

Twelfth-Century Toledo and Strategies of the Literalist Trojan horse

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Abstract: The scientific translating associated with twelfth-century Toledo remains a poorly understood phenomenon. Attention to its political dimension suggests that it should not be attached to the state-subsidized work carried out under Alfonso X after 1250 but is better explained in terms of Cluniac sponsorship of the first Latin translation of the Qur'an in 1142. This approach reveals grounds for potential conflict between the foreign scientific translators and the Toledo cathedral. Such conflict was nevertheless smoothed over by certain translation principles serving both scientific and religious interests. The foremost of these principles were literalism, secondary elaboration, the use of teamwork, the inferiorization of non-Latinist intermediaries, justification of conquest and the accordance of authority to non-Christian texts. Thanks to this shared regime, the Church helped scientific translations to enter Latin. But the translations brought with them a questioning spirit that would contest and eventually undermine Church authority.

Mention of the 'School of Toledo' is almost obligatory in any history of translation. The general reference is to work from Arabic into Latin in the twelfth century, mainly in the fields of astronomy, astrology, mathematics, medicine and assorted kinds of necromancy. More than a few of these scientific and proto-scientific texts were of Greek origin and had been translated into Arabic in the ninth century, mostly via the mediation of Syriac. In Spain we thus find several originally Greek texts being translated from Arabic into Latin, in the absence of any Greek manuscripts. That much can be agreed. But there is little agreement about the extent to which the translating should be associated with Toledo or described in terms of a school.

The translating can be grouped into three overlapping stages. The first, from about 1115 (Adelardus de Bada, Petrus Alphonsis in London) to perhaps 1149 (Robertus Ketenensis in London), comprises the international projection of work done mostly in the north of Spain, without any obvious institutional support or connection with Toledo. The second, which begins in 1142 and could be extended through to 1240, covers centralized church sponsorship of translations, mostly at Toledo. The third, from 1157 to 1187, corresponds to the years the Italian translator Girardus Cremonensis (Gerard of Cremona) spent at Toledo, although it could arguably be extended through to 1220, when Michael Scotus left Toledo for Italy. With or without this extension, the third stage runs partly parallel to the second, beginning after it and ending before it. The work of the great foreign translators at Toledo was somehow carried out within a period of official church sponsorship.

This paper will focus on the second and third of these stages, the ones most commonly confused as a 'school'. The aim is to uncover certain ideas as to the modes of translation, the reasons for translation, and the strategies involved. It is not to decide whether there was a 'School of Toledo' in any grand sense of the term, which is a matter for historians of glory. Our more modest hypothesis is that any translating that could be associated with a school must have

been in some way related to the church. The principles of the activity might thus be sought in this relation. Further, if there was tension in the relation, the principles might be formulated in terms of a negotiation. This approach seems not to have been explored elsewhere.

The evidence

The 'School of Toledo' is mostly the invention of two nineteenth-century historians.

In 1819 Amable Jourdain put together two translators' prefaces apparently addressed to archbishop Raimundus of Toledo, both apparently by the prolific translator Johannes Hispanensis (John of Spain). One of the prefaces mentioned close collaboration with 'Dominicus archidiaconus'. The historian's task was suddenly simplified: 'We confess, with a joy that all men of letters will appreciate, that the discovery of this college [collège] of translators has made up for the innumerable thorns that have covered our path'. Toledo was the prize that justified the scholar's voyage. Jourdain had no doubt that archbishop Raimundus 'was the creator of a college of translators' (1819: 108, 119).

In 1874 Valentin Rose made much of an Englishman's report of Girardus Cremonensis's work at Toledo. Rose concluded that Toledo was 'a formal school [Schule] for the transfer [Übertragung] of books and science from Arabic to Latin'. Rather than a school for training translators, this was supposed to be something like a proto-university: 'Girardus Cremonensis gave lectures to young men from all over the world. [...] Scholars went there not just to make books, but to use books to teach others' (1874: 327, 328-329).

Jourdain's 'collège' refers to the second of our stages; Rose's 'Schule' concerns the third. We thus have two separate discoveries of two very different kinds of schools. Hence considerable confusion.

The discoveries are now supported by several documents:

- Johannes Hispanensis's preface to his translation of Costa ben Luca's *De differentia spiritus et animæ* is indeed addressed to archbishop Raimundus of Toledo, as cited by Jourdain. But the preface proves nothing by itself, since no collaborative work is mentioned and we know the same translator also worked outside of Toledo and for clients who had little to do with the Toledo chapter (Jourdain 1819: 117; Haskins 1924: 13).

- The preface to a translation of Avicenna's *De anima* (ed. van Riet 1972: 103*-104*) describes the procedure whereby one translator produced an oral Romance version and 'Dominicus archidiaconus' wrote it down in Latin. Jourdain believed the preface was addressed to archbishop Raimundus and that the translator was Johannes Hispanensis. But d'Alverny (1964) has shown that Jourdain's conclusions depended on a misplaced comma. The more likely addressee was archbishop Johannes, who succeeded Raimundus at Toledo in 1152, and the actual translator was 'Avendauth Israelita'. The document thus does nothing to support Raimundus's claim to fame and should rightly undermine Jourdain's 'collège'. But it does indicate use of a particular translation procedure, as well as continued church financing of translations ('...ut vestro munere et nostro labore...', says the translator).

