

**Translating the French Renaissance into British Romanticism:  
Henry Cary's *The Early French Poets* and the Romantic Argument against French  
Classicism in the pages of the *London Magazine***

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**Abstract**

**Translating the French Renaissance into British Romanticism:  
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This project addresses the circumstances surrounding the publication of Henry Francis Cary's *The Early French Poets*. It identifies three key elements that influenced the revival of the French Renaissance in Britain in the 1820s: the role of British Romantic periodicals and the *London Magazine* in fostering a discussion of Romanticism, the British Romantic conflict with French Classicism, and the Romantic appropriation of the past and the foreign. Cary's translations and criticism of the French Renaissance poets are analysed within the context of the *London Magazine* as part of the British argument against French Classicism.

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Henry Francis Cary's translations of *The Early French Poets* were first published as a series of articles in the *London Magazine* from 1821 to 1824, then collected and published in book form by Cary's son in 1846 after his father's death, and subsequently republished with a preface by T. Earl Welby in 1923. These translations have been considered pioneering works, even by those who give their date of publication as 1846 (Gosse, France), instead of when they were first published as articles for the *London*. I believe *The Early French Poets* and the *London Magazine* offer an illuminating primary source of the shift in cultural hegemony from French Classicism to English Romanticism whose repercussions are still felt today. Translation, and critical translation, are at the centre of this argument.

In *The Task of the Translator*, Benjamin writes that "a translation comes later than the original, and since the important works of world literature never find their chosen translators at the time of their origin, their translation marks their stage of continued life" (Benjamin 71). Cary's *The Early French Poets* marks the beginning of a renewal of interest in the French Renaissance in Europe through Romanticism, which was itself a kind of Renaissance in its renewed concentration on a previously neglected past.

In my investigation into these groundbreaking translations, I started out with the question: why were the French Renaissance poets first revived and translated by an Englishman in a Romantic literary journal? (see Chapter 3 for the historical basis for this claim). This in turn led me to try to discover how this historically pioneering event came about.

I will be concentrating on the three major factors I believe contributed to Cary's pioneering work in translating the French Renaissance: The role of periodicals, Romanticism vs. Classicism, and making the Renaissance Romantic.

Chapter I of this thesis is concerned with the neglected history of Romantic periodicals (see Parker, *Literary Magazines and British Romanticism*), and why English translations of the French Renaissance appeared first in a periodical before they did in the form of a book. *The Early French Poets* articles were written for a periodical that was expressly Romantic in ideology, as part of a translation project not begun by the author.

My starting point will be to argue for the importance of translation to Romantic periodicals following Parker's argument for the importance of periodicals to Romantic studies. As he states in his introduction: "This book seeks to do three things: to demonstrate that literary magazines should be an object of study in their own right, to argue that they are the pre-eminent literary form of the 1820s and 1830s in Britain, and to explore the ways in which literary magazines begin to frame a discussion of Romanticism" (1). *The London Magazine*, arguably the most eminent of Romantic periodicals, spawned several books that were culled from articles first published in its pages, a fact that is equally ignored in discussions of *The Early French Poets*.

I will be showing how *The Early French Poets* came into existence because of two characteristics of the *London Magazine*: 1. In general, the unique milieu of the *London* placed an emphasis on engaging with the foreign in order to enrich English literature, especially through its first editor, John Scott. 2. Because of the particular circumstances of Scott's death, and the continuing of his editorial program, including his study of the French Renaissance, the project of offering a reassessment of French

Renaissance poetry through criticism and translation happened to fall into the hands of the most respected translator of his generation, Cary, “The Translator of Dante”.

Chapter 3 will deal with the debate between English Romanticism and French Classicism. The Romantic Revolution, as described by Charles Taylor, was in revolt against the “flattened world” of Classicism (1989, 372). Henry Cary uses the French Renaissance poets as an argument against the French Classicists who followed them. Because Cary was from Britain, the recent enemy of France (the battle of Waterloo took place in 1815, six years before Cary’s first article on the early French poets was published), the appropriating of France’s past becomes part of a narrative of conflict.

Chapter 4 is concerned with how Cary transforms French Renaissance poems into Romantic poetry. Part of the Romantic project was to “translate everything”, according to Berman (1984, 217), to make everything Romantic. Furthermore, I believe that in his argument against Classicism the Romantic will appropriate precisely what Classicism defined itself against: the Renaissance. As Berman demonstrates in *L'épreuve de l'étranger*, critical translation was the tool used by the German Romantics in their revolution against Classicism; Berman’s analysis can be applied to the British Romantic revolution against Classicism, while keeping in mind the particular circumstances of England’s cultural and territorial war against France.

I aim to show how the French Renaissance texts were transformed into Romantic texts by concentrating on a polarization expressed in both Cary’s commentary and in the translations themselves: nature vs. the base. Tracing the newfound sense of an inner nature, following Taylor, that found full expression in the Romantic movement, I will show how Cary censors (often explicitly) those Renaissance elements that deal with

perceived ignoble elements of humanity, and how he accentuates those elements that are deemed noble. I will do this through tracing the positive and negative terms attached to the poetry in Cary's comments on the poems, and through analysing the choices he makes as a translator. One of the reasons I feel this subject to be especially fertile, from a translation studies perspective, is the unique aspect of having the translator commenting on his translations within the same published text as the translations themselves. This commentary will provide one half of the mechanism by which Cary argues for a greater affinity between contemporary England and the French Renaissance, as opposed to contemporary France. The other half will consist in the translated poems themselves: the techniques used in rendering the poetry of the original into the poetry of 19<sup>th</sup> century English. The "Romanticising" techniques can be further highlighted by contrasting these translations with 20<sup>th</sup> century versions of a distinctly non-Romantic ideology.

Henry Cary (1772-1844) was known as "The Translator of Dante", particularly after Coleridge praised Cary's translation of Dante's *Commedia* in his lecture on Donne, Dante and Milton in February 1818 (King 114), and yet there were those, like Cary's friend Charles Lamb, who preferred his translations of *The Early French Poets* (224).

Crisafulli has already published a book on Cary's translation of Dante, and so I will make sparing reference to *The Vision of Dante* and the history surrounding it. Where the two subjects overlap will be in the study of how Cary avoids the "coarse" and the "gross", although from my reading Crisafulli does not relate this to the corresponding accentuation on "nature" and "poetry", and instead analyses this tendency as Cary translating within the polysystem of the British 19<sup>th</sup> century, wherein many bodily-related descriptions had to be expunged; "coarse images [...] may remain untransferable if the

state of the polysystem does not allow innovations” (Evan-Zohar in Crisafulli 180), and this particular polysystem lasted until the 1950 Dante translation into English. For Crisafulli, Cary seeks transparency, and not to shock his readers (181). Crisafulli’s text goes on to study the linguistic features which show Cary compensating for this loss of forcefulness and on Cary’s use of archaisms because of his supposed “target” based approach to translation (see especially the Conclusion in Crisafulli 327). My focus, instead, will be on Cary as a translator who was making an argument for Romanticism against Classicism through the best means at his disposal, according to his own writings on the subject: translation and poetry. I will be exploring how the culture of French Classicism is under attack in the *London Magazine*, and how this engenders a Romantic poetics of translation.

## CHAPTER 2: THE CONTEXT OF *THE EARLY FRENCH POETS*

The recent *Oxford History of Literary Translation in English* gives a useful summary of the position of medieval and Renaissance French literature in late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century England. At this point, pre- 17<sup>th</sup> century French poetry had fallen into complete neglect, excluding Chivalric Romances, although these too had only recently begun to be explored:

Medieval literature had been largely forgotten in France, but the tide began to turn after 1750 with collections such as that of Le Grand d'Aussy. His *Fabliaux ou contes du XII<sup>e</sup> et du XIII<sup>e</sup> siècle* provided material for an English prose collection (Anon. 1786), several times reissued, and for the versified *Fabliaux or Tales* of Gregory Lewis Way, first published in 1796 [...] What medieval and Renaissance France offered was above all a body of stories corresponding to Walter Scott's vision of chivalry [...] In many cases, though, narratives were not so much translated as reworked, whether in prose or in verse [...] Lang also translated and imitated some shorter old French poems in a conventional poetic idiom in his *Ballads and Lyrics of Old France* (1872) [...] In 1835, however, Louisa Stuart Costello had given a modern dress to some thirty poets from the troubadours to Henry IV in her *Specimens of the Early Poetry of France*. She devotes a good deal of space to Renaissance poetry, which also figures prominently in *The Early French Poets*, published in 1846 by Dante's translator Henry Cary. Thereafter, however, Ronsard and his contemporaries, though popular with the literati, were not much translated until about 1900 (231-232).

However, this catalogue does not mention that Cary's book was compiled from articles published in 1821-1824, in the pages of the *London*, and that the book was published by his son in 1846, after Henry Cary's death. This emphasises the importance of highlighting the neglected but essential role periodicals play in the history of translation.

In France, Sainte-Beuve was the first author to provide in-depth scholarship on the French Renaissance poets (Chadbourne 27); the state of neglect in early 19<sup>th</sup> century France for their Renaissance poets was such that, in his *Tableau de la poésie française au*

*XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Sainte-Beuve summarises the works of the principal poets, “quoting copiously, since most of the authors were little known at the time” (27). In the preface to this book “the author does admit having lost no opportunity to establish the relevance of his history to the current debate as to the merits of Romantic versus Classical poetry” (28). As Chadbourne documents, in *Tableau II*, Sainte-Beuve describes Victor Hugo as a model for the French Romantics by seeking, “emancipation, in 16<sup>th</sup> century models, from the ‘narrow, symmetrical mold of Malherbe and Boileau’ (Tableau II 40). It was largely Sainte-Beuve himself who discovered these new ancestors for them” (28). It was indeed Sainte-Beuve who awakened his friend Hugo to the French Renaissance and especially to Ronsard.

However, even Sainte-Beuve’s admiration was qualified, and he would call the Pleiade “a first and abortive phase of French Classical poetry”, and say that this era was without “a single man of genius” (28). The *Tableau de la poésie française au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle* was published in 1828, four years after Cary’s last article, and was inspired by the French Academy’s subject for its *Prix d’éloquence* for 1826: *Discours sur l’histoire de la langue et de la littérature françaises depuis le commencement du XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle, jusqu’en 1610*. Sainte-Beuve was happy to withdraw as a candidate and pursue the subject on his own (25).

Henry Cary was aware that his contemporaries in France were neglecting their own history of poetry, writing that “the French of the present day, I know, set but little store on these revivers of the poetical art” (1923, 11). He attributed this neglect to their continued emphasis on classical rules in literature and to the “solicitude for what they call the purity of their language” (11). It was the purity of the French language that the British

Romantics were, in part, defining themselves against, and Cary's *The Early French Poets* serves as a rebuttal to this purity by valuing an earlier French language that was not "pure", but was instead expressive.

### **The "visible translator" as instructor**

In *Poétique du traduire*, Meschonnic writes: "L'effacement du traducteur n'a qu'une visée: donner l'impression que la traduction n'est pas une traduction, donner l'illusion du naturel. Quitte à effacer toutes les particularités qui appartiennent à un autre mode de signifier, effacer les distances, de temps, de langue, de culture" (1999, p. 26). Cary's *The Early French Poets* offers an important exception to this invisibility of the translator (Venuti 334). Throughout his articles, Cary provides a running critique on his translations, offering insight into what he chooses to translate and into his method of translating, along with what he chooses *not* to translate. Part of Cary's project is always to instruct his readers, to provide them with poems they will never have seen before, which is part of the Romantic strategy. This is also one of the explanations for why this project was groundbreaking. As Klancher puts it:

In 1800 Wordsworth intuited a commodified popular culture emerging to displace the reading of Shakespeare and Milton. He claimed that a new language of poetry could resist the cultural entropy of a "torpid" middle-class mind. But that mind was not merely passive; it could be shaped, as the mass journal would show, to interpret the nineteenth-century world in a peculiar but ultimately powerful way. Forging their own interpretive strategies to counter those emerging all around them, middle-class writers intimated to their readers an unparalleled power of reading itself. To that end, one might say, the middle-class audience would come to see the social relation between people in the fantastic form of a relation between texts (49-50).

Like an Encyclopaedist, Cary is gathering together a wide array of cultural artefacts, but in this case, is transforming them into a poetic experience for his readers, one in which the distance between French and English, the Renaissance and the 1820's, is bridged. I will explore how he bridges this distance by analysing his translations and by using Cary's commentary and criticism as "paratexts" (Berman, 1995) within the same text (as opposed to being situated in a preface, or notes, as is the norm).

Cary is alive to the difficulties inherent in a strict target/source dichotomy. He frequently points to, for example, the influence of the early French poets on Chaucer, whom he considers the first great English poet. Cary not only explains what he is doing while doing it (the opposite of an invisible translator), he traces the "borrowings" of the poets he translates, whether they be from Horace or Petrarch. For him, the interchange between languages is a good thing; it is French Classicism which erects a barrier to such a fruitful dialogue. According to Cary, because his contemporaries in France hold on to a classical tradition that rejects the stimulation provided by foreign traditions, and that emphasises form for form's sake, their literature has atrophied. This will be discussed further in the section on "Translating the Foreign" in Chapter 4.

According to Meschonnic, "L'histoire du traduire montre qu'il n'y a pas d'un côté la théorie, de l'autre les traducteurs... Leur pensée a toujours été d'expérience, et souvent polémique, parce qu'ils se défendaient, comme Jérôme et Luther" (1999, 56-57). Cary uses translation in order to instruct his readers on a neglected era of literary history, to appropriate the French Renaissance, and to argue for a Romantic ideology of poetry. According to Meschonnic, it is just this revelatory insertion of the translator into the text that ensures that the original will continue. "Plus le traducteur s'inscrit comme sujet dans

la traduction, plus, paradoxalement, traduire peut continuer le texte. C'est-à-dire, dans un autre temps et une autre langue, en faire un texte. Poétique pour poétique" (27). *The Early French Poets* marked the beginning of a new phase of continuation for the French Renaissance poets.

### **The importance of the 1820s and the role of periodicals**

The 1820s were an important turning point in the history of Romanticism; indeed, Chandler, in *England in 1819: the Politics of Literary Culture and the Case of Romantic Historicism*, provides an in-depth and powerful argument for 1819 being a uniquely momentous year in the history of England, the focal point of an age surrounding it, "for which literary historians have produced what Claude Lévi-Strauss terms a "hot chronology," an age that, because of what we take to be its peculiar eventfulness, we use many dates to record" (Chandler 3). This era marked the beginning of publishing practices which continue to the present day, especially in the establishing of literary journals directed toward a non-strictly defined mass audience: "No mass audience would clearly appear in England before the 1820s" (Klancher 43). The *London* provides a most fruitful case study for this historic change and of the integral role translation played in it. The late 18<sup>th</sup> century *Monthly Magazine* set up the model of focussing on "the serious" (Klancher 39), and *Blackwood's* was its most successful descendant: "In such journals a kind of "intelligentsia" would discover itself in contact (and contrast) with wider readerships" (39). It can be argued that the *London* perfected this model. Often labelled the greatest British periodical of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, despite, or because of its brief run, the *London* could count a majority of the great British Romantic writers as its contributors.

According to Bauer, the *London* succeeded in occupying a distinguished place in 1820's Britain:

[...] a place even of pre-eminence, and in bequeathing to posterity enough of permanent value to keep its name alive a century and a quarter after its demise: "The career of the London Magazine was painfully brief, from 1820 to 1829, and during the last half of that decade it was barren enough; but for the first few years of its being it was probably richer in good authors and enduring literature than any other English magazine has been before or since." (Frederick E. Pierce, *Currents and Eddies in the English Romantic Generation*, New Haven, 1918, p. 199) [...] Lamb, Hazlitt, and De Quincey undoubtedly were its luminaries, but among the lesser lights who contributed to its brilliance may be found the names of many writers of distinction: Carlyle, Landor, Hood, Hartley Coleridge, Cary the translator of Dante, John Clare the peasant poet, Reynolds the friend of Keats, Thomas Noon Talfourd the first biographer of Charles Lamb, Bernard Barton the Quaker poet, Barry Cornwall, George Darley, Allan Cunningham, to mention only a dozen. Together they brought the *London* to an unrivalled position among its contemporaries (13-14).

Pointing to its emphasis on comprehending the foreign, Stendhal's contributions should be added to this list, articles written on French society for the *London* which were translated and published in English in its pages. *The Early French Poets* articles are an integral part of this literary milieu.

The often neglected history of Romantic periodicals provides the key to why English translations of the French Renaissance appeared first in a periodical before they did in the form of a book. *The Early French Poets* articles were written for a periodical that was expressly Romantic in ideology, as part of a translation project not begun by the author, Henry Cary. This project was begun, in fact, by John Scott, the first editor of the *London*, in his *Notices of Some of the Early French Poets*. The genesis of these translations places them outside of the idea of a self-contained *author* who is the sole generator of a work defined as "the voice of a single person" (Barthes 143). Instead, the history of *The Early French Poets* is intricately linked with the history of periodicals and

the *London Magazine* in particular. Klancher, in describing the change that occurred in periodicals right before 1820, writes that “the intricate nexus between publisher, editor, and writers made assigning personal responsibility for this decision or that text hard to establish [...]. No longer a society of readers and writers, the journal represented itself as an institution blending writer, editor, and publisher in what could only appear to be an essentially authorless text” (51).

