv, Naim), *brenin gwaredawc* (xvi, Turpin), *brenin kywaechoc* (xlvi, Gwenlwyd), *brenin da, kywaethoc, bonhedic* (lii, Rolant), or simply by his name (also by Gwenlwyd xlvi). The translation is more patent in the terms used by Oliver and Rolant in their dialogues. Oliver is "cumpainz" (v. 792), that is *vydlonaf gedymdeith* [most faithful companion, lv] or, during the horn scene (lxvi-lxviii), he is addressed by Rolant as *garu gedymdeith* [dear companion, xcviii, cf. “Sire cumpainz", v. 1503]. He is also addressed *gedymdeith da* (lxxxvi). In his turn, Oliver calls Rolant *vyg kedymdeith* [my companion, xv]. In this case the lexical choices work at a higher level to underpin the topic of companionship.

Lastly, it should be noted that the second person singular pronoun is employed where the Anglo-Norman poem prefers the plural form of politeness "vos" or "vus", referring to a single person. This does not go, however, in detriment of the sense of propriety of *Cân Rolant*. The pragmatics of politeness available to the Welsh translator clearly did not include the use of plural forms to address a sole individual.

Speech and greetings

Dialogue is an element that tends to attract formulae and standardization in the literary tradition of Middle Welsh prose. It is similarly important for both the epic and Middle Welsh prose tales especially if we consider the public world of the *chanson de geste*. As Sioned Davies indicates, its main function lies in that, rather than paraphrase feelings and thoughts of characters, what they usually do is to let the characters act through dialogue (1995, p. 197).

Direct discourse is always tagged in *Cân Rolant*, and belongs in the following of Davies' categories:

(a) Heb

(i.) -heb (eb) x: this is fairly common

(ii.) -heb x – heb x – 'Hyt y hatwen i', eb y Rolant, 'teilwg wyf i', eb ef… ['As far as I know', said Rolant, 'I am worthy', he said…, xv]; 'A mi a gerdaf', heb y Gwenlwyd, 'ar Varsli', heb ef…" ['And I shall go', said Gwenlwyd, to 'Marsli', he said, xix].

(d) Dywedut / dywawt (wrth): "dyuot mal hynn" [spoke thus, xxxiv, translates "dist"]; "dywedut wrthaw" [said to him, xxxix, "dist"]; "dyuot (…) wrth" [said (…) to, xlv, "ad dit"]

There are other introductory phrases built on saying verbs such as *attep*, *ymadrod*, *mynegi*, *ymadrodes*, and *ymdidan*:[20]

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(i) ymadraw: "Ac val hynn y racvylaenwd wrthaw y ymadrawd" [opened his speech to him thus, viii]; "dechreu ymadrawd val hynn" [began to speak thus, xxix]; "ymadrawd ac ef van hynn" [spoke with him thus, xli], "ymadrod ac ef" [spoke with him, xliv], "ymadrawd (…) a oruc val hynn" [spoke (…) thus, lxiii]

(ii) mynegi: "mynegi (…) val hynn" [he expressed (…) thus, ix]

(iii) attep (xii)

(iv) ymadrodes: "ymadrodes (…) val hynn" [spoke (…) thus, xxx, apostrophe of Gwenlwyd to his sword]

(v) ymdidan: "y emdidan ac ef val hynn" [to converse with him thus, xliii]

Therefore, as we can see, faced to the unmarked verb "dite" usually employed in the Anglo-Norman poem,[21] the Welsh translator resorts to an equal communicative option offered by his literary system, a traditional pattern of introducing dialogue. Likewise, he is also much more preoccupied with using a specific verb that will convey the illocutionary force of the speaker, i.e. his intention. A case in point is Roland's reproach to Oliver for not using his sword in vv. 1360-1364. The Welsh translator opted for the verb *ceryddu* (lxxxvi), which actually transmits the specific meaning of the speech.

Greetings do not tend to follow the traditions of native narrative storytelling in neither the order of the speakers nor in the employment of linguistic formulae. Thus the usual deference to status and hierarchy is somewhat undermined.[22] Davies identifies several formulas such as *dyd da it / henpych guell* [good day to you/greetings] or the indirect greeting *kyuarch guell* and its most usual answer, *duw a rod a yt* [God be good to you]. (Davies 1995, pp. 116-121). Only two of these formulas appear in *Cân Rolant*. When the pagan ambassadors arrive at Charlemagne's camp, "a chyuarch gwell idaw a orugant yn vuyd" [greeted him humbly, vii] and then Balacawnt says "Hanbych gwell, vrenin bonhedic, a hedyl a iechyt yt y gan y Gwr yssyd iechyt y bop peth…" ['Greetings, noble king, and life and salvation for you from Him who is the salvation of every thing', viii]. Terms of address that usually occur as part of the greeting (*arglwydd*, *unben*) are also absent. On the contrary, the Welsh translator follows closely his source in the translation of particular phrases that accompany greetings, such as "salvez seize de Deu" or other references to the Christian God or the pagan "gods". Linguistic formulas for oaths are not used either. In direct speeches the character says "kadarnhaaf o'm llw" ['I shall confirm my oath' says Marsli, xxxix] or "A mineu a dygaf yti y greirieu Mahumet" ['And I swear to you on the relics of Mahumet', says Maldebrwn, xli]. In the scene in which the pagans make the oath of killing Rolant, the narrator tells "Ac o lw Marsli a'e wyrda y'r llyuyr hwnnw y cadarnhaassant eu hedewit…" [And by the oath of Marsli and his barons on that book, they confirmed their promise…, xl].