- The *Philosophia* by the Englishman Daniel de Merlai (of Morley) (ed. Sudhoff 1917) describes Girardus Cremonensis and 'Galippus' talking on astronomy at Toledo. 'Galippus', a Mozarab (an Arabic-speaking Christian from Muslim territories), is also said to 'interpret' Ptolemy's *Almagest* in Romance while Girardus writes it down in Latin. Daniel mentions no actual translations, no formal school and no official church involvement. But the activities he

describes could be associated with both a group learning process and the translation procedure outlined in the *De anima* preface.

- Girardus Cremonensis's translation of the *Almagest* is dated 1175, thus allowing Daniel's account of Toledo to be located with some precision. The translation mentions no collaboration, but Kunitzsch's analysis of the text indicates Mozarab mediation between the Arabic and the Latin (1974: 108-109). Analyses of other translations by Girardus find evidence of similar oral mediation (Opelt 1959: 139, d'Alverny 1968: 134, Jacquart 1989: 117).

- The *Vita* of Girardus Cremonensis (ed. Sudhoff 1914; trans. McVaugh 1974) was written after Girardus's death in 1187 and gives a list of his translations carried out in Toledo. The impressive number of works could justify Girardus's status as 'perhaps the greatest translator of all time' (van Hoof 1986: 10). But the key evidence is that the list was drawn up by the master's 'socii', mostly glossed as his 'students' or 'associates'. The document thus allows some kind of group activity to be associated with Girardus's translations. However, it mentions no collaboration in the translations, no formal school and no church involvement.

- The cartularies of Toledo (ed. Hernández 1985) indicate the presence of 'Dominicus Colarensis archidiaconus' from 1162 to 1178, as well as Girardus Cremonensis named as 'magister Girardus' among the canons in 1157 (doc. 119) and as 'Girardus dictus magister' in 1174 and 1176 (doc. 165 and 174).

It seems quite reasonable to equate the 'Dominicus Colarensis archidiaconus' of the cartularies with the 'Dominicus archidiaconus' of the *De anima* preface (d'Alverny 1989: 196). This allows Jourdain's prime piece of evidence to become contemporaneous with Girardus's time at Toledo, further indicating that Daniel de Merlai was indeed describing a translation procedure. Rose beats Jourdain.

A fairly coherent narrative can thus be construed by bringing together the positive elements in the above documents: Archbishop Raimundus's sponsoring of translations at Toledo was continued by his successor Johannes, who had his archdeacon Dominicus write Latin translations from oral Romance-language versions furnished by Jews or Mozarabs, a procedure that was gradually taken over after 1157 by Girardus and his collaborators, whose procedures and debates were witnessed by Daniel in or before 1175.

This narrative would keep many historians happy. It could even make up for many thorns across complicated pathways. But translation history should also account for the numerous gaps in the documents. It should try to explain why Daniel mentions no translators, no formal school and no official church involvement, why there is no mention of collaboration or church involvement in Girardus's *Almagest* or *Vita*, why Girardus signs his name as 'dictus magister', and why any archbishop of Toledo would be interested in translations from Arabic in the first place. Answers to these questions must begin from Daniel's *Philosophia*, which is the document with the most significant gaps.

Daniel's story

Having returned to England after travels in France and Spain, Daniel tells the bishop of Norwich what he has seen and learnt. When referring to Toledo he twice mentions Galippus the Mozarab. One reference has Galippus speaking alone 'in the language of Toledo' and his words being written down in Latin: 'ut auditoris animus fortius cohereat, quod a Galippo mixtarabe in lingua Tholetana didici latine subscribitur'. Another describes Gallipus interpreting the *Almagest* for Girardus: 'Girardus Tholetanus, qui gallipo mixtabarbe interpretante Almagesti latinavit' (ed.

Sudhoff 1917: 9, 39-40). The significant points are ‘saying in the language of Toledo’, ‘writing down in Latin’ and the *Almagest* as an object of these processes.

The role played by Galippus has been interpreted in various ways. Rose talks of the ‘lectures’ (‘Vorlesungen’) of both Girardus and Galippus (1874: 329, 332). Haskins agrees that ‘both Gerard and Galippus lectured on astronomy in the hearing of Daniel of Morley’ (1924: 15). Thorndike is more cautious: ‘Daniel tells of Gerard of Toledo interpreting the *Almagest* in Latin with the aid of Galippus [...]. He speaks of setting down in Latin what he learned concerning the universe in the speech of Toledo from Galippus, the Mozarab’ (1923: II 88, 89). For Dunlop, Daniel heard Galippus ‘lecture “in lingua Tholetana”, presumably Romance’ (1960: 57). D’Alverny refers to a Galippus ‘with whom Daniel used to chat’ (1982: 452). As anyone who has taught in a university will realize, there is a considerable formal difference between lecturing, interpreting, setting down in writing and chatting. Although these terms all refer to ways knowledge can be transferred, the power relations are quite different in each case. Then again, as might be suspected by anyone who has participated in a reasonably active translation class, there is not such a wide formal difference between translating, chatting about a translation, and gaining knowledge from a source text. Peculiarly translational transfer makes authoritative power relations more difficult to establish. So what kind of school is it to be?

