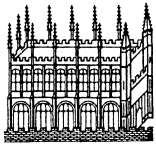
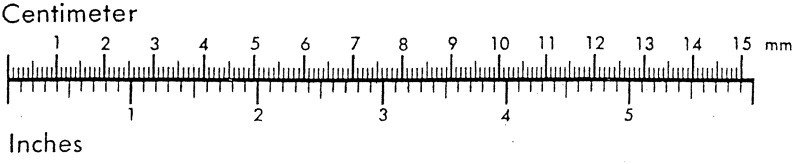
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A Study of Y Seint Greal in relation to La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus

D.Phil. thesis submitted by Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan of St. Anne's College, Hilary Term 1978

The Middle Welsh prose romance, Y Seint Greal has long been recognised as a translation of two early thirteenth century French Grail romances, La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus, but so far no comprehensive study has been made of the relationship between them, nor of the Welsh text as a work of literature in its own right. This study first puts Y Seint Greal into its proper context, as a product of the close links between France and Wales in the later Middle Ages, and as part of a surge of translation of foreign material into Welsh that began in the mid thirteenth century. Manuscript and other evidence indicates that Y Seint Greal was commissioned by the uchelwr (nobleman) Hopcyn ap Thomas of Glamorgan, at the end of the fourteenth century, both translator and scribe probably working in Neath or Margam Cistercian Abbey. The translator presents the Queste and Perlesvaus as two parts of a whole, creating a number of problems of consistency within Y Seint Greal. Moreover, comparison of the Welsh text with its French sources shows that the translator was insensitive to some of their qualities, and that his tendency to abridge has sometimes undermined the structure and coherence of the romances. However, many of the translation's apparent weaknesses can be ascribed to the redactor's concern to adapt his French material for the new audience. Overtly foreign elements are removed and efforts made to harmonise events and characters of the French romances with those of native Welsh tradition. The translator was familiar with earlier Welsh prose narrative, which has influenced his style, and he has drawn on the earlier romance of Peredur. Y Seint Greal was not intended to be a faithful translation but a bridge between Welsh and continental Arthurian traditions.

Abstract

The Middle Welsh prose romance, Y Seint Greal, has long been recognised as a version of two early thirteenth century French Grail romances, La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus, but hitherto no comprehensive study has been made either of the relationship between the three texts or of Y Seint Greal as a whole. This thesis aims to establish how closely the Welsh text follows its French sources and in addition to consider Y Seint Greal as a work of literature in its own right.

Of the six surviving manuscripts in which Y Seint Greal is preserved, only the oldest, the late fourteenth century Peniarth 11, is virtually complete, and all the later manuscripts are derived from it, with the important exception of the late fifteenth century Peniarth 15, which contains a small, independent fragment. The text of the Peniarth 15 fragment, and a detailed account of its relationship to the main French and Welsh versions is given in appendix.

Before a detailed comparison of Y Seint Greal and the two French manuscripts can be undertaken, the relationship between the Welsh text and the surviving French manuscript versions has to be established. Although the translator was using manuscripts that are now lost, it is possible from a study of the variants to demonstrate the relationship between these manuscripts and those that still exist.

Next the time and place of translation are considered, together with the precise circumstances under which Y Seint Greal was produced. In this context it is important to see the text as a product of the many close contacts that existed between Wales and France throughout the Middle Ages, both directly and via England, leading to considerable French influence on both Welsh language and literature. Y Seint Greal must also be recognised as part of a whole corpus of literature in translation, based on originals in Latin, French and English, that began to appear in Wales from the mid thirteenth century onwards. Like many other Welsh translations, Y Seint Greal appears to have been produced for an uchelwr, a member of the new nobility

which emerged after the Edwardian Conquest and settlement and the consequent decline of the native Welsh princes both politically and as literary patrons. Manuscript and other evidence points to Y Seint Greal being commissioned by the well-known man of letters Hopcyn ap Thomas of Ynysdawy in Glamorgan. Again like other translations of the period, our text was probably the work of a cleric in a local monastery, perhaps at Neath or Margam Cistercian Abbey. It appears that the oldest manuscript, Peniarth 11, was Hopcyn's own copy, the work of the scribe Hywel Fychan, who copied other manuscripts commissioned or owned by Hopcyn and his brother, including parts of the Red Book of Hergest. Y Seint Greal, therefore, can be dated at the end of the fourteenth century. Linguistic evidence, limited though it is, confirms this dating, and whilst dialectal evidence is too scanty to indicate the area in which the translation was made, the number of Romance and English loanwords found throughout the text again points to the south-eastern part of Wales, where the very mixed population would lead to borrowing on a large scale. Hopcyn's choice of texts would be influenced by the popularity of French literature, and especially Arthurian material, in the British Isles at the time; it is worth noting that versions of La Queste del Saint Graal appear in English, Irish and Welsh within just over fifty years of each other. Hopcyn's own interest in French culture is attested in poetry dedicated to him, but the selection of these two particular French romances may have been governed by what was available in his area. An account of the dissemination of French Grail material in mediaeval Wales is provided in appendix, together with an assessment of the influence of Y Seint Greal itself. Although La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus both tell the story of the Grail quest and thus have some common ground, their accounts are quite different. Not only is the Grail hero a different person in each, but also the concept of the Grail itself and the relationship between chivalry and Christian ideology. Even are not the same
the Christian ideas diverge. Whereas the Queste is imbued with Cistercian mysticism, stressing individual meditation and confession as the way to Christ and salvation, in the Perlesvaus Cluniac views are put forward, notably

crusading ideals of physical action on behalf of the Church and the forcible conversion of the pagan. Consequently, when the redactor presents these romances as two integral parts of a single whole many contradictions and inconsistencies arise, which he has not succeeded in ironing out. Since the translator is also keen to abridge his material the Welsh narrative lacks the clarity of the original versions. Some episodes end up without adequate motivation, whilst elsewhere information necessary for a full understanding of a situation is omitted. Abridgement occurs throughout both parts of Y Seint Greal, but it is particularly marked in the second section, where the final sequence of adventures in the Perlesvaus is abandoned, so that many threads are left untied and the conclusion is sudden and abrupt. Haste appears to be the main reason for these abridgements. Examination of the treatment of the structure and themes of the French romances shows that not only did the translator fail to remove contradictions arising from the juxtaposition of the Queste and Perlesvaus, but that he was not fully aware of some of the qualities of the two French romances. In particular, rather than seeing them as explorations of particular ideas for which the Arthurian legend provides a useful and familiar framework, he presents them as a sequence of adventures involving Arthurian heroes. For example, he has failed to appreciate the significance in the Queste of the concept of Christian chivalry and the essential difference between the Grail quest and other adventures undertaken by Arthur's knights; he has not understood the extent of the allegory. Furthermore, the characters are presented more as warriors than as chivalric knights.

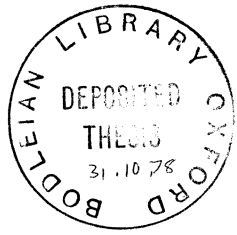
However, a number of the apparent weaknesses in Y Seint Greal as a translation are due not so much to incompetence on the part of the translator as to the important differences that still existed between French and Welsh Arthurian and narrative traditions, and indeed between French and Welsh society. Much of the background would be foreign,if not incomprehensible, to the translator and perhaps his public as well. Many of the imperfections would have gone unnoticed by a contemporary Welsh reader, who would be

approaching Y Seint Greal as a romance in its own right, not as a translation. Furthermore, many alterations in content, style and emphasis appear to stem from the redactor's evident concern to adapt his material for its new public. Not only have overtly foreign elements been excised, to be replaced by native Welsh equivalents, but, in addition, native elements are introduced to suggest a Welsh atmosphere, even where there is nothing corresponding in the French. The redactor has also made efforts to harmonise the French material with Welsh literary and Arthurian traditions, again for the benefit of his Welsh readers. His task was facilitated by the use in both French romances of episodes, motifs and characters having close counterparts in native sources. The translator was undoubtedly very familiar with earlier Welsh prose narrative, whose influence can be traced in episodes, motifs, narrative techniques, treatment of proper names and even the prose style. In particular, the translator has drawn on the earlier Welsh "Grail" romance of Peredur, which is perhaps not surprising since the same hero appears in both the Queste and Perlesvaus.

In assessing the achievements of the redactor of Y Seint Greal as a translator, the peculiar problems and circumstances of mediaeval translators have to be borne in mind. Many lacked special training; and the shortcomings of the surviving foreign-language teaching manuals indicate that the resources available for this type of study were inadequate. It is not surprising, therefore, to find the translator of Y Seint Greal paraphrasing or abridging when faced with a difficult construction or unfamiliar vocabulary. Nonetheless, most of his mistakes appear to be the result of hasty or careless reading rather than of a poor grasp of the language, and he copes successfully with certain types of specialised vocabulary, such as legal or ecclesiastical terms. Like many other Welsh translators working in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, the redactor of Y Seint Greal was less concerned with producing a faithful rendering of a particular foreign text than with adapting the sources to form a new work of literature, adapted for a different audience. It could not be said that Y Seint Greal approaches the Perlesvaus and Queste in sophistication or in general literary qualities, but

it was more suited to the needs of a contemporary Welsh public. The translator's achievement lies in marrying two separate but complementary Arthurian traditions, introducing new material to add to and enrich the existing stock. Moreover, Y Seint Greal, dating as it does from a period from which no native Welsh prose narrative survives, provides an important link between the early tales and the beginnings of Modern Welsh in the sixteenth century. Despite certain infelicities, the style of Y Seint Greal at times preserves the clarity and directness of earlier narrative, whilst at the same time introducing a new and wider range of material and ideas.

A Study of Y Seint Greal in Relation to La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus



D.Phil. thesis submitted by

Ceridwen Lloyd-Morgan of St. Anne's College

Hilary Term 1978

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Introduction

The Middle Welsh romance, Y Seint Greal, has long been recognised as a Welsh version of two well-known French Grail romances of the early thirteenth century, La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus, but hitherto the exact relationship between the three texts has not been explored, nor any detailed study been made of Y Seint Greal as a whole. The aim of this thesis is two-fold, therefore: to establish how closely Y Seint Greal follows the French sources, in terms of content and technique, and in addition to consider the Welsh text as a work of literature in its own right, its provenance,its relation to other surviving examples of Middle Welsh prose narrative, and its literary qualities. As considerable critical attention has already been devoted to both the Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal, such a detailed account of them will not be necessary here, but, nevertheless, this study should show how such French romances were received in Wales and the kind of audience they reached.

In the past there has been some confusion as to the exact nature of Y Seint Greal; it has not been fully understood that the Welsh text consists of a translation of both La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus, and that these are presented as two parts which together form a whole. Although the editor of the only printed edition, Robert Williams, noted in 1876 that the second part of the text had no parallel in Sir Thomas Malory's Morte Darthur, he did not realise that it was a translation of the Perlesvaus, even though that romance had already appeared in print[1]. Even in this century scholars have tended to mention Y Seint Greal only as a translation of La Queste del Saint Graal[2]. It is hoped that this study will help to redress the balance.

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[1] See Robert Williams (ed.), Y Seint Greal (London 1876), p. iv. The first modern printed edition of Perlesvaus had appeared ten years earlier; see Charles Potvin (ed.), Perceval le Gallois (Mons 1866-71), vol. i: Le Roman en Prose.

[2] See for example Thomas Parry, Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg hyd 1900 (Cardiff 1944), p. 71.

"Y Seint Greal" is not actually found as a title in the mediaeval manuscript versions. The leather binding of the earliest manuscript, Peniarth 11, which bears the title on the spine, is not original. In the manuscript itself the only reference to a title comes at the very end: "Ac uelly y teruyna ystoryaeu seint greal" (f.280r.; SG 433. 31). The earliest use of the present one seems to be found in the Book of Dr. John David Rhys, MS Peniarth 118, where Dr. Rhys himself has copied out a few pages of the Peniarth 11 text, under the heading "Seint greal 36 and forward" (Peniarth 118, p. 175). The manuscript dates from the last quarter of the sixteenth century[1]. Our text is now generally known as Y Seint Greal.

[1] See below, p. 10.

Chapter 1: Manuscripts and early printed sources

La Queste del Saint Graal

Nearly forty manuscripts have been preserved containing complete versions of the Queste, dating from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. There are in addition a number of fragments. A full account will not be given here, as detailed descriptions have already been published, for example, by Pauphilet in his Études sur la Queste del Saint Graal[1]. However, these lists have not generally included the early printed editions, although these are valuable in preserving versions that may no longer survive in manuscript. The earliest extant printed version of the Queste is dated 1488[2]. The book is divided into two volumes, the first containing the main part of the Prose Lancelot, the second the rest of the Prose Lancelot, the Queste and the Mort Artu. The first volume ends:

> "Ce present + premier volume a este Impri//me a Rouen.en lostel de gaillard le bourgois//Lan de grace mil.cccc.iiii.xx. + huyt le .xxiii.//iour de noue(m)bre.Par iehan le bourgois.Alex//altacion de la noblesse/ et de la bonne cheualerie/ q(ui) fut en la gra(n)de bretaigne eu te(m)ps du tres//noble + vailla(n)t roy artus/ et dela table ronde// Et a lexaltacion des courages de iennes no//bles ou aultres q(ui) se veulle(n)t erxcerciter aux ar//mes + acquerir lordre de cheualerie".

There follows a woodcut showing the arms of Jehan le Bourgois. The second volume has a similar colophon stating that the book was

> "imprime a Paris par//Jehan du pre.En la(n) de grace mil cccc. iiii.xx.// + xiii.le xvi. iour de septembre".

A single copy of this edition is kept in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and another in the British Library, London. This edition was reissued in 1494 in a smaller format.

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[1] Paris 1921, pp. v-xxii. See also A. Pauphilet (ed.), La Queste del Saint Graal (Paris 1972) pp. vii-viii. The manuscripts containing the Prose Lancelot as well as the Queste have been discussed in detail more recently by A. Micha in a series of articles in Romania lxxxi (1960), pp. 145ff.; lxxxiv (1963), pp. 28ff., 478ff.. The relationship of the manuscripts is closely examined by Micha in a further series, Romania lxxxv (1964), pp. 293-318, 478-517; lxxxvi (1965), pp. 330-59; lxxxvii (1966), pp. 194-233.

[2] For a brief account of this edition see Gweneth Hutchings (ed.), Le roman en prose de Lancelot. Le conte de la charrette (Paris 1938), p. xxv.

Two other early printed editions are known containing La Queste del Saint Graal; these were published in 1516 and 1523 respectively. As these two also contain the Perlesvaus they will be described separately below.

Perlesvaus

The romance of Perlesvaus has been preserved in seven manuscripts, dating from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, but only two of these contain versions that are anywhere near complete. Detailed descriptions of them will not be given here as full accounts are provided by Nitze in his edition[1]. Mention must be made, however, of two manuscripts important for the present study. These are MS f.fr.120, of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and MS 3480 of the Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal[2]. Both Pauphilet and Nitze refer to the first as O and the second as Ac.O is fourteenth century, Ac of the fifteenth, but the two manuscripts are very closely related. Both form the final volume of complete versions of the Vulgate Cycle, but in each manuscript part of the Perlesvaus has been interpolated into the beginning of the Queste del Saint Graal, occupying folios 520r.i-522v.ii in O and folios 483r.i-489r.i in Ac. The fragment in each agrees broadly speaking with the Chantilly manuscript of the Perlesvaus (Collection du Duc d'Aumale, MS 626), starting at the beginning of the romance and continuing up to the point where Arthur is told of the genealogy of Perlesvaus. Then, instead of "il fu fix alain le gros des vaus de kamaalot + sest apieles perlesuaus" which is found in the Chantilly manuscript and the other versions (=Per 457), both O and Ac read "il est nepueu du roy pelle filz de la fille du roy peschour". This description is applicable to Galaad, not to Perlesvaus, which suggests that the redactor was trying to adapt the Perlesvaus material to fit in better

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[1] W.A. Nitze & T.A. Jenkins (eds.), Le Haut Livre du Graal. Perlesvaus (Chicago 1932-37), vol. i, pp. 3-14, vol. ii, pp. 3-42.

[2] See Nitze, vol. i, pp. 10-12.

with the Queste. Presumably for the same reason, the account of Perlesvaus's childhood is omitted (Per 457-515). The fragment continues up to the end of the first paragraph of Branch ii of the Perlesvaus. Having begun immediately after the account in the Prose Lancelot of Lancelot's return to court, it is followed by the usual opening lines of the Queste, which then continues normally.

Apart from Y Seint Greal, O and Ac provide the only manuscript evidence for the combination of the Perlesvaus and Queste. It is hard to see why the Perlesvaus material was interpolated into a text of the Vulgate Cycle in this manner, for juxtaposing it to the Queste has created problems of consistency for the redactor. Before this question is considered, however, mention must also be made of two early printed editions which bring together these two French romances. In both the Perlesvaus is preceded by the Estoire del Saint Graal and followed by the Queste. LHystoire du Sainct Greeal was published in 1516 in Paris by Galiot du Pre and Le Noir, whilst Cest lhystoire du Sainct Greeal was published in 1523, also by Le Noir in Paris[1]. The latter text appears to be a new printing of the 1516 text, with few changes apart from a different set of woodcuts and a new frontispiece. No changes have been made in the text, so that these two can really be treated as a single edition for textual purposes. Both the 1516 and 1523 editions are extremely rare, but one copy of the first and two of the second are now in the British Library, London.

In both editions the text is divided into two volumes, although these are now bound together in one. The first part contains the Estoire, the second the Perlesvaus and a much abbreviated version of the Queste. A sharp break is marked between the Estoire and the Perlesvaus, emphasised by their being in separate volumes, but it seems that an attempt has been made to cast the Perlesvaus and Queste together in much the same way as the Welsh redactor. The second volume, beginning with the Perlesvaus, is headed by

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[1] See Nitze vol. i, pp. 12-13, and A.B. Swanson, A Study of the 1516 and 1523 editions of the Perlesvaus (Chicago 1934).

the following title:

"Le second volume du sainct greeal//contenant la conqueste dudict Sainct Greeal/faicte par Lancelot du lac//Galaad Perceual et boors".

This refers to the matter of the Queste rather than that of the Perlesvaus, since Galaad and Boors are included among the Grail heroes. Furthermore, the last paragraph of the Perlesvaus has been omitted so there is less finality at this point; instead a brief introductory account of the conception and birth of Galaad has been interpolated at the beginning of the Queste. This information is necessary here, since it is not supplied by the Perlesvaus, and the Prose Lancelot, which does provide it, is not included in this edition. Although the redactor was thus clearly conscious of the problems of combining the Perlesvaus and Queste, the join is nonetheless rather clumsy, as the Queste begins "Cy commence la derraine branche du sainct greaal", despite the fact that the last branch of the Perlesvaus had started, "La derreniere branche du saint greaal commence icy". This problem does not arise at the beginning of the Perlesvaus as the Estoire ends, "Ce fine le premier liure et hystoire du sainct Greaal", and the Perlesvaus then begins "Le second volume..".

The redactor of these editions, just like the redactor of the versions in manuscripts O and Ac, has found that joining together the Perlesvaus and Queste creates many difficulties, and scholars have attempted to find explanations for their doing so. Wechssler suggested that there must have been a manuscript once containing these two romances[1], together with the Estoire del Saint Graal, and that the redactor of the printed editions had such a manuscript before him. No such manuscript has survived, but as manuscripts O and Ac combine a fragment of the Perlesvaus with the Queste it is possible that manuscripts did once exist where a complete text of the Perlesvaus was copied with the Vulgate Cycle, although not necessarily interpolated into it. The contradictions and inconsistencies that this would cause need not have troubled a thirteenth-century redactor or public:

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[1] E.Wechssler,"Handschriften des Perlesvaus", ZRPh xx (1896), p. 81.

similar problems did not prevent the equally unlikely combination of the Prose Tristan and La Queste del Saint Graal in manuscripts of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries[1]. However, other hypotheses have been put forward besides that of the source manuscript combining the Perlesvaus and Queste. A.B. Swanson, in his Study of the 1516 and 1523 editions of the Perlesvaus, has suggested that the redactor was a cleric and was therefore interested not so much in the actual events and individuals in the romances as in their spiritual significance, or else that he did not recognise that the Perlesvaus was not part of the same cycle as the other two, or that if he did, he chose to ignore the fact[2]. Nitze suggested that the redactor's interest in the Trinity was the cause[3], a hypothesis supported by the representation of the Trinity in a woodcut on the title page of the 1516 edition, as well as the invocations to the Trinity at the beginning of the branches. A further possibility is that the publisher hoped for greater sales if he combined three popular Grail romances in one book. The present evidence does not tend to support any one of these hypotheses any more than the others. However, the mere existence of these editions and the manuscript fragments, even if they differ from Y Seint Greal in putting the Perlesvaus before the Queste, does show that the Welsh translator was not alone in joining together these two Grail romances.

Y Seint Greal

Two surviving manuscripts contain more or less complete versions of Y Seint Greal whilst four others contain fragments. All are now kept in the National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth. The four Peniarth manuscripts formed part of the library of the seventeenth century antiquarian, Robert Vaughan of Hengwrt, before coming into the collection of the Wynne family at Peniarth

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1 See Fanni Bogdanow, The Romance of the Grail (Manchester 1966), especially pp. 88-120, 273-286.

2 A.B. Swanson, op. cit., pp. 4-7.

3 Nitze vol. i, p. 12.

in 1859. Detailed physical descriptions of all the manuscripts listed here, together with comprehensive lists of their contents, may be found in J. Gwenogvryn Evans's Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language[1]. In some cases, for lack of any more recent published work, we are forced to quote Evans's datings, but these must be treated with some caution.

1. Peniarth 11 (=Hengwrt 49)

This is the oldest and most complete of the manuscript versions, dated by Evans at the end of the fourteenth century[2]. The text occupies all 283 folios (numbered 1-279 because some numbers have been duplicated), but folio 176 is missing leaving a gap in the text. A detailed account of the hand of this manuscript and its relation to other manuscripts of the period will be given later.

2. NLW 3063D (=Mostyn 184)

This manuscript is frequently referred to as the "Mostyn Grail", as it formed part of the Mostyn collection at Gloddaeth Hall, North Wales. J.G. Evans describes it as late fifteenth century[3]. The text occupies all 197 folios, but a number are missing (folios 2,4,5,76-79,93,173,179-191). There can be no doubt that the text is a copy of Peniarth 11 as Evans believed. Despite modernised spelling and a few small variants, mostly omissions or slightly different locutions, the text is the same. The proof that this is a copy of the earlier manuscript can be found at folio 124v.i.10, for here the scribe, reaching the point in Peniarth 11 where one folio is missing, continues copying blindly without noticing the gap. The only additional matter in the Mostyn text is a colophon. The first lines simply describe the subject-matter:

> "Sang Royal ae Kavas ac ae// duc y nef:Nyt amgen Ga//laath vab Lawnslot dy lac.//Peredur vab Evroc Iarll// a Bwrt vab brenhin bw//rt."

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[1] Historical Manuscripts Commission, 2 vols, London 1898-1910.

[2] RWMSS vol.i, p. 321.

[3] RWMSS vol.i, p. 274.

Coming at the end of the second part of the text, corresponding to the French Perlesvaus, this is somewhat inappropriate and serves only to underline the discrepancies between the two Grail accounts, since Galaad and Bwrt are the Grail winners only in the Queste and the first part of Y Seint Greal, and do not even appear in this last section of the translation, where Peredur is the Grail hero.

The rest of the colophon concerns the commissioning and writing of the manuscript:

> "Y copi kynttaf a ysgriven//nod Mastir phylip dauyd// o vnic lyfyr y vrdedic ewy//thr Trahaearn ab Jeuan ab//Mauric.Ar llyfyr hwnn a// beris syr rys vab th(oma)s//i esgrivennu ar y gost//ehun.Henw yr ysgolhaic//ae hysgrivennod.Gwilim//vab John vab Gwilim vab//Jeuan vychan vab Jeuan vab//Eynyon vab Rys//vab Madoc vab llywelyn//vab kedwga(n) vab elystan//glodrud".

This colophon, and the exact relationship between the Mostyn manuscript and Peniarth 11 will be discussed later.

3. Llanstephan 116

The main part of this manuscript, written in the second half of the fifteenth century, contains the Laws of Hywel Dda, but the final leaf is a fragment from Y Seint Greal. J.G. Evans noticed this leaf but in his Report referred to it twice as part of Mostyn 159[1]. It is in fact part of the Mostyn Grail, immediately recognisable by the script itself, subject matter and marginalia in the hands of William Salesbury and Gruffudd Dwnn. The leaf is one of those missing between f.178 and f.192, corresponding to f.261v-262v of Peniarth 11, and pp. 406.12-407.15 in Robert Williams's edition of Y Seint Greal. Half the leaf, one of the two columns, has been cut away and the leaf reversed so that what was the outer margin is now bound into the spine. It may have been put in just as a binding slip, but even so it is not known how or when it found it way into the Llanstephan collection from a Mostyn manuscript.

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[1] RWMSS vol.ii, pp. 567-68.

4. Peniarth 15 (=Hengwrt 57)

This is a fifteenth century manuscript[1], composed chiefly of Christian writings like the Credo Athanasius, the Elucidarium and Ymborth yr Enaid, which are found in early manuscript collections of religious prose such as the fourteenth century Llyfr yr Ancr. However, it also contains a three-page fragment of Y Seint Greal in a hand different from the other two that appear, and probably later than them. This fragment occupies pp. 123.2-125.37. The text is quite different from Peniarth 11, and the only extant version that is not simply copied from the latter. It is also the only fragment based on the second part of Y Seint Greal, corresponding to Perlesvaus. A complete transcript of the fragment, and an account of its relationship to the main version are provided in appendix I.

5. Peniarth 118 (=Hengwrt 518)

This manuscript is known as the "Book of Dr. John David Rhys", and much of it is in the hand of this well-known man of letters (1534-1609). According to J.G. Evans, it was written in the last quarter of the sixteenth century[2]. Pages 175-77 contain a fragment of Y Seint Greal, headed "Seint greal 36 and forward". This refers to the Peniarth 11 manuscript, for the fragment is a series of jottings made from Peniarth 11, from the top of f.36r up to f.42r.1 (SG 53.28-62.33). Dr. Rhys, in whose hand this section is written, has simply picked out short phrases here and there, in the same order as in Peniarth 11, but apparently chosen at random. The spelling is his own, and a few notes on the language have been interpolated.

6. Peniarth 254 (=Hengwrt 545)

The main part of this seventeenth century manuscript contains miscellaneous fragments, mostly compiled about 1609 by John Jones of Gellilyfdy (b.1578-83, d.?1658)[3]. His manuscripts came after his death to

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[1] RWMSS vol.i, pp 334-36.

[2] RWMSS vol.i, pp. 718-19.

[3] RWMSS vol.i, pp. 1071-72.

his associate, Robert Vaughan of Hengwrt, and prefaced to this collection are four folios in the hand of Robert Vaughan, being a copy of Peniarth 11 from the beginning to f.6r.6, with a few minor orthographical changes.

It can be said straightaway that there can be no doubt whatsoever that Y Seint Greal is a translation of the Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal, for if examination of the three texts were not enough to convince us of this, the redactor of Y Seint Greal actually describes himself as "y trossyawdyr" (SG 432.29). Neither is there any doubt that he was working from a French text, for he himself makes a number of references to his source:

"Igleis yn ffrangec y gelwir y vam" (SG 172.23).

"Yr milwr da hwnnw yd oed chwaer yr honn aelwir danbrann yn ffranghec. Ac na vit drwc gan darlleodron y llyfyr hwnn yr na metrwyfi gaffael henweu kymraec ar y rei ffrenghic.nac yr y gossot ual y gallwyf. namyn hynn a wnn I.y milwr yd ydys yny ganmawl yma.y henw yn ffrangec[1] yw peneffresvo galeif.kystal yw hynny yngkymraec apheredur" (SG 172.29-35).

However, before we can compare Y Seint Greal with the Perlesvaus and the Queste, we must decide what were the French sources used by the translator, that is, to establish the relationship of Y Seint Greal to the surviving French manuscript versions of the two romances.

It is evident, even from the most cursory of comparisons between Y Seint Greal and the published texts of Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal, that the Welsh preserves only an abridged version of each romance. It is essential to establish whether such abridgements, and indeed any other departures from the main versions, were made by the translator himself or whether in fact they already existed in the French manuscripts he was using. However, several problems arise immediately. The Welsh text is quite clearly not directly based on any of the extant manuscripts of either the Queste or the Perlesvaus, so we can never be sure how freely the translator was using his sources. Moreover, if we consider which group of French manuscripts the translation approaches most closely, we find that many of the significant variants which are invaluable for classifying the

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[1] So MS. Peniarth 11; printed text reads ffranghec.

French manuscripts into families and sub-groups simply disappear in translation. These generally consist of syntactic variations or differences in spelling, which cannot be carried over into Welsh. Nevertheless, a sufficient number of variants concerned with the essential meaning do remain in the Welsh to suggest the probable relationship of this version to the French manuscripts.

In the case of the Perlesvaus our task is facilitated by the small number of surviving manuscripts. In analysing these manuscripts in his edition of the romance, Nitze argued that there had been two different redactions, separated by some years, the first redaction being represented by the Oxford manuscript (Bodleian Library, MS Hatton 82), the second by the Brussels manuscript (Bibliothèque royale des ducs de Bourgogne, MS 11145)[1]. Nitze was relying largely on the evidence of the colophon of the latter:

> "Por le seingnor de neele fist li seingnor de cambrein cest liure escrire q'onques mes ne fu troitiez que une seule foiz auec cestui en roumenz et cil qui auant cestui fust fez e(s)t si anteus qu'a grant poine an peust lan choissir la lestre".

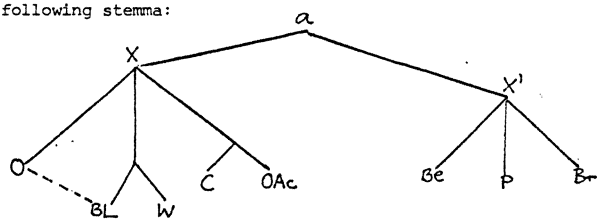
Unfortunately, this colophon is ambiguous. It could be understood to mean quite simply that those involved in the production of the Brussels manuscript knew of only one other copy, and that the Brussels manuscript was copied from this older one, which was difficult to read, the new copy being commissioned by the Seigneur de Cambrein for the Seigneur de Nesle[2]. Consequently, the colophon on its own cannot be taken as firm evidence for two separate redactions. Nevertheless, even though Nitze's hypothesis of two distinct redactions cannot be accepted unless further evidence comes to light, he was certainly correct in stating that "it is clear from almost every page of the text that the manuscripts of the Perlesvaus fall into..

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[1] Nitze vol.i, p. 14; vol.ii, p. 25, pp. 73ff..

[2] Compare Thomas Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal. Perlesvaus: A Structural Study (Geneva 1974), pp. 10-11.

two groups", and that "in numerous passages O, BL, W, C and OAc offer one reading, while Be, P and Br offer another"[1]. A distinction between two groups of families of manuscripts must still be maintained, therefore. Nitze's final classification of the manuscripts was represented by the following stemma:



Here a represents the archetype, X and X' the two redactions suggested by Nitze.

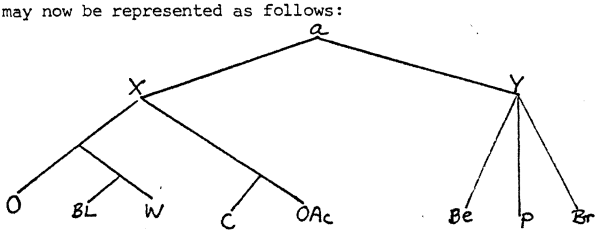
The relationship between the subgroup BL, W and the rest of the group descended from X needs some clarification. The problem was first examined by A.B. Swanson in 1934, and Nitze simply followed the main outlines of his conclusions[2]. Swanson examined in detail significant variants from all the manuscripts and from the Black Letter edition and Y Seint Greal. Although he was forced to rely on the unsatisfactory English translation provided by Robert Williams in his edition of the Welsh text, comparison of these and other examples with the Welsh original entirely confirms his conclusions. We find that although O, BL and W form a sub-group within the family descended from X, and were not copied from C, neither BL nor W can be directly based on

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1 Nitze vol.ii, p. 25. Nitze's abbreviations are followed here:
O Hatton 82, Bodleian Library, Oxford.
Br 11145, Bibliothèque Royale, Brussels.
P f.fr.1428, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.
C 626, Chantilly.
Be 113, Stadtbibliothek, Bern.
OAc f.fr.120, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris and 3480, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal, Paris.
BL The Black Letter edition of 1516 and 1523.
To avoid confusion, Nitze's use of W to represent the Welsh version is retained; where reference is made to SG this is to the Robert Williams printed text only.

2 A.B. Swanson, op. cit., pp. 45-55, 80-81. Nitze, vol.ii, p. 39, simply refers the reader to Swanson's study, giving no reason for his modifying Swanson's stemma.

O either. Furthermore, although BL has some abridgements not found in W, and vice versa, the cases of agreement between BL and W are, as Swanson writes, "sufficiently numerous and striking to indicate a closer filiation between W and BL than is the case between W and O or between BL and O"[1]. Despite the problems presented by the late date of the Black Letter edition, and the fact that both BL and W preserve freer, shorter versions than do the French manuscripts, the evidence justifies the adoption of Swanson's stemma for the O, BL, W, C, OAc family, rather than that put forward by Nitze. The latter fails to take account of the close relationship between O and BL, W against C, OAc. The relationship between the different versions may now be represented as follows:



Here X and Y represent the two copies descended from the archetype from which in turn descended the two groups of manuscript versions.

The close relationship between BL and W is particularly interesting since the early printed edition provides the only complete version of the Perlesvaus juxtaposed to the Queste, as it is in Y Seint Greal. As the Black Letter edition was produced in Paris, and so was almost undoubtedly based on a manuscript written in France, it is more likely that the Welsh translator was also using a continental rather than an insular manuscript of the Perlesvaus. However, if this were the case, there is still no means of knowing whether such a manuscript came to Wales direct from France or via England.

The relationship of Y Seint Greal to the extant copies of La Queste

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[1] A.B. Swanson, op. cit., p. 81.

del Saint Graal is initially more difficult to determine, because of the very large number of surviving manuscripts. Furthermore, whereas Nitze in his edition of the Perlesvaus provides a full account of the variant readings, this is not true of Pauphilet's edition of the Queste. There only select variants from the major manuscripts are given, for Pauphilet claimed that "vouloir appliquer ici la méthode critique ordinaire serait un labeur infini et sans doute vain"[1]. However, in his edition and in his Études sur la Queste del Saint Graal he did classify the corpus of Queste manuscripts into two main families α and β, which may be divided in turn into a number of sub-groups[2]. It was first realised that the Welsh translation was not based on any of the extant manuscripts as early as 1893. Gaston Paris, reviewing the Robert Williams edition for Romania, concluded on the evidence of the English translation provided by Williams that "(la traduction) de la Queste est faite sur un manuscrit du roman français différent de tous ceux qu'on a étudiés jusqu'ici"[3]. Comparison of Y Seint Greal with the variants published by Pauphilet in his edition and in the Études sur la Queste del Saint Graal, and with examples of the major manuscript groups, fully endorses this conclusion, even when the texts of the early printed editions, ignored by Pauphilet, are taken into account. Analysis of variant readings shows that the 1488 text cannot be closely related to the Welsh version, and although the Perlesvaus of the 1516 edition seems to be related to that used by the translator, this is not true of the version of the Queste which follows it. This last, like Y Seint Greal, is an abridged text of the romance, but the abridgements and omissions do not occur at the same points in the text. The same conclusion is reached if the translation is compared with a surviving example of a shortened manuscript version, the fourteenth century B.N.f.fr.123. This manuscript is, as

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[1] Pauphilet, Queste, p.vii.

[2] See Pauphilet, Queste, pp. v-vii, Études, pp. xvi-xxii.

[3] Romania, xxii (1893), p. 297.

Pauphilet puts it, "une rédaction à la fois abrégée et indépendante"[1]. Many episodes are omitted, including important ones like the story of the Grail hero's shield as told to Galaad by the White Knight, and the adventure of the tomb which follows it (Q 31.11-37.17). Reasonably complete accounts of these are preserved in Y Seint Greal. Apart from this manuscript, the only one containing a substantially abridged version is the fourteenth century B.N.f.fr. 343, which gives the so-called "Post-Vulgate Queste", that is, the text combines the Queste with parts of the Prose Tristan. Here again the abridgements do not correspond to those in Y Seint Greal. These being the only known examples of abridged French versions, out of about forty complete texts surviving, and these being quite clearly not related to the Welsh version, it seems probable that the translator was using a manuscript containing the entire text of the Queste and that he himself is responsible for any cuts that have been made.

Although it is impossible to link Y Seint Greal with any one specific manuscript version, it emerges from comparison of variants that the translation is more closely related to one of Pauphilet's subgroups than to any other. This is the group composed of manuscripts N, P, Y, S, S'. Another manuscript, the cyclic composition of B.N.f.fr.112 (dated 1470), should be linked with this group, for despite the fact that its version of the Queste contains many long interpolations from the Prose Tristan, it has many significant readings in common with the two London manuscripts, S and S', as Pickford demonstrated in his study of the manuscript[2]. This manuscript will be referred to as J. The relationship of Y Seint Greal to the main Queste manuscripts can be established by means of the variants given below.

1. W belonging to family α, agrees with N, Y, P, S, S', J and K, R, Z against group β.

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[1] Queste, p. v; Études, p. xi.

[2] C.E. Pickford, L'Évolution du roman arthurien en prose (Paris 1959), pp. 80-85.

a) "Et si tost com il orent mengié dou mortel fruit, qui bien doit estre apelez mortiex, car par lui vint primes la mors a ces deus" (Q 211.15-17).

The underlined phrase is preserved in N, Y, P, S, S', J and K, R, Z, but omitted in all manuscripts of family β[1]. The phrase is retained in Y Seint Greal:

"Ac yr awr y daruu udunt hwy vwyta y marwawl ffrwyth hwnnw.a iawn yw y alw yn varwawl.kanys oblegyt y ffrwyth hwnnw y cawssant wy elldeu eu hangheu" (SG 127.23-26).

b) "Il est voirs que dis anz a passez que li set chevalier que vos avez conquis vindrent en cest chastel par aventure" (Q 50.2-3).

Manuscripts in group β such as D, give ten years at this point, but K, R, Z and N, P, Y give seven[2], as does W:

"..bot seith mlyned er pandathoed ef.." (SG 33.6).

The evidence of J and S is ambiguous at this point, for both give two years, which could either result from confusing "dis" and "deus", or from copying ".vii." as ".ii.".

2. W agreeing with sub-group N, Y, P, S, S' and J against K, R, Z.

a) "Et maintenant entra laienz uns rais de soleil qui fist le palés plus clers a set doubles qu'il n'estoit devant" (Q 15.10-12).

K, R, Z all give seven at this point, but N, Y, P, S, S' and J give a hundred[3], as does W:

"Ac yna wynt a welynt paladyr yr heul yn tywynnu yn gant eglurach no chyt vei hanner dyd" (SG 10.3-5).

b) "Si lor avint a un mardi matin que il vindrent a une croiz" (Q 40.33-41.1).

K, R, Z mention Tuesday, but N, Y, P, S, S' and J give lundi[4]. Like them W gives Monday:

"Ac ef a damchweinyawd udunt duw llungweith dyuot hyt yn ymyl croes" (SG 26.27-28).

c) "Si trova li preudons qu'il avoit passés quatre anz qu'il n'avoit esté confés" (Q 54.8-9).

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[1] Compare Pauphilet, Études, p. xx.

[2] Compare Pauphilet, Queste, p. 282.

[3] Compare Pauphilet, Queste, p. 281.

[4] Compare Pickford, Évolution, p. 82.

Gauvain had not confessed for four years in K, R, Z, but for fourteen years in N, Y, P, S, S' and J[1], and in W:

"ef aadnabu y meudwy arnaw.na buassei ynghyffes yr ys pedeir blyned ar dec" (SG 36.8-9).

d) "si le voit si viel par semblant qu'il cuide bien qu'il ait trois cenz anz ou plus d'aage" (Q 82.27-28).

The age of King Mordrain is three hundred in K, R, Z but it is four hundred in N, Y, P, S, S' and J[2]. In W the passage reads:

"Kanys ef adebygei vot y gwr o oetran yn bedeirblwyd achant" (SG 54.15-16).

Here "a hundred and four" must be a misreading of four hundred, which is expressed in some manuscripts, such as S', as ".iiii^{c}." W would therefore appear to follow the sub-group N, Y, P, S, S' and J.

e) "..se Cil qui sauva Jonas ou ventre dou poisson.." (Q 93.25).

Whilst K, R, Z give poisson at this point, N, Y, P, S, S' and J give baleine[3]. This is also the reading followed by W:

"y gwr agadwawd Ionas ym moly y moruarch" (SG 61.22).

3. W agreeing with some of the sub-groups against K, R, Z.

a) "(Cil) qui gari Danyel en la fosse as lyons" (Q 93.25-26).

In most manuscripts, including S', the number of lions is not specified[4], but in N, Y, P, it is seven, as it is in W:

"..ac a iachaawd daniel yn ffos y seith llew" (SG 61.22-23).

J and S here diverge from the group as they both mention three lions, but by actually giving a number they are still approaching N, Y, P more than K, R, Z.

b) "Vostre suer a pris deus de vos chastiax" (Q 169.4-5).

Whilst K, R, Z specify two castles, N, Y, P, S, S' mention three. W agrees with the latter group:

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[1] Compare Pickford, Évolution, pp. 82-83, Pauphilet, Queste, p. 282.

[2] Compare Pickford, Évolution, p. 83.

[3] Compare Pickford, Évolution, p. 83.

[4] Pickford, Évolution, p. 83, states that S and S', like J, mention three lions, but S' gives "la fosse des lyons".

"kanys dy chwaer aduc tri chastell y arnat" (SG 98.25-26).

J here agrees with K, R, Z, mentioning two castles, not three as Pickford states in his study of the manuscript[1].

From these examples it may be seen that J cannot always be relied on to agree with N, P, Y, S, S'.

4. W agreeing with N, Y, P, S, S' and J against manuscripts from both α and β.

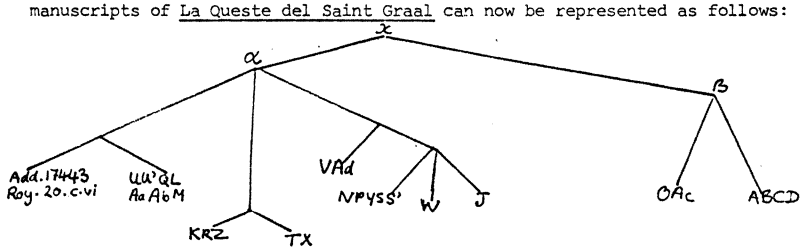
a) "Et il se tret avant et regarde dedenz le saint Vessel" (Q 277.32). Manuscripts such as K, R, V from family α and A from family β state that Galaad looked dedenz the Grail, but N, Y, P, S, S', together with Z and J, read deuant at this point. This weaker reading is followed by W:

"Ac ynteu adoeth ac aedrychawd ar y racwerthuawr lestyr" (SG 169.4-5).

b) "Un an et trois jorz vesqui Perceval en l'ermitage" (Q 279.17-18). According to K, R, V and A Perceval stayed one year and three days, but it is one year and two months in N, Y, P, S, S', in Z and in J[2]. W follows this last reading:

"Blwydyn adeuvis gwedy hynny y bu baredur yn vyw" (SG 170.1-2).

Finally, there are no cases of W differing significantly from N, Y, P, S, S', except where the translation omits or abridges. Adding W and J to Pauphilet's stemma[3], the relationship of the first part of Y Seint Greal to the manuscripts of La Queste del Saint Graal can now be represented as follows:



[1] Évolution, p. 83.

[2] Compare Pickford, Évolution, p. 83.

[3] The stemma is based on the classification given by Pauphilet in his edition of the Queste, and so differs slightly from that published in his Études, which preceded the edition.

Since Y Seint Greal presents a shorter account of the Queste than do the French manuscripts within the sub-group N, Y, P, S, S', it is not possible to conclude with certainty that it actually belongs to the same group, but the variants shown above demonstrate that the translator was certainly using a manuscript of the French romance far closer to this sub-group than to any other group of the surviving manuscripts. Given that out of all forty extant manuscripts, only two contain abridged versions, and that the latter are in no way related to the Welsh version, and considering also that no abridgements are found in the manuscripts forming the group to which Y Seint Greal seems most closely related, it is safe to assume that the text used by the Welsh translator was also complete, although it is possible that a leaf or two may have been missing. In general, however, it seems fair to assume that where the Welsh text gives only an abridged account, this is not the result of using a deficient French version, but that the translator himself should be held responsible.

Chapter 2: Literature in translation and the provenance of Y Seint Greal

In the first part of this chapter the translation of Y Seint Greal will be placed in its historical context and the external evidence for place, date and circumstances of translation will be considered. In the second part, the language of our text will be examined and our conclusions on this aspect compared with those based on the external evidence.

Part 1

Before embarking on a comparison of the content and style of Y Seint Greal, Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal, we must put the translation of the two French romances into its proper literary and historical context. A number of questions must be answered, such as how such French romances came to be available in Wales and why these should be translated at all, and who was responsible for such translation work in all its stages. This will help us to establish the provenance of Y Seint Greal. It must be stressed that the production of our text was not a unique or isolated act of translation of foreign material into Welsh. During the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a whole body of literature in translation appears in Wales, based on originals in French, Latin or English. Putting Y Seint Greal into this wider context will enable us to make a fairer assessment of the translator's achievement later on. In the first part of this chapter it will also be necessary to demonstrate that contacts between Wales and France were sufficiently common and close for it to be possible, and even frequent, for literary borrowing to take place, and that such contacts were already firmly established even by the thirteenth century when the Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal were written, and that there was constant communication throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries when Peniarth 11 and Mostyn 184, the two major manuscripts of Y Seint Greal, were produced.

Contact with other societies and their culture was not new for Wales. The coming of the Normans had simply meant a greater number of foreign

influences. Partly, perhaps, as a result of her geographic position, Wales already had a long tradition of assimilation of outside material. To the east, the border with England was an area of constant two-way contact, whilst to the west Wales had close communication with Ireland from the very earliest times until the eleventh century and the Norman conquest[1]. Among the earliest surviving prose literature in Welsh, Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi, dating in their present form from the period 1050-1120, testify to such contact between Wales and her two nearest neighbours[2], as do the English and Irish words borrowed into the Welsh vocabulary[3]. The influence of other societies on native Welsh culture being longstanding, therefore, it is hardly surprising to find contact with French or Normans also being reflected in both language and literature. Borrowing probably began even before the Normans had actually invaded England or Wales, for Normans were already active on the borders, in Herefordshire, for example, by 1052[4], and, as Ifor Williams suggested, some of the earliest Romance loan-words in Welsh may have come from this type of contact, especially words from the merchants' vocabulary, such as cordwal and pali[5]. However,

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1 On contacts between Ireland and Wales, see Cecile O'Rahilly, Ireland and Wales. (London 1924).

2 In Manawydan, for example, England is perceived as a foreign but neighbouring and accessible country, where two of the principal characters work for a time, whilst in the case of Branwen not only does much of the action take place in Ireland, but Proinsias Mac Cana, in his study, Branwen, daughter of Llyr (Cardiff 1958), has argued that many of the narrative elements may have sources in Irish literature. Compare Kenneth Jackson, The International Popular Tale and Early Welsh Tradition (Cardiff 1960), p. 100, and T.M. Charles-Edwards, "The Date of the Four Branches of the Mabinogi", THSC, 1970, pp. 289-98. For the date of Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi, see T.M. Charles-Edwards, art. cit., p. 298, and Ifor Williams (ed.), Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi (Cardiff 1930), p. xli.

3 On English linguistic influence, see T.H. Parry-Williams, The English Element in Welsh (London 1923); on Irish borrowings, see, for example, J. Rhys, Arch. Camb. series 5, xii (1895), pp. 264-302 and Rev. Celt. xvii (1896), p. 102.

4 The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, ed. G.N. Garmonsway (London 1953), p. 176; J.E. Lloyd, A History of Wales (3rd edn., London 1939), p. 363.

5 PKM p.xxxiv.

direct literary influence or wholescale borrowing seems unlikely this early. Morgan Watkin has been virtually alone in his belief that French influence can be seen already in tales as early as the Pedeir Keinc[1]. However, most scholars do now seem to agree that French literary influence is to be found in another, slightly later group, the three Arthurian romances of Peredur, Owein and Gereint, which have parallels in the Conte del Graal, Erec and Yvain of Chrétien de Troyes. Whatever may be the exact relationship between the French romances and their Welsh counterparts, there can be no doubt that the latter represent Welsh versions of tales centred around the exploits of heroes of earlier, native Welsh tradition, and that these have undergone Continental influence at some stage of their development. The Welsh romances in their present form are thought to have been in existence by about 1200[2], so by that date contact between French and Welsh cultures was already sufficiently well established for literary borrowing to take place.

The date of Y Seint Greal will be discussed later in this chapter but for the moment we can assume that the translation was made in the thirteenth or fourteenth century, since the earliest extant manuscript of the Welsh text, Peniarth 11, is late fourteenth century, and the Perlesvaus and Queste must have been completed by about 1225[3]. The circumstances under which Y Seint Greal was produced cannot be fully understood without consideration of life in Wales and the possibilities of contact between Welsh and French or Anglo-Norman culture during this period. However, the linguistic, social

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1 For Morgan Watkin's views, see "French Linguistic Influence in Mediaeval Wales", THSC, 1918-19, pp. 149-220; "French Literary Influence in Mediaeval Wales", THSC, 1919-20, pp. 1-81; La Civilisation Française dans les Mabinogion (Paris 1962). His views have been criticised by J. Loth, Rev. Celt., xxxix (1922), pp. 227-40, and xl (1923), pp. 442-51; Thomas Jones, BBCS, xiii (1950), pp. 17-19. Saunders Lewis also preferred a late date for the Pedeir Keinc, advancing arguments similar to those of Morgan Watkin. His arguments for a date around 1170-90 have been dealt with by T.M. Charles-Edwards in THSC, 1970, pp. 263-88.

2 See I.Ll. Foster, "Gereint, Owein and Peredur", in ALMA, pp. 192-205.

3 See Chapter 3.

and cultural situation in Wales in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, in particular the existence of a mixed population in certain parts of Wales, has to be seen in terms of the aftermath of the Norman conquest.

One of the most important features of the Norman settlement[1] had been the establishment of the Norman Marcher lords on the Welsh border, followed by deep penetration into Wales itself in certain areas. Gwent and Glamorgan were settled first and most successfully by the Normans, for there the rivers Severn, Wye and Usk cut through the highlands making the path easier for the conquerors, as the siting of the Norman castles confirms. Since the border regions had long had a mixed population of English and Welsh, the coming of the Normans simply brought a third language and culture. The mixed population in the south-east is illustrated in the late twelfth century by John, later king of England, as Lord of Glamorgan confirming a grant of land to Margam Abbey with a greeting to his "friends French, English and Welsh"[2]. The possibilities for contact between different social and linguistic groups and therefore the potential for interest in each other's culture, including literature, was far greater in south-east Wales than in, say, Gwynedd. There resistance to the invader, and consequently to his language and culture, was much stronger, partly due to the difficult nature of the land[3]. Although a line of Norman castles was built west of Chester and Shrewsbury, this served to protect the English border rather than to extend Norman rule, and west of this belt very little impression was made during the late twelfth and early thirteenth century,

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[1] For information on the Norman Conquest I have relied mainly on the following: J.E. Lloyd, A History of Wales, vol. ii, pp. 357-459; John E. Morris, The Welsh Wars of Edward I (Oxford 1901), pp. 1-15; William Rees, South Wales and the March, 1284-1415 (Oxford 1924), pp. 25-41; Lynn H. Nelson, The Normans in South Wales 1070-1171 (Texas 1966).

[2] See Jeremiah O'Sullivan, The Cistercian Settlements in Wales and Monmouthshire (New York 1947), p. 29.

[3] John E. Morris, The Welsh Wars of Edward I, pp. vii, 3, 7, 8.

despite the building of castles as far over as Caernarfon[1]. Thus although Basingwerk Abbey, of all the Cistercian Abbeys in Wales, was perhaps the most Anglo-Norman in character, and consistently supported the policies of the lord of Chester, the whole of its surrounding area and the lands it held were solidly Welsh and apparently remained so until even after the Edwardian conquest[2]. The far greater impact of the Normans in south-east Wales in particular suggests that it was there, and not in any of the northern territories, that most literary borrowing took place, and that it is in this region that Y Seint Greal may have been produced. Ample evidence has been found for various ways in which contact was possible, at a number of levels, between the different social and linguistic groups that co-existed, peacefully or not, in certain parts of Wales, and between Wales and the continent[3].

Let us consider first the situation within Wales. French, or rather Anglo-Norman, was naturally the language of the aristocracy, of the lords who had established themselves on the borders and inside Wales. Intermarriage between their families and those of Welsh lords or chieftains gradually became fairly common in both North and South Wales[4]. Giraldus Cambrensis (born c.1147) was the product of such a union and his maternal grandmother, Nest, daughter of Rhys ap Tewdwr, married, in about 1100, Gerald of Windsor, the first Norman baron to settle in Pembrokeshire. French being the language of the aristocracy was also that of administration and justice, so it was essential and inevitable that at least some of the Welsh population should learn it. Many documents relating to Wales are consequently in French,

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[1] Ibid., pp. 3, 7.

[2] Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Cistercian Settlements, p. 25; Arthur Jones, "Basingwerk Abbey", in J.G. Edwards et al. (eds.), Essays presented to James Tait (Manchester 1933), p. 177.

[3] The only attempt at a synthesis of such evidence was made, from a purely linguistic point of view, by Marie Surridge in "Romance Linguistic Influence on Middle Welsh", Stud. Celt., i (1966), pp. 63-92.

[4] For further examples see Marie Surridge, art. cit., and A.J. Roderick, "Marriage and Politics in Wales, 1066-82", WHR, iv (1968-69), pp 3-20.

including letters written for, if not by, Welshmen, so at the very least Welsh leaders must have had access to clerks who could write French[1]. The mixed population in those areas settled most effectively by the Normans would cause many problems of communication throughout society, particularly in the early years. It is not surprising, therefore, to find evidence of a whole class of professional interpreters, speaking Welsh, Anglo-Norman and English, operating on both sides of the border. Such interpreters need not have been confined to one particular area but could be sent outside Wales as envoys. In piecing together the evidence of their role in society, Constance Bullock-Davies has stressed the importance of such a class and their unique position as intermediaries between French and Welsh culture[2]. Her thesis is that these interpreters could have been the channel through which Celtic material was transmitted to France, to find its way into courtly romance, but the process is just as likely to have operated in the opposite direction, to bring French material to Wales. Although interpreters would be most needed in the period immediately following the Norman settlement, they continued to be employed by the king, and doubtless also by the Norman lords in Wales, well into the thirteenth century.

The role of another peripatetic group, the poets and minstrels, as transmitters of Arthurian material, has been hotly debated in the past. Scholars like Loomis, Brugger and Bruce suggested that the Breton jongleurs in particular provided the main channel for the transmission of Celtic Arthurian traditions to France in the twelfth century[3]. Although this subject is still controversial, any evidence in support of the hypothesis

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1 Marie Surridge, "Romance Linguistic Influence",p. 66.

2 Constance Bullock-Davies, Professional Interpreters and the Matter of Britain (Cardiff 1966).

3 See R.S. Loomis's articles in Mod. Phil., xxxiii (1938), pp. 233-38; Rom. Rev., xxii (1941), pp. 7-11,16-19; ALMA, pp. 52ff., especially p. 53. See also J.D. Bruce, The Evolution of Arthurian Romance from the Beginnings to 1300 (New York 1927), vol.i, pp. 59-70. For an opposing view see F. Lot's articles in Romania, xxiv (1895), pp. 497-528; xxv (1896), pp. 1-32; xxvii (1898), pp. 529-73; xlviii (1922), pp. 1-48; full references are given there for Brugger's arguments.

will also indicate contact on a more general level between Brythonic and Romance-speaking peoples. In Wales itself many poets, despite remaining in their country, may have moved freely between Welsh and Norman circles. Already in pre-Norman and early Norman times the poets are known to have moved from the hall of one lord to that of another, probably for the material rewards of patronage[1]. The same factors, and perhaps political realism later, are likely to have led some of them in time to compose for the new lords and their families. Certainly by the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries a considerable number of poets were composing for families of Anglo-Norman descent, notable examples being Dafydd ap Gwilym in the fourteenth and Guto'r Glyn and Lewis Glyn Cothi in the fifteenth, and the practice may actually have begun even earlier[2]. By the fifteenth century we also have concrete evidence of poets learning French, in the following lines by Ieuan ap Rhydderch:

"Dysgais yr eang Ffrangeg -
Doeth yw ei dysg, da iaith deg"[3].

Contacts between Welsh and Anglo-Norman culture were thus numerous in Wales, and took place at many levels, creating a climate conducive to literary exchange.

Foreign religious houses played an important role, both in the copying

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1 See Ceri W. Lewis, "The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg down to the Middle of the 16th century", Glamorgan County History (Cardiff 1971), vol.iii, p. 456. The question of patronage and the financial status of poets is discussed below, pp. 33ff.

2 See Gwallter Mechain and Tegid (eds.), Gwaith Lewis Glyn Cothi (Oxford and Denbigh 1837); J. Llywelyn Williams and Ifor Williams (eds.), Gwaith Guto'r Glyn (Cardiff 1939); Thomas Parry (ed.), Gwaith Dafydd ap Gwilym (Cardiff 1952). Compare Ceri W. Lewis, "The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg", p. 546: "Soon after the Conquest, cyfarwyddiaid (storytellers), professional latimerii and Welsh, English and French minstrels frequently lived cheek by jowl in many of the castles situated along the Welsh marches. Inevitably, in such a distinctly cosmopolitan milieu, there must have been a great deal of interchange of native literary material".

3 H. Lewis, et al. (eds.), Iolo Goch ac Eraill (Cardiff 1937), p. 228, lines 25-26.

of works of literature and in fostering contacts between the two cultures. The first order to settle in Wales was the Benedictine order[1], one of the earliest houses, Chepstow, being founded in 1071. However, the Benedictines were endowed exclusively by the invaders, with conquered Welsh land along the Normanised fringes of south and south-east Wales, and as a result they became identified with the invader and so regarded with suspicion and dislike. The Cistercians, coming to Wales a little later, proved far more popular[2]. Their houses were founded directly from France rather than as part of Norman policy, although in the very first phase Marcher lords did provide some land. The first house, Tintern, on the river Wye, was founded in 1131, followed by Whitland in Carmarthenshire, colonised from Clairvaux in 1140. One of the main reasons for their success was probably the close cooperation that existed from the beginning between the Cistercians and the Welsh lords. Whereas there are no records of Welshmen becoming Benedictines, in some Cistercian houses such as Whitland, the majority of the members were Welsh[3]. Strata Florida was closely associated with the Lord Rhys and his family after he gave grants of land and money to the abbot. The Welsh character of such abbeys and the close communication that existed between them and the Welsh lords is also demonstrated by the number of the latter who chose to be buried there, for example the descendants of the Lord Rhys in Strata Florida, and Gruffydd ap Cynan, Llywelyn ap Iorwerth and their descendants in Aberconway[4]. In view of this sympathy between the Welsh and

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1 For the Benedictines see the following: Glanmor Williams, The Welsh Church from Conquest to Reformation (2nd edn., Cardiff 1976); David Knowles and R. Neville Hadcock, Mediaeval Religious Houses in England and Wales (London 1971); Arthur J. Richard, "The Religious Houses of Glamorgan", Glamorgan Historian, ii (1965), pp. 61-75; F.G. Cowley, "The Church in Mediaeval Glamorgan", Glamorgan County History, vol.iii, pp. 87-166.

2 For accounts of the Cistercians in Wales see: Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Cistercian Settlements; Glanmor Williams, The Welsh Church, pp. 19-20, 24-26; J.E. Lloyd, History of Wales, vol.ii, pp. 593-603.

3 D. Knowles, The Monastic Order in England (Cambridge 1950), p. 347, has described Whitland as "a house of the native Welsh in which members of the chief families took the habit and became abbots".

