Author -- *Augmenter*

Latin *auctor* (author) < *augere* (augment)

In the middle of the twelfth century, the legend of King Arthur, a fabulous subject originating in Great Britain, was transcribed for the first time into French by a Norman troubadour, Robert Wace in his *Roman de Brut*. Then, at the court of Marie de Champagne – daughter of Eleanor of Aquitaine and King Louis VII – Chrétien de Troyes (1135-1183) formalized a new genre -- the *courtly romance*. Chrétien also launched in writing the first Arthurian cycle.

This translation of *Lanz & Gwenhevre* is the only known "Gallic Romance" of the Middle Ages. It was written in Anglo-Norman by Jehan d'Elleby of Colchester based on fabliaux from ancient *Waule*. This "Gallic Material" differs from the courtly style of Chrétien de Troyes. Translated into modern French, this translation retains some elements of medieval language (spelling, syntax, vocabulary), without wanting to annoy or confuse the reader of the twenty-first century, rather to preserve the flair and local color of Jehan's narrative.

The literary term, *bele conjointure*, was invented by Chrétien de Troyes specifically in verse 14 of his romance *Erec et Enide*. *Bele conjointure* relates to the structural unity of a long narrative (a romance), so meaning and form work in harmony. Apart from this *bele conjointure*, there is also a medieval penchant for dialogism and

superabundant intertextuality, two trends that can easily confuse the reader of the twenty-first century -- transforming *bele conjointure* into *bele disjointure*.

For example, it was customary to add to what predecessors had produced since ancient times, what might appear today as too many anachronistic and overflowing allusions: 1) ancient and contemporary characters tangled together in time and space; 2) scientific data catalogued in a multilingual mosaic (Latin, Greek, Arabic, Hebrew) in the *Speculum Majus* (*The Great Mirror*) of Vincent de Beauvais (1190-1264); 3) theological debates from multiple viewpoints, such as the dialogues of Pierre Abélard (1079-1142) with his *Sic et Non* (*Yes and No*). Indeed, these entanglements and complications penetrate all forms of medieval expression, including discordant chants in counterpoint and kaleidoscopic images on parchment and stained glass.

This is the stylistic context of Jehan's romance. On the other hand, his originality stems from the "*Material of Waule,*" not found elsewhere. It is assumed that Jehan wanted to preserve Gallic legends while transmitting news of twelfth-century France, which explains his dual rôle as *fabulist* and *chronicler*. Besides this translated romance, there is no other trace of Jehan d'Elleby, other than what he reveals of himself as the narrator. Finally, we can date this unique "Gallic Romance" or, if you prefer, this unique "Bourgeois Romance" according to historical events throughout his narrative, for example, the construction in 1145 of many cathedrals, cited in the first chapter as newsworthy developments.

Anglo-Norman

From 1066 to 1217, England was the property of the Dukes of Normandy, and these dukes were themselves vassals of the kings of France. During that period, England remained essentially a province of France until William Marshall won the Battle of Lincoln in 1217. But even long after that battle, between the Norman Conquest until 1400, the French language continued to be widely used in England.

This insular French, derived from the Norman *langue d'oïl*,* evolved on English soil and became known as Anglo-Norman. The conquest of England in 1066 by the Duke of Normandy spread the use of French in England where Old English still dominated, and some Celtic languages. Nonetheless, the new ruling class of England from France continued to speak French for centuries. However, William and his successors did not impose Anglo-Norman as the language of government, preferring, as in France since Charlemagne, to use Latin for that purpose. But many of the English were polyglots four centuries after the Norman Conquest -- including English religious; merchants; clerics who could speak English, French, and Latin. Gradually, the lexicon of the English language reflected Anglo-Norman, which had become the vehicular language of trade in Britain and on the European continent, even in Ireland after the

*[**langue d'oïl =** one of the two major branches of the French language, including dialects of northern and central France; the term is based on the pronunciation in these regions during the Middle Ages of "yes" = "oïl" [oj]; the other major branch is called the langue d'oc, still based on the pronunciation of "yes" = "oc" [ck] in southern France, in the Occitan language of troubadour literature]

Anglo-Norman occupation in the twelfth century. Not only was French used in Great Britain as the vehicular language, but largely in Europe and even in the Holy Land, with French becoming quite literally the "lingua *franca*" of the Middle Ages, used as the second foreign language of diplomats, businessmen, and artisans.

In effect, a cultural synthesis took place in the north of France during the Middle Ages whereby Roman and Germanic traditions merged and created both spiritual and institutional models for Western Europe, substituting little by little older Greco-Roman models. These notions of a new identity were fixed with the French language, replacing Latin in international communications. In short, with this new culture, thousands of French words were absorbed into various languages of Western and Eastern Europe.

It was therefore important to know three languages on English soil: English of the people; Latin of ecclesiastical and governmental institutions; Anglo-Norman -- the language of the English court, the Parliament in London, and various commercial and cultural institutions. For example, from 1066 to 1350, for the English aristocracy, a substantial Anglo-Norman literature materialized, produced on both sides of the Channel. Among the insular French manuscripts can be cited a variety of genres: chansons de gestes; Arthurian romances; troubadour poetry; plays; sermons; hagio-graphies; chronicles. In fact, some French writers sometimes worked on English soil: Chrétien de Troyes (1135-1183); Marie de France (dates unknown); Jean Froissart (1337-1405).

