

# Names in *Parcevals saga* and *Valvers þáttr*

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AN OLD NORSE VERSION of Chrétien de Troyes' unfinished Perceval romance, *Li contes del Graal*,<sup>1</sup> was composed, in all likelihood, during the reign of King Hákon Hákonarson of Norway (1217-63), in which period a number of other French romances were translated.<sup>2</sup> The Old Norse version consists of the *Parcevals saga*, which contains substantially all of Chrétien's work (except the later adventures of Gauvain) plus a makeshift ending, and a supplementary *Valvers þáttr*, which narrates the Gauvain adventures left out of the saga.<sup>3</sup> Although these works exist only in Icelandic manuscripts, it is generally agreed that it was composed in Norway, as the language testifies.<sup>4</sup>

The Norse text is considerably shorter than the French, although it does not leave out any of the essential narrative. Chiefly it shortens by omitting detail—particularly by shortening descriptions and dialogue. In this process a number of non-essential names are dropped. Together the saga and *þáttr* contain about 40 percent as many words as the original, although when we take into account the more synthetic nature of Old Norse, and its many compounds, it is likely that the Norse contains a higher percentage of the actual content.

The French text contains, if I have counted correctly, 114 items which can be classified as proper names.<sup>5</sup> Of these, 57 are anthro-

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<sup>1</sup> References to the French text are to *Der Percevalroman (Li contes del Graal) von Christian von Troyes*, ed. Alfons Hilka (Halle, 1932). This edition is based on Manuscript A (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds français 794), but also contains copious variants from the other manuscripts. I have also consulted the following excellent edition, based on Manuscript T (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, fonds français 12576): Chrétien de Troyes, *Le Roman de Perceval ou Le Conte du Graal*, ed. William Roach (Paris and Geneva, 1959).

<sup>2</sup> See e.g. Jan de Vries, *Altnordische Literaturgeschichte*, 2d ed. (Berlin, 1967), II, 534; Kurt Schier, *Sagaliteratur* (Stuttgart, 1970), 93 ff.

<sup>3</sup> All references are to *Riddarasögur*, ed. Eugen Kölbing (Stuttgart, 1872), pp. 1-71.

<sup>4</sup> Only one Icelandic manuscript, from which the others appear to have been copied, is of any value: Kölbing, *Riddarasögur*, pp. i-iv.

<sup>5</sup> This count is based on the "Index des noms propres" furnished by Roach in his edition, pp. 305-309, with some alterations.

ponyms, 38 place-names in the widest sense of the word (including everything from names of castles and fords to names of countries); two names of nationalities (type *Breton*); one horse name; four names of religious holidays; and seven designations for inanimate objects. Some of these items are included somewhat arbitrarily—for instance, is the type “The Red Knight” or “Fair Castle” a name? I have included them here, following Roach’s classification.

The Norse version retains a percentage of proper names roughly commensurate with the percentage of text it has retained, namely a total of 52, of which 32 are personal names; 14 place-names; one a horse name; five the names of inanimate objects.<sup>6</sup>

### PERSONAL NAMES

Many of the personal names which appear in Chrétien’s work are lacking in the saga. For one thing, almost all of the Biblical and historical characters who are more or less extraneously mentioned in the epic have been left out by the translator. Let us take as an example the following lines, where the King of Escavalon is said to be more beautiful than Absalon:

. . .le roi d’Escavalon,  
Qui est plus biaux que Absalon. . . (4791-92)

In the saga this comparison is not made. Similar examples of names of this type, all lacking in the saga/*þátttr*, are: *Adan* (8181), *Alixandres* (14; 58), *Phelipes de Flandres* (13; 53), *Saint Abraban* (2966), *Saint Davi* (4134), *Saint Martin* (7294), *Saint Pere* (2195), *Saint Pere l’apostre* (4249), *Sainz Pos* (49), *Saint Richier* (1899). Chrétien names himself twice in his work (*Cbrestiiens* 7; 62), but his names does not appear in the saga, either. However, *Aeneas* and *Lavinia*, mentioned once (9059) as *Eneas* and *Lavine*, are retained in the *þátttr* (71; 8) as *Enéas* and *Latímu* (acc.). Two references to the Holy Spirit (5076; 6277), and two to the Virgin Mary (6276; 6283) are likewise lacking in the saga.

In two of the French MSS (T and U) Gornemant takes Perceval to the hostel of Saint Julien (the patron saint of travelers—*cf.* Hilka, p. 650), while in the other MSS a fill-in phrase (*sanz vilenie* in A) takes the place of the saint’s name (1538). The saga in this instance goes along

<sup>6</sup> This count is based on the indices furnished by Kölbing in his edition, pp. 215-217, with some alterations.

with T and U: *at sönnu berbergi hins belga Júliani*—15,16. Guiromelant says of l’Orgueilleuse de Logres that she is not a girl, but rather worse than Satan:

Que pucele n’est ele pas,  
Einz est pire que Sathenas. (7455-56)

The *þáttr* renders this by “She is a devil and no girl”:

Hon er fjáandi, en ekki mær. (62;34)