Three aspects of Daniel’s account arouse suspicion.

First, no Galippus is mentioned in any of the texts produced in Spain. If he existed, he must have had a subordinate role in whatever was going on, presumably because of his cultural status as a Mozarab. He was not likely to be regarded as a ‘master’. Once away from the social structure of Toledo, Daniel was perhaps free to tell this tale out of school.

Second, Daniel makes no reference to any official church patronage. Since he is writing to his bishop, he might be expected to stress any church interest in scholarship at Toledo. The fact that he does not do so suggests there was some tension between Girardus’s translation process and the Toledo chapter.

Third, at the very beginning of his text, Daniel is by no means a neutral observer when he tells his bishop why he went to Toledo:

I spent some time in Paris, but there I saw nothing but beasts seated in scholarly chairs with grave authority. Lead styli in their hands, they reverently painted asterisks and obeli on two or three huge unmovable codices resting on lecterns in front of them, wherein Ulpian’s lessons were reproduced in letters of gold. These masters’ ignorance kept them as still as statues as they pretended to show wisdom by remaining silent. [...] And so, since it is at Toledo that Arabic teachings, almost all in the field of the sciences, are made known to the people, I hurried there to listen to the wisest philosophers in the world.
(ed. Sudhoff 1917: 6)

Paris was a thorn in the path that led to Toledo. Perhaps like Amable Jourdain, Daniel had a certain discursive interest in making Toledo look like the goal that justified the journey. It had to be a much better version of the school he had left behind, which was at that time no less than the intellectual center of Europe. Daniel’s Paris is founded on Roman tomes behind which authoritative silence hides ignorance. His Toledo is filled with oral interpretation and debate. Paris is seated; Toledo is standing up. The contrast could not be more extreme. But if this contrast is to work, Toledo must be more than just a few translators chatting between themselves. It must look like a school. And yet Daniel makes no explicit reference to any ‘school’. He has

Galippus merely ‘say’ and ‘interpret’, which could apply equally well to either a lecture or a translation process. Daniel perhaps had a discursive interest in not interpreting the implications of these verbs. Although his overall textual strategy indicates that Toledo is to be read in terms of a school, an anti-Paris, his actual words are frustratingly literal. He puts down exactly what he saw (‘it walks like a duck...’). If any interpretations are to ensue, they will be the responsibility of the reading bishop or future historians.

Literalism can be what happens when one has an interest in not interpreting.

Let us accept that what Daniel describes is both a learning process and a translation procedure. What do we gain or lose by such a hypothesis? If students write down a lecturer’s words in another language, are they any less involved in translation than would be an Italian writing down a Mozarab’s Romance in Latin? Are not both processes translational and pedagogical? But there is at least one important difference. In the model of the formal school, a lecturing Galippus would be the master and those writing down his words would be students. And yet the omission of Galippus at Toledo would indicate quite the opposite evaluation. In the translation situation, the oral intermediary would play a subordinate role to the master who writes the Latin. The hypothesis of a translation process that is perhaps also a school thus becomes a problem of the power relationship between oral and written discourse, between spoken and silent interpretation.

This analysis finds some justification in the wider twelfth-century context.

Moving back from the Toledo of 1175 to the Barcelona of around 1145 we find another Italian, Plato Tiburnensis (of Tivoli), translating with the help of the Jewish ‘interpreter’ Abraham Savasorda. As an interpreter, Savasorda was thought to be a mere intermediary, to the greater glory of the translator into Latin. But Steinschneider shows that the relationship was quite the reverse. Savasorda was a Jewish philosopher and mathematician, in at least one case interpreting his own texts so that Plato Tiburnensis could render them into Latin. According to Steinschneider, ‘through a strange misunderstanding the thirteenth century saw the Jews as pupils [Schüler] of the Christians’ (1867: 328). The situation was more like a translator working in collaboration with an author. And the greater glory should perhaps go to the Jewish philosopher who took the trouble to interpret.

Similar confusion surrounds part of the *De anima* preface referred to above:

Hunc igitur librum vobis praecipientibus[,] et me singula verba vulgariter proferente, et
Dominico Archidiacono singula in latinum convertente, ex arabico translatum

The passage is complicated by yet another mobile comma (van Riet 1972: 96*). More problematic, however, is the fact that the preface’s first person is not ‘Dominicus archidiaconus’, who is named in the third person as the Latinist. And yet the text is in Latin. It must be concluded that either the Jewish intermediary ‘Avendauth’ is able to write in Latin or he has instructed his Latin scribe to write these words down. Either way, as d’Alverny emphasizes, it is the Spanish Latinist and not the Jewish intermediary who is textually presented as the acolyte (1989: 195). Further, according to van Riet (1972: 98*, 99*n), the actual translation in this case bears no trace of oral mediation and its style differs from other translations attributed to the archdeacon. That is, the one preface that describes partitioned collaboration could have been a lie, since ‘Dominicus archidiaconus’ may well have been no more than a name guaranteeing ideological acceptability. And the translations that do bear traces of collaboration—notably Girardus’s—make no mention of it in their prefaces. Strange things were going on. The

archdeacon nevertheless gained pride of place in most accounts of Toledo, usually under the name of Gundisalvi, relegating 'Avendauth' to mysterious shadows.