4 On Strata Florida see Stephen W. Williams, The Cistercian Abbey of Strata Florida (London 1889), p. 92; for Aberconway, Rhys W. Hays, The History of the Abbey of Aberconway, 1186-1537 (Cardiff 1963), p. 131.

the Cistercians, it is not surprising that many Welsh mediaeval manuscripts were written in Cistercian houses, including manuscripts containing literature in translation[1]. This practice seems to have persisted despite the fact that from the thirteenth century onwards the Cistercians lost some of their popularity as they began to move away from the austere principles to which they had adhered closely in the twelfth century[2]. However, even though Cistercian houses did suffer damage to property at Welsh hands in consequence[3], on occasions when hostility with England erupted into full-scale violence the Cistercians tended to support the Welsh against the English, although in the thirteenth century there were notable exceptions such as Basingwerk[4].

The cultural role played by the Cistercian houses is also illustrated by the number of poets associated with them. In the fourteenth century, according to a strong tradition, Dafydd ap Gwilym was buried at Strata Florida[5], whilst in the fifteenth century Gutun Owain provides an excellent example of close communication with the Cistercians. He spent much of his life at Basingwerk Abbey, and is even known to have been involved in manuscript production, being responsible for the greater part of Llyfr Du Basing, for example[6]. Gutun also spent some time at Strata Florida and Valle Crucis, writing fifteen poems in honour of the abbot of the latter[7].

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1 See, for example, N. Denholm-Young, Handwriting in England and Wales (Cardiff 1954), pp. 40-43.

2 See, for example, Giraldus Cambrensis's Speculum Ecclesiae. Giraldus's highly personal views on the Cistercians, together with those of Walter Map, are assessed by D. Knowles, The Monastic Order, pp. 663-77.

3 See David H. Williams, "Cistercians in Wales: Some Aspects of their Economy", Arch. Camb., cxiv (1965), pp. 2ff.

4 See, for example, Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Cistercian Settlements, pp. 63-91.

5 Thomas Parry, Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg, p. 80; Stephen W. Williams, The Cistercian Abbey of Strata Florida, p. 90.

6 Acton Griscom, The "Black Book of Basingwerk" and MS Cotton Cleopatra B.v. (London 1926), pp. 20-22, 62; Thomas Jones (ed.), Brenhinedd y Saesson (Cardiff 1971), pp. xviii-xix.

7 E. Bachelléry (ed.), L'Oeuvre Poétique de Gutun Owain (Paris 1950), p. 120.

Unfortunately little trustworthy evidence survives concerning the size or contents of the libraries of these monasteries or those of individuals, but there are one or two valuable indications that French literature was read in the original in Wales. For example, an inventory exists of the goods of Llywelyn Bren, executed in 1317 for leading a rising. This inventory includes "i.romanz de la rose, iii.livres Galeys,ii.autres lyvres", testifying to the existence of French literature in Wales[1]. The reference to the Roman de la Rose is particularly interesting since later in the same century certain aspects of the work of Dafydd ap Gwilym suggest familiarity with this text[2]. If such works of courtly literature were circulating in Wales during the fourteenth century, it is not surprising to find a translation of Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal in existence by the end of that century.

It should be stressed that no single one of these various points of contact between Welsh and Norman was the channel of communication which would have brought about literary exchange, but that the contacts were so many and so close that this was the almost inevitable result. Nor were such contacts confined to Wales itself. Here again the religious houses play their part, for the Welsh Cistercian abbots were regularly summoned to France, whether to attend normal meetings of the chapter-general or, as was often the case, for reprimand[3]. Abbots from Welsh houses, together with clerks or attendants, must have visited France not infrequently, even allowing for the occasions when they refused to answer a summons. Crusades and pilgrimages must also have brought about contact with French culture, since travel to the Holy

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1 See J.H. Matthews, Cardiff Records (Cardiff 1898-1911), vol.iv, p. 58.

2 See Rachel Bromwich, Tradition and Innovation in the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym (Cardiff 1972), pp. 28-31.

3 See Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Cistercian Settlements, p. 4; F.G. Cowley, Glamorgan County History, vol.iii, p. 124, states that "at first annual attendance at the General Chapter was expected of all abbots of the Order, but, gradually, specific exceptions were made for those whose abbeys lay in distant lands. By the beginning of the fourteenth century the abbots of England and Wales were obliged to attend every second year".

Land usually meant passing through France[1]. In addition, from the twelfth to the fifteenth centuries Welshmen studied in Paris[2]. Others were educated in Oxford and Cambridge[3], but here too they would be exposed to French, since that remained the language of the ruling and educated classes well into the thirteenth century. As late as 1354, Henri de Grosmont, Duke of Lancaster and lord of Monmouth, wrote a religious text, Le Livre de Seyntz Medecines in Anglo-Norman[4]. Manuscript dedications too show that French literary texts were copied and read in England. The Perlesvaus itself, for example, was dedicated in the Oxford manuscript to the English nobleman Brian Fitz Alan of Bedale[5]. Direct contact between Wales and the Continent should not be underestimated, however, even if the loss of Normandy reduced some of the possibilities in the later period. Political contacts with France were close down to the fifteenth century, as the Welsh in their attempts to reverse the conquest of 1282 periodically negotiated with the French for support against the English. French interest was maintained by the presence in France of the so-called "Welsh Pretender", Owain Lawgoch or Yvain de Galles, the French making political use of him against the English[6]. He died in 1378 without securing active French support, but French interest in Wales continued right down to Glyndwr's rebellion in the early fifteenth century, when they sent 2,600 men to help the Welsh[7].

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1 See G. Hartwell Jones, "Celtic Britain and the Pilgrim Movement", Y Cymmrodor, xxiii (1912), pp. 1-581.

2 Obvious early examples are Giraldus Cambrensis and Walter Map.

3 Gwilym Usher, "Welsh Students at Oxford in the Middle Ages ", BBCS, xvi (1954, pp. 193-98; Rhŷs W. Hays, "Welsh Students at Oxford and Cambridge Universities in the Middle Ages", WHR, iv (1968-69), pp. 325-54.

4 K.E. Kissack, "Religious Life in Monmouthshire, 1066-1536", Journal of the Historical Society of the Church in Wales, xiv (1964), p. 37. For text, see E.J. Arnould (ed.), Le Livre de Seyntz Medecines (Oxford 1940).

5 See Nitze, vol. i, p. 3; vol. ii, pp. 3-8.

6 For Froissart's account, see Froissart, Oeuvres (ed. Kervyn de Lettenhove, Brussels 1869), vol. ix, pp. 72-76. For a general account of Owain Lawgoch, see Edward Owen, "Owain Lawgoch, Yeuain de Galles: some facts and suggestions", THSC, 1899-1900, pp. 6-81, and THSC, 1900-01, pp. 98-113.

7 J.E. Lloyd, Owen Glendower (Oxford 1931), pp. 76-105.

From this account it will be seen that the Welsh had contact with both insular and Continental French culture from the Norman conquest onwards, at many different levels, so that cultural influence and literary exchange was inevitable. All the basic prerequisites are there, areas of mixed population, especially in south-east Wales, and possibilities for contact between the different social and linguistic groups within and without the country. Furthermore, the Cistercian houses with their close links with Franch but predominantly Welsh members provided an ideal milieu for the actual translation process to take place. Although it might be felt that the political instability and unrest would have meant that many lords interested in patronising literature would have neither the money nor the leisure to do so, much important literature was in fact produced[1]. Even though the monasteries, where manuscript production took place, suffered at the hands of local people, from the demands of the Welsh lords, and from fines for supporting the wrong side during an uprising[2], most of the earliest surviving Welsh manuscripts were written in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, including two of the most important literary compendia, the White Book of Rhydderch and the Red Book of Hergest, usually dated around 1275-1325 and 1375-1425 respectively[3]. Although it is reasonably certain that many such manuscripts were written in Welsh Cistercian monasteries, it is difficult to say which books were written in which monastery, since there is little internal evidence and all the scripts tend to have a "family resemblance" which makes definite conclusions impossible[4]. In this the major manuscripts of Y Seint Greal are, as we shall see later, no exception.

Contact and interest may be vital factors without which literary exchange is not possible, but for works of literature to be produced

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1 Compare Glanmor Williams, The Welsh Church, p. 84.

2 Arthur J. Richard, "Religious Houses of Glamorgan", p. 65; Jeremiah O'Sullivan, Cistercian Settlements, pp. 75, 87.

3 J. Gwenogvryn Evans, RWMSS, vol.ii, p.i; N.Denholm-Young, Handwriting in England and Wales, p. 41.

4 N. Denholm-Young, op. cit., pp. 40-43.

patronage is also essential, and we must now consider what social group could provide a patron to commission the translation of our two French Grail romances. During the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries few of those actively engaged in literary production could have been sufficiently well off to support themselves indefinitely. Although the Gogynfeirdd had counted two princes, Owain Cyfeiliog and Hywel ab Owain[1], among their numbers, these are exceptions, and from the mid thirteenth century onwards the landed lords, who were rich enough to produce poetry without extra financial help, seem not to have done so, perhaps because the political situation put other pressures on their time and money. Traditionally the Welsh princes had been the main patrons of literature, but the war with England leading to the conquest by Edward I and the punitive measures taken against those who had supported the Welsh cause, marked the end of this source of support. Those who survived physically usually had their lands and other property seized by the English[2].

Literature had, therefore, to seek new patrons, although it should not, of course, be forgotten that the Church played an important role in commissioning texts for devotional use, and of religious inspiration, both before and after the Edwardian Conquest. The Church, however, could not perform the same functions nor extend its patronage as far as secular patrons[3]. The Marcher lords, as we noted earlier, had intermarried with Welsh families, but it is not until the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries,

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1 J. Lloyd-Jones, "The Court Poets of the Welsh Princes", PBA, xxxiv, (1948), pp. 1-2. For the relationship between the poets and the princely patrons see pp. 7-8 of this article.

2 See A.D. Carr, "An Aristocracy in Decline: The Native Welsh Lords after the Edwardian Conquest", WHR, v (1970-71), pp. 103-29; Ralph A. Griffiths, "Gentlemen and Rebels in later mediaeval Cardiganshire", Ceredigion, v (1965), pp. 143-67, especially pp. 144-48. Many lost their lands and were replaced by alien landowners. This may have been a deliberate policy on the part of Edward I or just a convenient way of rewarding those who had fought for him in the wars of 1277 and 1282; its effect was certainly to kill two birds with one stone.

3 The Church's primary concern would be the production of books for devotional purposes, especially for men and women in holy orders. See Glanmor Williams, The Welsh Church, Chapter 2, especially pp 88-104.

when they had become more Welsh in character and sympathies, that they began to show any serious interest in literature in the Welsh language. In the meantime, however, the gradual tendency towards integration in the outlook of both English and Welsh living in the same areas helped those who had some education, and were able and fortunate enough, to rise to positions of some prominence. The increasing English influence on the government and legal system of Wales led to greater administrative and political complexity, and this in turn fostered a skilled class of lawyers, diplomats, councillors and military leaders, depending on royal service for their advancement and social status. Some had acquired estates in Wales in return for services to the Crown, and gradually embedded themselves in local society. Such men moved freely between the courts of Welsh leaders, English barons and the king, thus broadening their horizons and gaining information about events outside Wales. In order to carry out their duties they must have been at least bilingual; many probably spoke French as well as English and Welsh. This group, known as the uchelwyr, became the new patrons of Welsh literature: "Gwedy'r tywyssogion y cymerth y gwyr bonhedhigion...y gwyr wrth gerdh attvnt"[1]. Some of these men were of pure Welsh descent, others of mixed blood. Madoc Fychan of Tir Iarll in Glamorgan is an early post-conquest example of an uchelwr and literary patron; in the fourteenth century Rhys ap Gruffydd in Cardiganshire provides another example. Perhaps one of the most famous was Sir Rhys ap Thomas (1449-1525), the well-known supporter of Henry Tudor, who in fact commissioned the Mostyn manuscript of Y Seint Greal, as we shall see later.

Although native poetry, after suffering a decline from the mid thirteenth century onwards, began to flourish again in the fourteenth century under the patronage of the uchelwyr, curiously, virtually no native prose narrative has survived from the latter part of the Middle Ages, and it is not now known

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[1] See J. Beverley Smith, "Einion Offeiriad", BBCS, xx (1964), p. 342. For the rise of the uchelwyr and their role as literary patrons see also: Glyn Roberts, "Antipathy and Sympathy", WHR, i (1960), pp. 375ff.; Ralph A. Griffiths, "Gentlemen and Rebels", Ceredigion, v (1965), pp. 143-67.

if any such texts ever existed. Instead we find a whole body of literature in translation, based on originals in French, English and Latin[1], proof that the mixture of peoples and languages had produced some literary results more definite than the Continental influence that can be traced in the earlier romances of Peredur, Owein and Gereint. Y Seint Greal, then, must be seen as part of this corpus of literature in translation. A similar surge of translation of foreign texts into the vernacular took place in England and Ireland, starting in the thirteenth and fifteenth centuries respectively[2], so that the Welsh examples like Y Seint Greal must be seen as part of a widespread phenomenon.

Before considering what material was chosen for translation into Welsh and the relationship of Y Seint Greal to other surviving examples, the term "translation" must be defined. It will be used here to describe any text from the later Middle Ages that has been recast into another language, in Wales and England from the thirteenth century onwards, and in Ireland from the fifteenth to the seventeenth. Nowadays a high degree of fidelity to the original is expected of a translator, but, as the examples discussed below will show, and likewise our comparison of Y Seint Greal with its French sources, during the period in question turning a text into another language was a rather different process. A reasonable degree of accuracy in translation and close adherence to the original can be expected in religious texts, where this is important, but translators of secular material may treat their texts with considerable freedom. Sometimes they depart so far from

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1 For general accounts see the following: Stephen J. Williams, "Cyfieithwyr Cynnar", Y Llenor, viii (1929), pp 226-31, and "Rhai Cyfieithiadau", in Gereint Bowen (ed.), Y Traddodiad Rhyddiaith yn yr Oesau Canol (Llandysul 1974), pp. 303-11; J.E. Caerwyn Williams, "Rhyddiaith Grefyddol Cymraeg Canol", Trad. Rhydd., pp. 326ff.; G.J. Williams, Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg (Cardiff 1948), pp. 148ff., 174-75, 177.

2 The main period of translation in Wales is discussed below, pp.36ff. In England the earliest examples are Floris and Blancheflour (c.1250) and Arthour and Merlin (late 13th century). See J. Burke Severs (ed.), A Manual of the Writings in Middle English (New Haven 1967), vol.i. For translation in Ireland see Robin Flower, The Irish Tradition (Oxford 1947), pp. 120ff.; Douglas Hyde, A Literary History of Ireland (new ed., London 1967), pp. 572ff, Patrick C. Power, A Literary History of Ireland (Cork 1969), pp. 68-71.

the originals that it would be more accurate, perhaps, to describe their works as "renderings" or "versions", but as the examples discussed range from almost literal translation to the vaguest of paraphrases, often within the same text, for convenience the term "translation" will be used throughout, to cover all types.

In Welsh the main period of translation, starting in the mid thirteenth century, introduced a wide variety of literature to the reading public. The lack of surviving native literary prose narrative suggests that those interested in writing or commissioning prose literature gave priority to the translation of major examples of foreign literature in Welsh, and it is these texts that have to bridge the gap between prose of the earliest Middle Ages, those tales often referred to collectively as the Mabinogion, and the early modern prose of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. As mediaeval texts are frequently much older than the earliest surviving manuscripts in which they are preserved, it is not always possible to date a translation with any certainty. This means that only tentative conclusions can be drawn as to the exact date when translation of foreign works began to be undertaken on a large scale in Wales. However, if we accept provisionally the datings put forward by editors of these texts, a rough chronology can be established.

The earliest surviving examples are of the mid thirteenth century, the translations from Latin of both the Turpini Historia and the Credo Athanasius being from the period 1265-82[1]. Morgan Watkin concluded that Bown de Hamtwn was no later than the mid thirteenth century[2], whilst the Transitus Mariae was probably written in the second half of the same century[3]. From then on examples of translations and recopyings continue through the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. After the Turpini Historia further sections of the Charlemagne and Roland material appear in the late thirteenth and the

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[1] See Stephen J. Williams (ed.), Ystorya de Carolo Magno (Cardiff 1930), pp. xxix-xxxi and Thomas Parry, Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg, p. 72; Henry Lewis (ed.), Credo Athanasius, BBCS, v (1930), pp. 193ff.

[2] Morgan Watkin (ed.), Ystorya Bown de Hamtwn (Cardiff 1958), p. lxix.

[3] J.E. Caerwyn Williams, "Rhyddiaith Grefyddol Cymraeg Canol", p. 336.

fourteenth century; these were Cân Rolant (between 1282 and 1336), Rhamant Otuel (between 1275 and 1336) and Pererindod Siarlymaen (before 1336), all based on French originals[1]. The fourteenth century manuscript Llanstephan 201 contains a fragment based on the French Prose Merlin[2], whilst another manuscript of the same century contains Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein, derived from a Latin text[3], whilst Chwedlau Odo, based on the Latin fables of Odo of Cheriton, probably dates from the end of the fourteenth century[4]. Efordd y Brawd Odrig, another translation from Latin, is found in a manuscript of the second half of the fifteenth century, Llanstephan 2, but the mention in a colophon of Rhys ap Thomas ab Einiawn as the man who commissioned the translation shows that the Welsh text must go back to at least the beginning of that century[5]. Amlyn ac Amic, also translated from Latin, is probably no later than the second quarter of the fifteenth century[6] and it marks the end of the main period of translation, although the process did not come to an end then, for in the sixteenth century we find Y Marchog Crwydrad, for example, translated from an English version[7].

In view of the chronology outlined above, if Y Seint Greal was in existence by the late fourteenth century, it must have been produced when

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1 Stephen J. Williams (ed.) Ystorya De Carolo Magno, pp. xxxi-xlvi, Thomas Parry, Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg, pp. 72-73.

2 Edited by J.H. Davies as "The Birth of Arthur", Y Cymmrodor, xxiv (1913), pp. 247-64. See also Appendix 3.

3 Henry Lewis (ed.) Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein (Cardiff 1958), pp. 17-20. This text differs slightly from the other Welsh examples cited here, since the editor believes that it is based, at least in part, upon an oral version.

4 See Ifor Williams (ed.), Chwedlau Odo (Cardiff 1957), pp. xl-xlii.

5 See Stephen J. Williams (ed.), Ffordd y Brawd Odrig (Cardiff 1929), p. 57. Rhys ap Thomas, as we shall see below, pp. 16-17, was probably the brother of Hopcyn ap Thomas, whose life is better documented. As Hopcyn died, an old man, around 1404, Rhys must have lived in the second half of the 14th century.

6 J. Gwenogvryn Evans (ed.), Kymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic (Llanbedrog 1909), preface; also H. Gaidoz's edition in Rev. Celt., iv (1879-80), pp. 203-44.

7 See E.D. Jones, "Le Voyage du Chevalier Errant", NLWJ, viii (1953-54), pp. 369ff.

the process of translating major texts was already well established and the translation of a continental text not unusual. We must now consider more closely the circumstances under which such a translation would be produced.

We have already noted that after the Edwardian conquest the uchelwyr became the main patrons of literature, and the evidence of the surviving Welsh manuscripts containing examples of literature in translation confirms this. The family of Gruffudd ap Maredudd, for example, was prominent in this field. Gruffudd (fl. 1265-82) was a descendant of the Lord Rhys, and thus came from a family with a long tradition of literary patronage[1]. A colophon on the manuscript of Cronicl Turpin states that Madoc ap Selyf translated the text from Latin into Welsh " o adolwyn a deissyf Grufud vab Maredud ab Owain ab Grufud ab Rys". Madoc ap Selyf may have been responsible also for the translation of the Transitus Mariae, which has a similar colophon. The manuscript is damaged but "..ab selyf o Ladin yg kymraeg y Ruffudd ma.." can still be deciphered[2]. Gruffudd had a sister, Eva, who was also interested in literature, for not only did she have poetry addressed to her by Cynddelw[3], but also the Credo Athanasius was translated into Welsh for her benefit. The translator, Gruffudd Bola, writes that it was done "yr caryat Eua verch Varedud ap Ywein a'e henryded", and explains that he has put it into "ieith y gellych ti y darllein a'e dyall", "can dyelleis i dy uot ti, enrydedus Eua verch Varedut, yn damunav caffel Credo Athanasius Sant yg Kymraec"[4]. It seems, then, that Eva's knowledge of Latin was limited, and it is likely that her brother Gruffudd commissioned the translation for her from Gruffudd Bola. The Llanstephan 2 manuscript of Ffordd y Brawd Odrig ends with a colophon naming both the translator and the patron who commissioned it:

> "Ac uelly y teruyna Siwrnei y Brawt Odoric yn India; yr hwnn a drossawd Syre Davyd Bychein o Vorganwc, o arch a damunet Rys ap Thomas vab Einyawn, y veystyr ef"[5].

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1 On Gruffudd ap Maredudd see J.E. Morris, The Welsh Wars of Edward I, pp. 154, 168, 194; and J.E. Lloyd, History of Wales, vol.ii, pp. 750, 768.

2 For both colophons see the editions, and Stephen J. Williams, "Rhai Cyfieithiadau", p. 304.

3 See E. Anwyl (ed.), The Poetry of the Gogynfeirdd, p. 45.

4 Ed. H. Lewis, p. 195.

5 Ed. Stephen J. Williams, p. 57.

The scribe of this manuscript of the second half of the fifteenth century must have simply copied the colophon from a Welsh text before him, for Rhys ap Thomas ab Einiawn must be the same man for whom the Red Book of Talgarth was produced at the end of the fourteenth century[1].

From the texts mentioned so far it is clear that both religious and secular material was being translated. In some cases patrons had Welsh versions made of both types of literature. Rhys ap Thomas provides one example, as he seems to have commissioned the Red Book of Talgarth with its serious religious texts, as well as the lighter Ffordd y Brawd Odrig which, although of religious inspiration is intended for entertainment rather than instruction. We have also seen that Eva, daughter of Maredudd ab Owain, had the Credo Athanasius as well as poetry addressed to her.

Having gained an impression of the kind of people who were commissioning translations, we must now consider the position in society of those who actually undertook the task. The manuscripts have given us the names alone of Madoc ap Selyf, Gruffudd Bola and Dafydd Fychan, responsible respectively for Cronicl Turpin and Transitus Mariae, Credo Athanasius, and Ffordd y Brawd Odrig[2]. As Gruffudd Bola signs himself "braut" it is clear that he was a monk. Many scholars have assumed that Madoc was a cleric also, although recently Glanmor Williams has stated that he was probably a layman[3]. Thomas Parry suggested that both Gruffudd and Madoc were monks at Strata Florida[4], whilst Nora Chadwick preferred to believe that Madoc was attached to Llanbadarn Fawr, for this house, as well as Strata Florida, enjoyed the patronage of the family of Gruffudd ap Maredudd[5]. Denholm-Young suggested

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1 See below p.42.

2 It has been suggested that the tradition that Dafydd Ddu of Hiraddug was the translator of the Officium Parvum Beatae Mariae into Welsh may have some basis in fact, but the question is likely to remain unresolved. See Brynley F. Roberts (ed.), Gwassanaeth Meir (Cardiff 1961), pp. lxxv-lxxx.

3 Glanmor Williams, The Welsh Church, p. 85, claims that Madog ap Selyf "is fairly certainly known to have been a layman", but cites no evidence or authorities that support this contention, and in fact himself states (loc. cit.) that "Most of these (translators) were undoubtedly clerics".

4 Thomas Parry, Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg, p. 72.

5 Nora Chadwick, Studies in the Early British Church (Cambridge 1958) pp. 180-81.

that Peniarth 5 which contains the Transitus Mariae was written earlier at Strata Florida or at its daughter-house, Strata Marcella, in the first quarter of the fourteenth century[1]. This would indicate that the Transitus Mariae was copied by a cleric, but not necessarily that the translator was a monk, and Madoc himself in the remains of the colophon only states that he translated the text, not that he copied it out. However, we have already noted that many manuscripts, like that of the Transitus Mariae, were written in Cistercian houses, so that there is little doubt that the scribes themselves were clerics. Moreover, it is such men who would have reached the level of education necessary for translating from Latin, and all those texts mentioned above whose translators name themselves are translations from Latin. Such men would also be in a position to be commissioned to make a translation by a benefactor of their monastery. Two texts at least were written by men of religion who were not attached to a monastery. Llyfr yr Ancr, containing the Elucidarium, dated 1346, was commissioned by Gruffudd ap Llywelyn from "gwr ry oed agkyr yr amsser hwnnw yn llandewyureuei"[2]. It has been generally accepted that Sir Dafydd Fychan of Glamorgan who translated Ffordd y Brawd Odriq was a priest[3]. Like monks, these men would have sufficient education to undertake translation.

Although detailed evidence for the monastic background of translators is lacking, the hypothesis is a reasonable one, and indicated by what evidence we do have. Furthermore, although the evidence outlined above refers only to texts translated from Latin, there is no reason to suppose that texts translated from French were not produced in similar circumstances. If the Welsh version of the Turpini Historia was written by Madoc ap Selyf, who was probably a cleric, it seems probable that a cleric was also responsible for other sections of the Welsh Charlemagne cycle. Stephen J.

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[1] Handwriting in England and Wales, pp. 40, 43.

[2] See I.Ll. Foster, "The Book of the Anchorite", PBA, xxxvi (1949), p. 199.

[3] Ed. Stephen J. Williams, pp. xi-xiii. The title "syr" was often used to denote a priest. Compare P.C. Bartrum, Welsh Genealogies A.D. 300-1400 (Cardiff 1974), vol. i, p. 8.

Williams once suggested that there might have been a whole school of clerics undertaking translation[1], but there is little to support such a hypothesis. All that can be said is that most of the examples of literature in translation, of whose history anything is known, seem to have been produced by clerics, either in the Strata Florida or Llanbadarn Fawr areas of mid Wales, or else in Glamorgan, where the mixed population must have been especially conducive to the production of translations from French. Rather than there being a school of translators, it is likely that the process was a rather more piecemeal affair, with individual uchelwyr acquiring or gaining access to texts and then commissioning a translation from a cleric, usually in the nearest monastery or one in which he had some financial interest[2].

In the case of Y Seint Greal itself, the earliest manuscript, Peniarth 11, has left no clues as to who commissioned the translation or actually undertook the work, but there is a certain amount of scattered evidence which, when pieced together, forms a picture of the early history of our text.

Some light is thrown on the matter by the manuscripts in the same hand as Peniarth 11. Portions of the Red Book of Hergest, for example, and most of the Red Book of Talgarth are the work of the same scribe. References in the manuscript to the local rebel, Llywelyn Bren and to various lords of Glamorgan immediately suggest a Glamorganshire provenance for the Red Book of Hergest[3], and it is now generally accepted that this manuscript was once in the possession of Hopcyn ap Thomas ab Einiawn, an uchelwr and notable man of

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[1] Stephen J. Williams, "Cyfieithwyr Cynnar", Y Llenor, viii (1929), p. 227.

[2] In Ireland, however, there are cases of lay patrons commissioning not clerics, but professional, lay writers to undertake translation. The Irish version of the Queste del Saint Graal, for instance, has a colophon stating that "Sean O Mulconry..in the house of Angus O Daly and the daughter of Philip of Gibney (wrote) this book" for "John Plunket and for the daughter of the Baron of Galtrim, namely, Kathleen Hussey, to wit, my lord and lady". See Sheila Falconer (ed.), Lorgaireacht an tSoidhigh Naomtha (Dublin 1953), p. 290.

[3] See G.J. Williams, TLlM, p. 147, and Ceri W. Lewis, "The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg" in Glamorgan County History, vol. iii, p. 542.

letters and patron, from Ynysdawy in Glamorgan[1]. Hopcyn was apparently deeply respected in the area and renowned as a "maister of Brut", to the extent that in 1403 Owain Glyndwr was urged by neighbours of the by now aging Hopcyn to consult him about invading Gower[2]. Evidence that the Red Book of Hergest was once in his hands has been found in the manuscript itself, where five awdlau are found addressed to him and praising him as a wise man and generous patron, and in, column 598, triads listing the "casbethau" of "gwilim hir, saer hopkyn ap thomas". However, even if this does suggest that the Red Book was in his possession, it does not necessarily follow that he commissioned it. Nonetheless, the dating of the manuscripts would allow this possibility, for Denholm-Young mentions the "late fourteenth century"[3] and Hopcyn was born in 1330 and died in about 1404[4]. There is quite definite evidence that he commissioned another manuscript, the copy of Brut y Brenhined now in Philadelphia, for this bears a colophon stating:

> "y llyuyr hwnn a yscriuennwys howel vychan uab howel goch o uuellt...o arch a gorchymun y vaester nyt amgen Hopkyn uab thomas uab einiawn".[5]

Moreover, this manuscript is clearly the work of the same scribe as Peniarth 11, which would at the very least make it possible that the same patron was involved in both cases. Furthermore, not only was this scribe also responsible for most of the Red Book of Talgarth (Llanstephan 27), but in addition the name of Rhys ap Thomas ab Einiawn appears in this manuscript (f.152-53) in circumstances that indicate that he commissioned it. The fact that the same scribe was responsible for work commissioned by Hopcyn and Rhys,

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1 See J.E. Caerwyn Williams, "Rhyddiaith Grefyddol Cymraeg Canol", Trad. Rhydd. p. 339; G.J. Williams, TLlM, p. 147; Brynley F. Roberts, "Un o Lawysgrifau Hopcyn ap Tomos o Ynysdawy", BBCS, xxii (1966-68), pp. 223ff.

2 J.E. Lloyd, Owen Glendower (Oxford 1931), pp. 68-69.

3 N. Denholm-Young, Handwriting in England and Wales, p. 44.

4 P.C. Bartrum, Welsh Genealogies, vol.i, p. 116, claims that 1330 is too early for Hopcyn's date of birth, but if Hopcyn was already old in 1403 when he met Glyndwr, the date cannot be brought much further forward.

5 See Brynley Roberts, BBCS, xxii, p. 224. I am grateful to Mrs G. Charles-Edwards for the information that this manuscript is in the same hand as Peniarth 11 and for letting me see a photographic reproduction.

together with the fact that they share the same patronymic, makes it almost certain that they were brothers, and indeed this is now generally accepted[1]. It is true that the genealogical sources that include the family of Hopcyn ap Thomas do not credit him with a brother but only with a sister[2], but this does not affect the hypothesis, since, quite apart from the fact that he may have been included in genealogies now lost, such sources are pedigrees rather than complete family trees and are likely to exclude persons who did not marry or who died without issue. Rhys may well have fallen into one of these categories.

Returning to the Red Book of Talgarth, we find that it is composed of various Christian writings including the Welsh version of the Elucidarium. Now in one of the awdlau addressed to Hopcyn in the Red Book of Hergest we find the following lines by Ieuan Llwyd ab y Gargam:

"Dysgawd lyvreu, loewvreint dawnus
Lucidarius lwys y daered".[3]

Hopcyn, then, had a copy of the Elucidarium in his possession, and this could well be the copy in Llanstephan 27, given the connection between Rhys and this manuscript and between Rhys and Hopcyn. This piece of evidence receives confirmation in the poetry of Dafydd y Coed (fl.c.1370). In a poem in praise of Hopcyn he describes some of the books he had in his collection:

"Mwnei law mae yn y lys
Eurdar y Lucidarius,
Y Greal a'r Ynyales,
A grym pob kyfreith a'e gras".[4]

Here again Hopcyn is said to have a copy of the Elucidarium, together with what must be some kind of annals (if that is what is meant by "ynyales"),

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[1] G.J. Williams (TLlM, p. 149), was hesitant about going this far, but Brynley Roberts (BBCS, xxii, p. 224), J.E. Caerwyn Williams ("Rhyddiaith Grefyddol", Trad. Rhydd. p. 340) and Ceri W. Lewis "The Literary Tradition of Morgannwg" (Glamorgan County History, vol.iii, p. 543) all accept this identification.

[2] P.C. Bartrum, Welsh Genealogies, p. 116.

[3] RP, col. 1415, lines 38-40.

[4] RP, col. 1376, lines 20-22.

and a copy of the Grail. Given that Peniarth 11, the oldest manuscript of our text, is in the hand of the same scribe as a text of the Elucidarium, commissioned apparently by Hopcyn's brother, it seems safe to conclude that it was this copy of Y Seint Greal that belonged to Hopcyn himself. It should be noted that there are no references to an actual copy of the Grail story in any Welsh poetry earlier than this, nor indeed any direct references to the Grail romances in general[1]. This suggests that Peniarth 11 was one of the earliest copies ever made, so we may ask at this point whether it was Hopcyn who commissioned the translation. He certainly had an interest in French culture, for this is mentioned in the following lines in the Red Book of Hergest, addressed to Hopcyn by Meurig vab Iorwerth:

"tat y gerdwryaeth vat vawr..
koeth awdur messur moesseu ffrenghic".[2]

Moreover, his brother, assuming Rhys was such, commissioned at least one translation, for we have already seen that Sir Dafydd Fychan of Glamorgan translated Ffordd y Brawd Odrig into Welsh, "o arch a damunet Rys ap Thomas vab einyawn y veystyr ef". Dafydd uses the term "drossawd" which is quite unambiguous. Although the date usually assigned to Llanstephan 2, the only extant manuscript of the text, is the second half of the fifteenth century[3], so that this cannot be the original copy made for Rhys, there can be no doubt that Sir Dafydd Fychan actually undertook the translation at his behest.

To sum up the evidence so far, if Hopcyn ap Thomas possessed a copy of the Grail story, the earliest known Welsh copy, if he and his brother commissioned work from the same scribe as that of Peniarth 11, if Hopcyn had an interest in French culture, himself commissioned a copy of the Brut and

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[1] Compare Appendix 3. The lines "Rhodiais i'th geisio, iaith digasog/Mal y Greal, myn y grog" are attributed to Dafydd ap Gwilym by Robert Williams in the introduction to his edition (p. v) and likewise by Owen Pughe in his Dictionary (2nd ed., Denbigh 1832), s.v. greal. If this were correct, then we would have a 14th century reference, but in fact these lines were written in the 15th century by Dafydd Llwyd o Fathafarn. GPC gives, s.v. greal, "14g., Gruel a archei greal cwrrogeu", but John Lloyd-Jones in his Geirfa Barddoniaeth Gynnar Gymraeg, quoting this same line, is extremely dubious about its value: "ffig. efallai, ond ansicr iawn. Dichon mai gair hollol wahanol ydyw".

[2] RP, col. 1373, lines 6-7; col. 1378, line 4.

[3] J. Gwenogvryn Evans, RWMSS, vol.ii, pp. 420-22.

his brother a translation into Welsh, it seems likely that it was Hopcyn ap Thomas who actually commissioned Y Seint Greal, and that Peniarth 11 was his copy. From what we have seen of other examples of literature in translation, it is likely that he commissioned a clerk in a monastery to undertake the work, perhaps in a Cistercian abbey such as Margam or Neath, since these were the nearest religious houses to Hopcyn's home in Ynysdawy, although there is no specific evidence for this text. Some scholars have claimed, chiefly from internal evidence in Brut y Tywyssogion, that the Red Book of Hergest was the work of a scriptorium at Strata Florida, but there is no indication of its precise provenance[1]. For Peniarth 11, the linguistic evidence, such as it is, points to south-east Wales, as we shall see later, which accords both with the hypothesis that Hopcyn ap Thomas commissioned the translation and with the suggestion that it was copied in Neath or Margam Abbey.

One major question that remains is whether Peniarth 11 was the original copy made by the translator himself, or a fair copy made afterwards by a separate scribe. The kind of errors in the manuscript suggest that Peniarth 11 is not the actual copy made by the translator, but a copy of it. It must be very close to the original draft as it preserves an obvious mistake made at the moment of translation. At one point (SG 172.9) the scribe writes "kanys ioseph.kanys y wassanaethu yn gywir a wnathoed ioseph idaw", where the French (Per 27) has "car Joseph l'avoit molt bien servi". It is quite clear that the translator started the sentence, then looked to the end, found that the way he was going to translate it into Welsh entailed sending the subject to the end of the clause, and so started again. Such a mistake cannot, however, be taken to indicate that this is the translator's own copy, for a number of other mistakes suggest that the scribe of Peniarth 11 had a written Welsh copy before him. This can be seen from the kind of

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[1] See Denholm-Young, Handwriting in England and Wales, p. 43. In discussing a number of related manuscripts, including Peniarth 32, which also bears the hand of Hywel Fychan, he states that "No strictly palaeographical evidence has .. yet been produced to bind any one of these manuscripts indissolubly to any one monastery. Internal evidence is in favour of Strata Florida or Strata Marcella...the 'family likeness' of the manuscripts does not necessarily point to a region, but, perhaps, to the 'family' of Welsh Cistercians".

omissions he makes, which he then rectifies by adding the relevant words in the margin, or adding the missing letters above the word. For example, folio 4r.3 reads "+yr hwnn$^{y}_{\wedge}$ q$^{orf}_{\wedge}$wy$\S$sya$^{nt}_{\wedge}$holl anturyeu aryuedodeu", with "henyw o lin dd. brofwyt.ac o iosep o arimathia o achaws+" added in the margin. (SG 6.4-6). Again, on folio 5v, the words "ac na thebic di bellach dy uot yn oreu" (SG 8.36) are added in the margin. It is hard to see how these kinds of mistakes could occur if the scribe were working directly from a French text[1]. But if the manuscript is nonetheless close to the original draft as our first example showed, we must consider whether scribe and translator were in fact the same man. The manuscript provides no evidence at all. Analysis of the language of Y Seint Greal, as the next part of this chapter will demonstrate, points towards south-east Wales, but we know that the scribe, or at least his father, came from Builth, since in the Philadelphia manuscript he signs himself: "hywel vychan uab howel goch o uuellt". Although we cannot exclude the possibility that this meant that the father came from Builth and that Hywel Fychan may have moved south, this remains

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[1] The question of the relationship between the translator and the scribe of Peniarth 11 is apparently complicated by a reference in the text at the end of the second part. At the point where the struggles between Lancelot, Claudas and Brien are left unfinished in the Welsh and the story brought to a hurried close, the following lines are found:
"Y trossyawdyr yssyd yma yn menegi yr darlleodron mae drwc adoluryus yw ganthaw nawybu pale yn yr ynys honn yr oed lys brenhin peleur.namyn hynn o diwed ar yr ystorya honn ahyspyssafi y chwi. drwy welet ohonaf inneu yn llyfreu ereill.Nyt amgen no Ioseph yssyd yn tystolyaethu.mynet paredur or castell yn ryw amser.ac ny wybuwyt med ef o hynny allan un geir y wrthaw y mywn ystorya or byt". (SG 432.29-36).
Here the translator ("trossyawdyr") is referred to at first in the third person, whereas elsewhere in the text such interpolations are made in the first person (e.g. SG 172.30-33), as in the last few lines quoted here. The terms used are rather vague, but it could be argued that here the copier of the Welsh translation is retaining the original apology of the translator, then himself supplying what he could from his own reading in "llyfreu ereill". But the fact that he then continues with "Nyt amgen Ioseph yssyd yn tystolyaethu.." makes it unlikely that the copier should be adding, from other sources, what was not in the Welsh version before him. It should be concluded, therefore, that the change from the third to the first person has no real significance and that the whole passage is simply a "cover-up" for the omission of a large portion of the French romance.

uncertain[1]. It is worth noting, however, that although this scribe was responsible for copying other works in translation, such as the Elucidarium in the Red Book of Talgarth,he was not in such instances the translator. We cannot, therefore, assume that he was the translator as well as the scribe of Y Seint Greal. However, since the Peniarth 11 text cannot be far removed from the translator's draft,it is possible that scribe and translator were working together, perhaps in the same abbey. Morgan Watkin in his study of Bown de Hamtwn concluded from the type of errors made that two men had been involved in the translation of that text, one of them reading out the Anglo-Norman and the other listening, mentally translating and then writing down the Welsh[2]. Although there is nothing to suggest that this was the case with Y Seint Greal, it is possible that two men worked together, the translator, with the French romances before him, writing out a Welsh version which was then handed over to the scribe to copy in his neat hand, this last copy being Peniarth 11.

We must now consider the relationship of the Mostyn Grail to Peniarth 11. It is generally accepted that it is a copy from Peniarth 11; the failure to notice the missing folio makes this indisputable, but we have still to establish who made the Mostyn copy, and for whom, and how they had access to Peniarth 11. Some indications are provided by the colophon of the Mostyn manuscript (f.197v.ii). This states that:

> "y copi kynttaf a ysgrivennod Mastir phylip dauyd o vnic lyfyr y vrdedic ewythr Trahaearn ab Jeuan ab Mauric.*Ar llyfyr hwnn a beris syr rys vab th(oma)s i esgrivennu ar y gost ehun.Henw yr ysgolhaic* ae hysgrivennod.Gwilim vab John vab Gwilim vab Jeuan Vychan vab Jeuan vab Eynyon vab Rys vab Madoc vab Llywelyn vab kedwga(n) vab elystan glodrud".

The portion between asterisks has been vigorously erased and crossed out in the manuscript and is extremely difficult to read. J.G. Evans offers the

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[1] One Hywel Fychan ap Hywel Goch appears in the genealogies, but the family seems not to have moved out of Cedewain, and so cannot be the same one. See Bartrum, Welsh Genealogies, vol.i, pp. 223ff. However, both Hywel Goch and Hywel Fychan seem to have been very common names at this time, as Bartrum's index shows.

[2] YBH, pp. lxiii, lxxxvii-lxxxix.

above reading[1] and examination of the manuscript supports it. From the colophon the following points emerge.

1. That Trahaearn ab Ieuan ap Meurig had a single copy of Y Seint Greal. It is hard to determine the exact force of "vnic" here, but it seems more likely to mean that this was his only copy of the text and perhaps virtually unique, rather than that this was the only book Trahaearn possessed.
2. A "first" copy was made of the "vnic lyfyr" by Trahaearn's nephew, Philip Dafydd.
3. Another scribe, Gwilym ab Ieuan, made the present copy, commissioned by Sir Rhys ap Thomas.

These points will be considered in turn.

Trahaearn is known to us from the work of poets of the fifteenth century. He lived at Penrhos Fwrdios near Caerleon, where he had a high reputation as a man of letters and collector of Welsh books, as an awdl to him by Lewis Glyn Cothi (fl.1447-86) shows:

"Dy ddysg sydd amlach no'r gwrŷsg a'u gwraidd,
Dy lyvrau(eto'n Gymmröaidd) ysgol,
Wrth reol,ydynt wir athrawaidd".[2]

This also confirms that "vnic" refers to the copy of the Grail and does not mean that Trahaearn possessed only one book. That Trahaearn had a copy of the Grail story, as the colophon states, is also demonstrated by a cywydd composed for him by Guto'r Glyn (c.1412-93; fl.1445-75), in which the poet asks him for the loan of the book of the Grail for Dafydd, abbot of Glyn

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[1] RWMSS, vol.i, p. 274. The version of the colophon given by Robert Williams in the introduction to his edition (p.v) quotes the text as given in Aneurin Owen's catalogue of the Hengwrt manuscripts (first published in the Transactions of the Cymmrodorion vol.ii (1828), pp. 400-18). Williams himself had not seen the Mostyn manuscript although he knew of its existence. As Williams quotes it, the lines that were crossed out are omitted without any indication, so that it no longer makes sense, and "Siencyn" is given both times for "Gwilim". As a result, Williams, undaunted by grammatical impossibilities, understands the colophon to mean that "Siencyn ab John" was the scribe of Peniarth 11.

[2] LGC, pp. 97-99, lines 50-52.

Egwèstl or Valle Crucis, the Cistercian Abbey near Llangollen[1]:

"Am un lyfr y mae'n llefain
A gar mwy nog aur a main
Echwynfawr oedd iwch anfon
Y Greal teg i'r wlad hon". (lines 43-46)

The word "greal",it is true, can sometimes refer to a collection of church anthems, as in a cywydd by Ieuan Du'r Bilwg (fl.c. 1470) asking a certain Lewis from Glyn Nedd for a copy of "Llyfr y Greal"[2]. But the following lines from Guto's poem remove any doubt that it is the romances that the abbot wants:

"A llyfr y gwaed, llyfrau o gwyr,
Lle syrthiodd yn llys Arthur.
Llyfr enwog o farchogion,
Llyfr at grefft yr holl Ford Gron". (lines 47-50)

Neither is there any doubt that the book was in Welsh:

"Llyfr eto yn llaw Frytwn,
Llin Hors ni ddarllenai hwn". (lines 51-52)

The fact that the abbot, living at Valle Crucis, was so anxious to borrow a copy from Trahaearn at Caerleon, at the other end of Wales, suggests that copies of the text were rare indeed and not to be found in North Wales. His assurances (line 59ff.) that this will only be a loan and that the book will certainly be returned safely suggest that it might be virtually irreplaceable and that Trahaearn might be loth to part with it for that reason. This evidence accords with that of the Mostyn colophon, indicating as it does that Trahaearn's book was his only copy of Y Seint Greal and probably the only known copy. As we know that Mostyn 184 is a copy of Peniarth 11, it is almost certain that the Peniarth copy had passed into Trahaearn's hands some time after the death of Hopcyn ap Thomas (c.1404), perhaps having passed through the possesion of another collector. The period at which these poets were writing fits the late fifteenth century date of the Mostyn manuscript. At least one copy of Y Seint Greal was still in the Glamorgan area in the first half of the fifteenth century, for that is the date of Peniarth 50

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[1] GGG, pp. 303-4.

[2] G.J. Williams, TLlM, p. 37.

("Y Cwta Cyfarwydd"), a manuscript written in Gower or West Glamorgan and containing a triad which the scribe seems to have composed himself, drawing on a copy of Y Seint Greal[1]. Given the apparent scarcity of copies, this could well be Peniarth 11.

Turning now to the "first copy" made by Trahaearn's nephew, a problem arises concerning the relationship of this copy to the present copy, Mostyn 184, made by Gwilym ab Ieuan. We can, I think, accept that Gwilym is the scribe of the Mostyn copy, for it is most unlikely that another person should bother to write out Gwilym's long pedigree, and the words "ar llyfyr hwnn" must refer to this manuscript and not to the "copi kynttaf". There are two possible explanations for this first copy made by Philip Dafydd. Either he made a copy of Trahaearn's book, probably Peniarth 11, and then Gwilym made a copy from Philip's version for Sir Rhys ap Thomas, or else Philip's copy was the first copy that was made from Trahaearn's book and Gwilym's was the second made from it. The second hypothesis is preferable, since, despite its modernised spelling, the text of the Mostyn manuscript is so very close to that of Peniarth 11. Furthermore, whilst it is feasible that even a reasonably careful scribe should fail to notice the missing folio of Peniarth 11 (perhaps through pausing at the end of a page), it would be curious if a second copier, as careful as the Mostyn scribe is normally, should fail to notice complete nonsense and a mid-sentence switch from one episode to another, in the middle of a column, and so did not amend it. Unfortunately, there is only one major error left uncorrected by the scribe of Peniarth 11 (the one noted above, p.45 ; SG 172.9), and this would have appeared in one of the lost leaves of the Mostyn Grail, so the only other piece of evidence that could have helped to establish the exact relationship between these versions is missing.

The man who made the Mostyn copy was obviously no lowly clerk, as he is keen to stress. He considers himself a man of some breeding, tracing his

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[1] Rachel Bromwich (ed.), Trioedd Ynys Prydein (Cardiff 1961), pp. xxxi-xxxiii. Compare J.G. Evans, RWMSS, vol.i, p. 389, and G.J. Williams, TLlM, p. 11.

descent back to the famous Elystan Glodrydd. However, the surviving genealogies do not agree with Gwilym's account of his pedigree. If we start with the line of Elystan Glodrydd, we find agreement for only four generations, as far as Madog ap Llywelyn. If we follow up Gwilym's immediate forebears, examination of the genealogies suggests that he may be the grandson of one Gwilym ap Ieuan Fychan ap Ieuan, particularly since Rhys, a son of the latter, married an heiress from Glamorgan, which demonstrates that this family was in the right area. But again, if we assume that this is indeed the family of Gwilym ap John, we find that the genealogies again diverge from the pedigree noted by the scribe after four generations, after Ieuan the father of Ieuan Fychan. Whatever his family was, however, he must have been a man of some learning, as he describes himself as "ysgolhaic". He was apparently commissioned to make the copy of Y Seint Greal by Sir Rhys ap Thomas (1449-1525), who was one of the most prominent Welshmen of his day. A notable Welsh supporter of Henry Tudor in his claim to the English throne, after the latter's success at Bosworth, Rhys became attached to the court in London and held a number of high offices. There are references to him in Gruffudd Dwnn's marginal notes in Mostyn 184. Gruffudd describes himself as a relation of Sir Rhys ap Thomas ("i nai vab i nith verch i gender", f.26), and later had the manuscript in his own collection of Welsh books[1]. He may have acquired it at the death of Rhys, whose funeral in 1525 he describes in one of the marginal notes (f.26). J.G. Evans suggested[2] that it was Gruffudd Dwnn who scrubbed out the reference to Rhys ap Thomas in the colophon, since elsewhere (f.178) he writes:

> "Llyma vy llyfr y gryffydd dwnn ap oweyn dwnn ap Robert dwnn ysgwier y gwr a gostoedd gwneythyr y llyfr hwnn".

If Gruffudd was claiming that he, not Rhys, had commissioned the book, it is impossible to take such a claim seriously, as Gruffudd himself was not born

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[1] Gruffudd Dwnn mentions this collection in one of his marginal notes in Mostyn 184: "Pann oedd o(ed) k(rist) (1564) iroedd gennyf i gr. dwnn...o lyfrau kymraeg mowrion a bychain i myhvn bedawr thrigain oll i gyd yn iawn" (folio 150).

[2] RWMSS, vol.i, p. 274.

until about 1500, by which time the manuscript was already written.

The circumstances under which Y Seint Greal was probably produced have now been established, but we have still to consider how the text itself was transmitted. Evidence in French romances, such as in Chrétien's Yvain, shows that in the late twelfth century such texts were often read aloud[1], in portions of a suitable length, to an audience, who might then discuss what they had just heard. It is very likely that this still held true for the Queste and Perlesvaus, which were produced during the first quarter of the thirteenth century. The Perlesvaus itself provides some evidence for this, for at one point the narrator suddenly turns to address the audience directly, reminding them of the difference between the two Camaalots:

> "Seignor, ne cuidiez mie que ce soit cil Camaalos donc cil conteor content, la o li rois Artus tenoit si sovent sa cort". (Per 7280-81)

However, internal evidence in Y Seint Greal suggests that the translation was produced for private reading, since the translator specifically refers to his public as readers:

> "Ac na vit drwc gan darlleodron y llyfyr hwnn yr na metrwyfi gaffael henweu kymraec ar y rei ffrenghic". (SG 172.30-32).

> "Y trossyawdyr yssyd yma yn menegi yr darlleodron mae drwc adolyurus yw ganthaw". (SG 432.29-30).

Consequently, whereas in the case of the Perlesvaus and Queste it should be borne in mind that at least some of those who became familiar with the romances heard them read aloud, Y Seint Greal must have been destined for a public which would have read it in manuscript. The size of this public in the case of Y Seint Greal is virtually impossible to determine, but it is likely that uchelwyr such as Hopcyn ap Thomas, who had such texts in their possession, might lend them to neighbours who shared their literary interests. Guto'r Glyn's cywydd to Trahaearn, asking for the loan of his copy of Y Seint Greal on behalf of the Abbot of Valle Crucis indicates that such borrowing took place, even though Trahaearn's response is not known. The limited

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[1] Yvain (ed. Mario Roques, Paris 1960), lines 5354-64. Compare H.J. Chaytor, From Script to Print (Cambridge 1945), pp. 10-12; R. Crosby, "Oral Delivery in the Middle Ages", Speculum ix (1936), pp. 88-110.

evidence that has survived to suggest the extent to which Y Seint Greal was read in the two centuries following its production is set out and assessed in Appendix 3.

Part 2: The Language of Y Seint Greal: Evidence for the date and place of translation

In the previous section the external and manuscript evidence for the provenance of Y Seint Greal was examined. We must now consider the language of our text to see whether this will bear out our earlier findings.

Middle Welsh is generally described as extending from the beginning of the twelfth century to about 1400[1]. The present state of knowledge does not permit precise dating of the linguistic changes that took place during this period, for many texts survive only in manuscript versions very much later than the texts themselves, many of the prose tales have passed through a number of stages of development, and very few firmly dated texts exist. However, it is still possible to distinguish two stages in the development of Middle Welsh. These are referred to as Early Middle Welsh, extending from the early twelfth century to the middle of the thirteenth, and Late Middle Welsh, continuing thence to the end of the fourteenth century[2]. Within these two periods a rough chronology can be established, so that it can at least be said whether a given text belongs to the beginning or end of one period. A study of the language of Y Seint Greal cannot place the translation any more accurately than this, but it is still enough to test conclusions based exclusively on external evidence. It can be said at once that the

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[1] GMW p. xvii, WG p. 7.

[2] J. Morris-Jones describes Late Middle Welsh as extending into the early 15th century (WG p. 7), but more recently D. Simon Evans has set the turning point at the end of the 14th (GMW p. xvii). It is, of course, impossible to draw rigid lines between different periods in the development of a language, and although Later Middle Welsh appears in late 14th century texts such as Chwedlau Odo, the earliest examples of Early Modern Welsh are the poems of Dafydd ap Gwilym, dating from the mid 14th century. (See GMW p. xx, WG p. 7).

language of Y Seint Greal, even at first reading, gives an impression of considerable modernity in comparison with the better known Welsh Arthurian romances of Peredur, Owein and Gereint, even though our text still preserves many of the essential characteristics of Middle Welsh. The following analysis is not intended to be exhaustive but aims to illustrate the salient features of the language of Y Seint Greal[1].

Orthography

At first sight the orthography seems to display many characteristics found in prose narrative of the Early Middle Welsh period.

Vowels[2]

y is normally used to represent [ə],

Examples: ymeith (SG 29.4), dyuot (SG 373.1), yna (SG 135.32).

However, y is occasionally replaced by e =[ə] .

Examples: E kyfarwydyt (SG 16.28), er ymdidan (SG 86.28), Ema (SG 226.5).

This is characteristic of the early period of Middle Welsh.

y is also used to represent [i] , as in Modern Welsh (for example, heuyt SG 247.35), but is also used where Modern Welsh has i.

Examples: gwedy (SG 26.5), nyt (SG 243.26), ty (personal pronoun, SG 281.7).

The vowels [i] and [ə] as represented by y are often assimilated to i in the next syllable.

Examples: gilyd (SG 282.28) becomes gilid (SG 282.25), myui (SG 26.39) becomes miui (SG 111.22).

The alternation of a and y before a nasal is found occasionally.

Examples: amdanaw (SG 55.32) and ymdanaw (SG 5.37), amherawdyr (SG 176.35) and ymherawdyr (SG 200.38).

Similarly, the alternation of a and e in the same position can be found:

Examples: anrydedu (SG 6.35) and enryded (SG 7.12), anryuedawt (SG 7.38)

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[1] For this study I have relied chiefly on GMW, where full details are given of the features mentioned here. Page references are given in the following notes.

[2] GMW pp. 1-3.

and enryuedawt (SG 8.10).

Again, a similar alternation between e and y occurs.

Examples: emendey (SG 183.16) and ymendaaf (SG 431.13), ymendao (SG 201.19) and emendau (SG 380.23).

However, these types of alternation are found only occasionally, and in general the orthography of Y Seint Greal is comparatively uniform.

The characteristic Middle Welsh epenthetic vowel between a consonant and f, l, m, n, or r is regularly indicated.

Examples: ffenestyr (SG 141.36), kwbyl (SG 7.39), gevyn (SG 316.6).

Diphthongs

These are generally represented as in Modern Welsh, but with some important exceptions[1]. Thus where the modern language has au our text has eu.

Examples: minheu (SG 52.26), elldeu (SG 128.36), ynteu (SG 286.15).

This also occurs in plural forms.

Examples: bylcheu (SG 411.34), vuryeu, chlodyeu (SG 53.23).

Similarly, where Modern Welsh has ai, ei is usual in Y Seint Greal.

Examples: eneit (SG 48.37), gwreic (SG 192.39).

The diphthong aw is regularly found in final unaccented syllables in our text.

Examples: marchawc (SG 6.4), allawr (SG 187.32), achaws (SG 313.12).

The reduction of aw to o, which is found occasionally in Middle Welsh texts even as early as the Pedeir Keinc, and became general in the modern language, is not noted at all in Y Seint Greal. In this the translator was conservative but consistent. Unaccented ae in a final syllable is likewise consistently retained, although this is often reduced to e in Middle Welsh. Only one example appears in Y Seint Greal: chware (SG 187.28). This single example occurs in the passage describing the boyhood of Peredur, corresponding closely to the similar passage in the earlier romance of Peredur, and as the form chware is used at this point in all the extant manuscript versions of Peredur,

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[1] GMW pp. 3-5.

it is just possible that this was the reason for the translator of Y Seint Greal using a form completely uncharacteristic of him. His use of the earlier romance will be demonstrated in Chapter 6.

Semi-vowel

Regular Middle Welsh representations of the semi-vowel yod [j] [1] are found in Y Seint Greal. The usual spellings are i and y.

Examples: chynheliir (SG 32.30), wirion (SG 56.39), lidiassei (SG 320.16); hwylyaw (SG 102.27), eissyoes (SG 279.19), garyat (SG 287.9).

However, the [j] is sometimes denoted by e.

Example: fwndeaw (SG 177.34).

Consonants

Regular Middle Welsh usage is reflected in the representation of consonants in Y Seint Greal[2], but here there is greater variety in the representation of the same sounds than was the case with the vowels.

Final [d] is often represented by t.

Examples: oet (SG 1.2), mynet (SG 1.5), byt (SG 363.27).

However, d is used not only to represent [d],

Examples: edrych (SG 176.1), daethost (SG 176.29),

but also for [ð]. This is found medially,

Examples: hediw (SG 3.18), ymdidan (SG 3.4),

and also finally,

Examples: herwyd (SG 3.18), kyrchawd (SG 287.14).

The use of dd for [ð] , which is attested as early as the thirteenth century in Ystorya Bown de Hamtwn[3], is not found at all in Y Seint Greal.

Final c regularly represents [g] .

Examples: dec (SG 1.3), groc (SG 171.4), marchawc (SG 171.23).

However, c also represents [k] , especially when initial.

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[1] GMW p. 6.

[2] GMW pp. 7-13.

[3] YBH p. cviii.

* Refer first to p. 57 overleaf.

It should be noted that the last two examples are borrowed words, which may have caused hesitation or uncertainty. Normally ll represents [ɬ] in Y Seint Greal.

Examples: llall (SG 80.24), ymelldigaw (SG 412.14), lle (SG 364.19).

From this brief survey it may be seen that many of the characteristic spellings of Middle Welsh are preserved in our text, but the rarity of some orthographical practices found chiefly in the Early Middle Welsh period suggests that a date in the later period would be appropriate. This conclusion is supported by the complete absence of some features of the early period, which must have been abandoned by the time of writing. They are l =[l̥] , t =[ð] , t = [θ] , p =[b] , c = [x] and w =[v] . Moreover, although in some cases more than one letter may be used to represent a single sound, and vice versa, the orthography of Y Seint Greal does show far greater consistency and uniformity than is found in Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi, for example, or even the three earlier Welsh Arthurian romances. All these factors, then, the absence or rarity of orthographical features characteristic of Early Middle Welsh, and the greater consistency, point to our text being of the later period. We must now consider whether this conclusion based on the evidence of orthography is borne out by that of morphology and syntax.

Mutation

Mutation of initial consonants in certain positions is still not fully or regularly indicated, as is typical of Middle Welsh, although such changes had already developed fully[1]. In Y Seint Greal examples of the mutation not being shown are rare.

Example: yn tewdwr (SG 189.32).

The soft mutation is always marked.

Examples: y law (SG 5.8), oe wled (SG 79.17), ffenestyr uechan (SG 84.2), eistedua beriglus (SG 5.28), drwy dystolyaeth (SG 171.7).

[1] For a full description of mutations, see GMW, pp. 14-22, for an exhaustive account, T.J.Morgan, Y Treigliadau a'u Cystrawen (Cardiff 1952); for the date of development see Kenneth Jackson, Language and History in Early Britain (Edinburgh 1953), pp. 543-61.