Moreover, into the fifteenth century, French literature was also written by the English, such as the works of Robert Grosseteste (1175-1253), Sir John Mandeville (dates unknown), and the works of John Gower (1330-1408), the author of the *Mirour de l'omme* ; *Cinkante Ballades*, among other works, and the personal friend of Geoffrey Chaucer; these English polyglots were writing and editing manuscripts at ease in English or Anglo-Norman or Latin.

Pierre Abélard -- Intentionalism

In this romance written by Jehan d'Elleby, the main characters, Lanz and Gwenhevre, are both influenced by the French humanist Abélard. Also a language specialist, Pierre Abélard practiced methodical doubt before Descartes: "By doubting we start research and by seeking we find the truth (*Sic et Non*)." With his *Sic et Non* (1123), full of quotes taken from the Church Fathers, Abélard sought to settle disputes on matters that presented contradictions. In this work, Abélard invented a methodology to study the meaning of words, the same word having sometimes multiple meanings.

In the twelfth century – an era both humanistic and violent – a time when civilizations clashed in world trade and the Crusades, Abélard was also a forerunner of intercultural dialogue. He wrote the *Dialogue entre un Philosophe, un Juif et un Chrétien* [*Dialogue Between a Philosopher, a Jew and a Christian* (1142)], which remained unfinished, and another book on morality: *Connais-toi toi-même* (*Éthique*) [*Know Thyself* (*Ethics*)]. Sensitive to the plight of Jews in medieval Christendom, the

author highlighted the virtual universality of the Abrahamic Covenant and similarities between the Decalogue and natural law, so that Job might be recognized fairly as an exemplary introduction to the Gospel. The second text, *Know thyself*, expounded with vigor -- not without paradoxical formulas -- his ethics of pure intention according to which the only sin would be mankind's free decision to hate God.

Abélard's intentionalism would replace biblical justice -- "an eye for an eye." For instance, in British jurisprudence "degrees" of intention are weighed and considered behind an act of murder, and those grades of intention warrant different types of punishment, for example: *first degree, second degree and third degree murder*.

Individualism and a New Morality

From the twelfth to fourteenth centuries, until Dante, the influence of French-speaking troubadours and writers represented the germinal literature of a new European identity, first transmitted to England, thanks to Eleanor of Aquitaine, then to Germany and the Netherlands, then to Scandinavia, Spain, and Italy.

With this new individualistic culture, moral conflicts in the romance by Jehan d'Elleby resemble those in the works of Chrétien de Troyes and Marie de France, all representative of Abélard's intentionalism -- each case, each situation deserves a separate and individual assessment. For example, in the romances of Chrétien, adventures are desired and pursued in order to show the potential of the hero or heroine.

Morally nothing is ever “black and white” and never simplistic in character development by Jehan, Chrétien and Marie. There is less interior monologue with Marie’s characters than those created by Jehan and Chrétien, but all their protagonists seek, sometimes in vain, a moral balance while fighting extremes: measured behavior/ excess; charity/unkindness; fidelity/infidelity; jealousy/tolerance; generosity/greed.

Marie de France – Literary Activity 1160-1190

Marie de France, the earliest poetess of French literature, possibly the half-sister of King Henry II of England, greatly influenced English writers with her Breton lais filled with Celtic atmosphere, including Arthurian legends. Author of an *Ysopet* (collection of fables) and her twelve lais, Marie lived near the brilliant court of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine in England. She knew Latin literature, including Ovid, had knowledge of English, the novels of antiquity, as well as the tales of Breton minstrels.

Marie’s twelve lais group themselves into two distinct types: 1) the “magical fairytales” (*Lanval*; *Yonec*; *Guigemar*); 2) the “realistic tales” (*Eliduc*; *The Laostic*), but all her lais concern love stories with complex moral or social conflicts. It is interesting to note three similar trends shared by Jehan and Marie; firstly, their manuscripts written in Anglo-Norman; secondly, their psychological insights into a natural, spontaneous love, for which neither tries to claim any kind of “ethic” to support courtly love. For both poets, chivalrous idealism would be illusory and false. Thirdly, both these poets who wrote in England include magical elements, for example, in the lais of Marie there is

often an enchanted atmosphere where fairies fall in love with men (*Lanval*), where men turn into werewolves (*The Bisclavret*).

Chrétien de Troyes – Literary Activity 1164-1183

It was also from the Celtic tradition that this courtly poet and humanist borrowed to write his romances in verse, but freely interpreted in an original way, adapted to his own aesthetic and moral concerns. Here are the five romances of Chrétien's Arthurian cycle: 1) *Erec and Enide* (1170?); 2) *Cligès* (1176?); 3) *Lancelot, the Knight of the Cart* (between 1177 and 1181); 4) *Yvain, The Knight of the Lion* (between 1177 and 1181); 5) *Perceval, the Story of the Grail* (after 1181).

Finally, these three poets of the twelfth century focus on the psychology of love and the moral struggles endured as lovers try to reintegrate into society, to restore some kind of balance between their most private lives (either marital or adulterous love) and their social duties as individuals to their wider community.