Since the inferiorization of oral intermediaries is indicated in interpretations of all three of our stages—Savasorda, Avendauth, Galippus—, it might be projected as a general principle of whatever was going on. This would explain why there is no mention of intermediaries in Girardus's *Almagest* and *Vita*. But it does not explain why there might have been tension between the Latinist translators and the church.

How would foreign translators be received in a Spanish school?

Almost everyone writing in Latin in the twelfth century was either a monk or a clerk trained by the church. All the Latinist translators in Spain were probably related to the church in one way or another. However, since little specific information is available with reference to Toledo, we are forced to develop hypotheses about this relation from several general trends in twelfth-century education.

Clerks had often been trained in monastery schools, which they could abandon without taking sacred orders. This left them free to work for public administrations. The fact that clerks were thus able to commercialize their written Latin created considerable tension within the church. This tension increased further as clerks were progressively able to receive money from students, setting up external schools and laying the economic foundations for university corporations. The result was the unruly world of relatively independent intellectuals idealized by Le Goff (1957).

Numerous chapters and cathedrals nevertheless capitalized on this process by setting up their own schools. Since the local church schools did not teach students beyond the age of fifteen, one of the key elements in the resulting system was exile, *terra aliena*, as part of a good education (Delhay 1947). Students would move to the larger towns and from country to country. In order to alleviate the financial burdens involved, Pope Alexander III decreed at the Latran Council of 1179 that all cathedrals should have a master who taught without requiring students to pay. The move was good for traveling scholars but not so good for financially-minded cathedrals.

This change came at the same time as a technical reduction of the cathedrals' control over teaching practices. The established practice was that any clerk who wanted to teach externally first had to be granted and pay for a *licencia docendi* from the local chapter or cathedral. But in 1170 Alexander III saw this measure as an unnecessary restriction on learning. He instructed all French bishops to grant the *licencia* free to anyone who wanted it and was able to teach. The measure became general law following the Council of 1179. Whether a cathedral in a frontier region like Toledo would go along with this change is a matter of some doubt. Yet tension over the granting of a *licencia* would provide an interesting explanation for Girardus's apparent change of status from a cathedral canon to a 'dictus magister'. The 'dictus' could of course be attributed to Girardus's proverbial modesty. But one could also see him as a foreign clerk who—at least to pay for the time spent translating—wanted to set up an external school, perhaps largely for foreign students and scholars, but could not do so officially. His group translation activities would thus be described as a school in all but name, even by a visiting Englishman who had every interest in naming a school.

The situation at Toledo would also be complicated by the cathedral's virtual monopoly over administrative writing. In fact, the archbishops were to become heads of the royal chancery

from the end of the century (Proctor 1934). Such control over writing involved considerable power. It would surely have been challenged by an influx of students and foreign clerks working outside the chapter's structure. Protectionist measures might have been called for.¹

The potentially conflictual position of these foreigners must be understood within a fairly complex social mosaic. Translators working from Arabic in twelfth-century Spain fall into four cultural groups. The first is formed by the Arabic-speaking Mozarabs, Jews and conversos who gave oral versions of the texts. The second, which includes Petrus Toletanus, Marcus Toletanus and perhaps Johannes Hispanensis, comprises Mozarab clerks. The third, represented only by 'Dominicus archidiaconus' and Hugo Sanctallensis, comprises clerks of perhaps unadulterated Hispanic culture (although Gundisalvi is sometimes said to be a converso). The fourth group is then made up of a wide range of foreign intellectuals in *terra aliena*: three Englishmen, two Italians, a Carinthian, a Fleming, and the rest unknown. These foreigners would appear to have been the only ones with no fixed source of income. They were thus the only translators with any financial reason to create trouble by commercializing their skills. They would have to accept whatever commissions were going, selling their services to administrators (breaking the church's monopoly) and perhaps accepting fees from paying students. On both these counts, extramural activities by foreigners would challenge the cathedral's control over written Latin.

Consideration should also be given to the kinds of texts being translated. Astronomy, astrology, medicine and so on presented a mode of truth based on observation, measurement and experimentation. They were to constitute a major challenge to the church's 'magister dixit' (Lemay 1963: 646). Even if no one at Toledo appreciated the extent of this long-term conflict—the archbishops did finance translations—, there must at least have been a whiff of dissidence in the air.

These are all reasons why there might have been tension between the cathedral of Toledo and a group of translators operating in a way similar to a school. These reasons would also explain why the documental evidence makes no explicit mention of any school of translators. Of course, the existence or non-existence of an actual school is irrelevant here. Nor is it important whether or not there was any open conflict. What counts is that a pedagogical translation practice would have presented grounds for conflict. With or without the hypothetical school, the tension itself provides an interesting way of explaining the strategies the translators used.

Literalism as a misplaced theory

The basic translation procedure for scientific texts in the twelfth century was word-for-word literalism. The strategy has been described as 'slavish' (Kunitzsch 1974: 104), since it presents the translator as an inferiorized intermediary, subordinate to the source text. But one should not immediately suppose that all translators adopted this position out of unthinking servility. There were good reasons for translating word for word.