Translation plays an integral role in the history of British periodicals that Parker recounts. Parker argues for a re-evaluation of the influence of periodicals on British Romanticism; as he states in his introduction: “This book seeks to do three things: to demonstrate that literary magazines should be an object of study in their own right, to argue that they are the pre-eminent literary form of the 1820s and 1830s in Britain, and to explore the ways in which literary magazines begin to frame a discussion of Romanticism” (1). The *London Magazine*, arguably the most eminent of Romantic periodicals<sup>1</sup>, spawned several books, whose origins in the pages of the *London* are often forgotten, a fact that is equally ignored in discussions of *The Early French Poets*. As Parker states: “More often magazines are simply ignored in critical discussions. Few treatments of De Quincey’s “Confessions of an English Opium Eater,” for example, do more than mention the *London*, although that magazine, which had made a point of recounting and analysing unusual psychological experiences, had much to do with preparing for the initial, unexpected success of this work” (3).

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<sup>1</sup> Walter Jerrold wrote of that “wonderful circle of men of genius and talent who gave such character to the London Magazine of the eighteen-twenties as no predecessor or successor in the whole of magazinedom has equalled” (Jerrold, *Thomas Hood & Charles Lamb* [London 1930], quoted in Bauer, 17).

The existence of *The Early French Poets* relies on the fact that it was first published in a periodical, *The London Magazine*. The unique milieu of the *London* placed an emphasis on engaging with the foreign in order to enrich English literature, due in large part to its first editor, John Scott, with such writers as De Quincey emphasising the importance of German literature. Because of the importance of John Scott as editor of the *London*, his sudden death meant that his many initiatives had to be picked up by other writers, including his reassessment of French Renaissance poetry, which fell into the hands of the Translator of Dante.

According to Jauss:

The poetic text can be disclosed in its aesthetic function only when the poetic structures that are read out of the finished aesthetic object as its characteristics are retranslated, from out of the objectification of the description, back into the process of the experience of the text that allows the reader to take part in the genesis of the aesthetic object (1982b, 140).

By reading the final aesthetic object in the form of Cary's book, *The Early French Poets*, published in 1846 and 1923, not only is the original publication history lost, but the way in which these texts interacted with other texts in the *London* is forgotten as well, as evidenced in the references to *The Early French Poets* cited here that do not mention its earlier publication in the pages of the *London*.

For Jauss, instead of being a purely subjective experience, "the coherence of literature as an event is primarily mediated in the horizon of expectations of the literary experience of contemporary and later readers, critics and authors" (22). In the following pages I will be tracing some of the literary experience of Cary's contemporaries, often within the pages of the *London* itself.

Berman takes Jauss's concept of the "horizon of expectations" surrounding an aesthetic object and applies it specifically to the elements that produce a translation: "On peut définir en première approximation l'horizon comme l'ensemble des paramètres langagiers, littéraires, culturels et historiques qui "déterminent" le sentir, l'agir et le penser d'un traducteur" (1995, 79). Presumably, "Déterminent" is used with caution here because a causal relation is not what is being suggested; it is important, rather, to look at how these elements helped shape the genesis of the project. In the following section I am concerned with "l'agir" of Cary: the particular circumstances that led to him being contracted to write these articles on Renaissance French poetry for the *London*.

In his *Literary Magazines and British Romanticism*, Mark Parker focuses primarily on the neglected concept of context when studying Romanticism, especially in relation to periodicals: "Context can also be produced by the relations between editor and contributor: overtly in the commissioning of a particular article or essay, in negotiating about the product, and through editorial changes; covertly in the silent adjustments contributors might make in fitting their work to a specific magazine" (2).

What is lost in reading individual contributions outside the orbit of the periodical is not simply an immediate context for the work but a mode of emergence which radically affects the meaning of a particular essay, review, poem, or novel. A writer's intentions are only part of the meaning of the work in a periodical: a work in such a setting enters a variety of relations with other articles and ongoing institutional concerns that give subtle inflection to its meaning (3).

The fact that Cary's articles, published in the *London Magazine* from November 1821 to April 1824 were published as a book after his death by his son, has led later writers to mistakenly credit Cary for being the first champion of the early French poets. Edmond Gosse's essay on Cary, published in *Silhouettes* in 1925 begins:

In recalling to light the forgotten volume of Cary's Early French Poets, Mr. T. Earl Welby has not said too much in praise of it, but has underestimated its relative historical importance. ... the importance of the work is its pioneer quality, which was much greater than even Mr. Welby seems inclined to recognise (57).

This passage highlights several aspects of the periodical press I would like to focus on here: Gosse does not mention that Cary's "chain of little prose chapters" appeared in specific contexts within a periodical over a long period of time; instead, he is referring to the book published after Cary's death, in 1846. This accounts for why John Scott's great importance to this project is neglected; his works never appeared in book form, and thus out of context. In Cary's son's introduction to his father's *The Early French Poets*, on the other hand, the son is at pains to emphasize that his father's works were first published in the then-defunct *London Magazine*:

The papers of which this volume is composed, were originally published in various numbers of the *London Magazine*, between the years 1821 and 1825, at which time that periodical could reckon among its contributors names of no less note than those of Charles Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, Allan Cunningham, Thomas Hood, Thomas Carlyle, and the author's highly valued friend George Darley (Cary 1846, ix).

We see here the great importance Cary's son places on the context of these articles, and perhaps the heightened value placed on that context now that the *London* is a thing of the past. Cary's son (also Henry Cary) was keeping his father's memory alive both through the publication of his father's memoirs and *The Early French Poets*, and his attention to the history of the *London Magazine*, absent in many later references to *The Early French Poets*, is also a remembrance of the emotional ties that existed for the writers of the *London Magazine*<sup>2</sup>.

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<sup>2</sup> The last of the *London* "Magazine dinners" was held at Cary's house, in August 1824 (King 177). Cary's son remembered the general tone of the dinners: "the conversation, which never flagged, consisted of a strange mixture of learning, wit, and puns, bad and good" (144).

Cary's son goes on to explain in his introduction why this volume had the unconventional form of not following the French authors chronologically from chapter to chapter:

[...] this was impractical, without frequent alterations of the text, for that the latter papers contain references to former ones, though these may happen to carry us further forward in the history. The papers themselves, though doubtless written with a view of being afterwards published in a separate form, were composed and printed as at the time best suited the author's mood or convenience (Cary 1846, p. ix).

It is important to add that they were also printed at the time best suited for the *London's* convenience, and that the impact of *The Early French Poets* is in no way limited to their publication in book form.

The popularity of various early 19<sup>th</sup> century British periodicals is difficult to measure in terms of circulation:

The most significant journals gathered audiences of five to fifteen thousand readers each: the *Edinburgh Review* (1802), the *Examiner* (1808), the *Quarterly Review* (1809), the *New Monthly Magazine* (1814), *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (1817), the *London Magazine* (1821) [sic], the *Westminster Review* (1824), the *Athenaeum* (1828), *Fraser's Magazine* (1830), the *Metropolitan* (1831). Their total readership could only be guessed at, but Francis Jeffrey's estimate still stands: some twenty thousand among what he called "fashionable or public life": upper civil servants and clergy, the richer merchants and manufacturers, the gentry, and the professionals, all earning more than eight hundred pounds a year. Much more selectively, the journals also reached into the "middling classes" of some two hundred thousand teachers, lesser clergy and civil servants, and shopkeepers, each earning three hundred pounds or less a year. The definition of readers sought by these journals was unavoidably imprecise by contrast to eighteenth-century journals, which mapped their audiences by targeting specific ranks (Klancher 50).

With reproduction rights being only in their infancy at this time, articles from eminent magazines would often be reprinted, without permission, elsewhere, which would further disseminate a magazine's influence. Cary's biographer, R. W. King, quotes Thomas Hood, sub-editor for the *London*, recounting how he "once cut out from a country

newspaper what seemed to me a very good old English poem. It proved to be a *naturalization*, by Cary, of a French song to April, by Remy Belleau.” King goes on to explain:

This was the poem beginning “Avril, l’honneur et des bois Et des mois,” Cary’s version of which, one of his best, appeared in the *London Magazine* in April, 1822. Provincial newspapers frequently conveyed (without acknowledgment) poems and even long articles from the London periodicals: the *North Wales Gazette*, for example, reprinted this very poem of Cary’s in its issue of April 11, 1822; the same journal also borrowed Lamb’s *Roast Pig* and other essays (King 149).

However, while taking into account the original publication history of Cary’s articles, the reason for their being commissioned in the first place must also be addressed. Cary’s articles were not the first of their kind because they were in fact intended as a continuation of an article by the recently deceased founding editor of the *London*, John Scott. Analysing John Scott’s *Notices of some of the Early French Poets* will illuminate what features of Scott’s article Cary carried into his own, and where they diverge. This also provides a valuable context for why such a project was deemed worth pursuing in this eminent British Romantic journal of the 1820s.

### **John Scott and the French**

The first article in *The Oxford History of Literary Translation in English* (2006): “Translation and British Literary Culture”, by Kenneth Haynes, provides a useful summary of the state of translation in 19<sup>th</sup> century Britain. Haynes points to the transformation that was taking place in Britain at this time with regard to its attitude towards foreign literatures: “In an essay of 1821, Thomas De Quincey insisted that English literature needed the stimulus of foreign literatures: ‘So it is with the literatures

of whatsoever land: unless crossed by some other different breed, they all tend to superannuation” (3).

This article was the first De Quincey wrote for the *London* after his “Confessions of an Opium-Eater” and appeared in the December 1821 issue of the *London Magazine*. This edition also contained Cary’s second article on *The Early French Poets*, on Clément Marot, which serves as his introduction to the series and therefore appears first in the book, and is for this reason the only article out of sequence. Haynes continues:

[De Quincey] was pleading for the study of ‘some exotic, but congenial’ foreign literature, namely German, to protect English from the dotage, nervelessness, and imbecility that had befallen French because of its refusal to admit influences from without or to form alliances with exotic literature [...] Not only were German literature and philosophy read throughout Europe for the first time, but in mid-century American literature was discovered by Britain and the Continent, and at the end of the century and into the twentieth, Russian literature became widely known [...] Translation played a large part in these literary discoveries and in many more besides [...] Among Italian writers, Dante was read widely for the first time, often in Cary’s translation [...] The new importance of periodicals for translation was also in evidence: *Blackwood’s*, for example, gave prominence to translations of foreign literature in the first few decades of its run [...] (3-5).

From this quote can be seen not only how the act of translation was undergoing a transformation in the 1820’s, and the importance of Romantic periodicals in this change, but also the contentious attitude the British Romantics had towards French Classicism.

John Scott was the editor of the *London Magazine* from its inaugural issue until he was killed, like a Romantic novel’s hero, in a duel in February, 1821. What distinguished the *London Magazine* from its contemporaries was not only its contributors; “the *élan vital* of the magazine, there is little doubt, was furnished by its first editor” (Bauer 66). After his demise, the magazine slowly followed suit, and from 1825 to 1829 it was a shell of its former self, dying quietly before the beginning of the new decade. By all accounts, Scott was a brilliant editor, and much of the lustre cast on

the *London* is credited to his leadership and to his ability to corral the geniuses of such disparate characters as Hazlitt and Lamb, who produced their best work, Hazlitt's *Table Talk* and Lamb's *Elia* articles, for the magazine.

The *London* was inaugurated as a corrective to the partisanship of the other contemporary magazines, and Scott was chosen as editor for his sense of fair play, by its original publishers, Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy. However, it was this sense of fair play that resulted in the argument with the controversial *Blackwood's* that led to Scott's death (Bauer 76-80). Although *Blackwood's* provided the *London* with the model for a literary magazine that would appeal to a broad section of the reading public by both providing interest and educating taste, it also habitually engaged in the kind of anonymous libel and character assassination whose most notorious example is probably the attack on the Cockney school and in particular John Keats, whom Byron mistakenly disparaged as being "snuffed out by a review"<sup>3</sup>.

John Taylor, Keats's publisher, recounts a meeting with William Blackwood in 1820 that is emblematic of the different direction the *London* was taking, in opposition to *Blackwood's*. The *London's* reputation for fair play would eventually lead Taylor to buy the magazine in the confusion following Scott's death:

I have had this day a call from Mr Blackwood. [...] I observed that we had published another Volume of Keats's Poems on which his Editors would have another opportunity of being witty at his expense. He said they were disposed to speak favourably of Mr K. this time- and he expected that the article would have appeared in this month's mag.

'But can they be so inconsistent?' 'There is no inconsistency in praising him if they think he deserves it.' [...] 'But why did they attack him personally?' 'They did not do so.'

'No? Did not they speak of him in ridicule as Johnny Keats, describe his appearance while addressing a Sonnet to Ailsa Crag, [...] what had he done to

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<sup>3</sup> See Gitting's argument against this popular explanation for Keats's early death in *John Keats: the Living Year, 21 September 1818 to 21 September 1819*, published in 1978.

deserve such attacks as these?'

'Oh, it was all a joke, the writer meant nothing more than to be witty. He certainly thought there was much affectation in his Poetry, and he expressed his opinion only- It was done in the fair spirit of criticism.'

'It was done in the Spirit of the Devil, Mr Blackwood. So if a young man is guilty of affectation while he is walking the streets it is fair in another Person because he dislikes it to come and knock him down.'

'No,' says B., 'but a poet challenges public opinion by printing his book, but I suppose you would have them not criticized at all?' (Colvin 475-476).

John Scott was as fervent a believer in fair play as he was in a rejection of Classical strictures on art, a characteristic that led both to his death and to his writing on the French Renaissance; he denounced the French Classicists and Blackwood's writers in equal measure:

John Scott, the keen-witted and warmhearted editor, formerly of the *Champion* and latterly of Taylor and Hessey *London Magazine*, had denounced the 'Z' papers, and demanded a disclosure of Lockhart's share in them and in the management of the magazine, in terms so peremptory and scathing that the threat of a challenge from Lockhart followed as an inevitable consequence. The clumsy, well meant intromission of third parties had only the effect of substituting Lockhart's friend Christie in the broil for Lockhart himself. The duel was fought on January 16, 1821, exactly a week before Keats's death, and Scott was killed (519).

Taylor and Hessey bought the *London* from Baldwin in the months immediately following Scott's death. Coincidentally, they had approached Henry Francis Cary, the celebrated translator of Dante, to be the editor of a magazine that would engage in fair play two years before the birth of the *London*, in 1818. These plans did not work out, but when they bought the *London* it was both in acknowledgement that this magazine personified these qualities of non-partisanship, and in order to re-engage their original plan. They again contacted Cary to work for them, perhaps as editor, and he was in fact disappointed when he learned that John Taylor had decided to take on the responsibility himself, and was now only contacting Cary for contributions. Cary was not at all pleased

with this new development, as evidenced in a draft of a letter he sent to Taylor, dated May 21, and quoted in King:

In consequence of your note of Saturday last, I wish it to be understood as soon as possible that you must not rely on me as a contributor to the Magazine. I have thought of the matter, and I am sure that it would not be worth my while to give my time and attention to writing for it on the terms mentioned by you the other day, that is 10 guineas a sheet for prose and 15 for verse; nor should I have sent for Mr. Baldwin the little paper with which you expressed yourself so much better satisfied than it deserved, if it had not been with the view of being employed in a different way [i.e., as editor] (130).

Taylor proceeded to mollify Cary, in part by offering 15 guineas a sheet, and by attempting to continue the various policies and topics that had made Scott's editorship of the magazine so successful. One of the first of these topics Taylor continued was Scott's *Notices of Some of the Early French Poets*, the article Scott had given first place to in the March edition of 1820. After Scott's death, this tradition was carried on by Taylor, along with many others. He often began the magazine (after his editorial, "The Lion's Head", this title and tradition also inaugurated by Scott), with Cary's *The Early French Poets* (Bauer 57-80, 285-302).

Apart from being the instigation for the subsequent articles written by Cary on the French Renaissance, Scott's inaugural article is a useful point of reference showing where Cary follows Scott's lead, and where he diverges from it when dealing with the same material.

The polemic elements of a Romantic argument against French Classicism (the subject of Chapter 3 of this thesis) are more evident in Scott's rendering of French Renaissance verse than in Cary's, and will be shown to be just one element in his attack on French Classicism. On the other hand, Cary is, in contrast, more concerned with the scholarly details surrounding these poems, and in translating their poetic affects into a

Romantic idiom (the subject of Chapter 4). Against this latter claim, it could be argued that Scott wrote only one article, and so could not concentrate on details, while Cary wrote twenty articles on the early French poets. This objection, however, does not take into account the precarious nature of writing for the *London*: Scott may very well have planned on continuing this project himself before his tragic death, as he did with many of his other series of articles; and there would have been no reason for Cary to count on being asked to contribute as many articles as he ended up contributing, especially given his initial mistrust of Taylor.