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Some conclusions

The survey presented in the previous pages shows that the translator attempted a compromise between adequacy to the source text and acceptability to the target language and culture. A primary operational norm was the shift from verse to prose.[23] We can then detect three different attitudes: direct adoption of the source text word or phrase, with o without some degree of *welshification* (e.g. proper names, terms of address, greetings); replacement by a word or phrase with the same semantic, contextual, or communicative function (e.g. some animals, some weapons, speeches); employment of traditional terms or literary language (e.g. syntax), even when those terms are less specific (titles of nobility).[24] In the case of titles of nobility, the translator had recourse to a set of terms belonging to his repertoire and more familiar to a Welsh audience. His choices depend, as well, on thirteenth century Welsh usage instead of Anglo-Norman cultural signs that would be, in some cases, probably incomprehensible.

Two things stand out: narrative connectives and the variety of verbs of diction. The set of narrative connectives is not unknown to Middle Welsh literature but it is certainly not present in *La chanson de Roland*. The result is a tighter narrative, very punctuated in the organisation (and subordination) of episodes. The wide array of verbs of diction, that convey the particular nuance expressed by the enunciation or the enunciator, points to the evident change of reception: from the performance of *La chanson de Roland* to a written transmission.

In summary, the study of the micro-textual level of *Cân Rolant* shows that in the process of accommodating the source text to the target language, the translator created a sort of individual style led by idiosyncrasies or personal ways of realizing general attitudes (rather than deviations from the standard). In this respect, his remarkable preoccupation for narrative cohesion and for expressing verbal nuance reveals a skilful and knowledgeable translator.

La chanson de Roland	*Cân Rolant*
Mahumet	Mahumet
Carles / Carlemagne	Chiarlymaen / Chyarlys (Red Book)
Blancandrins	Balacawnt
Marsilie	Marsli
Valdabruns	Maldebrwn
Climborins	Kilbrwm / Cilborus / Cliborin (Red Book)
Bramimunde	Braimwnt
Malquïant	Malquidon / Malkwidon (Red Book)
Anseïs	Gansel
Grandonies	Grandon
Gerier	Gereint

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Berenger	Brengar
Guiun	Gwimwnt
Austorje	Astorius

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[1] For the stemma see Segre 2003, p. 16.

[2] References are to Short's edition (2005). All English translations are from Duggan and Rejhon (2012).

[3] We follow here Poppe 2013. For the dates of the manuscripts see Huws 2000. For a complete palaeographical and codicological description of the White Book and the Red Book (two of the most important collections of Middle Welsh literature) see also HUWS 2000 and 2003.

[4] Early editors and translators include Rev. WILLIAMS, Robert (ed. and trans.). *Campeu Charlymaen. The Gests of Charlemagne, and Bevis of Hampton*. London: Thomas Richards, 1878, which is quite unreliable since he evidently employed more than one manuscript without stating which one in each case; and WILLIAMS, Robert. *The History of Charlemagne. A Translation of "Ystorya de Carolo Magno" with a Historical and Critical Introduction.* London: Honorable Society of Cymmrodorion, 1907where all the texts except the *Pererindod* were translated and published with a long introduction. His study does not hold, though, in front of Rejhon's textual criticism and Williams' readings are in many cases erroneous (1984, pp. 95-98). Morgan Watkin, one of the first to draw attention to medieval Welsh translations and to study them as literary artefacts in their own right, wrote a brief note about the Welsh Carolingian cycle in "Les traductions galloises des épopées françaises". In *Gallica. Essays presented to J. Heywood Thomas by colleagues, pupils, and friends*. Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1969, pp. 31-39.

[5] For instance, in Brynley Roberts' words: "The written form of the *cyfarwydd* prose became the accepted literary vehicle, with its own set of conventions and clearly marked apart from the other Middle Welsh prose styles, for Welsh narrative throughout the Middle Welsh period. Its strength may be appreciated when one sees it used for translations of Anglo-Norman chansons de geste and for new Welsh versions of Old French romances" (1988, p. 17).

[6] By epic traits we mean formal and ideological features that are consubstantial – and, therefore, characterise – French *chansons de geste*. For a detailed discussion of French epic as genre see, for instance, Boutet 1993; Zumthor 2000; Paquette 1988. Duggan 1973 is a valuable study of the formal techniques of *La chanson de Roland*.

[7] Parallelism is a type of "enchaînement", an epic technique usually employed in the *chanson de geste* (Boutet 1993, p. 83)

[8] "La laisse demeure donc, le plus souvent, l'instrument de composition et de structuration spécifique" (Boutet, 1993, p. 172).