The first good reason was the need to invent entire target-language vocabularies. Plato Tiburnensis and Girardus Cremonensis complained about the inferiority of Latin as a language of science (d'Alverny 1982: 451). The translators who had been trained in France were rather less self-deprecatory, but they nevertheless faced the same general problem: All the translators frequently confronted passages they simply did not understand. The resulting errors (Opelt 1959, Lemay 1968, d'Alverny 1968, Jacquart 1989) indicate they were grappling with concepts and realia new to both them and their language. Whether or not one regarded Latin as inferior, literalism—often transliteration—remained a useful way of generating terms that could provide

future interpreters with at least a few clues. Remarkably enough, later users of the translations were able to solve some of the resulting problems. A much-cited example is the ‘*planta noctis*’ (night plant) that Sudhoff found translated by Girardus and Alpagus as a cause of skin infections (1909: 352). The origins of the plant are to be found in the Arabic *nabat*, a defective transcription of the term *banat*, meaning ‘daughter’. As was eventually stated in a sixteenth-century version—at a time when physicians were seeking information on the ‘new’ disease of syphilis—the real infections came from ‘daughters of the night’. Jacquart (1989) gives a similar example concerning testicles, if anyone is interested. The important point, however, is that literalism was a partly successful way of transmitting knowledge that the translators did not understand. The logic sounds perverse, but it sometimes worked.

There was also some theoretical background for literalism at Toledo. Boethius and Johannes Scotus had extended the use of literalism from sacred texts to the translation of secular philosophy, the first because his aim was not brilliant oratory but ‘*incorrupta veritas*’, the second because he wanted to be considered ‘the translator of this work, not its expositor’ (cit. Copeland 1991: 52). Literalism was thus a strategy that had been taken over from the church and should at least have looked respectable in the eyes of the church. After all, it socially restricted knowledge of science in the same way as it had restrained critical knowledge of sacred texts.

But there were also several reasons why this strategy should perhaps not have been applied at Toledo.

The principles of Medieval literalism had been formulated on the basis of reasonably cognate language pairs, notably Greek and Latin, where word-for-word renderings could at least fall back on the accrued results of previous translations. This principle could not be applied so blindly when working from Arabic, where sentence structure and morphological generation patterns were markedly different from those of Latin. The oral use of an intermediary Romance language would also complicate the principle, since it is difficult to translate ‘word for word’ when a Romance word stands between the Arabic and Latin. And literalism would make even less sense when the Arabic word is itself a translation from Syriac, which was in turn a translation from Greek. Further, there is evidence that many translations, including Girardus’s *Almagest*, were made from several Arabic manuscripts. This would introduce a further series of variants making ‘word for word’ principles difficult to apply.

In view of these factors, there should at least be some suspicion that the translators in Spain were using a principle that did not really suit their circumstances. If they still applied literalism, they must have had a certain interest in doing so, just as Daniel de Merlai had a certain interest in describing literally what he saw, passing the task of interpretation on to later readers.

This hypothesis is partly confirmed by cases where literalism was either not applied or applied in a self-interested way.

In Johannes Hispanensis’s first-stage Abu Ma’shar we find omission of the Virgin Mary described as a ‘coquette’ (*‘ganija’*), omission of the sun as the giver of life, and a general attenuation of sexual references and astral fatalism (Lemay 1968: 118-121). In Girardus’s third-stage Aristotle there are references to the perfection of the Trinity, to hell, and to God as creator, where the Greek text certainly did not make such references (Opelt 1959: 145). Diplomatic christianization meant that basic literalism could be modified in the interests of a higher authority.

But literalism could also be made to work against higher authorities, particularly to the extent that it led to recognizably translational language. Boethius did not write his own works the way he translated other people’s (Haskins 1924: 233). There were thus two kinds of language

available. Translational language proclaimed the authority of the source text and the translator's subservience to that authority. Non-translational language could not be sheltered in the same way. Any translator using it could be held partly responsible for the opinions expressed.

There is some evidence that translational language was a convenient way of presenting dissident or non-authorized opinions. Thorndike argues that many of the texts presented as translations may well have been pseudotranslations: 'The number is suspiciously large of works of which the lost originals were supposedly by Greek or Arabian authors but which are extant only in later Latin "translations"' (1923: II 26-27). The early twelfth-century English traveler and translator Adelardus de Bada claimed to have disguised many of his personal opinions in a way quite compatible with pseudotranslation: 'For I am aware what misfortunes pursue the professors of truth among the common crowd. Therefore it is the cause of the Arabs that I plead, not my own' (cit. Thorndike 1923: II 25). Such strategies would help explain the maintenance of literalism as a general measure of self-protection, if not of subtle subversion.

Because extreme literalism was generally deemed the only strategy appropriate to authoritative texts, the resulting opacity required recourse to secondary strategies. We thus find discourses that extend beyond the limits of recognizably translational language.

Girardus Cremonensis often added literal versions of transliterated terms, as well as variants found in the source manuscripts and notes designed to complete or explain the text (Clagett 1964: I 232-233, Kunitzsch 1974: 110-111, Jacquart 1989: 111-12). When in doubt, he was prepared to apply literalism twice (giving variants) or to provide marginal explanations. The effect was to elaborate on the translation without contradicting the authority of the most literal version, which was included in the translation proper. Literalism thus led to a divided discourse, marking out a thin line between the authoritative voice of the source text and the voice of variants and glosses. One voice was the source as authority; the other was the translator as guide.