Fortune is personified in the epic: the ugly maiden tells Perceval that Fortune is bald in the back and has hair on the front of her head, and deplores the fact that he did not hold onto Fortune when he had her:

“Ha! Percevaus, Fortune est chauve  
Derriers et devant chevelue.  
Maudahez et qui te salue  
Et qui nul bien t’ore ne prie!  
Que tu ne la retenis mie  
Fortune quant tu l’ancontras! (4646-51)

The personification is lost, and the six lines of the French are reduced in the saga to “You are unlucky because you let fortune (ON *gæfa*) slip out of your hands”:

En þú ert úgíptufullr er þú þagðir gæfuna ur hendi þér. (41;14-15)

Nature personified appears twice in the epic (385; 7905). The saga condenses so much it ignores the first instance, but retains the general sense of the second. The beautiful damsel at the Castle of Marvels had a beautiful visage which Nature had illuminated with a pure vermilion color:

La face ot blanche et par desus  
L’ot anluminee Nature  
D’une color vermoille et pure. . . (7904-06)

The saga says in its flat way that she was the most beautiful girl that Nature itself could create:

ok öll var hon hin fríðasta, sem sjálf nattúran mátti bezt skapa. (64; 15-16)

Many of the names of minor characters are lacking in the saga. Sometimes the characters are not included at all, and sometimes they are included but not named. King Arthur's enemy, King Rion (851), is not mentioned, nor are Perceval's two brothers, so it is natural that King Ban of Gomeret (467), under whom one of them served, does not appear there either. Nor is Girflet's father Do (4721) mentioned. Garin, the vavassor at Tintaguel, at one point is called the son of Berte (5230), and at another the son of Bertain (5246). Neither Berte nor Bertain is mentioned in the saga. Gauvain's sister is called *Clarissanz* at one point only in Chrétien (8269), but she is nameless in the *þáttr*. Gauvain's three brothers are mentioned in passing in the epic, but ignored in the saga/*þáttr*: *Agrevains* (*Engrevains*) (4768; 8139); *Gaberiez* (8141); *Guerebés* (8141). Garin's son, variously called (5257) *Bertranz* (A), *Brebals* (R), *Tiebauz* (C, Q, F, M), *Herbauz* (H), *Hermans* (T, U), is also not mentioned in the saga. The *þáttr* concludes before the section of the epic in which the lady Lore(s) is mentioned (9227). King Arthur's mother Yguerne (8742) is not mentioned by name in the *þáttr*, being referred to merely as the white-haired queen (67, 35-36). Yvain plays a small part at King Arthur's court (2884 ff.), but his role is filled in the saga by Valver (26, 36 ff.). Yvain is mentioned in passing at another point (8152), as is his father Urien (8149) and his half-brother, Yvain l'Avoutre (8157), but none of these is mentioned in the *þáttr*. Sagremor's nickname, *Desreez* (4221), is omitted. Uterpan-dragon, King Arthur's father, is mentioned twice in the epic (445; 8740), but not in the saga/*þáttr*.

A number of the characters in Chrétien's work are referred to by descriptive phrases, which then take on the nature of quasi-proper nouns. For the most part these are rendered in the saga by translated phrases, which scarcely take on the nature of names. The Red Knight (*li Vermauz Chevaliers* 950; *le Chevalier Vermoil* 1066) is rendered in the saga by (*binn*) *rauði riddari* (7,17-18; 8,36-9,1). The knight known as *li Orguelleus de la Lande* (3817) is variously called *binn drambláti riddari* (34,30-31), *binn drambláti (riddari)* (35,1; 35,34; 36,9), *dramblátr* (36,9). After his defeat by Parceval he loses all his pride (*dramblæti*), after which he is referred to solely as "the knight" (*riddarinn*). Guiromelant tells Gauvain (8638-39) that the latter's feminine companion is called *l'Orguelleuse de Logres* (*Nogres*), and that her knight, whom Gauvain had defeated, is called "li Orguelleus de la Roche (del

Passage) a l'Estroite Voie, qui garde les porz de Galvoie" (8646-48). Both remain nameless in the þátr. The young girl who befriends Gauvain at Tintaguel is nicknamed "the girl with the little sleeves" (*La Pucele as Manches Petites* 4989; 5437). This nickname is missing in the saga, where the motif is considerably simplified. The Fisher King (*roi Pescheor*, nom. *rois Peschierre*) is so named four times in Chrétien (3495; 3520; 4652; 6372; a fifth time in MS T-3926g), and once he is referred to as *riche Pescheor* (6417). The corresponding phrase occurs only twice in the saga, both times in the dative: (*um*) *góða konungi fiskimanni* (32,18); (*með*) *konungi fiskimanni* (52,14). The first instance renders the French phrase *le buen roi* (3587), but makes up for the instance in the French text where it is said, "For that reason he has the name Fisher King" (*Por ce li rois Peschierre a non*-3520). It must have seemed impossible to the Norse translator to think of this phrase as the man's name, as he here substitutes, "And still he is the most powerful king" ("En hann er þó hinn ríkasti konungr"-31,38-32,1). At two other places the Norse has instead the phrase "king and fisherman": ". . . þú hefir verit at hins góða konungs ok fiskimanns" (31, 29-30); ". . . hinum góða konungi ok fiskimanni" (41,12-13). *Riche Pescheor* is rendered by *sá hinn ríki fiskimaðr* (52,24-25).