Scott wrote several articles that clearly display his feelings about the French, especially in regard to contemporary French art, such as *The Spirit of French Criticism, and Voltaire's Notices on Shakespeare*, published in the February 1820 edition of the *London*. His ideology is shown most clearly, however, in *The Influence of Religious and Patriotic Feelings on Literature*, published in the inaugural issue of the *London*, in January 1820. Here Scott contrasts the French and English approach to literature, and goes as far as to write: "The French are the most unpoetical nation in Europe, and afford the most remarkable proof, that it is not in the pursuit of the specific ingredients of pleasure, that our nature is either dignified or transported, but that, on the contrary, they "harden all within and petrify the feeling"" (Scott 37) (Scott is quoting Burns here). Scott goes on to accuse his contemporaries in France of "epicureanism, and a disposition to enjoy more than to know" (37). The root of this problem, then, is in a lack of religiosity, and is personified in Voltaire, "whose irreligious feelings connected themselves with the general poverty of his imagination" and who was a philosopher of "attractive creeds, and pleasurable sensations" (39). Scott moves on from this to declare that "there never was a

man that had less of the Romantic in his disposition” (39). A picture of what Romanticism is for Scott emerges in this article, and much of the definition is based on a contrast with French Classicism. Voltaire personified this position as a “philosopher as he is called” whose chief claim to fame was “the power of degrading the value of things: whatever passed through his hands came deteriorated from them. His talent was ‘de dire bassement toutes les choses’” (39). Romanticism emerges as a creed concerned with depth of feeling in contrast to “pleasurable sensations”, religious feeling in contrast to epicureanism, and a concern with the past in contrast with an unwarranted pride in modern accomplishments: “Are we to be cajoled into a renunciation of the principles, the ideas, the affections, by which our greatest authors have been inspired? [...] Egotism, affectation, sickly sentiment, and vulgar language, are the substitutes they offer for masculine energy, real feeling, and lofty disdainful enthusiasm” (40).

John Scott, in the vehemence of his rhetoric, provides an extreme example of the Romantic argument that Cary will take up, in a more muted form, in his articles on the early French poets. The views expressed in this article also provide an answer to why Scott would go about translating France’s pre-classical poets: they can be appropriated to the Romantic ideology because they share with it “religious feeling” and “real feeling”, and embody the very past that the Classicists purportedly ignore.

However, in covering even France’s pre-classical poets, Scott’s unsympathetic attitude towards the French often surfaces. In his *Notices of some of the Early French Poets*, while discussing the Pléiade, modelled on the ancient Greek Pleiad, Scott observes that “the French have always been fond of these imitations” (243). And in recounting the circumstances surrounding Jodelle’s *Cléopâtre*, he takes evident pleasure in pointing out

that “the author *acted the part of the Egyptian Queen!* He put on petticoats, and was his own *Cléopâtre*” (243).

While this type of barb is absent in Cary, the practice of praising Romantic ideals in the early French authors takes place in Cary’s articles. In a move that we will see amplified in Cary (Chapter 3), Scott praises Marot as “one of the most genuine of the French poets, and who will not lose on a comparison with any modern writer of the nation”, and although “a great master of wit and pleasantry, it is in the tender and pathetic that we find the real character of his genius” (242).

In discussing Grévin’s *Jules César* (1560), Scott makes the implied superiority of the French Renaissance over the Classical era that supplanted it explicit:

There is much reason to regret that the later French dramatists, in polishing their language, should not have succeeded better in preserving the masterly strength which distinguishes the best morsels of their predecessors. The passage we have just quoted has an air of proud strength about it, and it displays an earnestness of feeling, both of which too often evaporate in that process of elaborating and refining, which was so ably conducted, in other respects, by writers of what is called the golden age of French literature (243-244).

After praising its strength, however, Scott goes on to warn that Grévin’s “language is dangerous, and ought not to be quoted at this time without a caveat against improper application” (244). Scott goes on, in his translation, to dampen the affect of the original, after alluding to the “dangerous” language. Cary will use the same technique later on, although in this instance Scott is not so much concerned with “vulgarity” as he is with the precarious state of British politics “at this time” (discussed in Chapter 3). Thus, Scott quotes Grévin’s original:

Quand on dira, - César fut maitre de l'empire!  
 Qu'on sache quand et quand Brute le sut occire!  
 Quand on dira, - César fut premier Empereur,  
 Qu'on dira quand et quand Brute en fut le vengeur!

Scott, however, translates this passage as:

And when they tell how Cesar knew to sway,  
 Remind them too that Brutus knew to slay:  
 And when they brag that Cesar broke the laws,  
 Whisper that Brutus well avenged their cause! (244)

In the original, there is no mention of “laws” in the second to last line. Instead, the original’s “Empereur” is excised from the translation. This occurs at a time when the controversy over George IV’s coronation (coinciding with the advent of the *London*), and the barring of Queen Anne from the ceremony, was fresh news not only in the pages of the *London*: the so-called “Queen’s Affair”, “swallowed up every other topic for that year” (Bauer 21). At a time when revolution was of great concern in Britain (see Chapter 3), Brutus becomes a force against the anarchy of Cesar in Scott’s translation; not a force against the tyranny of absolute rule, a charge that could easily be levelled against a King just as much as could be against an Emperor. The affect of Grévin’s poem is also dampened in Scott’s translation by the loss of repetition as a cumulative affect: Grévin’s almost hypnotic repetition of “dira”, becomes in Scott’s translation “tell”, “brag”, and finally the least forceful “whisper.”

Like Cary later on, Scott not only censors the original in his translation, he lets his readers know this is what he is doing. Part of the explanation for this, in this instance, is that the original is given for anyone who can read French, and it will not be mistaken for the author’s sentiments. The other important reason for self-proclaimed censorship, however, of which there will be further examples in Cary, is the noble “principles, ideals and affections” that Scott outlined in *The Influence of Religious and Patriotic Feelings on Literature*. For the Romantic, censorship does not come into play because of what society

allows or disallows, but rather because what is being censored would otherwise debase what is noble in mankind. This is the subject of Chapter 4 of this thesis.

### **Le temps a quitté/laissé son manteau**

Scott's first translation in his *Notices of some of the Early French Poets* is of a poem by Charles of Orleans. The prominence of this figure is not only due to his antiquity (1394- 1465); there is also the appeal to a patriot such as Scott of Charles of Orleans's British connection. Taken prisoner after Agincourt, he spent 24 years as a prisoner of war in England. In fact, although not mentioned by Scott, Charles of Orleans is especially interesting for Translation Studies as an early multi-lingual, self-translating poet<sup>4</sup>. This was not generally known in the 19<sup>th</sup> century; Cary reproduces the three English poems by Charles of Orleans that came to his attention, as a "curiosity" (Cary 1846, 232). The debate continues as to the authorship of the English poems with Cary's 1923 editor, Welby, who dismisses the claim that the English versions of the poems are by Charles of Orleans (Cary 1923, 183) (see Chapter 2 of Coldiron, "*Translatio, Translation, and Charles d'Orleans's Paroled Poetics*", which stresses Orleans's "ownership" of the English poems).

Charles of Orleans also provides the only example of a poem translated by both John Scott and Henry Francis Cary, a rondeau beginning "Le temps a laissé son manteau", that has been translated many times since, including a version by Longfellow. Scott provides the original, and then follows it with his translation. The first indication of Scott's less rigorous approach to his source material than Cary's is that he does not quote,

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<sup>4</sup> This is the subject of Coldiron's *Canon, Period, and the Poetry of Charles of Orleans: Found in Translation*.

or translate, the complete short poem. Neither does he indicate from where he obtained his source material. Cary, on the other hand, is always concerned to introduce his readers to this material and offer them the resources to follow up on it themselves. He lets them know that he is working from the manuscript discovered by Abbé Sallier in 1742, taken from what the Champollion-Figeauc edition of Charles d'Orleans's poetry, published in 1842, refers to as the "Manuscrits de la Bibliothèque royale" (Champollion-Figeauc, p. xxvij- xxx) . In addition, the original Cary provides is markedly different from the version Scott provides, apart from its length: 1. the fragment used by Scott is in modernised French, 2. the first line quoted by Scott uses the verb "quitté", which is the less common choice as far as I can tell. Page 21 of Michelet's *Histoire de France Jusqu'au XVIe Siècle*, published in 1852, does use "quitté", but the French, like Scott's, is modernised (for example, pluie instead of pluye). This immediately results in different choices for the two translators: in translating the first line, Cary uses "laid aside", whereas Scott uses "cast away"; the former being closer to "laissé", in the sense of laying something aside, while "cast away" is a more direct translation of "quitté", both involving a more final leave taking.

Cary's more rigorous approach is unfortunately lost on his 1923 editor, Welby, much to Cary's biographer's consternation, who laments the "most unwise excision of the French texts" (King 186). This results in a difficulty discerning where one of Charles of Orleans's poems ends and the next begins, there being no titles, and no French text separating the poems. This also highlights the critical component of Cary's project which is erased by his 1923 editor: Cary is offering translations of Renaissance texts, but allowing his readers to compare his poetry with the poetry in the original.

The following is the original and translation provided by Scott, and then the original and translation provided by Cary.

John Scott's source, followed by his translation:

Le temps a quitté son manteau  
 De vent, de froidure, et de pluie,  
 Et s'est vêtu de broderie  
 De soleil luisant, clair et beau.  
 Il n'y a ni bête ni oiseau  
 Qu'en son jargon ne chante et crie;  
 Le temps a quitté son manteau  
 De vent, de froidure, et de pluie

The Season now doth cast away  
 Its garb of cold, of wind, and sleet,  
 And proud appears in new array  
 Of sunshine and of flowers sweet;  
 Each bird and beast doth now essay,  
 In its own fashion, heaven to greet,  
 Because the Season casts away  
 Its garb of cold, and wind, and sleet (Scott 241).

Henry Cary's source, followed by his translation:

Le temps a laissé son manteau  
 De vent, de froidure et de pluye,  
 Et s'est vestu de broderye,  
 De soleil raiant, cler et beau.

Il n'y a beste ne oyseau  
 Qui en son jargon ne chante ou crye ;  
 Le temps a laissé son manteau.  
 De vent, de froidure et de pluye.

Rivière, fontaine et ruisseau  
 Portent en livrée jolie  
 Gouttes d'argent d'orfèverie;  
 Chascun s'abille de nouveau,  
 Le temps a laissé son manteau.

The time hath laid his mantle by  
 Of wind and rain and icy chill,  
 And dons a rich embroidery

Of sun-light pour'd on lake and hill.

No beast or bird in earth or sky  
Whose voice doth not with gladness thrill  
For time hath laid his mantle by  
Of wind and rain and icy chill.

River and fountain, brook and rill,  
Bespangled o'er with livery gay  
Of silver droplets, wind their way:  
So all their new apparel vie;  
The time hath laid his mantle by (Cary 1846, 226-227).

The choice of this poem for both Scott and Cary relates to an element of Romanticising the Renaissance that will be further dealt with in Chapter 4. As Shaw writes in *The Cambridge Introduction to French Poetry*, concerning Charles of Orleans:

One of the best-known poems of the French Middle Ages is his *rondeau* 'Le temps a laissié/ son manteau.' It shows among other things that the *rondeaus* can extend out of the domain of love (the original concern of much lyric poetry), to treat a variety of themes, even as it retains complex courtly metaphors from the tradition of *fin'amor*. Perhaps this poem, which displaces the traditional amorous theme of the "reverdie," or return of spring, has appealed to modern readers' sensibilities because it anticipates the Romantic penchant for *le sentiment de la nature*, what John Ruskin called the "pathetic fallacy": the projection of human feelings on to the natural world (45).

The translation choice does not only involve how to translate the text, but also which text to translate. Cary's repetition of Scott's choice of poem is one that presumably would appeal to their Romantic readers, as it has to readers since. While neither translator effaces the courtly tradition from which this poet sprung, neither do they stress it.

According to Shaw, "unlike Romantic poems, in which the sky, land, and waters often reflect the raw sentiment of an isolated individual, this poem has nature readily assuming the hierarchical order of medieval society as its clothing and ornament" (45). She points out that the second iteration of "Le temps a laissié son menteau", in the second stanza, could be seen as the "crye" of the beasts and birds, echoing the poet's lines. To read it

this way, one merely needs to add hypothetical quotation marks around the refrain. Scott, however, does not provide for this possibility in his translation, instead leading into the refrain with “Because”. In the same way, Cary negates this possible reading, wherein the second refrain is sung by the birds and the beasts, by leading into it with “For time hath laid his mantle by [...]”. Both “Because” and “For” are additions to the refrain, which never changes in the original. Thus not only is the form transformed, but possible readings are lost as well.

This brings us to an element that both Scott and Cary’s translations share in common: in both cases not only is the meaning of the words translated, but the poetic form is as well. Scott and Cary translate the octo-syllabic meter, and the *abba* rhyme structure. The rondeau, “which suited (Charles of Orleans’s) poetry particularly well, presents the following structure: twelve or thirteen lines constructed on two rhymes  $a*b*ba\ aba*(b^*)$ , (the second line of the refrain is often not repeated)” (Shaw 45). Scott’s solution to the problem this variable form presents is to only include two 4 line stanzas, without a break. Cary, meanwhile, includes the last 5 line stanza.

Translating the poetic structure, however, introduces further restrictions on the possible choices of words. In this case, only two rhymes are allowed, and both translators chose different rhymes, meaning that they will never end a line with the same word. This can also explain additions to the meaning; for example, Scott introduces “flowers sweet” to the sunshine in the fourth line, when there are no flowers in the original, although this does maintain the rhyme scheme. Cary’s “sun-light pour’d on lake and hill” is no closer to a word for word translation of “De soleil raiant, cler et beau”, and yet the “lake”

invokes the sense of “cler et beau” in a way that is arguably closer than Scott’s association with flowers.

Scott introduces a religious sentiment with “heaven to greet” in line 6, pulling the poem further away from its lyric “amorous theme”, and closer to what he outlined in *The Influence of Religious and Patriotic Feelings on Literature* as “where the fountain-head of lofty thoughts really lies” (38), namely, religion. Cary, a clergyman, translates this line as, “Whose voice doth not with gladness thrill”, a much closer word for word translation of “Qui en son jargon ne chante ou crye”.

The purpose here is not to disparage the work done by Scott (Cary was already known as a translator when he began this project), but to highlight two elements of Cary’s work that I will be pursuing in the following chapters: the desire to convey the poetic affect of the original, which can come into conflict with a program of Romanticising the French Renaissance.

### CHAPTER 3: *THE EARLY FRENCH POETS* AND THE WAR BETWEEN BRITISH ROMANTICISM AND FRENCH CLASSICISM

The Romantic Revolution, as described by Taylor, was in revolt against the “flattened world” of Classicism (1989, 372). While this was an argument over aesthetics, at the same time England and France had just emerged from a long and costly war, with the British claiming victory at the Battle of Waterloo on June 18, 1815. In this chapter I will be applying Baker’s description of how translation is used in the narrative of war (in *Translation and Conflict: A Narrative Account*) to Cary’s appropriation of France’s past. Cary’s revival of the French Renaissance thus becomes part of a narrative of conflict surrounding the Napoleonic wars.

The argument against French Classicism is picked up where John Scott left off when Henry Cary begins his *The Early French Poets* with an article on Clément Marot<sup>5</sup> in the December 1821 issue of the *London*. In this section I will be tracing the narrative of conflict surrounding *The Early French Poets*, namely the war between England and France which by this point had shifted from an armed conflict to a cultural war: the hegemony of French Classicism was being challenged by English Romanticism. I will then look at how the translations in *The Early French Poets* are influenced by and take part in this conflict.

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<sup>5</sup> According to Cary’s son, the article on Thibaut, which appeared a month earlier, in November 1821, should not be considered the introductory article: “[...] as it carries us back to an earlier period than any of the after pages, so was it written and published prior to all the rest. It is, however, placed second in this volume, because the account of Clement Marot purports to introduce us to the series” (Cary 1846, note on p. 17).

### Engaging the enemy

It is often assumed within Romantic scholarship, according to Mortensen, that British Romanticism was a hermetically sealed movement, cut off from the rest of Europe, and only relying on Britain's past, especially Shakespeare, for inspiration. This is the assumption Mortensen's *British Romanticism and Continental Influences* (2004) aims to combat: "In Carlon's view, it is one of Romantic scholarship's most deeply entrenched critical commonplaces that British Romantics (with a few noteworthy exceptions) wrote in isolation from, and indifference towards, significant trends in Continental literature" (2). This viewpoint is in no small part due to Bloom's influential "Anxiety of Influence" thesis: "Bloom emphasizes the burden felt by the belated poet who struggles to emancipate himself from an overwhelmingly powerful ancestor" (2). The tide is changing, however, and J. H. Alexander, for example, "envisions 'a revival of a lively interest in the influence of continental literatures on British Romantics literature.' In Alexander's view such 'a recovery for modern literary studies of the salient features of continental influence on British literary life in the Romantic period' is likely to be a long-term benefit to Romantic studies, even if in the short term it will require that Romantic critics fundamentally alter the way in which they conceive of their field of study" (2-3). An important way this account of history can be altered is by looking at translation's role in British Romanticism.

The story of this neglect is intimately tied to Meschonnic's account of the history of translation in the West: "L'histoire du traduire dans le monde occidental est, comme on va voir, l'illustration historique, et idéologique, de la traduction comme effacement" (1999, 31). And for Berman, "la traduction est demeurée une activité souterraine, cachée,

parce qu'elle ne s'énonçait pas elle-même" (1984, 11). Ignoring the British Romantic engagement with continental literature involves the role of translation being erased. This chapter is concerned with demonstrating not only the importance of translation to British Romanticism, shown in Cary's work for the *London*, but that translation was an essential weapon in the British Romantic's arsenal when confronting French Classicism.