Another example of secondary elaboration is found in Adelardus de Bada's three versions of Euclid's Elements. The first version indicates translation directly from an Arabic text; the second includes didactic commentaries and omits much of the proofs; the third puts the proofs back in (Clagett 1953). The fact that the one translator could work on the same text in three different ways once again shows the limits of literalism. If the literalist version was opaque, a second version could adopt an explanatory discourse to clarify the first, without negating its authority. We thus have evidence of a translator who was also prepared to explain.

Or were these translators also prepared to teach? If the literalist discourse marks out a thin line between translating and pedagogical elaboration, its maintenance could be crucial to any school that was not supposed to be a school. It allowed one to teach without being responsible for the actual knowledge transmitted. Such strategies are common enough among ideological infiltrators. But they are likely to be overlooked by translation theories that see literalism as the simple opposite of freedom.

These broad points give a general idea of why literalism might have been appropriate for the translation of science. But we have yet to explain why there were situations requiring literalism.

Strategies of group translation

One of the key conditions for any translation process is the physical movement of a text from one point to another. If we can work out why a text moved, we have a good chance of

determining why and for whom it was translated, and even why it was translated in a particular way.

Medieval manuscripts were exchanged for money or merchandise. An Andalusian of the late eleventh century warned against this kind of commerce: 'Except for books that concern the law (sharia), scientific works should not be sold to Jews or Christians, who then translate them and attribute them to their own and to their bishops' (cit. d'Alverny 1982: 440n). The prohibition indicates the existence of the activity. Whoever was going to translate needed either enough money to purchase the texts or enough power to conquer the places where they were kept. In intellectual matters, wealth and power in twelfth-century Spain belonged not to individual translators but to bishops and archbishops, who could thus occasionally enjoy the privilege of having their names put on translations.

One such bishop was Michael of Tarazona, in the first of our stages. He employed the Spanish clerk Hugo Sanctallensis to translate at least ten Arabic texts (Lemay 1963: 644), receiving a rather interesting dedication in return: '...what the modern astrologers of the Gauls most bemoan their lack of, your benignity may now bestow on posterity' (cit. Thorndike 1923: II 87)

The transfer was thus conditioned by a fairly precise demand, 'the modern astrologers of the Gauls'. The translation was headed for France and was paid for by a bishop. This is not altogether surprising. Bishop Michael was French. But why should money from a French churchman be in search of Arabic science?

Most of the translators working on scientific texts during our first stage formed a small network among themselves. There is little evidence of any attachment to local church structures. Robertus Ketenensis and Hermannus Dalmata were friends and in contact with Plato Tiburnensis, Rudolfus Brugensis and Johannes Hispanensis. But they were geographically dispersed and had few visible means of support. This first-stage network would be fundamentally altered by a visit from the head of a very powerful multinational, the power-broking organization behind not only much of the Spanish Crusades but also the presence of quite a few French bishops in twelfth-century Spain.

Petrus Venerabilis (Peter the Venerable), abbot of Cluny, was in Spain in 1142. His motives were primarily economic. Since Cluny had helped in the conquests, it demanded a share of the profits. But Alfonso VII of Castile had not been paying the tributes promised by his grandfather. Hence the visit, which was reasonably successfully in economic terms (Kritzeck 1964: 12). Yet Petrus wanted more than gold from ex-Muslim lands. He also sought an intellectual battle against Islam.

While in the north of Spain the abbot of Cluny asked the translators Hermannus Dalmata and Robertus Ketenensis to carry out the first Latin translation of the Qur'an, along with several explanatory documents. He won over their services through 'many prayers and much expense'. He further extended the team to include the Mozarab clerk Petrus Toletanus and his own notary Petrus, to make sure the text came out as acceptable Latin (letter of 1143, ed. Constable 1967: I 274-299, II 278-286). A native informant anonymously named 'Mahumeth' had also been employed, but the abbot seems to have mentioned this only some years later (d'Alverny 1948: 71, Kritzeck 1964: 229), further confirming what we have said about the inferiorization of intermediaries.

Although generally considered peripheral with respect to the translation of scientific texts, Petrus Venerabilis's visit is of considerable importance for the relation between translators and the church. The project he set up is the first evidence we have of a translation team working

in Spain on the one general task, in the one general region, and for visible money. His visit thus marks the beginning of our second stage, initiating the kind of centralized patronage that would be continued at Toledo.

When the abbot of Cluny was in Salamanca in 1142 he met archbishop Raimundus of Toledo, who was also French, as had been his predecessor at Toledo. This meeting quite possibly inspired the archbishop to sponsor a translation himself—the Costa ben Luca version mentioned above—, since his personal interests had until then been money and power (González Palencia 1937). Since Raimundus’s patronage of translations would be continued by his successors at Toledo, the abbot of Cluny had quite probably introduced an institutional structure that would remain of importance for as long as a century.

Yet this does not yet explain what strategic interests these churchmen could have had in scientific translations. The key evidence here lies in the conflicting strategies behind the *Qur’an* translation.

Petrus Venerabilis had fairly clear reasons for ordering a Latin *Qur’an*. And his foreign translators had fairly clear reasons for not really wanting to supply the goods.