Examples: cwbwl (SG 177.27), castell (SG 363.36).

[k] is also represented by k.

Examples: kafas (SG 109.32), kanys (SG 109.4);

but ck is also found medially.

Examples: anckres (SG 52.28), arwydockaa (SG 105.21), ebryfycka (SG 327.32).

[f] is normally indicated by ff.

Examples: gyffelybir (SG 91.27), ffrwyth (SG 109.34).

There are, however, a few rare examples of the earlier use of f for [f].

Example: gorfwyssant (SG 6.5),

but as a rule f represents [v] in Y Seint Greal as in modern Welsh. This occurs regularly in our text when [v] is final.

Examples: dywedaf (SG 72.33), ef (SG 181.12), odef (SG 367.15).

However, u is also found for [v], especially medially.

Examples: kyuoeth (SG 33.7), dyuot (SG 63.24), keuynderw (SG 363.5).

v is used initially or medially, never in final position.

Examples: vanagaf (SG 36.2), varchocaawd (SG 397.1); drachevyn (SG 63.3), ovyn (SG 429.34).

In texts of the Early Middle Welsh period ff is also found for [v] but this usage is found only rarely in Y Seint Greal.

Examples: difflannawd (SG 10.18-19), difflannassant (SG 245.32).

Besides representing [v], u is also found for [w] in Early Middle Welsh, and for [u] where Modern Welsh has w. Only two examples of this are found in our text: gur (SG 6.29), gurda (SG 6.33).

Elsewhere w or ŵ are used, suggesting a later date.

A date in the later period is also indicated by the rarity of g for [ŋ] in Y Seint Greal.

Examples: ebryvygus (SG 317.32), hebryuygu (SG 174.20).

[ŋ] is usually represented by ng.

Examples: angel (SG 162.25), angheu (SG 290.28).

ll for [l], is rare, again suggesting a later date.

Examples: gallon (SG 171.26, 174.33), ffalls (SG 277.27), ŧoll (SG 143.5).

The spirant mutation is also regularly indicated.

Examples: y tri pherson (SG 171.14), a chymeint (SG 129.14), a thri charw (SG 193.8), a thrannoeth (SG 135.4).

However, the nasal mutation as a rule is only partially indicated.

Examples: ympenvoisins (SG 278.2), vyngkallon (SG 166.24), vyndwyn (SG 103.32).

But there are a number of examples of the nasal mutation being fully marked, which tends to indicate a fairly late date.

Examples: ynghaerllion (SG 174.5-6), vymmrawt (SG 103.9), ynglynn (SG 192.30).

Initial mutation of the verb after a negative is regularly noted.

Examples: ny thebygei (SG 399.6), ny chymerth (SG 169.38).

Lenition does not occur in the case of ~~after~~ b or m, however, as we find throughout Middle Welsh.

Examples: ny bu (SG 433.4), na bydaf (SG 313.11), ny mynnawd (SG 284.7).

Syntactic developments

A number of developments are found regularly in Y Seint Greal but which are far less common in Early Middle Welsh prose. The use of the infixed possessive pronoun in the plural has become common[1].

Example: "pan beris hitheu udunt oe hanuod..." (SG 134.18).

However, there is an occasional example of the prefixed plural form:

"y llewot affoassant oc eu selereu" (SG 326.38).

On the other hand, a number of pronominal usages common in Early Middle Welsh are no longer found in the language of Y Seint Greal, or are used only rarely. Thus the use of yn before a clause denoting place or time has entirely lapsed[2]. Instead of the earlier construction,

Example: "ymchwelut yn yd oed Pwyll" (PKM 10.6),

we find a number of different possibilities.

Examples: "ac adoeth hyt lle yd oed bat bychan" (SG 212.7), "ef a doeth yr lle yr oed y griffyeit" (SG 369.38-39), "Ac yr awr yd aeth ef yr avon" (SG 61.2).

[1] GMW p. 53, note 3.

[2] GMW p. 71.

The earlier pa or py used substantivally meaning what? has been virtually abandoned in our text, although it lingers in a few specific contexts[1].

Example: "pythawr ytti beth adywetto ef" (SG 321.31).

Instead, beth is normally used for what?

Examples: "yny wypei beth oed hynny" (SG 280.7), "ar brenhin a ovynnawd beth a daroed idaw" (SG 177.11-12).

Similarly cwt?, meaning where? or whither? has been totally abandoned[2] in favour of pa le? or o ba le?.

Examples: "awydost di o pa le yr wyfi yn dyuot?" (SG 68.19), "A unbennes heb y paredur pa le y mae y marchawc hwnnw?" (SG 325.11).

Furthermore, the interrogative pan?, which developed as a relative during the Middle Welsh period, has given way to constructions with yd or yr[3]. Thus instead of examples like:

"Py le pan deuy ti?" (WM col. 125.36), we find:

"o ba le yd wyt ti yn dyuot?" (SG 68.22), "peredur a ovynnawd idaw o pa wlat yr hanoed" (SG 65.17).

Panyw as a subordinating conjunction[4] is still found, but only infrequently.

Examples: "A phan wybuant wy panyw lawnslot aoed yno llawen vuant wrthaw" (SG 2.1-2), "Yna y morynyon a ... dywedassant panyw herwr oed ef" (SG 321.18-20).

Most examples, however, are found in the formulaic sentences used to introduce a new section of the narrative.

Example: "Tystolyaethu y mae y kyfarwydyt yma panyw peredur a hanoed o lines iosep o arimathia" (SG 268.30).

In such contexts, however,it is usually replaced by constructions like the following:

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1 GMW p. 76.

2 GMW p. 79.

3 GMW p. 79.

4 GMW p. 80.

"Ema y mae yr ymdidan..yn dywedut vot arthur.." (SG 190.21-22).
"Tewi y mae yr ymadrawd am vriant..ac yn dywedut am lawnslot y vot yn kerdet" (SG 393.29), "Dywedut y mae y kyfarwydyt marchogaeth o walchmei" (SG 220.33).

The interrogative pronoun pwy[1] appears on one or two occasions in Y Seint Greal in a construction without a verb:
"Pwy henw dy arglwyd di heb y clamados" (SG 267.11), "Pwy dy henw di heb ynteu" (SG 74.26).
Normally in our text, however, the copula is used with pwy in such contexts. Examples: "Ac yna govyn idaw pwy oed y henw awnaeth" (SG 96.4), "arglwyd heb hi pwy yw dy enw di" (SG 352.21).

Morphology and Syntax of the Verb

Here again a number of features characteristic of Early Middle Welsh have either become rare or have been entirely abandoned in our text, indicating that a date in the later period should be sought.

There are no examples in Y Seint Greal of the use of the present subjunctive to express futurity[2], which is found in texts of the Early Middle Welsh period; instead the present indicative is used.
Examples: "ti a gysgy heno yn y neuad ... a thitheu a deuy y gyt a mi" (SG 175.19-22), "minneu a af y gyt a thydi" (SG 1.18).
In the conjugation of the preterite tense, the older third person singular endings -as, -es and -is are rivalled by the ending -awd[3].
Examples: "hi a gyfarchawd gwell idaw.ac a ovynnawd idaw y ba le yr aei" (SG 81.9-10). However, examples of the older forms do appear. Particular verbs are still resistant to this change, notably ro(d)i, gwelet, taraw, peri and adaw.

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1 GMW pp. 74-75.

2 GMW p. 113.

3 GMW pp. 122-23.

Examples: roes (SG 81.2), gweles (SG 81.9), trewis (SG 116.29), beris (SG 223.13), edewis (SG 223.14).

Nevertheless, the form -wys has been completely abandoned in our text, and -awd is the ending used most frequently for this tense and person, pointing again to Y Seint Greal being of the Later Middle Welsh period.

The same conclusion is suggested by the rarity of the perfects and pluperfects formed by the addition of the present and imperfect forms of the verb bot to the preterite stem[1]. Very few examples of this occur in Y Seint Greal and these are confined to the pluperfect of the verb caffel.

Examples: kawssoedwn (SG 278.34), kawssoedynt (SG 11.5), kawssoed (SG 34.14).

All other verbs use forms such as anuonassant (SG 55.22) in the pluperfect.

The syntax of the verb also precludes an early date for Y Seint Greal. Examples include the total absence of the pre-verbal particle ry[2]; and the loss of the copula ys in the "mixed order" before an emphasised word or phrase[3].

Examples: "Trist vu gan arthur hynny" (SG 179.30), "Gwir a dywedy di" (SG 298.18).

The common use of the conjunctions os[4] (instead of earlier o(t)) and pei,[5] both meaning if, also suggests that our text belongs to the later period.

Examples: "Ac ediuarhau yn vawr arnaw awnathoed pei tyckyei" (SG 11.32), "a llawer or barwnyeit yny gwahawd pei asmynnei" (SG 9.6); "os da gan duw" (SG 23.2), os gwediei o gallon" (SG 174.33).

A fairly consistent picture emerges from the evidence outlined above. It is clear that a large number of developments have occurred since typical texts of the Early Middle Welsh period, such as Culhwch ag Olwen or the Pedeir Keinc took on their present form. Many features of the older orthography,

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1 GMW p. 136, note 3.

2 GMW p. 166, note 2.

3 GMW p. 141.

4 GMW pp. 240-42. It should be noted, however, that or, "if", is also used frequently in Y Seint Greal, for example, "or bydaf varw" (SG 68.10), "Ac or credy di idaw" (SG 69.16).

5 GMW p. 243.

morphology and syntax have been abandoned or have become scarce, to be replaced by new ones that in many cases have been retained into the modern language, so that Y Seint Greal has an almost modern flavour. It is true that some of the older forms and practices still persist side by side with the new, but we have seen that in such instances only a few examples may survive of the earlier ones, confined to a limited context, such as a particular verb. If the translator was familiar with Welsh texts of the earlier period, then at least some of these older forms in the text might be due to the influence of these earlier writings. Although any dating on the basis of language alone can never hope to be more than tentative, the evidence such as it is seems to indicate fairly clearly that Y Seint Greal was translated towards the end of the Middle Welsh period. In other words, the evidence is sufficient to compare our dating based on external matters, which placed the text at the end of the fourteenth century.

The next question to be considered is whether the language of Y Seint Greal gives any indication of the area in Wales in which the translation was made. However, large numbers of distinct dialectal forms cannot be expected, for Y Seint Greal, like all Middle Welsh sources, is unquestionably a literary text and thus uses a language far more standardised than the spoken medium would have been[1].

We have already seen that the Peniarth 11 text of Y Seint Greal must be very close indeed to the translator's own draft, so that there is no question of generations of scribes overlaying the original with their own dialect, and any consistent dialectal features that might appear would be likely to belong to the translator.

John Morris-Jones points out in his Welsh Grammar that one of the earliest dialectal forms to appear in Welsh manuscript sources is the levelling of the diphthongs ai and au to e in final unaccented syllables, so

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[1] Compare D. Simon Evans: "We must remember that the language we study is the literary language, in all cases removed from the spoken medium". (GMW p. xviii).

that llefain, for example, would become llefen[1]. This is characteristic of north-east and mid-Wales, and of south-west Wales (the old territorial divisions of Powys and Dyfed). No such forms occur in Y Seint Greal, the absence of the characteristic south-western e forms pointing to the south-east. Other forms which are characteristic of certain modern dialects, and appear in Y Seint Greal cannot be held as definite dialectal features in the Middle Welsh period. Thus the retention or addition of h in certain positions (SG 171.11 angheu, for example)[2] or the retention of the yod [j] in plural formations (such as SG 193.11, inseilyeu)[3], which later appear as southern characteristics, can not be regarded as firm evidence in our text.

Dialect evidence, therefore, is insufficient to indicate the area where Y Seint Greal was produced, but an examination of the vocabulary proves more fruitful, since it contains a large number of loanwords from French or Anglo-Normal and from English. A complete list of loanwords in Y Seint Greal will be found in Appendix 2.

It is only to be expected that in a text translated from French some Romance loanwords should appear. Unfortunately, it is rarely possible to distinguish those words borrowed directly from French from those of Romance origin that have come into Welsh through English, nor is it easy to differentiate French and Anglo-Norman loanwords. In each of these cases, scholars have been unable to establish phonological rules for separating one kind of loanword from the others[4]. In our text, therefore, although a

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[1] WG pp. 8, 33.

[2] M. Watkin, YBH p. xxviii.

[3] M. Watkin, YBH p. xxviii-xxix.

[4] The problem has been considered most recently by Marie Surridge in "Romance Linguistic Influence on Middle Welsh", Studia Celtica i, pp. 63ff. She demonstrates that "the difficulty of assigning these (loan)words with certainty to one source or the other results from the fact that the majority of words of Romance origin attested in Middle Welsh are also attested at much the same time in Middle English, and that they are attested in remarkably similar form in the two languages". Thus she concludes: "From the point of view of distinguishing between words which were borrowed direct and those which came through English, phonological investigation has proved fruitless,

Cont. ....

number of words are, undoubtedly, ultimately of Romance origin, a comparatively small number can be definitely said to be borrowed from French or Anglo-Norman, and the choice of those of whose origin we can be certain has usually been quite obviously determined by the use of a very similar word in the French text. Many of these are technical terms, connected with military life:

Example: albryst (SG 389.28; Per 8161 aubaleste)[1].

Some are attested here for the first time, suggesting that they were recent borrowings or even that the translator himself may have been responsible for the borrowing.

Example: gisarmeu (SG 419.11; Per 9104 guisarmes)[2]

ystopyawd (SG 72.7; Q 111.27 estoupe)[3].

Others, however, are attested quite early in Welsh.

Example: (b)liant (SG 295.6; Per 4576 bliaut). This appears in the romances of Peredur and Owein and so must have been in common literary use by about 1200[4].

Such use of both new and longstanding borrowings could be accounted for by assuming that the translator had picked up a number of Romance loanwords from reading earlier Welsh literature, perhaps including translations, which are likely to contain borrowed words, and that he himself was responsible for the newer ones, borrowing from the text he was translating when he could

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.... Cont.

4 and is likely to remain so". T.H. Parry-Williams expressed the same opinion in The English Element in Welsh (London, 1923), p. 11. Morgan Watkin in "The French linguistic influence in Medieval Wales", THSC, 1918-19, p. 147, also stated that he "could not succeed in discovering any phonological tests separating the one class of loanwords from the other", but from this he concluded that all his examples had come into Welsh straight from French; however, his contentions have received little or no support from other scholars

1 EEW p. 60, GPC s.v. albryst.

2 GPC s.v. gisarm.

3 EEW p. 160.

4 For date of the romances, see I.Ll. Foster ALMA p. 205. Bliant appears in Peredur, WM col. 142, and in Owein, WM col. 226. For the possibility that bliant was borrowed even earlier, see I. Williams, PKM pp. 146-47.

not provide a suitable Welsh equivalent from his own current vocabulary. Although, as I shall demonstrate in Chapter 6, the translator must have been familiar with some earlier Welsh literature, and so might have acquired loanwords there, the hypothesis as a whole is not entirely satisfactory, especially as far as new loanwords are concerned. We cannot assume that just because a loanword is found for the first time in our text, it was borrowed by the translator, for, whilst this might be true in a few cases, it is also possible that such a word was used in earlier writings now lost, or, indeed, that it had been in use in the spoken language for some time. A far better explanation is that the translator spoke a Welsh which already contained a larger number of French or Anglo-Norman loanwords and which was still absorbing new Romance loanwords. Strong evidence in support of this contention lies in those words in Y Seint Greal which are almost certainly French or Anglo-Norman borrowings, but do not correspond to the words used in the equivalent passage in the French sources of the text[1], and so must have been familiar to the translator already, and yet are likely to be comparatively recent borrowings as they do not appear to be attested earlier than Y Seint Greal.

Examples: pwrri (SG 44.24), used in the phrase "chwerwach no phrenn pwrri" to translate "plus amers que fuz" (Q 67.26) and which must be borrowed from the French pourri[2]; kwrprieu (SG 404.24) used to translate chapes (Per 8617)

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[1] The French manuscripts, of course, give variant readings of the text in some places. However, in the case of the Perlesvaus, the manuscripts agree on the choice of word at the relevant points. (See the full variants supplied in Nitze's edition). As the Queste manuscripts are so numerous, it is not possible to be totally certain that a word closer to the Welsh has not been used in some version, but variants from the major manuscript groups published by Pauphilet in his Études sur la Queste del Saint Graal, by C.E. Pickford in L'évolution du roman en prose and by A. Micha in his articles in Romania lxxxi, lxxxiv, lxxxv, lxxxvi, lxxxvii, have been checked, as have the Queste manuscripts kept in the Bodleian Library, Oxford, and the British Library, London and the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, and show no significant variants at all as far as the examples quoted are concerned. Where it is stated that a Welsh example has "no equivalent" in the French, this means that the translator has paraphrased and in so doing added a detail or an idea not present in the French version.

[2] The form of this word shows the origin; unfortunately, I have found no published reference to it. GPC has not yet reached p, and pwrri does not appear in any of the usual lists such as Parry-Williams's EEW and Morgan Watkin's articles in THSC, 1918-20.

and derived from the French cuir bouilli[1].

A further group of words may be distinguished which could just as easily have been borrowed through English as directly from French or Anglo-Norman, but in the majority of cases the choice of these words, whatever their origin, has clearly been influenced by the French text used. Again technical terms figure prominently, especially terms connected with chivalry and courtoisie, an area where the Welsh vocabulary could be expected to be deficient.

Examples: (t)wrneimant (SG 9.12; Q 13.24 tornoiemens)[2]

kwrteis (SG 217.29, Per 1438 cortois)

corteissi (SG 248.14; Per 2523 cortoisie)[3]

Words connected with clothing and materials might also be included in this category.

Examples: samit (SG 319.18; Per 5492 samit)[4]

sinopyl (SG 291.13; Per 4451 sinople)

swrcodeu (SG 250.1; Per 2580 sorcot)[5]

However, amongst these words borrowed directly from French or Anglo-Norman or through English, there are some examples where the loanword is not sufficiently close to the word used at the corresponding point in the French for us to be certain that the latter has exerted an influence. This supports the suggestion put forward above that the translator's own language already contained a considerable number of Romance borrowings.

Examples: corset (SG 279.39; Per 4078 jupe)[6]

(c)eplans (SG 191.22; Per 602 chapel)[7].

[1] See GPC s.v. cwrpri.

[2] EEW pp. 90, 162.

[3] EEW p. 156; GPC s.v. cwrtais, cwrteisi.

[4] EEW p. 84.

[5] EEW p. 161.

[6] EEW p. 107; GPC s.v. corsed.

[7] GPC s.v. geplans.

It has already been stated that it is impossible to determine whether such forms are direct French borrowings or whether they came into Welsh via English, so that another possibility emerges, that the translator lived in an area where English had also exerted a strong influence on the Welsh language. There seems little doubt of this, for English borrowings are plentiful in Y Seint Greal, and even constitute the largest group of borrowings from any one language. Admittedly, some of these, although their form may prove them to be borrowed from English, may be ultimately of Romance of origin and, in addition, many of them have been suggested by the use of a similar word in the French texts.

Examples: barwnyeit (SG 265.10; Per 3071 barons)[1]

bwrgeis (SG 226.14; Per 1732 borjois)[2]

kwarel (SG 389.34; Per 8163 carriax)[3]

crwper (SG 411.8; Per 8834 crope)[4]

traetur (SG 398.36; Per 8441 traitres)[5]

Nevertheless, at least some of these must have been already embedded in the translator's vocabulary as they are found not only where a similar word is used in the French but also where a totally different word or phrase occurs in the Queste or Perlesvaus.

Examples: ermin (SG 191.26; no equivalent in the French, Per 606-7)[6]

ffaelu (SG 173.33; Per 72 alentir)[7]

nigromawnswr (SG 69.13-14; Q 107.1 enchanterres)[8].

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[1] EEW p. 68; GPC s.v. barwn.

[2] EEW p. 155; GPC s.v. bwrdais.

[3] EEW p. 221; GPC s.v. cwarel[2].

[4] EEW p. 107; GPC s.v. crwper.

[5] EEW p. 166.

[6] EEW p. 116; GPC s.v. ermin.

[7] EEW p. 194; GPC s.v. ffaelaf.

[8] EEW p. 62.

Moreover, the largest group of English loanwords is found only in contexts where the French used a totally different word or phrase and consequently cannot be said to have influenced the translator's choice.

Examples: actwn (SG 330.31; Per 5878 hauberc)[1]

(c)wnstabyl (SG 406.9; Per 8666 vavasor)[2]

herlot, herlotwas (SG 194.32, 252.31; Per 612, 2677 vallez)[3]

pwrs (SG 135.30; Q 226.13 aumosniere)[4]

crupyl (SG 167.28; Q 275.26 home a potences)[5]

grwndwaleu (SG 242.25; Per 2315 - no equivalent)[6]

ridill (SG 258.8; Per 2835 - no equivalent)[7]

(c)ertwein (SG 242.19; Per 2306 - no equivalent)[8]

hacknei (SG 203.28; Per 1013 roncin)[9]

cliket (SG 154.18; Q 254.21-22 - no equivalent)[10].

One word, blattys (SG 40.3; Q 59.31 unes armes)[11], is not attested outside our text.

Some of these words are recent borrowings, other, such as (c)ertwein and crupyl are thought to be derived from Old English[12], testifying to early English influence.

In short, the evidence of loanwords shows that the language used by the

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[1] EEW p. 66; GPC s.v. actwn.

[2] EEW p. 60; GPC s.v. cwnstabl.

[3] EEW p. 117.

[4] EEW p. 160.

[5] EEW p. 28; GPC s.v. crupl.

[6] EEW p. 61; GPC s.v. grwndwal.

[7] EEW p. 141.

[8] EEW p. 25; GPC s.v. certwain.

[9] EEW pp.74, 191; GPC s.v. hacnai.

[10] GPC s.v. clicied, EEW p. 138.

[11] EEW p. 68; GPC s.v. blattys.

[12] For references see p. 69, notes 5 and 8 above.

translator had already assimilated many borrowings from English and from French or Anglo-Norman. Consequently, the translator must have lived in a part of Wales where there had been contact with these languages for a long time, and where they were still exerting an influence. In the first part of this chapter it was shown that the area of Wales which had the closest and most longstanding contacts with French or Anglo-Norman and with English was the south-east, whose population had been mixed since the eleventh century. Here, more than anywhere else in Wales, Welsh would have been open to continual influence from these languages, from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries. Furthermore, the evidence of dialectal forms, although limited, points towards this region, as we have already seen. The language of Y Seint Greal, therefore, with regard to both date and place of writing, fully confirms the conclusions put forward in the first part of this chapter. Unless new evidence comes to light, it will be safe to assume that Y Seint Greal was translated at the end of the fourteenth century, in the south-east of Wales, commissioned by Hopcyn ap Thomas of Ynysdawy, and the actual translation undertaken by a cleric who came from that area, and was in all probability attached to a Cistercian house such as Neath or Margam.

Chapter 3: The Choice of Texts for Translation

In Chapter 2 we saw that Y Seint Greal was simply one example from a whole corpus of literature in translation that appeared in Wales from the thirteenth century onwards, and the circumstances under which this particular translation was produced were discussed. However, although we have already seen that cultural contacts in south-east Wales were such that literary borrowing was only to be expected, the question of the choice of material for translation into Welsh remains to be considered.

We have already noted that translations of religious writings form an important group within the corpus and these can be regarded as fulfilling some spiritual need in making available in the vernacular texts that were previously closed to all except those well-versed in Latin. However, many religious texts were certainly read for pleasure as well as instruction, even if such was not their original purpose. Saints' lives fall into this category, as do the fables of Odo of Cheriton (a collection of exempla as used in sermons), and the account of the travels of Brother Ordoric, all these being translated into Welsh in the course of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries[1]. The reasons for the translation of secular literature are harder to establish, particularly in a country like Wales where vernacular literature had a strong and unbroken tradition. Secular writings do not have the practical application of devotional works or medical and other scientific treatises, but are intended primarily for pleasure and entertainment, even if there may be some instructional value as well. Nonetheless, tales like Amlyn ac Amic and Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein were popular not only in Wales, but all over Europe. The Latin Vita Amici et Amelii was translated into French and Anglo-Norman, English and Icelandic as well as into Welsh, whilst the Seven Sages tale, originating in the East, is found in most European languages, in

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[1] See D. Simon Evans, "Y Bucheddau", Trad. Rhydd., pp. 245-273, I. Williams, Chwedlau Odo, pp. lx-xxxiv, Stephen J. Williams, Ffordd y Brawd Odrig, pp. xiii-xvii.

at least forty distinct versions[1]. The popularity of such a text is easily accounted for, since their simple narratives, of the type of the international popular or folk tale, are as much at home, and equally applicable, in, say, Germany or Ireland as in India or Byzantium. This type of material, however, formed only a small part of the body of secular prose narrative in translation in Welsh. If the Welsh corpus of literature in translation is compared with its counterparts in English or Irish, it becomes apparent at once that translators in all three languages were drawing chiefly on the same sources. Hence in English the Auchinleck manuscript, dated between 1330 and 1340[2], includes much the same type of writings as survive in Welsh. Some of these are of religious inspiration, such as legends of the saints and of the Virgin Mary, a vision of purgatory and paraphrases of Scripture, but the bulk of the manuscript contains secular material, including versions of those texts also found translated into Welsh, not only Amis and Amiloun and the Seven Sages but also the Charlemagne and Roland material and Bevis of Hampton. In Irish, although the main surge of translation begins no earlier than the fifteenth century, a similar picture emerges. Again we find Bevis of Hampton, parts of the Charlemagne cycle, and the Seven Sages[3]. Translations of La Queste del Saint Graal also appear in English and Irish as well as in Welsh[4]. It appears, then, that apart from "popular tale" material represented by Vita Amici et Amelii and the Seven Sages, the bulk of secular narrative in translation was based on French or Anglo-Norman originals. This fact points to some connection between the surge of vernacular writing and the supremacy of French culture. The so-called "twelfth century renaissance" in all branches of the arts, including literature, had gained

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1 See J. Gwenogvryn Evans (ed.) Kymdeithas Amlyn ac Amic, preface, and H. Lewis (ed.), Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein, p. 16.

2 See Allen Rogers Benham, English Literature from Widsith to the death of Chaucer (New Haven 1916), p. 515.

3 Compare Chapter 2.

4 See below, pp. 74-75.

France international cultural pre-eminence. As Bernhard Bischoff has pointed out[1], French for a time enjoyed similar status to that of Latin as an international language in Europe. Access to the language means access to the literature, and if the foreign language has acquired a certain cultural status and universality, then this can lead to a certain amount of cultural domination. The close contacts that existed between Wales and France have already been pointed out, but it must be stressed that French influence was felt all over Western Europe. It is this French domination of European letters that must account, at least in part, for the choice of so much French material in translation into the languages of the British Isles, including Welsh. For those who considered themselves educated or cultured, familiarity with French literature would be important, and if one's French was inadequate for the purpose, then a translation was the next best thing.

Amongst the French texts that were translated into other European languages, including Welsh, were those with Arthurian matter like Y Seint Greal itself. Whatever were the immediate origins of the matter of Britain in French romances, there is no doubt that Wales's own pre-existing traditions about Arthur were gradually extended and adapted to incorporate the newer continental developments. This process probably began as early as the late twelfth century, as witness the romances of Gereint, Peredur and Owein[2]. The translator of Y Seint Greal was not, therefore, breaking entirely fresh ground by producing a Welsh version of Continental Arthurian material. If the wide dissemination of French Arthurian material is considered, the existence of versions of the romances of Chrétien de Troyes, for example, in Italian, Spanish, Dutch, English, Icelandic and the Scandinavian languages[3], it would be surprising indeed if the Welsh had not produced their own

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[1] "Foreign Languages in the Middle Ages", Speculum xxvi (1961), pp. 209ff.

[2] See Chapter 2, p. 23.

[3] Accounts of these are given in ALMA, Chapters 31, 32, 34, 35, 37.

versions. The Grail romances, no less than the rest, were translated into a number of languages from the thirteenth century onwards. In Dutch, for example, parts of the Vulgate Cycle and of Chrétien's Conte del Graal were translated between the mid thirteenth and early fourteenth centuries[1], whilst from the thirteenth century onwards, portions of the Vulgate Cycle appeared in the Hispanic languages[2]. Focusing on the immediate sources of Y Seint Greal, we find that the Perlesvaus, curiously, was not, as far as is known today, translated into any language except Welsh, for no traces of any other translation have been found. The Queste, by contrast, gave rise to a Dutch version in the early fourteenth century[3], to Spanish and Portuguese ones by the fifteenth century[4], as well as those in English, Irish and Welsh. It is possible that the Perlesvaus simply never enjoyed the same success as the Queste. This conclusion is also suggested by the number of surviving manuscripts of each. Although such evidence is unreliable, due to the random nature of manuscript survival, the contrast between a mere half-dozen manuscripts of the Perlesvaus and well over forty of the Queste del Saint Graal is significant. Considering the proximity of England, Ireland and Wales, it might be wondered if there were any connection between the versions of the Queste produced there, particularly in case Y Seint Greal could have been influenced by an Irish or an English version. However, in English the only extant version of the Queste is Malory's Tale of the Sankgreal[5], which being of the mid-fifteenth century is far too late to have had any influence on our Welsh text. In Irish the Queste was translated, but the Lorgaireacht an tSoidhigh Naomtha[6] was written only a little earlier

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1 H. Sparnaay, "The Dutch Romances", ALMA, pp. 444ff.

2 M.R.L. de Malkiel, "Arthurian Literature in Spain and Portugal", ALMA, pp. 408ff.

3 H. Sparnaay, ALMA, p. 444.

4 M.R.L. de Malkiel, ALMA, pp. 407-10.

5 Sir Thomas Malory, Works (ed. E. Vinaver, Oxford 1967), vol.2, pp. 847-935).

6 Ed. Sheila Falconer (Dublin 1953).

than the Tale of the Sankgreal. However, all three versions, the English, Irish and the Welsh, seem to be based on versions different from those represented by the surviving French manuscripts. The editor of the Lorgaireacht states that the Irish romance is a "unique version", which "seems closer to the archetype of the manuscripts than any other extant copy"[1], whilst Vinaver in his edition of Malory's works claims that the actual text used by him for the Tale of the Sankgreal is not to be found in any of the extant manuscripts and is not even completely close to either of the two main groups of Queste manuscripts[2]. As we have already seen in Chapter 1 that the first part of Y Seint Greal was not based directly on any existing French manuscript version, there is a possibility that all three translations made in the British Isles were based on copies of the same version. Examination of the texts themselves, and comparison of significant variants, however, proves that this cannot be so. Moreover, although Malory, like the translator of Y Seint Greal, was working from a French text, this does not seem to be true of the Lorgaireacht, for the editor has concluded, mainly on linguistic evidence, that the Irish text was probably based on a lost English version pre-dating Malory[3]. However, even if there is no direct connection between the three translations, the very existence of Malory's Tale of the Sankgreal and of the Lorgaireacht an tSoidhigh Naomtha does indicate that the Queste was circulating widely in the British Isles, not just in Wales, so that the production of a translation of such a text need not surprise us.

Nonetheless, even if Continental material in general, and Grail romances in particular, were circulating and being translated in Wales and outside throughout the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, this in itself does not fully explain why the Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal in particular

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1 Sheila Falconer, Lorgaireacht an tSoidhigh Naomtha, pp. vii, xi.

2 Vol. 3, pp. 1521ff.

3 Lorgaireacht, pp. xix-xxxi. However, see review by Rachel Bromwich, Medium Aevum, xxv, No. 2 (1957), pp. 92-95.

were chosen, nor does it account for their being treated as two parts of a single entity, when these particular French romances were not normally associated with each other in the manuscript tradition and were not, as far as is known today, translated together in this way at any other time. The difficulties caused by combining the Perlesvaus and Queste are so great that the choice of these two texts for the purpose of translation is one of the major problems posed by Y Seint Greal, yet there can be no doubt that the translator did think of them as two parts of a whole. The complete text is referred to as "ystoryaeu seint greal" (SG 433.31), whilst the Queste is described as "y rann gyntaf or greal" (SG 170.16). In the same way, one of the opening lines of the Perlesvaus, "Li hauz livres du Graal commence o non du Pere e du Fill e du Saint Esperit" (Per 8-9) is adjusted accordingly to "Erann honn yr ydys yn y dechreu yn enw y tat ar mab ar yspryt glan" (SG 171.13-14). Moreover, the translator, as we shall see in Chapter 7, has made some small adjustments in order to reduce the contradictions between the two sections, which he would not have done if he had wished simply to present them as separate romances linked by a common theme.

Before we consider the advantages and disadvantages of choosing these two romances and of presenting them as parts of a single whole, the relationship of the Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal must be established. The Queste, of course, forms part of the Vulgate Cycle of French Arthurian romances, and was dated by Pauphilet around 1220[1]. Although, like the other romances that form the Vulgate Cycle, it contributes to the larger fabric of this whole, it can still be read and understood apart from the Cycle, in as much as it conforms to what was, by the early thirteenth century, a well-developed Arthurian framework. The Perlesvaus, however, is quite distinct from the Vulgate Cycle. With the exception of manuscripts O and Ac, mentioned in Chapter 1, the manuscript tradition does not associate the Perlesvaus with the Queste, or indeed with any other part of the Vulgate

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[1] A. Pauphilet, Études sur la Queste del Saint Graal, p. 11, Queste, p. iii.

Cycle. Nevertheless, it has been suggested that the Perlesvaus once formed part of a cyclic composition[1]. The romance opens with the situation following Perlesvaus's first Grail failure and the redactor assumes familiarity with that earlier episode in the hero's career, so that it is possible, at least in theory, that there was once a preceding romance. However, all the information necessary for filling in the background to the opening episodes of the Perlesvaus could be acquired by even a cursory reading of Chrétien's Conte del Graal, which was certainly well-known by the early thirteenth century, as witness the Continuations. The possibility of a sequel to the Perlesvaus is raised by the colophon found only in the Brussels manuscript, which mentions a further series of adventures:

> "Apres iceste estoire conmence li contes si conme brians des illes guerpi li rois artus por lanc' que il namoit mie et conme il laseura li rois claudas qui le roi ban de benoic toli sa terre. Si parole cist contes conment il le conquist et par quel maniere et si com galobrus de la uermeille lande uint a la cort le rois artus por aidier lanc'.Quar il estoit de son lignage.Cist contes est mout lons et mout auentureus et poisanz.Mes li liures sen tera ore atant trusqua vne autre foiz".[2]

This, however, is the only evidence we have for such a sequel. It may be that a further romance was intended, but either was never written or has not survived. The former seems the preferable explanation, since apart from this colophon in a single manuscript there is no evidence at all to suggest that such a sequel ever existed.

Many scholars have centred their arguments on the relationship between the Perlesvaus and Queste around the question of dating, trying to establish which of the two romances was the earlier. Pauphilet suggested a date around 1220 for the Queste, since the romance was clearly later than Robert de Boron's Joseph but earlier than Manessier, whose Continuation of the Perceval draws on the Queste[3]. This has been generally accepted, although J.N. Carman

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[1] See for example Thomas Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal: Perlesvaus.A Structural Study (Geneva 1974), pp 24-25.

[2] Nitze, vol.i, p. 409.

[3] See above, note 1, p. 76.

claimed that the Queste was roughly contemporary with the Estoire del Saint Graal, and since he held that the Chronicle of Helinandus, which has been widely thought to refer to the Estoire, was written between 1211 and 1223, he suggested a date of 1210-15 for both the Estoire and Queste. Since he was convinced that the Perlesvaus predated the Queste, this gave him a date before 1210 for the Perlesvaus[1]. There is, however, considerable disagreement on the dating of Helinandus's Chronicle, for here again little reliable evidence has survived and any dating can only be tentative. As the last entry in the Chronicle is dated 1204, and mentions the fall of Constantinople only very briefly, J.F.D. Blöte concluded that Helinandus stopped work on the chronicle that year, before a detailed account of the event could reach him[2]. Blöte argues that had Helinandus known of Baldwin's becoming emperor later that year, he would have mentioned it, judging by his practice in the rest of the chronicle. As the last two books of the chronicle, numbers 48 and 49, were written in the same year, according to Helinandus himself, Blöte calculates that book 45, which contains the famous Grail reference, must have been written in 1203. It is unlikely that the Grail reference is a later interpolation, for if it had been added later, Helinandus would surely have added further details of such a momentous event as the fall of Constantinople. Scholars such as Frappier, Payen, Marx and Kelly have suggested that the Grail reference alludes not to the Estoire but to the Perlesvaus[3], arguing that the description of the tale being told to a hermit in a vision fits the latter romance more

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1 J.N. Carman, "The Relationship of the Perlesvaus and the Queste del Saint Graal", Bulletin of the University of Kansas, Humanistic Studies, v, no. 4, (1936), pp. 9ff. In his edition of the Perlesvaus (vol. ii, p. 83), Nitze expressed dissatisfaction with Pauphilet's dating but did not pursue the matter.

2 For Helinandus's Chronicle, see Migne, Patrologia Latina, vol. 212, for the Grail reference see cols. 814-15. For dating see J.F.D. Blöte, ZrP, xlviii (1928), pp. 679-94. Compare E. Brugger in ZFrSL, liii (1930), pp. 149ff., J.F.D. Blöte, ZFrSL, lv (1932), pp. 91ff. See also Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, p. 14; J. Frappier, Étude sur la Mort le Roi Artu (Paris 1936), pp. 136-38; J.N. Carman, "The Relationship of the Perlesvaus and the Queste", pp. 9-10; F. Lot, Études sur le Lancelot en Prose (Paris 1918), pp. 136ff.

3 See Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, p. 14.

exactly. This would imply, of course, that the Perlesvaus is a much earlier composition than most critics have thought hitherto, but both the dating of Helinandus's Chronicle and the identification of the Perlesvaus with the romance mentioned are based on probability rather than fact, and can be taken as no more than likely hypotheses. Even Kelly, keen as he is to accept both these propositions, ultimately avoids declaring for a particular date of composition for the Perlesvaus.

It has generally been accepted that the Glastonbury exhumation of the supposed remains of Arthur and Guinevere provides a terminus a quo for the Perlesvaus, for Lancelot's visit to Guinevere's tomb at Avalon (Per 7569ff.) suggests that the author knew of the exhumation and was consciously making use of the idea that the king and queen were buried there[1]. This conclusion is supported by a second reference in a closing paragraph in both the Oxford and the Brussels manuscripts. This states that "Li latins de cui cist estoires fu tretiez en romanz (fu pris) en l'Isle d'Avalon en une sainte meson de religion qui siét au chief des Mares Aventurex, la o li rois Artuz e la roïne gisent.." (Per 10188-90). However, the exact date of the exhumation itself is uncertain. 1191 has been accepted by many scholars in the past, including Nitze, but more recently Karl Heinz Göller has shown that the early sources give dates ranging from 1184 to 1191, and argues that the most reliable accounts are those that give 1189[2].

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[1] See Nitze's edition, vol. ii, pp. 45-72. Compare Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, pp. 9-10. Kelly criticises Nitze's interpretation of the Perlesvaus as "Glastonbury propaganda"; compare R.S. Loomis, in his review of Nitze's edition (Romanic Review, xxix (1938), p. 175). Nitze suggests that the Perlesvaus might be the work of a Glastonbury cleric, his main argument resting on the description of Avalon (Per 7569ff.). But a visit to Glastonbury shows that the description could not have been written by a cleric living there, for the small church of St. Michael on the Tor (destroyed by the 1271 earthquake) has been confused with the more extensive abbey building. The summit of the Tor is too small to support an edifice of the dimensions described in the Perlesvaus. It is more likely that the redactor had seen Glastonbury some time before and retained confused memories, or else had seen or heard a description at second hand.

[2] Karl Heinz Göller, "Giraldus Cambrensis und der Tod Arthurs", Anglia, xci (1973), pp. 170-93.

For a terminus ad quem, the Brussels manuscript gives some indication. Its colophon states:

> "Por le seingnor de neele fist li seingnor de cambrein cest liure escrire q'onques mes ne fu troitiez que une seule foiz auec cestui en roumenz et cil qui auant cestui fust fez e(s)t si anteus qu'a grant poine an peust lan choissir la lestre"[1].

The information that has been discovered about these two noblemen, both living in the first quarter of the thirteenth century, has been summarised by Nitze in his edition[2]. Opinion is divided on the date at which this manuscript was commissioned. A terminus ad quem in 1212 is preferred by those who feel that the Seigneur de Cambrein would not commission a book for Jean de Nesle after the latter had begun to serve Philip Augustus in that year. Nonetheless, although Jean de Nesle's Flemish connections were weakened after 1212, he did not give up his Flemish possessions until 1225, so it is possible that the manuscript was commissioned at any time up till that date. If we are to believe the statement in the colophon that the copy used by the scribe was "si anteus" then even if an exact date were established for the Brussels manuscript a time gap would then have to be allowed between this and the date of the older manuscript. Once again, the evidence allows no precise dating.

So far, then, none of the arguments produced by scholars has done more than point to the Perlesvaus being written in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. Linguistic evidence, in French as in Welsh, cannot provide exact dating either, for linguistic changes are gradual and often the texts in which they first appear cannot themselves be dated more accurately than within a quarter of a century[3]. Another field of discussion has been the relationship of the Perlesvaus to other texts[4]. A number of thirteenth

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1 Nitze, vol. i, p. 409.

2 Nitze, vol. ii, pp. 73-81; compare also Carman, "The Relationship of the Perlesvaus and the Queste", pp. 14-15.

3 For the conclusions of Lucien Foulet and Paul Imbs on the language of the Perlesvaus, see Romania, lxxx (1959), p. 515; compare Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, p. 12.

4 See Nitze, vol. ii, pp. 81-82, 133-51.

century works have been shown to be drawing on the Perlesvaus, such as the prose version of Robert de Boron's Merlin, and Fouke le Fitz Waryn[1], but as no precise date can be established for these texts either, such evidence offers no help. However, not only romances known to post-date the Perlesvaus have been examined for dating purposes, but also those roughly contemporaneous, in particular those of the Vulgate Cycle. The chronology of the Prose Lancelot, Perlesvaus and Queste has caused much debate. Early scholars such as Bruce thought that the Perlesvaus was a late composition[2], but more recently J.N. Carman and Thomas Kelly have argued that it is the earliest of the three texts[3].

The relationship of the Perlesvaus to the Prose Lancelot will be examined first. Kelly discussed the well-known reference in the Prose Lancelot to the forthcoming Grail hero. Noting that Elspeth Kennedy has established that "Perlesvaus" or "Perceval" and not "Galaad" is the correct reading of the archetype, Kelly seems to see this as evidence that the Perlesvaus was already written beforehand[4]. However, it is just as possible that the redactor of the Perlesvaus was following the Prose Lancelot in his choice of Grail hero. The reference in the Prose Lancelot to "une branche del haut conte del Graal"[5] is equally inconclusive. It could mean that the redactor was referring to the Perlesvaus, or that the redactor of the Perlesvaus had borrowed the phrase, or indeed that the phrase implied a general body of Grail material of which each individual romance formed but one "branche". Carman, approaching the problem

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[1] The story of Cahus and the candlestick from Branch i of the Perlesvaus is borrowed in Fouke le Fitz Waryn, but unfortunately the most recent editors of the text, E.J. Hathaway, P.T. Ricketts, C.A. Robson and A.D. Wilshere (Oxford 1975) fail to identify the passage correctly: they state that it is derived from the Queste (p. 103 and note 60.2).

[2] For example, J.D. Bruce, The Evolution of Arthurian Romance (2nd ed., New York 1927), vol. ii, p. 165.

[3] See Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, p. 28.

[4] Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, p. 13. For the reference to the Grail hero, see Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. iii, p. 29.4-11.

[5] See B.M.MS Landsdowne 757, folio 164r.i, and B.N.f.fr. 751, folios 144-48. Compare Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, p. 30.

of the relationship of the Perlesvaus and Prose Lancelot from a different angle, undertook a detailed textual comparison of two passages, the capture of the Grail Castle in the Perlesvaus and the conquest of Dolorous Gard in the Lancelot[1], and concluded that the redactor of the Prose Lancelot was drawing on the Perlesvaus, which, Carman argued, must be earlier. Carman's arguments break down because he ignores the fact that any two accounts of a castle being taken are bound to have certain structural similarities, especially within a traditional framework such as an Arthurian one. There is no doubt that the relationship between these two texts has not been studied sufficiently closely as yet, and that firm conclusions must await the findings of such a study. In particular a detailed comparison is needed between the series of wars against Claudas and his personal hostility to Lancelot in each romance, together with a study of the theme of the love of Lancelot and Guinevere. As this theme is not resolved in the Prose Lancelot, it might seem reasonable to suppose that the Perlesvaus, where Guinevere dies of grief well before the other main themes begin to draw to a close, is later. In this case the Perlesvaus provides an alternative to what has since, perhaps due to the influence of the Vulgate Cycle, come to be regarded as definitive. In the same way, since Guinevere dies at this particular point, the Perlesvaus excludes the possibility of an ending on the lines of that in Geoffrey of Monmouth's Historia Regum Britanniae and the Vulgate Mort Artu. Since in the Prose Lancelot itself there is as yet no indication of the ultimate fate of the Arthurian world, it is possible that the Perlesvaus predated the Mort Artu. However, in considering all such questions it must be borne in mind that the redactor of the Perlesvaus appears to presuppose familiarity with a well established set of Arthurian conventions in order to use them in an entirely individual way. The treatment of the Grail theme and of the Fisher King in particular provide notable examples. This is especially important in the case of the Lancelot and Guinevere theme, since, setting aside the Prose

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[1] J.N. Carman, "The Conquests of the Grail Castle and Dolorous Guard", PMLA, lxxxv (1970), pp. 433-43.

Lancelot, we only know of two surviving Lancelot romances before the thirteenth century, Chrétien's Chevalier de la Charrette and the Lanzelet of Ulrich von Zatzikhoven[1], neither of which has the queen die at this early stage.

If the relationship of the Lancelot and the Perlesvaus has yet to be thoroughly examined, the order of composition of the Perlesvaus and Queste del Saint Graal has been debated by scholars since the late nineteenth century. A. Birch-Hirschfeld, A. Nutt, F. Lot, M. Lot-Borodine, J.D. Bruce and A. Pauphilet all urged that the Queste was written first, whilst E. Brugger, Gaston Paris, W. Nitze, Jessie Weston and J.N. Carman, like Thomas Kelly, have argued that the Perlesvaus is the earlier[2]. Various arguments have been put forward, but one of the main bones of contention has been the different treatment of narrative elements common to both. Taking these as a whole, some scholars have felt that the more "sophisticated" Queste, with its more closely knit structure, must predate the Perlesvaus, which in many cases uses the same basic material but, they believe, less skilfully. Opponents of such a view, notably J.N. Carman, have argued that the different treatment of the material in the Perlesvaus is in fact a more "primitive" feature, and closer to the original source, so that the Perlesvaus must be the earlier of the two romances[3]. Clearly neither of these arguments can carry much weight on its own in dating the romances, for it is not possible to assume that either progress or decline in quality is a constant factor in the development of literature.

A point which seems to carry more weight is the identity of the Grail hero. At first sight, at least, it seems more probable that once the Queste

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[1] Chrétien's Chevalier de la Charrette is dated between 1177 and 1179 or 1181 by J. Frappier, ALMA, p. 159, but the traditional dating of Chrétien's romances has been challenged by Claude Luttrell in The Creation of the First Arthurian Romance (London 1974). Lanzelet is dated 1194 or soon after by H. Sparnaay, ALMA, p. 436, note 6 and p. 437.

[2] The views of these scholars are summarised and full references given in J.N. Carman, "The Relationship of the Perlesvaus and the Queste", pp. 7-8.

[3] J.N. Carman, "The Relationship of the Perlesvaus and the Queste", pp. 16ff., 40ff. Compare Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, pp. 11-12.

had made Galaad the hero, relegating Perceval to a supporting role, other writers would follow suit. Nevertheless, although it may not seem likely that the author of a Grail romance later than the Queste would revert to the earlier tradition, removing Galaad to reinstate Perceval, the possibility cannot be entirely ruled out[1]. This would appear to throw us back onto the external evidence for dating, which, as we have seen, is fraught with difficulties. Despite the efforts of scholars, then, the dating of the Perlesvaus and Queste and their relative chronology has remained uncertain and is likely to remain so, unless new evidence appears. However, the problem of the exact dating of the romances should not be allowed to overshadow the content and qualities of the texts themselves, as it has done in the past. Furthermore, critics have tended to assume that the redactor of the one must necessarily have been working with the other, earlier romance in mind, since the two texts share a number of common themes and narrative motifs. If the two romances were produced within a few years of each other, as the dating evidence suggests, there is no reason why this should be so. Since both redactors have used themes and motifs which were already popular and already formed part of the established Arthurian stock in trade, the existence of such elements in both need not imply that the redactor of one was drawing on the other alone. Once the theme of the Grail quest had been chosen, narrative patterns used in earlier romances would be obvious choices. It is precisely this overlap between the Perlesvaus and Queste that has not only bedevilled criticism but has also caused enormous difficulties for those attempting to publish the two romances together, from manuscripts O and Ac to Y Seint Greal and the Black Letter edition.

At every point in comparing the Perlesvaus and Queste del Saint Graal, whatever aspects are examined, it becomes immediately apparent that the close similarities serve only to underline the contradictions between them. The most important of these, in terms of ideas and outlook, will be examined in Chapter

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[1] Compare Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, pp. 11-12.

5, so that here we shall concentrate instead on differences in the use of the same basic narrative elements.

The most important example is the nature and use of the Grail and Grail quest, which provide the main narrative themes in both the Perlesvaus and Queste. The significance of the Grail itself in each romance will be discussed in Chapter 5, so only its structural role need be considered here. In both romances the redactor recounts the progress of the Grail hero, and of a few other important knights, in their search for the Grail, but the treatment is totally different in each. The Grail hero is not the same; Perlesvaus or Perceval is superseded by Galaad in the Queste but retained in the Perlesvaus. In the Queste the conclusion of the Grail quest itself means the conclusion of the knights' adventures and the end of the romance, whereas in the Perlesvaus the Grail victory takes place only three-fifths of the way through the romance, the aftermath of this success being as important as the events leading up to it. The instigation of the quest is also quite different in each. As we noted earlier, the redactor of the Perlesvaus assumes that the audience is familiar with the Conte del Graal of Chrétien de Troyes. The reader is expected to know of the hero's Grail failure at his first visit to the Grail Castle, for it is this failure that has caused the decline of Arthur's court at the beginning of the romance. The action is then finally set off by Guinevere persuading Arthur to rouse himself from his apathy. In the Queste, however, the Grail quest is announced at a point where the Arthurian world is continuing apparently much as ever when suddenly certain circumstances are brought about which make the Grail quest inevitable: the knighting of Galaad and the fulfilment of various prophecies which can only lead to the Grail quest being announced and taken up. The consequences of the successful completion of the quest are also different in the two romances. In the Queste it is made clear, even when the Grail quest is first announced at Arthur's court, that although this will prove the highest adventure ever proposed there, it will also spell the end for that court[1]. In the Perlesvaus,

[1] Queste, pp. 17-21.

on the other hand, whilst there is no doubt that the court can never return to the heights of fame and achievement which it had reached before Perlesvaus's Grail failure, the hero's later success does lift the the Arthurian world out of its decadence and apathy. Unlike the Queste, the Perlesvaus gives no sense of impending disaster. It is true that Claudas and Brien des Illes still constitute a serious threat, but for the moment the Arthurian world is in the ascendant. The note of optimism with which the romance ends is confirmed by the Brussels manuscript's colophon, which promises in a sequel the final defeat of the enemy by Lancelot and his kinsman, Galobrus.

At every point the redactors of the two romances appear to have built completely different edifices on very similar foundations. The major theme of the love of Lancelot and Guinevere which appears in each is treated in a different fashion. Not only does Guinevere in the Perlesvaus take an active role in the world and then die of grief at the death of their son, whilst in the Queste she remains a living but shadowy figure throughout, but also Lancelot's attitude to her differs. In the Queste he is prevailed upon to completely renounce and repent of his love for her, in order to achieve some success in the Grail quest, whereas in the Perlesvaus he refuses to do so under any circumstances, and yet is still able to remain the most valued and respected of Arthur's knights: the treatment of Lancelot inevitably hinges on the choice of the Grail hero, for if Galaad is chosen, then Lancelot must be seen to be at the same time inferior to his son but also of sufficient merit to be the father of such a knight. Apart from such themes in common, we also find certain episodes or motifs appearing in both romances, but in different guises, and with different functions and significance. Obvious examples, which have been discussed at great length by J.N. Carman[1], are the theft of the candlestick by Cahus in the Perlesvaus and of the crown by Melyant in the Queste, and the use of the magic ship motif, employed exclusively for the hero in the Perlesvaus, but used repeatedly by a number of

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[1] J.N. Carman, "The Relationship of the Perlesvaus and the Queste", pp. 40ff.

different persons in the Queste, and there imbued with important spiritual significance.

Hitherto the negative aspects of the choice of texts have been stressed, the problems of inconsistency that arise from bringing together the Perlesvaus and Queste, so we should now consider what the motivation could have been in choosing these two particular texts for translation into Welsh in this manner. In Chapter 1 we noted the existence of two manuscript fragments combining part of the Perlesvaus with the Queste, and of the Black Letter edition, where these two romances are combined with the Estoire del Saint Graal, and a number of possible explanations were put forward for the choice of romances for the early printed edition. As no evidence survives beyond the mere existence of these versions, it is perhaps fruitless to build up unproveable hypotheses as to the redactors' motivations, particularly since this may have been different in each case. However, it is worth considering in the case of Y Seint Greal that in commissioning the translation Hopcyn ap Thomas may well have been governed in his choice of texts simply by what was available to him personally. On the other hand, such evidence as survives to indicate what French literature was circulating in Wales does suggest that Hopcyn could, in theory at least, have had access to texts other than Grail romances[1], but in that case the popularity of Grail literature may have influenced his choice. Let us, therefore, consider what advantages, if any, there could be in choosing the Perlesvaus and Queste and treating them as two parts of a single whole.

Both romances, of course, recount the successful completion of the Grail quest by a predestined hero. From a literary point of view it is interesting to see different developments of the same basic theme, and different possibilities and interpretations of the Grail theme, for example, may give added pleasure to the reader. Many French Arthurian romances of the same period overlap or parallel each other, and there is no reason to suppose that more than one version of one basic narrative structure was not enjoyed by the

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[1] See appendix 3.

same audience. By the thirteenth century, when the genres of courtly and Arthurian romances were firmly established, French audiences may well have enjoyed drawing comparisons between the various adventures of different characters and discussing the significance of separate developments of the same theme, in the same way as they discussed problems of courtoisie that arose in lyric poetry and in romance. Even within one romance the same narrative patterns could reappear with various twists, or in a number of different romances written by the same man. Chrétien provides excellent examples of the last case; one notable instance is the sequence found in Erec, Yvain and Le Conte del Graal, where the hero, incognito, is attacked by Keu, who is defeated, and the hero is then won over, identified, and reintegrated with the court through the gentle and courteous persuasion of Gauvain[1]. Different adventures undertaken by the same hero, such as Perceval or Gauvain, are commonly found in separate romances and can have raised no serious problems; indeed the many, varied adventures of Gauvain in particular seem to have been very popular[2]. As far as a Welsh public is concerned, the long sequence of varied adventures in the romance of Peredur shows that such a phenomenon was acceptable. There the same narrative patterns are repeated so that the hero arrives at similar castles, fights similar human or monstrous opponents and forms a number of liaisons with women. This, of course, is very close to the technique of the oral storyteller where all the known adventures of a particular hero or heroine, and even variations on these, may be told as one single narrative whole to give a version that is as complete and, therefore, as "true" as possible. With the oral storyteller the inclusion of as much detail as possible is often claimed to be a sign of the authenticity and authority of the tale[3]. From this point of view, a Welsh public, familiar

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[1] W. Roach (ed.), Le Roman de Perceval (Geneva 1959), lines 4211-4602, Mario Roques (ed.), Le Chevalier au Lion (Yvain) (Paris 1960), lines 2224-2311, Mario Roques (ed.), Erec et Enide (Paris 1952), lines 3920-4192.

[2] See for example, A. Micha, "Miscellaneous French Romances in verse", ALMA, pp. 358ff.

[3] Compare K.G.T. Webster & R.S. Loomis (trans. & ed.), Ulrich von Zatzikhoven: Lanzelet (New York 1951), p. 9. For information on this subject I am also grateful to Mr Kilkenny of Pollatomish, Co. Mayo, formerly of the Irish Folklore Commission.

with oral tradition, or at least with native prose narrative literature still bearing the mark of oral transmission in places, may well have found nothing unacceptable in Y Seint Greal, where two different accounts of the Grail quest are presented as the first and second parts of a complete narrative, even though this may appear unsatisfactory to a modern eye.

Such a hypothesis can deal with structural difficulties but a further problem remains. The Christian ideas put forward so strongly in each have such a different emphasis that it has become a commonplace to state that the Perlesvaus gives Benedictine or Cluniac viewpoint, that of the crusading church militant, whilst the Queste, in total contrast, is imbued with Cistercian ideas, emphasising individual meditation and contemplation as the way to God, rather than mass conversion through conquest and force[1]. Moreover, men of religion are mostly encountered in an eremetic context in the Perlesvaus, whereas a monastic setting is usual in the Queste. Here again, however, it may be that the opposite views were seen as giving completeness, rather in the same way as the four different accounts of the life of Christ are given in the four Gospels. All four have the same basic narrative but each adds different details to this basis, so that in some cases minor contradictions arise, whilst some incidents are found only in one out of the four accounts. Perhaps the Perlesvaus and Queste were seen in a similar way: alone, each provided only part of the story, or one side of it, but together they formed a totality. Their different views of the aims and duties of the Christian simply represent two extremes, two sides of what is still the same coin, two possible modes of conduct that lead to the same end along different paths. In this case there is no need to adapt the two romances to make them compatible. Apart from a few minor adjustments, as we shall see in the course of this study, the Welsh translator has been content to present his two romances as the first and second part of the Grail story, without even adding a transition passage in between, but simply noting where the first ends and the second begins.

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[1] For a detailed account, see Nitze, vol. ii, pp. 82-89. See also below, Chapter 5.

An examination of the translator's treatment of the two French romances, in terms of both structure and themes or ideas, follows in the next two chapters.

Chapter 4: The Structure of La Queste del Saint Graal, Perlesvaus and Y Seint Greal

Like other mediaeval translators of foreign material into Welsh, the translator of Y Seint Greal has treated his material with greater freedom than would be acceptable today. Inevitably such treatment is likely to affect the structure of the original romances, and in the course of this chapter we must consider not only the consequences of translation on the overall shape of the material, but also whether the translator was conscious of the importance of the structure of the French romances. Their construction must be approached from two different directions. First the external form must be examined, that is, the divisions made in the material by the redactor or scribe, together with their use and significance, and then the development and cohesion of the narrative and themes within this framework. Our first task, therefore, must be to show how far the translator has kept the outward form of the French romances.

One of the most striking features of the Perlesvaus is its division into a number of "branches" of varying length. This division, apparently unique in French Arthurian romance, is observed in all the manuscripts and, furthermore, the beginning of each branch is marked by the use of a formula in the text so that we can assume that it was in the copy used by the translator and that it goes back to the redactor of the text in its present form. These formulae will be fully discussed later. The division seems to be closely related to the content, for the longer the branch, the more important its subject matter is likely to be. Thus the first five branches are short (between 110 and 560 lines of the Nitze edition), since their function is largely introductory, setting the scene for the main action, and depicting the adventures of other characters (Lancelot, Gauvain and Arthur) in preparation for the appearance of Perlesvaus himself. Apart from Branch vii, which is only about 500 lines in length, the remaining six branches are all long, between about 1,000 and 2,000 lines. This greater length seems to

match the increasing complexity and seriousness of the adventures related in these branches. The complexity also leads to a speeding up of the action, so that these branches form a strong contrast to the earlier ones where the movement is more leisurely, frequently interspersed with descriptive passages of greater length than those found in the latter part. The short Branch vii, which is exceptional amongst the last branches, can be seen as a kind of interlude in the action. The hero, Perlesvaus, has by now actually appeared, but at this stage he undertakes only comparatively minor adventures which serve chiefly to give some indication of his prowess and thus prepare for later action and raise our expectations of gallant deeds.