Because the British Romantics were in direct conflict with French Classicism, this led to their emphasising non-Classical literatures in order to forward a Romantic ideology. To cite one example of how the Romantic poets were influenced by pre-Classical, non-British authors (in this case Dante), Gittings writes that Keats, for inspiration,

[...] turned to Cary. Here, even more than when he was writing the original *Hyperion* a year before, he borrowed the translator's style. Cary himself had translated the *Inferno* and *Purgatorio* at different times of his life, and quite apart from the requirements of their subjects, he produced a very different result. The change in poetic tone between *Hyperion* and *The Fall of Hyperion* is the change in the verse of Cary between the *Inferno* and the *Purgatorio*. It was in Dante speaking through Cary that Keats found the conflict and distinction he was trying to make all through the new poem, the antithesis between the true poet and the mere dreamer (178).

In moving on to translate the French Renaissance after his work on Dante, Cary was confronting Britain's enemy head-on. Mona Baker's work on narrative in *Translation and Conflict* points the way to an understanding of how a narrative of conflict between England and France, Romanticism and Classicism, helped shape the discourse and translations in *The Early French Poets*. For Baker, "a narrative gets truth-value from being conscious of the conditions of its production, and being cognizant of, and able to learn something from, its own evolution" (18). Just as we can be aware of the history of the influence of Romantic aesthetics on our modern day world, the Romantics,

and Cary, are concerned with finding connections with, and valuing the past. Indeed, Cary often highlights this narrative of conflict in the criticism and historical accounts he writes of the poems he is translating. This direct opposition to French Classicism, along with this historical approach, was influenced by Herder, as will be discussed below.

*The Early French Poets* is part of a hegemonic shift to a Romantic narrative which would become more pronounced by the time, for example, Victor Hugo, a devotee of Shakespeare, publishes *Notre-Dame de Paris* (set in 1482) in 1831. According to Baker, “acknowledging the constructed nature of narratives means that we accept the potential existence and worth of multiple truths. This is a key issue in claiming that narratives have political import and that they can unsettle and contest hegemonic views of the world” (19). The Romantic narrative unsettled the French cultural hegemony, and became, in turn, a cultural hegemony itself. Cary’s Romantic narrative falls under what Baker terms “Public narratives [...] defined as stories elaborated by and circulating among social institutional formations larger than the individual” (33). One of these institutions is the *London* itself, and this narrative is contributed to by each of its writers, including John Scott, Thomas De Quincey and Hartley Coleridge.

### **Against courtly classicism**

In describing a generally held view of French poetry, Meschonnic writes that “la française s’y place comme la langue du raisonnable, langue de toute manière censée apoétique et sans rythme, par toute une tradition” (1999, 30). *The Early French Poets* is a primary source for the birth of this tradition.

In the 17<sup>th</sup> century, French was generally regarded as the language of culture in Europe: “With the wars of Louis XIV and the treaties that concluded them, French became the language of diplomacy and international agreements” (Casanova 67). By the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however, the hegemony of French was being challenged: “The campaign against the “empire” of French was henceforth to be conducted on two fronts, England and Germany, with decisive consequences for the structure of European literary space throughout the nineteenth century” (67). Henry Francis Cary and the *London* are a part of the Romantic Revolution that positioned itself against this French dominance, especially through an attack on the “reason” Meschonnic describes. This took a reformulation of the definition of “poetry”, and for the Romantics, art came to be defined, in part, in its separation from “reason”, a definition I believe the 20<sup>th</sup> century West has inherited. Present-day aesthetics are strongly marked by an emphasis on inspiration and originality; according to Taylor we live in the “age of authenticity”:

we now have a widespread “expressive” individualism. This is, of course, not totally new. Expressivism was the invention of the Romantic period in the late eighteenth century. Intellectual and artistic élites have been searching for an authentic way of living or expressing themselves throughout the nineteenth century. What is new is that this kind of self-orientation seems to have become a mass phenomenon (2007, 473).

In Meschonnic’s view, the Romantic revolt against Classicism has become universalised:

“Le romantisme revient, par son sens de la spécificité, à la recherche de l’original. Étrangement, dans son rejet de l’universalité à la française, il inaugure une requête de spécificité qui, née d’Allemagne, s’est universalisée” (1999, 48).

In choosing his poets and time, Cary values originality over polish, antiquity over contemporary French verse. This is consciously contrary to the Classical position,

embodied by Voltaire when he writes to Lord Lyttleton, lamenting the performances of Shakespeare he had witnessed in London: “the taste of your politest countrymen [...] differs not much, in point of tragedy, from the taste of a mob at Bear Garden” (Hankey 74).

One can see this attack on French Classicism, instigated in Germany by Herder, and picked up in England, as, in part, the middle classes rejecting the ideals of the courtly society. Elias quotes Lessing, in this regard, who argued for Shakespeare’s relevance to the people: “If someone had translated the masterpieces of Shakespeare... for our Germans, I know well that it would have a better result than thus making them acquainted with Corneille or Racine. In the first place, the people would take more delight in him than in them” (17). Elias’s penetrating two volume *The Civilizing Process* helps trace the ideals behind Cary’s choices in terms of whom he translates, and what he accentuates in pre-classical poetry. For Elias:

The importance of good form, the specific mark of every genuine “society”; the control of individual feelings by reason, a vital necessity for every courtier; the reserved behaviour and elimination of every plebeian expression, the specific mark of a particular stage on the road to “civilization”- all this finds its purest expression in classical tragedy. What must be hidden in court life, all vulgar feelings and attitudes, everything of which “one” does not speak, does not appear in tragedy either (16).

In this perspective, the classical unities and emphasis on formality became essentially linked to an aristocratic, courtly society. The Romantics in Germany, as Elias points out, were most often from middle-class backgrounds<sup>6</sup>, and were re-evaluating what was high and low, civilized and uncivilized.

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<sup>6</sup> See chapter IV, “The Middle-Class and the Court Nobility in Germany” and chapter V, “Literary Examples of the Relationship of the German Middle Class Intelligentsia to the Court” in Elias 1978.

Much of the tension between translating what is “natural” and “lively” in Cary, and censuring what is “base” can be attributed to his rejection of the courtly, rational ideal of French Classicism, while articulating a new, middle-class ideal of “civility”. According to Elias, “the French language was decisively stamped by the court and court society” (111). Cary and the Romantics wanted to distance themselves from this conception of language dictating that “phrases, words, and nuances are good *because* they, the members of the social elite, use them; and they are bad *because* social inferiors speak in this way” (111). Instead, through his translations, Cary will argue that a certain way of expression is good from a poetic, aesthetic viewpoint, emphasising a “naturalness” of expression. He will contrast this with the courtly “tamelessness” of the French Classicism that had dominated Europe for so long.

### **Herder and the French hegemony**

The Romantic revolution against the hegemony of French can be traced back to Herder. Casanova finds the root of a new way of thinking about nationality and cultural dependence in Herder’s writings:

Between 1820 and 1920 in Europe, alongside the nationalist movements of the period, there occurred what Benedict Anderson has called a “philosophical-lexigraphic revolution.” The theories of Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), formulated in the late eighteenth century and thereafter rapidly and widely disseminated, brought about the first enlargement of literary space to include the European continent as a whole. Herder not only proposed a new manner of contesting French hegemony that was to be of value to Germany; he also provided the theoretical basis for the attempt made in politically dominated territories, both in Europe and elsewhere, to invent their own solutions to the problem of cultural dependence. By establishing a necessary link between nation and language, he encouraged all people who sought recognition on equal terms with the established nations of the world to stake their claim to literary and political existence (75).

The concept Herder was at odds with was that “the French language was not seen as an expression of national character [...] but rather a universal language, which is to say one that belonged to all people and so rose above national interests” (72). Instead, he stressed the importance of equally valuing past ages, “particularly the medieval period, arguing that each epoch (and nation) possesses its own special character and so must be judged according to its own criteria” (76). Casanova claims that Herder used three weapons against “the aristocratic and cosmopolitan power of French universalism; the people; the literary tradition issuing from sources other than Greco-Latin antiquity [...]; and, finally, England” (76).

Cary follows the program set out by Herder in three ways:

1. By valuing a past age, one that had been devalued by the French;
2. By valuing poetry that broke the classical rules: Herder writes of “the amusing Frenchman who arrives at Shakespeare’s play during the final act in order to gulp down the emotion in its quintessence. This might work at some French plays because everything is put into verse only for the theatre and arranged in specific scenes” (Herder 153);
3. By focussing on poetry: for Herder, “in poetry’s gallery of diverse ways of thinking, diverse aspirations, and diverse desires, we come to know nations far more intimately than we can through the misleading and pathetic method of studying their political and military history” (Herder 143).

The act of translation becomes the central tool in this arsenal of weapons countering French Classicism. Berman points to Herder’s redefining of translation as a literary category, “définie par la fidélité absolue de son opérateur, le traducteur” (1984,

68), and quotes Herder writing on the new way translation should be conceived for the Germans:

[...] et la traduction? En aucun cas elle ne peut être *embellie* [...] Les Français, trop fiers de leur goût national, tirent tout à celui-ci, au lieu de s'adapter au goût d'une autre époque [...] Mais nous, pauvres Allemands, par contre, encore privés de public et de patrie, encore libres de la tyrannie d'un goût national, nous voulons voir cette époque telle qu'elle est (69).

The translation of poetry becomes the best way of looking into the past and valuing it for what it was. Berman describes how translation takes a central role for Herder, along with criticism:

Elle partage ce rôle, à vrai dire, et en cela, Herder annonce les Romantiques, avec la critique. On peut d'ailleurs parler [...] de *traduction critique*. Mais la traduction, dans l'optique herdérienne, joue un rôle pour ainsi dire plus immédiat, plus concret, puisqu'elle a affaire directement au langage (70).

Thus the form of *The Early Romantic Poets* is essentially Romantic: it centres on translations of poetry, but is equally criticism and history of this poetry. In the articles Cary wrote for the *London*, these early French poets are transplanted onto modern English soil. And so, when he translates them, as he will state, he is seeking to translate their poetic affect into one his readers will feel. The concept of translating poetic affect will be expanded on in Chapter 4 of this thesis.

### **The narrative of how the French lost their poetry**

Cary's vocabulary, in assessing the ancestors to Malherbe and Boileau, is part of the structure of his argument against French Classicism. He describes the French Renaissance poet's "deep and solemn feeling" (Cary 1923, 29), "clearness of expression" (33), "natural and pathetic" sentiment (78), "nature and passion" (92), and "natural ease

and elegance” (176), for example. This is contrasted with Cary’s argument against the Classical approach, the reserve and control of a courtly attitude, for which he uses negative descriptions, such as “tameness” (11), the classical “purist”, (52), the “fettors of alternating male/female rhymes” (53) and the “strait waistcoat of his Alexandrines” (156).

This argument was later picked up by French writers following Romanticism’s acceptance in France, according to Meschonnic, who quotes Gide in this regard: “La langue française se montre particulièrement rétive. Elle n’a plus cette plasticité qui permettait à un Ronsard, à un Montaigne, leurs merveilleuses inventions verbales” (1999, 263). Stendhal, one of the first French self-proclaimed Romantics, who would begin contributing to the *London* in November, 1824, castigates the French Classicist for an outmoded emphasis on formality: “De nos jours, le vers alexandrin n’est plus souvent qu’un cache-sottise” (51). Gide is also the subject of a story Jauss recounts of a dispute with this writer and A. E. Housman, who asks Gide why there is “no such thing as French poetry?” Jauss goes on to note, “the widespread prejudice—deliberately overstated here—that French lyric poetry suffers from a chronic lack of feeling clearly shows that Gide’s interlocutor himself subscribed to a historically determined and therefore episodic canon of the beautiful: the concept of poetry Romanticism cherished, a movement which has its roots in Germany and England” (1982a, 224). Gide would go on to counter this narrative with his own: “By contrast, it is the “classical” principle of *contrainte* (restraint) which anti-Romanticism had reevaluated that Gide placed at the head of his canon as he made the selections for his new anthology which was to rebut this prejudice” (224).

*The Early French Poets* is a guide to this redefinition of French poetry of the last four hundred years that took shape in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Berman describes how German Romanticism created a new valuation of the “poétique” and of the “philosophique”: “Le Romantisme est un de nos mythes” (1984, 38). The German Romantics before Cary had also used arguments against the “bon goût” of the previous era: “Cette tendance que les Allemands de l’époque ont eux-mêmes qualifiée de francisante est victorieusement combattue avec la pénétration en Allemagne de la littérature anglaise et l’amorce d’un retour aux “sources” (poésie populaire, poésie de Moyen Âge, philosophie de Jacob Boehme, etc.)” (28). In the same way, Cary uses his poetic translations and criticism to further the point of view that the Renaissance poets, as compared to the Classical French, were superior, and close to the British Romantics.

#### **A territorial and cultural war**

Cary’s translations are simultaneously an appropriating of the past and an argument against Classicism; the pre-Classical poetry of France enters this narrative of conflict as a corrective to the corrupt present. Baker writes that translations are an integral part of the narratives surrounding wars, and they can include literary translations just as they include interpretation and the more evident elements of translation used in warfare. Narrative theory “allows us to examine the way in which translation features in the elaboration of narratives that cut across time and texts” (4). The narrative built up over the course of *The Early French Poets* is of a vital, natural French poetry that was stifled by French Classicism, and is being resurrected by the British Romantics. This theory provides insight into how Cary’s project can be seen as a reaction to the

Napoleonic wars, and the French Revolution that was of such great concern to Britons at this time.

“Europhobics introduced a potent tropology of ‘poisoning’ and ‘disease’ that enabled Romantic writers to present their texts’ relationships to the European ‘other’ as simultaneously imitative and antagonistic. Henceforth Romantic writing could be justified and valorized as critique and warning, antidote and cure” (Mortensen 16). This was often because of modern German plays that were flooding into England in translation (Mortensen 14-15). Jane Austen’s *Mansfield Park* (1814), for example, centres around the characters rehearsing an English adaptation of the German play *Das Kind der Liebe* (*Child of Love*), by Kotzebue, which is fortunately quashed by the return of Sir Thomas, the head of Mansfield Park, before it can be performed. However, the damage has already been done, and Jane Austen’s characters must deal with the repercussions of this foreign influence for the rest of the novel.

Cary takes this approach of antidote and cure one step further, by painting contemporary French poetry as the poison, and Renaissance French poetry as its cure. In Cary’s penultimate *The Early French Poets* article, in the January 1824 edition of the *London Magazine*, he tackles the neglected poet Fresnaie Vauquelin. In this article he recalls a debate with a scholar over the poet Parny:

I charged my informant with having recommended to me a book that was not fit to be read. His answer was that Parny was not at all worse than some of the Greek and Latin poets, whom he knew no scholar scrupled to read; and I could plainly perceive that he thought there was something of puritanism in the objection. I could not however agree with him in ranking his favourite modern among such good company. The voluptuousness of Parny is covered with a veil of sentiment that renders it more dangerous than theirs. They have no fine art of seduction. Their grossness is too palpable to slide into the mind unperceived. So it is with Vauquelin. He is not rotten at the core. His lovers, in spite of their excesses, are still, as he calls them, ‘fermes et loyaux amants!’”

But I have no thoughts of entertaining my reader in this way. To the following (the 77<sup>th</sup> Idyl of the first book) no exception can be made (1846, 203).

Here Cary highlights the characteristics that are to be valued in the pre-Classical poet, contrasted with the modern one. For a Romantic, in this case, the “grossness” Vauquelin shares with the ancients is a corrective to the “voluptuousness” of Parny; the modern French poet is “rotten” and “dangerous”. And even while Cary offers an example here of his explicit censoring, presumably because of the “excesses” of Vauquelin’s lovers, even this can be seen as an antidote to the modern French sensuousness through its purity of spirit, and emotion. “The idea of an innate “genius” for individualism and sincerity, for example, is closely bound up with a sense of political identity directly opposed to that of France” (Casanova 75). This political identity is contrasted with, on the one hand, the ultra-civilized French culture, and on the other, the anarchy of the French Revolution.

The territorial war between Britain and France had an impact on the consciousness of the British that was felt for many years:

Britain had experienced a series of wars throughout the eighteenth century but the Revolutionary and Napoleonic wars, conducted on a global stage and engaging most of Europe, were seen as unprecedented; looking back in 1822, the Prime Minister, the Earl of Liverpool, asked, ‘Who that contemplated the character of the late war could for a moment think of comparing the events of that war, and the state of things growing out of it, with the events and effects of any former war?’ [...] The wars have been estimated to have cost the British about £1,500,000,000, reckoned by Eric Hobsbawm to have been ‘between three and four times’ what they cost the French. They have also been estimated to have cost 315,000 British lives, which as Best argues by one statistical method can be presented as a higher proportion of servicemen than that lost in the First World War. (Bainbridge 5-6)

As great an impact as the territorial war had on England, the idea that it was of even greater ideological importance had great resonance at the time. The shock the French Revolution gave an England that was a monarchical state, wherein the head of state was

also the head of the church, cannot be underestimated. “Peterloo” (when cavalry charged into a crowd of 60,000-80,000 gathered at St Peter’s Field, Manchester, in order to demand the reform of parliamentary representation) had occurred the year before the first *The Early French Poets* article, in 1819, and though there is debate as to whether or not this was the closest England came to revolution since the 17<sup>th</sup> century (Chandler 18-21), as Chandler shows, many in England felt this time to be especially fraught, and a turning point. There was a sense that this war with France was “a new kind of conflict, changing in nature from limited to total and fought for ideological rather than territorial reasons” (Bainbridge 7). In other words, the stakes were high, and articles being published in the prestigious *London Magazine* make up an important part of this conflict.