[9] See also Ivana Djordević, *Mapping Medieval Translation: Methodological problems and a Case Study*, PhD dissertation (Department of English, McGill University, Montreal, 2002), pp. 145-6. As part of an apparently universal tendency to generalize, translators often choose superordinate terms (also known as hypernyms): for example, a translator may use "dog" for the original's "Alsatian" when the context suggests that the breed is irrelevant (ibid., p. 146, n. 120).

[10] For military strategies and equipment in *La chanson de Roland* see De Vries 2006.

[11] Rejhon 1984, p. 147, n. 34. Another word used for spear is *paladyr* (LXXXV). *Paladyr* and *ffyn* seem to be interchangeable if we attend to section LXXXVI where the narrator describes Oliver's weapon as a *paladyr* and then Rolant says that they do not need *ffyn* to fight but swords.

[12] Bédier (1927): "Le gant a un rôle symbolique important. On le voit donné, accepté, offert ou simplement frappé sur le genou, pour affirmer solennellement une promesse, pour confirmer un don, pour rendre hommage, soit à Dieu, soit à un suzerain, pour proposer ou accepter un défi; enfin, il est, avec le bâton, la marque distinctive de l'ambassadeur. "

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[13] Regarding the *bref* in the Anglo-Norman poem and its connection with Ganelon´s lie and treason see Bennett 1998.
[14] GPC glosses *gwrda* as "nobleman, chief, peer, lord (sometimes of God and Christ); worthy man, good man, good fellow; hero". It is translated as "goodman" by Jenkins (1986) in *The Laws of Hywel Dda*. There it is used to refer to the aristocracy, as is seen in the value of the *agweddi*: "Three legal *agweddïau*: the *agweddi* of a king's daughter, twenty-four pounds (and her *cowyll* eight pounds); the *agweddi* of a goodman's daughter, three pounds (and her *cowyll* a pound); the *agweddi* of a villein's daughter, a pound (and her *cowyll* six score pence)" (Jenkins 1986, p. 50). Lewis (1913) explains that these *gwyrda* were the highest class next to the royal house.
[15] "The three main categories of status above the slave are the *brenin* 'king', the *breyr* or *uchelwr* 'noble', and the *taeog*, a man who is not a slave but yet is tied to the land and to the lord. The *breyr* or *uchelwr* is also, more precisely, defined as the noble whose father has died and who has therefore inherited land and is the head of his own household, as against the *bonheddig*, noble who is not yet the head of his own household (Charles-Edwards 1993, p. 172-3).
[16] xlvi: *Algalif, y ewythyr,* "Algalif, his uncle".
[17] For a discussion of verbs of diction of ample range, e.g. *attep*, *mynegi*, *ymadrod*, and traditional patterns of dialogue see below, "Speech and Greetings".
[18] For instance: (i) "Ac yn y dinas hwnnw yd oed Marsli (…) *yr hwnn* petvei ganthaw fyd Gatholic, ni ellid caffel gwr brudach na gwell noc ef" [And in that city ruled Marsli (…) than whom, if he had the Catholic faith, it would not be possible to find a man wiser or better, i] / can translate "ki Deu nen aimet" [who does not love God, v. 7]; (ii) "Balacawnt, *yr hwnn* a oed lyweawdyr ar arglwydiaeth a holl gedernyt y glynn issel", [Balacawnt, who was ruler over the domain and the whole stronghold of the low valley, ii] / translates "Blancandrins de Castel de Valfunde" [Blancandrin of the castle of Valfunde, v. 23]; (iii) "y Gwr yssyd iechyt y bop peth, *yr hwnn* a gymyrth knawt o'r Wyry…", [He who is the salvation of every thing, who took flesh of the Virgin, viii] / expansion; (iv) "y kyuodes Naym Dwyssawc rac bronn Chiarlymaen, *yr hwnn* a dangossei…", [lit. rose Prince Naym before Chiarlymaen, whose age [showed], xiv] / cf. "Aprés içe i est Neimes venud / Meillor vassal n' aveit en la curt nul" [After this Naimes comes forward / there is no better vassal in the court, vv. 230-1].
[19] Other types employed are: *nominal subject + particle a + finite verb*, *verb noun + particle a + auxiliary verb*, *pronominal subject + particle a + finite verb*, and *nominal object + particle a + finite verb*.
[20] I am not considering here verbs with specific nuance such as *annog*, "urge".
[21] For *La chanson de Roland´*s formulaic speech pattern see Duggan, pp. 109-113.
[22] For the rules governing the dynamics of greetings and forms of address amongst the aristocracy see Charles-Edwards 1978.
[23] The concept of 'operational norms' is from DTS and refers to the norms that direct the decisions made during the act of translation itself (Toury 1995, p. 64).
[24] Poppe and Reck (2006, 2008) also noted conflicted tendencies in the process of textual transfer from Anglo-Norman into Welsh in the case of the translation of *Bevis of Hampton* into Middle Welsh, *Ystorya Bown o Hamtwn*.