Turning to the Welsh text, we find that the translator has largely ignored this division into branches. The only important division for him is that between the first and second parts of Y Seint Greal, between the Perlesvaus and the Queste, these two sections making up the "ystoryaeu seint greal" (SG 433.31). At the end of the Queste section he writes, "Ac uelly y teruyna y rann gyntaf or greal.nyt amgen nor keis", and then gives a brief, and rather misleading note of what will be related in the second part:

> "Bellach dywedadwy yw o rann walchmei.ac o anturyeu y milwyr ual y kyfaruu ac wynt". (SG 170.17-19).

Although the second part begins with a reference to "Er ystorya honn" (SG 171.1), that could mean either the whole "ystorya", containing the two romances, or simply the "ystorya" of the second part alone, after this introductory passage the second paragraph begins with a quite unambiguous statement:

> "Erann honn yr ydys yn y dechreu yn enw y tat ar mab ar yspryt glan". (SG 171.13).

When the points at which the Perlesvaus divides into branches are compared in the Welsh, it is found that no word equivalent to "branche" is used, not even "rann" which was used to divide Y Seint Greal into its two major parts. As a rule the actual break is marked, but it is not distinguished from those within the individual branches. Thus the second part of the Welsh text, and indeed the first, is made up of a very large number of untitled sections

which may contain a part or the whole of an episode. These are marked in the Peniarth 11 manuscript by beginning a new paragraph, usually with a large red capital, and the Mostyn 184 copy of Peniarth 11 observes the same divisions. The break may also be marked by the use of formulae like, "Ema ymae yr ymdidan yn traethu ac yn dywedut vot arthur ynghaerllion.." (SG 190.21, corresponding to the beginning of Branch ii in the Perlesvaus) and "Dywedut y mae y kyfarwydyt.." (SG 220.33; beginning of Branch v), but these formulae, although similar to those in the Perlesvaus, are completely indistinguishable from others within a French "branche", as are the divisions that they mark. Some of the Welsh chapters begin with such formulae, others do not, and the formulae themselves seem to have a purely transitional function. Like phrases such as "Ore dist li contes.." or "Mes atant se taist li contes de.. et parole de.." in the French, they serve as signposts to the reader or listener that the focus is about to shift from one character and place to another[1].

In the Queste, unlike the Perlesvaus, divisions of the text are not referred to as "branches" but are nonetheless clearly marked. In the Queste manuscripts these are indicated by beginning a new paragraph with a large decorated capital, often preceded by a miniature illustrating one of the events to be recounted in the next section. Furthermore, each of the fifteen sections concentrates on one character or group of characters or a single theme. Thus the first section, which is introductory, sets off the action by describing the fulfilment of certain prophecies which can only lead to the announcement of the Grail quest. This section ends with the departure of the knights, and in each of the following branches the narrative focuses chiefly on the activities of a single knight. Galaad is the central figure

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[1] In only one case is the division between two branches ignored altogether: at the beginning of Branch vi, where at the equivalent place in the Welsh text there is no break at all; the point at which the French marks a break occurs in mid-paragraph and lacks even a transition formula, which is not essential here as the end of Branch v and the beginning of Branch vi both relate the adventures of Gauvain.
It should also be noted that the division between Branch vii and Branch viii would have been contained in the missing folio of Peniarth 11 (See below, p. 116).

in the second section, (Q 26.23-41.18), Gauvain in another (Q 51.17-55.32), followed by Lancelot (Q 56.1-71.28) then by Perceval (Q 71.29-115.29) and so on. In one case Gauvain and Hector share a section, for here they are given equal prominence, both are unsuccessful in the quest for similar reasons, and both experience, together, parallel visions to explain in what manner they are to fail. Finally the three Grail heroes are brought together after pursuing separate adventures (Q 195.18ff.) and from then on the sections concentrate on these three together, apart from one in which Perceval's sister tells the story of the Tree of Life (Q 210.29-226.8) and one in which Lancelot's partial revelation is related (Q 246.7-262.19). A final section is devoted to the conclusion of the quest, with the Grail liturgy at Corbenic and the death of Mordrain followed by the heroes' voyage to Sarras and finally Galaad's vision in the Grail (Q 262.20-280.5). There can be no doubt that these divisions in the text were made by the redactor, rather than being the work of the scribe, for, as the above analysis shows, they are directly linked to the subject matter. Moreover, the beginning and end of a section is marked by the use of formulae similar to those found in the Perlesvaus. For example, one section which has focussed on Lancelot ends, "Mes atant lesse ore li contes a parler de lui et retorne a Perceval" (Q 71.27-28), whilst the next begins, "Or dit li contes que quant Perceval se fu partiz de Lancelot, qu'il retorna a la recluse.." (Q 71.29-30). Sometimes these formulae include reminders of where the character to whom we are returning was last left. The account of Perceval's stay on the island, for example, ends with the following lines:

> "Mes a tant lesse ore li contes a parler de lui et retorne a Lancelot, qui ert remés chiés le preudome qui si bien li ot devisee la senefiance des trois paroles que la voiz li avoit dites en la chapele". (Q 115.26-29).

The next section can then begin:

> "Or dit li contes que trois jorz fist li preudons Lancelot demorer o lui" (Q 115.30-31),

without need for any further explanation. As in the Perlesvaus, these formulae bring the change of focus to our attention and help us to follow the development of the narrative.

In the first part of Y Seint Greal these formulae are always preserved.

The first section, for example, ends with words close to those in the Queste:

"Yma ymae yr ymdidan yn tewi y keis oll ac yn troi ar galaath. kanys pennaf oed ef onadunt wy" (SG 16.26-27, = Q 26.21-22).

The second section then opens with the following formula:

"E kyfarwydyt yssyd yn menegi gwedy ymwahanu or keissyeit. marchogaeth o galaath pedwar diwarnawt" (SG 16.28-30, = Q 26.23-24).

As with the branches of the Perlesvaus, the beginning of each new section is marked in manuscripts Peniarth 11 and Mostyn 184 by the use of a large coloured capital, but here again, in the first as in the second part of the translation, similar divisions may be made within such sections, so that the distinction between major and minor divisions is less obvious than in the original[1]. Moreover, in one case a major division in the Queste appears within a paragraph in Y Seint Greal. This may be a deliberate change on the part of the translator, since it occurs at a point where the change of focus is not as sharp as usual. Instead of moving from one particular knight to another who is elsewhere, the narrator ends one section at the point where Melyant has parted from Galaad to follow the more dangerous road at the crossroads (Q 41.17). The next section then continues with Melyant's experiences. Although the break is clearly marked by the use of formulae ("Mes atant lesse ore li contes de Galaad et parole de Melyant.."), the distinction between the two sections is far less than in any of the other cases in the Queste. Despite the parting of the two knights, the second section flows naturally out of the first, so that it may well have seemed preferable to the translator to treat the two sections as one, hence his failure to mark the division by a new paragraph. He still retains the transition formula, however (SG 27.3-6), but this is in keeping with his normal practice. For the translator, such formulae are not inseparable from major divisions as they are in the Queste. Accordingly they are sometimes introduced by the translator within a section, where the French has nothing equivalent. One such example is found when, after the death of Mordrain,

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[1] It should be noted, however, that such a clear distinction is not drawn in every one of the many Queste manuscripts.

a transition passage is introduced in the Queste to note that five years elapse before the next major event, when Boort rejoins Galaad and Perceval (Q 265.12-21). This pause in the action is marked more strongly in the translation, where the phrase "Ac yma y mae y kyuarwydyt yn traethu.." (SG 161.17) is used as well as a new paragraph. By not keeping rigidly to the major divisions marked in the Queste and the Perlesvaus and by abandoning the term "branche" used in the latter, the translator has reduced a major difference in the visible, external form of the two French romances, although this may not have been done deliberately. In Y Seint Greal as a whole the beginning of a new paragraph in the Welsh text does correspond roughly to a similar break in the French if a transitional formula is used. However, there are examples in the second part of a break being made and a new paragraph begun where this does not occur in the Perlesvaus, usually where the French introduces within a paragraph a formula normally used to mark a new paragraph (for example Per 5705, SG 308.15; Per 8517, SG 401.15). As far as the Queste is concerned, the division into paragraphs within each major section varies considerably from one manuscript to another, since the formulae, which stabilise such divisions in the Perlesvaus, are here restricted to the important breaks.

Although these formulae have a transitional function in both French romances, they also serve to stress the authority of the text, a standard topos in mediaeval romance. Where the narrative shifts from one character to another, for instance, reference is often made, as in the examples already quoted, to the contes or estoires of which the present book, it is implied, is a faithful copy. The phrases used in the Perlesvaus are usually of the following kind: "Cis haut estoires de coi cis contes muet nos dit que.." (Per 3873),"Cist haut estoire nos tesmoigne et recorde que..." (Per 3187). In the Queste, however, this aspect is not stressed so much, and the formulae are usually of the following type: "Si lesse ore li contes a parler d'ax et retorne a Lancelot" (Q 246.4-5). The weight of authority is reserved for the

concluding lines[1]. Phrases like "Or dist li contes" appear only at the beginning of sections in the Queste but in the Perlesvaus they are found both at the beginning of branches and within them, usually marking a new paragraph but occasionally appearing also within a paragraph, when they should perhaps be regarded simply as a feature of the author's style. The frequency with which such formulae occur in the Perlesvaus indicates that they have a stylistic value rather than being necessary for giving authority to statements that require support. Whereas in the Queste they are restricted to major divisions of the text, a startling number of such formulae is found in the Perlesvaus[2]. In general these are retained by the Welsh translator. The few cases of omission occur where the formula has no transitional value but is simply interpolated, perhaps in mid-sentence, as in the following examples:

"Lanceloz, ce dit li contes, ne se volt desarmer.." (Per 4599; SG 295).
"Josephes nos dist c'a icel tans.." (Per 6506; SG 345).

As a rule the translator keeps close to the meaning in these phrases so that "Josephes nos recorde por verité que onques mes n'entra en la chapele.." (Per 5132-33) is rendered "Ioseph yssyd yn tystolyaethu na doeth dyn eiryoet yr capel.." (SG 309.27), and "Cist contes dit que li rois Artus s'en vait" (Per 6394) becomes "Ema y mae y kyuarwydyt yn menegi varchogaeth o arthur.." (SG 342.13). Similarly in the Queste "Mes a tant se test ore li contes de lui, et retorne a monseignor Gauvain" (Q 51.14-16) becomes "Yma y mae y kyfarwydyt yn tewi am galaath ac yn trossi ar walchmei" (SG 34.7-8). Variations that do occur are minor (such as "Iosep" for "li contes", SG 193.37, Per 693), and do not alter the basic meaning.

The Welsh redactor makes use of a far greater variety of terms in translating these phrases than is found in the French. In the Perlesvaus, where the reference to authority is not made directly to "Josephes", either "li contes" or "li estoires" is used; in the Queste "li contes" alone appears. Both these words are used in a similar fashion in Arthurian romance from

[1] See below, p. 99.

[2] Over eighty examples are found in the Perlesvaus compared with fifteen in the Queste.

Chrétien de Troyes onwards, and both can refer to a written source, as here. Unlike the redactor of the Queste, the narrator in the Perlesvaus is keen to distinguish between his written source, that gives all the force of learned authority to his narrative, and the oral traditions. In mentioning Camaalot, the home of Perlesvaus's mother, he differentiates between this and the same name in the tradition of the oral versions: "Seignor, ne cuidiez mie que ce soit cil Camaalos donc cil conteor content, la o li rois Artus tenoit si sovent sa cort" (Per 7280-81). In both parts of Y Seint Greal, estoires and contes are translated quite indiscriminately by ymadrawd, ymdidan, ystorya or kyfarwydyt, apparently purely in the interest of variety. Ymdidan is used most frequently in both, followed in the Perlesvaus section by ystorya and kyfarwydyt, and in the Queste section by kyfarwydyt alone. Ymdidan and ymadrawd are rather vague terms; perhaps the nearest French equivalent is récit. Kyfarwydyt is found in early Welsh prose, notably in the Pedeir Keinc, where it refers to the source. This is generally agreed to denote at that date a tale delivered orally, probably by a professional story-teller or kyfarwyd[1]. Consequently, it is not found in the rather later, more complex tales like the three Arthurian romances. However, by the time Y Seint Greal was completed the "oral tale" nuance of kyfarwydyt may well have been lost or weakened, and the word come to mean a story in general, although perhaps retaining the implication of a certain tradition behind it, whether oral or written. Turning to the use of ystorya in the Perlesvaus, we find it was used in Peredur to refer to the source, though again whether oral or written is not clear from the context[2]. However, Brynley Roberts has unravelled some of the meanings of this word by examining its use in a number of different contexts[3], and he has shown that it was used in Middle Welsh to refer to a

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1 See PKM p. 103, TYP pp. lxxxiii-lxxxvi, but compare Patrick Ford, "The Poet as Cyfarwydd in Early Welsh Tradition", Studia Celtica vol. x (1975), pp. 152-62.

2 "Ac y gwledychwys peredur gyt ar amherodres pedeir blyned ar dec megys y dyweit yr ystorya" (WM col. 165).

3 BBCS vol. xxvi (1974), pp. 13-20.

variety of texts, but in general for a written work, particularly a history or chronicle of any kind. He concludes, "Enw ar destun sy'n adrodd hanes, neu sy'n draethiad yw ystoria"[1]. As such it implies a considerable degree of authority and is therefore entirely suitable for Y Seint Greal. The lack of examples of ystoria in the first part of the Welsh text may not be significant. It is possible that on reaching the Perlesvaus, with its extremely numerous transition formulae, the translator felt obliged to find another term in addition to those already in use, for the sake of variety.

Although the verb most commonly used in these contexts in the second part of the translation is the banal yn dywedut, traethu is also frequently employed, this verb having much the same implications as ystoria and so suiting this context. Comparison of the terms used in equivalent cases in the Queste section yields similar results, traethu and dywedut are still the most commonly used verbs in these formulae[2].

Although as a rule the translator keeps reasonably close to the original in the repeated transition formulae in both parts of Y Seint Greal, this is not true of the conclusion of the Queste, where the only detailed reference to the origins and the authority of the text is found. This passage tells how the account of the Grail quest, written down from Boort's dictation, was kept "en l'almiere de Salebieres dont Mestre Gautier Map les trest a fere son livre del Seint Graal por l'amor del roi Henri son seignor, qui fist l'estoire translater de latin en françois" (Q 280.1-3). References to an English king who conducted several campaigns against the Welsh would hardly be acceptable to a Welshman in the years preceding the Glyndwr rebellion[3], so it need not surprise us to find them expunged. The abbey of

[1] loc. cit., p. 16.

[2] In the second part of Y Seint Greal the distribution is as follows:: ymdidan, 27 examples, (h)ystorya 15 (ystoryaeu 1), kyvarwydyt 14, ymadrawd 4, (ymadrodyon 1); dywit/dywedut 27 examples, traethu 17, tystolyaethu 9, menegi 4, hyspyssu 3, med 2, dwyn ar gof 2. In the first part we find: ymdidan 13 examples, kyfarwydyt 8, ymadrawd 1; traethu 9, dywedut 3, ymdidanwyd 1, menegi 1, trossaf 1, deallaf 1.

[3] Henry II conducted campaigns in 1157, 1163 and 1165 against Owain Gwynedd and against the Lord Rhys of Deheubarth. See, for example, J.E. Lloyd, History of Wales vol. ii, pp. 505-22.

"Salebieres" too, is abandoned, to be replaced by a more familiar name from Welsh tradition:

> "Agwedy daruot gwneuthur ac ysgriuennu anturyeu y greal o gwbyl. wynt aanuonet y ynys auallach oe cadw". (SG 170.14-16)[1].

In contrast, the translator renders quite faithfully the statement at the beginning of the Perlesvaus concerning the origins and authority of the story. The opening lines of the Perlesvaus state that "Josephes le mist en remenbrance par la mencion de la voiz d'un angle, por ce que la veritez fust seüe par son escrit et par son tesmoignage" (Per 3-5), and "de Dieu si muet li hauz contes du Graal" (Per 10). The translation has retained this with little alteration as "Ioseph ae hysgrifennawd drwy orchymun angel or nef.kanys duw a vynnawd gwybot gwirioned drwy y ysgrifennyat ef am y damwein hwnnw" (SG 171.5-7), and "Ac o duw y kychwynnawd ystorya seint greal" (SG 171.15-16). Further detail is given later in the text, where one of the transition formulae states that Josephes wrote the tale in Latin and that the writer of the present version turned it into French, although it is not clear whether it is the present redactor who is claiming responsibility for the translation:

> "Josefes nos dist par l'escriture qui le nos recorde, de coi cist estoires fu traitiez de latin en romanz, que.." (Per 8865).

Again this is faithfully preserved in the Welsh:

> "Ioseus yssyd yn hyspyssu yr hwnn a drosses yr ystorya honn o ladin yn ffranghec.." (SG 412.3).

However, at the end of the romance the translator omits the only other detailed reference to the source as a French translation from Latin. Where the Perlesvaus has "Li latins de cui cist estoires fu tretiez en romanz (fu pris) en l'isle d'Avalon en une sainte meson de religion qui siét au chief des Mares Aventurex, la o li rois Artuz e la roïne gisent" (Per 10, 188-90), the Welsh just gives vague references to the ystorya and Joseph, as he brings his narrative to a rather hurried close, forestalling any demands for further information with phrases like, "ny wybuwyt med ef (=Ioseph) o

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[1] The earliest Welsh reference to Ynys Afallach is found in the early 13th century manuscript of Brut Dingestow, but Afallach is attested as a personal name in the genealogies. See TYP pp. 266-68.

hynny allan un geir y wrthaw y mywn ystorya or byt", (SG 432.35-36), before concluding: "Ac weldyma y chwi yr hynn hyspyssaf a giglefi y wrth lys brenhin peleur.Ac uelly y teruyna ystoryaeu seint greal" (SG 433.29-31). Had the translator retained this reference to Avalon, then both parts of Y Seint Greal would have been in agreement for once, since at the end of the first part "auallach" is substituted for "Salebieres". However, instead of using this to link the two Grail stories, the translator omits this part of the conclusion of the Perlesvaus, failing to take an opportunity of reducing the inconsistencies between the two parts of his work. Although haste may be the prime reason for altering the conclusion of the Perlesvaus, it is also possible that the references to the burying of Arthur and Guinevere were unacceptable to the translator, since they suggest that the disappearance of Arthur from the world is final.

Structurally this ending of the second part of Y Seint Greal provides an interesting contrast to the Perlesvaus, quite apart from the abridgement of the last episodes. The Welsh text breaks off the narrative at the point where Lancelot has been freed from prison, and Brien, furious at this development, goes off to join Claudas in a new alliance against Arthur. Then the translator rushes on to the concluding passage telling of the Grail Castle gradually falling into ruins, and the conversion of the two Welsh knights who find it. This means that the Claudas-Brien-Arthur-Lancelot conflict is nowhere near resolved. On the contrary, since Brien is last seen going to join Claudas, one expects to hear of a new campaign. The French text, on the other hand, brings the sealed heads theme from the first branch to a satisfactory conclusion, motivates and describes in detail the events leading up to Perlesvaus's departure, to the Isle Plenteurose, whilst bringing the Lancelot-Claudas theme to a point where peace is temporarily restored and Lancelot fully reinstated in Arthur's favour. It is true that one is left with the impression that this conflict is not finally resolved and may break out again, but nevertheless, this is still a far more satisfactory point at which to stop than that chosen by the Welsh writer. It is paradoxical,

therefore, that Y Seint Greal should make its concluding paragraph so final, precluding any possibility of a sequel, whereas at the point where the Oxford manuscript of the Perlesvaus breaks off, the Brussels manuscript adds a colophon promising a continuation of the Lancelot-Claudas series of adventures. This colophon has led some critics to suggest that the Perlesvaus could once have formed part of a cyclic composition[1]. An analysis of the variants from the manuscripts of the Perlesvaus has shown that the Welsh version is closer to that of the Oxford manuscript than to that of the Brussels manuscript[2], so that it is most likely that the copy used by the translator did not contain the colophon and that he was unaware of this possible continuation. Nonetheless, the Perlesvaus is not a complete, independent text for the Welshman either, for he sees it as forming a whole in conjunction with the Queste del Saint Graal which precedes it in his translation.

Having considered the external appearance of the Perlesvaus, Queste and Y Seint Greal, we must now turn to the internal construction of the texts. Here an analysis will be necessary of the way the French romances themselves are constructed, before the significance of any changes in the Welsh translation can be fully appreciated. La Queste del Saint Graal poses few problems structurally, and has been the subject of so many studies from the publication of Pauphilet's Études sur la Queste del Saint Graal onwards, that no more than a short summary will be necessary here. In the opening section, the common topos of Arthur holding court at Pentecost is used to introduce the events leading up to the Queste. Once Galaad has been knighted and then presented at court, the stage is set for the fulfilment of certain conditions and prophecies leading up to the announcement of the Grail quest and the departure of the knights. From then on the narrative concentrates on the progress of each of the chief knights in turn, following their progress through a series of tests until finally the three who are destined to succeed

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[1] Chapter 3, pp. 76-77.

[2] Chapter 1, pp. 12-14.

are brought together and remain together until their mission is fully accomplished. The romance reaches its conclusion when Galaad, having won the highest reward, dies, to be followed by Perceval, leaving Boort to return home alone to relate all the adventures to Arthur and the court. The narrative, although focusing for long periods on one knight and then another, nonetheless flows smoothly towards the conclusion. The explanations of the adventures, given by holy men and recluses, constantly remind the reader or listener of the nature of the quest and of the fact that Galaad, Boort and Perceval are destined to succeed. The main difference to be noted in the translator's treatment of this material is abridgement. Throughout the first part of Y Seint Greal we find him discarding matter that is not absolutely essential to the basic narrative, and compressing whole passages into a few lines. When Boort and Lionel discuss Galaad, for example (Q 9.18-33), the whole of their conversation is reduced to one sentence:

"Ac yna bwrt a lionel a ymdidanyssant am y mab". (SG 7.3-4).

The information which in the Queste is provided in the course of their talk is introduced afterwards instead by the Welsh narrator:

"Ar ymdidan a gerdawd yn gymeint a dywedut o bawp or llys mae euo oed galaath uab lawnslot o verch vrenhin peles". (SG 7.4-6).

A further example is provided by the conversation between the queen and a servant which takes place immediately afterwards (Q 10.2-23, SG 7.8-18). In this case the direct speech is preserved, rather than the conversation being simply summarised at the end, but the queen's ladies, who are present in the French, are removed and the interchanges themselves compressed.

This procedure does not impair our understanding of the narrative, although in these particular instances compression of dialogue or its replacement by a brief third-person summary makes the account less lively and immediate. When carried out over the romance as a whole, in various contexts, such abridgement inevitably weakens the force and interest of the unfolding narrative. Moreover, the translator does not restrict himself to abridgement but even entirely omits a number of passages or episodes, each of which must be considered in turn, and their effect on the overall structure

of the romance assessed.

In only one case can it be said that the translator is fully justified in omitting a complete episode. This is the account of Galaad joining the "Espee Brisiee" (Q 266.16-33). In the Queste itself the tale is already confused, for we are told there that Galaad alone was able to join the pieces of the sword "dont li contes a ja devisé autre foiz, cele dont Joseph ot esté feruz parmi la quisse" (Q 266.17-18). Unfortunately, no mention is made in the Queste of any Joseph being so wounded. That event is related only in the Estoire del Saint Graal, where Joseph is wounded by an angel (Sommer, Vulgate Version vol. i, p. 77.13-32)[1]. In the Queste we are only told (Q 209.9ff.) that Parlan, the Roi Mehaignié, found on Solomon's ship the sword that Nascien had broken and Mordrain rejoined, and that after unsheathing it he was struck by a lance "par mi oultre les deus cuisses" (Q 209.27-31). Since in this account it is Parlan, not Joseph, who is wounded, and the sword had already been repaired by Mordrain, the translator was perhaps wise to omit the entire passage. It is not essential to our understanding of the narrative, and there is no danger of leaving loose ends if it is omitted; to have included it would have confused rather than enlightened the reader. For the reader or listener approaching the Queste as part of the complete Vulgate Cycle, of course, this problem does not arise, and the passage acts as a link between the Queste and the Estoire, and between the final Grail hero and the early heroes of the Grail pre-history.

In another instance it can at least be said that the translator has chosen a non-essential passage for abridgement. This occurs during the long interview between Lancelot and the hermit after Lancelot has seen the Grail. The hermit explains to him the meaning of his experiences, including the accusation, made

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[1] It is generally thought that the Estoire was written after the Queste (see e.g. Jean Frappier in ALMA p. 313); if this was the case, then Joseph's name may only have been introduced in the Queste at this point when the first completely cyclic Vulgate versions were produced to provide a link between the different parts of the Cycle. Perhaps in the original version Parlan may have been mentioned instead. Such a hypothesis is supported by the fact that in the Estoire it is a lance, not a sword, which wounds Joseph.

by an unearthly voice, that he is "plus durs que pierre, plus amers que fuz, plus nuz et plus despris que figuiers" (Q 61.16-17). In the Queste the hermit compares Lancelot to the third servant in the parable of the talents and then continues:

> "Et encore, qui velt puet len bien entendre pierre en autre maniere" (Q 69.7-8),

going on to draw a further parallel, from the story of Moses striking water from the rock (Q 69.8-20). In the translation, the whole of this last passage is left out. The parable of the talents is retained, including the final explanatory phrase: "Ac am hynny y gellir dywedut dy vot ti yn galedach no maen.ac yn vwy dy bechawt noc arall" (SG 45.21-22), but then we move straight on to the explanation of "plus amers que fust":

> "Arglwyd, heb y lawnslot ti a dangosseist ymi hynny yn dadigawn. Dangos ym bellach heb ef paham yrwyfi chwerwach no phrenn pwrri" (SG 45.23-25).

In this instance, the translator has not caused any great detriment to the romance by omitting a complete passage. Our understanding of the exegesis as a whole is not impaired, since the example of Moses and the rock is given as an alternative to the parable of the talents, in order to press the point home yet further. It is only in this one case that more than one explanation is given for a single statement or event, so the translator may have felt it was superfluous, or, at least, that this was a point where abridgement would be perfectly satisfactory.

The remaining examples of abridgement are far more serious than the two just discussed, and actually damage the structure of the romance. One such example is found in the account of Lancelot's adventures, when he is about to take leave of the same hermit. In the Queste we are told that Lancelot stayed with the hermit for three days, during which the latter "li sermonna touz dis et l'amonesta de bien fere" (Q 115.31-116.1). A long speech by the hermit then follows (Q 116.2-117.4) in which he explains the meaning of the quest and of "earthly" and "celestial" chivalry. In Y Seint Greal this speech is very briefly summed up and added to the introductory statement, so that the

whole passage is compressed into a few lines:

> "ac yno y bu ef ... y gyt ar gwr da yr hwnn drwy amrauaelyon exawmpleu, a chospedigaetheu ae trossassei ar gret da ac ediuarwch am yuuched a gynhalyassei or blaen" (SG 74.14-16).

The concluding statement in the French, explaining how Lancelot "se tint molt a beneuré de ce que Diex l'avoit amené cele part a cel preudome qui si bien l'avoit enseignié qu'il en cuidoit mielz valoir toz les jorz de sa vie" (Q 117.6-8), is left out altogether in the Welsh. Although the translator retains a summary, this by no means compensates for the loss of the hermit's speech. Not only is this summary far too brief to preserve the force of the original, but also it misses the chief purpose of the speech, which is the explanation of the quest in its relation to the two different types of chivalry, and the practical consequences for Lancelot, or indeed for any sinful knight. Since these ideas are essential for our understanding of the overall meaning of the Queste, their exclusion is, to say the least, unfortunate. Here, as in the previous example, the translator has abridged in a passage of exegesis, during one of the many interviews between a knight and a man of God. It is possible, therefore, that the translator had little interest in these comparatively static sections and felt that they held up the action. We shall see elsewhere that he failed to grasp the essential meaning of the Queste and so attempted to present the protagonists as knights involved in more worldly action; when the first part of Y Seint Greal is considered in this light the motivation of such abridgements can be understood, even if deplored.

A little further on, the translator again dispenses with a passage of explanation, but this time he has taken care to omit also the event that was to be explained. This is the vision that comes to Lancelot as he sleeps beneath a cross at the junction of two roads. The translator includes Lancelot's meeting with the maiden on a palfrey that immediately precedes this incident (SG 81.7-19; Q 129.28-130.12), but then omits all reference to Lancelot's arrival at the cross, his spending the night there and his vision, together with his thanks giving and departure the next day (Q 130.13-132.16). The Welsh text takes us straight on to the meeting with the knight who had

stolen Lancelot's arms the day before (SG 81.20ff., Q 132.16ff.). The translation retains the account of Lancelot, after this encounter, riding on to a hermitage (Q 132.32ff., SG 81.33ff.), but the description of his stay at the hermitage is drastically reduced. The conversation between the knight and the hermit about the Grail, Lancelot's confession, his description of his vision and the hermit's long explanation of it, all these have gone, together with the reminders of the relationship between Lancelot and Galaad and the role of Galaad himself. In Y Seint Greal we are left with a bald statement that Lancelot was lodged by a hermit until the next day:

> "Ac yna ef aarganuu meudwydy athu ac yno y doeth ef y lettyu.ar meudwy avu lawen wrthaw ac aduc y varch y mywn.a bwyt a rodet idaw digawn. (...) Agwedy bwyt rac y vlinet lawnslot aaeth y gysgu hyt y dyd drannoeth". (SG 81.33-39).

The translation only rejoins the French at the departure of Lancelot.

> ("Et quant li jorz aparut, il se leva, et ala oïr la servise Nostre Seignor...", Q 139.24ff.; "Trannoeth y bore ef agyfodes lawnslot y vyny ac aaeth y warandaw offeren...", SG 82.1ff.).

It is, of course, true that the removal of the hermit's explanations does not have any serious consequences on the structure of the Welsh version, since the vision itself has already been omitted. However, it does result in the loss of a large section of Grail "pre-history", which in the Queste clearly demonstrates the links between the Arthurian world and the period immediately after the Crucifixion, which is central to the whole idea of the Grail quest, the chief knights of Arthur's court being directly descended from important early Christian heroes associated with Joseph of Arimathea. Some of the information included here about Mordrain, Evalac and Nascien has already been given earlier in the romance, as part of the story of the shield (Q 32.6-35.12), some during Perceval's stay at the abbey where King Mordrain lies, (Q 83.21-86.33), and yet more is given in the tale of the "Espee as Estranges Renges" (Q 206.32-209.5), but in the French these recurring references to this earlier history keep the links between the two periods and the two sets of heroes constantly before us, perpetually reinforcing the essentially Christian nature of both the Grail itself and the Quest. Furthermore, the hermit's explanations inevitably also include reminders about

the distinction between earthly and spiritual chivalry, and the need for confession and a life of virtue before success in the Grail quest can be achieved. Exclusion of these points weakens still further this important aspect of the Queste which the translator failed to recognise. Similarly, the omission of the discussion of the role of Galaad destroys a carefully constructed cumulative effect of the French romance whereby references to Galaad's virtue, prowess and fulfilment of prophecies causes the reader to look forward eagerly to his ultimate success. The fact that the passages referring to the earlier Grail history do tend to overlap may have persuaded the translator to omit this example, but the absence of anything equivalent in earlier Welsh sources, and especially in Peredur, the only Welsh "Grail" romance before Y Seint Greal,may have been another important consideration. A further possibility is that the translator felt that by omitting both Lancelot's vision and its exegesis he could avoid harming the structure, although in fact, as we have seen, he has seriously weakened it.

His next choice of a passage for abridgement is, perhaps, even more unfortunate. In this instance he includes the account of Boort's meeting with the disinherited lady and his fight with Priadan on her behalf, but then fails to include the explanation of this adventure. In the Queste Boort relates this adventure to the abbot of a Cistercian house, together with his visions of the bird and its young, the black and the white bird, the rotten tree-stump and the lilies, explanations for all these last being preserved in the Welsh. (SG 109.13-111.18). The introduction to the passage of exegesis requires no alteration since the French simply summarises Boort's recounting of the adventures:

"Lors li conte ce qui le jor li estoit avenu" (Q 183.8-9).

Accordingly this is retained exactly as it stands:

"Yna ef adywawt y gyfranc ac ual y kyfaruuassei ac ef y dydyeu gynno hynny" (SG 108.31-33).

The effect of leaving out the explanation of the one adventure (Q 184.31-185-26) does not seriously impair our understanding of the narrative but it does leave a loose end. Throughout the Queste each adventure and each vision

is always explained afterwards to the person who has experienced it, and who may even deliberately seek out a hermit or cleric to ask for explanations[1]. It is made clear from the outset that adventures will always have a deeper meaning, and we are constantly reminded of this by the advice given to knights by holy men, who repeatedly stress the spiritual nature of the quest. The failure to explain Boort's adventure consequently stands out clearly in the Welsh version, so much so that uncertainty is raised as to the status of this incident, and whether it in fact has any bearing on the quest itself, since no indication of any deeper meaning is given.

A small but significant omission occurs during the account of the meeting of Galaad and King Mordrain. We are told earlier in the romance that Mordrain was covered with wounds in his battle against Crudel on behalf of Joseph son of Joseph of Arimathea, and that he lost his sight through coming too near the Grail vessel after the battle (Q 84.29-85.18, SG 55.28-56.13), but Mordrain is told that before his death he will see Galaad and at that moment have his sight restored and wounds made whole (Q 85.31-86.3, SG 56.25-28). When Galaad arrives at the abbey where Mordrain lies, the translation follows the Queste in telling how the king's sight is restored, how he dies in Galaad's arms, but whereas the French describes how "cil de laienz ... vindrent au cors et troverent que les plaies qu'il avoit eues si lonc tens estoient sanees" (Q 263.22-24), the translation makes no reference whatever to the wounds healing. In Y Seint Greal those present instead of marvelling at such a miracle (Q 263.24-25: "Si le tindrent a grant merveille") are overjoyed at finding Galaad amongst them:

> "Ac yna llawen vu bawp or vanachlawc wrth galaath pan wybuant panyw efo oed yno" (SG 160.7-9).

This comment only confuses the reader, since Galaad was immediately recognised by Mordrain, who addressed him publicly by his name (Q 262.29ff., SG 159.32ff.).

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[1] For example, after Gauvain and Hector have each seen a vision and each been admonished, Gauvain says: "li mielz que je i sache a nostre oes, si est que nos aillons quierre aucun hermite, aucun preudome qui nos die la senefiance de noz songes et la senefiance de ce que nos avons oï" (Q 151.13-16).

The precise reason for the omission of the healing of the wounds is not clear, unless it is simply a case of carelessness or haste, but small as it is, it leaves yet another narrative thread untied and contributes to the general weakening of the structure of the original romance.

Before coming to any firm conclusion about the translator's motives or passing any definite judgement upon him, we must consider his treatment of the Perlesvaus. Until recently, no comprehensive or constructive study had been made of the structure and technique of the Perlesvaus. J.D. Bruce, in his Evolution of Arthurian Romance, denied that it had any coherent structure and described it as "a mediocre patchwork of motifs drawn from a great variety of earlier sources,prose as well as verse". He added that it bore "all the marks of a period of decline"[1]. His chief complaint was that the narrator continued his story after the defeat of Chastel Mortel, and the reappearance of the Grail (Per 6271), thus "adding to the Grail story, which he had really exhausted, a series of virtually disconnected episodes, many of which not only have no relation to the Grail, but no relation even to the hero, himself"[1]. This view was echoed by critics such as Nutt and Lot, and even Nitze in his edition of 1932-37 did little to refute this harsh judgement, for in his chapter on "Structure and Style of the Perlesvaus" he skirted round the basic problem of overall structure and concentrated instead on the use of sources and the prose style[2]. However, Thomas Kelly's recent book, Le Haut Livre du Graal: Perlesvaus. A Structural Study, has gone a long way toward redressing the balance. Although some of the points Kelly makes may not receive universal support, the main outlines of his analysis of the structure seem incontrovertible. For the purpose of comparison with the Welsh translation, it is these broad outlines that are important, since we need only to establish whether any alterations made in Y Seint Greal seriously undermine the structure of the original.

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[1] J.D. Bruce, The Evolution of Arthurian Romance, vol. ii, p. 165.

[2] vol. ii, pp. 157-72.

Two main features emerge, which are examined in detail in Kelly's study, first that the structure should be regarded as deliberately bipartite, and secondly that the two halves of the romance are both balancing and complementary, inextricably linked to each other[1]. Whilst it is true that the defeat of Chastel Mortel does form a climax to the narrative, this does not mean that what follows is unnecessary, nor that it was introduced merely to extend the romance. It is better to regard this as an example of bipartite structure which was doubtless entirely acceptable to the contemporary public, for whom the continuation of the Perlesvaus after the Grail conquest was no weakness in itself[2]. If we assume a deliberate bipartite structure then we must consider how these two sections are connected and how far each is indispensable to the formation of a whole. The main problem is that in the second section the narrative moves between Perlesvaus's own adventures and those of Lancelot in a political struggle with Brien des Illes and Claudas, involving Kei and Arthur also. Since the Perlesvaus describes itself as a Grail romance, Le Haut Livre du Graal, the presence here of adventures not directly connected with the Grail theme has been criticised. Even to a partisan like Nitze this section of the narrative was "to all intents and purposes ... a side issue"[3]. However, Kelly has pointed out that a clear pattern underlies the apparent digressions, although this pattern does not emerge at first sight, largely because of the multiplicity of episodes and characters, but also because of the writer's story-telling powers that draw the reader straight on from one episode into

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[1] For a more detailed analysis than is given here, see Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, pp. 37ff.

[2] Whilst few texts of the 12th or 13th centuries make such a major break after the climax, there are nonetheless many examples where the climax occurs well before the end of the text and is followed by a number of events, which, to a present day reader, may seem anticlimatic but are in fact closely linked or indeed absolutely essential to the preceding section. The obvious example is the Chanson de Roland, where the death of Roland provides the climax but the Baligant episode is indispensable and is closely integrated into the poem as a whole. Yet in the early part of this century some critics held that the Roland should have ended after the hero's death.

[3] Nitze, vol. i, p. 21.

the next. Kelly shows that each major adventure in the first part has its parallel in the second, and that each agent and place of action, as well as each episode, has its equivalent, either in a complementary section or within the same section[1]. This pattern will be seen more easily if a general analysis with examples is given.

The first section, leading up to the climatic episode of the Grail Castle and the establishment of the New Law occupies about three-fifths of the text. This can be subdivided into the introduction and then the three individual heroes' Grail quests. The introduction sets the scene (the decadence of Arthur's court, the general blight over Britain), and then the action is triggered off by Arthur's agreeing to go and seek guidance at Saint Austin's chapel. The events that take place in the course of this pilgrimage and as a result of it (for example, Arthur at last holding court again) ultimately precipitate the departure from court of Gauvain and Lancelot on their respective quests. Preparation has already been made for the appearance of Perlesvaus; we know that he was ultimately responsible for the present state of affairs (Per 18ff.), and his return and expected triumph are constantly foretold. Gauvain and Lancelot, as well as various female characters like Perlesvaus's sister and the Damoisele du Char, are involved in a quest for Perlesvaus in order to bring about the combination of circumstances that will allow him to achieve his own, higher quest, that of the Grail, and solve all the problems arising from his previous failure. The quests of Gauvain and Lancelot, which combine the search for Perlesvaus with Grail missions, both fail, their Grail failures paralleling their failure to make contact with Perlesvaus, yet their quests are valuable in preparing for the hero's arrival and success. Even their modest successes foreshadow the greater triumphs of Perlesvaus, who once he appears, makes relentless progress towards the Grail victory, which forms the climax of the narrative.

The section following this important episode depicts the aftermath of

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[1] See note 1, p. 111.

the defeat of Chastel Mortel. The focus shifts from Perlesvaus as an individual to the wider field of Arthur's kingdom as a whole and to the territories of the Veve Dame and other relations of the hero. For the full justification of these adventures to be seen, this field must be interpreted as the world and its state after Christ's resurrection and triumph, with many long battles still to be fought, though the situation is much improved from before since now real hope exists. At the beginning of the romance, Arthur's apathy had brought his kingdom into decay, but now activity and vitality have returned and he and his followers can fight to bring about change. The New Law, having been declared at the defeat of Chastel Mortel, can be effectively established in the world, but this requires the defeat of a number of powers who are opposed either to Arthur himself or to Perlesvaus's family and thus opposed to the New Law as well. These struggles are therefore doubly important, both to the hero and to the structure, each having a practical and a spiritual aspect. For the New Law to have been established firmly and instantaneously at the defeat of Chastel Mortel would have been facile and unsatisfactory; some further struggle and, therefore, a continuation of the narrative is vital. For Perlesvaus there remain many family duties, fighting enemies of his mother and of other relations, whilst at the same time he fights for the New Law, converting or killing these same enemies as upholders of the Old Law. These adventures balance those recounted in the first section. Meanwhile Lancelot is struggling against evil powers threatening Arthur's kingdom, balancing Perlesvaus's adventures, just as those of Gauvain parallel those of Perceval in the Conte del Graal and its Continuations. The fact that Claudas upholds the Old Law links Lancelot's adventures here more closely with those of Perlesvaus, for they are both fighting basically the same enemy, though in different places and guises. The concluding section of the romance brings these adventures to a close and motivates the hero's final departure.

If the two separate sections of the romance are examined and compared it becomes clear that they have been carefully built up so that each episode

in one has its counterpart in the other. In fact, the whole structure across the two sections and within each can be seen in terms of parallel actions, people and places. The characters, even down to minor ones, can be divided into those related to or connected with the Grail family, and those connected with Arthur's court. Opposed to them are their equivalents among the enemies of one group or the other. Minor adventures, otherwise weakly motivated, can be attached to the main threads of the narrative by bonds of kinship between one of the characters involved and Perlesvaus. A good example is the Chastel de la Baleine episode (Per 9712-9816) in which the oppressed family whom Perlesvaus undertakes to help turn out to be related to him through his father, Julain le Gros. The places where the actions occur are either in the lands of the Grail family or in those of Arthur, and each of the chief struggles and conquests in the first section has its counterpart in the second so that the defeat of Cahot le Roux balances that of Li Rous Chevalier, the Sire des Mares is the counterpart of Aristor, and the defeat of Chastel Mortel is paralleled by that of the Noir Hermite. In the same way Arthur's own Grail pilgrimage echoes the quests of Gauvain and Lancelot in the first section. Pairs of opposites link different parts of the narrative, for example the description of the Castle of the Noir Hermite contrasts with that of Camaalot, home of Perlesvaus's mother, the Isle Soffroitose with the Isle Plenteurose. The neat balance created within and across the two sections by these techniques would be destroyed if any part of the second section were removed, especially the whole theme of Lancelot's conflict with Claudas and Brien, judged "unnecessary" by critics like Bruce.

Moreover removal of any part would destroy the entrelacement which forms a vital part of the structure. It is used throughout and serves to knit together the adventures of the different agents: Perlesvaus, Arthur, Gauvain and Lancelot, and a host of minor characters. The formulae mentioned earlier as linking devices also have a function here, warning that a different thread of the narrative is now going to be taken up. Phrases like "Ici se taist li contes de..et revient a.." both here and, indeed,

in the Queste, may be somewhat unsubtle, but at least they prevent the switch from one scene to another from being too abrupt. When the attention does shift from one character to another, we are carefully reminded where he was previously left, and told briefly what he has been doing since. There has always been some progress: the character does not remain suspended from activity while the narrator turns to someone else, but continues on his way, even if he does not achieve anything of significance in the meantime. The entrelacement not only helps to keep the different narrative strands before us, but also plays an important part as a cohesive factor between the two main sections of the Perlesvaus. A number of strands that appear in the first part continue in the second, where they are satisfactorily concluded. In the tale of Lohout, for instance, the news of the death of Arthur's son, which was related to Perlesvaus in the first section (Per 4918ff.), is finally announced to Arthur's court and Kei's guilt made public in the second (Per6292), thus also providing the motivation for Kei joining the enemy. The first part of Lancelot's adventure at the Gaste Cite takes place before the Grail Conquest (Per 2856ff.) and he returns afterwards (Per 6638ff.) for the conclusion of the Beheading Test.

The bipartite structure is also given cohesion by the appearance of the same characters at different points in the narrative, such as the Coart Chevalier, by the use of prophecies of later events and explanations of such events after they have taken place, a technique also used in the Queste. However, there is no denying the complexity of the Perlesvaus, the plurality of characters and adventures, but even so, quite apart from the author's enthusiastic story-telling that pulls the reader or listener along to the next adventure without time to consider the significance, motivation or structural value of the previous one, some connecting thread can always be discerned.

These, then, are the main points to be kept in mind when considering what effect the translating into Welsh has had on the structure. The techniques of balance and entrelacement that we have seen are so essential to

the structure that clearly any omissions, additions or rearrangements by a translator, even of a small part of the text, would have serious consequences for the romance as a whole. By and large the translator does keep close to his text, which we have already suggested was a version closely related to the Oxford manuscript and to the manuscript on which the Black Letter edition was based. Consequently, most of the remarks made above about the structure of the Perlesvaus can be taken to be true of the second part of Y Seint Greal also. There are, however, some notable exceptions that illustrate the results of omitting parts of the original text, and indicate a lack of concern about its structure on the part of the narrator. Such omissions destroy the carefully balanced construction, but also lead to the creation of loose ends and the loss of essential items of information, which make the narrative harder to follow and impair the reader's or listener's enjoyment. We cannot blame the translator, nor indeed the scribe, in one case, where manuscript Peniarth 11 has lost a folio, which would have contained the equivalent of lines 3389-3905 of the Nitze edition. These lines recount the end of the encounter between Meliot de Logres and Clamados, then Perlesvaus's visit to the hermitage, Lancelot's adventures at the Burning City and with the Robber Knights, his Grail failure and ill-fated organisation of a couple's marriage, all incidents of some importance, which in the French are linked to other sections of the romance. The next folio in the Welsh manuscript takes up the story where Perlesvaus is at the castle of the Reine des Pucelles (SG 275.7). In the passages immediately preceding and following this lost folio there is nothing to indicate that these adventures were not included by the translator.

There are, however, a few important omissions in the Welsh which can be shown to be due to the translator and not simply the result of scribal error. The gaps occur at lines 1949-1977 (the Magic Fountain), lines 6180-6273 (the conclusion of the defeat of Chastel Mortel and the reappearance of the Grail), lines 6521-6535 (Arthur deciding to travel incognito) and lines 6887-6990 (part of the Three Days' Tournament). These major omissions must be examined

in detail in order to establish how far they affect the structure, and the reason for the exclusion of these passages from the translation.

The Magic Fountain episode in the Perlesvaus takes place after Gauvain has succeeded in leaving the land of the Roi de la Gase and before he comes to the land of King Gurguran. Whilst travelling through a forest he comes upon the fountain, and the episode forms an interlude in his journey. The lines leading up to the episode are retained in the Welsh:

> "Il i jut la nuit; l'endemain s'en parti, e ist fors de la terre molt liez e molt joianz, e s'en va vers la terre le roi Gurgurant" (Per 1947-48),

are rendered almost exactly by

> "Y nos honno y bu walchmei yno.a thrannoeth ef aedewis y wlat drwy diruawr lewenyd.ac a gerdawd parth a thir brenhin gorgeraus" (SG 232.20-22).

But then instead of the passage that follows in the French, describing the fountain and Gauvain's experiences there, we find only

> "ac y adoeth y fforest.ac adaw honno awnaeth" (SG 232.23)

before rejoining the French with

> "a marchogaeth yny welei dy meudwy.armeudwy yn wr prudlwyt.yr hwnn aovynnawd idaw pa le yd aei" (SG 232.23-25)

corresponding to

> "Messire Gavains prent congié e s'en va, e chevauche tant qu'il trueve .i.hermitage, e voit l'ermite par defors oissu, vieil e chanu e de buenne vie. 'Sire, fet il a Monseigneur Gavain, o irez vos?'" (Per 1977-80).

From Gauvain's point of view the chief importance of this incident lies in the news it gives him of Perlesvaus, for when he asks the three maidens to whom they will take the bread, meat and wine, they reply that some of it is for the "buen chevalier qui gist chiés son oncle malades, le Roi Hermite" (Per 1973). Gauvain is keen to go and find Perlesvaus immediately, but the cleric officiating warns him that it is not yet time. The episode thus helps, in a small way, to link the different threads of narrative together, reminding us that one aim of Gauvain's quest is to find Perlesvaus, and also looking forward to later developments in the narrative when the focus turns to the Grail hero and eventually he and Gauvain meet. In addition the episode has

an allegorical function. The Christian associations of the scene are inescapable, and these provide links with other passages as well as keeping the theme of the Grail before us. The gold vessel suspended by a chain may well be intended as a link with the Grail cup, whilst the "ymage si proprement figuree que ce sanbloit que ele fust en vie" (Per 1954) is an obvious reference to the doctrine of the Real Presence and to the earlier episode where Arthur has the vision of the form of a man between the arms of a hermit celebrating mass (Per 315-7). The bread, meat and wine can only be eucharistic symbols, whilst Gauvain's impression that the three maidens have become one obviously refers to the Trinity. The main functions of these are to provide reminders of some of the recurring themes and doctrines of the romance, and to form links with later episodes where such meanings stand out from the action; in short, it provides one of the many elements that build up the structure of the Perlesvaus with its complex system of cross-references and balancing components. There is only one later, explicit reference to the scene, when Gauvain at the Chastel del Enqueste relates his adventures to the priest and receives explanations of them. In fact, Gauvain is not given further information about the fountain, for when he asks the priest about it the latter replies:

> "je ne vos en diroie plus que vos en aves oï, et de tant vos devez vos tenir a bien paié, car on ne doit pas descovrir les secrez au Sauveor; ainz les doit on esgarder secreement cil a qui il sont commandé" (Per 2241-44).

The Welsh translator carefully omits this reference to the Magic Fountain but also omits the previous explanation of the child representing the Saviour, yet retains this refusal by the priest in order to attach it to Gauvain's question about the child:

> "Y mab hwnnw heb yr offeiryat a gyffelybir i iachwyawdyr y byt. Ac ny dywedafi ytti mwy.kanys nyt oes ymi rydit y dinoethi dirgeledigaetheu duw" (SG 240.22-25).

Then Y Seint Greal, like the Perlesvaus, continues with Gauvain's questions about Gurguran.

The motif of the fountain with the gold basin attached with a chain was

probably familiar to the Welsh redactor, since it has such close parallels in Welsh literary tradition, in the story of Owein, and, even earlier, in Manawydan[1], and so one would expect it to be retained. He may have felt, however, that the associated material, with its overt Christian significance, was unsuitable for what he associated with a consciously non-Christian context[2] or else that this was an episode that could be dispensed with, for if the translator was keen to abridge his material then this episode was a good choice, as its omission has fewer serious consequences than might be expected.

The effect of abridgement is far more serious in the essential episode of the defeat of Chastel Mortel, which forms the climax of the narrative. The events leading up to the Grail hero's success here are carefully built up from the point where Perlesvaus visits his uncle, the Roi Hermite. His uncle tells him how to tackle the conquest of Chastel Mortel, and each stage in the attack is fully explained, to be put into practice subsequently by Perlesvaus. The approach to the castle, the attack and final victory are related in detail, and as we are told that Perlesvaus is predestined to succeed, neither the reader nor listener, nor those involved,are in any doubt as to the outcome:

> "Li aucant savoient bien que Perlesvaus le conquerroit, car il estoit prophetizé piecha que cil qui cel escu porteroit conquerroit le Graal sor celui qui Deu renoieroit" (Per 6113-16).

Up to the point where Perlesvaus and the twelve hermits, having taken the bridges, are about to enter the castle, the Welsh version follows the French narrative in its general outlines. However, there is a marked tendency to paraphrase and abridge from the beginning of Perlesvaus's approach to the castle. (Per 6113ff.; SG 336.39ff.). A number of details are omitted, for example, all references to the standard carried by the hero, and many non-essential details like "Perlesvaus set la pensee dou blanc lion" (Per

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[1] WM, col. 230.14-19; PKM p. 56.

[2] In the earlier Welsh prose tales all references to the Christian Church are deliberately excluded, not only in PKM but even in texts as late as Owein.

6151; SG 338.7-), and "il regardent deriere aus", (Per 6152-52; SG 338.8-). Just before omitting a large section of the French, the translator compresses ten lines of the French (Per 6182-92), leading up to the triumphant entry into the castle, into two lines:

> "ac wynteu a archassant y nawd.ac ynteu gwedy hynny a gymerth y uarch ac a aeth yr castell" (SG 338.38-40).

These lines mark the end of the episode in Y Seint Greal. The actual entry into the castle, the massacre of the knights within, the suicide of the King of Chastel Mortel, the joy and thanksgiving for victory, and the reappearance of the Grail, the lance and the sword in the chapel, Perlesvaus being shown the tomb of the Fisher King, all these steps in the narrative are left out in the Welsh. The narrative is taken up again only when the scene shifts back to Arthur at his court (Per 6272ff.; SG 339.1).

It could be argued in the translator's favour that in the French the fact that the Fisher King has died already lends a feeling of anti-climax to the events, but this does not excuse the fact that in the Welsh the episode is left unfinished and innumerable loose ends are created. For example, our only indication that the hero did complete his mission successfully is contained in the earlier prophecy:

> "ac ef awydyat rei onadunt panyw paredur a ennillei y castell y ar ylleill.kanys darogan oed..." (SG 336.39-337.2),

and later on the reader finds that he is expected to know of the death of the Fisher King. The drastic abridgement that immediately precedes the end of the episode in the Welsh suggests that the omission was deliberate, rather than being due to, say, a lacuna in the French manuscript used, or to the eye of the translator or scribe travelling from one column to another. The translator must, therefore, be held responsible for the handling of the material here. Not only does he fail to conclude the conquest satisfactorily, but he also omits the reappearance of the Grail, which is an essential part of the episode, since earlier we learn that due to the wickedness of the king of Chastel Mortel the Grail disappeared at the death of the Fisher King, together with other relics and even the priest who officiated in the Grail Chapel

(Per 5149-51; "Onques puis ne s'i aparut li Graaus, et toutes les autres reliques se sunt esconsees, si ne set l'en que (li) prouvoire qui la chapele servoient sunt devenu, ne li.xii. chevalier ancien, ne les damoiseles, qui laienz estoient"; SG 310.1-3: "nyt ymdywynnygawd dim o seint greal yno.a chwbwl or creireu ereill ny wys chwedyl or byt y wrthunt. Ar offeiryat avu yn gwassanaethu y capel ar deudec marchawc urdawl nar morwynyon a oedynt yno ny wys dim y wrthunt oll.")

The next major omission in the Welsh comes at the end of the adventure experienced by Arthur, Gauvain and Lancelot at the "gaste manoir" full of corpses. The group are attacked by evil bands that haunt the place. The first group are defeated and "devienent fiens e cemdre e lor cors e lor cevaus, e diable tuit noir a guise de corneile lor issent des cors" (Per 6485-86). Up to this point, (SG 344.38), the Welsh text is in agreement. But then, in the Perlesvaus, a second band, more hideous than the first, attack the heroes, who are hard pressed until a bell chiming in the forest drives the enemy away at great speed. This second band, together with the detail of the bell, and the impression it makes on Arthur, are omitted in Y Seint Greal, and with them the account of the three hermits who bury the corpses in the "manoir". (Per 6500-6519). The Welsh text rejoins the French briefly to conclude the episode, "ac adywedassant mae llyna le drwc aflonyd oed hwnnw" (SG 344.38-39), corresponding to "li lius avoit esté trop perillos" (Per 6520), before moving on to the next step, the journey through the forest. At this point the French narrative pauses to relate how Arthur decides to conceal his identity, and asks Gauvain and Lancelot to address him only as "compaignon" (Per 6524-25). The Welsh translator, however, omits this point entirely and moves straight on to the arrival at the house of the couple that Lancelot had joined none too happily in marriage. Here again the translator abridges, leaving out the passage where the lady recognises Lancelot and the return of her husband from hunting, mentioning only that the knight recognises him. (Per 6529-39: "La dame lor vint encontre, si lor fist mout grant joie (...). Ele esgarde Lancelot, si le conoist. (...) Atant ez vos le chevalier

de(l) recet o il vient de la forest d'archoier. (...) Quant il vit Lancelot, "Par mon cief, fait il, je vos conois bien". SG 345.8-11: "wynt a welynt yno marchawc urdawl a gwreic dec ygyt ac ef. Ac yna y marchawc adywawt wrth lawnslot. Myn vympenni heb ef myui ath atwaen di yn hyspys.")

Assessing the effect of these abridgements we find that the omission of the second band of evil knights and their flight at the sound ofthe bell is not of great consequence. No further reference is made to them, and the episode is satisfactorily concluded even without them. Neither is the burial of the corpses by the hermits who arrive so opportunely a vital part of the narrative. That these omissions are again deliberate is indicated by their beginning at a convenient point in the story, and by the fact that the translator then returns to the French for a line or two before omitting another two passages. The lady's recognition of Lancelot is duplicated by that of her husband, so this last omission does not impair our understanding of the scene. To leave out Arthur's incognito is rather more serious, however, for it robs later episodes of a certain point and irony. The first is that in which the priest at Tintagel tells the knights of the conception and birth of Arthur, and although it is not stated explicitly, it is implied that Arthur, still incognito, is unknown to the priest as he tells the story (Per 6584-6614; SG 346.25-347.19). Secondly, when Arthur and Gauvain attend the Three Days' Tournament the dramatic irony of the reader, but not the Maidens of the Tent, knowing the identity of the king is lost. Thus the conversation between Arthur and the younger sister, where he names himself as Arthur of Tintagel and implies that Arthur is a separate person which is retained in the Welsh, naturally loses its power of gentle, ironic amusement, since the reader is made to realise quite abruptly that the king does not wish to be recognised. (Per 6786-91: "Sire, fait ele, conment est vostre nons? - Damoisele, j'ai a non Artus si sui de Titaigue. - Apartenez vos le roi Artu de noient? - Damoisele, j'ai esté a sa cort par mainte foiz, mais (se) il ne m'amaste je lui, jene fuse mie en la compaignie Monseignor Gavain. Mais il est li roi eu monde que je plus aim, quel que i(l) soit". La damoisele

esgarde lo roi Artu, mais el ne cuide mie que ce soit il". SG 352.21-27: "Arglwyd heb hi pwy yw dy enw di. Ef amgelwir i arthur o tindagol heb ynteu. Aderit ytti y brenhin arthur heb hi. mi avum heb ynteu yny lys ef lawer gweith. aphei na charei ef vyui ny chaffwn i y ganlyn ef. na gwalchmei. Yr unbennes vyth aoed yn edrych ar arthur. ac ny wydyat panyw y brenhin oed ef".)

This is not the only change that the Three Days' Tournament suffers, however. After omitting a few minor details in the account of the first day, when the second day begins and Arthur and Gauvain enter the lists with Gauvain sworn to play the coward, the Welsh redactor, after failing to mention Arthur's preparations, omits the entire account of that day. He also leaves out the third day, during which Arthur defeats Nabigans de la Roche and Gauvain wins the Cercle d'Or, only rejoining the French when Meliot de Logres turns up in search of Gauvain on the fourth day (Per 6994; SG 355.10). As a result, the reader, who has been expecting a full account of the tournament, is disappointed and finds himself instead hurtled on to the next episode before this one is completed. The wounding of Nabigans is not absolutely essential, but it does prepare for the later account in which Gauvain kills Nabigans, and the omission in the Welsh leads to loose ends. For example, the references to Nabigans being recovered from his wound and to his low opinion of Gauvain for his cowardly behaviour at the tournament are inappropriately retained (SG 357.21-24; Per 7068-69). Furthermore, later references to the Cercle d'Or become confusing in the Welsh as the reader has not been told that Gauvain has won it. These occur when Gauvain meets the maiden sent by Perlesvaus to enquire about it (Per 7086-7100, SG 358.12-25). Later, when Gauvain hands it over to Perlesvaus, Y Seint Greal omits this detail, and another narrative thread is left untied (Per 7183-84, SG 361-).