In defining itself against France, England was beginning to define itself as a political nation with distinct cultural values, and “poetry was very much part of this address to the newly expanded political nation” (Bainbridge 8). In *British Poetry and the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars*, Bainbridge describes the importance poetry (especially the poetry of Walter Scott) played in influencing the British attitude to these wars. Again, periodical and magazines were the most important forums for a debate over England’s identity, in part because of the immediacy of their publication: “[...] the chief medium of publication of war poetry were the magazines and newspapers, which provided poets concerned with the war a steady outlet for their encomiums, their warnings, their arguments” (Betty T. Bennett, quoted in Bainbridge 9).

*The Early French Poets* becomes part of a war that centres on language; not simply the languages of English and French, but poetry as either refined and elite (Classical), or unique and belonging to the people (Romantic). It acts as a response to

such writings as Rivarol's famous *Discours de l'universalité de la langue française* (1784), which argued for the supremacy of the French language: "The *Discours* was also an engine of war, manufactured for the purpose of fighting France's most dangerous rival in this eternal conflict of nations, the one that then challenged most directly the universal domination of French universality: England" (Casanova 72-73).

### **Translating the enemy**

Although according to Bauer "the fanatical patriotism of the first editor, the almost Tory reverence for the Matchless Constitution, the disapprobation of anything French, the fear of Jacobism and contempt of Napoleon, all died with Scott" (122), I believe the project of translating the early French poets was at its root against contemporary France, and it was this project that was carried out by Cary, though perhaps in less vociferous terms. The project to translate the early French poets was not as much a "confrontation" (Berman 1995, 16) with the "other" as it was an appropriation of France's "other"; its past. According to Berman, the Romantic desire to "translate everything" is, in part, the desire to make everything Romantic (1984, 215-225). This will be elaborated on in Chapter 4.

It was not only the Classicism of France that was the problem, however. Both Scott, and Cary following him, rail against the growing disease of atheism in France. Whereas Scott claimed, "their legislature passed a decree that there was no God in the heavens, and that death was an eternal sleep" (Bauer 295), Cary uses his translation of Vauquelin to speak to this issue: "What shall we say to his presentiments of the evils

which were afterwards to befall his country from the prevalence of atheism?" Cary goes on to translate the following passage from a poem by Vauquelin:

France, faut il encore que ces debordements  
 Troublent de tes François les beaux entendements?  
 Et que cela te soit un menaçant presage  
 De te voir saccagee un jour par quelque orage,  
 Tout ainsi que la Grece? Arriere ces mortels  
 Qui vont de l'Eternel blamant les saints autels.

Cary renders this as;

And shall these wild excesses, France, infest  
 Thy noble sons, and shake their firmer breast?  
 A threat'ning presage, that some direful storm  
 One day shall far and wide thy realm deform,  
 As erst in Greece! Avaunt, ye baser crew,  
 That rob the eternal of his honour due (1846, 252).

In this instance, he wants to make a point about contemporary France. Instead of just offering a translation of the above passage, he prepares the reader's expectations by saying it is a prophetic poem about the current atheists in France. A line such as "Qui vont de l'Eternel blamant les saints autels" is not so much about atheism as it is about Catholicism, something for which the average British reader would not have much sympathy. And so the line is translated as "That rob the eternal of his honour due"—the saints are excised from the line. Atheism was not, in reality, an issue in France in the Renaissance—Protestantism, however, was. This being, again, a translated text with the translator's commentary, it is interesting to note that while Cary transforms the text in order to make it read as if it were about atheism, after translating the verse, he comments that Vauquelin considers the luxuries of the clergy as "the chief cause of the evils which had arisen from the Lutherans" (Cary 1846, 252-253). We see here the revealing

interplay that can happen when a translator introduces and comments on his or her translation. He himself, in this instance, reveals the conflict between his interpretation of the text and of his translation with the original. This is perhaps more evident in a translator who may not be as open-minded towards the French as Gosse suggests in his essay, but who nevertheless seems alive to his conflicting feelings towards the French.

### **The example of Clément Marot**

Scott's *Notices of Some of the Early French Poets* concludes with a passage from Garnier's *Cornelia* and a censure of French taste in neglecting these old poets:

*Bradamante* is considered the finest tragedy of this excellent old author, from whom Corneille has taken much, and who is only noticed by La Harpe to hold up to the sneers of the Parisians the vices of his style. Would it not have been more noble, as well as more useful, to have claimed their admiration for his great merits? (1820b, 244)

After Scott's death, Cary begins his article on Marot with a similar observation:

The French of the present day, I know, set but little store on these revivers of the poetical art. Their extreme solicitude for what they call the purity of their language, makes them easily offended by phrases, the irregularities of which we should be ready to pardon, in consideration of higher excellence, or even to welcome, as so many means of aiding us in that escape from the tameness of common ever-day life, which it is the one great end of poetry to affect. I do not know of any other people who have set up an exclusive standard of this sort. What would the Greeks in the age of Pericles have said to a literary censor, that should have endeavored to persuade them to throw aside the works of Homer and Hesiod, because he could have pointed out to them on every page, modes of expression that would not have passed muster in a coterie at Aspasia's? (1846, 2)

In both instances, the contemporary French are taken to task for upholding an outmoded Classicism that leads them to ignore non-Classical literature. This theme would be the subject of Stendhal's *Racine et Shakespeare* two years later, in 1823, before the project of *The Early French Poets* was complete. In *Racine et Shakespeare*, Stendhal argues that

post-revolutionary France has more in common with Shakespeare's time of constant political turmoil, than it does with the time of Louis XIV. For Stendhal, arguing as "le romantique" against "l'académicien", Shakespeare has become more relevant to the French than Racine.

It was, in fact, the very revolution that shook up Europe that provided Cary with the means to carry out the project of *The Early French Poets*: he recounts in his introductory article on Clément Marot how he had free access to a large collection of books at Versailles, where he had spent the summer of 1821, "which formerly belonged to the kings of France; but, like other royal property, having been confiscated at the Revolution, still continues unreclaimed, and is now open to the use of the public" (1846, 1).

Herder's themes of valuing the past for its own merits, and the Romantic rejection of upper class, courtly aesthetics, are struck up in the second page of this article wherein Cary is making his case against French Classicism:

What reply should we make to a critic, that would fain put us out of conceit with some of the finest things in Spenser and Shakespeare, because they were cast in a mould utterly different from that impressed on the language of our politer circles, though similar enough to the stamp of our country-folk's talk? Let anyone take up Voltaire's commentary on the tragedies of Corneille, and he will see to what a pitch of fastidiousness has been carried in the instance of a writer comparatively modern (2).

He then goes on to separate the English spirit from this "fastidiousness": "I am not much afraid lest the generality of my readers should be subject to any such disgust. Our ignorance is a happy security from this danger" (2). As with Vauquelin's "grossness", ignorance is turned into a positive by being contrasted with an over-refined, courtly aesthetic.

In beginning with Marot, Cary has the ideal Romantic figure to contrast with modern French fastidiousness. Cary writes that “[...] his own countrymen seem to have almost lost sight of him”, and quotes contemporary French critics as proof, such as M. Avenel, “one of the writers in the Lycée Français” who claims that “[...] we do not read with pleasure that which has need of a dictionary to explain it. Almost all of his expressions are antiquated”. Cary concludes: “[...] all this may show the little taste the French now have for their elder poets” (3). And so the article begins with the contemporary neglect of Marot, which Cary is rectifying. Throughout this article, Cary uses a framing device that accentuates elements of Marot’s life and poetry that both distance him from the Classical French, and bring him nearer to the Romantic British. Baker describes how translators can frame their subjects in order to “accentuate, undermine or modify aspects of the narrative(s) encoded in the source text or utterance” (105). She gives the example of a translation of Hugo’s *Bug-Jargal* that “presents the reader with a narrative that is unequivocally anti-slavery” when Hugo’s text is ambivalent towards slavery (108).

At the end of the article, where Cary traditionally places biographical information, he highlights the controversial religious views that led to Marot’s persecution at the hands of the Catholic establishment in his own time. Cary writes that “at Ferrera, he contracted a friendship with Calvin, and is said to have embraced the opinions of that reformer” (1846, 15). Meanwhile, the poetry Cary quotes is unequivocal in its fidelity to the Catholic Church:

Point ne suis Lutheriste,  
 Ne Zuinglien, et moins Anabaptiste  
 [...]  
 Je suis celui, qui prens plaisir, et peine

A louer Christ et la mere tant pleine  
 De grace infuse; et pour bien l'eprouver,  
 On le pourra par mes escrits trouver (16).

Cary translates this as “I am neither Lutheran nor Zuinglian; and still less an Anabaptist: [...] I am one whose delight and whose labour it is to exalt my saviour and his all-gracious Mother. The best proof of this may be found in my writings” (16). This is one of the rare instances in which Cary translates poetry into prose. Chapter 4 of this thesis will deal with the Romantic conception of poetry, and why history, or in this case, a personal defence, does not fall under the rubric of poetry and therefore is not translated into verse. In this case, Cary makes clear that Marot was in great danger stemming from these accusations. The story continues with Marot defending himself to the King against the accusation of heresy: “The argument which he uses to defend himself on account of having prohibited books in his possession, are much the same as Milton has since urged on a similar subject in his *Areopagitica*” (16). Cary’s article, and the narrative, ends as it began, with Marot left neglected by his compatriots:

On his return to France in 1536, he employed himself in translating some of the Psalms into French metre, from the version of the Vatable, the royal professor of Hebrew, which gave so much scandal to the doctors of the Sorbonne, that they induced the King to prevent him from continuing his work. Still however he persisted in delivering his sentiments on religion with such freedom as to keep alive the resentment of his enemies; and he at last found it necessary to remove to Geneva. Here he was accused of having committed some gross irregularities of conduct, of which I am willing to believe him innocent. He then retired to Turin, and died in poverty at the age of sixty (17).

This time Marot is being neglected by his contemporaries rather than the “French of the present day”, although these “doctors of the Sorbonne” appear as fastidious as their academic descendants, and his persecution results from Marot engaging in the same activity Cary himself is doing, namely translation.

Bainbridge describes the influence Walter Scott's metrical romances had on the 19<sup>th</sup> century and how Scott's "re-imagining of war remained tremendously influential throughout the nineteenth century, playing a major role in the chivalric revival" (225), while the *Oxford History of Literary Translation in English*, quoted in Chapter 2 of this thesis, states that "what medieval and Renaissance France offered was above all a body of stories corresponding to Walter Scott's vision of chivalry" (France 231). Cary appropriates Marot by orphaning him to both his French contemporaries and descendants; by comparing him with British authors; and by accentuating the chivalric nature of his poetry. While introducing Marot's *Temple of Cupid*, he compares the poem to the works of Chaucer and Spenser, and describes the hero-poet in it as a "knight-errant" on a "quest" (1846, 5). The translation of this poem, and the subsequent articles Cary will write, have now been framed in a way that alienates the French Renaissance poet from the Classical, while at the same time transforming Marot into a Romantic poet.

## CHAPTER 4: THE POETICS OF TRANSLATING *THE EARLY FRENCH POETS*

Because part of the Romantic project was to “translate everything” (Berman 1984, 217), to make everything Romantic, in his protest against Classicism, the Romantic will appropriate precisely what Classicism defined itself against: the Renaissance. As Berman demonstrates in *L'épreuve de l'étranger*, critical translation was the tool used by the German Romantics in their revolution against Classicism; Henry Cary, the British Romantic, uses this same tool in *The Early French Poets*, but in this case critical translation is strongly influenced by the particular circumstances of England's conflict with France, discussed in Chapter 3.

These French Renaissance texts are transformed into Romantic texts both through Cary's commentary and in the translations themselves: Romantic ideals of “the natural” and originality are heightened, while the “base” is censored. What is base, for Cary, can be represented by his picture of contemporary France's artificiality and sensuousness. Tracing the newfound sense of an inner nature, following Taylor, that found full expression in the Romantic movement, leads to an explanation for why Cary censors, often explicitly, those Renaissance elements that deal with perceived ignoble elements of humanity, and accentuates those elements that are deemed noble. This is shown through the positive and negative terms Cary attaches to the poems in his criticism, and in the choices he makes as a translator.

This Romantic emphasis on critical translation offers a different focus from that of the “invisible translator”, discussed in Chapter 2. Cary often comments on the translation choices he makes, or informs the reader he is suppressing something, within

the articles themselves, which contrasts with a translation practice that limits the translator's commentary to an introduction, or to footnotes—that is if the translator's perspective is not rendered completely invisible by being absent from the published work.

### **Translating the foreign**

Berman's *L'épreuve de l'étranger* deals with the periodical the *Athenaeum*, which was inaugurated in 1798 in Germany and around which the most important critical thinkers of German Romanticism were gathered, such as the Schlegel brothers and Novalis. Critical translation, a Romantic ideology, and writing for a periodical are three common elements the writers for the *Athenaeum* share with the writers of the *London*, making Berman's observations especially relevant to this thesis.

As Berman states: “Tout traduire, voilà la tâche essentielle du vrai traducteur” (1984, 217). For the Romantics, translating everything is also making everything Romantic: “dans la mesure où les œuvres traduites semblent représenter tantôt la préfiguration, tantôt la quintessence de l'art romantique, le principe monologique joue jusque dans le choix des textes à traduire: la traduction romantique ne traduit que des œuvres romantiques, que le ‘même’” (218). Cary himself draws the parallel between the French Renaissance poets and contemporary Britain in his commentary; his translated poems then demonstrate a Romantic reading of these Renaissance texts. According to Berman, for the Romantics: ““‘Tout traduire’, c'est traduire ces œuvres, passées ou étrangères, qui portent en germe la littérature à venir [...]” (217).

Along with his colleagues at the *London*, Cary is making an argument for a Romantic viewpoint on literature, and is appropriating those elements from other literatures from the past that announce a Romantic aesthetic. This aesthetic defines itself, against Classicism, as being open to foreign experiences. As De Quincey writes in the December 1821 edition of the *London*: “Now whence comes this poverty of the French literature? Manifestly hence, that it is too intensely steeped in French manners to admit of any influences from without: it has rejected all alliance with exotic literature” (De Quincey 607). In his article on Ronsard, whom Cary praises for the “openness of his heart” and for his “hearty love of the country in its natural and unembellished state” (1846, 86), he makes a direct relationship between Ronsard’s openness to the foreign, through translation, and the evolution of French literature, in this case French comedy:

His next attempt was a version of the *Plutus* of Aristophanes, part of which still remains. It was represented on the French theatre; and, from such a beginning, we can, in some measure, account for the excellence at which the French have since arrived in this species of composition (89).

Just as translating the ancient Greeks furthered French comedy, translating the French Renaissance can enrich British literature.

However, to translate French literature into English Romanticism, this literature must be divorced from what the writers of the *London* see as the enemy of England, which is both the political and aesthetic principles of France. Coleridge’s eldest son, Hartley, makes this explicit in his article *On Parties in Poetry*, published in the November 1821 edition of the *London*. Hartley Coleridge explains how, after the English Civil War, the puritans emptied England of its poets (excepting Milton) and of its poetry, and, “a foreign swarm was called in to replenish it. French principle in government, and

in criticism, overpowered or corrupted the old British spirit” (477). He goes on to diagnose the defects of French classicism, and the English “poets of the French school” who wrote around the time of Queen Anne (1665-1714), drawing a parallel between their poetry and the Ancien Régime:

An extreme caution characterises both, with a mighty reverence for etiquette; great pretension to decorum; frequent appeals to precedent, yet chiefly the precedents of late, and not the best periods; and instinctive horror of whatever is new or bold; and a not less intense, though less open aversion to whatever is derived from simpler and more energetic stages of society. Both, perhaps, have the merit of repressing presumption, but then they are equally fatal to originality (478).

Originality, an openness to the foreign, the valuing of the simpler stages of society, a democratic spirit: these are the elements that are brought out in Cary’s early French poets. Ronsard’s openness to the foreign and the past is part of the same Romantic spirit that leads poets to use local dialects in order to enrich their language; in the following passage Cary draws a direct comparison between Ronsard and Edmund Burke:

His idolatry for the antients [sic] was not such as to make him neglect the means which his own country afforded him for enriching its vernacular tongue. He is said, like Burke, to have visited the shops of artisans [...] he himself recommends this practice and at the same time advises the poet to appropriate the most significant words that he can collect from the different dialects of France (1846, 90).