To risk gross simplification, Petrus supported the Crusades to the extent that they might convert rather than kill Muslims. His purpose might have been better served by translating the Bible into Arabic than the *Qur’an* into Latin. But Petrus saw Islam as a kind of Christian heresy that had to be understood, categorized and fought. Although his ultimate goal was conversion, his immediate goal was a good disputation.

It was then in the spirit of a disputation that Petrus used information on Islam to accompany the *Qur’an* translation with a long secondary discourse, his *Liber contra sectam*, lest the pedagogical purpose of the undertaking be misconstrued. The prologue is addressed to Christian clerks and explains why a discourse against Islam should be written in Latin. Petrus hopes it will eventually be translated into Arabic, but even if it ‘finds no interpreters or produces no translations, at least the Christian armory/library will also have the arms against those enemies’ [‘...habebit saltem Christianum armarium etiam aduersus hos hostes arma’] (ed. Kritzeck 1964: 230, cf. 213). The immediate purpose of the *Qur’an* translation was thus to provide the information needed to forge a weapon.

The *Liber contra sectam* itself is addressed to ‘the Arabs’ and sets out to convince them to abandon the Qur’an. Much of the argument is against the Islamic belief that the Qur’an should not be an object of debate. Petrus combats this by referring to the Arabs’ own ‘studious lovers of secular science’ who would at least create hypotheses about the Qur’an’s axiomatic authority. This amounts to a plea for scientific rationality in questions of religion, exploiting a division in the source culture without being unduly worried about the same division in the target culture. Further, Petrus says he knows about the Arabs’ secular writings because his translators ‘have gone deeply into your libraries for much that refers to your humanistic and scientific studies’ (trans. Kritzeck 1964: 164, 177). Knowledge of Arabic science was thus strategically useful for winning debates against Islam.

The translators’ strategic interests were quite different. Since Robertus and Hermannus had to be paid handsomely, they must have been somewhat reluctant to translate for the abbot. Robertus, who did the bulk of the work, actually described the job as a ‘digression’ from his true interests in mathematics and astronomy (Kritzeck 1964: 62). By all accounts he did a rather shoddy non-literalist job of the *Qur’an*, which he regarded as non-authoritative ‘vile matter’ (d’Alverny 1948: 85-86; Kritzeck 1964: 110). But the abbot’s money was an offer he couldn’t

refuse. Nor, presumably, could the later translators who were to work for the archbishops of Toledo.

Interestingly, Robertus's efforts were also rewarded by his appointment as archdeacon at Pamplona in 1143. But he could not have stayed there long. He signed a translation in Segovia in 1145 and drew up astronomical tables for London in 1149. Integration into the church structure was obviously not his ultimate goal. Rather than forge Christian swords, he returned to life as a travelling translator of science.

The abbot's strategy was to use translation as a weapon. The translators of science were also interested in intellectual conquest, but of a different kind. This can be appreciated from our friend Daniel de Merlai. Here he is giving further justification for his visit to Toledo, trying to cover over quite a few gaps:

Let no one be shocked if, with reference to the creation of the world, I should invoke the testimony of pagan philosophers rather than the church fathers. Although not of the faithful, some of the gentiles' words are full of faith and should be incorporated into our doctrines. We who have also been mysteriously liberated from Egypt have been ordered by the Lord to take the Egyptians' gold and silver to enrich the Hebrews. Let us then obey the Lord's command and, with his help, rob the pagan philosophers of their wisdom and eloquence. Let us take from the unfaithful so as to enrich our faith with the spoils. (ed. Sudhoff 1917: 7)

Since the Bible could justify appropriation, it could also justify translations of secular science. One wonders how far Daniel's bishop would have gone along with the argument. Rather than resolve a problem, Daniel indicates the problem that had to be resolved. The abbot of Cluny might have used translated science against Islam, but the translators wanted to use it as a source of wealth in itself. What the abbot saw as the creation of a weapon, the translators saw as direct appropriation.

These two strategies would seem to involve quite different principles, especially since the translation of science was eventually to undermine the authority of the church. And yet what we find in Spain are various modes of compatibility between conflicting interests.

For the sake of prestige, bishop Michael was no doubt pleased to see his name on a translation of service to astronomers. For the sake of storing weapons, archbishop Raimundus and his followers no doubt thought they were simply applying the abbot's strategy. And for the sake of money, the translators were no doubt prepared to accommodate these interests, diplomatically Christianizing their translations and finding whatever biblical analogies were convenient. For all these reasons, science could pass from Arabic to Latin, presenting gifts of conquest to the authorities it would later contest.

There was also a properly historical dimension to this process. Foreign translators were in Spain before the church took an official interest in translations. Stage one came before stage two. The church sought to use the translators to its own ends, partly institutionalizing them at Toledo where they could at least be seen and superficially controlled. Stage two thus provided the intercultural space for stage three. But in bringing together voices that knew and were interested in Arabic science, the church set up a mode of group translation that was also a pedagogical activity based on oral discussion and debate. Tension resulted. And the lessons written down in this extended translational practice would eventually extend beyond ecclesiastic control.