Examination of these passages from the Perlesvaus, as in the case of those from the Queste discussed earlier, suggests that they were omitted deliberately. In the first part of Y Seint Greal, although the length of the passages omitted varies considerably, in all but one case the effect on

the narrative structure has been considerable. Nonetheless, the translator does follow the main outlines of the French romance, bringing it to a satisfactory conclusion, and none of the gaps in this part can compare with the omission of the long series of adventures at the end of the Perlesvaus. In the second part of the Welsh text, although the translator at first dispenses only with incidents like the Magic Fountain episode which are almost self-contained and have only secondary links with the main themes and action of the romance, as the work progresses he pays less attention to such considerations. Thus by the time he reaches the Three Days' Tournament, nearly three-quarters of the way through the text, he has become less careful in abridging and disrupts the narrative structure to a serious extent, leaving loose ends and confusing the reader. The reason for this gradual increase in abridgement may be that in the early part of the Perlesvaus section the translator resisted abridging until he had familiarised himself with the form and style of his second French romance, although growing impatience with his long task was probably the most important factor. Haste seems the most plausible reason for all these untidy abridgements in both parts of Y Seint Greal, but in particular for the hurried conclusion of the second part where the action is suddenly arrested at a crucial moment, long before the end has come in the Perlesvaus. On such occasions the translator inevitably gives us the impression of having a disregard for structure, consistency and unity, but whilst it cannot be denied that this procedure impairs the literary qualities of Y Seint Greal, it must be borne in mind that a Welsh public would have different tastes and expectations from the French. Abrupt shifts of focus, loose ends and an episodic structure are not uncommon in earlier Welsh prose narrative. Culhwch ag Olwen is the classic example, but the same can be seen, to a lesser extent in the Pedeir Keinc or Peredur. Yet these works were judged worthy of preserving at the same time as Y Seint Greal, for they were copied into the Red Book of Hergest, in which is found the same hand as in Peniarth 11, the earliest copy of our text. It is likely, therefore, that the Welsh readers were not troubled by what may now appear to be serious structural weaknesses.

Chapter 5: Ideas and Themes in La Queste del Saint Graal, Perlesvaus and Y Seint Greal

In this chapter we shall consider the treatment in Y Seint Greal of the ideas and themes appearing in La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus. For convenience these may be divided into three categories: courtoisie and chivalry, religion, and the Grail, and these will be considered in turn, although in fact within the romances these three tend to overlap considerably.

The terms "courtly" and "chivalric" allow for variety of interpretation and emphasis, for their meanings evolved over a long period, in different languages, social milieux and literary contexts, from their first appearance in the lyric poetry of eleventh century Provence, through their development in northern France from the twelfth century onwards and their subsequent adoption by English writers. It is not possible to produce one single, comprehensive definition of courtoisie or chivalry, but certain features remained constant, notably the idea of the knight's love-service for his lady, connected with a complex of code behaviour in public and in private. In both La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus the principal characters aspire to certain ideals or standards of behaviour that can be described as "courtly" or "chivalric", but whilst such standards would have been both acceptable and familiar to a French audience of the first quarter of the thirteenth century, the same will not necessarily be true of a Welsh public nearly two centuries later. It might be supposed that by the time these two Grail romances were translated, the concepts of courtoisie and chivalry would have filtered into Welsh literature, since such close links existed between Wales and France from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries, and continental literature, either in its original form or in translation, was circulating in Wales by the thirteenth century. However, the earliest texts to display any continental influence, the romances of Peredur, Gereint and Owein, show little interest in the problems or ideals of courtoisie, and bear few traces of its extensive and specialised vocabulary. Where such terms are used in the corres-ponding romances of Chrétien de Troyes, the Welsh tales either exclude them

altogether or, at best, use very general native terms, such as "moes a mynut" (WM, col. 128.23). The three earlier Welsh Arthurian romances, then, provide no evidence of any pre-existing native concepts of courtoisie and chivalry. A lack of any such tradition is also suggested by the choice of continental texts for translation, for the majority are non-courtly, whether popular tales like Amlyn ac Amic and Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein, or heroic literature like the Charlemagne cycle[1]. The first evidence of native Welsh literature absorbing the continental concepts of courtoisie and chivalry and their specialised vocabulary appears with the poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym (born c.1320), where the influence of courtly poetry is unmistakable[2]. His is the only work earlier than Y Seint Greal where such concepts appear in anything like their original form, and the novelty of this aspect of Dafydd's poetry in his own day is indicated by Gruffydd Gryg's accusations in his poetic contest with him[3]. Moreover, new ideas, subjects or language which appear in poetry may not find their way into prose literature for some time afterwards.

It is unlikely, therefore, that the conventions of courtoisie and chivalry had become widespread in Wales or embedded in its literature by the time the translator of Y Seint Greal was at work. The fact that some works of French literature, courtly or otherwise, had been circulating[4] would mean that romances like La Queste del Saint Graal and the Perlesvaus would have an audience in Wales, but it would not guarantee that this audience would fully appreciate the sophisticated conventions of courtoisie and chivalry, or the use made of them in these two Grail romances. Moreover, the ideas embodied in them are not those of the courtly lyric poetry, nor of the later Roman de la Rose, both of which were probably familiar to Dafydd ap Gwilym, so not

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[1] See Chapter 2, pp. 36-37, Chapter 3, pt. i, p. 72.

[2] See Rachel Bromwich, Tradition and Innovation in the Poetry of Dafydd ap Gwilym (Cardiff 1972), especially pp. 20-40.

[3] Rachel Bromwich, Tradition and Innovation, pp. 21-24.

[4] See Chapter 2, p. 30 and Appendix 3.

even familiarity with the Welsh equivalent of fin'amors in Dafydd's poetry would help a Welsh reader here. Whereas in the French romances of the twelfth century the Arthurian framework was used primarily as a setting for worldly action, for courtly and chivalric activities and ideas, in the Perlesvaus and Queste this conventional background is now used as a vehicle for specifically Christian ideas. This is not to say that the earlier romances, such as those of Chrétien de Troyes, had been entirely devoid of religious elements, but there Christianity rarely went beyond conventional social observance, and the activities of individuals attached to the Arthurian court provided the main narrative theme. In the Perlesvaus and Queste, however, although the largely secular framework is retained, the worldly adventures are eclipsed by Christian thought and action. Both romances reject the earlier conceptions of courtoisie where the love of women and desire for worldly glory and rewards provided the chief incentives to action. Instead, in both it is Christianity which provides the inspiration and force behind the most successful knights[1], and so, as the importance of women and the love of women wanes, courtoisie itself becomes overshadowed by chivalry, so that, particularly in the Perlesvaus, action and military prowess and achievements are stressed at the expense of social behaviour. The action takes place in an essentially masculine, warlike world, not in a lady's chamber or secluded garden. The hero is first and foremost a warrior, not a lover.

Curiously enough, this new emphasis may have made romances like La Queste del Saint Graal and Perlesvaus more easily assimilable by a Welsh audience, since the hero as a conquering warrior slips more comfortably into the native Welsh traditions. It should not be forgotten that Peredur, Owain and Gwalchmai first appear in early Welsh verse as warriors in the kingdoms of North Britain[2]. The Christian aspect may be new but the almost superhuman

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[1] For an account of the development of Christianised conceptions of chivalry, see Jean Frappier, "Le Graal et la Chevalerie", Romania, lxxv (1954), pp. 165-210.

[2] For full references see, for example, TYP, pp. 369-75, 479-83, 488-91.

military qualities of the French Grail heroes would not seem strange to anyone familiar with the ~~Llywarch Hen poems~~ Gododdin, for instance. We must establish how far the translator retained in Y Seint Greal both the vocabulary and the ideas of courtoisie and chivalry and whether he felt it necessary to adapt these at all before they would be comprehensible or acceptable to his public.

Although the Perlesvaus and Queste both put forward a Christian-inspired concept of chivalry, the approach is quite different in each, and, as we shall see, this creates problems when they are juxtaposed. We must therefore distinguish the differences and consider how far they affect the internal consistency of the Welsh text as a whole.

The terms courtois and courtoisie do not occur in the Queste and are not common in the Perlesvaus. This restrained usage reflects the emphasis on action, the preference for chivalry rather than courtoisie in the sense of a particular type of social behaviour. Where these terms do appear in the Perlesvaus they simply have connotations of good manners and attention to social duties, for example, "vos serez bien herbergiez o chastel, car ele est molt cortoise" (Per 1437). Courtois and courtoisie appear in opposition to vilain and vilenie, and in such contexts the meaning is again rather unspecific. The contrasting pairs seem to imply little more than "good" and "bad", or "praiseworthy" and "blameworthy". For example, when Clamados is accused of killing the lion belonging to Meliot de Logres, he is told:

> "vos avez fait grant vilonie, qui avés ochis le lion al plus cortois chevalier que l'on sache" (Per 3127-28),

and Clamados himself retorts:

> "il poet bien estre que li sire est cortois, mais li lions estoit vilains, qui voloit ochire moi et les trespassans" (Per 3131-32).

These terms are retained just as they stand in the Welsh, courtois and courtoisie being borrowed as kwrteis and kwrteissi, and vilain, vilenie as vilein and mileindra, so that, for example, the interchange from the Perlesvaus just quoted is rendered as follows:

> "ti awnaethost vileindra mawr pan ledeist llew y marchawc urdawl, kwrteissyaf o loegyr"..(..).."Eissyoes y llew nyt oed gwrteis namyn milein.pan vynnei lad hynn oll o ffordolyon" (SG 266.38-267.5).

This borrowing from the French indicates that even when the meaning was comparatively unspecific, as in the examples quoted, there was nothing exactly equivalent in the native Welsh vocabulary. However, although vilain seems to convey the same ideas as the French, kwrteis, which was already borrowed into Welsh by the mid 13th century, seems to have developed a slightly different nuance from courtois. The contexts in which it is found earlier than Y Seint Greal suggest that it had connotations of refinement, elegance and nobility. Examples include "marchawc bonhedic cwrteis" (YBH lines 1022-23) and "a byrrion ewined ballassar kwrteisson ar hirveinion vyssed" (Llyfr Ancr p. 94).

Courtois and courtoisie, vilain and vilenie are the only cases of words of this type used in the French being taken over direct into the Welsh text. Considering the number of Romance loanwords elsewhere in Y Seint Greal this may seem surprising, but it should be noted that the terms used in the Perlesvaus and Queste to convey the new, Christianised concepts of knightly behaviour are considerably less specific and stylised than those used in the Provencal lyric, for example, and lack the subtle nuances that even superficially commonplace words took on in such poetry. In this earlier courtly literature, love had been a major theme but in the Perlesvaus and Queste there are few references to love, except in a religious sense. Instead of fin'amors the only love between man and woman mentioned in the Queste is "fole amor", as the love of Lancelot and Guinevere is described, (Q 71.25), and even this single reference is omitted in Y Seint Greal (SG 46-47). Once fin'amors is discredited and excluded, inevitably the attendant, specialised vocabulary disappears with it and so too some important problems of translation. As the qualities advocated in both our French romances are essentially Christian virtues, a translator's own native vocabulary should be able to provide equivalent terms, particularly if he was himself a cleric, as we have already suggested.

In both the Perlesvaus and Queste the ideal knight is possessed of certain clearly defined Christian virtues. On the whole these are translated accurately; for example, when Perlesvaus is described as "chastes e virges de

son cors" (Per 16), these being the best qualities a knight can have, this is rendered without difficulty in the Welsh as "gwyry oed oe gorff.diweir oe vedwl" (SG 171.25). However, the translation is not always so satisfactory. A typical case is the list in the Queste of the five cardinal virtues to which knights should aspire, namely virginité, humilité, soffrance, droiture and charité. (Q 123.22-125.85). In the rather compressed account of this passage in Y Seint Greal (SG 78.1-17) soffrance is omitted for no apparent reason, and whilst droiture is translated quite literally as (c)yvyawnder, the other virtues are rendered less acurately. Virginité becomes diweirdeb (chastity), humilité becomes ufuddawt (obedience), charité becomes (t)rugared (mercy). Throughout the Welsh text we find examples of the meanings of virges and chastes being transposed. As this is not consistent, it can only be assumed that the translator attached little importance to the exact Christian virtues of the heroes. There can be no question of misunderstanding the French terms, for these are fully defined in the Queste by the hermit during Lancelot's confession, and the translator is able to render these definitions in a coherent, if abridged, form. A similar lack of precision is noticeable in the translation of other virtues, for example, when abstinence is rendered as "ymattal am wneuthur y drwc" (Q 160.10; SG 94.17), but, curiously, the sins and faults into which knights may fall are rendered with complete accuracy. Pechié, for example, is always rendered pechawt, covoitise as chwant y byd, the luxure and orgueil, which are two of the prime sins in the Queste, appear as godineb and balchder respectively. This greater accuracy is perhaps due to the more clearcut nature of sins; there is no indication that the translator understood this set of terms in the French better than those concerned with virtues.

Although the chastity and virginity of the Grail hero are stressed in both the French romances, in the Perlesvaus a broader outlook is maintained, for Christian virtues such as those just mentioned, although important, are not the only qualities to which a knight should aspire, and some measure of success is possible even without virginity, as the quests of Gauvain and

Lancelot show. Thus virginity and chastity are only two of the many qualities of the hero outlined at the beginning of the Perlesvaus: he is also "hardiz de cuer e poissanz" and "corageus" (Per 16-18). These are, of course, military qualities, and whereas they are hardly mentioned in the Queste, in the Perlesvaus they are essential, perhaps even more important than virginity in enabling the hero to complete his Grail mission successfully. These warlike characteristics were clearly acceptable to the Welsh translator for he uses a variety of effective terms, using (c)ryfach, dewraf and grymussaf to translate li plus hardiz or li mielz vaillant, for example (e.g. SG 205.22/ Per 1073; SG 270.7/Per 3236; SG 267.1/Per 3129). He has no trouble either in rendering technical terms connected with warfare and personal status, and here is able to draw on a particularly rich native vocabulary. Examples include dial (SG 246.16; Per 2642 revanchier), enryded (SG 16.9-10; Q 26.1 honor), amarch (SG 267.1; Per 3129 despit and SG 219.20; Per 1505 damage), halogrwydd (SG 289.5; Per 4382 outrage), goganu (SG 329.23; Per 5840 blasmee). Similarly, terms of praise and abuse are translated accurately,as, for example loial and desloial as kywir and anghywir (e.g. Q 166.8/SG 97.5; Q 54.11/SG 36.11), and often with great gusto: the rather commonplace "Sire chevaliers, trop fustes fox et musarz" (Q 29.14), for example, becomes "Tydi varchawc dyfyrllyt ffals gwamal" (SG 18.19).

Besides Christian virtue and military prowess noble birth is a sine qua non of a successful knight in both the Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal. Chivalry may have become fully Christianised in these romances but it is still indisputably the prerogative of the aristocracy as it was in earlier courtly traditions. The name and honour of one's family are still important and must be upheld always by the knight. Thus when Melyant is knighted by Galaad in the Queste he is warned: "gardez que vostre chevalerie soit si bien emploiee en vos que l'anors de vostre lignage i soit sauve" (Q 40.9-11). To the translator this cannot have been of much importance, for he barely mentions such considerations, and refers only in passing to Melyant's rank as "mab y vrenhin"(SG 26.10), stressing instead the knight's duties towards

God. Similarly all the references in the Perlesvaus to the hero being "Buens chevaliers ... par droit, car il fu du lignage Joseph d'Arimacie" (Per 22-23) are abandoned in Y Seint Greal. Consequently noble birth must have been less significant to the translator writing for Welsh readers than to the French redactors of the Queste and Perlesvaus. The reason for this probably lies in the difference in the social structure of Wales at the period of translation and that of France in the first quarter of the thirteenth century. France still had a rigid class system and was governed by an aristocratic, landed class, but in Wales the concept and role of the aristocracy was rather different. Wales, which was, traditionally, a non-"feudal" society, had seen Norman invaders coming to rule side by side with its own native princes and lords, until the decline of the latter and the rise of the uchelwyr after 1282. Lignage in the sense of family ties and tracing pedigrees back to heroic ancestors was undoubtedly important in the Welsh context, but the English or French notion of a blueblooded aristocracy can not be expected. It is probably for this reason that virtue and military prowess are the only essential characteristics for the heroes of Y Seint Greal.

So far the qualities proper to a knight have been discussed, but not terms used to describe the knight himself and his calling. Chevalier and chevalerie occur throughout the French romances, but unfortunately no exactly equivalent terms were available in Welsh. In the earlier Arthurian romances marchawc was generally used, corresponding to chevalier in Chrétien's romances, with a few examples of the less specific gw(y)r (i Arthur) (WM cols. 165, 178, for instance[1]). Although semantically related to chevalier, marchawc does not have the same nuances. This is indicated by the use of a feminine form, marchoges (WM col. 176), which appears from the context to mean no more than a female rider on horseback. Marchawc is perhaps, therefore, closer to the modern French

[1] Gw(y)rda is also found occasionally in Y Seint Greal, but whereas in the earlier Welsh Arthurian romances it was used to describe Arthur's men, here it is generally used to translate preudome (e.g. SG 92.29; Q 158.1). Barwn(yeit), borrowed from Anglo-Norman, and having a specific meaning, does appear in the translation, apparently suggested by the use of baron in the French (SG 265.10, Per 3071), but there are very few examples.

cavalier than to chevalier. Consequently, marchawc urdawl (literally, an ordained knight) is used in the three earlier Welsh Arthurian romances to avoid confusion. Both these terms are used in the same way and apparently fairly indiscriminately in Y Seint Greal. As a rule, marchawc or marchawc urdawl is avoided when the knight is not actually on horseback, and milwr (soldier or warrior) is used instead, but milwr occurs also where marchawc would have been equally appropriate. Thus "li mieldres chevaliers du monde" (Per 474) is translated as "y milwr goreu..or holl vyt" (SG 187.37). In this way the translator emphasises the warrior-like characteristics of knighthood far more than do the French originals, although even there a knight may be referred to as a soldier of Christ (soudoier or serjanz)[1]. As milwr is used to translate these terms as well, the distinction between chevalier and soudoier or serjanz is lost, but this distinction was presumably meaningless to the Welsh who, unlike the French or even the English, had not seen the conventions of chivalry being played out in real life by their kings and nobles: the native Welsh princes in their time had been untouched by that fashion. Consequently, even the order of chevalerie is simply referred to as milwryaeth, which suggests little more than military qualities and carries with it none of the nuances of the French.

We have already noted the existence of two types of chivalry in the two French romances, chevalerie profane or chevalerie terrienne and chevalerie célestielle, the former being that celebrated in earlier romances, for example those of Chrétien de Troyes, where the favour of women and worldly glory are the knight's main aims and incentives. In both the Queste and the Perlesvaus this type of chivalry is shown to be inferior to that of Christian inspiration, but the emphasis is different in each and this causes difficulties for the translator.

In the Queste the position is unambiguous, for it is made clear that the

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[1] Soudoier is preferred in the Perlesvaus (e.g. "Perlesvaus .. estoit soudeier Nostre Sire", Per 5974), serjanz in the Queste (e.g. "a droit fustes apelez mauvés serjanz et desloiax", Q 54.11).

two types are in opposition with each other[1] and that the higher form is constantly threatened by the other, although it emerges triumphant in the end. As a result, after most adventures the knight or knights involved receive from a hermit or "preudome" explanations of the spiritual significance of the adventure, with special reference to the relationship between it and the spiritual progress of the knight. Such explanations are regularly retained in the translation, even if in a rather abridged form[2]. However, it is also made clear in the Queste that the whole narrative is in fact an allegory in which the knights take part, all the adventures representing temptations or tests of faith. The wicked are prevented by their sins from encountering any adventures, and they even fail to grasp the spiritual significance of the Queste on which they have embarked. They fail to remember what they were told at the outset, that "ceste queste n'est mie Queste de terriennes choses" (Q 19.19), and do not realise that they are taking part in an allegory. Like these sinful knights, the translator seems to have completely missed the point, since he unconcernedly leaves out all such important statements. It is true that in the explanation of the symbolic tournament (Q 143.25ff.) he does preserve the distinction between "marchogyon bydawl ar rei nefawl" (SG 84.27), but it would have been impossible to retain this episode at all without this explanation for it would have become totally meaningless. Everywhere else in Y Seint Greal the contrast between chevalerie célestielle and chevalerîe terrienne, which is stressed in the Queste, is

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[1] E.g. Q 116.2-33 (omitted SG 74). In the Queste the two types of chivalry are opposed in the sense that preoccupation with earthly chivalry excludes a knight from heavenly chivalry. Thus Lancelot is reproached for his "pensees terrianes" (Q 116.4), and as for any knight wishing to enter the service of heavenly chivalry, "il li convient avant espurgier et netoier de totes ordures terrianes" (Q 116.27-28). The majority of Arthur's knights fail because they continue to apply the criteria of earthly chivalry in a spiritual quest. Jean Frappier has argued (Romania, lxxv (1954), p. 197) that "les erreurs de la chevalerie terrienne sont condamnées et non la chevalerie elle-même" and sees more common ground between the two, but whilst it is true that earthly chivalry as such is not totally condemned the opposition between the two kinds of chivalry is still there. See also E. Gilson, "St. Bernard et l'amour courtois" in La Théologie Mystique de St. Bernard (Paris 1947), p. 205.

[2] E.g. Q 101.20ff., SG 65.35ff.

implicit only. Nonetheless, on a purely narrative level the motivation of the adventures is still adequate in the translation, because the explanations of events after they have taken place is preserved. The motivation is therefore always consistent, as the interpretation is always a Christian one in the Queste.

Unfortunately for the translator, this is not true in the Perlesvaus, and this results in a lack of consistency between the two parts of Y Seint Greal and within the second part itself. In the Perlesvaus, in contrast to the Queste, whilst chevalerie célestielle is still the most important type of chivalry, it is not in conflict with the earthly type, but complements it. This means that far more of the traditional, secular ideas of courtly and chivalric behaviour linger on in the Perlesvaus, and they do not come in for the same heavy criticism. The different attitudes are summed up in the treatment of the love of Lancelot and Guinevere. In both romances this prevents Lancelot from gaining complete success in the Grail Quest, but the emphasis is different in each. In the Queste, before he is able to earn even a partial revelation, Lancelot is forced to repent absolutely and renounce his love for Guinevere, who is presented as a dangerous temptress and an obstacle between Lancelot and God. (Q 71.3-27, 125.26-127.4). In contrast, in the Perlesvaus Lancelot, in a similar confrontation with a hermit, refuses to repent of his love (Per 3647-95), and Guinevere is seen throughout the romance as a positive force for the good, in so far as she inspires Lancelot, and indeed Arthur, to undertake valiant deeds in the defence of right and justice. This example also demonstrates the two types of motivation or inspiration in the Perlesvaus. Chivalry in the service of God is superior, but chivalry of earthly inspiration is still acceptable, for battles fought against the wicked in the world are battles fought for God in the war against sin; love of women is only blameworthy in so far as it keeps a knight from doing deeds of "haute chevalerie" which are pleasing to both God and man[1]. Consequently, it is possible for some of the

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[1] See Thomas Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, pp. 165ff., and "Love in the Perlesvaus", Romanic Review, lxvi (1975), pp. 1-12.

major episodes to be motivated by secular concerns such as honour, bringing with them some of the classic situations and problems of courtoisie. Typical examples are found in the return of Lancelot to the Gaste Cite for the second part of the Beheading Test (Per 6633-6733), and Gauvain's behaviour at the Three Days' Tournament, when his duty to keep a promise to a lady forces him to play the coward (Per 6868-6925). The translator, as we saw in the last chapter, cuts this episode short, abridging the first part of the account of Gauvain doing the worst he can, then abandoning the description of the rest of the second day and all of the third day. It seems likely that although the translator was in general keen to abridge, he may have done so at this particular point because Gauvain's cowardice left him confused or uncomfortable, since elsewhere in the romance Gauvain, like Gwalchmei, his counterpart in Welsh tradition, is consistently portrayed as fearless and eager to fight. Moreover, the heroes of Y Seint Greal like their predecessors in Welsh literature, are depicted as warriors more than knights, so that cowardice for whatever reason would be totally unacceptable in any of them.

Having found himself denying the value of earthly chivalry, or at least milwryaeth, in the first part of his text, the translator is now forced to accept it in the second part, and so creates contradictions between the two halves of his romance. Furthermore, the acceptance of two possible types in the Perlesvaus brings in addition problems with regard to the motivation of adventures within the second part of the translation. In the Perlesvaus itself certain statements are provided explaining that both types of chivalry are praiseworthy but that chivalry in the service of God is the best, and the narrator is careful to remind us from time to time that even acts of apparently worldly chivalry have some value in terms of Christian service or that some actions prevent a knight from reaching the highest levels. For example, we are told that Gauvain and Lancelot would be "li mellor chevaier dou monde s'il ne fussent luxurios" (Per 6047-48). The translator cannot have realised the importance of such statements as he retains or omits them without any apparent

reason. The example just quoted, for instance, is left out in Y Seint Greal (SG 335), and similarly the statement that "Perlesvaus..estoit soudeier Nostre Sire,e Dex li mostroit bien que il amoit sa chevalerie" (Per 5974-75) is omitted altogether (SG 333). Only one major statement on the superiority of chevalerie célestielle is retained in the second part of Y Seint Greal, and this comes almost at the end: "nyt oes yny byt milwryaeth kyndecket ar honn a wneler yr gwellau cret duw.ac ef adyly pawp lauuryaw yr duw mwy noc yr neb", (SG 417.34-38; Per 9060-62: "il n'est nule si belle chevalerie come cele est que l'on fait por la loi Deu essaucier, e por lui doit l'on miex pener que por toz les autres"). As a result, the status of each type is not clear for most of the second half and the reader is as bewildered by the apparently indiscriminate mixture of adventures inspired by God and those of a purely secular nature, as the translator himself appears to be. A possible explanation for this is that he could not himself accept any overlap between worldly and religious duties. He may have felt it normal that a knight should fight for his king, in this case Arthur, or that he should fight for his religion, as a man might by going on a crusade, but felt confused by a combination of the two. The lack of any chivalric tradition in Wales would mean that he had no useful models outside the romances. His solution is to represent knights as warriors, but, as we have seen, this brings him further problems, like the difficulty of Gauvain's cowardly behaviour at the Three Days' Tournament.

It could be argued in the translator's favour that his diluting the chivalric aspects of the romances, by omission and abridgement of a number of statements in them, to a certain extent must lessen the conflict between the two conceptions of chivalry. However, although such abridgements may mean that the differences are diluted a little, enough remains in the Welsh for this to create the problems of inconsistency described above. It is probable that he regarded his material simply as two episodic accounts of warrior heroes, put into a new, Christianised context, and failed to realise the exact significance in each of the French romances. Although this does not excuse

the confusion that arises from his handling of this aspect of the material, it does confirm our original contention that the continental conventions of courtoisie and chivalry had not become fully established in Wales. A modern reader, who may be familiar with the French traditions and may be able to compare Y Seint Greal with the two original romances, may feel that in this respect much has been lost in translation, but a contemporary Welsh reader would be unlikely to have these advantages and would not, therefore, be so troubled by the rather inconsistent treatment of courtoisie and chivalry.

It is only to be expected that the results of the combination of courtoisie with a totally Christian inspiration should create problems for a Welsh translator in the late fourteenth century. Although certain works of Christian inspiration such as Chwedlau Odo, Ffordd y Brawd Odrig, and even some of the saints' lives may have been read for pleasure as well as instruction, on the whole Welsh prose literature surviving from this period allows little overlap between, on the one hand, theological or devotional works, usually translated from Latin, and on the other, the prose tales and semi-historical writings. Moreover, all the Welsh Arthurian literature earlier than Y Seint Greal presented Arthur and his court in a non-Christian context; within a society having little in the way of overt religious beliefs or observances. In the earliest surviving prose tales, whether Arthurian, like Culhwch a'c Olwen, or non-Arthurian, like the Pedeir Keinc, references to Christianity are kept to the minimum, as if the redactors of such tales were conscious that the events they described took place in a society different from their own, perhaps much earlier, and definitely non-Christian. Hence the reference in Pwyll to the baptism of Gwri:

"Peri a wnaethont bedydyaw y mab, o'r bedyd a wneit yna" (PKM, p. 23). Even the three Welsh romances corresponding to Chrétien's Erec, Yvain and Perceval contain few references to Christian practices or beliefs[1]. The

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[1] For example, marriage is seen as a couple sleeping together, without any religious ceremony. Only in Owein is there any question of a more formal arrangement, in the priodas of Owein and the lady of the fountain. (WM col. 244.33).

translator of Y Seint Greal may well have felt the lack of a model when he approached the two French romances and this may have affected his treatment of the religious spirit which pervades them both. Furthermore, a different use in each of the Arthurian framework as the medium for expressing Christian concepts, and the difference between the conception of Christianity in each create problems of internal consistency for the translator who presents them as two parts of a whole.

Let us consider first the role of the Arthurian setting in the two French romances, and how the translator dealt with it, for in both this is inseparable from the use of allegory as a vehicle for Christian ideas[1]. In the Perlesvaus the Arthurian world is clearly intended as a representation of Christian society, so that the decadence of Arthur's court, for example, at the beginning of the romance, recalls the state of the world before Christ's coming, whilst the aftermath of Perlesvaus's defeat of Chastel Mortel parallels the state of the world after the crucifixion: many enemies remain to be conquered, but at least real hope now exists for mankind. In addition, enemies of the Arthurian world tend to be presented as enemies of Christianity as well, so that Madaglan, for example, is not only a threat to the security of Arthur's territories but also to the New Law. In fact, agents in the Perlesvaus can function on more than one plane, sometimes as members of the Arthurian world, fighting for or against Arthur, sometimes as opponents or supporters of the New Law, and even as allegorical figures. Thus the wife of Marin le Jalox, for instance, at first appears as a character of the Arthurian world, suspected of having been seduced by Gauvain, but later, at the Chastel del Enqueste, Gauvain is told that she represented the Old Law (paganism and Judaism) which received the death-blow at the crucifixion (Per 2207-11). This interpretation of events does not mean that the lady should be regarded purely as an allegorical figure; she is an Arthurian character who at a certain point can be used also allegorically. The same agent need not receive a single

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[1] See Thomas Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, pp. 91-180, and Rosamund Tuve, Allegorical Imagery (Princeton 1966), pp. 401-4.

spiritual interpretation. The Noir Hermite, for example, is described as a representation of Lucifer at one point (Per 2182) immediately after being described as a symbol of hell (Per 2180-81). The religious allegory in Perlesvaus is not intended to form a cohesive whole[1]; instead, agents and events in the romance are intended to remind the reader, to call to his mind similar situations from, for example, the life of Christ. This is explicitly stated in the text, when the priest at the Chastel del Enqueste tells Gauvain, "ce nos trete en senefiance li bons hermites por la Novele Loi, en la quele li plusor ne sont pas bien connoissant, si en volt fere remenbrance par essanples" (Per 2184-86). These "essanples" are the adventures encountered by the Arthurian heroes, which may then be interpreted for the heroes afterwards. For example, Gauvain receives explanations of a number of adventures from a cleric at the Chastel del Enqueste (Per 2153-2252), and Perlesvaus learns the meaning of a series of adventures from the Roi Hermite (Per 5976-6026). In this way the Christian message is clearly expressed, and the true meaning of events is never in doubt.

Despite the abridgements made in the corresponding section of Y Seint Greal and the omission of some adventures, these features of the Perlesvaus are mostly retained. However, there are two important differences. In the first place, the idea that the adventures should "fere remenbrance", should remind the reader of certain Christian truths, is entirely lost. Throughout the Perlesvaus this idea is kept before the reader by references like "Dex voloit qu'en itel vaisel fust sacré ses cors, e que on le meïst en remenbrance" (Per 7227-28) or "Josep...nos dit par remenbrance que.." (Per 2166-67), but these are mostly omitted in the Welsh. The most explicit

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[1] See Thomas Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, pp. 91-92, Rosamund Tuve, Allegorical Imagery, pp. 401-2. For the opposite view see, for example, J.N. Carman, "The Symbolism of the Perlesvaus", PMLA lxi (1946), pp. 42-83. Carman insisted on seeing Perlesvaus's career as an exact representation of the life of Christ, so that he had to go to some lengths to find parallels from the latter in every one of Perlesvaus's adventures. Inevitably the episodes had to be stretched in order to make them fit the pattern he tried to impose.

statement, that of the priest at the Chastel del Enqueste (Per 2184-86), is left out, so that although events are still interpreted as in the French, the exact status of the Christian interpretations, and the relationship between actual events and their Christian significance remains unexplained, for the reader to work out alone. In addition, although the essential points may be retained in an explanation, the Christian message, being condensed, is given less prominence in relation to the actual events. In Y Seint Greal, as we saw in chapter 4, the final series of adventures is entirely abandoned, so that the section where Perlesvaus has explained to him the meaning of the chain, the crown and the pit (Per 9617-43) is lost, but the other two major passages of explanation, during Gauvain's stay at the Chastel del Enqueste and Perlesvaus's with the Roi Hermite, are retained in an abridged form. The exclusion of non-essential details by the translator makes the explanations less easy to follow in the Welsh. For example, when Perlesvaus asks the Roi Hermite for explanations, he sums up his experiences:

"...je me merveil mout d'une petite beste blance que je trovai en .i. forest, e avoit .xii. chaiaus en son ventre qui abaioient e glatisoient dedenz lui. En le fin s'en issirent si l'ocistrent dejoste .i. croiz, mais onques de la char ne gosterent. Un chevalier e .i. da(moisele) pristrent la char e le sanc, se la mistrent en .i. vaisel, e li chien qui de li nasquirent s'en fuïrent en la forest". (Per 5978-83).

The translator, however, omits all this, stating only that, "menegi yr meudwy y antur aoruc" (SG 333.34). Moreover, the translation is not always accurate in these passages, which creates further confusion. For example, when the Roi Hermite explains why one of the hermites was beating the cross (Per 6021), "laidenjoit" in the French is rendered as "y chussanu" (SG 335.1), which makes no sense either within the context of the explanation or in that of Perlesvaus's own experience.

Turning now to the Queste we find as before that the elements common to the two French romances only serve to underline the differences between them. As in the Perlesvaus, the Arthurian framework in the Queste provides a

vehicle for the expression of Christian ideas, but the ideas and their relationship to the framework are not the same. Whereas in the Perlesvaus the adventures are actually taking place in the familiar Arthurian world, in the Queste this is only true of the opening section, when the knights are still at Arthur's court. Once they have left on the quest, although superficially some of the adventures may have parallels in earlier Arthurian romance, they take place on a totally different plane. It is stressed at the beginning of the quest, and by various "preudoms" thereafter, that these are spiritual, not terrestial events, and so the methods normally used by the knights are no longer appropriate. Instead of encountering physical opponents the knights undergo a series of tests of their spiritual qualities, in other words, temptations. Sinfulness or failure to remember the spiritual nature of this quest prevents the knights from even experiencing any adventures. Whereas in the Perlesvaus the adventures are earthly but can be used as illustrations or reminders of Christian truths, all the adventures in the Queste are spiritual, and, moreover, dreams, visions and explanations occupy more space than action.

We have already shown that the translator was probably working from a more or less complete text of the Queste rather than from a version already abridged[1], so that the translator must be held responsible for at least the major omissions from the Queste. These include Lancelot's vision of Christ in glory (Q 130.28ff./SG 81-), together with the explanation of this vision (Q 134.2ff./SG 81-) and the interpretation of the disinherited lady and her sister as "Sainte Eglise" and the "Vieille Loy" respectively (Q 185.5ff./SG 109-). The accounts of Lancelot's conversations with hermits (Q 63.13ff./SG 41.32ff.; Q 132.32ff./SG 81.32ff.) are, moreover, given in a very shortened form. As the Welsh version retains only the salient features, the impact of the Christian teachings tends to be reduced, and the accounts become less compelling, since little more than a catalogue of points remains.

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[1] See Chapter 1, pp. 15ff..

The translator makes no attempt to harmonise the different ways of putting over the religious meaning in his two romances, or the differences in the use of the Arthurian framework, any more than he adjusts the conflicting conceptions of chivalry. There is no doubt that he failed to grasp the significance or status of the quest in his first text, but by omitting some of the crucial explanatory statements he succeeded in diluting a little the contradictions between the two. However, even abridgement has not resolved the conflict between the two different conceptions of Christianity that emerge in the French romances. So far these conceptions have only been touched on and must now be examined more closely.

Although there are a few cases where both the French romances treat the same points of Christian belief in a similar fashion (for example, the use of the so-called "miracle of St. Gregory" in each, Per 291ff., Q 269.13-21) these are the exceptions to the rule, and each text tends to emphasise different aspects of the Christian doctrine. Thus the redactor of the Perlesvaus, unlike that of the Queste, displays great interest in the Trinity, opening many branches with an invocation to the Trinity. Branch X, for example, begins "si reconmenche .i. autre branche dou Graal, eu non dou Pere e dou Fil e dou Saint Esperit" (Per 7175-76)[1]. Further references within the branches, often supplied by the narrator, indicate the same preoccupation. For example, the conversion of the inhabitants of the Chastel Tornoiant is described thus: "il corurent tantost com (Perlesvaus) fu venuz au batesme, et creürent la Trinité fermement" (Per 5799-5800). This reference is, atypically, retained in Y Seint Greal: "Ac ar hynt peri eu bedydyaw awnaethant a chredu yr drindawt" (SG 328.10-11); on the whole the Welsh translator tends to remove these references. All those at the beginning of the branches have been dropped, whilst the Magic Fountain episode, where the merging of three maidens into one

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[1] This idea is reinforced in the printed edition of 1516 by the use of a woodcut representing the Trinity on the first folio. (Reproduced in Nitze's edition, vol. i, facing p. 12). Although the Queste itself does not display the same preoccupation, an invocation to the Trinity begins the prologue prefixed to it in MS B.N.f.fr.112: "O glorieuse trinite le pere le fils et le benoist sainct esperit" (f.1r.i).

(Per 1963-69) also serves as a reminder, has been entirely left out. This does have the effect of reducing one of the major differences of emphasis between the two parts of the romance. However, it is far from certain that this was the translator's intention; it is far more likely that he was simply dispensing with matter that he did not feel to be essential to the narrative, and the consequences of this abridgement on his work as a whole are probably coincidental.

Both the Queste and Perlesvaus use the theme of the Grail quest to show how man may reach salvation, but the means by which this is to be achieved are totally different. In the Perlesvaus action, in particular military enterprise, is constantly emphasised. On one level the Grail hero is intended to recall Christ redeeming lost souls through his own activity, on another Perlesvaus and other characters, such as Arthur, show that the way to personal salvation is through fighting for Christ. The Perlesvaus vividly illustrates the Crusading spirit that prevailed in France and England at the time it was written, for not only are paganism and Judaism ("la Viez Loi") seen as dangerous threats to Christianity ("la Novele Loi"), but also warfare is at the same time the recommended procedure for furthering Christianity in the world, and the surest way of achieving one's own salvation. The enemies of Christianity are either forcibly converted or massacred, so that scenes of wholesale carnage are common, for example, that of Queen Jandree's people after her conversion (Per 9251-52). This forms a startling contrast to the Queste where killing, even in extenuating circumstances, is disapproved of. Thus Galaad is deeply distressed by the number of people he and his companions have killed at Chastel Carcelois (Q 229.7ff.), and is only reassured when a priest in the castle tells him that they were heathens. (Q 232.5). As a rule the tragic, horrific aspects of killing are stressed, as for example when Lionel goes berserk, kills a hermit and Calogrenant and then tries to murder his brother (Q 188.23-193.16). For the redactor of the Queste it is not so much military prowess and force that lead to God, as personal meditation and sincere repentance for one's sins, so that the pattern of confession and

repentance is extremely common. Lancelot, Gauvain, Perceval and Boort all have long spiritual conversations with abbots, hermits or recluses. Confession, not action, is the most crucial step in the progress towards salvation and revelation, in other words, it is a prerequisite of success in the quest. We learn this from the "preudom" who tells Boort: "Par cele porte, qui est apelee confession, sanz quoi nus ne puet venir a Jhesucrist, covient entrer en cest Queste et muer l'estre de chascun" (Q 163.20-22). This concern with the progress of the individual and his soul is, of course, quite opposed to the crusading spirit of the Perlesvaus, so that it has become a commonplace to describe the Perlesvaus as a Cluniac work and the Queste as a Cistercian one[1]. Presenting the two parts as a whole cannot fail to create contradictions, therefore. Once again it may be said that the tendency to abridge reduces a little the glaring inconsistencies between the two, but these are nevertheless considerable. It is true that very occasionally a feature of the Queste, the first part of Y Seint Greal, is taken over into the second half of the translation. The references to knights receiving hospitality at Cistercian abbeys provide a good example. These abbeys are very common in the Queste; for example, Galaad (Q 26.26-27) finds that "sa voie l'amena droit a une blanche abeie". Cistercian abbeys would naturally be out of place in the Perlesvaus, with its Cluniac viewpoint,yet in the second part of Y Seint Greal the translator, presumably influenced by the Queste, describes as Cistercian the abbey founded after Perlesvaus's mother set up a chapel: "Gwedy hynny med yr ystorya ef aadeilywyt yno manachlawc wenn" (SG 414.4). Such references are at odds with the rest of the section and serve only to increase the confusion.

So far the translator's tendency to abridge where possible has been stressed. However, there is one important exception to this rule. Little or no abridgement has taken place in the close references to Scripture (including the apocryphal gospels) in the course of passages of exegesis in both the

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1 Compare Nitze, vol. ii, pp. 83-88.

Queste and Perlesvaus. In the Perlesvaus such references are brief and of a fairly general character, so that there is nothing more detailed, for example, than the words of the priest at the Chastel del Enqueste to Gauvain:

> "par Evaim fu Adans traïz, et toz li poples qui adonc estoit, et li siecles qui est a venir s'en doudra a toz jorz mes. Por ce que Adans fu li premiers hom, l'apele il roi, car il fu nostre pere terriens, et sa fame roïne" (Per 2167-70).

These statements are already sufficiently concise for the translator to retain them with little further abridgement:

> "...drwy eua y twyllywyt adaf.achwbwl oc adoeth ohonaw ynteu. achanys adaf agrewyt yngyntaf or pobloed.am hynny yd ydys yny alw ef yn vrenhin.kanys efo yw yn tat daearawl ni.Ac eua oed y vrenhines" (SG 238.28-32).

In the Queste, however, references to Scripture are extremely common and usually take the form of detailed retellings of Biblical stories. The most notable example is the story of the Tree of Life from the time of Adam and Eve to Solomon's time and beyond. It is true that some of these passages from the Bible or from the Apocryphal Gospels have been omitted in the Welsh; the account of Moses striking water from a rock (Q 69.8-18) has been abandoned. The remaining passages of this type are preserved with comparatively little abridgement. These episodes are those which follow closely Biblical or apocryphal texts which had already been translated into Welsh by the time Y Seint Greal was produced. Consequently it is not surprising to find close parallels between such Welsh Scriptural writings and Y Seint Greal itself. As Thomas Jones noticed some years ago[1], in one case a passage in Y Seint Greal is so close to the Welsh version of the Gospel of Nichodemus that we can only conclude that our translator was quoting from that rather than translating from the French. This passage forms part of the account of Pilate washing his hands at the judgement of Christ. In Y Seint Greal this account is fuller than in the Queste and reads as follows:

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[1] Thomas Jones, "Pre-Reformation Welsh Versions of the Scriptures", NLWJ iv (1945), p. 112.

"..pan esgussodes pilatus am Iessu grist wrth y bobyl.drwy gymryt dwfyr y ymolchi.A dywedut diargywed wyfi heb ef o waet y gwirion hwnn.Ac wynteu ae hattebassant ef yn druan.Ac a dywedassant.Bit y waet ef heb wynt arnam ni ac ar an plant". (SG 25.29-34).

The oldest version of the Welsh Gospel of Nichodemus is preserved in MS Peniarth 5 (the White Book of Rhydderch, dated 1275-1325)[1]. There this incident appears several times, similar language being used in each case, as the following quotations will show:

"Diargywed wyfi o waet y gwiryonn hvnn.val y gueluch chvi. Bit arnam ni ac ar yn meibon y waet ef heb yr idewon". (BBCS xiv, p. 260.2-3).

"a guedy gostegu y bobyl.gouyn ae hvnn a geissyei herot.hvnn heb wynt.ac yna y kymerth pilatus dvuyr.ac ymolchi ygwyd y bobyl.a dywedut. bit y waet ef arnauch chui.ac arch y meibon(sic)". (BBCS xiv, p. 261.38-40).

"Ac ofynhav oe galonn aoruc pilatus ac ymolchi a dywedut. Yggwyd yr heul glan ywyfi hep ef o waet y gwiryonn hvnn.A chvitheu a gymersauch arnavch.ac ar ych meibon y waet ef". (BBSC xiv, p. 263.9-11).

The similarity between the phrases underlined here and those used in Y Seint Greal is such that although there is no one passage in Euengyl Nicodemus that contains all the phrases preserved in our text, it is certain that the translator of Y Seint Greal had these passages in mind. Two further considerations lend support to this conclusion. In the first place, the Red Book of Talgarth (MS Llanstephan 27), which is the work of Hywel Fychan, the scribe of the Peniarth 11 manuscript of Y Seint Greal, contains a version of the Gospel of Nichodemus closely related to the Peniarth 5 version quoted above[2], so that the translator probably had access to the text. In addition, the translator actually states that he is quoting from a Welsh version for he introduces the passage in Y Seint Greal as follows:

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[1] See J.E. Caerwyn Williams, "Efengyl Nicodemus yn Gymraeg", BBCS xiv (1950), pp. 108-112, 257-73.

[2] J. Gwenogvryn Evans stated that this text in Llanstephan 27 was copied from Peniarth 5 (RWMSS, vol. ii, p. 458), but Caerwyn Williams refutes this claim: "Y mae testun II (Llanstephan 27) yn debyg iawn i I (Peniarth 5), mor debyg fel y gallai II yn hawdd iawn fod yn gopi o I, ond pan gymharer y ddau'n fanwl, dengys yr ychydig wahaniaethau mai gwell, efallai, yw tybio ddarfod copio I a II yn uniongyrchol neu'n anuniongyrchol o'r un cynsail". (BBCS xiv, p. 109). For the relationship of Llanstephan 27 and Peniarth 11 see Chapter 2, p. 42.

"Y llef ynteu a deuei or bed a arwydokaa parabyl doluryus yssyd yny groclith pan esgussodes pilatus am Iessu grist wrth y bobyl." (SG 25.27-29).

As a rule "Y Groclith" (literally, "the lesson of the cross") is the title given to a combined text consisting of the Gospel of Matthew or, as here, the apocryphal Acta Pilati, together with an account of the finding of the True Cross by Helena, and these were read in church on Good Friday[1]. In the Peniarth 5 text, all these form a continuous text with Ystorya Adaf, under the same heading of Euangel Nicodemi[2]. In this version, and in the very closely related Llanstephan 27 text, are also found parallels to other scriptural passages corresponding to those in the Queste. Notable examples are the tale of Cain and Abel and the Tree of Life (in Ystorya Adaf) and the account of Joseph of Arimathea asking Pilate for Christ's body (in the actual Gospel of Nichodemus section). However, in these cases the verbal similarities are not sufficient for us to conclude that here too the translator was actually quoting from them. Nevertheless, even if the translator was not always quoting directly from these Welsh Scriptural translations at these points, the inclusion of these very passages in the Red Book of Talgarth, a product of the same scribe as was responsible for the earliest manuscript of our text, suggests that the translator was familiar with these Christian writings. If he was a cleric, as we have already suggested in an earlier chapter, then it is of course most likely that he would have known them. Such familiarity with existing Welsh versions was probably the reason for his retaining in their entirety these Scriptural passages from the French text, rather than following his usual policy of abridgement.

If the technique of our two French romances is compared with the early Welsh prose literature with which our translator was probably familiar, it becomes evident that the French use of regular reminders of the Christian

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[1] See Thomas Jones, NLWJ iv, pp. 109-11.

[2] The title "Euangel Nicodemus" in Peniarth 5 seems to have been added above Ystorya Adaf by a later hand. See J.E. Caerwyn Williams, BBCS xiv, p. 108.

nature of the text would have been quite foreign to him. We noted earlier that even the three Welsh Arthurian romances exclude reference to Christian practices of the kind common in Chrétien. Yet in the Perlesvaus the narrator often interposes his own comments or reminders about the holy nature of the material. As a rule, these are incorporated into the transition formulae referring to the source that occur frequently in the romance. As the source is claimed to be ultimately a book written by the historian Josephus from an angel's dictation, reference to the source inevitably also recalls the religious significance of the text, as well as giving it weighty authority. These phrases, such as "Josephes nos recorde par la devine escriture" (Per 5494) tend to be abandoned (SG 319-), although the only lengthy passage of this type is, rather surprisingly, retained. In this last case (Per 6615-30), the narrator explains that God altered the geography of Britain so that the knights might have more varied adventures. This is rendered quite faithfully in Y Seint Greal (SG 347.23-35), perhaps because the magical shifting of the shape of the land appealed to the translator, or perhaps, more prosaically, because at this point he was translating automatically without attempting to edit his material.

Reference to daily religious practices abound in both French romances as another means of keeping the Christian nature of the material before us. The commonest are the references to knights attending mass regularly, especially before embarking on a new adventure or just after experiencing one. In the Perlesvaus Gauvain, for example, after staying the night with a hermit "s'en parti quant il ot la messe oïe" (Per 4218), whilst in the Queste, the whole company of knights attended mass before setting out: "si tost come li jors aparut,se leverent li compaignon et pristrent lor armes et alerent oïr messe a une chapele qui laienz estoit" (Q 26.10-12). In general these references are retained in the Welsh text, although they are more cursory than they are in the French. The last example quoted, for example, is reduced to "athrannoeth y bore wynt aaethant y warandaw offeren. A gwedy yr offeren.." (SG 16.18-19).

. Another similar feature in the French romance is the devotional language that forms an integral part of the speech-patterns of individual characters. The Christian aspect is kept constantly before us by remarks such as, "Ore alez a Dieu qui vos conduie" (Q 56.16) or "A Dieu vos comman"..."E ja Dex ne vos conduie..se vos alez a la cort le roi Artu" (Per 535-36). This last example demonstrates that such references have a largely stylistic function, but nonetheless they appear frequently and do help to keep the Christian context before us. In Y Seint Greal such phrases are usually omitted, perhaps because the translator felt that they were purely formal, but small as they are, their absence, when seen in conjunction with the abridgements and omissions already noted, does contribute to the weakening of the specifically Christian outlook of the material. There are a few isolated cases of the translator actually strengthening or adding to the Christian meaning; for example, "seur totes amors" (Per 423) is rendered "yr duw" (SG 186.13), and "li rois estoit esloigiez de sa terre comme cil qui s'en aloit au Graal" (Per 8061-62) becomes "ac arthur gwedy mynet ỳ bererindawt" (SG 386.22-24), but these are so rare and so minor that they have little or no impact.

Although the heroes of the two romances are still seen as Christian warriors in Y Seint Greal, the evidence of the treatment of various elements that we have seen in this chapter shows that the Christian aspect overall is far less prominent in the Welsh. In Y Seint Greal, partly due to the translator's eagerness to cut down his lengthy work, but also perhaps to uncertainty as to how best to handle new and strange material, the romances are preserved as little more than straightforward narratives recounting the adventures of warriors for whom religion forms an important part of life, rather than the narrative having a specifically religious purpose and function as a means of conveying certain Christian teachings.

Before leaving the Christian aspect of the Perlesvaus, Queste and Y Seint Greal we must consider separately the treatment of the Grail theme. The use of the Grail quest has already been discussed briefly in relation to concepts

of chivalry and to the relationship of the depiction of the Arthurian world to the Christian meaning, but the exact nature and significance of the Grail itself still remains to be considered.

Both the Perlesvaus and Queste, of course, were making use of a theme that had already become familiar since Chrétien's Conte del Graal. We have already noted that the Perlesvaus begins at the point where Le Conte del Graal breaks off and that the narrator assumes knowledge of the main events of the earlier text[1]. Although the Queste is more self-contained in this respect, it still presupposes familiarity with the idea of the Grail as well as with the Arthurian conventions in general. In Chrétien's Conte del Graal, the first true Grail romance, the Christian associations were still only implicit, and the possibilities only began to be fully explored by his successors, but by the time our two French romances were written, the Grail was above all a Christian symbol, often closely linked with the Last Supper and Crucifixion. The Perlesvaus and Queste, therefore, were following on in a well-formed tradition[2]. The Welsh translator, on the other hand, had no native precursors in producing a Welsh, Christianised Grail romance. The earlier romance of Peredur, of course, is often referred to as a Grail romance, and is evidently closely related to Chrétien's Conte del Graal, but strictly speaking it cannot be so described. There is a "dyscyl", the semantic equivalent of the "graal", carried in a procession similar to that in Chrétien's Grail Castle but the mystical aspects are entirely absent in the Welsh. The Grail quest is reduced to a straightforward vengeance quest, and so instead of a mysterious Grail vessel, we find a simple dish or platter on which sits a severed human head. (WM col. 130). Apart from Peredur there is no real evidence for an indigenous Welsh Grail tradition. Y Seint Greal is the only surviving Welsh text that can be called a "Grail romance" in the French sense. The lack of a well-formed,

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[1] Chapter 3, p. 77.

[2] They were probably making use of earlier, post-Chrétien romances. For example, Perlesvaus owes a debt to Robert de Boron's Joseph for its treatment of the Grail in relation to Joseph of Arimathea. For this and other possible sources, see Nitze's edition, vol. ii, pp. 90-156.

Christianised Grail tradition must be borne in mind when considering the translator's treatment of the Grail theme in his French material. His terms of reference, and indeed the word greal itself, are taken straight from the French[1]. Nonetheless, the degree of fidelity to the French romances as usual varies considerably, as we shall see.

Despite their highly individual viewpoints, the Perlesvaus and Queste have some common ground in their treatment of the Grail theme. In both, for example, virginity is a prerequisite for the hero who will succeed in the Grail quest. Furthermore, the Grail hero, although a different individual in each, is depicted as a Christ-like figure throughout. Although it is not possible in either case to say that he represents Christ, it is clear that his actions and experiences are intended to parallel those of Christ[2], this parallelism demonstrating beyond any doubt the essentially Christian character of the Grail. These crucial points, the virginity of the Grail hero and his Messianic attributes, are retained in the Welsh, even though Peredur, the Grail hero of the first part (corresponding to the Queste), was familiar to the translator from the romance of Peredur and from early heroic poetry, where the context was totally non-Christian and the hero's character incompatible with this new role. The translator in this case must have been fully aware of the significance of the theme and of the part played by the hero, and so was prepared to take over these features unchanged from the French.

Although the Grail hero may have a similar role in each, the exact status of the Grail itself is quite different in the two French romances, which naturally gives rise to contradictions when they are juxtaposed. In the Perlesvaus the Grail is primarily a holy relic, a fact which is surely related to the Crusading spirit that pervades the romance. The idea of a relic is introduced in the very first lines of the Perlesvaus:

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[1] Nevertheless, there is ample evidence that the translator knew Peredur and was actually drawing on it. See Chapter 6, pp. 160-62, 170-71.

[2] Compare Thomas Kelly, Le Haut Livre du Graal, pp. 100ff.

"Li estoires du saintisme vessel que on apele Graal, o quel li precieus sans au Sauveeur fu receüz au jor qu'li fu crucefiez". (Per 1-3).

The Grail vessel, then, is that in which Joseph of Arimathea collected the blood of Christ. Moreover, the other objects normally associated with the Grail are likewise holy relics, for when these disappear from the Grail chapel they are described in the following terms:

"Onques puis ne s'i aparut li Graaus, et toutes les autres reliques se sunt esconsees" (Per 5149-50).

These include the lance which was used to wound Christ (Per 33, SG 172.19) and which drips blood from its tip (Per 2426, SG 245.10-11). It is usually referred to as "la lance de coi la pointe (de fer) saine" (e.g. Per 352), but in the Welsh the identification of it with the lance of Longinus, and thus its status as a holy relic, receives greater emphasis, since this phrase is rendered as "gwaew y brathwyt iessu grist ac ef" (SG 183.34). In addition, a sword and shield connected with the Grail are seen as relics. As Grail hero, Perlesvaus before he can succeed in his quest must acquire the shield of Joseph of Arimathea (Per 622-27, SG 192.7-15), whilst the sword which Gauvain restores to the Roi Pescheor (Per 2372, SG 243.34-35) is that used to decapitate John the Baptist. The importance of sword and shield as relics is in no way weakened in Y Seint Greal, these references being retained in full.

The sword and shield that also feature prominently in the Queste have rather different histories. The shield is still associated with Joseph of Arimathea, but was handed by his son, Joseph, to king Ewalach before his battle with Tholomers, a piece of Grail "pre-history" which has no equivalent in the Perlesvaus. Instead of the single sword of the Perlesvaus, we find two, the sword in the stone which Galaad gains at the beginning showing that he is the chosen hero, and the "Espee as Estranges Ranges" on the ship, which carries all the historical and mystical associations of the Grail hero's sword. There is also an additional object associated with the Grail in the Queste, the Grail table, which has the same status as a holy relic, since it seems to be identified with that of the Last Supper (Q 271.21ff.). Here again the translator retains all the details, even strengthening the

identification (SG 164.37-165.1).

The complete absence of the Grail table in the Perlesvaus means that it is also absent from the second part of Y Seint Greal, although this example of a lack of continuity between the two halves is not very noticeable amid the plethora of adventures in the second part. This is not true, however, of the strikingly different nature and function of the sword and shield in the second section. Once again reasonable fidelity in translation gives rise to problems of inconsistency in the Welsh text as a whole. In the Queste again the Grail itself, in one of its aspects, is a relic, as it is in the Perlesvaus, but of a different type. Instead of being the vessel used to collect Christ's blood, it is "L'escuele ou Jhesucriz menja l'aignel le jor de Pasques o ses deciples" (Q 270.27-29). The same idenfitication is made in Y Seint Greal: "y dysgyl y bwyttaawd iessu grist ohonei yr oen y gyt ae disgyblon" (SG 164.17-18), which is contradicted in the Perlesvaus section. It is, of course, unlikely that different definitions or interpretations of the Grail in the various Grail romances troubled contemporary French readers; the very fact that the Grail is capable of a number of different interpretations increases its power and mystery as a symbol. However, such contradictory statements within a single text like Y Seint Greal inevitably cause confusion and uncertainty in the reader. This is not to say that there is no common ground at all between the two French versions in their conception of the Grail. For example, sweet smells are associated with the appearance of the Grail in both (Q 15.22-24; Per 2428), but the translator neglects this rare opportunity for linking the two sections, for he retains this feature in the first part of Y Seint Greal but drops it in the second. The same thing happens in the case of description of the blood from the lance dripping into the Grail vessel, a feature found only in these two romances (Q 269.9-10; Per 2424-27). The translator in this instance retains the reference in the second section (SG 245.10-11) but leaves it out in the first.

In the Queste the Grail has two functions not found in the Perlesvaus, for it is important as a healer (Q 58.21-59.18) and as a nourisher (Q 84.4ff.

These characteristics are preserved in the first part of Y Seint Greal (SG 39.18-34; 55.5-7), but their absence in the second part (since they are not found in the Perlesvaus) is not, on the surface, of crucial importance. However, it is in its comforting and feeding of Christ's followers in prison (Q 84.4-6, SG 55.5-7; Q 276.27-30, SG 168.9-13) that the Grail displays affinities with the Holy Ghost. This interpretation of the Grail has been fully examined by Gilson, who argued that the Grail in the Queste represented the grace of the Holy Spirit[1]. The two are, in fact, explicitly equated in the romance: "li Sainz Graax, ce est la grace del Saint Esperit" (Q 159.2). The Welsh redactor may have been prepared to retain the identification of the Grail with concrete objects, in other words, to present it and its associated objects as holy relics, but he seems ill at ease with more abstract interpretations. The theological implications of such an interpretation may also have troubled him. Certainly the line connecting the Grail with the grace of the Holy Spirit has been partly left out in the translation, and the whole passage garbled, so that we are left with a totally different, bald statement that "y ffynnawn...a gyffelybwn ni y seint greal. yr hwnn y mae dwfyr yndi" (SG 93.22-24). The translator's attitude to the Grail theme is summed up by his treatment of the climactic episode of the Queste, when Galaad is permitted to look into the Grail. Although abridging as usual, he follows in its broad outlines the preparation for this event, up to the point where the hero steps forward to look into the vessel. In our sad catalogue of his weaknesses, we cannot blame the translator for substituting the unsatisfactory "a edrychawd ar y racwerthuawr lestyr" (SG 169.5) for "regarde dedenz le saint vessel" (Q 277.32), since he was actually following his French manuscript here. The group of manuscripts to which Y Seint Greal is closely related (N, Y, P, S, S') all read "deuant" for "dedanz" at this point[2].