This spirit that leads Ronsard to his “idolatry” of the ancients, and to his search for different words in the dialects of France, is the same as the spirit of translation itself. Openness to the foreign, be it the past, another language, or the language of the people, involves a translation of foreign experiences into one’s own literature. And this spirit is a sign of an openness evidenced in Cary’s description of Spenser’s regard for du Bellay: “Yet this honourable testimony from the author of the Faery Queene, who has still more

distinguished the subject of it by translating several of his poems, secures for Joachim du Bellay undeniable claims to attention and deference from an English reader” (50).

Translation is the way one can most distinguish one’s regard for the foreign.

This is, again, in contrast with the Classical spirit, which is limited to a courtly form of expression. Cary describes how du Bellay, like Ronsard, in his *Defence and Illustration of the French Language*, “ [...] a judicious and well-written treatise, to which I have more than once had occasion to refer” (50), describes how Jean le Maire de Belges was perhaps the first Frenchman to “illustrate” his language: “[...] by which he explains himself to mean that he imparted to it many poetical words and phrases, of which the most excellent writers in his own time had availed themselves. Most of these, I doubt, have since been thrown away by the purist” (51). The Classical purist would throw away the very words that would appeal to an English reader; Cary amplifies this theme while discussing Garnier’s *Hippolyte*, when he declares that “[...] it must be owned that there is something in all this more to our English taste”, as opposed to Racine’s treatment of the same Greek sources in his *Phèdre*:

In the next scene the judgement of Racine led him to follow Euripides, though he has done it most timidly, and with a sacred horror of the bold and passionate imagery of the Greek. In his preface, acknowledging his obligations to that writer for the conception of Phaedra’s character, he tells us that he believed he had never exhibited anything so reasonable on the stage. “Quand je ne lui devois que la seule idée du caractère de Phèdre, je pourrois dire que je lui dois ce que j’ai peut-être mis de plus raisonnable sur le théâtre.” And to her reason indeed it must be allowed he has brought her in the strait-waistcoat of his Alexandrines; for the poor Queen raves no more as she formerly had done in her palace in Athens [...] but talks as a lady might be supposed to talk who had lived the greater part of her life at Paris, and who was subject to be at times a little flighty.

Dieux, que ne suis-je assise à l’ombre des forêts?  
 Quand pourrai-je, au travers d’une noble poussière,  
 Suivre de l’œil un char fuyant dans la carrière?

Garnier would assuredly have made more of this” (156).

The French Classicist, against “English taste”, dampens emotion to make it compatible with a courtly, Parisian lifestyle. This quotation from Racine is not translated into poetry, because the aim of these articles is to translate what Cary deems poetic: Racine’s Alexandrines are in stark contrast, for Cary, with the lively, natural poetry that he is translating in *The Early French Poets*. Cary and the British follow the German Romantic program of “translating everything” (which is why Cary is discussing these poets before his French contemporaries do) up to a point, but he balks at translating French Classicism. Translating everything in this case more precisely means translating everything that is poetic. What is not considered poetic is both described as such, and is either not translated, or translated as prose, as will be discussed in the section below on poetry and prose.

In the above-quoted passage, the French are given their due of reason, and reason is devalued as an impediment to poetry, and is in fact linked with a strictured, courtly, “Parisian” ideology. In his article on Pierre Gringore, Cary digresses to the subject of modern France once again, after informing his readers that the lady who is the subject of Gringore’s poem “[...] is no less than the Blessed Virgin, whom the author calls also ‘Reason’”:

At the beginning of the French Revolution, the philosophers thought they were freeing themselves from all their old superstitions when they worshipped, in the person as it is said of a common woman, the Goddess of Reason; though they were, in fact, relapsing into a very old superstition, only stripped of all that was decorous and affecting to the imagination (272).

A connection is here made between French politics and French aesthetics. In both cases, while the French have reason, they do not have nature. In contrast, nature is something the British can lay claim to, as Hartley Coleridge elaborates in his *On Parties in Poetry*:

The great excellence to which our political constitution approximates, is the fair and balanced representation of all the great interests of society, and, as resulting from thence, the due subordination of every part of the body politic to the whole. An analogous excellence is discoverable in the writings of our great dramatists, and dramatic poets (under which title Chaucer may be fairly included), up to the age of Milton. These, therefore, we call the upholders of our poetical Constitution. They were the elect of nature; and uttered, as it were, the common voice of mankind [...] They speak, in short, for the whole estate of human nature, not for the particular plot of it which themselves inherit. This praise belongs to Shakespeare pre-eminently, yet in large measure it is due to his predecessors, contemporaries, and immediate successors (Coleridge, Hartley 476).

### **“Nature” and the “Base”**

Charles Taylor’s *Sources of the Self* and *A Secular Age* trace the beginnings of the concept of human “nature” and the importance it had for the Romantics. This leads to a Romantic focus on “nature” as a source of higher good for human flourishing (leading to the “pathetic fallacy” discussed in Chapter 2), and also includes a greater emphasis on originality and “the natural”, as opposed to Classical formality.

This perspective illuminates why Cary makes the translation choices he makes with regard to dampening “gross” or “base” elements of a poem and heightening “noble” elements. According to Taylor, “the sense that our thoughts and feelings emerge from nature gives them depth and potential force, indeed, introduces a new notion of “depth”[...]” (1989, 349). This leads to an element of the Renaissance poetry that is heightened in the translation: Cary chooses poems by Renaissance writers that deal with nature, and then emphasises the elements in these poems that relate to nature, or the natural, as an expression of man’s inner depths. In his commentary, Cary contrasts this

with the artifice of Classicism, and praises the Renaissance writers for writing in a natural way. According to Taylor, part of the Romantic protest involved being “brought back to the “natural”. One of the pioneers of this notion of disalienation as a recovery of contact with our own deeper purposes was Jean-Jacques Rousseau” (2007, 310). Cary’s extensive reading and praise of Rousseau mentioned throughout the early section of his *Memoirs* places his translations within this current.<sup>7</sup>

According to Taylor, for the Romantics:

Art imitates reality [... ] The move from mimesis to expression was under way well before the Romantic period, throughout the eighteenth century in fact. It fed on a host of things: in part, the new valuation of sentiment gave a higher significance to its expression; in part also, the new conceptions of the origins of language and culture in the expressive cry lent colour to the view that the earliest speech was poetical, that early people spoke in tropes because they spoke from the heart and the natural expression of feelings is poetry. This could easily combine with the primitivist sentiment that the earliest, most primitive poetry was also the purest. Admiration for early, rugged, unspoilt, strongly expressive poetry grew in the second half of the eighteenth century, and turned people towards folk poetry (Herder played a particularly important role here) as well as towards Homer, the Hebrew Bible, and even the entirely invented writer ‘Ossian’ (1989, 377).

Cary is part of this Romantic project to rediscover history and to claim it for a Romantic ideology. For him, these Renaissance poets, and their poems, are more natural than the corruption that followed later from an over-civilized Classicism. What Cary wishes to accentuate is the “poetry” of these authors, which can be defined as “the natural expression of feelings”, echoed in Cary’s praise of Jan de la Peruse’s poem: “this is natural and pathetic” (Cary 1846, 85). He opens his article on Belleau with the statement:

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<sup>7</sup> “Once again, I have been experiencing the delightful magic of that necromancer, Rousseau, who has the key to every avenue of the heart. His “Eloisa,” and his “Confessions,” made me admire, made me wonder at him; but his “System of Education” has made me love him [...] Could we but choose our guardian spirits, thine, Rousseau, should ever be my guide and conductor!” (Cary 1847, 32-33). Francis Cary provides a footnote to this passage claiming that Cary, in later life, advised that Rousseau’s works should be removed from his son’s book-shelf, as they were “objectionable books to be placed in the hands of youth” (33).

“The painter of Nature was the appellation which distinguished Remy Belleau among the poets of his time [...] how rare that merit is of which it may be considered as a pledge”

(66). He goes on to accentuate the move from mimesis to expression that Taylor outlines above:

There is in these sufficient to prove that Belleau was not in the habit of looking at nature through the eyes of other men; that he did not content himself with making copies of copies; but that he drew from life whenever he had such objects to describe as the visible world could supply him with. Nor is this the whole of his praise; for he has also some fancy, and a flow of numbers unusually melodious (66-67).

Making copies of copies is what Classicism does; Belleau, and the Romantic, paint directly from nature. As if to solidify this connection between the Renaissance and Romanticism, on the next page Cary quotes nine lines from Keats's *Endymion*, “as a companion” to the excerpt from Belleau.

### Poetry and prose

Cary's definition of poetry can be gleaned from his metrical, rhymed translations of poems whose subject is nature, or love. If, however, a poet is writing poetry that deals with history (or the defence of his beliefs, as was the case with Marot discussed in Chapter 3), the choice Cary makes to render this in prose points to what does not belong to his definition of poetry. Vauquelin describes the history of the Alexandrine in the following stanza:

Nos longs vers on appelle Alexandrins, d'autant  
Que le Roman qui va les prouesses contant  
D'Alexandre le grand, l'un de neuf preux de l'age,  
En ces vers fut escrit d'un Romanze langage. (250)

Cary translates this as: “Our long verses they call Alexandrines, because the Romance which recounted the exploits of Alexander the Great, one of the nine worthies of the age, was written in this measure” (250). This prose translation follows the meaning of each line, giving the information contained in the original about the origins of the Alexandrine, but dispenses with the meter and the rhyme. This indicates a gap between Cary’s conception of poetry and Vauquelin’s conception of poetry: for Cary the Romantic, poetry has to avoid the mundane, the base, for it is precisely the noble, or beautiful, in poetry that reflects and expresses the beauty of nature. For Vauquelin the Renaissance man, poetry is a means of expression that can be used for anything from history and salacious poems, to devotional and love songs. Cary sets up his antithetical definition of poetry as a young man in his memoirs: “The poetry of the French is diametrically opposite to that of the Italians: the latter are full of sublimity, pathos, and imagination; the former of ethics, and descriptions of common life.” (1847, 42).

A further illumination of Cary’s definition of poetry occurs when he does not translate what he considers bad poetry into metrical verse. Bertault’s poetry is described as presenting the reader with “the idea of no living object”:

The fancied mistress seems to be nothing more than a web stretched out on the warp for the purpose of embroidering the poet’s conceits; and, of these, many have no concern either with the imagination or the heart: such is the description of her hand:

Quant à sa belle main, ceste vive merveille,  
 Qui de ma liberté rend l’Amour possesseur,  
 Elle se pourroit dire au monde sans pareille  
 Si Dieu l’eust condamnée à n’avoir point de soeur:  
 Mais pour mon double mal, elle nasquit gemelle,  
 D’un marbre qui mobile en dix branches se fend:  
 L’une exerce le vol, et l’autre le recele:  
 L’une commet le meutre, et l’autre le defend.

As to her beautiful hand, that living wonder, which renders Love the possessor of my freedom, it might be said to be without an equal in the world, if heaven had condemned it not to have a sister: but for my double misfortune it was born a twin, and both framed of a marble that is endowed with motion, and cleft into ten branches: the one is the committer of the theft, and the other its concealer; the one perpetrates the murder, and the other defends it (1846, 154-155).

In this, one of the rare prose translations of a poem about love, Cary demonstrates how there is “no concern either with the imagination or the heart” by effacing the poetic affects of the original. Berman quotes Novalis on Romanticism: “L’art de [...] rendre un objet étranger et pourtant connu et attirant, voilà la poésie romantique” (1984, 158). In this instance, Cary highlights the absurdity of the poetic conceit of the mistress’s hands, making it unattractive, by rendering it without poetic affect. “It was born a twin, and both framed of a marble that is endowed with motion, and cleft into ten branches” highlights a poetry of affectation by taking out what can attract the reader to poetry, the rhyme and form. The concepts of “twin” and “cleft” applied to a hand are without the corollary rhymes of “gemele/recele” and “fend/defend” which close out the conceit, highlighting the strange use of such concepts without making them attractive in English. However, this is a rare instance of Cary’s translating love poetry into prose; usually the subject of love is highly valued in Cary’s poetics, and is therefore translated into metrical verse. In the section on the poetics of translation, I will deal with the Romantic emphasis on translating poetic form along with the sense, following Novalis’s ideal quoted above.

If our deep nature is noble, it cannot be “base”, “gross” or “vile”. This restriction can be applied to poetry that is too full of conceits, or too mundane, to be translated into an English poetic form. The conviction that human nature is essentially noble also explains the censor coming into play when bodily functions, including sexuality, are

portrayed as comical or ignoble. Instead of looking at the Romantics, and Cary, as proto-Victorians, who were ashamed of their sexuality, or prudish, I see this censorship as being linked to the accentuation of “nature” discussed above, and to a conscious program to instruct his readers, ennobling them through the critical translation of poetry.

### **Censoring the base**

The Romantic rejection of Classical “purity”, while at the same time seeking to ennoble man through an avoidance of what is “base”, leads to a tension within the Romantic viewpoint between accentuating the “natural” and yet avoiding the “base”, which is played out in Cary’s articles. In *L’épreuve de l’étranger* Berman writes that

[...] dans l’horizon romantique, on peut certes affirmer *théoriquement* que Shakespeare, Cervantes et Boccace, c’est l’*union* du haut et du bas, du vil et du noble. Mais dans le fond, on ne peut pas plus accueillir la dimension du bas et du vil que la tradition antérieure: les nombreuses imitations de ces auteurs auxquelles s’est livré le Romantisme européen montrent plutôt que le “vil” y est constamment éclipsé, ou soumis à un traitement hyper-ironique qui l’anéantit. En réalité, rien n’est plus étranger au Romantisme que la naturalité du langage, même si à la différence du Classicisme, il revendique un langage “obscur” et chargé d’allégoricité (d’où, parfois, le recours aux mots anciens, qui donnent l’impression du “lointain”). Comment pourrait-il accueillir dès lors ce qui, chez les auteurs cités, est de l’ordre de l’obscène, du grivois, du scatologique, de l’injure? (1984, 222-223).

Cary explicitly states throughout *The Early French Poets* that he will not translate something, and after giving a cursory description of bawdy poetry, he writes: “but I have no thoughts of entertaining my reader in this way. To the following... no exception can be made” (1846, 31). The exception that could be made is that bawdy writing does not accurately paint humanity in its noble nature. It is up to the translator to decide what can be translated, or how it should be transformed, based on what is deemed too vulgar for his readers. Cary’s review of a translation of Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso*, in the pages of

the June 1824 edition of the *London*, outline his translation principles: the translator “has to make his author easy without vulgarity, and lively without studied point” (Cary 1824, 626).

I would like to take up here the idea of censorship as outlined by Gouanvic in his paper on Steinbeck:

Le mot (censure) peut certes être appliqué à toute pratique de traduction qui imprime à l'énoncé une restriction, qu'elle soit sémantique ou qu'elle porte en tout premier lieu sur le signifiant, si petit soit-elle, ou qui fait dire au texte source ce qu'il entend ne pas dire. Cette problématique de la censure rejoint celle de la transformation comme trait fondamental de la traduction. Toute traduction pourrait ainsi être tenue pour “censurante” (191).

For the Renaissance texts Cary is translating to become Romantic, those elements in the original that paint a picture of humanity as ignoble must be left out. The writers of the *London Magazine* argue that the Renaissance is superior to the later, more corrupt, Classical era, and what followed it in France. According to Taylor, for the Romantics, “beauty as the fullest form of unity, which is also the highest form of being, offers the definition of the true end of life” (2007, 313). The Romantics were protesting against the previous order, which “had divided us, confined us in a desiccating reason which had alienated us from our deeper emotions” (314). It is the task of the Romantics to redeem the nobility and beauty of the human soul.

Cary makes explicit, in his “Rose’s Orlando Furioso”, what should be censored:

We may witness the loves of Olympia, of Isabella, of Genevra, and Bradamant; the two first of these in particular may be cited as examples of whatever is most pure and exalted in the most powerful passions. As it is, however, Ariosto must remain in the original a sealed book to the eyes of innocence; and that translator does little service to his country who does not unsparingly disentangle the fulsome weed from the fresh and untainted flower (Cary 1824, 624).

Cary praises Rose for being mindful of his readers in taking out offending passages, but in a note further outlines that in so doing, the translation must not suffer: Rose “might have been more delicately select in the choice of words; members for limbs should be relegated to Moore’s almanack. Sometimes it might have been better to modify rather than expunge” (624). And by excising certain passages of a sexual nature, Rose “leaves the heroine in an ambiguous situation which she does not deserve” (624).

The moral purpose of the censor coming into play for Cary is to uplift the reader through what is noble, and what is noble is tied to human nature. The purpose of poetry is to

awaken hope and fear, compassion and indignation [...] Ariosto’s poem may thus be said to have a moral purpose [...] the laws of the human mind, and the high instincts implanted in our nature, impel the poet to render good faith, generosity, and honour amiable, and vice and meanness odious (624).

This attitude towards bawdy elements in literature would change by the 20<sup>th</sup> century in England. Edmund Gosse, for example, writing in 1925, explains Cary’s attitude towards François Villon (one of the few early French poets in whom Cary finds little to recommend) as stemming from the era in which Cary wrote: “That Cary understood the Pleiade, and the earlier ingenious poets of the class of Marot, better than he did Villon and Pierre Gringoire is obvious [...] It is, indeed, a long cry from 1821 to the age of Rossetti and Swinburne” (Gosse 59). As Galway Kinnell describes in his book of translations of Villon published in 1965, in the 20<sup>th</sup> century Villon became “the prototype of the *poète maudit*, spiritual father to Poe, Baudelaire, and Rimbaud” (7) and “a new kind of criticism is coming into being which admits its ignorance and makes this act of respect for Villon its starting point” (9).