Six principles for translators without a theory

This three-stage process conforms to the now classical model of a translation culture starting on the periphery of an expanding target-culture system and working its way towards the centre. The model applies well in this case because Arabic learning, which was in decline in the twelfth century, played virtually no active role in the reception process. The Jewish and Mozarab intermediaries would also seem to have left the target system untroubled once they collected their fees. But the classical model cannot explain the causality of this process. It cannot describe the complex determinism of different social groups using strategic action to achieve different but superficially compatible ends. These latter aspects can be approached through a model of negotiation.

Given the passive role of the source culture and the Arabic-speaking intermediaries, the general translation situation can be reduced to a bilateral negotiation between Latinists. On one side we have the foreign clerks who accepted the authority of their source texts and had some idea about what they were translating. On the other stand the interests of the church, which was concerned with extending its own authority, represented by an abbot, archbishops, bishops, and perhaps one archdeacon. The most significant negotiation took place between these two parties.

Any negotiation process requires principles that are to some degree shared by both parties. Sets of such principles may form 'regimes' (see Pym 1992: 145-149). When formulating a regime it is convenient to start from the principles that are most shared and then proceed to those that involve most tension. Ideally, the priority of the first principles will override the tensions of the latter, establishing a more or less coherent hierarchy.

We have already analyzed most of the principles involved:

1. The translation of authoritative texts should be literal. The church believed in literalism because of the sacred status of its own authoritative texts. The translators also found literalism convenient because it meant they could not be held directly responsible for what was said in the texts.
2. Secondary elaboration may be used. The abbot of Cluny added a didactic secondary discourse to the translation of the Qur'an. The translators on the side of science were also using secondary strategies, mostly to compensate for the effects of literalism. In both cases the result was a divided discourse legitimizing marked additions to source texts.
3. Translators should work in teams. The church was interested in teams because it could put the styli in the hands of its own Latinists. The scientific translators also benefited from teams, first as a distribution of linguistic competence and second as a place for intellectual debate.
4. Oral intermediaries may be inferiorized. The church had little interest in mentioning the role of Jewish and Mozarab intermediaries. But the Latinist translators were not particularly interested in showing subservience to oral intermediaries either. The Jews and Mozarabs could mostly collect their money and disappear from written history.
5. Translation was legitimate conquest. For the abbot of Cluny, translations from Arabic could forge weapons. For the translators, they were a conquest in the sense of direct appropriation. There was thus room for agreement, but also room for potential disagreement about what some

translators saw as the inferior status of the target language and culture. The fact that this contradiction did not surface as a conflict—as it later would—owes much to the way common accord on the principle of literalism blocked any developed debate about the use of eloquent Latin in translations.

6. Non-Christian texts could be authoritative. The church could appreciate Arabic science as at least a counter-authority to Islam. The translators, on the other hand, generally recognized the texts as both authoritative and directly useful. They made them superficially compatible with the authority of the church, and the church went along with a process that it could hardly have stopped anyway.

As formulated, these principles can be no more than hypotheses tentatively applicable to the overall process formed by all three of our stages. But they do constitute a fairly coherent whole that would have enabled conflicting interests to be reconciled. The Trojan horse could be proposed and accepted.

Some would say the principles look like a translation theory. And yet twelfth-century Spain offers no formal theory of translation. Our regime might help explain this absence.

Some theoretical words could have been cited at Toledo: Boethius against oratory, Erigena against auctorial responsibility, and perhaps John of Salisbury in favor of additions. But a developed theory like Etienne Dolet's could not have been formulated there. When Dolet argued that the translator should completely understand the matter to be translated, that the source language should be mastered, and that liberty was preferable to word-for-word servitude (1540: 14-16), he would appear to be stating the obvious until we compare his position with the regime of twelfth-century collaboration. His theory involved an individualism too easily presupposed today, especially by those who seek the secrets of translation in neurophysiology rather than the interculturality of past teams. More fatally, Dolet's liberty implicitly made the individual translator responsible for what was translated. Although no doubt a theorist in tune with the practice of his time (Norton 1984: 31), he was not a good negotiator. The church held him personally responsible for his translations, condemning him to the stake just four years after he wrote down his theory.

Trojan horses can subvert from within. But a gift too loudly theorized can also be burnt.

Note

1. The cartularies edited by Hernández (1985) raise more questions than they answer. Two of the documents signed by Girardus announce measures to restrict the number of cathedral canons. In 1157 the archbishop attempted to limit the number to thirty (doc. 119). The move was unsuccessful, since the document Girardus signed in 1174 specifies that the canons are now to be 'reduced to forty' (doc. 165). Where were all the new canons coming from? Could this tension explain why in 1182/83—well before Girardus's death in 1187—a group of Toledan clerks revolted against the archbishop (doc. 632)? Could it be related to the fact that Girardus is first displaced as 'dictus magister' in the same document signed by one 'Johannes Toletane ecclesie magister scolarum' (doc. 165)? If the top school job had gone to a local boy, what position was left for a wandering Italian translator? The hypotheses could even cover a couple of G's: As noted, we have 'G dictus magister' in 1174, 'Girardus dictus magister' in 1176, but then an intriguing 'magister Giraldus' signing as Alfonso VIII's notary in 1178, 1180, 1181 and 1184

(docs. 184, 189, 191, 207, 208, 209, 210), disappearing prior to the translator's death in 1187. I leave conclusions to the experts.

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