[1] See E. Gilson, "La Mystique de la Grace dans La Queste del Saint Graal" in Les Idées et les Lettres (Paris 1932), pp. 59-91.

[2] The Irish translation of the Queste, Lorgaireacht an tSoidhigh Naomtha, also describes Galaad looking upon the Grail (ed. Sheila Falconer, p. 177). Perhaps the English version that Falconer claims was used by this translator was based on a French manuscript related to the same group. Compare above, Chapter 3, pp. 74-75.

However, the translator must be held responsible for omitting the lines "Si comence a trembler molt durement, si tost come la mortel char commença a regarder les esperitex choses" (Q 277.33-278.2), which are among the most significant of the whole romance, for here the conventional terms of courtly love-service are transposed into a new, Christian context.

There is nothing in the Welsh text to suggest that for the translator the Grail was in any way the powerful Christian symbol it is in the French romances, where it is capable of many different interpretations and cannot be pinned down to one particular meaning valid throughout. Yet again the translator can only be said to have weakened the force of his original, by reducing a complex element to a single, rather prosaic idea of a relic. Haste in translation may be partly the cause, but we cannot escape the conclusion that the translator was either unconscious of or uninterested in anything beyond the narrative thread of his French originals, and that many of their less tangible qualities were lost on him.

Chapter 6: Native Welsh Tradition in Y Seint Greal

Although Y Seint Greal bears all the marks of translation from French and could not be confused with a native Welsh product, close examination shows that the translator was by no means unaware of earlier Welsh prose narrative and Arthurian traditions. In this chapter we shall consider the extent of his familiarity with pre-existing native traditions and how far these were harmonised with his French material. Three distinct levels of native tradition can be distinguished in Y Seint Greal. The first is made up of characters, motifs, episodes and even stylistic features and techniques which, although taken over with few changes from the Queste and Perlesvaus, are actually very similar to, or even identical with, those in earlier, native Welsh tradition. On the second level we find overtly continental features in the French romances being replaced by a rough equivalent from Welsh tradition, whilst on the third level the translator adds to his version features characteristic of earlier native tradition which have no counterpart in the French.

Let us begin by examining the first level. It should be stressed that whatever were the precise origins of the Arthurian romances in France, whether or not French writers were drawing on specifically Celtic traditions, the Arthurian literature produced in France from the twelfth century onwards had a certain amount in common with earlier and contemporary Welsh literature. The same heroes, with similar names, took part in comparable adventures in each, although the treatment and details varied considerably. Thus when the continental developments of the Arthurian legend reached Wales, it was possible for the Welsh to recognise in the main protagonists, such as Artu, Gauvain, Yvain and Perceval, their own heroes, Arthur, Gwalchmei, Owein and Peredur, and identify them. Furthermore, the adventures of the continental heroes, where they differed from those known in Welsh sources, could simply be added to and incorporated in the existing Welsh stock of tradition. As a result it can be difficult to distinguish between the two threads of tradition in Welsh material that has undergone continental influence. Thus in the case

of the three romances of Gereint, Owein and Peredur, corresponding to Chrétien's Erec, Yvain and Perceval, it is virtually impossible to establish with certainty the extent or exact nature of the influence of continental developments on the Welsh. In the case of Y Seint Greal the relationship is not in any doubt, for the redactor calls himself "y trossyawdyr" (SG 432.29), but if we compare the Perlesvaus and Queste with earlier Welsh Arthurian tales, we find that some motifs or even entire episodes in the French romances bear remarkable similarity to passages in the Welsh sources, so that even as late as the thirteenth century, and in romances of indisputable French origin, style and outlook, there is still plenty of common ground with Welsh tradition. For example, the basic narrative pattern of the hero riding on through a forest and coming out into a clearing or plain where he reaches a dwelling or meets someone and so embarks on an adventure, is common in Welsh as well as in French. Accordingly, it is found in Peredur, for example, not only in the sections that closely parallel Chrétien's Perceval, but also in the "native" sequence of the text, that is, the adventures recounted in columns 145-165 of the White Book of Rhydderch, that have no counterpart in Chrétien's romance. It is not just the sequence of events that is paralleled, but even the technique used in relating them, whereby we see the surroundings as if through the eyes of the main protagonist, or as if looking over his shoulder, as in modern cinema photography. In addition, there is a gradual narrowing of the focus so that we move from a general view of the landscape to concentrating on one particular area where the next step in the action is to take place. An example will show how this works. The following passage is taken from Peredur, where this technique is particularly well-developed:

> "..dwy nos a deudyd y bu (Peredur) yn kerdet ynyalwch a diffeithwch heb uwyt heb diawt.Ac yna y doeth y goet mawr ynyal. Ac ymhell yn y coet.ef a welei llanerch o vaes.Ac yn y llanerch y gwelei pebyll. Ac ynrith eglwys ef a gant y pater wrth y pebyll.Apharth ar pebyll y daw.A chadeir eur yn agos yr drws.A morwyn wineu telediw yn eisted yn y gadeir a ractal eureit am y thal.a mein damllywychedic yn y ractal.A modrwy eur vras ar y llaw". (WM col. 120).

Exactly the same procedure is found in our translation, as the following

example shows:

> "Yna kychwyn ymeith aoruc ef.a ... marchogaeth ohonaw drwy syurneioed yny doeth y tir teckaf or awelsei eiryoet.Ac ar hynny ef a arganvu gastell oe vlaen.Apharth a hwnnw y doeth ef.a dynessau parth ar castell aoruc ef.ac arganuot llew yn gorwed ar y porth.ac o bop tu yr porth ydoed deu vilein gwedyr wneuthur o elydyn.ac yngossot yn engiryawl ar y neb adelei yno ymywn.Aphan weles gwalchmei hynny ny bu hy ganthaw dyuot yn nes no hynny yr porth rac ovyn y llew ar mileinyeit elydyn. ac odyna edrych aoruc ar y gaer.ac ar y mur ef awelei gapel. ac ar y capel ef awelei deir croes.ac ar bop (croes) eryr o eur." (SG 224.32-225.6).

Nevertheless, if we compare this passage with its French source we find that the translator has made no significant alterations apart from some abridgement, which, by removing descriptive detail, tends to make the technique stand out more clearly. The corresponding passage in the Perlesvaus reads as follows:

> "Il s'en part toz esbahiz e entre en la forest ... il erra tant par terres e par roiaumes qu'il trova une terre molt bele e molt ri(ch)e e molt plenteïve, e un chastel en miliu (sea)nt, molt bel e molt riche.Il s'en va cele part e aproche le chastel, e le voit avironné de grant mur, e voit l'entree du chastel molt fort. E esgarde e voit .i. lion enchaané qui se gisoit enmi l'entree de la porte, e estoit fichiee la chaaine o mur.E avoit a chascune partie de la porte .ii. vilains massiz de coivre qui fischié estoient o mur,e descochoient par enging carriax d'aubaleste par grant force e par grant aïr. Messire Gavains n'ose aprochier la porte por ce q'il voit le lion a la porte e tex genz.Il esgarde desus les murs amont,e voit une maniere de genz qi sanbloient estre de sainte vie,e vit provoires qui estoient revestu d'aubes,e chevaliers anciens e chanuz qui vestu erent religieusement.E avoit a chascun qernel du mur une croiz,e (une) chapele desus le mur par ont on ve(noit d'une grant) sale qui o chastel estoit.E avoit desus la chapele .iii. crois,e desus chascune .i. angle d'or". (Per 1687-1703).

Although it is clear that the translator is adding nothing to his original, he is using a technique which seems to have been a standard topos in descriptive passages in Welsh, and which would be immediately familiar to a Welsh reader, so that its use in Y Seint Greal brings the translation into line with earlier prose tradition.

Turning to individual motifs and episodes in which readers of Y Seint Greal would recognise close parallels to those in their own, native traditions, we find, for example, that the Magic Chessboard incident in Perlesvaus (Per 2457-66; SG 246.7-22) closely parallels a passage in Peredur (WM col. 174-75), as well as recalling the account of "Gwyddbwyll Gwenddoleu"

in the XIII Tlws Ynys Brydain[1]. Similarly the sword quest undertaken by Gauvain/Gwalchmei in the Perlesvaus (Per 1716ff.) and the second part of Y Seint Greal (SG 225.24ff.) recalls the quest for the sword of Wrnach Gawr in Culhwch a'c Olwen (WM cols. 485-89). In the Queste and the first half of Y Seint Greal the appearance of a young woman on horseback with a message (Q 1.4ff., SG 1.6ff.; Q 12.22ff., SG 8.22ff.) might be associated in the mind of a Welsh reader with the arrival of the Black Maiden in Peredur (WM cols. 165-67), or with the appearance of Rhiannon at Pwyll's court in the First Branch of the Mabinogi (PKM pp. 9-13).

The French romances, therefore, include material, whether single motifs or episodes, which need little or no alteration to fit in with pre-existing Welsh traditions and are as much at home in the Welsh context as they were in the original French. Such points of contact between the two traditions may have helped to counterbalance some of the more foreign aspects of the material translated, and rendered the Perlesvaus and Queste more suitable for dissemination in Wales than non-Arthurian romances might have been. Moreover, as we have just noted, these common motifs and techniques impart a certain native flavour to Y Seint Greal in that a Welsh reader familiar with earlier prose narrative would immediately associate them with their counterparts in those Welsh tales.

Furthermore, the choice of words in the translation often makes a verbal as well as a structural link with the earlier texts. One example of this occurs in the incident in the Perlesvaus (Per 2120.32) where Gauvain is welcomed at the Chastel de la Pelote by two maidens who are then upbraided by a dwarf, whose words are rendered thus in Y Seint Greal:

> "Paham y gwnewch chwi lewenyd kymeint a hwnnw yr gwr aladawd awch brawtuaeth". (SG 237.15-16).

This forms a close parallel not only to the situation in Peredur where

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[1] See TYP pp. 241, 246-47. Although the text of the XIII Tlws is late (the earliest manuscript is fifteenth century), it was undoubtedly drawing on older material, as Rachel Bromwich has shown (TYP p. cxxxiii).

Gwalchmei is welcomed at a castle by a woman, who is then berated by a "gwr gwynllwyt", but also to the words used by the latter:

> "yr achenoges racco educher yn eisted ac yn yfet gyt ar gwr a ladawd awch tat". (WM col. 169).

In each case Gwalchmei is supposed to have killed a close male relative of the woman or women by whom he had been welcomed, and Gwalchmei is instantly recognised by the accuser, although he himself until then was unaware of his crime.

Another reminiscence of Peredur occurs in the description of Gawns/Cahus arriving at the chapel of St. Augustine at the beginning of the second part of Y Seint Greal and of the Perlesvaus. In the Welsh translation this passage reads as follows:

> "Ymywn y doeth ef a disgynnu awnaeth.a rwymaw y varch wrth vodrwy aoed wedy y sawduryaw ym mur y capel a dyuot y mywn awnaeth ef". (SG 176.6-7).

This hardly departs from the French, except in the detail of the ring used for tying up the horse, which the translator has added:

> "Il ala cele part e descendi.Qant li vallez fu descenduz il atacha son roncin e entra dedenz la chapele". (Per 133-34).

The words chosen in Y Seint Greal suggest that the translator had in mind a similar passage in Peredur, depicting the arrival at Arthur's court of the "Syberw llanerch", in the text of the Red Book of Hergest:

> "ef a dathoed marchawc arall y lys arthur.ac a rodes modrwy eurvras yn drws y porth yr dala y uarch". (RB p. 197)[1].

Similarly, Perlesvaus's words to Cahot li Roux,

> "...herbergiez moi a uimés conme chevalier doit fere autre, et le matin au partir si face chascun au meuz qu'il porra". (Per 3211-13),

only need a small alteration,of "best" to "worst", for the translation,

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[1] At this point the earlier, White Book version reads: "ef a doeth marchawc arall yr llys ac arodes modrwy eur vras y dyn yn y porth yr daly y varch. Ac ynteu a doeth racdaw yr neuad" (WM col. 121). This reading is probably preferable; compare Peniarth 14 (second half of the fourteenth century): "..ydoeth ymarchawc arall yr llys.a modrwy eururas arodasei hwnnw y dyn yny porth yr dala yuarch tra adoed ynteu y mewn" (WM p. 288). However, since the same scribe was responsible for parts of the Red Book and for the Peniarth 11 manuscript of Y Seint Greal, it is likely that the translator was influenced by the Red Book text of this passage.

"ỉletya di vyui heno.ac avory gwnaet bawp yr hynn gwaethaf a gallo y gilyd" (SG 269.17-18),

to produce an echo of Arthur's words concerning Cei and Peredur in Peredur:

"mi a geissaf ynyalwch ynys prydein ymdanaw yny kaffwyf.Ac yna gwnaet pob vn onadunt a allo waethaf y gilyd". (WM col. 132).

At this point it should be stressed that although reference is constantly made in this chapter to earlier Welsh traditions, there is no doubt whatsoever that these traditions were still circulating in Wales at the time Y Seint Greal was produced. Not only were the earliest prose tales, from the Pedeir Keinc to the three Arthurian romances, still being copied, but they were included in the Red Book of Hergest, parts of which were the work of Hywel Fychan, the scribe of the Peniarth 11 manuscript of Y Seint Greal, who was probably working in both cases for the same patron. It is possible to conclude,therefore, that Y Seint Greal was produced for the very same public as were the prose tales at this time, so that this public can be assumed to be familiar with those older, native products.

Turning to the second of our three levels, where the translator substitutes for obviously continental elements equivalents from native Welsh tradition, we find a strong link forged between Y Seint Greal and the older Welsh Arthurian literature in the treatment of proper names. The major characters in the French romances are immediately identified with counterparts in Welsh tradition even where the two forms are not very close, as in the case of Perceval/Perlesvaus = Peredur[1], Gauvain = Gwalchmei, Guenievre = Gwenhwyfar. Presumably by the time Y Seint Greal was produced at the end of the fourteenth century the equivalence of these common Arthurian names was well-established; the link had obviously been made when the three earlier Welsh Arthurian romances took on their present form. The same was not necessarily true of the minor figures, however, as witness the treatment of the name Loholt (Arthur's son in the Perlesvaus). The first time he is

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[1] In Peniarth 11 the commonest form is Paredur, which is also found occasionally in the Peniarth 7 fragment of the romance of Peredur (e.g. WM col. 607). However, the form Peredur is used throughout this study because it has become so familiar from the Red and White Book texts of Peredur uab Efrawc.

mentioned in the French (Per 4005) the translator simply borrows the French name, slightly adapted to the rules of Welsh phonology as Loawt (SG 278.6). Later, however, the translator uses the form Llacheu (SG 304.29) where the French has Lohot (Per 4918). Llacheu is the name given to the son of Arthur mentioned in early Welsh sources, for example in the Black Book of Carmarthen, where he is associated with Cei (BBC 96.9, 99.16). The translator, then, has made the connection between the French Lohout and the Welsh Llacheu, but, as Rachel Bromwich has pointed out[1], the hesitation of the translator in identifying the Loholt of the Perlesvaus with the Llacheu of earlier Welsh tradition suggests that the association of these two was neither strong nor longstanding. Curiously, there is also some hesitation in the treatment of the father of the Grail hero in the second part of Y Seint Greal. In the Perlesvaus he is named as "Julain le gros des Vax de Kamâlot" (Per 43), and this is rendered in the Welsh as "efrawc iarll. o benn glynn camalot" (SG 172.38-39). Efrawc Iarll is named as the father of the hero in the romance of Peredur[2], so the translator has replaced the personal name with its equivalent from Welsh tradition. However, instead of continuing as he had begun and replacing also "des Vax de Kamâlot", he has simply translated this literally. Yet in Peredur, once again, the form "efrawc or gogled" is found (WM col. 138) and this could well have been substituted for the foreign epithet that sits uncomfortably with the Welsh name. The translator, as we shall demonstrate shortly, must have been familiar with the romance of Peredur, so his behaviour in this particular instance is probably due to uncertainty as to how far to substitute native equivalents for French names and how far to retain the French ones as they stood. As a rule, however, he seems to have been anxious to replace French names by ones from native Welsh tradition hence Gwalchmei, Gwenhwyfar and Myrddin, for example. He himself demonstrates this by apologising for using French names at all:

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[1] See TYP pp. 416-17.

[2] WM col. 117.

"Ac na vit drwc gan darlleodron y llyfyr hwnn yr na metrwyfi gaffael henweu kymraec ar y rei ffrenghic". (SG 172.30-32).

In one case it is familiarity with native tradition that seems to be the cause of hesitation and inconsistency in his treatment of a proper name, that is Yvains li Avoltres. In the Vulgate Cycle Yvains li Avoltres is a separate character from the better known Yvains li Fiz Urien, the two being half-brothers, for the former was the illegitimate son of Urien by the wife of his seneschal[1]. Meeting the name for the first time in the Queste (Q 27.3), the translator fails to realise this distinction and so replaces Yvains li Avoltres with the name of the Owein well known in Welsh sources. Owein uab Uryen (SG 16.38) originally a historical figure, is found first in the Book of Taliesin, where he appears as a warrior in the North of Britain[2]. In the romance of Owein he took the role played by Yvain li Fiz Urien in Chrétien's Yvain. Reaching the second half of his translation, the redactor of Y Seint Greal seems to have realised that Yvains li Avoltres was not the same as the familiar Owein/Yvain, and so translates the name literally this time, as Owein Vrych (SG 175.13 = Per 109).

Despite these examples of inconsistency and uncertainty, the translator at times shows considerable ingenuity in finding native equivalents. The most striking instance is his treatment of the pun on the Grail hero's name in the Perlesvaus. When Arthur is told of the boyhood of Perlesvaus by the maiden he meets at St. Austin's chapel in Branch I, he learns that the child was named "Pellesvax" because the father, Julain le Gros, "dist qu'il voloit q'il eüst non Pellesvax, car li Sires des Mares li toloit la greigneur partie des Vax de Kamaalot, si voloit qu'il en sovenist son fil par cest non, se Dex li monteplioit tant qu'il fust chevaliers". (Per 460-63). This play on "perd-les-vaux" cannot be taken over into Welsh, so the translator has cleverly used an equivalent pun. The hero, he claims, is called Peredur,

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[1] See H.O. Sommer, Vulgate Version, p. 165.

[2] See for example TYP pp. 479ff.

because "pan anet y mab y peris y dat roi arnaw yr henw hwnnw.par dur. kanys arglwyd y corsyd oed yn ryuelu ar efrawc.a gwedy dwyn yarnaw lawer oe gyfoeth.am hynny y roespwyt ar y mab peredur yr dyuot cof idaw pan vei yn wr gymryt par o dur.neu ynteu o nerth par o dur dial ar arglwyd y corsyd". (SG 187.20-25). The translator was perhaps familiar with the similar pun on peri (spears) and dur (steel) found in the Gododdin ("peredur arueu dur", CA line 359)[1].

An examination of the place names also indicates a familiarity with native traditions and a desire to incorporate these into the continental material. Although some of the less common ones may be retained as they stand in the French (for example Carcelois, Q 229.8, is preserved as Carcaleis, SG 137.26), where possible a Welsh equivalent is given. This may be a form close to that used in the French, such as Lloegyr (SG 40.24) for Logres (Q 60.28) or Rhufein (SG 372.6-7) for Rome (Per 2013). Sometimes, however, the Welsh equivalent has a more distinct form, as in the case of Ynys Avallach (SG 372.6-7), which replaces l'Isle d'Avalon (Per 7586), the Welsh form being attested (as a personal name) as far back as the genealogies on which Geoffrey of Monmouth later drew[2]. Arthur's courts at Camalot and Pennevoiseuse have no equivalent in Welsh tradition and so are retained as they stand, although Pennevoiseuse was so strange to the translator that he renders it in several different ways (penneissense, SG 190.27; penvoisins, SG 278.2; penvesius, SG 281.12; penwed, SG 380.37). The lack of any Welsh tradition of Arthur having a court at Camalot is also indicated by the omission of the narrator's explanation (Per 7280-87) that the Camalot where the hero's mother lived was not the same as that of the court. As the name was foreign to them, there would be no danger of Welsh readers being confused as French ones might be, so the explanation is unnecessary and can be omitted. However, where the Perlesvaus places Arthur's court at Cardueil

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1 Compare TYP p. 489.

2 See TYP pp. 266-67.

(for example Per 78), the translator regularly changes this to Caerllion ar Wysc (for example SG 174.6), just as Caerllion in the romances of Gereint, Owein and Peredur corresponds to the use of Cardueil in Chrétien's romances[1]. Caerllion is the usual setting for Arthur's court in Welsh traditions post-dating Geoffrey of Monmouth, earlier sources such as Culhwch ac Olwen retaining the older localisation of Celli Wig in Cornwall[2].

It is hardly surprising that the translator, having adopted the localisation found in the earlier Welsh Arthurian romances, should also refer to Arthur himself in the same terms as those three romances, referring to him as "yr amherawdyr arthur" where the French has "le roi" (for example Per 8060, SG 386.18-19). The translator must have been not only familiar with earlier traditions but also still thinking of characters in native Welsh terms, despite the continental accretions in his material. This may also be the reason for the omission of the account of the death of Guinevere in Y Seint Greal. Whereas the Perlesvaus refers to "la roïne Genievre, qui morte est e enterree" (Per 7149-50), the translator has softened this to, "Ar vrenhines yssyd kyndristet (o) achaws (arthur) ac o achaws angheu llacheu y mab ac y tebic y byd marw yn ehegyr" (SG 358.38-359.1). This brings us to the third level of tradition in Y Seint Greal, where elements from native tradition are added even though they have no counterpart in the French. Thus the translator adds to the simple name Cei that character's traditional Welsh epithet, naming him Cei hir at one point (SG 340.8 = Per 6316), recalling, for example the references to him as "y gwr hir" in Peredur (WM col. 122-23)[3]. Familiarity with older traditions is similarly displayed among the place names. An excellent example is his addition of the name Ynys y Kedyrn. When the Damoisele du Char tells Arthur, "mes chiés estoit molt biax e molt cheveluz e galonez de riche treceoir d'or" (Per 649-50), this is rendered in the Welsh as "nyt oed yn ynys y kedyrn morwyn nac gwreic degach y phletheu gwellt no

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[1] e.g. Owein, WM col. 223, Yvain (Ed. M. Roques, Paris 1960), line 7.

[2] e.g. Culhwch ac Olwen, WM col. 497.

[3] Compare also the use of Cei hir, at a different point in the narrative, in the Peniarth 15 fragment of Y Seint Greal (line 19: see Appendix I).

myui" (SG 192.39-193.1). This old name is otherwise found only in Branwen, where it appears several times as a name for Britain (for example PKM pp. 30-32). A further place-name peculiar to the Welsh text is rather more difficult to assess. Where the Perlesvaus refers to "une ille qui est en ceste mer" (Per 3933), Y Seint Greal gives "ynys yr honn aelwir lanoc" (SG 276.1). This is a reference to Ynys Lannog (Glannawg or Glannog's Island) off the eastern tip of Anglesey, now known as Ynys Seiriol in Welsh and Priestholm or Puffin Island in English. It is difficult to see exactly why the translator has added this name here, but the island does have some important associations. It is first mentioned as "insula Glannauc" in the entry for A.D. 629 in the Annales Cambriae[1], when Cadwallon was blockaded there by a fleet belonging to Edwin of Northumbria, but it is unlikely that this was what the translator had in mind. There is a tradition that Glannawg's son, Helig Foel, or Helig ab Lannawg, had lands there that were overrun by the sea, but this legend is not thought to go back as far as the time of Y Seint Greal[2]. If our translator was a cleric in a monastery, however, he might have known of the house of Augustinians there[3]. Nonetheless, the Welsh coastline is not lacking in holy islands associated with saints, so there still remains the question of the choice of this one in particular. It was never such an important monastic or pilgrimage centre as was Bardsey, for instance, and there do not seem to have been any important traditions associated with it. Ynys Lannog is not mentioned in any other Middle Welsh prose writings, nor in the Triads. It is possible, of course, that there was some special tradition attached to the island that has been lost without trace, but the most likely explanation for the inclusion of this name is that

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1 Ed. E. Phillimore, Y Cymmrodor ix (1888), p. 157.

2 See F.J. North, The Legend of Llys Helig (Llandudno 1940) and Idem, Sunken Cities, Legends of the coast and lakes of Wales (Cardiff 1957). North argues that the legend of a sunken city only became attached to the area between Ynys Lannog and north Caernarfonshire in the seventeenth century.

3 For the religious settlements on the island, see Arch. Camb., Series vi, i (1901), pp. 85ff.; D. Knowles & R. Neville Hadcock, Medieval Religious Houses in England and Wales (London 1971), p. 171; the Report of the Royal Commission on Ancient Monuments in Anglesey (London 1937), pp. 141-44.

the translator had lived in northern Caernarfonshire or eastern Anglesey and chose this island as he was familiar with it[1].

The relationship between the style of Y Seint Greal and the earlier Welsh prose traditions must now be considered. In both language and style Y Seint Greal is visibly later than, say, the three Arthurian romances preserved in the White and the Red Book, and it bears the marks of being a translation. This fact emerges very clearly if the Peniarth 11 text is compared with the Peniarth 15 fragment, where one episode has been transposed into a totally native context, with all continental features carefully excised[2]. Nonetheless, there is a significant number of cases even in the Peniarth 11 text where the translator's style has such close affinities with that found in earlier prose narrative that he must have been familiar with texts like Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi and the three romances. One such case is the repeated use of the introductory verb with direct speech, a feature characteristic of the prose style of the earlier tales, which is adopted in Y Seint Greal. Examples of such constructions as "Ac yna y dywawt arthur wrth y gwr du.Ny ro duw ymi nawd heb ef os myui a ryd nawd ytti" (SG 185.18), are found in Gereint, for example:

> "Ac yna y dywawd gwalchmei vrth arthur.Arglwyd heb ef ponyd oed iawn i titheu.." (WM col. 387).

In addition, the translator makes use of a number of set phrases or formulae which are common in the earlier tales. Some of these formulae are closely linked with certain repeated narrative patterns. For example, phrases like "a phan yttoedynt uelly ar yr ymdidan hwnnw llyma uorwyn ieuanc aduwyndec yn dyuot attunt" (SG 8.22-24) are frequently used in the older tales to introduce a new person or step in the action. Thus we find in Peredur, "Pan yttoedynt uelly.wynt awelynt yn dyfot y mywn gwr du" (WM col. 164), and in

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[1] This need not invalidate the conclusion reached in Chapter 2, that the translator was from south-east Wales, as this does not preclude his ever having visited or lived in north Wales, nor the possibility of his having relatives there.

[2] See Appendix I.

Breudwyt Ronabwy, "Aphan yttoedynt uelly yndigrifaf gantunt eu gware uch yr wydbwyll.nachaf y gwelynt o pebyll gwynn penngech ... mackwy ieuanc pengrych melyn" (WM col. 212). This pattern is sometimes varied by the use of megys, for example:

"Megys y bydei walchmei uelly nachaf deu varchawc urdawl yn dyuot" (SG 243.8-9).

In all these cases, the translator is adding to the French text. Sometimes this same type of formula is used simply to mark the passage of time, as in the following case:

"Ac uelly ybuant yn ymdidan.yny yttoed gwedy hanner dyd" (SG 70.19).

A slightly different formula is used in the same way, to provide a transition between two steps in the action. Phrases like "Ac yno y bu yr amherawdyr arthur y nos honno" (SG 180.17), "Ac yno y nos honno y buant" (SG 35.2) are used in the same context in, for example, Peredur ("Yno y bu y nos honno.." WM col. 170). Set phrases are also used where there is a movement from one place to another, as in "Aphahyt bynnac y bu y mab yn kerdet arhyt y byt ef adoeth y lys arthur" (SG 188.28). Exactly the same formula is used on a number of occasions in the Pedeir Keinc, for example in Manawydan:

"A pha hyt bynnac y bydynt ar y ford, wynt a doethant y Dyuet" (PKM p. 50),

and in Branwen:

"Pa hyt bynnac y bydynt ar y ford, wynt a doethant hyt yn Llundein" (PKM p. 47).

A similar link between our translation and the earlier prose tales may also be observed in direct speech, in the use of introductory phrases or interjections. Thus the formula "gwir a dywedy", common in Y Seint Greal (for example, SG 200.16) and the similar "a gwybyd di yn lle gwir" (for example, SG 430.26) are found in earlier narrative tradition, as for example, "Arglwydes heb ynteu, gwir adywedy" (Peredur, WM col. 165). Even in his choice of oaths the translator tends to follow earlier tradition. Among the commonest are "Myn vyngcret" (for example, SG 3.16-17) and "rof i a duw" (for example, SG 48.16), which are also found frequently in the three romances. Examples from Peredur include "Myn vygcret heb y peredur" (WM col. 124) and

"na rodaf y rof i a duw" (WM col. 148)[1].

The stylistic similarities between Y Seint Greal and the older surviving Welsh prose tales should not be overemphasised, for Y Seint Greal could never be mistaken for anything other than a translation. Nonetheless, this makes the repeated use of phrases and formulae characteristic of the earlier literature all the more striking.

The translator's familiarity with Welsh tradition in general has been demonstrated, but in fact among the examples quoted the closest and commonest links have been with Peredur. The examples we have already seen suggest that the translator knew the romance of Peredur well, was influenced by its style and identified the hero completely with the Perceval of the Queste and with Perlesvaus, and that he was deliberately, or perhaps sometimes even unconsciously, using this material in Y Seint Greal. This possibility becomes a certainty when we consider the treatment in the translation of the references to Peredur's family and childhood. The first case occurs in the Queste when the recluse who is also Perceval's aunt warns him not to undertake a battle with an unknown knight (Galaad):

> "Avez vos talent de morir ausi come vostre frere, qui sont mort et ocis par lor outrage? Et certes, se vos morez en tel maniere, ce sera damages granz et vostre parenté en abessera mout" (Q 72.33-73.3).

In Y Seint Greal this becomes:

> "A vynny di ymlad ac ef.ac awyt chwannawc di yth lad ual y llas dy vrodyr oc eu hymladeu ae twrneimyeint.Ac jawn mawr yw yth genedyl di oth ledir ual y llas wynteu". (SG 47.30-34).

The information that Perceval's brothers were killed in "battles and tournaments" is not given anywhere in La Queste del Saint Graal. It is true that their deaths are mentioned in the Perlesvaus:

> "Tuit cist morurent a armes o service du Saint Prophete qui avoit renovelee la Loi par sa mort, e plessierent ses ennemis a leur pooir". (Per 52-54).

But even here there is nothing exactly equivalent. However, at the beginning

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[1] Further examples of stylistic similarities between Y Seint Greal and earlier Welsh prose will be found in Chapter 7.

of the romance of Peredur we hear that Efrawc, Peredur's father, was killed together with Peredur's brothers:

> "Nyt oe gyfoeth yn benhaf yd ymborthei efrawc namyn o twrneimeint ac ymladeu a ryueloed.ac ual y may mynych yr neb a ymganlyno a ryuel ef a las.ac ef ay chwemeib". (WM col. 117).

This provides exactly the facts mentioned in Y Seint Greal, and furthermore, even the same words are used, "o twrneimeint ac ymladeu" in Peredur and "oc eu hymladeu ae twrneimyeint" in Y Seint Greal.

Further light is thrown on the relationship between Y Seint Greal and Peredur by the treatment of the passage in Perlesvaus in which the hero's family background is described. Arthur is given a long account of the hero's "enfances" when he meets a maiden at St. Austin's chapel. This passage is worth quoting in full:

> "Li vallez fu molt biax e genz, e crut, e commença a aler par les forez a lancier de ses javeloz as cers e as bisches comme Galois. Ses peres e sa mere l'amoient molt.E estoient .i. jor venu fors de leur recet esbatre, de coi la forez fu prochainne; e avoit entre la forest e le recet une chapele petite qui seoit seur .iiii. colonbes de marbre; e estoit coverte de fust, e avoit dedenz un petit autel, e devant l'autel avoit .i. sarqeu molt bel, e estoit pardesus la figure d'un home escrite. Sire, fet la damoisele au roi, li vallez demanda a son pere qex hom gisoit dedenz cel sarqeu.Li peres li respondi: 'Certes, biax filz, ge ne vos sé dire, car li sarqeuz i est ainçois que li peres mon pere fust nez, e onques n'oï dire a nului q'il seüst qu'il a dedenz, fors tant que les letres qi sont o sarqeu dient: qant li mieldres chevaliers du monde vendra ci, li sarqeuz overra, e verra on ce qu'il a dedenz'. -Damoisele, fet li rois Artuz, a il molt la passé de chevaliers puisque li sarqeuz i fu mis? -Oïl, sire, tant que ge nes sé nonbrer; ne onques ne se mut li sarqeuz. Qant li vallez oï ainsi parler son pere,il demanda que chevaliers estoit. 'Biax filz, fist la mere, vos le devriez bien savoir par lignage'. Ele dist au vallet q'il avoit .xi. oncles eü de par son pere qi avoient esté tuit ocis a armes, e ne vesqi chascuns que .xii. anz chevaliers. Sire, fet ele au roi, li valez respondi que ce ne demandoit il mie, mes comfet chevalier estoient; e li peres li respondi que ce estoient cil du monde o il avoit plus de valeur. Aprés li dist: 'Biax filz, il ont hauberz de fer vestiz por leur cors garantir, e hiaumes laciez, e escuz e glaives, e espees çaintes por ex deffendre'.
> Sire, fet la damoisele, qant li peres ot ainsi parlé au vallet, il retornerent ensanble au chastel. Qant vint l'endema(i)n la matinee,li vallez se leva, e oï les oisiax chanter, e se pensa qu'il iroit deduire en la forest, por le jor qi biax estoit. E monta seur un des chaceeurs son pere, e porta ses javeloz comme Galois, e ala en forest; e trova .i. cerf, e le suï bien .iiii. liues galesches, tant qu'il vint en une lande; e trova .ii. chevaliers armez qui la se conbatoient. E avoit li uns .i. vermeil escu, e li autres .i. blanc. Il guerpi la chace du cerf por esgarde(r) la mellee, e vit que li Vermelz Chevaliers conqueroit le Blanc. Il lança l'un de ses javeloz au Vermeil Chevalier si durement q'il li faxa son hauberc e li fist passer parmi le cors, e li chevaliers chaï morz.(...)

"Sire, il enmena le destrier chiés son pere e chiés sa mere. Il furent molt dolant qant il sorent les noveles du chevalier q'il ot ocis. Il orent droit, car granz painne leur en crut puis. Sire, li vallez se parti du recet son pere e sa mere e vint a la cort le roi Artu. Li rois le fist chevalier molt volentiers qant il sot sa volenté. Aprés se parti de la cort, e ala aventurer par totes les terres". (Per 463-507).

Much of the information given here is already known to the reader familiar with Chrétien's Perceval and also fits in with the account given in the corresponding section of Peredur (WM cols. 117-25). The Perlesvaus account agrees with these on a number of points. The boy is brought up near the forest with his mother, for example, and amuses himself throwing darts at deer. The two French accounts put this against a conventional springtime background. In all three versions, the boy is kept ignorant of what a knight is, for his brothers have been killed in knightly activities. Having found out what knights are, the boy resolves to leave, despite his mother's grief, and later meets and defeats a Red Knight, winning his horse, and travels to Arthur's court where he is finally knighted by Arthur. There can be no doubt at all that the translator of Y Seint Greal had this passage in mind as he worked, for he has included in his version of it a detail found only in Peredur, not in the French versions of this story. Whereas in the Perlesvaus the boy is armed with "ses javeloz" (Per 491) and in Chrétien's version with "trois gavelos" (Perceval line 79), in Y Seint Greal he has "dyrneit o aflacheu" (SG 188.7-8). This is clearly inherited from the description in Peredur of the young hero setting out for Arthur's court:

"A chychwynu racdaw ymdeith a dyrneit gaflacheu blaenllym yny law". (WM col. 120).[1]

Although the Perlesvaus agrees with the earlier French and Welsh accounts in these broad outlines, so that the translator is able to link them with specific reminiscences, there are a few important differences between them. For example, in both Peredur and Le Conte del Graal the boy's father is dead, having been killed in the same circumstances as the brothers. The translator

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[1] The Red Book text, which our translator probably knew, is even closer to Y Seint Greal at this point, for it reads "dyrneit o aflacheu" (RB col. 657, p. 195).

is clearly unhappy about the father still being alive, which is contrary to the Welsh tradition, and so he changes father to foster-father ("y datmaeth") after the account of Peredur's birth (SG 187.27), although in the rest of the passage he uses the two forms interchangeably. A further feature peculiar to the Perlesvaus is the sarcophagus incident. The Welsh translator retains it, but makes certain alterations. The "letres qi sont o sarqeu" (Per 474) are omitted, instead Peredur's father knows from hearsay ("wynt a dywedynt", SG 187.36) that all will be known, not when "li mieldres chevaliers du monde vendra ci" (Per 474-75), but "pan delei y milwr goreu neu yr eil goreu or holl vyt" (SG 187.37), the translator attempting to come to terms with the fact that in the first part of his work Galaad is the best knight in the world, but in the second part it is Perlesvaus/Peredur. The whole account has become very confused in the Welsh, presumably because it did not conform to the familiar version of the hero's childhood, and some important information has been left out or misplaced. Thus the statement by Peredur's father that when the best knight in the world arrives, the coffin will open, has disappeared, but is replaced by a very unsuitable remark attributed to Arthur: "Panyt ymegyr yr ysgrin yr neb ual y gweler beth yssyd yndi" (SG 187.38-39). The fact that there was nothing at all similar to this in Peredur, or indeed in any other Welsh narrative sources, meant that the translator was uncertain whether to include it at all, and, if so, how to treat it. Finally, the account of Peredur asking what a knight was, which appears, but in a different form, in Peredur (WM col. 118) and Chrétien's Perceval (line 174ff.), is omitted entirely in Y Seint Greal. Given that the translator was familiar with Peredur, and that his readers were also, he probably felt that this information would already be known to them and that it did not need repeating. Moreover, if the translator was as keen to abridge at this point as he was elsewhere, this section was not a bad choice, for not only would the information probably be known to his readers already, but in addition there is no further reference to it in the Perlesvaus, or indeed in the translation.

From the translator's evident familiarity with older traditions and his

active use of them, it is clear that such native traditions were still very much alive despite the contemporary popularity of continental literature. Most, if not all, of the new works commissioned and produced in Welsh at this period may have been translations, but, as witness compendia like the Red Book of Hergest, the older literature was still being written down, and it was sufficiently well-known for the translator of our text to make extensive use of it and,presumably, for his audience to recognise and appreciate such references. The translator must have had in mind the tastes and needs of his public and was consciously reworking his material to this end. Realising that a literal translation of these two French romances would be unsuitable he has endeavoured to bring them into line with the kind of material with which the Welsh public would be familiar.

Chapter 7: The Redactor of Y Seint Greal as Translator

Hitherto we have concentrated on the translator's treatment of the structure, themes and ideas of the two French romances, but now the more technical aspects of his work must be examined, and his abilities as a translator assessed. However, the aims and standards of a mediaeval translator were not those of his present-day counterpart, whose work must remain as faithful as possible to the original, producing a translation that is not only accurate but preserves as much as possible of the style and tone. In the main period of translation of foreign texts into Welsh, although accuracy and fidelity to the original were considered important in translating religious writings, secular material was treated with considerable freedom. Lest the achievements of these mediaeval translators be judged by anachronistic modern standards, their aims in translating and the problems facing them must be considered.

As clarity was one of the main concerns of the translator, prose rather than verse was the most satisfactory medium for this type of writing, and in fact all the Welsh translations that survive from the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries are prose works[1]. Unhampered by the demands of rhyme, metre and, in Welsh, cynghanedd, the translator is able to concentrate on the essential meaning of his text, a particularly important consideration when religious, and especially liturgical, texts were translated. Some translators of the period state this explicitly, for example the Englishman Robert Mannyng writing in the fourteenth century states that "there are many who do not understand hard English when they see it in rhyme...I did not compose my work to be praised, but that ignorant men might be helped. If it were written in tail, foreign or interlaced rhyme, there are enough Englishmen who could not get the clue to the meaning"[2]. Apart from producing a clear, comprehensible

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[1] Nonetheless, it should be remembered that in Welsh prose was the usual medium for pure narrative, whereas in France most secular narrative works were produced in verse until the beginning of the thirteenth century, and verse continued to be used long afterwards side by side with prose.

[2] Allen Rogers Benham, English Literature from Widsith to the Death of Chaucer (New Haven 1916), p. 515.

translation, translators were also concerned with the problem of writing smoothly and idiomatically at the same time as keeping close to the original, as we are told by Gruffudd Bola in the introduction to his Welsh translation of the Credo Athanasius:

> "Kymereis i arnaf vychydic o lauur y troy yr Credo hvnn yn ieith y gellych ti y darllein a'e dyall..Vn peth hagen a dylyy ti y wybot ar y dechreu, pan trosser ieith yn y llall, megys Lladin yg Kymraeg, na ellir yn wastat symut y geir yn y gilyd, a chyt a hynny kynnal priodolder yr ieith a synnvyr yr ymadravd yn tec.Vrth hynny y troes i weitheu y geir yn y gilyd, a gveith ereill y dodeis synnvyr yn lle y synnvyr heruyd mod a phriodolder yn ieith ni".[1]

Concern with such problems was not confined to Welsh translators, for the very same principles are set out by an English translator in the preface to the second Wyclifite Bible in about 1380:

> "translate after the sentence and not only after the words, so that the sentence be as open, either opener, in English as in Latin, and go not far from the letter; and if the letter may not be used in the translating, let the sentence ever be whole and open, for the words owe to serve to the intent and sentence, and else the words be superfluous either false".[2]

Also in the second half of the fourteenth century, Trevisa, translator of Higden's Polychronicon, followed the same rules for making his translation "clere and plaine, to be known and understandyn", as his letter to Lord Berkeley on the theory of translation demonstrates[3]. Such testimony indicates that those producing vernacular translations in England and Wales in the latter half of the Middle Ages were well aware of the problems to be surmounted. However, the statements are a little misleading, for they suggest that a translator was always careful to keep reasonably close to his original, whilst our comparison so far of Y Seint Greal with the Queste and Perlesvaus shows only too well that this was not always the case. In dealing with secular literature of this type fidelity to the text cannot have been regarded as essential, and might even be a disadvantage, for some editing or adaptation

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[1] Ed. H. Lewis, pp. 195-96.

[2] A.W. Pollard (ed.), An English Garner: Fifteenth Century Prose and Verse (Edinburgh 1903), p. 194.

[3] "Letter to Lord Berkeley on Translation", in A.J. Perry (ed.), Trevisa's Dialogue (EETS no. 167, London 1925), p. xxxiv.

might be necessary before a particular text could be fully understood by its new audience, since differences between even neighbouring societies were greater than today, and contacts between them fewer. Consequently both interpolation and abridgement are common in Welsh translations of the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein, for example, includes borrowings from Culhwch a'c Olwen[1], whilst in Y Seint Greal itself we have seen that older native traditions have been woven into the continental material to render it more acceptable to the Welsh public. Interpolation of non-essential, extraneous matter into prose narrative was not confined to translations but can in fact also be observed in earlier, native Welsh tales, like Culhwch a'c Olwen and the Pedeir Keinc. In the same way, the actual length of the French texts when taken together may have been unacceptable, for, as we have suggested, some of the abridgements in Y Seint Greal were probably made with the Welsh public in mind, reducing the number of overtly foreign elements that would be inappropriate or even incomprehensible to them. It should also be noted that the earlier Welsh Arthurian romances of Gereint, Owein and Peredur are considerably shorter than their French counterparts, whilst direct translations from French, such as Bown de Hamtwn and parts of the Charlemagne cycle, have, like Y Seint Greal, been abridged. The translator of Y Seint Greal must have been well aware that such texts had been written in a different society, for people with different customs and tastes, and realised that some amendments must be made before they were suitable for the new public, and so deliberately reworked his material. Translators of this period probably set out to produce, not just a translation, but something that was a work of literature in its own right. As Stephen J. Williams put it, "Gan eu bod yn llenorion, fe fynnent wella ar yr adrodd yn y cerddi hirwyntog gwreiddol drwy dethol ac addasu a chymwyso ac yn wir drwy ail-greu o'r defnydd ger eu bron"[2]. In Chapters 4 and 5 we have seen this

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[1] See H. Lewis (ed.), Chwedleu Seith Doethon Rufein, p. 23, and Thomas Parry, HLlG, p. 74.

[2] Stephen J. Williams, "Rhai Cyfieithiadau" in Trad. Rhydd., p. 308.

process at work in Y Seint Greal, but we have still to examine the finer details, how faithful the translator can be to the French when he is not deliberately making major changes to the original texts.

Certain problems of methodology arise at the outset, since we do not have the exact copies of the Queste and Perlesvaus used by the translator and since it cannot be proved definitely whether or not the scribe of Peniarth 11, the earliest manuscript version, was also the translator, and if he was not, whether he made any alterations to the translator's version. However, we have already shown that although we no longer have the very copies of the French romances that were used by the translator, we do have manuscripts belonging to the same group as the ones he had before him, so that we can compare his account with these versions and be reasonably confident that any significant departures from these were either deliberate or the result of misreading or misunderstanding. Furthermore, we have seen that all the available evidence indicates that Peniarth 11 is, if not the first, then at least one of the first copies of Y Seint Greal to be made from the translator's draft. We have also shown that translator and scribe were in this case separate individuals, but perhaps working together in the same monastery. All in all, it is safe to assume that our text is a faithful version of the translator's work, so that it can be judged against the French. However, translators of our period not only had different aims and practices from those of the present day, but they also faced an additional problem in the language itself. Even a cursory glance at the examples of French texts translated into Welsh shows that most translators had an imperfect command of the second language. Although there is no direct evidence for Wales, surviving manuals for English speakers learning French suggest that poor training was the cause[1]. The earliest extant examples of these manuals, from the thirteenth century, are so confusing and full of contradictions and mistakes, that it is not surprising that the standard of accuracy in translations was

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[1] See, for example, W. Rothwell, "The Teaching of French in Mediaeval England" MLR lxiii (1968), pp. 37-46.

not always high. Whilst Latin, the language from which religious texts were translated, was probably taught thoroughly in the monasteries, the opportunities for achieving a good command of French were probably more limited, even in an area of mixed population like south-east Wales, where people probably picked it up gradually rather than being actually taught. The appearance of teaching manuals for English speakers by the thirteenth century shows that by that time French was becoming a foreign language in England, and there is nothing to indicate that the same was not also true of Wales. In short, our translator cannot be assumed to have the same competence as a present-day translator. We must bear in mind not only the way he had been taught but also how much experience he might have had of reading French. The existence of French books in Wales has already been established[1], but if the translator was, like other Welsh translators, a cleric in a monastery, it is possible that he might not have had access to secular French texts. If this were the case, then the fact that the material was new to him could have added to the difficulty of his task. However, we have seen that he was familiar with Welsh secular literature at least, even to the extent of drawing on it. Any knowledge of French literature is clearly more difficult to trace, particularly since the translator consciously excluded many overtly continental elements. Nonetheless, French Arthurian material was circulating in the same area of Wales as that in which our text was probably produced, and there is even one indication that the translator had come into contact with the Prose Lancelot, suggesting that romances of the type he translated were not entirely new to him[2].

Some indication of how much French the translator knew can be gleaned from the text, by seeing how often he obviously mistranslates a word or phrase, how often he falls back on borrowing the French word, and how far he is able to find satisfactory Welsh equivalents when dealing with specialised or

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[1] See Chapter 2, p. 30, and Appendix 3.

[2] See Appendix 3.

technical vocabulary. This last case, the treatment of the specialised vocabulary that sometimes crops up in the French texts, will clearly be a test of the translator's abilities. Where a word refers to some foreign object or idea that has no equivalent in Welsh, he does tend to borrow the French word, so that guisarmes (Per 9104), for example, becomes gisarmeu (SG 419.11)[1], and estoupe (Q 111.27) becomes ystopyawd (SG 72.7), but in many cases such words had already been borrowed into Welsh from French or Anglo-Norman, for they are attested in written sources earlier than Y Seint Greal. Terms such as kwrteis, kwrteissi are obvious examples[2]. In these cases, where the word had been borrowed some time previously, the translator may not even have thought of them as loan-words. The very large number of English as well as French or Anglo-Norman borrowings in his vocabulary supports this hypothesis. However, the translator is usually able to find excellent Welsh equivalents even for technical terms. Some of the commonest examples relate to personal status (vavasor (Q 46.21))for example, is rendered as gwr mwyn (SG 30.36-37)), or to procedures connected with status, so that "devindrent home a la damoisele" (Q 51.1) for example is translated "gwneuthur gwrogaeth idi" (SG 33.32). Even some terms connected with courtoisie have been given satisfactory Welsh equivalents, so that "por ce que il ne cuit que ce soit losenge" (Per 8594) has been translated, "rac tybyeit wrthaw y vot yn ethrodwr" (SG 403.34-35). Legal terms are always translated with considerable ease as precise Welsh equivalents can be found in the Welsh Laws. "Homicides de l'une et de l'autre" (Q 179.22-23), for example, appears as "yn affeithyawl y alanas y vorwyn ath kevynderw" (SG 105.36). In the field of religion the translator can find exact equivalents without difficulty, perhaps not surprisingly if he was a cleric. Examples include pechawt for pechié, chwant y byd for covoitise, godineb for luxure[3].

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[1] See Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru s.v. gisarm.

[2] See Chapter 5, pp.128-29.

[3] See Chapter 5, p. 130.

Having seen some examples of the translator's ability to deal satisfactorily with individual words of a technical nature, we must now consider how far he departs from his text as a rule, and whether such departures are deliberate or accidental. The main criticism that can be levelled at him is his fondness for abridging. In earlier chapters we have constantly noted this tendency and its sometimes unfortunate results. It is comparatively rare to find the translator slavishly following the French text; in general his version is quite free, although not departing too far from the spirit or gist of the original. At this point, before examining in detail some specific cases of departure from the text, we must demonstrate what is the "norm" for the translator, by comparing a few selected passages from the French with the Welsh version. Passages of different types have been chosen so as to show the translator's procedure in various contexts. Words or phrases in one text having no equivalent in the other are underlined.

1. Queste/Y Seint Greal

a) Narrative: Q 32.6-19/SG 20.9-21

Il avint empres la Passion	ef auu amser gwedy diodef iessu
Jhesucrist quarante et deus	grist.deng mlyned a deugeint.
anz que Joseph d'Arimacie, li	dyuot Josep o arimathia yr hwnn
gentix chevaliers qui despendi	a gladawd iessu grist ac ae tynnawd
Nostre Seignor del la sainte	y ar brenn y groc.a chychwyn
veraie Croix, se parti de la cité	ymeith o gaerussalem ae genedyl
de Jhersualem entre lui et grant	ygyt ac ef.a cherded aorugant
partie de son parenté.Et tant	wy trwy ewyllys duw yny doethant
errerent, quant il se furent	y ynys aelwit sarram yny lle yd
mis a la voie par le comandement	yttoed brenhin sarrain.Yr hwnn
Nostre Seignor, qu'il vindrent	aelwit eualac. Ac ynyr amser
en la cité de Sarraz, que li rois	hwnnw yd oed ryuel ar eualac y
Ewalach, qui lors estoit sarrazins,	gan vrenhin arall galluawc yr
tenoit.Et a cel tens que Joseph	hwnn aelwit tolomeus.Aphan yttoed

vint a Sarraz avoit Ewalach guerre a un sien voisin, riche roi et puissant, qui marchissoit a sa terre; et estoit icil rois apelez Tholomers.Et quant Ewalach se fu aprestez por aler sor Tholomer, qui sa terre li demandoit, Josephes li filz Joseph dist que, se il aloit en la bataille si desconseilliez com il estoit, il seroit desconfiz et honiz par son anemi.

eualac gwedy ymbaratoi y vynet ambenn tolomeus.Josep uab josep o arimathia a dywawt wrthaw.ot ey mor anghynghorus ac yr wyt yn mynet yr ryuel.mi a rodaf vyngccret itt na deuy drachevyn.

Apart from some abridgement, the only significant changes that have been made in translation are the substitution of deng for deus in the second line, probably due to confusion of deus and dis or deis, and the use of direct instead of indirect speech in the last few lines.

b) Conversation: Q 90.6-20/SG 59.7-18

..il voit Perceval, si li dist: "Ha! sire, veistes vos par ci passer un chevalier armé qui menoit le destrier que vos me demandastes ore?"-"Oïl voir, fet Perceval,por quoi le dis tu?" -"Por ce, fet cil, qu'il le m'a tolu a force.Si m'en a mort et maubailli; car mes sires m'en occirra en quelque leu que il me truist".-"Et de ce, fet Perceval,que veuz tu que je te face? Je nel te puis mie rendre, car je suis a pié. Mes se je eusse cheval, jel te cuidasse

Aphan weles ef beredur ef aovynnawd idaw awelsei y marchawc yn mynet heibyaw.Gweleis heb y peredur.Aphaham ydwyt ti yny ovyn ef.Arglwyd heb ynteu ef a duc y march y gennyf y dreis. ac neur daruu idaw vy llygru kanys vy arglwyd am llad pa le bynnac ym kaffo. Beth a vynny dimi wrth hynny heb y peredur.ny allafi y beri ef ytti.Arglwyd heb ynteu dos di ar gevyn yr hacknei hwnn ac or gelly di ennill y march arnaw ef bit teu dy hun.Pa delw heb

ramener par tens".-"Sire, fet
li vaslez, montez sor mon roncin,
et, se vos le poez conquierre,
vostre soit".-"Et ton roncin,
fet Perceval, coment le ravras tu se
je puis le cheval gaaignier?"
-"Sire, fet cil, je vos sivrai tout
a pié, et se vos poez le chevalier
conquierre, je prendrai mon
roncin, et li chevax soit vostres".
Et il dit qu'il ne demande mielz.

y peredur y keffy di dy varch
os y llall a ennillafi. Arglwyd
heb ynteu mi adeuaf yth ol di
ar vyntraet.

Here the translator has transposed Direct Speech into Indirect in the opening lines, but apart from a characteristic amount of abridgement the only significant alteration is the use of march in the penultimate paragraph, where the French has roncin. This inappropriate usage seems to stem from concern for conciseness.

c) Action: Q 191.14-29/SG 113.20-33

Quant Lyonel entend ceste parole,
se prent son escu et demande
Calogrenant qui il est. Et il se
nomme; et quant il le conoist,
si le deffie et li cort suz
l'espee trete, et li done si
grant cop come il puet amener
del brant.Quant cil voit qu'il
est venuz a la meslee, si cort
prendre son escu et tret l'espee.
Et il estoit bons chevaliers et
de grant force, et se deffent viguer-
eusement.Et dure la meslee tant que
Boorz se fu levez en son seant,

Yna lionel a duc hwyl ac agymerth
y daryan.ac aovynnawd idaw pa
un oed. Aphan y hadnabu ynteu ef.
ef ae rybudyawd drwy erchi idaw
ymoglyt. Ac yna ymlad awnaethant
pob un ae gilyd yn wrawl kanys
marchogyon da oedynt.apharhau
awnaeth y uateil y ryngthunt
yny gyfodes bwrt y uyny yny
eisted.yn gynwannet ac na thebygei
ef yn y mis hwnnw allel chweith
ymlad nac ymdaraw.onyt duw arodei
ras idaw.Aphan weles galogryuant
yn ymlad ae vrawt.trwm vu ganthaw

si angoisseus qu'il ne cuide mes des mois avoir pooir, se Nostre Sires ne li aide. Quant il voit Calogrenant qui a son frere se combat,si est molt a malaise.Car se Calogrenant ocit son frere devant lui, il n'avra ja mes joie, et s'il ocit Calogrenant, la honte en sera soe: car il set bien qu'il ne commença la meslee se por lui non.De cette chose est il molt a malese; si les alast volentiers departir, s'il poïst, mes il se delt tant qu'il n'a pooir de soi deffendre ne d'autrui assaillir. Si a tant resgardé qu'il vit Calogrenant au desoz de la bataille.

a thrist am na allei vynet y ryngthunt.kanys kewilyd oed ganthaw or lledit galogryuant yny amdiffyn ef.ac ymlad awnaeth y gwyr eissyoes yny vu hytrach lionel nor llall.

In this case the Welsh account, whilst retaining the main features of the French, is considerably compressed. Paraphrase has been used as much as abridgement.

2. Perlesvaus/Y Seint Greal

a) Conversation: Per 78-96/SG 174.5-36

Li rois Artuz ert a Cardueil un jor de l'Ascension.E estoit levez du mengier, e aloit par la sale de chief a autre, e esgarda e vit la roïne, qui ert assise a une fenestre.Li rois ala seoir delez li, e l' esgarda enmi le vis e vit que les lermes li coroient des ielz. "Dame, dist li rois, que ce est?

Megys ydoed arthur diuieu kyrchauel ynghaerllion ar wysc.gwedy bwyta achyuodi yn eu sefyll.ef a welei y vrenhines yn drist vedylgar yn eisted yn ymyl ffenestyr.Sef aoruc ynteu eisted ygyt a hi.ac edrych yn y hwyneb ae gwelet yn wylaw.Arglwydes heb y brenhin pa ystyr yw y teudi y wylaw.Arglwyd heb hi.os wylaw awnaf i.nyt reit y titheu uot yn

por coi plorez vos?-Sire, dist
ele,g'é droit se ge pleur.
Vos meïsmes ne devez pas mener
joie.-Dame, certes no faz ge.
-Sire, fet ele, vos avez droit.
J'é veü a tel jor com hui est,
que vos aviez si grant plenté
de chevaliers en vostre cort que
a paines lé poïst on nonbrer.
Ore en i a si poi chascun jor
que ge en é grant vergoigne,
ne nule aventure n'i avient mes;
si é grant poor que Dex ne vos
ait mis en obli.-Certes, dame,
dist li rois, ge n'é volenté de
fere largesce ne chose qui tort
a honeur; ainz m'est mes talenz
muëz en floibece de cuer, e par
ce sé ge bien que ge per(t) mes
chevaliers e l'amor de mes amis.
-Sire, dist la roïne, se vos aliez
a la chapele Saint Augustin, qui
est en la Blanche Forest, que
on ne puet trover se par aventure
non, je cuit que vos avriez
talent de bien fere au reperier.
Car nus no requist onques
desconseilliez que Dex no
conseillast por lui, porqu'il
le priast de buen cuer.-Dame,
fet li rois, e ge iré molt volen-

drallawen yr hynny.Myn vyngcret
arglwydes heb ef nyt wyf lawen inheu.
Arglwyd heb hitheu iawn awney.mi
aweleis heb hi yngkyfryw diwarnawt
a hediw vot yn gyn amlet marchogyon
urdolyon y gyt a thi.ac o vreid y
gallei neb eu kyfrif nae hamkanu.
Yr awrhonn nyt ynt namyn ychydic.
ac nyt oes chweith antur yn dyuot
yth lys yn y mod y gnottaei.ac am
hynny y mae arnaf i diruawr gewilyd.
ac ovyn heuyt vot duw wedy llidiaw
wrthym an hebryuygu.Myn vy llw heb
yr arthur.nyt oes gennyfi chweith
ewyllys y wneuthur da nac ehalaethder.
na dim oc ellit y drossi ar enryded.
namyn vy medwl yssyd wedy trossi
ar wander a chrydder callon.ac am
hynny y colleis vy marchogyon.
ac y pellassant vy milwyr y wrthyf
a charyat vynghedymdeithyon. Arglwyd
heb y vrenhines.pei elut ti parth
a chapel seint augustin.yr hwnn
yssyd yny llannerch wenn.Ac ny dichawr
neb damweinyaw ar y capel hwnnw
onyt trwy anturyaeth.Mi adebygwn y
trossei ytt ewyllys da ar dy dyuotyat
drachevyn.kanys nyt aeth yno dyn
eiryoet ac anghynghor arnaw.ny chyng-
horei duw ef kynn y dyuot drachevyn.
os gwediei o gallon da.Arglwydes

tiers. Je l'é oï tesmoignier
si com vos dites, e talenz
m'en est venuz trois jors a.

heb ynteu arthur minneu aaf yno kanys
mi a giglef dystolyaethu hynny yn
wir.am medwl inneu yssyd ar hynny
yr ys tri diwarnawt.