In other words, late Romantics like Swinburne, and proto-moderns like Rimbaud, can claim Villon as a spiritual father, just as Cary is claiming the Renaissance poets as ancestors to Romanticism. What a modern translator, such as Kinnell, highlights in Villon's poetry, and what a Romantic like Cary chooses to value, illuminate the differences in ideology regarding poetry and translation pertaining to these different eras. One might assume that the prudery of a parish priest is what prohibits Cary from translating most of what he reads in Villon, and what allows him to censor one of his poems. His main issue, however, is that most of what Villon wrote "can scarcely be made out by the help of a glossary" (Cary 1846, 236). Even Marot, who was Villon's editor a hundred years after his death, is the first to offer the opinion that much of Villon is unintelligible to anyone living after Villon's time (Cary 1846, 237, Kinnell 8). Cary goes on to conjecture that Villon simply does not appeal to English tastes because he engages in "badinage", "something between wit and buffoonery." This passage concludes with Cary taking another opportunity to point out the differences between the English and French national characters: "to an Englishman ["badinage"] is apt to appear either ridiculous or insipid; to a Frenchman it is almost enough to make the charm of life" (1846, 237).

Focussing on a stanza from Villon's *Grand Testament* and analyzing Cary's translation along with Kinnell's translation of the same passage will highlight the differences in a poetics of translation between Cary writing in the 1820s and Kinnell writing in the 1960s. Cary by no means dismisses Villon's poetry as a whole, but he evinces difficulty in translating it. I would like to point out that this difficulty comes less from a sense of prudishness than from a specifically Romantic notion of why one

translates. In introducing the poem, Cary writes that, “from what has been said of the peculiar vein of his genius, the reader will perceive, that it is scarcely capable of being fairly represented in another language. His happy turns of expression, smart personalities, and witty innuendoes, would tell very differently at second hand. A short ballad out of the Grand Testament, being more general, may be attempted” (241).

The following is the second stanza of *Le Grand Testament*, followed by Cary’s translation, followed by Kinnell’s of the same stanza:

Ou est la tressage Helois?  
 Pour qui fut chastré (et puy Moyne)  
 Pierre Esbaillart à Sainct Denys  
 Pour son amour eut cest essoyne.  
 Semblablement ou est la Royne,  
 Qui commanda que Buridan  
 Fut jetté en ung sac en Seine?  
 Mais ou sont les neiges d’antan?

Where is Heloise the wise,  
 For whom Abelard was fain,  
 Mangled in such cruel wise,  
 To turn a monk instead a man?  
 Where the Queen, who into Seine  
 Bade them cast poor Buridan?  
 - Where are they—Tell me, if ye know;  
 - What is come of last year’s snow?  
 (1846, 241).

Where is the learned Heloise  
 For whom they castrated Pierre Abelard  
 And made him a monk at Saint-Denis,  
 For his love he took this pain,  
 Likewise where is the queen  
 Who commanded that Buridan  
 Be thrown in a sack into the Seine?  
 But where are the snows of last year?  
 (Kinnell 66).

At first reading, Kinnell's translation seems closer to the original, in the sense of a word for word translation; each English line corresponds to the same line in French. Kinnell's translation is also more direct: where Cary translates, "Pour qui fut chastré (et puy Moyne) / Pierre Esbaillart à Sainct Denys" as "For whom Abelard was fain / Mangled in such cruel wise", Kinnell writes, "For whom they castrated Pierre Abelard / And made him a monk at Saint-Denis". Is the censor operating here to prevent Cary from using the more obvious choice of the word, "castrated", coming from the same root *castrare*, instead using the less direct translation "mangled"?

Berman asks: "Comment pourrait-il accueillir dès lors ce qui, chez les auteurs cités, est de l'ordre de l'obscène, du grivois, du scatologique, de l'injure?" (1984, 223). The answer is that, in both criticism and in translation, the Romantics will suppress the base elements that are commonly found in Renaissance writers. And so, Buridan is not "thrown in a sack", as Kinnell renders "Fut jetté en ung sac", which, again, is almost a word for word translation, but instead, "into the Seine... is cast". The absence of the words "sack" and "castrated" in Cary's translation, words that were readily available English versions of the French that Villon uses, suggests that Cary censors what is "base" or "obscene".

But censorship can work on various levels. In Berman's book on Donne, he cites Genette's claim that the intangibility of the poetic is a modern idea and continues:

L'auteur souligne dans une note de la même page que l'idée d'intangibilité du texte poétique, ou littéraire au sens large, est liée à celle d'intraduisibilité, autre dogme, non spécifiquement moderne, mais sans cesse réaffirmé à notre époque et par des poètes, et par des théoriciens (comme Jakobson) (1995, 71-72).

For Jakobson, in his *On Linguistic Aspects of Translation*, “translation involves two equivalent messages in two different codes” (Jakobson 114), and poetry is a problematic code to decipher through translation:

Any assumption of ineffable or untranslatable cognitive data would be a contradiction in terms. But in jest, in dreams, in magic, briefly, in what one would call everyday verbal mythology and in poetry above all, the grammatical categories carry a high semantic import. In these conditions, the question of translation becomes much more entangled and controversial (117).

This becomes controversial for Jakobson because, according to Venuti, “Jakobson underestimates the interpretive nature of translation, the fact that recoding is an active rewording that doesn’t simply transmit the foreign text, but transforms it” (69). A focus on language as a code of individual signs means that meaning associated with word-play, a common feature of poetry, cannot be translated. Meschonnic also quotes Jakobson in this regard: “En poésie, les équations verbales sont promues au rang de principe constructive du texte [...] la paronomase règne sur l’art poétique; que cette domination soit absolue ou limitée, la poésie, par définition, est intraduisible. Seule est possible la transposition créatrice” (1973, 313). Meschonnic refutes this claim:

La “poésie” n’est pas plus “difficile” à traduire que la “prose”. La notion de la difficulté de la poésie, qui se présente aujourd’hui comme ayant toujours eu cours, est datée. Elle inclut une confusion entre vers et poésie. Elle est liée à la notion de la poésie comme violation des normes du langage (313).

This modern mistrust of poetic translation leads to a modern emphasis on translating the “meaning” of the text, and not the poetic form. Poetic form is construed as a violation of “normal” language, the language of conversation. Here meaning is relegated to the definition of words, and not the “grammatical categories” that Jakobson is referring to.

We see this modern viewpoint in Kinnell's translation and in his reasons for rendering Villon's poetry in prose. In his introductory note on the translation, Kinnell states:

I decided against using rhyme and meter. When one is writing a poem, the sound and meaning of a word are one inseparable thing, but when one is translating a poem, they become two things, and to keep the rhyme the translator has to adulterate the meaning. What is more expressive of a poet than his images? Yet in rhyming translations we can't ever be sure the images are the poet's. In this translation the reader can at least know that what he is reading closely translates my understanding of what Villon wrote (19).

Earlier, in his introduction, Kinnell states, "For there is nothing "poetic" anywhere in Villon. His poetry starts from the grossest base, it is made of pain and laughter, and it is indestructible" (18). Kinnell's distrust of the "poetic" is at an opposite pole from Cary's poetic translations, and echoes the modern doubt in the possibility of translation in the first place. Kinnell accentuates the importance of "images" over anything else in poetry. And yet, a clear contrast between the definitions of poetry and prose, is that poetry can use rhythm and rhyme as part of its form, whereas both poetry and prose use images.

For Cary, to bring out the poetry of a text, it must read as poetry. Cary not only translates the meaning of Villon's text, he attempts to translate the form. Villon writes in an iambic tetrameter that rarely deviates from its four stresses per line, as does Cary. Villon's rhyme scheme is ABAB BCBC. This scheme is notable in its carrying over of the rhyme B into the next quatrain. Cary echoes this in his ABAB BBCC scheme. It is clear that Cary does not believe that the importance of Villon's poetry lies in its imagery and in its "grossness". As a Romantic, he is interested in translating the poetic form as well as the content.

To look at censorship another way, it is just this poetic principle that Kinnell is censoring in his translation; there is no clear rhyme scheme, no discernable meter. Instead, it is an attempt to get close to a word for word translation. The difference between these two approaches highlights the Romantic nature of Cary's translations: for Cary, the poetic affect, which is brought about through poetic form, rhyme and meter, takes precedence over the definitions of the words. Poetry's ability to communicate something beyond the definitions of the words being used allows the Romantics to value it more highly than prose. In contrast, the "meaning" of the poem, for Kinnell, lies in the images that are being conveyed, and he makes his translation choices accordingly, dispensing with the original's poetic form.

Cary's contemporaries in France had no interest in Ronsard and even less in Villon because the Classical tradition was still strong in France and there was little that was 'elegant' in Villon, and in addition he used forms that strayed far from the alexandrine. We have, at one extreme, Kinnell affirming that for art to reflect reality it must not be "poetic", since poetic form is a kind of artifice, and on the other the Classical notion that poetic form is everything and that the breaking of the Classical rules of mimesis results in bad art. Cary is against the classical, but would not agree with Kinnell that poetic form itself obscures the meaning of a translation. We can see an analogous tension in Cary's project between translating what is early, and less refined, and avoiding the "base" and "gross" as incompatible with the Romantic view of nature being the highest good, as Taylor outlines in *Sources of the Self*.

## Translating Nature

According to Taylor, the Romantic move towards an emphasis on nature is a move inwards: “If nature is an intrinsic source, then each of us has to follow what is within; and this may be without precedent. We should not hope to find our models without” (1989, 376). This explains the Romantic emphasis on nature poetry, as well as the move away from Classical forms. The early French poets are attractive to the Romantics in their use of various forms, as well as in their direct invocations of love and nature. The Romantic appropriation of early writers (Shakespeare *et al*) is problematic, however, in that they still have to avoid what is “base”, as Berman explained above. This is because, in articulating their inner nature, the Romantics were articulating “a picture of nature as a great current of sympathy, running through all things” (Taylor 1989, 369). Taylor quotes Herder in this regard, who wrote: “See the whole of nature, behold the great analogy of creation. Everything feels itself and its like, life reverberates to life” (369).

This means that there is a move to “Romanticise” earlier poets who did not share this view of nature, and to censor that nature if it is too “base”. What separates Cary and Kinnell is that, in the intervening century, the conception of art imitating nature did not change as much as the conception of that nature being a “higher good”, as Taylor would put it, changed. For Cary, art imitates nature in its nobility and ceases to do so when it becomes “gross”. For Kinnell, as a post-Romantic, it is precisely the “gross” elements of everyday life that should be valued poetically.

We can see Cary explicitly explaining his acts of censorship; he will not reproduce and translate those poems by Vauquelin, for example, that are too “gross”. A

poem by this French author he does reproduce, and the translation that follows, are notable, however, for their barely veiled sensuousness. The first lines of Vauquelin's poem are followed by Cary's translation:

Ombreux vallons, claires fontaines,  
 Ruisseaux coulants, forests hautaines,  
 Ou Philanon eut doucement  
 De Philis maint embrassement;  
 Vivez heureux, et la froidure  
 Ne vous depouille de verdure;  
 Ne jamais, beaux vallons, l'Esté  
 Ne vous nuise, en son apreté:  
 Jamais les bestes pasturantes,  
 Fontaines, ne vous soient nuisantes:  
 Ne jamais, Russeaux, vostre cours

Shady valleys, tumbling floods,  
 Crystal fountains, lofty woods,  
 Where Philanon hath often prest  
 Loved Phillis to his panting breast,  
 Blessed be ye: never air  
 Of winter strip your branches bare;  
 Lovely valleys, parching heat  
 Never soil your green retreat:  
 Never hoof of herd uncouth,  
 Fountains, break your margin smooth:  
 Streams, your windings never lie  
 (1846, 258-259).

We can see that the censor is not working in the same way here as it was in Cary's translation of Villon. If anything, Cary highlights the sensuous nature of this poem by translating, for example, "Ou Philanon eut doucement / De Philis maint embrassement;" as, "Where Philanon hath often prest / Loved Phillis to his panting breast". There is no term in the French that equals "panting breast". This phrase, however, can be found in English poetry from Richard Lovelace to Yeats<sup>8</sup>. The depiction of human nature as

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<sup>8</sup> Richard Lovelace: "To Amarantha, That She Would Dishevel Her Hair"; Yeats: "The Tower".

reflected in nature itself is a central theme for the Romantics, which means that those Renaissance poems that deal with nature will undergo a transformation into a Romantic depiction of nature by avoiding the “gross” and accentuating the noble. If our inner nature is noble it is so in how it reflects nature itself.

Cary avoids those poems by Vauquelin wherein the “grossness is too palpable”, that treat with the body in too direct a manner. In this poem, the sensuousness is depicted under the metaphor of nature. Cary translates “beaux vallons” relatively directly as “Lovely valleys”, and continues the metaphor with his “Fountains, break your margin smooth”, a metaphor that is not found directly in the corresponding line, “Fontaines, ne vous soient nuisantes”. It continues, however, the metaphor of the lover’s body with the valley, and in this regard is translating the sense of the original. Unlike Kinnell, but like Schlegel, it is precisely the poetry that Cary wants to translate. It is the metaphor of the valley as the woman’s body that makes this more poetic for Cary than a poem that is descriptively about sex. Again, he is also at pains to reproduce the poetry of the meter and rhyme. Both original and translation are in iambic tetrameter, and both follow an AABB, rhyming couplet, scheme.

It is illuminating at this point to recall what Berman has written about what in French is termed “translation”.

Il y a une dialectique entre les translations non traductives et les traductions. On peut considérer qu’une œuvre n’est vraiment “transplantée” et “implantée (ce qui ne veut pas dire: intégrée, naturalisée) que lorsqu’elle est traduite *stricto sensu* (et non, par exemple, adaptée). Mais une traduction ne se déploie et n’agit vraiment dans une langue-culture que si elle est étayée et entourée par des travaux critiques et des translations non traductives (1995, 17-18).

Cary’s work in *The Early French Poets* is to translate not simply the poems, but also the experience of the poems to his readers. He engages in transplanting the world of these

poets to his readers in various ways: by giving biographical details, summaries of poems, and actual translations.

### **A poetics of translation**

Meschonnic offers a conception of translation that emphasises its relation to poetry: “Pour la poétique, la traduction n’est ni une science, ni un art, mais une activité qui met en œuvre une pensée de la littérature, une pensée du langage” (1999, 18). Cary’s conception of language is revealed in his poetics of translation.

The Romantic practice of translating poetry into metrical verse, so foreign to Kinnell, is a part of the Romantic conception of language that places a high value on poetic affect. Indeed, for poetry to be translated at all, something of the poetic affect must be translated as well. Berman, in *L’épreuve de l’étranger*, quotes the following passage from one of Schlegel’s lectures:

Meter (Silbenmaass) should not be just an external ornament... but it ranks among the essential and original prerequisites of poetry. Furthermore, since all metrical forms have a definite meaning, and their necessary character in a particular language may very well be demonstrated [...] one of the first principles of the art of translation is that, as far as the nature of a language allows, a poem should be recreated in the same meter (1992, 132).

Cary shares the same Romantic emphasis on meter, but only insofar as it belongs to his definition of the subject of poetry, which does not include history, as evidenced in what he chooses to translate as prose. As he writes in his review of Rose’s *Orlando Furioso*, “the poet’s first aim is to please; and he who sits down deliberately to instruct will assuredly fail of his object” (1824, 623). This is why the critical translation of poetry takes a central role for Romanticism: it allows poetry its function of expressing depth of

feeling, while instructing readers, through criticism, of the value of originality and a democratic openness to foreign influences.

Poetry speaks in a separate syntax from prose, and poetic translation is the only way to appropriate this syntax. Cary further clarifies his definition of poetry in the same article, countering Classical formality and emphasising Romantic depth and originality: “He is not the greatest poet who works after rules, but who follows with most vigour and ardency the beat of his genius, and who comprehends within his grasp of intellect the widest diversity of powers” (625). Poetry is valued so highly, that to transform the original into better poetry is considered a plus. Cary counters Rose’s argument against Dryden’s translation of Horace by pointing out Dryden’s accomplishments as a poet: “Dryden, whose affluence of diction and ready mastery over all the resources of rhythm and powers of language laugh to scorn almost every competitor but Shakespeare” (628). Dryden’s poetic licence in translating Horace is criticised by Rose, and conversely praised by Cary, who quotes the offending translation by Dryden:

I can enjoy her when she’s kind;  
But when she dances in the wind,  
And shakes her wings, and will not stay,  
I puff the prostitute away.

“Is this what Horace says?” asks Mr. Rose: now the question properly should be, “Is this in the spirit of Horace? or is it in the spirit of poetry?” and if all that Horace could do, did he write in English, were to tell us “I praise her when steady, when she flies from me resign what she bestowed,” we have only to say that we think Dryden, in this, as in a hundred other instances, has approved himself a better poet than his original (628).

Translating poetry, then, for Cary, is only problematic if one does not translate the poetic affect, if not improve on it. Unlike a Classical approach, however, it is not poetic form or the purity of language that dictates the poetic affect, but instead the emotional content

married to the “flow of numbers” and originality, or freedom, with which this affect is carried off. This is another element that the Renaissance poets share in common with the Romantics, for Cary. In his article on Ronsard, apart from highlighting Ronsard's love of antiquity and search to expand the French vernacular, he points out where Ronsard's sonnets are an imitation, in other words a loose translation, of another poem:

The fifty-ninth is an imitation of Bembo. There is more elasticity and freedom in the copy than in the original.

Comme un chevreuil, quand le printemps detruit  
 Du froid hyver la pognante gelée,  
 Pour mieux brouter la fueille emmiellée,  
 Hors de son bois avec l'aube s'enfuit:  
 E seul, e seur, loin de chiens et de bruit,  
 Or sur un mont, or dans une vallée,  
 Or près d'une onde à l'escart recelée,  
 Libre s'egaye où son pied le conduit:  
 De rets ne d'arcs sa liberté n'a crainte;  
 Sinon alors que sa vie est atteinte  
 D'un trait sanglant, que le tient en langeur.  
 Ainsi j'allois sans espoir de dommage,  
 Le jour qu'un oeil sur l'Avril de mon age  
 Tira d'un coup mille traits en mon cœur. (1846, 101)

Cary then provides his readers with the Italian version by Bembo, so they can compare the two, and then finally provides his translation of Ronsard's sonnet:

As when fresh spring apparels wood and plain,  
 Forth from his native lair, a tender fawn  
 Issues alone and careless, if the dawn  
 Gin the grey east with flecker'd crimson stain;  
 And all unheeding of the hunter's train,  
 Wherever through his roving fancy drawn,  
 By lake or river, hill or flowery lawn,  
 Sports with light foot, and feeds and sports again;  
 Nor aught he fears from meshes or from bow,  
 Till to his liver a fleet arrow sped  
 Has pierced, and panting on the earth he lies:  
 In my life's April thus wont I to go,  
 Of harm unfearing, where my fancy led,

Ere the dart reached me from her radiant eyes (102-103).<sup>9</sup>

Although, in his article on du Bellay, Cary refers to the strict alternation of male and female rhymes in French poetry as “one of its most galling fetters” (53), Cary limits himself here to the same rhyme scheme as Ronsard’s which is: ABBA ABBA CCD EED. This is unusual in the English sonnet, such as Shakespeare’s, which traditionally changes rhyme for each quatrain, allowing for a greater choice in rhyming words. Cary does not have to deal here with the “fetters” of male/female rhymes in this translation because Ronsard sticks to masculine endings to his lines, as does Cary. Indeed, the alexandrine was only one meter among many for the Renaissance poets, and Ronsard in his sonnets uses the decasyllabic line, which is closely analogous to the most common English meter, iambic pentameter, used by Shakespeare in his plays and sonnets. Thus Cary can translate Ronsard’s meter into one that will suit his English audience without changing the number of feet. As he writes in the article on du Bellay, “All of the sonnets in the *Olive* are, I believe, in the “vers commun,” the ten-syllable verse; which is more agreeable to an English ear than the Alexandrine” (56). The change Cary does make to the rhyme scheme of the last six lines, from Ronsard’s CCD EED to Cary’s CDE CDE, maintains the same limit on rhyme, while altering the structure to another one commonly used by Petrarch in his sonnets that exerted such an influence on Ronsard and his contemporaries. In other words, for Cary, the poetic affect of the original is translated into English, along with the

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<sup>9</sup> Many modern editions, including “Pierre de Ronsard, Selected Poems with a prose translation by Malcolm Quainton and Elizabeth Vinestock” have the alternate lines: “D’un trait neutrier empourpré de son sang” and “Tira d’un coup mille traits en mon flanc” for “D’un trait sanglant, que le tient en lueur/ Tira d’un coup mille traits en mon coeur”. Sainte Beuve’s edition of Ronsard’s poems, published in 1828, however, contains the same version as Cary’s. Sainte-Beuve also agrees with Cary on the model in Bembo and in preferring Ronsard: “Il n’est pas inférieur à l’original, et j’oserai même dire que je le lui préfère” (Sainte-Beuve 1879. 9).

metaphor built up of a fawn being shot with an arrow just as the poet's heart is pierced by the lady's eyes.

Cary's objections to the alexandrine are echoed in his account of Ronsard:

In the Preface to the *Franciade* he says that he had changed his mind as to the Alexandrine measure, which he no longer considered as the properly heroic. His reason is, that it savours too much of an extremely easy prose, and is too enervated and flagging; except it be for translations, in which it is useful on account of its length, for expressing the sense of the author (89).

Here the Alexandrine is labelled as being unpoetic, although it is deemed suitable in translations, where concessions must be made. While Cary rarely makes concessions to poetic form, or perhaps chooses poems whose form is already "more agreeable to an English ear", Cary agrees with Ronsard's concern for not letting the form get in the way of the sense. Cary addresses this issue in an article published in the March 1823 edition of the *London*:

An original writer is master of what he shall say next, and has sometimes a happy thought suggested to him by the rhyme itself. The translator has no such advantage, and will be apt to employ the metre that will leave him most at liberty to make choice of such words as shall best convey the sense of his original. (1823, 319).

This quotation is from the remarkable article (split between this issue and the next of the *London* because of its length) that Cary wrote in defence of his translation of Dante: *A Comment on the Divine Comedy of Dante*. The author of the attack on Cary's great translation is not named, and neither does Cary name himself in his defence as the author of *The Vision of Dante*, although he provides several clues, such as "we own ourselves to be a little interested in this matter" (320). Here, the periodical format allows Cary to take apart, one by one, each exception "the author", who has evidently attempted his own

translation, takes to Cary's version. While the majority of this article only concerns Cary's translation of Dante, the excerpt quoted above points to how he approaches translating poetry in *The Early French Poets*. While there is some licence, or liberty, in choosing the meter one will translate into, there are limits to this for Cary. In the following excerpt, Cary lets "the author's" deficiencies as a translator speak for themselves:

"Without troubling others," says he, "I meditated on the matter; and the consequence was, that I at last determined to allow myself the liberty of varying my lines from eight to ten syllables, instead of giving them all the fine heroic complement; as well as using double rhymes at pleasure. Even his lordship uses them." [meaning Byron] Here one scarcely knows which to commend most, the forbearance of not troubling others, the magnanimous resolution not to give all the lines the fine heroic compliment, or the politeness to his lordship (319).

Citing "his lordship" as a reason for making a translation choice, even if that Lord happens to be a Romantic poet, is clearly not an adequate reason for making a poetic choice in one's translation. In *L'épreuve de l'étranger*, Berman outlines the "*programme romantique*: unir philosophie et poésie, faire de la critique une science et de la traduction un art" (1984, 112). While not stressing the uniting of philosophy and poetry like his German counterparts, Cary unites criticism and translation in *The Early French Poets*, and demonstrates through his translations how the original poem can retain its art in a poetic translation.

### **Coleridge's poetics**

Henry Francis Cary was at the centre of the Romantic movement in England, both through his association with his publishers, Taylor and Hessey, the publishers of Keats and later the *London*, and through his association with Coleridge, whose theories on

aesthetics had a profound influence on Romantic writers. Cary's translation of Dante not only influenced Keats's poetry, but was used in Coleridge's *Notes and Lectures Upon Shakespeare and Some of the Old Poets and Dramatists. The Early French Poets* articles offer the opportunity of observing a Romantic translator engaging in the critical translation of select poetry from the French Renaissance in order to appropriate it for a Romantic periodical audience.

Coleridge's poetics<sup>10</sup> can thus demonstrate a contemporary aesthetic that can inform one's understanding of why Cary makes the translation choices that he does. As Sabin writes in *English Romanticism and the French Tradition*, for Coleridge, "the translator commits himself to re-create the life of the original in new form" (222). I believe form becomes a part of this "life" of the original, as it is an essential element to poetry, which deals with a mode of communication that is on a separate level from everyday conversation, or prose. This concept relates the "unspoken language" of poetry to nature: Sabin looks at Coleridge's essay "On Poesy or Art", wherein Coleridge takes up Dryden's ideas of translating poetry and transforms them into a Romantic ideal:

The poet's relation to the "unspoken language" of nature replaces Dryden's more practical concern for the relation of one writer's language to another. By using the looser word "imitation," Coleridge affiliates himself with the freer side in the debate about translation. Yet he retains Dryden's sense of responsibility to a reality beyond the translator's own invention (223).

For Cary, the freedom in imitation is directly linked with poetic affect: one can change the form, and even the meaning, if it heightens the poetry of the original. For poetry to

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<sup>10</sup> Cary cited Coleridge in the preface to the *Vision*, before they met: "On a retrospect of the time and exertions that have been thus employed, I do not regard those hours as the least happy of my life, during which (to use the eloquent language of Mr. Coleridge) "my individual recollections have been suspended, and lulled to sleep amid the music of nobler thoughts; nor that study as misapplied, which has familiarized me with one of the sublimest efforts of the human invention." (Dante, p. v)

affect the reader, however, it should be affective as poetry, and it should strive for the noble and avoid the base. Coleridge states: "I write in metre, because I am about to use a language that is different from prose" (1978, 561). The responsibility beyond the translator's own invention, then, is to a language that is different from prose. This poetic language is separate from English, Italian, or French, and is characterized by strong emotion: "the very *act* of poetic composition *itself* is, and is *allowed* to imply and to produce, an unusual state of excitement, which of course justifies and demands a correspondent difference of language, as truly, though not perhaps in as marked a degree, as the excitement of love, fear, rage, or jealousy" (563). This is why Cary always translates what he deems to be poetic in a poetic form, and why Renaissance poems that deal with history, or do not produce "an unusual state of excitement", are translated as prose. Cary is translating from the French into English, but his main concern is to translate the French poetic affect into English poetry.

Coleridge's *Notes and Lectures Upon Shakespeare and Some of the Old Poets and Dramatists* provides further insight into the Romantic aesthetic powering Cary's translations. The relevance of these lectures can be seen in a passage wherein Coleridge describes the need for "naturalness" in contemporary poetry in his lecture on Dante, and using Cary's translation for this purpose. It was, indeed, these lectures that brought Cary's *Vision* to the notice of the general public, and began Cary's and Coleridge's friendship.

The Images in Dante are not only taken from obvious nature, and are intelligible to all, but are ever conjoined with the universal feeling received from nature, and therefore affect the general feelings of all men. And in this respect, Dante's excellence is very great, and may be contrasted with the idiosyncrasies of some meritorious modern poets, who attempt an eruditenness, the result of particular feelings. Consider the simplicity, I may say plainness, of the following simile, and

how differently we should in all probability deal with it in the present day (Coleridge 1849, 102-103).

Coleridge then proceeds to quote from Cary's translation of Dante. In this lecture, Coleridge explains why grotesque imagery should be avoided for aesthetic reasons: "And in this comparison [with Milton] I should notice Dante's occasional fault of becoming grotesque from being too graphic without imagination... in other words, many of his images excite bodily disgust, and not mortal fear" (108).

According to Sabin, "Coleridge sees the particular forms of genius—in man and in nature—all governed by the same universal laws. The artist need not bend his mind to an alien genius; he is free to obey the highest laws of his own human nature" (224). In his translations of the early French poets, Cary is both rejecting the aesthetic laws set out by Classical France, and bending the French Renaissance poets to a Romantic poetics.

In *Sources of the Self*, Charles Taylor outlines the influence the Romantic "expressivist turn" had on the 20<sup>th</sup> century:

The terms which were coined in the Romantic era still apply to the epiphanic art of the twentieth century. That time developed a rich organic language to talk about the organic unity of the work of art, about the process of artistic creation—Coleridge likened it, indeed saw it as related to the process of growth in nature—and, by extension, to talk about undistorted, fulfilled human life, as against the cramping and fragmenting categories of mechanism. The biological images of early expressivism, as we see very clearly with Herder, for instance, were directed against the dualism of mind and body, of reason and sensibility. For Schiller, beauty brings form and matter into a perfect unity (420).

The shift in aesthetics, and in the cultural hegemony within Europe that has been outlined in this thesis, hinged on a Romantic poetics that relied on a conception of organic unity. "Making everything Romantic" is not only appropriating the past and the foreign, but making everything expressive and "natural". This narrative of combating the earlier,

classical, “fragmented” approach to poetics, can be traced through the increasing number of translations of foreign works into English poetry throughout the rest of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. A corresponding shift in 20<sup>th</sup> century poetics along with a greater prevalence of translating poetry into prose would be the subject of another thesis.

## CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

Henry Francis Cary's ground-breaking articles of translations and criticism of the French Renaissance poets came about because of a unique set of circumstances: the Romantic periodicals provided the forum for an interchange of ideas, and a continuing debate on Romanticism vs. Classicism that accounts for these translations appearing as articles before any book was published on French Renaissance poetry. The French Renaissance is used here as an argument against the French Classicism that followed, and that dominated eighteenth century aesthetics throughout Europe, in order to forward a contrasting Romantic aesthetic. This aesthetic cannot be separated from the political and cultural struggles occurring at this time between France and Britain. The Romantic aesthetic of translating poetry is advanced by transforming Renaissance poetry into Romantic poetry, by dampening what are perceived as "base" elements, and by heightening what is deemed "natural".

Translation played a central role in the Romantic revolution, both in England and in Germany. Berman quotes Brentano, who goes as far as to say: "Le romantique est lui-même une traduction". Berman continues: "Nous parlons à dessein de traduction généralisée: tout ce qui concerne la "version" de quelque chose dans autre chose" (1984, 136). The Romantics were re-writing the past, and the foreign, and making it Romantic. They were translating the Classical concepts of poetry and criticism into a Romantic form, by devaluing what were perceived as courtly, artificial approaches to poetic form, and by celebrating an openness to foreign elements that could enrich an aesthetic experience. These foreign influences could include foreign languages, or a simpler

approach to poetry, whether it be from the past or from the middle and lower classes. The early French poets answer these criteria by being foreign, of the past, and in some cases (as with Villon, or Ronsard's borrowing from the artisans), from the lower orders of society. Most importantly, they are in direct contrast with French Classicism in their access to a more natural form of expression, one that will move the reader.

Berman describes how “[l]e programme romantique consiste à transformer ce qui n'est historiquement qu'une tendance en une intention consciente d'elle-même” (1984, 118). The intention in this case is to make the Renaissance Romantic by focusing on “natural” and “pathetic” tendencies in early French poets. I believe the Romantic narrative of the Renaissance is one the twentieth century Western world has inherited: a simpler (chivalric) time not corrupted by the strictures of the Classicism that followed. A time wherein the purity of language was not as important as the conveying of natural emotion. The French Renaissance thus becomes a time of natural expression that has been quashed by the formality of courtly French Classicism.

The Romantic emphasis on translating poetic form, however, is in contrast with twentieth century examples, such as Kinnell, of translating poetry in non-metrical, non-rhyming prose. From the perspective of Cary, translating the poetic structure of a poem was just as important as translating the sense, and in some cases, translating into superior poetry was the most desirable outcome. This opens up the question as to what is being defined as “sense” when a translator speaks of translating the sense of the original. For Cary and the Romantics, “sense” was clearly not limited to a word for word definition, but equally involved poetic structure, including rhyme and meter.

In *Translation and the Formation of Cultural Identities*, Venuti writes that

[t]ranslation is thus an inevitable domestication, wherein the foreign text is inscribed with linguistic and cultural values that are intelligible to specific domestic constituencies. This process of inscription operates at every stage in the production, circulation, and reception of the translation. It is initiated by the very choice of a foreign text to translate, always an exclusion of other foreign texts and literatures which answer to particular domestic interests (Schaffner 9).

At the beginning of this thesis, I asked the question: why were the French Renaissance poets first revived and translated by an Englishman in a Romantic literary journal? The foreign text chosen, in this instance, was written by the enemy of Britain through ongoing war, and through cultural hegemony. *The Early French Poets* articles are published in the formative stages of a narrative that casts French Classicism as “unpoetic”, and early French, along with English, as more “natural” and supple. This naturalism is central to a hegemonic shift from French as the language of diplomacy to English as the language of expressivism, and to a new emphasis on expressivism itself, what Taylor calls the “expressivist turn” (1989).

However, within this larger current run the particularities of this translation project: the periodical, apart from being an immediate forum for the exchange of ideas, was a medium that allowed for frequent publication and remuneration, precarious as it could be. Cary’s son notes that his “father had paid unremitting attention to the education of his children. The time had now arrived, when two of them should be sent to college; but his means were altogether inadequate to so heavy an expense. He therefore resolved to eke out his slender income by means of his pen, and became a regular contributor to the “London Magazine”, of which his publishers, Messrs. Taylor and Hessey, were then the proprietors” (Cary 1847, 72). The particularities of John Scott’s death, the hiring of “The Translator of Dante”, and the discourse being carried out within the pages of the

*London* over French Classicism and English Romanticism led to this unique and historical work, or more accurately “works”, being written. The history of translation, and of periodicals, as has been shown, is one of effacement before the author and the work. Tracing the central role of both translation and periodicals to Romanticism can illustrate the way in which Romanticism itself transformed the occidental approach towards the past and the foreign.

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