Here in contrast to the earlier passages, the translator has very slightly expanded the text, mostly by using two ideas where the French has one, such as "kyfrif" and "hamkanu" for "nonbrer", "llidiaw" and "hebryuygu" for "mis en obli".

b) Description: Per 2856-67/SG 258.37-259.11.

Atant s'en part Lanceloz de
l'ermitage, et chevauche tant
que il vient hors de la forest
et trove une terre gaste et
un païs grant et large, ou il
n'abitoit ne bestes ne oisiax,
car la terre estoit si seche
et si povre q'il n'i trovoient
point de pouture. Lanceloz esgarde
devant lui en loig, et voit une
cité aparoir, si chevauche cele
part grant aleüre, et voit que
la cité est si grant q'il senble
q'ele porpraige un païs. Il voit
les murs qui dechïent environ,
et les portes enclinent de
vellece.Il entra la dedenz et
trove la cité tote voide de gent,
et voit les granz palés dechaüz
et gastes, et trove les marchiez
et les changes toz voiz, et voit
les granz cemetires toz plains de
sarqex et les iglises totes gastes.

Lawnslot ar hynny aaeth ymeith.
a marchogaeth aoruc yny doeth
odieithyr y fforest, a dyuot y
dir daruodedic tlawt o bop da.
ar tir hwnnw aoed uawr ac ehalaeth
aeth heb nac adar nac aniueilyeit
yndaw.Lawnslot yna aedrychawd ce
vlaen ac arganuu dinas ar gynnwll
y wrthaw. A dyuot tu ac yno kyntaf
ac y gallawd aoruc. Ac ef awelei y
dinas hwnnw yn uawr ac yn ehalaeth.
ac yn amgyffret llawer o dir adaear.
Ar mur aoed gwedy syrthyaw yn llawer o
leoed arnaw.ar pyrth yngwyryaw o
heneint. a dyuot aoruc ef ymywn yr
dref yr honn oed wac o dynyon.ar myn-
wennoed yn llawn o vedeu.ar eglwysseu
yn wedw.A marchogaeth aoruc ef yny
doeth y lys vreinyawl.a cheyr llaw
honno sefyll aoruc.

Il chevauche parmi les granz rues
et trove .i. grant palés qui
senbloit estre meudres et plus
entiers de toz les autres. Il
s'areste dedevant.

The translator has omitted some of the details of the description, the chief consequence being the weakening of the impression of desolation.

c) Action: Per 4632-47/SG 296.11-27

Lanceloz est sailli sus et quida
prendre s'espee.Il troeve le
fuerre tot voit. La damoisele qui
l'espee tenoit, li cort sore tote
premeraine, et li .v. chevalier
l'envaïrent de totes parz. Il
perçoit que c'estoit s'espee que
la damoisele tenoit et qu'ele le
coitoit plus que tuit li autre.
Il prent son gleve qui estoit a
son chevez et vient vers li maistre
des chevaliers de plain esllais
et le fiert de si grant vertu qu'il
li empainnt tres parmi le cors
qu'il li passe outre une aune, et le
porte a terre mort. Sa lance peçoia
au retraire.Il cort a la damoisele qui
tenoit s'espee, si li enracha
des poinz et la prent tres parmi
les flans, si l'estraint molt tres
durement envers lui; et ele li
volt retolir par force, de coi
Lanceloz se mervelle molt.Il l'em-

(..Arhynny deffroi aoruc ef) ac
ymauael a gwein y gledyf.Eissyoes
neur daroed cribdeilyaw y cledyf
y arnaw ef.ar marchogyon yn dyuot
y mywn.Ar uorwyn yna a dywawt.ef
a weler heb hi pa delw y dialawch
chwi ar lawnslot.a hitheu ehun yn
gyntaf ahwylyawd idaw.ar pump
marchawc obop parth idaw. Yna
lawnslot a gymerth y waew ac a
hwylyawd yr meistrolaf or pump
marchawc.ac ae trewis yn y vyd
y gwaew trwydaw mwy no llatheit o
hyt.Ac yny dynnu attaw ef atorres.
Ac yna hwylaw aoruc ef tu ac att
y vorwyn y geissyaw y gledyf ae
ysglyffyaw oe dwylaw aoruc.ar
pedwar ereill aoed am y penn ef
yny gystudyaw.ac ynteu adyrchafawd
y law ar vedyr taraw un onadunt.Ac
yna y vorwyn a neityawd y geissyaw
dal lawnslot.ac yn hynny y dyrnawt
a disgynnawd ar y phenn hi.yny hyllt

point ensus de lui et li .iiii. chevalier li revienent. Il hauce l'espee si cuide l'un ferir, et la damoisele se lance entre .ii. et quide Lancelot aerdre si conme li cox dut descendre desor l'un des chevaliers. Il consioi le damoisele tres parmi le chief et l'ocit, de coi il fu molt dolanz, conment qu'ele eüst esploitié envers li.

hyt y dwy ysgwyd.

In this case the translator has begun by paraphrasing, giving a very free account of the French narrative, and has then resorted to simple abridgement, preserving, nonetheless, the main outlines.

From these typical passages it can be seen that the translator's fidelity to his original is by no means constant. Although abridgement and, to a lesser extent, paraphrase are the main characteristics of his work, he occasionally adds an extra idea or nuance. However, these small additions are less likely to alter the sense significantly than are the abridgements. Examination of the type of omissions made and the evidence of the French manuscript traditions has already led us to conclude that the abridgement in the Welsh, in instances where the results are still reasonably coherent, must be deliberate[1]. There are only a few cases where the scribe rather than the translator seems to be responsible and these are easy to identify, for it is usually a question of a single word being omitted so that a sentence is left incomplete. "Dex vos saroit bon gré" (Per 6069), for example, appears in Peniarth 11 as "ti a geffy diolwch gan" (SG 335.27), where "duw" has evidently been omitted by mistake. In general the scribe is careful to correct any mistakes he has made, deleting repeated words or phrases and adding omissions in the margin. In one curious instance it could be either the scribe or scribe and translator together who are responsible, when "poing" is translated

[1] See Chapter 1, p. 20, and Chapter 4, pp. 103ff., 116ff.

as "drwyn" (Q 33.10; SG 21.9). It is inconceivable that a translator who could deal competently at times with quite specialised vocabulary should fail to understand such a common noun, but if he had written, correctly, "dwrn" for "poing" in his rough copy, the scribe could have misread this as "drwyn" in making his fair copy, particularly if the translator had unwittingly transposed the r and the w. ~~[Such an explanation gains support from the appearance of the opposite mistake later in the text, when "Ienes" (Per 1532) is translated as "duryn" (SG 210.2), although "drwyn" must have been intended.]~~

It is hard to establish the precise motivation for some departures from the French for which the translator himself must be responsible, particularly in cases of paraphrase. For example, where the French uses a very precise or an uncommon word and the translator has a much vaguer one, we may suspect that he was uncertain of the exact meaning of the French word, but we cannot rule out the possibility that he was consciously changing the meaning to something which he felt to be more appropriate, or that the change was simply the result of hasty reading. In the description of the Fisher King's Castle in the Perlesvaus, for example, the French text mentions" un angre molt bel, qui a son doit ensaignoit la chapele ou li Sainz Graax estoit, et avoit une pierre precieuse enmi le piz" (Per 2328-29), but the Welsh states that the precious stone is "ardal y capel" (SG 242.33) instead of on the angel's breast. It is possible that the translator could not think of the exact meaning of piz, but he might have felt that a precious stone was out of place in such a place and so decided to move it to the chapel. Sometimes the translator also leaves out a word or phrase in circumstances which suggest that he did not understand the French perfectly. Even allowing for his fondness for abridgement, when he omits phrases like "mendre d'un gorpil" (Per 5496) or "sanz nul escondit faire" (Per 8632), there is a strong possibility that he did so because he was not familiar with the less common words.

One group of departures from the French is quite obviously due to

misreading or misunderstanding[1]. Our understanding of the narrative is not necessarily impaired in such cases, as when "Tres adons" (Per 2189) for example, is apparently read as "tres ans" and so ends up as "yr ysteir blyned" (SG 239.17). Occasionally, however, the results are a little curious. Thus when, in the Perlesvaus, Cahos hides the stolen candlestick "entre sa huese et sa cuisse" (Per 141-42), the translator gives "yn y hossan ledyr" (SG 176.16). This apparently arbitrary change in the sense may be accounted for by assuming that the translator, with a cursory glance, read "cuisse" as "cuir". In the same way, when "bele de la nerté qu'ele avoit" (Q 171.2) is rendered "tec herwyd y vagyat" (SG 99.27), it appears that he has understood "nerté" as a derivative of "naître" rather than of "noir". Confusion between verb and substantive has changed the meaning of Kei's words in Branch I of the Perlesvaus concerning the three stags that draw the cart full of sealed heads, for "si en ferions fere buens lardez" (Per 671) has become "ti a gymerut y blaena or keirw ywellau y larder" (SG 193.23-24), but this is at least still in keeping with the spirit of the original. At times the translator fails to distinguish between masculine and feminine forms so that "la damoisele" (Q 1.26) becomes "marchawc arall" (SG 1.26-27), presumably from confusion of (la) damoisele and (li) damoisel. Misreading a single letter has made a significant change in the sense when "angle d'or" (Per 1703) has been understood as aigle, giving "eryr o eur" in the translation (SG 225.6). These types of mistakes can obviously be imputed to the translator, whether they are due more to haste or carelessness in reading or to sheer ignorance.

Mistranslations due to hasty or careless reading are not confined to common nouns but are even found amongst the proper names. "Gaule" (Q 267.29), for example, is understood as "Galles" and translated as "(c)ymry"(SG 162.19). Most mistakes are made in translating epithets or descriptive place names. For example, "Bertolés li Chaus" (Per 48), for example, becomes "Brecoles Goch" (SG 173.5), "chaus" apparently being understood as "chaud" rather than

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[1] For similar mistakes by another translator, compare YBH, pp. lxxxviiiff.

"chauve". In the same way "Desreez" is understood as "Désiré", so that "Sagramor li Desreez" (Per 8082) becomes "Sagamor Damunedic" (SG 387.13)[1]. Again, the "Damoisele du Char" (Per 809) becomes "Morwyn y Gadeir" (SG 197.20), the most plausible explanation for this being that the translator understood "Char" as the English "chair"[2]. Similar examples may be found among place names, such as "Llannerch dan y Paleis" (SG 358.8) for "Pré des Pailes" (Per 7086), where the French "Pailes", meaning "silks", has been translated as if it were "palais" (a palace). In exactly the same way "Tref des Pailes" (Per 7691) is translated, even more inaccurately, as "Llannerch y Paleis" (SG 375.11). At times carelessness has left the Welsh itself difficult to understand, such as when "e gisoit ses braz desus un orillier" (Per 605-6) appears as "a than y brath ydoed glustoc" (SG 191.26). Here the translator has borrowed the French noun without reflection, and since the form brath is a common noun whose meaning, "wound", is inappropriate in the context, the sentence has become nonsensical. A similar example is the translation of "(il) devale les degrez de la sale" (Per 2533) as "yn disgynnu arhyt pont grech y waeret" (SG 248.25). In one instance a new place name has been created as a result of misreading the French, when "la veve dame de laienz" (Q 188.9-10) has become "wreic wedw o sarens" (SG 111.32). In a few cases misreading the manuscript, rather than misunderstanding the French, seems to be the cause, as when "Port Perillex" (Q 207.30) becomes "(p)ont beriglus" (SG 125.12), although it is just possible that the translator had come across the "Pont Perilleux" in other Arthurian sources[3].

In some instances the situation is not so clear as in these last examples, and it is virtually impossible to tell whether the translator has altered the meaning because he misunderstood the text, or whether he did so deliberately

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[1] It is worth noting that Malory makes exactly the same mistake, calling this knight Sagramor le Desyrous.

[2] The translator of Ystorya Bown de Hamtwn also makes a number of mistakes that seem to be the result of translating a French word or phrase as if it were English. See YBH, pp. xcii-xciii.

[3] See J. Armitage Robinson, Two Glastonbury Legends (Cambridge 1926), pp. 25-27.

in order to "improve" the text. For example, in the Queste when Lancelot arrives at the Grail Castle and tries to enter the chamber where heavenly voices are singing, he cannot enter at all (Q 254.21-23), but in Y Seint Greal, although we are told that the "ystauell ... aoed gwedy y chaeu yndiogel digawn", Lawnslot actually manages to go in: "a throi cliket honno aoruc ef ae hagori" (SG 154.17-18). The addition of this new idea only confuses the passage, as it contradicts the other information we are given. Contradiction and inconsistency, however, as this example suggests, do not seem to worry the translator unduly. This is also true with regard to the treatment of proper names. We have seen in an earlier chapter how the name Loholt was rendered first as Loawt, borrowed directly from the French, but later as Llacheu once the translator realised the identity of the character[1]. Admittedly this suggests the lack of a strong tradition identifying the French Loholt and the Welsh Llacheu, but a translator might be expected to be more consistent. The same practice may be observed in the treatment of other names where a Welsh form was available. Thus Salemons (Solomon) is first rendered as Salamon (SG 78.25; Q 125.20), but later (Q 220.7) the Welsh form Selyf is used (SG 131.10), and in the same way both Augustin (SG 174.27) and Awstin (SG 177.38) are used for Augustin (Per 91,184). Variation in the spelling of proper names is common throughout the mediaeval period, and indeed beyond, but the use of two distinct forms must surely have created confusion. The converse also occurs, two separate names being translated as one, so that two characters become conflated. Both the "Roi Mehaignié" in the Queste (Q 16.16, for example), and the "Roi Pescheor" in the Perlesvaus (Per 2267) become "(brenhin) Peleur" in Y Seint Greal (SG 10.32; 240.38). This may be partly due to the fact that Pelles and the Fisher King are already confused in the Queste del Saint Graal[2]. However, the translator does display a regrettable carelessness rather often, sometimes translating so inaccurately

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[1] See Chapter 6, pp. 162-63.

[2] See Pauphilet's note, Queste, p. 294.

as to make nonsense of a phrase or passage. Thus when Arthur, incognito, defends "King Arthur" against the accusations of the damsel at St.Austin's chapel by saying "on n'est pas buens por le non, mes par le cuer" (Per 530-31), the translator wrecks the meaning by writing: "nyt yr y henw y mae drwc ef, namyn oe gallon" (SG 189.22-23). Again, when the "Orgueilleuse Pucele" explains to Gauvain that her four coffins are prepared for the three best knights in the world and for herself, so that she may possess them in death (Per 1457-72), the translator, reducing the whole of her long speech to one sentence, gives a totally misleading summary: "Ni wybydir vyth heb hi beth yssyd yndunt onyt trwy y marchawc goreu or holl vyt" (SG 218.9-11). He is clearly confusing this set of coffins with the one visited by Perlesvaus as a boy with his father (Per 466-75; SG 187.29-37). When the carelessness is seen in conjunction with the translator's normal tendency to abridge, it suggests the result of haste. Perhaps the translator's patron wanted the work finished by a particular date and so in order to finish as quickly as possible the translator not only abridged but tended also at times to read the French rather quickly and superficially. Such an explanation would be borne out by the fact that the most drastic abridgements and the most glaring examples of inaccurate translation occur in the second part of the text, the translation of Perlesvaus. Only haste can be the explanation for the omission of the whole of the last series of adventures and the summary completion of the narrative.

Despite the inconsistencies and careless omissions that we have seen, by far the largest number of departures from the meaning of the French are evidently deliberate. We have already noted, in discussing the use made of native Welsh traditions in Y Seint Greal, that the translator was often prepared to add to or adapt his original so as to make his version more acceptable to a Welsh public. This practice is not confined to questions of Arthurian tradition, but extends to commonplace ideas and objects, so that obviously foreign phenomena tend to be excised. Consequently a number of proper names that occur in the French but would be unfamiliar to a Welsh

reader are simply omitted, for example Pellehen (Q 201.24; SG 120-). Often they are replaced by a common noun, so that the sense of the passage is not altered. In this way, "Chinon", for example, becomes simply "castell idaw" (Per 7822, SG 379.13).

Simplification of this type is the commonest procedure employed for dealing with foreign elements in the text, usually by reducing a number of specific ideas to one of a more general nature. This is particularly true of descriptions of clothes, where it might be expected that exact Welsh equivalents would be hard to find. Thus "une robe de drap de soie e d'ermine, cote e seurcot e mantel" (Per 552-53) becomes "glan dillat" (SG 190.6), and "un(e) molt riche robe d'un drap d'or" (Per 2347-48) is reduced to "dillat" (SG 243.13). This procedure is also applied to descriptions of rich furnishings, like the following:

> "Li rois gisoit en un lit cordeïz donc li pecol estoient d'ivoire, et i avoit une coute de paile sor quoi il gisoit, et par deseure un covertoir de sable donc li dras estoit molt riches; et avoit un chapel en son chief, sebelin covert d'un vermeil samit, et une croiz d'or deseure, et avoit un orillier desoz son chief qui estoit enbasmez, et avoit as quatre acorz .iiii. pierres qui rendoient molt grant clarté". (Per 2359-65).

In the Welsh all details are dispensed with, and we are left with the following:

> "ac nyt reit oed govyn aoed da y wely. ar glustoc yny ymyl yd oed croes o eur. yn yr ystauell ydoed piler o eur, ac arwarthaf hwnnw yd oed angel. a chroes eur yn y law, a phedwar tors o gwyr yn llosgi yny gylch ogylch". (SG 243.26-30).

Most examples of this particular type occur in the second part of Y Seint Greal, but this is probably due not to increasing haste on the translator's part, but to the terseness and, indeed, the rarity of such descriptions in the Queste. However, we have already seen that the same treatment is extended to other kinds of foreign elements in both sections of the Welsh text, particularly where the translator may not have fully understood the French. Sometimes a paraphrase or a less precise word is used the first time a difficult term or phrase appears, but then a more exact translation may be used subsequently, as if, the second time he came upon it, the translator realised from the context what the meaning must be. For example, when Lancelot is told of the

underground passage occupied by ".i. lion e .ii. gripes" (Per 7396), the translator translates this as "llew...a deu aniueil ereill aruthyr" (SG 369.10-11). Later, however, the translator uses griffyeit (SG 369.39), a Latin borrowing attested by the thirteenth century. Similarly, when the translator reaches the first description of the Damoisele du Char's cart carrying the sealed heads, he renders "un char" (Per 655) as "ryw beiryant ar weith cadeir" (SG 193.7-8), showing that he was uncertain what kind of vehicle this was, even though this phrase is clearly unsuitable, given that the words are spoken by the Damoisele herself. Finding that "char" is going to recur, he then decides on the unsatisfactory "cadeir" (SG 193.18, for example).

This kind of periphrasis or simplification may make little difference to one's understanding of the basic narrative, but reduction to the least common denominator inevitably leaves the text poorer. However, these examples are balanced, if not outweighed, by certain deliberate changes which also appear to be made so that the material may be more acceptable to its new public. In many cases a foreign element is replaced by something familiar from the Welsh way of life, so that not only is the foreign aspect removed, but in addition the Welsh dimension is strengthened. The obvious example is the use of "tawlbwrdd" and "gwyddbwyll", two Celtic board-games[1], where the French has "eschés" (for example, SG 246.11, Per 2459; SG 367.9, Per 7404), but even where a literal translation could have been used the translator sometimes chooses to reinforce the Welsh atmosphere by selecting a more familiar object, as when he translates "de soie ou de lin" (Q 105.2) as "ae o vrethyn ae o hemp" (SG 67.39). The contention that the translator made such alterations because he had his readers in mind is supported by his treatment of references in the French to Wales or Welsh habits. When in the Perlesvaus the narrator refers to ".xx. liues galesches" (Per 997-98), for example, the translator replaces this by "ugein milltir" (SG 203.13), and in the account of the herc's

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[1] See F.R. Lewis, "Gwerin Ffristial a Thawlbwrdd", THSC, 1941, pp. 185-205.

childhood he substitutes "a dyrneit o aflacheu ganthaw herwyd mod y kymry yn yr amser hwnnw "(SG 188.7-9) for "e porta ses javeloz comme Galois" (Per 491). In both these cases the French text is clearly looking at Wales, or an imagined Wales, from a continental viewpoint, so some adjustments must be made for Welsh readers.

The Welsh setting is also reinforced by the translator through the addition of certain small details,so that when the French refers for example to "li Rois Peschierres" being Perlesvaus's uncle (Per 37), this is expanded to "y ewythyr vrawt y vam" (SG 172.24). The link between a man and his mother's brother was considered particularly close and important in early Wales, a fact reflected in much of the prose literature before Y Seint Greal[1].

The close links between the style of Y Seint Greal and that of the earlier Welsh tales have already been discussed in Chapter 6, but here it should be noted in addition that even where the translator is not,apparently, directly influenced by older sources he is able to find excellent native equivalents for idiomatic expressions or stylistic features, and has sufficient sensitivity to the language of his French romances and to the possibilities of his own that he resists literal translation where this might be inappropriate. This may be seen clearly in his treatment of interjections and other set phrases. Examples include "duw ath vendigo" (SG 199.36-37) for "Dex vos gart" (Per 888) and "os da gan duw" (SG 184.3-4) for "se Dex me remaine arriere sauvement" (Per 358). The translator shows great skill in finding equivalents for comparative or figurative expressions. Some of the most notable examples are the use of "kynduet ar pyc duaf" (SG 323.18) for "noir comme de foudre" (Per 5634), "Lawnslot ny roi nytwyd yr yd oed hi yny dywedut" (SG 371.3) for "Lanceloz ne prise rien de cancqu'il ot" (Per 7549). In the same way, for "a grant eslés" (Per 386) he writes "o nerth traet y varch" (SG 185.4). At times the translator is able in addition to remove a "courtly" element inappropriate in the Welsh context, as, for example, when

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[1] Compare for example Peredur: "ath ewythyr titheu vrawt dy vam wyfi" (WM col. 128).

he translates "la graignor joie que damoisele feïst onques a chevalier nul" (Per 8890-91) as "y llewenyd mwyaf or awnaeth dyn eiryoet y arall" (SG 412.33). Occasionally the translator even expands the French in order to fit in a colourful phrase, such as when he translates "et li fiert de si grant aïr q'il li enpaint son glaive tres parmi le cors et l'abat mort" (Per 2834-35) as "ae daraw awnaeth yny vyd y waew trwydaw megys drwy ridill.ac yny vyd ynteu yn varw yr llawr" (SG 258.8), or when "e la blance mule le siut aprés" (Per 6096) becomes "ar mul ae kanlynawd megys pei at uei milgi" (SG 336.15-16). References of particular interest to a Welsh reader, linking the translation with earlier traditions are discussed in Chapter 6, but some of these refer to traditions which by the fourteenth century had become equally popular on the continent. Thus when at the beginning of the Queste the day comes for the "Siege Perilleux" to be filled, the translation adds that the time has elapsed "herwyd proffwydolyaeth vyrdin yr hwnn a wnaeth yr eistedua honn" (SG 3.20-21). [Turn to p197a, over].

Turning now to more general considerations of style, the most noteworthy feature of the translator's prose style is its directness and simplicity. Subordinate clauses are rare; instead the translator links main clauses with conjunctions, of which the commonest is a(c), giving rise to constructions of the following type:

> "Ac yna kyuodi yuyny awnaethant or ffenestyr.Ac edrych awnaeth ef o bop parth idaw.Ac arganuot gwas ieuangk tec". (SG 175.10-12).

A new step in a sequence of events may be marked by one of a number of different phrases of which (a) gwedy..,(ac)ar hynny..,ac odyna.. are the commonest, as in the following examples:

> "Gwedy kychwyn bwrt y wrth y gedymdeithyon..." (SG 95.20-21).
>
> "Ac ar hynny dynessau aoruc arthur parth ar allawr.." (SG 179.4-5).
>
> "Ac odyna roi y law aoruc ar y hossan ledyr.." (SG 177.18-19).

Although in the course of Y Seint Greal the translator uses a variety of such phrases, he does tend to concentrate on one type at a time, using a single phrase several times consecutively before abandoning it in favour of another, so that the style can become rather heavy and repetitive within a single

Allied to the presentation of the material in a manner more acceptable to the new public is the problem of the two contrasting but complementary halves of Y Seint Greal. Some of the difficulties raised by juxtaposing the two French romances have already been discussed, but we must now consider how much adjustment the translator felt obliged to make in order for their presentation as two parts of a whole to satisfy his public. That the translator did think of his work in these terms is suggested by his comment at the end of the first part:

"Ac uelly y teruyna y rann gyntaf or greal" (SG 170.16).

Furthermore, one of the opening lines of the Perlesvaus,

"Li hauz livres du Graal commence o non du Pere e du Fill e du Saint Esperit " (Per 8-9),

has been adjusted to

"Erann honn yr ydys yn y dechreu yn enw y tat ar mab ar yspryt glan "(SG 171.13-14).

whereas at the beginning of this second section reference is made to "Yr ystorya honn" (SG 171.1), the end of this section and of the whole work is marked by the statement

"Ac uelly y teruyna ystoryaeu seint greal" (SG 433.31).

Within the text itself, the changes made to harmonise the two narratives are very few. There is one curious interpolation in the closing passage of the first part that may be an attempt to adapt it to what will follow in the second. When the Grail disappears at the end of the Queste we are told

"il ne fu puis nons si hardiz qu'il osast dire qu'il eust veu le Seint Graal" (Q 279.6-7),

but the translation reads :

"ac yr nynny hyt heuiw ny bu neb aallei y welet ar y uaear onyt gwalchmei unweith "(SG 169.30-32).

The only explanation that can be offered is that the translator had already looked quickly through the Perlesvaus

and had noted that there Gauvain witnessed the Grail procession (Per 2424ff.), although in fact both Arthur and Perlesvaus also see the Grail (Per 7223ff.). Perhaps the translator had read only as far as the account of Gauvain's quest; that quest was clearly uppermost in his mind, for he concludes the Queste section with the following words:

"Bellach dywedadwy yw o rann walchmei. ac o anturyeu y milwyr ual y kyfaruu ac wynt "(SG 170.17-19).

Apart from these two references, the changes that indicate a desire to harmonise the two narratives are confined to the second part of Y Seint Greal and tend to be rather clumsy, which suggests that the inconsistencies caused by combining the Queste and Perlesvaus only struck him once he had embarked on the second section. It is mostly the different identity of the Grail hero that troubles the translator, so that occasionally when he comes across references to Perlesvaus as the best knight in the world he qualifies the statement, since in the first part of his work Galaad was the best knight and Perceval or Peredur no more than second. Hence in the account of the hero's childhood the statement by Perlesvaus' father that the coffin will open "qant li mielures chevaliers du monde vendra ci" (Per 474-75), is modified to "pan delei y milwr goreu neu yr eil goreu or holl vyt" (SG 187.37). In the same way, when Gauvain enquires who owns the forest of Kamaalot and is told it belongs to the "meilleur chevalier du monde" (Per 983), Peredur is described without hesitation as "Y marchawc urdawl eil goreu or holl vyt" (SG 202.32-33). A more explicit statement appears during Gauvain's first meeting with Clamador des Onores. In the French, Gauvain refers to Perlesvaus as "li meldres chevaliers et li plus sages qui vive ou monde, et del plus saintisme lignage" (Per 3054-56), but the translator puts:

"kanys goreu marchawc or oyt yw paredur onyt y nei uab

y geuynderw.nyt amgen no mab lawnslot.yr hwnn aanet o verch brenhin peles.ac a elwir galaath "(SG 264.25-28).

Although these examples show an awareness of at least one of the contradictions between the two French romances, they constitute the sum total of any efforts to deal with them. No further interpolations or modifications of this type occur after the one just quoted; the translator seems to resign himself to inconsistency. If haste was one of the reasons for his tendency to abridge, it may also have been a factor as far as this question was concerned.

[To p.197].

paragraph or section. Thus within the section numbered LXXVIII in Robert Williams's edition, the phrase "A gwedy daruot.." is used four times, and "A gwedy hynny" once (SG 182.11, 18, 26, 30 and 182.20). Similarly in section XCVIII yna appears with monotonous regularity: "Yna y wreic ae merch a gyvodassant y vyny...Yna y kerdassant wy parth ar capel...Yna symlu arnaw yn uawr aoruc gwalchmei...Yna y verch adywawt wrth walchmei.." (SG 204.27-39).

Where one continuous action or state is interrupted by a new step, the translator again uses a variety of phrases indiscriminately; as in the following examples:

"Ac ympenn ruthur gwedy hynny ef a gyuaruu ac ef morwyn ieuangk yn marchogaeth palffrei.Ac yr awr y gweles hi lawnslot hi a gyfarchawd gwell idaw". (SG 81.7-9).

".. ac eisted aoruc ef yn y lle y gnottaei y meudwy eisted.A megys y bydei ef uelly.ef a glywei y drablud yny capel". (SG 179.22-24).

"Ac yna eisted aoruc arthur.a medylyaw nat aei odyno yny vei deruyn ar y gwr da.Ac ual y bydei ef uelly ef aglywei lef". (SG 179.15-18).

"Ac val yd oedynt wy yn ymdidan uelly.nachaf y marchogyon urdolyon or castell yn dyuot attunt". (SG 117.31-33).

"ef..adechreuawd yr offeren.or wynuydedic ueir.Aphandaruu yr offeren yr anckres yna.... aelwis ar lawnslot". (SG 83.38-84.2).

Continuous uninterrupted action is often emphasised by the use of an additional clause summing up after a detailed description of the action, such phrases usually beginning, "ac uelly..". After the description of Galaad's entrance into Arthur's court in the first part of Y Seint Greal, the translator adds,

"Ac uelly y doethant yr eistedua beriglus" (SG 6.16-17).

A further example appears a little later:

"Ac auory heb ef mi athwnaf yn varchawc urdawl.Ac uelly y gwnaeth ynteu". (SG 24.17-19).

New steps in the action or further information on a subject may be introduced by more neutral conjunctions, such as eissyoes, and, less frequently, sef,:

"ymlad aorugant yny oruu ar lambar ffo.Sef aoruc ef ffo yr ysgraff honn". (SG 122.32-33)

"Y capel yssyd beriglus ac anturyus.Eissyoes y mae yno yn trigyaw y gwr santeidyaf o vrenhinyaeth gymry". (SG 174.36-37).

In Chapter 4 we noted that in both parts of Y Seint Greal, as in the Queste and Perlesvaus, the narrative is divided into distinct sections, each, as a rule, concentrating on one character or theme, so that a clear break is usually made at the end of one such section. In neither of the French romances is any particular phrase or formula used to open a new section, but in Y Seint Greal the translator tends to use one or two main types of opening phrase, "Megys ydoed.." or "Diwarnawt ydoed..":

"Megys ydoed yr amherawdyr arthur yn y llys aelwit camalot ..." (SG 1.1-2).

"Megys ydoed arthur diuieu kyrchauel ynghaerllion ar wysc.." (SG 174.5-6).

"Diwarnawt ydoed arthur yngkaerllion yn kynnal gwyl". (SG 389.21-22).

"Diwarnawt ydoed y brenhin yn vedylgar yngkaerllion". (SG 430.3-4).

Similar opening formulae are found in the earlier Welsh prose tales, for example:

"adiwarnawd ef a welei kadw geifyr oed y uam.." (WM col. 117).

Once again the translator seems to be consciously adding a more native flavour to his material. However, many features of the translator's style are, inevitably, taken direct from the French sources. For example, in both the Queste and Perlesvaus a common device for suggesting the passage of time or leading into a new episode is the use of precise time references, which appear to pinpoint the exact hour or duration of an action, but should not really be taken literally. The canonical hours are the usual choice in both French romances, and these are retained in Y Seint Greal:

"Au soir aprés vespres" (Q 198.32)

becomes

"Aphrytnawn gosberawl" (SG 118.31-32).

"A tiex paroles errerent tant qu'il fu hore de none" (Q 200.24)

becomes

"Ac ymdidan uelly aorugant yny vu awr nawn" (SG 119.39-120.1).

An overnight stay with a hermit or at a castle is also employed by the redactors of both French romances to indicate the passage of time, and these

references are likewise preserved in Y Seint Greal, the next step being introduced by "trannoeth y bore" in many cases:

"athrannoeth y bore wynt aaethant y warandaw offeren" (SG 16.18-19;

"Au matin, si tost come li jors aparut, se leverent li compaignon et pristrent lor armes et alerent oïr messe a une chapele", Q 26.10-12).

"Trannoeth y bore ef agyfodes lawnslot y vyny ac aaeth y warandaw offeren" (SG 82.1-2; "Et quant li jorz aparut, il se leva et ala oïr le servise Nostre Seignor", Q 139.24-25).

This device slips naturally into the Welsh translation as it is also used in earlier prose narrative, for example in Peredur:

"Ac yno y bu y nos honno.Trannoeth y bore ef a gyfodes y vynyd". (WM col. 140).

Sometimes time is only marked by very vague phrases, showing that these references have a stylistic function and serve simply as a link between two steps in the narrative rather than having any precise value as indications of time. A variety of phrases is used, as in the following examples:

"Ac ny bu hir wedy hynny.yny oed ar bop onadunt blodeu affrwyth lawer". (SG 100.9-10).

"Yno y trigyawd ef dalym mawr gyt ae vam". (SG 413.34-35).

"Yno y bu y brenhin yn hir o amser". (SG 179.11-12).

"A gwedy bot paredur yno hyt tra vu digrif ganthaw..". (SG 413.1-2).

Another important characteristic of the translator's style, partly inherited from the French romances but also closely linked to the use of a series of main clauses rather than subordinate clauses, is repetition. Frequently the translator repeats the same subject or verb in two adjacent sentences, where this could have been avoided, by using a different verb or pronoun, or even by linking the two sentences.

"a gouyn awnaeth y paredur aoed digassed or byt y ryngthunt.Nac oed heb y paredur". (SG 188.21-22).

"A marchogaeth aoruc yn vedylgar.ac ovyn arnaw y oganu am a dywawt y vorwyn wrthaw.A marchogaeth awnaeth ef yn hyt y dyd hwnnw". (SG 199.26-28).

"Lawnslot agerdawd racdaw yny doeth y gaerllion.ac yna lawnslot adoeth hyt geyrbronn arthur". (SG 404.18-19).

Similarly an idea or action may be restated in slightly different terms, for example, "Tu ac yno ydoeth lawnslot y ty yr anckres" (SG 83.33). Such

repetitions may have been introduced for greater clarity and directness, but here too the translator may have been influenced by the earlier literature where the same practice is found, for example in Peredur:

"ystauell a gyweirwyt y peredur ac y gysgcu ydaethant.Trannoeth y bore peredur a gyfodes y vynyd". (WM col. 130-131).

"Ac ygyt ar dyd peredur a glywei diaspat.A chyfodi yn gyflym aoruc peredur". (WM col. 139).

Another common feature of the style of Y Seint Greal is the pairing of adjectives, adverbs and nouns, as follows:

"Pell a meith med yr ystorya oed dir brenhin magdalans y wrth gyuoeth arthur". (SG 383.34-35).

"Paredur agigleu y dyrnawt yn drwm ac yn vawr". (SG 409.6-7).

"Nysgwnn arglwyd heb y peredur.na pha antur na pha gyflwr y deuthum i yna". (SG 64.37-38).

In some cases the coupling of two particular adjectives in this way may have become a conventional expression, for example, "blin a lludedic". This is found not only in Y Seint Greal (such as "kanys blin wyf alludedic" (SG 250.24) but in other Middle Welsh prose works, for example in Brut Dingestow, "guneuthur..gorffowys y rei blin lludedic" (BD p. 123, line 2). One descriptive technique, that used for leading the narrative into the next episode with a gradual narrowing of the focus, has already been discussed. Just as this type of description is automatically employed when a knight riding through a landscape is about to meet a new adventure, so a set piece is used when a battle or tournament takes place. In both parts of Y Seint Greal, the same phrases recur in such descriptions. Preparation for the encounter often involves taking a run up to the opponent:

"Ac yna yd ymchoelawd y marchawc du drachevyn yr kymryt redec oe varch ynwell". (SG 184.26-27).

"Ac yna ymchoelut draegevyn aoruc yr kymryt redec oe varch". (SG 197.8-9).

"ac ymchoelut drachevyn y gymryt eu redec yn well". (SG 274.27-28).

A particularly dangerous opponent like the Dragon Knight leads both Arthur and Peredur to take the same defensive action:

"ac ymgudyaw aoruc arthur yn gwasgawt y daryan". (SG 185.4-5).

"Eissyoes paredur a ymgudyawd yngkysgawt y daryan". (SG 329.33).

The fierceness of the blows exchanged is often indicated by the same phrases in each description:

"ac ymgyhwrd y gyt a wnaethant a deu waew .... yny yttoed eu llygeit yn disserennu ar gwaet yn tardu allan fford eu ffroeneu ac eu geneueu". (SG 184.31-35).

"ac ae trewis yny oed y lygeit yndisserennu gan angerd y dyrnawt". (SG 276.25-26).

"Yngymeint eu kwymp ac yny yttoed eu gwaet yn ffrydyeu oe geneueu allan". (SG 230.18-19).

"Ac ar hynny lawnslot a briant a ymgyrchassant yn greulawn.yny ytoed eu .... llygeit yndisserennu". (SG 376.9-14).

The battle usually ends with the unhorsing of one of the contestants, the same basic expression being used each time, though with some minor variations:

"yny yttoed dan draet y varch yr llawr" (SG 82.26).

"yny vyd dan draet y varch yn uarw yr llawr" (SG 188.19-20).

"yny vyd dros bedrein y uarch yr llawr" (SG 416.34).

"yny vyd(aristor) ae varch yr llawr" (SG 409.8-9).

These phrases appear in virtually every battle scene, as does "o nerth traet y varch", used to indicate the speed and energy of the charge.

Turning now from description to dialogue, we find that the translator normally follows his sources in the choice of Direct or Indirect Speech, as in the following case:

"Sire, fet Lancelot, ceste semblance que vos m'avez ci mostree..." (Q 64.26).

"Arglwyd heb y lawnslot yna.y parabyl a dywedeist di..." (SG 42.33-34).

This simple pattern is common in the translation, but at times the redactor departs from it, and from his sources, to use the construction already noted, familiar from earlier Welsh prose tradition:

"A hitheu yna adywawt.bwrt heb hi.pany wney di yr hynn aercheis i". (SG 106.39-107.1).

Moreover, there are examples where the translator starts off in Indirect Speech, sometimes following the French in this, but sometimes paraphrasing or abridging, and then slips without warning into Direct Speech. For example:

"Ac yna rei or marchogyon ... a dywedassant nat yrdunt wy elldeu yr ordinawyt y twrneimant.a gedwch y ereill beth y gyt achwi". (SG 291.1-3).

In such cases the identity of the speaker or speakers is in no doubt, so that no confusion is caused, despite the lack of introductory phrase; indeed, the passage gains a certain dramatic quality.

In this chapter, we have had to point out what may seem a sizeable number of errors in translation and infelicities of style, but it must be remembered that together the two parts of Y Seint Greal make up a lengthy work, and within the context of the whole, mistakes and awkwardness of expression stand out because they are uncommon. Many of them appear to arise not from incompetence but from translating mechanically, without considering the sense of the whole passage, or without regard for the choice of words in the immediately preceding passage or sentence. Perhaps these infelicities would have disappeared if the translator had revised or even reread his translation, but it is clear from the mistakes and inconsistencies that arise that he did not do so. The same haste which seems to have driven him to abridgement may also have prevented him from revising the translation, and forced him to hand his draft straight over to the scribe. Nonetheless, it should be stressed that many cases of departing from the letter of the original seem motivated by a desire to reduce at least some of the overtly foreign elements in his material and to add a little native Welsh flavour, so as to make these Grail romances more palatable for their new public. Moreover, by using the same stylistic techniques, including set phrases or formulae, in both parts of the text, he has succeeded in imposing some unity and continuity on the two very different French romances. Y Seint Greal may not be a "good" translation in the modern sense of the term, but the translator was undoubtedly well aware of the needs of his Welsh readers, and his efforts to adapt the continental material to those needs must be fully recognised.

Conclusion

Both external and internal evidence indicates that Y Seint Greal was translated at the end of the fourteenth century for the uchelwr Hopcyn ap Thomas of Ynysdawy in Glamorgan. Hopcyn probably commissioned a cleric, perhaps at Neath or Margam Abbey, to translate the Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal into Welsh, and the text was then written out for Hopcyn, in the manuscript now known as Peniarth 11, by the scribe Hywel Fychan, who copied other manuscripts during the same period for Hopcyn and his brother Rhys. In his choice of texts for translation the patron would be limited by what was available in south-east Wales at the time, but the popularity and influence of French literature, and of Arthurian, Grail romances in particular, would have meant not only that texts like the Queste and Perlesvaus were available but also that Hopcyn himself as a man of letters would have had an interest in such material. However, although the two French romances as accounts of the Grail quest have a number of similarities, translating them together as parts of a single whole raised problems of consistency which the translator has not succeeded in resolving. Similarly, the translator's fondness for abridgement, perhaps partly due to haste, has weakened the thematic and narrative structure of the French romances. Like many mediaeval translators, the redactor of Y Seint Greal is not consistently accurate; a number of mistakes and misunderstandings are found together with periphrases of difficult words or phrases. Nonetheless, these are comparatively few considering the length of the text, and many of these weaknesses would probably go unnoticed by a contemporary Welsh reader who did not know the French texts in the original. The redactor clearly had his Welsh readers in mind, and has taken pains to adapt his French material as far as possible for them, by omitting many overtly foreign elements, and by contriving to bring some of the characters and events into harmony with earlier Welsh traditions about corresponding heroes. Furthermore, despite the large number of Romance and English loanwords to be found in Y Seint Greal, perhaps

inevitable in dealing with new ideas and objects, it is evident that the translator was not only familiar with earlier, native Welsh prose, but was also strongly influenced by it, so that at its best his style has a similar directness and simplicity which makes the reader forget, temporarily at least, that this is a translation from the French and not a work of purely Welsh origin. The extent of the popularity and influence of Y Seint Greal could not approach that of the French romances on which it was based, but the translation was sufficiently well known to make some impression on the Triads and poetry, whilst the text itself was sufficiently appreciated to be copied in its entirety at least once during the following century and to be prized not only in the Glamorgan area but even as far away as Valle Crucis in the north. For its own qualities, and as one of the few full-length works of prose fiction surviving to bridge the gap between the early native prose literature and the beginnings of Modern Welsh prose, Y Seint Greal deserves greater recognition than it has been accorded hitherto.

Appendix 1: The Peniarth 15 fragment of Y Seint Greal

As we noted in Chapter 1, the late fifteenth century Peniarth 15 contains mostly religious writings, in two different hands, the first occupying pages 1-123, line 1, and the second, pages 127-146. The fragment of Y Seint Greal, the work of a third, later hand, begins at page 123, line 2, and continues to the end of page 125, page 126 being left blank. A date around 1500 seems likely from comparison of this script with other examples from the period. The arrangement of the fragment in the manuscript and the later date of this hand suggest that the scribe was trying to fill up a few blank leaves left in the manuscript.

These pages are very faded and rubbed and the edges have been damaged, so that some of the writing has been lost. In the transcript that follows, the fragment is reproduced as it stands. Any letters or words that have been supplied are underlined, and doubtful readings are indicated. Ultra-violet light was needed to read the last lines of each page, the beginning and end of many lines, and to confirm other readings.

(Page 123)

Pan ytoed Arthur yngaerllion y dinas ardderchockaf yn ynys
prydein y damweinnawd dyfot gwr gwynllwyt enrededus a ..
darryan o eur a chroes yn ganol y darryan ac yngenol y
groes ymogel y darryan ydoed maen llewychedic ac yn
ysgrivennedic dan y maen ydoed mal y gellit y darllen
manegi na beidei a dwyn nae harver yn diberrigl dieithyr y
marchoc gorev or marchogyon ae gadaw a wnaeth ar y ..
..st yn y llys heb gael mwy hyspyssrwyd gantaw a mynet a
wnaeth arthur ae wyrda yny kyngor beth a wnelei ef(?) ae
.. y darryan ae peidyaw a chael yny gyngor beidyaw rac vot(?)
aflonydwch uy deernas gan varchogyon o deernasoeth
pell a marchogyon a dywedassant py varchoc bynnac ae
varchoc o lys arthur nas kai heb ymbrofi ac ef.A diwar-
nawt val yr oed arthur yn dyfod o hela y damweinawd dyfot
arglwydes ieuang deyrnneid o vod a thrwyssyat a disgyn
dal y glin ger bronn arthur a dywedvt hanpych gwell ..
nyadvr brenines enyssoed yr eigyawn.Ac erchi arch
idaw yr karyet ar dvw yr hwn oed arveredic gantaw..
..rodi y pawb rae keissei yn gyflawn kei hir a dywit llawer
..on marchogyon an golvt(?) y dynnu ny gelli yr mwyn y ryw ..
..ercheit angyfyawn hyn a mynet mewn petrvster
..yneidyev an kyrf uy hvnein a pheidyaw a oed da
defodev hynny arthvr a dywat dioer heb ef dan ..
wy(?) vy mot i yn well noc arall ny devent ac af i
..arall a gorev genyfi mwya amgofwyo a allwyf yr vdvnt..
ar vnbennes racko gresso dvw wrthi arglwyd heb hi ac

..c yt vawr argysswr kanys ny cheissyaf dy ah..
diot a gwely hyt pan del marchoc y gyrchy y darryan
..mas mi a wn na beidy di y dwyn na neb oth varchogyon
neb onyt y marchoc gorev ar eil pwnc arglwyd..
..y marchoc a del oe chyrchv oth lys yny gaffel
..arglwydes heb ef hawd yt gael dy..
(Page 124)
Ac yna y triga hi yn y llys ac y rodet y gyt ar morynnyon a oed
mewn twr y kewri yn kadw y diweirdeb.Ac velly y bvant o wyl
Ievan yn yr haf hyt pethewnos wedy gwyl viangel.A nosweith
yr oed arthur heb allv kysgv a llevat hydref yn llathrv goleu
yn yr ystafell. dioer heb ef nev allei mae gweledigaeth a vy(n?)
dvw ym y gwelet.A gwisgyaw amdanaw aorvc a gadaw y deulu
yn kysgv a mynet o dieithyr y llys ar hyt glan wysc hyny doeth
yr aber ac yno arganvot llong aorvc wedy angori a bat yn
rwym wrth y tir ac arthur aeth yr bat ac ae gyryaw hyt
y llong ac arganvot marchog vrthol yn kyscv yn arfawc a gwr
gwynllwyt anrydedvs yn kerddet yr kwrr y gilyd yr llong
yn kannv y bederev ac arthvr yn rith gwr simpel a gyfarch-
awd gwell ydaw henpych gwell thithev gan dvw heb ef ha wr
da heb yr arthvr a gafi gennyti yr karyat ar dvw manegi ym
gyfenw y marchog ysyd yn kyscv kannas na weleis ac na chly-
weis eiryoet oherwyd vy synnwyr i marchawc vwy y ar..
(ef?) nae vilwryaeth noc ef yn kyscv dioer heb y gwr gwynllw-
yt pob peth ac a ofynnvt ym dieithyr hynny a vanagwudyt..
gwydwn a hynny ny beidyaf y vanegi a gaf inev gennyti dywat
py damwein ath dvc yr aber hwn key heb ef yn hawd llys ar..
da aelwir arthur yssyd gerllaw ac yno y mae tarryan y marcha-
wc arderchawc racko ac ny beid neb y dwyn onyt ef dyoer
hep ef nas beid y darryan honno a vu y gyosseb barmathia yr
awr a dynnawd iesv odiar y groes a dodes peth or kysse-
gredic waet ymogel y darryan oe gadw rac y elynyon
a gorev marchawc vv gyosseb yny oes agnawt yw vot
o lin gyosseb y marchoc gorev ar marchoc yma yw hwn-
nw yn oe chyrchv a ewchi y lys y gwr hyny kyn dyd heb ef
..n a vydwn y hwylyaw moroed kyn dyd rann an gwlat
gwedy delom odyno ac ymnachav ac ef a wnaeth arthvr
a dyfot parth ae lys dan diolwch ydaw na delei wr kyfvrd
a hwnnw o lys yn direbvd a dyfot ar vrys yr llys a dihu-
nyaw y gwassanaethwyr a chyflenwi y byrdev o wassana-
eth a gossot golevadev a cherdev yn gyflawn yny llys
a dihvnaw yr arderchogyon a gwenhwyfar a dywedvt
y damwein ac erchi y bawb roi kyflawn lewenyd yr
marchog mal vedei oe gorf ehvn ac agos y bys..
(Page 125)
.. oed ac y gysgv yd aeth arthvr ac yn gydneit nychaf y marchog
yn dyfot ac yn disgyn ar lawr y nevad ac nyt kyfarch y vren-
hines nac y arderchogyon a wnaeth onyt syrthyaw ar
dal y lin drachvron y darryan a chanv y badyr a mynet y
..uengyl yddi a roi ar y ysgwyd a dodi tarryan arall dda
yno y lle a dywedvt pwy bynnac a vo reit ydaw ohonaw
..ei wrth darryan arferet ohon kany beidewch yma..
..r ar llaw a roi y droet yny warthol a mynet ar y varch
y vrenhines ehvn a amafaelawd ac afwyn y march ar-
glwyd heb hi ni wney di gewilyd kymeint y arthvr a mynet
or llys heb gymryt bwyt a diot a choelvennev arderchawc
ar arglwyd vrenhin a gyfyt atat arglwydes heb ef kym-
eint o diolwch a wnaf yt yr nas kymerwyf a phei as
kymerwn a phei dywedassvti kyn elwn ar vy march
y gymryt a wnawn a phellach yr neb ny disgynnaf hyny
vwyf ymerfedyt ac ymeith yd aeth heb ..eissyaw ny..

gennat gan neb a phan dihvnyawd arthvr a chlywed my-
net y marchoc ymeith dev dristyt a gymerth drwy
..erdv y varchogyon y neill dristyt oed gantaw am vy-
net y marchoc ar darryan mewn dirmyg idaw ar llall
am vethv gantaw yr edewit yr arglwydes a trannoeth
pan doeth yr arglwydes yr llys a gwelet nat oeth y darryan
yno dodi llef mawr aorvc drwy ymgeinyaw ac arthvr
a dywedvt symyl oet dy alw di y orev vrenin or vren-
hinoet kannas gwaethaf brenin wyt a hyt yd ys..
itt glot minev a dygaf yt aglot ac nyt digyaw a wna-
eth arthvr wrthi nam dywedvt geiryev pwyllic ha
arglwydes heb ef galw dy bwyll atat ac ef a vv ar-
nafi orchest vwy no gafel y marchoc a mi a drafaelaf
gyt a thi a mi am llvoeth oe geissyaw y vorwyn a dyw-
at arglwyd heb hi na chyfroa di dy synnwyr ar geiryev gyn-
reigyawl kannas nat oes y wreic gledev onyt y tharaw
dieithyr bit diev yti y mae blin(y?)aeth yma na chawn y ba le
af achos vy vn brawt oed ac nys gweleis eiryoet ae vam
or(?) yssyd gwedy y arglwyd y korssyd dwyn petwar kastell ar dec
..di ar pymthecvet yr oed hi yn trigyaw yndaw ymal..
ymlad ac ef yr ar awr hon aphei kassoedwn ni welet vy
mrawt ef a dilyngassei gyfoeth y vam o gethiwet honno.

There can be no doubt that the Peniarth 15 fragment is related to the second part of the romance Y Seint Greal, corresponding to the Perlesvaus, but its relationship to the Peniarth 11 version is not immediately apparent. The events recounted are familiar enough from the main French and Welsh versions: the shield left at Arthur's court for Peredur, the arrival of his sister, the subsequent failure of Arthur to bring brother and sister together when Peredur finally arrives. However, there are a number of important differences that show that this fragment was not just another copy based on Peniarth 11.

The first point to be noted is that the events are presented as a single episode, virtually complete in itself, for the intermediate adventures found in the other versions between the delivery of the shield to Arthur's court (SG 191-92, Per 596-646) and the arrival of Peredur's sister (SG 278-81, Per 4013-4142) have been omitted altogether. No material extraneous to the theme of the shield is allowed to intrude. Moreover, material that is scattered in the main versions but is nonetheless relevant to this theme is brought in, even though it does not occur at this point in the French or in Peniarth 11. This is true of the account of Joseph of Arimathea taking Christ down from the cross, and of the link between Joseph and Peredur (SG 329, Per 5850-51; SG 192, Per 623). The news of Peredur's mother, who is gradually losing her

lands to "arglwyd y korssyd" ("Sire des Mares"), is given elsewhere in Peniarth 11 and in the French (SG 203, Per 1018; SG 205, Per 1077; SG 279, Per 4054). This bringing together of all the information needed to understand fully the situation described, and omission of all references to characters and events not directly connected with it, mean that for a reader reasonably familiar with the standard Arthurian framework the episode stands alone quite satisfactorily. Although we do not hear what came of Arthur's offer to help to look for Peredur, the narrative stops at a convenient point when it seems likely that the maiden, having explained the reason for her distress, will accept the offer.

The writer's concern to present a single, coherent episode may have been the reason for his changing the manner in which the shield is delivered. In the Perlesvaus and Peniarth 11, of course, it is introduced in the story with the arrival of the Damoisele du Char and her two attendant maidens. The second maiden carries it, whilst the Damoisele du Char herself explains its purpose and significance to Arthur. In Peniarth 15, however, it is brought by a "gwr gwynllwyt enrededus", similar to another (also "gwr gwynllwyt anrydedus"), who comes in the ship with Peredur later on. The introduction of the Damoisele du Char would have brought with it a number of other narrative strands to be developed or at least explained; all such complications are neatly avoided by replacing the three maidens by one elderly man. This character might well have been suggested to the redactor by the man who arrives in the ship, and even implicitly identified with him, or the writer could have remembered the similar person who presents Galaad at Arthur's court at the beginning of the first part of Y Seint Greal, corresponding to the opening section of the Queste. The "gwr gwynllwyt" is, of course, a stock figure of earlier Welsh narrative appearing in the romances of Peredur and Gereint and in Breudwyt Maxen, for example (WM cols. 127, 393, 181 etc.).

These major alterations, the selection of one particular theme from the original text and its presentation as an autonomous piece of narrative, suggest that the writer was making deliberate changes, yet some parts of the fragment

are still extremely close to the other extant versions. Before the relationship between Peniarth 15 and these other versions can be established even tentatively, a detailed comparison will be necessary.

In order to produce a single, coherent episode a certain amount of simplification was required. The three damsels of the cart, as already mentioned, have been reduced to one "gwr gwynllwyt", and consequently themes such as Peredur's Grail failure and the sealed heads have been totally abandoned. Some of the information about the shield, originally supplied by the Damoisele du Char, has been transferred to an inscription on the shield; the rest has been fitted neatly into the conversation between Arthur and the man on the ship. The hunting dog, which is left with the shield and later recognises Peredur and his sister, is omitted altogether. The tête à tête between Peredur's sister and the queen is left out in Peniarth 15 since the information given in this incident is supplied here by the maiden herself at the end, as a reason for her excessive distress and disappointment.

Like these simplifications some changes are demanded by the need for conciseness, for tightening up of structure, whilst in some cases a new and perhaps stronger motivation is introduced. Since the man who brought the shield has given no information about it, the device of an inscription on the shield is employed. This then triggers off the discussion between Arthur and his knights as to what, if anything, should be done about the shield. None of this occurs in Peniarth 11 or the Perlesvaus. The night that Peredur comes to collect the shield, whereas Peniarth 11 simply states that Arthur could not sleep, and Perlesvaus that he "fu esvelliez des le premerain some, si ne se puet rendormir", Peniarth 15 gives a more precise motivation by explaining that the harvest moon was shining so brightly into the room that it was impossible to sleep. Once the locus of the action has been changed from Pennevoiseuse or Penneissense to Caerllion, it is impossible for a ship to come right up to the court, so Arthur is made to walk along the banks of the Usk down to the river mouth to see the ship. Hence, too, Peredur's arrival and departure on horseback, which incidentally gives the opportunity for the dramatic scene of

the queen grabbing the horse's rein to delay the knight's departure. Whereas in Peniarth 11 and the Perlesvaus Arthur simply forgets to tell the maiden immediately Peredur arrives, in the fragment the reason for his failure is a little less dishonourable, as he falls asleep after rushing around making preparations for the knight's arrival. Finally, in the main versions it is Lancelot or Lawnslot and Gauvain or Gwalchmei who go off in search for the Grail hero, whilst in Peniarth 15, to avoid having to bring in these characters, it is Arthur who offers his services and those of his men in finding the knight.

Despite these changes the basic material is still that found in Peniarth 11 and Perlesvaus, even if the redactor of the Peniarth 15 fragment has modified it for his own purposes, in some cases perhaps unconsciously. For example, the description given by Peredur's sister of the mother's situation corresponds fairly closely to information given in quite different passages in the original French and Peniarth 11: she is threatened by "arglwyd y korssyd", the Sire des Mares of the Perlesvaus, whose name here is given exactly the same Welsh form as in Peniarth 11. In the fragment as in other versions, he has taken from her all her castles but the last, which she is about to lose, but whilst Peniarth 11 and the French text state that she has already lost seven castles to the enemy (SG 203.38, Per 1021), Peniarth 15 gives the figure as fourteen (Line 104), though there is no way of knowing whether this increase is deliberate or accidental. The reference to the Feast of the Nativity of St. John is also interesting in this context, as it seems to be inherited from one of the main versions, but slightly displaced. In the fragment we are told that Peredur's sister stayed at Arthur's court "o wyl Ievan yn yr haf hyt pethewnos wedy gwyl viangel" (lines 34-35). From this we deduce that she arrived at court on St. John's Day itself. There is no mention of the date at this particular point in the French or in Peniarth 11, but the day on which the Damoisele du Char comes with the shield is referred to explicitly as the Feast of St. John. In fact much is made of Arthur summoning his knights for this day and not for Pentecost as

usual, the reason being that as the feast was announced too late for everyone to arrive in time, it had to be postponed for a week. Although all this background information has gone in Peniarth 15, and no particular day is given at the beginning of the episode when the shield is delivered, the unusual date is retained.

Although the localisation of Arthur's court has been changed, the reason for this too can be found in the other versions. In Peniarth 15 Arthur is at Caerllion when the shield is delivered, and is still there when Peredur arrives, since he walks along the banks of the Usk. Caerllion is not explicitly named as "ar Wysg" here, but it would be familiar to a Welshman, particularly if he lived in south-east Wales or knew earlier Welsh Arthurian material such as the three romances. In the French, the court is held at Pennevoiseuse[1], and the Peniarth 11 manuscript retains this as Penneissense (SG 190.27), Penvoisins (SG 278.2), Penvesius (SG 281.12)or Penwed (SG 380.37). However, in Peniarth 11 the paragraph preceding that where the shield is brought describes Arthur being "ynghaerllion" (SG 190.22), since the French gives Cardueil (Per 568), and, while he is there, arranging for the court to be held at Penneissense on the Feast of St. John. It may be this earlier reference that caused the redactor of the fragment to set all these events at Caerllion, but there are other reasons too for his choice. Pennevoiseuse is obviously unfamiliar to the translator of Y Seint Greal, as the number of variant forms in Peniarth 11 show, whilst Caerllion would be familiar to any Welshman interested in Arthurian traditions[2].

This brings us to another important feature of the Peniarth 15 fragment. Whereas the Peniarth 11 version of Y Seint Greal bears all the marks of a translation from the French, Peniarth 15 immediately impresses the reader with

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[1] This is true of all the Perlesvaus manuscripts except two, Nitze's OAc (see edition vol. i, pp. 10-12, and above, Chapter 1, pp. 4-5), where the interpolation of part of the Perlesvaus into a text of La Queste del Saint Graal has given rise to Kamaalot at this point.

[2] For example, the three romances of Peredur, Owein and Gereint (WM cols. 145, 152, 223, 385) use this localisation, which goes back to Geoffrey of Monmouth, and it is also one of the "Teir Prif Lys Arthur" in the Triads (TYP p. 211).

its strong native flavour. The opening line, "Pan ytoed Arthur yngaerllion", takes us straight back to the three Arthurian romances (compare, for example, Gereint, WM col. 385). Caerllion, furthermore, is described as "dinas ardderchockaf yn ynys prydein" (lines 1-2), the kind of phrase familiar from earlier prose narrative. The arrival of the stock Welsh "gwr gwynllwyt" follows quite naturally. This impression of a traditional style of narrative is maintained throughout, as the following examples will show. Peredur's sister is named "brenines enyssoed yr eigyawn" (line 17), a name found neither in Peniarth 11 nor in the French, and she is lodged, to protect her honour, with the other maidens in "twr y kewri" (lines 33-34). Kei is prominent in the episode; he is retained from the main versions whilst other named knights have disappeared. He is given his traditional epithet, "Kei hir" (line 19)[1]. The passage describing the arrival of Peredur's sister begins "A diwarnawt val yr oed arthur yn dyfod o hela" (line 14), a departure from Peniarth 11 and the French, but striking a note familiar from Peredur (WM col. 152), Gereint (WM col. 387-88), and the Pedeir Keinc (PKM pp. 1, 84). The sister immediately asks a boon of Arthur, "yr hwn yr oed arveredic gantaw" (line 18), reminiscent of the scene in Culhwch a'c Olwen where Culhwch asks the same on arrival at Arthur's court (WM col. 459-60). Later the feast preparations for an expected arrival recall similar situations in, for example, Peredur (WM col. 164), Owein (WM col. 249) and Pwyll (PKM p. 13), and the emphasis on the shame that will fall on Arthur and his household, if Peredur refuses his hospitality and gifts, fits in with the Welsh atmosphere of the whole fragment. This is also true of the much stronger reaction of Peredur's sister when she discovers what has happened: "dodi llef mawr aorvc drwy ymgeinyaw" (line 92), in contrast to "och arglwyd heb y vorwyn, ys mawr a bechawt a wnaethost di a myui" in Peniarth 11 (SG 281.22-23), whilst her threat to Arthur, "minev a dygaf yt aglot" (line 95), recalls Arawn's words to Pwyll, "mi awnaf o anglot

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[1] Compare the references to Kei as "y gwr hir" in Peredur (WM cols. 123, 125). The epithet is also used once in the main version of Y Seint Greal, at a different point in the text (SG 340.8).

itt guerth can carw" (PKM p. 2), and those of Culhwch: "onys agory mi adygaf anglot yth arglwyd" (WM col. 457). Finally, Arthur's offer to himself leave with his host to find Peredur is more in keeping with Welsh tradition than with continental developments.

The prose style of the fragment is far closer to the three Arthurian romances than is that of Peniarth 11. Some phrases stand out as examples: the repeated "dioer heb ef", and phrases like "Ac velly y bvant o wyl Ievan yn yr haf..". Sometimes there seem to be direct echoes of earlier prose, for example "achos vy vn brawt oed ac nys gweleis eiryoet" (line 104) recalls the words of "iarlles y kampeu" in Peredur, "etlym gledyf coch oed y gwr mwyaf a garwn i.ac nys gweleis eiroet" (WM col. 160.5). The fragment has the same type of simple, direct narratives we find in earlier prose tales, although at times the style becomes startlingly abrupt. The most characteristic features are the scarcity of subordinate clauses and the frequent use of a(c) as a conjunction, giving constructions like "y damweinnawd dyfot gwr gwynllwyt enrededus a darryan o eur a chroes yn ganol y darryan ac yngenol y groes ymogel y darryan ydoed maen llewychedic ac yn ysgrivennedic dan y maen ydoed mal y gellit darllen.." (lines 2-5).

In theory there are a number of ways in which Peniarth 15 could be related to the French text and to the other Welsh version of the story. It could be an independent translation from the French, based perhaps on a version different from those now known; it could derive ultimately from the Welsh version in Peniarth 11 or one of its copies, or from a separate Welsh translation, now lost.

Let us consider first the possibility that the fragment represents an independent translation from the French. The only strong evidence is a single detail included in the Perlesvaus but not in Peniarth 11. This occurs in the description of the shield. In Perlesvaus the boss is described as "une bocle d'or tot plain de riches pierres" (Per 6611), but Peniarth 11 leaves out the precious stones and simply gives "bogel o eur coeth" (SG 191.31). In Peniarth 15, where the whole shield is of gold ("darryan o eur", line 3), the

precious stones, lost in Peniarth 11, are restored, but the number is reduced to one: "ac yngenol y groes ymogel y darryan ydoed maen llewychedic" (lines 3-4). This may suggest that the redactor saw a French version, but this single indication must be outweighed by the freedom with which he has treated his material in general, and the strong native flavour of both narrative elements and prose style. The purity of the style, and a complete lack of Romance loanwords, in contrast to the other Welsh version, also make it hard to believe that the redactor was working from a French manuscript. It is possible that another Welsh version once existed which mentioned the precious stone on the boss, but the external evidence does not support such a hypothesis. All the outside references, as we saw in Chapter 2, can be shown to refer to precise copies of the text, and the evidence of Guto'r Glyn's cywydd to Trahaearn suggests that copies of Y Seint Greal were rare indeed and that Peniarth 11 was the only one known even to someone living as far from Penrhos Fwrdios (near Caerleon) as Valle Crucis. It is most likely, therefore, that the Peniarth 15 fragment is somehow related to Peniarth 11 or to a copy of it, and that restoration of the detail of the precious stone is pure coincidence. It could well have been introduced by the redactor to improve the description, or could be the result of writing from memory, since it is natural to associate gold and precious stones, a commonplace in descriptions in the oral or popular tale. If we assume, then, that this has been introduced simply as a stock narrative element, since it is the only thing to suggest a close connection with the French, we can proceed to examine the relationship between Peniarth 15 and the main Welsh version.

We have already noted that copies of Y Seint Greal seem to have been scarce and that available evidence suggests that the Peniarth 11 text and its copies were the only written versions ever produced. It is most unlikely that an oral version ever circulated or that the Peniarth 15 fragment was based on such a version. The highly literary nature of the romance, the complex sequence of events, the detail and length of the text must preclude this

possibility[1]. It is true that a triad exists based on the first part of Y Seint Greal (corresponding to La Queste del Saint Graal), but this is found only in a late manuscript and was probably compiled by a scribe with access to a written text[2], so the existence of the triad cannot be taken as evidence of a well-formed tradition circulating orally.

The most satisfactory explanation is that the author of this fragment had seen a text of Y Seint Greal, most probably Peniarth 11 or a copy of it, or had heard it read aloud, and then wrote out this episode later, when he no longer had the manuscript before him. Some of his divergences from the original would arise because he just had a general picture in his mind, but he was apparently consciously selecting and arranging in order to produce a single, autonomous episode. The arrangement of the text in the manuscript, suggesting that he was trying to fill up a few blank leaves, and tailoring the chosen episode to fit the space, indicate that the redactor and scribe were one and the same. The traditional style of narrative and lack of Romance loanwords are not, therefore, indicative of an early date, but of conscious archaising[3]. There is no evidence as to the identity of the redactor, but the language shows that he was familiar with earlier Welsh prose narrative, whilst the narrative style and technique demonstrate that he was deliberately recasting this episode into a traditional framework. Herein lies the importance of the Peniarth 15 fragment, which can be seen as evidence not only of the transmission of Y Seint Greal itself, but also of Arthurian traditions in general in Wales. The treatment of the material demonstrates that, even as late as the end of the fifteenth century, the older Welsh

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[1] The statement at the end of Breudwyt Ronabwy that "na bard na chyfarwyd" could tell even that tale "heb lyuyr" (WM cols. 222-23) indicates that a full-length romance like Y Seint Greal must have circulated in a written, not an oral form.

[2] See Appendix 3, p. 228.

[3] Cases of conscious archaising are found in other literatures. The closest analogy is the work of Procopius, who was similarly imitating older models and consciously excluded any modernism. See Averil and Alan Cameron, "Christianity and Tradition in the Historiography of the Late Empire", The Classical Quarterly xiv (1964), pp. 316-28, and Averil Cameron, "The 'Scepticism' of Procopius", Historia xv (1966), pp. 466-82.

Arthurian traditions survived. Despite the translation of much continental literature from the mid-thirteenth century onwards, such native traditions had not given way to foreign influences but were still very much alive. Moreover, writers were conscious of what was foreign in the stock of tradition, and could carefully exclude such elements in order to produce a narrative purely Welsh in content, form and style.

Appendix 2: Romance and English Loanwords in Y Seint Greal

The problems of distinguishing words borrowed directly from French or Anglo-Norman from those that entered Welsh via English were outlined in Chapter 2. Because of these difficulties, some of the examples that follow can be assigned only tentatively to one category or another. The main works consulted in drawing up these lists were T.H. Parry-Williams, The English Element in Welsh (London 1923) and Marie Surridge, A Study of Words of Romance Origin in Middle Welsh (unpublished D.Phil. thesis, Oxford 1962); I have tried to steer a middle course between the equally partisan approaches of these two. Where possible, their conclusions have been compared with the etymological notes in Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru. Full references and notes will be found in these three works.

It should be stressed that the loanwords listed here are not the only ones found in Y Seint Greal. A number of Latin borrowings may also be found.

1. Words borrowed from French or Anglo-Norman:

albryst (SG 389.28; Per 8161 aubaleste)

corporal (SG 163.10; Q 269.5-11 -)[1]

kwrprieu (SG 404.24; Per 8617 chapes)[2]

ffigier (SG 44.14; Q 67.13 figuiers)

gisarmeu (SG 419.11; Per 9104 guisarmes)

processio (SG 236.15; Per 2099 procession)[3]

pwrri (SG 44.24; Q 67 -)[4]

pwynt (SG 260.12; Per 2902 point)

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[1] Late Latin corporalis palla gave Old French corporal, meaning the cloth on which the consecrated elements are placed during mass. See GPC s.v. corporal.

[2] The singular form cwrpri was probably borrowed from French cuir bouilli in the form cwrbli. See GPC s.v. cwrpri.

[3] The usual Welsh form is prosessiwn borrowed orally from English. In this example the translator seems to have simply dropped the final n of the French form.

[4] The French "plus amers que fuz" is translated as "chwerwach no phrenn pwrri". Pwrri must come from French pourri.

syarret (SG 88.34; Q 149.32 chaiere)[1]

ystopyawd (SG 72.7; Q 111.27 estoupe)

2. Words of Romance origin borrowed either direct from French or Anglo-Norman or via English:

a) Choice of word influenced by French source

(b)ateil (SG 63.22; Q 97.15 bataille)

besawnt (SG 42.5; Q 63.26 besant)

(cottardi o) vliant (SG 295.6; Per 4576 .i. bliaut de soie)

corteissi (SG 248.14; Per 2523 cortoisie)

kwrteis (SG 217.29; Per 1437 cortoise)

fflwrdlis (SG 100.6; Q 171.20 flors de lys)

(ti a) warenty (SG 256.23; Per 2790 craanteroiz)

samit (SG 319.18; Per 5492 samit)

secret (yr offeren) (SG 169.2; Q 277.29 segré de la messe)[2]

sinopyl (SG 291.13; Per 4451 sinople)

swrcodeu (SG 250.1; Per 2580 sorcot)

syndal (SG 6.14; Q 8.5 cendal)

(t)wrneimánt (SG 9.12; Q 13.24 tornoiemens)

ysgwier (SG 258.36; Per 2854 escuier)[3]

hystablawd (SG 295.18; Per 4587 establa)[3]

b) Choice of word not influenced by French source

(c)aptaen (SG 360.33; Per 7172 garde)

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[1] T.H. Parry-Williams, EEW p. 79, suggests that syarret was borrowed from Middle English chariot or chariet(te) but Old French charrette seems a likelier source.

[2] Surridge, D.Phil. thesis, p. 283, suggests English influence on the form.

[3] Although in these instances the French source seems to have influenced the choice of word, they must have belonged to the translator's own current vocabulary since the related forms also appear where the French has nothing corresponding, e.g., "un or ysgwieryeit" (SG 14 .38) for vaslet (Q 18.17); ystabyl (SG 262.38) where the French has nothing equivalent (Per 2998).

(c)eplans (SG 191.22; Per 602 chapel)

corset (SG 279.39; Per 4078 jupe)

(c)otardi (SG 259.19; Per 2874 cote)

cottardi (o vliant)(SG 295.6; Per 4576 .i. bliaut de soie)

griffwns (SG 366.23-24; Per 7396 gripes)

helym (SG 9.31; Q 14.23 hiaume)

(p)wmhel (SG 101.34; Q 174.10 pont de l'espee)

3. Words ultimately of Romance origin, borrowed from English but the choice influenced by the French source:

apel (SG 272.27; Per 3312 apel)

assur (SG 191.30; Per 611 azur)

barr (SG 180.34; Per 266 barre)

barwnyeit (SG 265.10; Per 3071 barons)

(b)astart (SG 377.11; Per 7757 bastarz)

bwrgeis (SG 226.14; Per 1732 borjois)

(b)wtler (SG 376.19; Per 7731 boteilliers)

(c)apan (SG 337.36; Per 6142 chape)

certeinyawl (SG 44.16; Q 67.16 certain)

(c)osta (SG 393.3; Per 8262 costera)

(c)rwper (SG 411.8; Per 8834 crope)

kwarel (SG 389.34; Per 8160 carrel, Per 8163 carriax)

kwmpaeni (SG 13.26; Q 21.27 compaignie)

eliphantyeit (SG 325.12; Per 5694 Olifanz)

ermin (SG 6.15; Q 8.8 hermine)

esmeraud (SG 233.33; Per 2016 esmeraude)

exawmpyl (SG 183.12; Per 336 essanples)

ffaelyei (SG 299.39; Per 4751 failloit)

ffals (SG 383.18; Per 7958 fausse)

ffelwniaeth (SG 273.29; Per 3344 felonie)

ffigys (SG 45.37; Q 69.32 figuiers)

galis (SG 276.7; Per 3937 jalie)[1]

hossan (SG 176.16; Per 142 huese)

inseilyeu (SG 193.11; Per 660 seelé)

(wedi eu) hinseilyaw (SG 193.12; Per 663 seelez)

larder (SG 193.24; Per 671 lardez)

nigromawns (SG 332.17; Per 5928 nigromance)

palis (SG 220.39; Per 1564 paliz)[2]

palffrei (SG 8.24; Q 12.23 palefroi)

parabyl (SG 244.10; Per 2385 parole)

piler (SG 243.28; Per 2365 piler)

swrplis (SG 64.30; Q 99.13 sorpeliz)

sywrneioed (SG 159.14; Q 262.10 jornees)[3]

tabyl (SG 155.3; Q 256.3 table)

traetur (SG 398.36; Per 8441 traïtres)

twel (SG 163.10; Q 269.5,7,8 to(u)aille)

ysgarlat (SG 211.25; Per 1255 escarlate)

ysgwrs (SG 191.33; Per 613 corgiee)

However, some of these same examples are found in contexts where the French sources cannot have influenced the translator:

(c)wareleu (SG 30.6; Q 45.21 darz)

ermin (SG 191.27; Per 606-7 -)

ffaelu (SG 173.33; Per 72 alentir)

ffalls (SG 277.27; Per 3989 mauvés)

nigromawnswr (SG 69.13-14; Q 107.1 enchanterres)

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[1] Elsewhere the translator renders galie (Per 3987) as llestyr (SG 277.25).

[2] Palis is attested elsewhere with the meaning "wainscot", "partition", from Middle English palice, palis, palais, and I have been unable to trace other examples of palis meaning "palisade" as here.

[3] Sywrneioed is probably derived from Middle English iornee, iournee (EEW p. 160). Mediaeval translators seem to have been uncertain whether French jornee meant a "day" or a "journey". Compare YBH line 2894, "yn un iwrnei" for "a l'enjornez", and note, p. 168.

4. Words borrowed from English, without being suggested by the French sources:

abit (SG 53.8; Q 81.1 -)

actwn (SG 330.31; Per 5878 hauberc)

blattys (SG 40.3; Q 59.31 unes armes)

bat (SG 212.7; Per 1270 nef)

(b)ostywr (SG 391.9; Per 8208 bobancier)

(c)ertwein (SG 242.19; Per 2306 -)

cliket (SG 154.18; Q 254.21-22 -)

cnap (SG 4.21; Q 5.19 perron)

(c)opyr (SG 193.15; Per 663 coivre)

crupyl (SG 167.28; Q 275.26 home a potences)

cwmpas (SG 344.11; Per 6469 cerne)

(c)wnstabyl (SG 406.9; Per 8666 vavasor)

kyvyrlit (SG 307.16; Per 5033 drap)

ffwrri (SG 279.39; Per 4078 grise)

gerlont (SG 247.25; Per 2499 chapel)

gra (SG 211.25; Per 1256 ver)

grwndwaleu (SG 242.25; Per 2315 -)

hacknei (SG 203.28; Per 1013 roncin)

herber (SG 220.39; Per 1564 vergier)

herlot/herlotwas (SG 191.32, 252.31; Per 612, 2677 vallez)

lafwr (SG 345.24; Per 6548 bachins)

meistres (SG 397.24; Per 8400 dame)

meistyr (uffern) (SG 23.21; Q 36.7 l' anemi)

pres (SG 353.30; Per 6837 asamblee)

y pap (SG 364.29; Per 7319 l' Apostoile)

pwrs (SG 135.30; Q 226.13 aumosniere)

ranswm (SG 417.20; Per 9048 triue)

ridill (SG 258.8; Per 2835 -)

seler/selereu (SG 222.1, 326.38; Per 1594 cave, Per 5753 travalz)

solàns (SG 370.4; Per 7514 -)

superu (SG 17.1; Q 27.9 mẽngié)

syartrassei (SG 372.24; Per 7601 -)

tapyr (SG 176.10; Per 137 estavauz)

tỽll (SG 143.5; Q 237.9-10 costumes)

tors (SG 179.15; Per 225 chandoiles)

(t)resteleu (SG 227.7; Per 1772 -)

twrnel (SG 316.22; Per 5389 cuve)

ystiwart (SG 403.13; Per 8579 seneschal)

ystor (o vilwyr) (SG 429.24; Per 9441 -)

ystorym (SG 67.35; Q 104.30 estorbeillons)

5. Uncertain cases:

kyff (SG 316.24; Per 5391 cuve)

In the rest of this passage describing the punishment of the Sire des Mares/ arglwyd y Corsyd, cuve is translated twrnel. Here however, the sentence reads "a thorri penn pob un onadunt ae daly ywchpenn y kyff..hyt nat oed yn y twrnel namyn gwaet oll". (Compare Per 5390-93: "et lor fet les chiés couper en la cuve et tant saignier com il pourent rendre de sanc; et puis fet les cors oster et les chiés, si que il n'ot que le sanc tot por en la cuve"). It is possible that the translator intended kyff here to mean the vat or receptacle in which the blood is collected, and used it here instead of twrnel simply to give variety. This is the opinion of Morgan Watkin who, referring to this passage from Y Seint Greal states: "Unwaith arferir cuve ei hun, ar ffurf kyff, gydag y=ỻ fel yn H(en) S(aesneg) ac ff = v, er mwyn amrywio'r ieithwedd"[1]. On the other hand, Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru quotes this particular passage from our text to illustrate the usage of cyff meaning "trunk" or "block", in this case presumably meaning a "heading-block". (Later in the text, SG 418.10, kyff is used again, but to translate tronc, Per 9072). No block is mentioned in the Perlesvaus when the Sire des Mares is punished,

[1] YBH p. 113, note to line 1700.

and the context in the Welsh does not make it clear which of the two meanings the translator had in mind. Cyff meaning a "block" is borrowed from Latin cippu, and first attested around 1200 but as Watkin suggests, it could also in this case be borrowed from cuve in the French.

yspardum (SG 2.26; Q 3.8 esperons)

Scholars have been unable to decide whether yspardun is a Romance borrowing or derived from Old English or German[1].

[1] See e.g. L. Mühlhausen, "Die lateinischen, romanischen, germanischen Lehnwörter des Cymrischen", Festschrift Ernst Windisch (Leipzig 1914), p. 325.

Appendix 3: The Dissemination of French Grail material in Wales

The appearance of a whole body of literature in translation in Wales from the mid-thirteenth century onwards has been discussed in some detail and emphasis placed on the popularity of French Arthurian material, in particular the Grail romances, throughout the British Isles, where the same material was translated into English, Irish and Welsh. Y Seint Greal by its very existence testifies to Welsh interest in Grail literature at the end of the fourteenth century, when the translation was probably made, and in the fifteenth century when copies of it were produced. However, copies of Y Seint Greal seem to have been scarce at all periods so the extent of the popularity and influence of such a text must be determined. If few people had access to a copy, was Y Seint Greal of minor importance to the contemporary public and, perhaps, to the development of Welsh literature in general? It is true that such specific references as we have to the text, notably in the poetry of Dafydd y Coed and Guto'r Glyn, suggest that it was highly prized, if rare, but this tells us nothing of its popularity or how large an audience it ever reached.

There are three main sources that may help us to answer these questions: prose works based on or translated from continental texts, the Triads, together with triadic material such as the XXIV Marchog Llys Arthur[1], and finally the poetry of the cywyddwyr, or poets of the uchelwyr, as they are also known. The prose works provide direct evidence that continental material was circulating in Wales, whilst the Triads and poetry contain references that indicate how far this Grail material was adopted into the general stock of tradition and how popular it was compared with older, native material.

Y Seint Greal provides the only complete, full-length example of the translation of French Grail material, but the very existence of this Welsh

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[1] For texts, see TYP. For full details of manuscripts mentioned in this section, see TYP pp. xi-lxii.

version of the Perlesvaus and La Queste del Saint Graal opens up the possibility that other romances were at least circulating in Wales, either in the original French or in translation. Y Seint Greal, moreover, provides one indication that the Prose Lancelot was known in Wales. This occurs in the first part of the translation, when Peredur's aunt foretells that three knights will succeed in the Grail quest. In the French Queste she says:

> "si en seront li dui virge et li tierz chastes.Et de ces deus virges sera li chevaliers que vos querez li uns et vos li autres, et li tierz Boorz de Gaunes". (Q 73.12-14).

In Y Seint Greal this is expanded as follows:

> "ar deu avyd marchogyon gwyry.heb wneuthur pechawt godineb oe kyrff eiryoet nae vedylyaw.Y trydyd avyd diweir.kystal yw hynny ac na bu idaw wreic eiryoet onyt unweith.Ar weith honno y kaffat arnaw som a phrofedigaeth.Ac ny byd vyth idaw mwy.Ac am hynny y gelwir ef yndiweir". (SG 48.2-8).

The translator obviously knew more about the circumstances under which Boort lost his virginity than he could have acquired from his text. In the Queste there is only one reference to this event that offers any further detail. This appears during Boort's stay with a preudom who confesses him and finds "qu'il ne s'ert onques meffez en corruption de char, fors a cele hore qu'il engendra Elyan le Blanc" (Q 166.23-25). This reference alone cannot account for the translator's extra information, for even here, although the child of the union is named, there is no mention of the magic trick that had to be perpetrated on Boort before the event could take place. In the Welsh, however, this is quite explicit: "Ar weith honno a kaffat arnaw som a phrofedigaeth". There is no tradition about Boort/Bwrt in Welsh earlier than Y Seint Greal, and this information is otherwise found only in the Prose Lancelot (Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. iv, pp. 267-70). On its own, this small reference might seem inadequate proof that the Lancelot cycle was known in Wales, but as we shall see later, it is supported by a number of others, chiefly in the Triads and associated material. We shall move on, therefore, to the Triads and see whether their references to the Grail material were based on French or Welsh sources or both.

The Triads, transmitted orally at first, but later written down, formed

the chief repository of literary tradition from the earliest times and although the extant manuscript versions do not predate the thirteenth century, Rachel Bromwich has fully demonstrated their antiquity[1]. One Triad manuscript in particular, Peniarth 50, displays an interest in ecclesiastical legend, and includes a number of references to the Grail legend. Triad 81 in Bromwich's collection appears to be a reworking of an older tradition, for the version in Peniarth 50 reads as follows:

"Tri Santeidd Linys Ynys Prydein:
Llinys Joseph o Ar(i)mathia,
a Llinys Cunedda Wledic,
a Llinys Brychan Brecheinawc".

This is in contrast to the Cardiff 18 version:

"Tair Gwelygordh Saint Ynys Prydain o Vam Gymreig:
Plant Brychan Brycheiniawc,
a phlant Cunedha Wledic
a phlant Caw o Bryd(yn)".

Peniarth 50 was written in the first half of the fifteenth century, whilst Cardiff 18 contains the work of no scribe earlier than the late sixteenth century, but it looks as if the Cardiff manuscript has retained the original version[2]. Bromwich is inclined to believe that, given his interest in Grail and similar legends, this Triad was rewritten by the scribe of Peniarth 50, substituting Joseph of Arimathea for Caw of Prydein, under the influence of Y Seint Greal, since Joseph is mentioned in both parts as head of a lineage[3]. It is possible that the scribe was familiar with the legend of Joseph of Arimathea from the Apocryphal Gospels, or indeed from the French Vulgate Estoire del Saint Graal, but in view of the fact that Joseph appears here in an otherwise strongly Welsh context, the influence of Y Seint Greal seems more likely. Since Peniarth 50 was written in west Glamorgan or Gower, in the first half of the fifteenth century, and Peniarth 11 is known to have been in

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1 TYP pp. lxiii-lxix; Rachel Bromwich, "Trioedd Ynys Prydein" in Welsh Literature and Scholarship (Cardiff 1969), pp. 3-6.

2 TYP pp. xxxi-xxxiv, xxxviii.

3 TYP pp. xxxiii, 202-3. In both parts of Y Seint Greal Joseph of Arimathea is head of the lineage of the Grail hero.

that area during the same period, it is quite possible that the scribe had seen the text, either in Peniarth 11 or in one of its copies.

Another Triad in the same manuscript, Bromwich 86, not only shows the influence of Y Seint Greal but acknowledges its debt to the romance:

"Tri Marchawc o Lys Arthur a enillawd y Greal, ac eu duc y Nef:[1]
Galaad vab Lawnslot y Lac,
A Pheredur vab Efrawc Iarll,
A Bort vab Brenhin Bort.
A'(r) ddeu gyntaf oeddynt wery o gyrff.A'(r) trydydd oedd ddiweir, am na wnaeth pechawt knawdawl ont unweith.A hynny drwy brovedigaeth yn yr amser y enillawd ef.....verch Brenyn Brangor, yr honn a vu Ymherodres yn Constinobyl, o'r honn y deuth y Genedlaeth vwyaf o'r byt; ag o'r genedlaeth Joseph o Arimathia y hanoedynt yll tri, ac o lin David brofwyt, mal y tystolaetha Ystorya y Greal".

At first sight it appears that the whole Triad and the notes are derived from Y Seint Greal as the scribe states. The three Grail-winning knights are indeed those whose adventures are recounted in the first part of the text, corresponding to La Queste del Saint Graal. However, a closer examination shows that the notes contain information not found in the Welsh translation. In the Triad Bwrt is said to have lost his virginity with the daughter of "Brenyn Brangor" (the French "Brangoire"), but she is not identified in Y Seint Greal. The main reference in the translation states that Bwrt "a golles y vorwyndawt ae wyrdawt o achaws gweithret knawdawl a wnaeth unweith a gwreic" (SG 91.31-33; compare "Boorz qui jadis se meffist en sa virginite", Q 156.26). The information about Brangoire's daughter is found only in the Prose Lancelot (Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. iv, pp. 267-70). Moreover, at that point in the Lancelot the name of the king's daughter is not given, which explains why the scribe of the Triad left a gap in the manuscript where the name should be[2]. The implication of this is that the scribe had access to the Prose Lancelot,

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[1] The similarity of this rubric to the opening lines of the colophon of MS Mostyn 184 ("Sang royal ae kavas ac ae duc y nef") suggests that there might be some connection between the two. The date and place of copying of Peniarth 50 and Mostyn 184 would allow the Mostyn scribe to have seen this Triad. See Chapter 2.

[2] TYP p. 213.

or at least part of it, just as did the redactor of Y Seint Greal. This possibility is strengthened by the facts already mentioned, that both Peniarth 11 and Peniarth 50 were produced in the same area. Peniarth 11, as we have seen, was commissioned by Hopcyn ap Thomas from Ynys Dawy, which lies at the top of the Gower peninsula, whilst Peniarth 50 was produced in west Glamorgan or Gower. Given also that Peniarth 11 was produced in the last years of the fourteenth century, Peniarth 50 some time in the next fifty years, it is likely that a copy of the Prose Lancelot was in this same small area, perhaps in the collection of an uchelwr[2]. The treatment of the reference to Brangoire's daughter in Peniarth 50 suggests that this was a French manuscript, not a Welsh translation.

The third Triad of interest is Bromwich 91:

"Tri Diofnog Ynys Brydain:
Vn fv Walchmai ap Gwyar,
ar ail fv Llacheu ap Arthur,
ar trydydd fv Brydyr (=Peredur) ap Efrog Iarll".

Although these three heroes are known separately in earlier sources, it is only in the second part of Y Seint Greal that they are combined. Bromwich believes there is some connection between the only manuscript containing this Triad (Cardiff 6, written around 1550) and Peniarth 50. Like the two Triads just examined, this one seems to have been invented by the scribe. Cardiff 6 and Peniarth 50 are related by a number of Triads, so it is possible that the Cardiff 6 text of Triad 91 was ultimately derived from a manuscript produced by the Peniarth 50 scribe, who had written it under the influence of Y Seint Greal[3].

As well as the Triads, the associated XXIV Marchog Llys Arthur must be

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1 ~~Again like the translator of Y Seint Greal, the scribe of Peniarth 50 must have known the earlier romance of Peredur, for there is no other explanation for the intrusion of the "Ymherodres o Constinobyl", a temporary consort of Peredur, WM cols. 162-65.~~

2 Could this perhaps have been Hopcyn ap Thomas? Certainly his interest in French culture is beyond doubt: compare Meurig ab Iorwerth's reference to Hopcyn: "koeth awdur messur moesseu ffrenghic" (RP col. 1374.3-4).

3 TYP pp. xxxviii, 219.

considered. This text is a list of Arthur's knights made up of a number of Triads, some of which are adapted from older Triads. The oldest manuscript of the XXIV Marchog, Llanstephan 28, is in the autograph of the poet Gutun Owain and bears the date 1455. The corrupt forms of some of the proper names indicate that it was preceded by at least one older and better version from which came the more authentic forms in later manuscripts, but Bromwich thinks it unlikely that the text in its present form is much earlier than the mid fifteenth century. However, these Triads were extremely popular with the bards until the seventeenth century, occurring frequently in manuscripts, often with the genealogical tracts also used by the poets[1].

The second set of knights seems to be derived from Y Seint Greal:

"Tri Marchoc Gwyry oedd yn Llys Arthur: Bwrt ap Bwrt, brenhin G(w)asgwin, a Phredur ap Efroc Iarll, a Galath ap Lanslod Lak..".

It is possible, however, that it was based on Triad 86, not on the romance. "Gwasgwin" is not found in either; Y Seint Greal renders "Boorz de Gaunes" as "Bwrt Agawns", but the name "gwascwyn" is attested elsewhere[2]. This particular set of knights is found in Peniarth 127, a manuscript written after 1510. In the same text the next group reads as follows:

"Tri Chadvarchoc oedd yn Llys Arthur; Cadwr Iarll Kernyw, a Lanslod Lak, ac Ywain ap Urien Rreget..".

The inclusion of Lancelot here must be due to the influence either of Y Seint Greal or of the French Vulgate Cycle, for the name is not known in Welsh sources earlier than Y Seint Greal, nor in poetry before the cywyddwyr. Perhaps here again the otherwise Welsh context may suggest that Y Seint Greal, and not a French romance was the source.

The fifth set tells of the

"Tri Brenhinawl Varchoc oedd yn Llys Arthur: Nasiens mab Brenhin Denmarck, a Medrod ap Llew ap Kenvarch, a Howel ap Emyr Llydaw..".

Although the name Medrod is found in early poetry, the reference here to him

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[1] TYP pp. cxxxv-cxxxix, 250-55. See also Rachel Bromwich, "Pedwar Marchog ar Hugain Llys Arthur", THSC, 1956, pp. 116ff.

[2] e.g. WM col. 253.

and to Howel of Brittany is probably taken from Geoffrey of Monmouth, but Nasiens must come either from Y Seint Greal or from the French Vulgate Cycle. The latter possibility should not be excluded, for a short prose tale, Yr Olew Bendigeid, claiming to be a translation from Latin[1], also refers to Nasciens in terms which indicate contact with the French Estoire del Saint Graal. Nasciens is credited with the writing of "ystoria saint greal". This must mean the Estoire, and not the Welsh, Y Seint Greal, for we are told that he wrote it at the behest of the Holy Ghost:

> "Ar Nasciens hwnnw trwy orchymyn yr ysbryd glan a yscrifenodd ystoria saint greal y gyd"[2].

This suggests the influence of the opening passages of the Estoire where we learn that the tale was written at Christ's command[3]. The detailed references to the story of Joseph, son of Joseph of Arimathea, coming to Britain and being anointed bishop in Sarras also indicate that the Estoire was the source[4].

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1 Yr Olew Bendigeid was included by Robert Williams in his Selections from the Hengwrt Manuscripts, vol. ii (London 1892), pp. 324-26; unreliable as it is, this appears to be the only printed text at the moment, but the text is shortly to be published by R. Wallis Evans in Llên Cymru. Williams does not state which manuscript he was using, but the published text seems to be based on the sixteenth century Peniarth 137. A total of thirteen manuscripts have survived: Peniarth 50, Peniarth 137, Peniarth 183 (c. 1582-86), Peniarth 214 (1609), Peniarth 216 (1607-11), Peniarth 267 (1635-41), Peniarth 326 (16th and 17th centuries), Cardiff 50 (16th century), Hafod 8 (no later than 1561), Llanstephan 34 (end of the 16th century), Llanstephan 104 (early 18th century), Llanstephan 117 (1544-52). In some of these manuscripts the text is preceded by a rubric claiming that it is a translation. For example, Hafod 8 has "Llyma dechray hystdori yr olew bendigaid yn wir wedy y droi o lyfyr lykas or lladin yng hymraec". (Compare below, p.232). For details of MSS see RWMSS.

2 HMSS, vol. ii, p. 324.

3 Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. i, p. 12.21-29. The Estoire does not state who was responsible for writing the book; indeed the narrator insists on preserving his anonymity (Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. i, p. 1.13ff.). The redactor of Yr Olew Bendigeid may be following the Prose Merlin in attributing the book to Nascien. See below, p. 233.

4 "..ar llyfr yssydd yn tystolaythu kyssegry o grist ehun Jossebus vab Josseb o Aramathia yn esgob yn ninas farar.ai yrddaw ag olew bendigaid. yr hwn a ddug saith engylion nef i Joseph ai fab ai ddeuddec neient..(..) ..a gorchymun a ddayth or nef.y erchi y Joseph a hynny o nifer oll ddyfod i ynys brydain a dwyn yr olew gyda hwynt.ag velly y gwnaethant. Koel oedd frenin yn ynys brydain yna.." (HMSS, vol. ii, pp. 324-25). Compare Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. i, pp. 36.27-33; 209.15-212.6; 231.9-12.

The earliest extant manuscript version of Yr Olew Bendigeid is found in Peniarth 50, and we have noted already how the scribe of this manuscript is interested in ecclesiastical legend and in incorporating such material into other texts which he is copying. Now the references to Nascien and to Joseph only form an introduction to the essential matter of the text, the story, found in Thomas of Walsingham's Historia Anglicana[1], of Thomas Becket receiving the Holy Oil from the Virgin Mary, and the two sections are not, in fact, adequately integrated. The reader has the impression that the two parts have been hastily cobbled together, the story of Joseph bringing the oil to Britain providing a forerunner or parallel to the Thomas Becket story, but at the same time undermining its authority, since two different and incompatible accounts of the Holy Oil story are juxtaposed. Consequently the possibility that the introductory matter is again the work of the Peniarth 50 scribe should at least be considered. Grounds for such a hypothesis are found in the passage that precedes the text of Yr Olew Bendigeid in Peniarth 50. Here the scribe not only states that he had sought out and found "man betheu droganawl o ladin franghec a saesnec", but also adds, "a minneu ay kyuatheis"[2]. Since he claims responsibility for the translation, and since the Arthurian material he includes is not normally associated with the Becket prophecy[3], it is most likely that the Peniarth 50 scribe added the first section himself. This hypothesis would imply that not only was a copy of the Prose Lancelot proper available in the Gower-Glamorgan area in the early fifteenth century, as we have already seen, but also the Estoire. This in turn raises the possibility that a complete manuscript of the Vulgate Cycle was in a collection there. A further reference in Yr Olew Bendigeid adds weight to the latter hypothesis, for the statement that Nascien wrote "ystoria

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[1] Thomas of Walsingham, Historia Anglicana (ed. H.T. Riley, Rolls Series 28.1b, London 1864), pp. 239-40.

[2] See RWMSS, vol. i, p. 394, also M.E. Griffiths, Early Vaticination in Welsh (Cardiff 1937), pp. 203-4.

[3] See Rupert Taylor, Political Prophecy in England (New York 1911), pp. 99-100.

saint greal" concludes, "yr hwn y mae blaes feudwy yn kyfuno ag ef"[1]. "Blaes feudwy" is obviously the hermit Blaise of the Prose Merlin (Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. ii). This romance must also be the source for the idea of the two books, one written by Nascien and the other by Blaes, for we are told there that one Nasciens, a relative of Pelles (Sommer, Vulgate Version vol. ii, p. 221.37-39), had "la saint estoire en sa baillie + escrit de sa main propre par le commandement del saint maistre. +tant en escrit quil aiousta al liure blaise qui par merlin en fist ce quil en fist" (Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. ii, p. 222.3-5). This book of Nascien's seems to have been confused by the redactor of the Estoire, and consequently also by the compiler of Yr Olew Bendigeid, with another book, attributed to Joseph, son of Joseph of Arimathea, which tells of those who brought the Grail to Britain. Merlin orders Blaise to write down these same adventures and tells him:

> "si sera li liures ioseph adiouste au tien..(..)..Et quant li doi liure seront ensamble si iaura .j. biau liure + li doi seront .j. misme chose fors tant que ne puis pas dire ne retraire les priuees paroles de ihesu crist + de ioseph". (Sommer, Vulgate Version, vol. ii, p. 20.5, 9-12).

Familiarity with the Prose Merlin is also shown in the sixth set of knights at Arthur's court in the Llanstephan 28 text of the XXIV Marchog. Here "Blaes mab Iarll Llychlyn" appears as one of the "Tri Chyvion Varchoc oedd yn Llys Arthur". Further evidence of the circulation of the Prose Merlin in Wales is provided by a fragmentary fourteenth century account of the birth of Arthur. Although much of the text could as easily be based on Geoffrey of Monmouth, a reference to "Blasius esgob" as Merlin's "dat eneit" and "ysgrivennyd cwbyl oi broffwydolaethev" shows that the redactor must have had access also to the Vulgate Merlin[2]. We now have evidence, then, that the Merlin, Estoire, Prose Lancelot and Queste were known in Wales. Although I have found no concrete evidence for the existence of the Mort Artu, the possibility cannot be ruled out[3]. The existence of a complete Vulgate Cycle

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[1] HMSS, vol. ii, p. 325.

[2] TYP, pp. cxxxvii, 213; "The Birth of Arthur" was edited by J.H. Davies in Y Cymmrodor, vol. xxiv (1913), pp. 247ff. For reference to Blaise see p. 252.

[3] References to Mordred, for example, are just as likely to be based on Geoffrey of Monmouth or the Welsh Brut and so cannot help us.

in south-east Wales need not surprise us, for we have already seen that contacts between Wales and both England and France were close enough throughout the later Middle Ages for French manuscripts to find their way to Wales without difficulty, and that a copy of the Roman de la Rose[1] was in the area in the early fourteenth century. Now the Triads and the XXIV Marchog, grouping together as they did three strands of tradition with some connecting thread or theme, provided a convenient and easily remembered check-list for the poets to draw on, and since such sources include the kind of references we have just been considering, it would appear that continental Arthurian material, whether in translation, as in the case of Y Seint Greal, or in the original French, had some impact in poetic circles. It is true, as Rachel Bromwich points out, that only one third of the material in the XXIV Marchog is adapted from Geoffrey of Monmouth, Y Seint Greal and the French Vulgate Cycle[2], but it is nonetheless significant that these other traditions had found their way into native forms and were being combined with those that were native. The next step will be to see how far the poets themselves drew upon this newer, non-native material, for inclusion in a Triad does not necessarily prove popularity with the poets.

The poets of the late fourteenth, the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the cywyddwyr, drew on a vast range of poetic and narrative tradition for epithets and comparisons with which to glorify their patrons and adorn their verse. A survey of the extant works of the major poets from Iolo Goch (c. 1320-98) down to William Llŷn (c. 1534/5-1580)[3] shows that almost every

[1] See Chapter 2, p. 30.

[2] TYP, p. cxxxvii.

[3] The chief collections examined were: Ifor Williams & T. Roberts (eds.), Cywyddau Dafydd ap Gwilym a'i gyfoeswyr (Bangor 1914); H. Lewis, Thomas Roberts, Ifor Williams (eds.), Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill (2nd ed., Cardiff 1937); J. Llywelyn Williams & Ifor Williams (eds.), Gwaith Guto'r Glyn (Cardiff 1939); Thomas Roberts & Ifor Williams (eds.), The Poetical Works of Dafydd Nanmor (Cardiff 1923); W. Leslie Richard (ed.), Gwaith Dafydd Llwyd o Fathafarn (Cardiff 1964); Islwyn Jones (ed.), Gwaith Hywel Cilan (Cardiff 1963); Tegid & Gwallter Mechain (eds.), Gwaith Lewis Glyn Cothi (Oxford & Denbigh 1837); Leslie Harries (ed.), Gwaith Huw Cae Llwyd ac Eraill (Cardiff 1953); T. Gwynn Jones (ed.), Gwaith Tudur Aled (Cardiff, Wrexham & London 1926); E. Bachelléry (ed.), L'Oeuvre Poétique de Gutun Owain (Paris 1950); J.C. Morrice (ed.), Barddoniaeth William Llŷn (Bangor 1918).

type of material became grist to the poetic mill. References cover the heroes of the Old North, from early Welsh poetry, the early native prose tales like Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi and Culhwch ac Olwen, the three Arthurian romances of Peredur, Owein and Gereint, and finally the new literature in translation, including the Seith Doethon, Amlyn ac Amig and the Charlemagne and Roland material as well as Y Seint Greal itself. It is only fair to say, however, that by the sixteenth century the practice had become purely conventional, with the same set phrases recurring, often reproducing exactly whole lines from the first generations of cywyddwyr. Nonetheless, the fact that non-native traditions were used alongside Welsh ones shows that material like that of the French Grail romances had been assimilated to the extent that at the very least their basic subject matter and the names of their main characters were familiar and evocative for poets and public alike; there is little value in comparing one's patron to a hero from poetry or prose if he does not recognise the allusion. It might be objected that poets and their patrons formed but a small class, yet Thomas Parry in his Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg points out that in the time of the cywyddwyr "nid diddordeb cylch bach dethol o arbenigwyr oedd prydyddu,ond peth yn cyniwair trwy gyfran fawr o'r dosbarth llythrennog"[1], whilst the uchelwyr, their patrons, were themselves numerous, as a glance at the dedications of the poets' work confirms.

When considering the figures from Arthurian romance who appear in the poetry of the cywyddwyr, it has to be remembered that the majority were already familiar to the Welsh from earlier literature, from the Old Welsh poetry about the northern heroes to the early prose tales like Culhwch ac Olwen and the three romances of Peredur, Owein and Gereint. In the case of Arthur, Peredur, Owain, Gwalchmei and Cei, for example, it is impossible to tell whether the poet had a particular source in mind or whether, as seems more likely, he was simply referring to a general stock of Arthurian tradition,

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[1] HLlG p. 106.

as exemplified in the Triads. Consequently, the number of references that can only be based upon Y Seint Greal or the French Vulgate Cycle, rather than upon any pre-existing Arthurian traditions, is small.

Most of the references to the Grail itself have already been examined in Chapter 2, so that a detailed account is not necessary. The earliest reference is found in Dafydd y Coed's poem to Hopcyn ap Thomas, listing

"Eurdar y Lucidarius,
Ar Greal a'r Ynyales". (RP col. 1376.21-22).

This poem, which, as we have seen, must refer to Peniarth 11, cannot be dated more precisely than the late fourteenth century; Dafydd is simply known to have been active around 1370. The poem gives no indication of the popularity of the text, for Dafydd mentions the "greal" only to illustrate the learning of his patron, and although he must have actually seen the book there is no evidence that he was familiar with its contents.

A cywydd written by Dafydd Llwyd o Fathafarn (c. 1420-?1490, fl. 1447-86), entitled "Marwnad Syr Gruffudd Fychan", contains the following lines:

"Mi a rodiais ym mrodir
Dy wlad ymhob adail ir
I'th geisio, iaith digasog,
Mal am y Greal, ym Grog". (GDLlF p. 120.5-8).

The use of the verb "ceisio" with "y Greal" points to familiarity with the general outlines of the Grail story, though whether Dafydd had any more detailed knowledge of it, or whether he had come across a French or a Welsh version, is impossible to tell. As Syr Gruffudd Fychan was killed on July 9th, 1447[1], this elegy must have been written soon afterwards. By 1447, therefore, the story of the Grail quest was familiar enough to the literary public for a poet to make use of the theme.

Guto'r Glyn's cywydd asking Trahaearn ab Ieuan for the loan of the Grail has already been examined, and we have seen that Guto had some knowledge of the content of the book, since he describes it as

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[1] See GDLlF, p. 205.

"llyfr y gwaed, llyfrau gwyr,
Lle syrthẽidd yn llys Arthur,
Llyfr enwog o farchogion,
Llyfr at grefft yr holl Ford Gron". (GGG p. 304.47-50).

One other poem mentions Y Seint Greal:

"Gwr yw gyda Sain Greal,
A'i le'n nef a'i wely'n Ial". (GGG p. 50.45-46).

The "gwr" in question is probably the same abbot of Valle Crucis who had asked for the book from Trahaearn, for the cywydd in which Guto asks for it on the abbot's behalf includes the lines,

"Saint mynaich sy'n dymunaw
Sain Grëal i dre Ial draw". (GGG p. 304.57-58).

The idea of the grail seems to have been not uncommon among poets by the late fifteenth century. Although never becoming a standard topos, it was sufficiently well known to be used as an ornament. Lewis Glyn Cothi's work contains two typical examples:

"Y gwr ieuanc val Grëal". (LGC p. 110.1).

"Gwyr o wlad Grëal ydym". (LGC p. 259.19).

Such references to the grail, do not point to a particular copy of the book, and give no indication as to how far the poets really were familiar with the romances. However, some of the cywyddwyr do mention a few of the main characters that are found in Y Seint Greal but not in the earlier Welsh sources. Obviously references to Peredur could be drawn from the romance of Peredur vab Efrawc, or indeed from early poetry where Peredur appears as a hero in the North. In one case, however, a non-Welsh form is used, suggesting that the poet had used a different source. This appears in the work of Rhys Goch Eryri (c. 1365/7-1448/50):

"..Persifal oedd
A gedwis yn y goedwig". (IGE p. 184.8-9).

Rhys Goch is referring to the upbringing of the hero in the forest, which is recounted not only in Peredur vab Efrawc and Chrétien's Conte del Graal, but also in the second part of Y Seint Greal and the Perlesvaus. In the Welsh texts the forms Peredur or Paredur are used. The appearance of "Persifal" suggests that the poet took it from a French source, but in a

recent article W. Gerallt Harries, considering this poem together with a reference in the work of Dafydd Nanmor (c. 1420-85), has concluded that both poets were drawing on the English Sir Percyvell of Galles, perhaps through an oral version[1]. As far as Y Seint Greal is concerned, then, all the references to the first Grail hero are unhelpful. The second Grail hero, Galaad, on the other hand, is not mentioned in any extant Welsh sources earlier than our text, so that where the name occurs in the works of the cywyddwyr it must be derived either from Y Seint Greal or from knowledge of the French Queste. The earliest such reference is "ail Glahath" in Iolo Goch (c. 1320-98; IGE p. 48.11), followed by "Glewlwyth aer, ail Galath dda" in Rhys Goch Eryri (1365/7-1448/50; IGE p. 310.26). Guto'r Glyn refers to "Pedwar Glath y pedeir gwlad" (GGG p. 47, 48), "Glath i Aber Dau Gledd" (GGG p. 137.10), and Lewis Glyn Cothi to "Enw Galath Ieuan y Glyn" (LGC p. 467.8), both Guto and Lewis writing in the second half of the fifteenth century. Finally there are several examples in Tudur Aled (1465/75-c. 1527): "Syr Galath hirfawr" (GTA p. 42.117), "Mal Syr Galath, maels aur glog" (GTA p. 114.6) and "Brawd Galath Aber Dau Gledd" (GTA p. 422.26), are a few examples. It looks as if Tudur Aled lifted the last line from Guto'r Glyn, but it is just possible that the demands of metre and cynghanedd led both to make the same choice. The examples quoted illustrate the uncertainty among the poets as to the form and accentuation of the name[2]. Despite its appearance in Y Seint Greal it must have still sounded foreign and unfamiliar to them. The use of the name as an epithet simply proves that Galaad was known as an heroic character. The fact that he was known at all is probably due to Y Seint Greal, for he is otherwise mentioned only in one Triad (86), which is of the first half of the fifteenth century and consequently is too late to account for the reference in Iolo Goch. In view of the vagueness of the references, and the apparent scarcity of copies of Y Seint Greal, it is more likely that the poets had heard the name and perhaps knew the outlines of

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[1] "Peredur, 'Nai Arthur'", BBCS, xxvi (1975), pp. 311-14.

[2] Compare TYP, pp. 353-54.

the story than that they had actually read it themselves.

Lancelot, Boort and Lionel are the only other major characters mentioned by the cywyddwyr who are otherwise not known in Welsh before Y Seint Greal. References to Lancelot are frequent. In the work of Rhys Goch Eryri we find "Gwilym Lawnslod ni 'mgilia" (IGE p. 310.25), whilst Guto'r Glyn describes a nobleman as "un glod a Lawnslot di Lag" (GGG p. 4.48). Lewis Glyn Cothi also likens a subject to "Lawnslod" (LGC p. 425.38), whilst Dafydd Nanmor (c. 1420-85) writes, "Na Lawnslod Dvlag, nag Vthr Bendragon.." (DN p. 59.58), and Tudur Aled of "Dyrnod Syr Lawnslod ar lu" (GTA p. 182.65). As Rachel Bromwich points out[1], this name was unknown to the Gogynfeirdd, so the cywyddwyr must have taken it either from Y Seint Greal itself or from the French Vulgate Cycle. The same is true of the allusions to "Syr Liwnel" and "Bwrd" in Guto'r Glyn (GGG p. 122.37; 137.10) and to "Syr Bwrt" in Tudur Aled (GTA p. 246.70).

These references in poetry indicate that the general framework of the Grail romances and the names of the main characters were known to the poets and must have been familiar also to their audiences. However, the references prove nothing more. Although some of the poets may have become familiar with the major proper names and themes via the triadic material, the late date of the XXIV Marchog and ofthe most relevant Triads shows that this cannot be true for the first generation of cywyddwyr, including poets such as Iolo Goch and Rhys Goch Eryri. With the one exception of the reference to "Persifal" in the work of Rhys Goch, the forms of the proper names provide no help in identifying sources, since there is no way to distinguish a foreign name half-digested by a translator and then copied by a poet from one adapted by the poet himself, particularly since the demands of cynghanedd and metre, coupled with a foreign-sounding name, can give rise to a variety of forms.

Nonetheless, the evidence of the Triads and the poetry of the cywyddwyr does show that from the fourteenth century onwards, even into the sixteenth

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[1] TYP, p. 415.

century, continental Arthurian material provided an important source of inspiration. Although references based only on the newer, non-native material form a small proportion of the whole, it is still significant that it was drawn on at all and that it was used in conjunction with purely native traditions. The circulation of the French Vulgate Cycle and of Welsh translations such as Y Seint Greal, thus helped to provide a new source for the poets, fostering the Welsh interest in continental literature that could be seen as early as the three Welsh Arthurian romances and which had given rise to much translation of foreign texts from the mid thirteenth century onwards.

Abbreviations

ALMA	R.S. Loomis (ed.), Arthurian Literature in the Middle Ages (Oxford 1959)
Arch. Camb.	Archaeologia Cambrensis
BBC	J. Gwenogvryn Evans (ed.), The Black Book of Carmarthen (Pwllheli 1906)
BBCS	Bulletin of the Board of Celtic Studies
BD	Henry Lewis (ed.), Brut Dingestow (Cardiff 1942)
DN	Thomas Roberts & Ifor Williams (eds.), The Poetical Works of Dafydd Nanmor (Cardiff 1923)
EEW	T.H. Parry-Williams, The English Element in Welsh (Cymmrodorion Record Series, no. x, London 1923)
Études	A. Pauphilet, Études sur la Queste del Saint Graal (Paris 1921)
Évolution	C.E. Pickford, L'évolution du roman en prose (Paris 1959)
GDLlF	W. Leslie Richard (ed.), Gwaith Dafydd Llwyd o Fathafarn (Cardiff 1964)
GGG	J. Llywelyn Williams & Ifor Williams (eds.), Gwaith Guto'r Glyn (Cardiff 1939)
GMW	D. Simon Evans, A Grammar of Middle Welsh (Dublin 1970)
GPC	Geiriadur Prifysgol Cymru
GTA	T. Gwynn Jones (ed.), Gwaith Tudur Aled (Cardiff, Wrexham & London 1926)
HLlG	Thomas Parry, Hanes Llenyddiaeth Gymraeg (Cardiff 1944)
HMSS ii	Robert Williams (ed.), Selections from the Hengwrt Manuscripts (vol. ii, London 1890)
IGE	H. Lewis, Thomas Roberts & Ifor Williams (eds.), Cywyddau Iolo Goch ac Eraill (2nd ed., Cardiff 1937)
LGC	Gwallter Mechain & Tegid (eds.), Gwaith Lewis Glyn Cothi (Oxford & Denbigh 1837)
MLR	Modern Language Review
Mod. Phil.	Modern Philology

NLWJ	National Library of Wales Journal
Nitze	W.A. Nitze & T. Atkinson Jenkins (eds.), Le Haut Livre du Graal. Perlesvaus (Chicago 1932-37; reprinted New York 1972)
PBA	Proceedings of the British Academy
Per	Line references to Perlesvaus; see Nitze above
PKM	Ifor Williams (ed.), Pedeir Keinc y Mabinogi (Cardiff 1930)
PMLA	Publications of the Modern Language Association of America
Q	Page and line references to Queste (see below)
Queste	A. Pauphilet (ed.), La Queste del Saint Graal (Paris 1972)
RB	J. Gwenogvryn Evans (ed.), The Text of the Mabinogion from the Red Book of Hergest (Oxford 1887)
Rev. Celt.	Revue Celtique
RP	J. Gwenogvryn Evans (ed.), The Poetry in the Red Book of Hergest (Llanbedrog 1911)
RWMSS	J. Gwenogvryn Evans, Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh Language (Historical Manuscripts Commission, London 1898-99)
SG	Page and line references to Robert Williams (ed.), Selections from the Hengwrt Manuscripts, vol. i: Y Seint Greal (London 1874-76)
Stud. Celt.	Studia Celtica
THSC	Transactions of the Honourable Society of Cymmrodorion
	G.J. Williams, Traddodiad Llenyddol Morgannwg (Cardiff 1948)
Trad. Rhydd.	Geraint Bowen (ed.), Y Traddodiad Rhyddiaith yn yr Oesau Canol (Llandysul 1974)
TYP	Rachel Bromwich (ed.), Trioedd Ynys Prydein (Cardiff 1961)
Vulgate Version	H. Oskar Sommer (ed.), The Vulgate Version of the Arthurian Romances (Washington 1908-16)
WG	J. Morris-Jones, A Welsh Grammar. Phonology and Accidence (Oxford 1931)

WHR	Welsh History Review
WM	J. Gwenogvryn Evans & R.M. Jones (eds.), Llyfr Gwyn Rhydderch (2nd ed., Cardiff 1973)
YBH	Morgan Watkin (ed.), Ystorya Bown de Hamtwn (Cardiff 1958)
ZFrSl	Zeitschrift für französische Sprache und Literatur
ZrP	Zeitschrift für romanische Philologie

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NLW 3063D (=Mostyn 184), late 15th century.

Llanstephan 116, late 15th century fragment taken from NLW 3063D.

Peniarth 15 (=Hengwrt 57), late 15th century fragment.

Peniarth 118 (=Hengwrt 518, "The Book of Dr. John David Rhys"), fragment from last quarter of 16th century.

Peniarth 254 (=Hengwrt 545), early 17th century fragment.

b) La Queste del Saint Graal

For more detailed accounts of the contents of each manuscript, and references to manuscripts not mentioned in this study, see Pauphilet, Queste, pp. 111ff..

Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale.

* F.fr.98 (M), 15th century.

F.fr.110 (P), 13th century.

* F.fr.111 (Q), 15th century.

F.fr.112 (J), dated 1470.

F.fr.116 (N), 15th century.

F.fr.120 (O), 15th century.

* F.fr.122 (L), dated 1344.

F.fr.123, 14th century.

F.fr.339 (A), 13th century.

F.fr.342 (D), dated 1274.

F.fr.343 (B), 14th century.

F.fr.344 (R), 13th century.

F.fr.751 (V), 13th century.

* F.fr.768B 14th century.

F.fr.771 (X), 13th century.

F.fr.1423-24 (Y), 13th century.

* F.fr.12573 (T), 13th century.

* F.fr. 12580 (U), 13th century.

* F.fr.12581 (C), 13th century.

* F.fr.25520 (U'), 13th century.

Nlles.acq.fr.1119 (Z), 13th century.

Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal

* 3347 (Aa), 13th century.

* 3480 (Ac), 15th century.

* 3482 (Ad), 14th century.

* 5218 (Ab), dated 1351.

Lyons, Palais des Arts

* 77 (K), 13th century.

London, British Library

Royal 14.E.iii (S), 14th century.

Royal 20.c.vi, 14th century.

Add.10294 (S') 14th century.

Add.17443, 13th century.

Oxford, Bodleian Library

Although none of the Bodleian manuscripts are of special interest for the present study, the following are included as corrections to Pauphilet's list:

Rawlinson D.874, 15th century. This does not contain the main version of the Queste, as Pauphilet's lack of comment infers, but a text of the Post-Vulgate Queste, very closely related to B.N.f.fr.343. Folios 136r.i-158r.ii and 159r.ii-233r.i contain interpolations from the Prose Tristan.

Rawlinson D.899, 14th century. Pauphilet refers to this manuscript as Rawlinson D.89.

Rawlinson Q.b.6, first half of the 14th century. This manuscript is not mentioned by Pauphilet; for details see Gweneth Hutchings, "Two hitherto unnoticed manuscripts of the French prose Lancelot", Medium Aevum, 1934, pp. 189-92.

c) Perlesvaus

Oxford, Bodleian Library

Hatton 82 (O), Mid 13th century.

Brussels, Bibliothèque royale des ducs de Bourgogne.

* 11145 (Br), second half of 13th century.

Paris, Bibliothèque nationale.

F.fr.1428 (=anc. fonds 7526) (P), c.1250.

F.fr.120 (O), 14th century.

Paris, Bibliothèque de l'Arsenal

* 3480 (Ac), 15th century.

Chantilly, collection of the duc d'Aumale.

* 626 (C), 13th century.

Bern, Stadtbibliothek

* 113 (Be), 13th century.

2. Editions

a) Y Seint Greal

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At present this is the only complete printed text of Y Seint Greal. It consists of a transcript of MS Peniarth 11, together with an introduction and English translation,but is rather unreliable, and where necessary I have corrected quotations against the manuscript. An edition of the first part of Y Seint Greal, corresponding to La Queste del Saint Graal, was prepared by the late Professor Thomas Jones, and is to be published by the University of Wales Press. Five short passages from the first part of Y Seint Greal were published by A.O.H. Jarman in his Chwedleu Cymraeg Canol (2nd. ed., Cardiff 1969), pp. 91-107. These correspond to pp. 4.14-8.19, 9.35-10.22, 95.20-97.11, 161.21-164.18, 168.1-169.32 of Robert Williams's edition.

b) La Queste del Saint Graal

i) Early printed books

1488 edition, in two volumes containing the Prose Lancelot, Queste and Mort Artu. Printed by Jehan le bourgois and Jehan le Pre, in Rouen and Paris. A copy of this edition is preserved in the Bodleian Library, Oxford.

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c) Perlesvaus

i) Early printed books

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