The personal names that are retained undergo certain vagaries. Masculine names sometimes correspond to the Old French nominative, sometimes to the accusative form, with little regard to the way the name actually appears in the French text. *Artus*, *Artu* appears always as *Artús* (3,2, etc.); *Gornemanz* (in many MSS *Gornemant*) *de Goort* (*Gorbaut*, etc.) appears as *Gormanaz* or *Groholi* (15,21-22; 17,34). *Guiromelanz* (8627) appears in manuscripts C, L, U as *Grinomelanz*, *Grinomelans*, corresponding closely to the Norse form, *Grinomelas* (67,13), which lacks only the nasal consonant (vocalized?). *Tiebaus*, *Tiebaut* (*Tiebalt*) (4840; 4950; etc.) appears in the saga (often, pp. 42-45) as *Saibaz*, *Saibas* and *Sabaz*, which must be due to some corruption in the MSS tradition, possibly within French. The name of Gauvain's enemy appears three times in Chrétien's work (7118; 7141; 7302) variously in the different MSS as *Greor(r) eas*, *Georreas*, *Gregorias*, *Griogoras*, *Georgeas*, *Georeas*. He is named only once in the þátr, and by the strange form *Gerimers* (61,25). Gauvain's father, *Lot* (8751) appears also as *Lot* in the þátr (68,6). The smith who is supposed to repair Perceval's sword appears in the form *Trebuchet* in manuscript A (3679), variously as *Trabuché*, *Tirboet*, etc., in the other MSS. The saga has the form *Trebucer* (34,1), which could easily have been a misreading of the form *Trebucet*, attested in manuscript R.

A few of the masculine names appear in a Latinized form. *Clamadeus*, *Clamadeu* (2005; 2029, etc.) appears in the saga as *Klamadíus* (nominative) 23,2; *Klamadíi* (genitive) 19,3; *Klamadíó* (dative) 24,21; *Klamadí-um* (accusative) 24,25. The French phrase *des Iles*, which sometimes appears with his name (*Clamadeu des Iles*—2005) is rendered in the saga by *ur suðreyjum* (19,3) lit., “from the Southern Isles.” The name of Clamadeu’s seneschal, variously *Anguingeron(s)*, *Agringarons*, *Engygerons*, *Aguingeron*, etc. (2004), appears in shortened and otherwise variant Latinized form in the saga: *Gingvarus* (nom.) 19,3; *Gingvaro* (dat.) 25,24; *Gingvarum* (acc.) 21,13. *Garins*, *Garin* (5230; 5255, etc.) appears in the saga in the Latinized form of *Garius* (nom.) 46,3; *Garío* (dat.) 46,2. Presumably the French nominative form was misread as *Garius*.

Other masculine nouns have a form in the saga that corresponds to the OF oblique-case form. *Gauvains*, *Gauvain* appears as *Valver* (26,36, etc.), which goes back ultimately to the earlier French form *Walwain*—see below. *Girflez*, a knight of Arthur’s court, is mentioned twice (2883; 4721, where he is called *li filz Do*). He is mentioned in both places in the saga without the patronymic as *Gerflet* (26,24; 41,29), even though the oblique form does not appear in the French epic (see below). The name of Gauvain’s enemy, *Guinganbrésil* in manuscript A (4749, etc.), appears in many slightly variant forms in the different MSS, in some of them (such as T) with a nominative form ending in *-ils* or *-is*. The saga has the form *Gandilbrasil* (41,35) and *Grandilbrasil* (50, 28. 30-31). The name of the Arthurian knight *Kabedins* (4725) appears also in the French MSS as *Kaadins*, *Kebadins*, *Kaedins*, *Cabadins*, *Quaadins*, *Kaberdins*, *Kenndins* and *Kabedin* (manuscript F, M). The saga’s form *Kinderin* (41,30) is far removed from any of these attested variants, but corresponds to the F, M form at least in the lack of final *-s*. The great belittler *Keus*, *Keu*, *Ke* appears always in the saga as *Kæi* (7,35, etc.)—see below. *Melianz*, *Melian de Liz* (4825, etc.) appears without the geographical determinant in Latinized fashion in the saga: *Meliander* (nom.) 42,17; *Meliandri* (gen.) 43,21; *Meliandi* (gen.) 43,22; *Meliandro* (dat.) 43,30; *Meliander* (acc.) 43,8. *Percevaus*, *Perceval* appears always as *Parceval* (3,1.4, etc.), except for one instance when it appears as *Pacuvaleis* (32,12) (see below). (In Chrétien’s work Perceval is not mentioned until line 3575, while in the saga he is mentioned in the very first line, and several other times in the first few pages, and afterwards sporadically in the section corresponding to the one in Chrétien where he is not mentioned.) *Sagremors*, *Sagremor* also with first syllable *Saig-*, *Seig-* (4220, 4237, etc.), appears in the nominative

case without the final -s in manuscripts R, U. The saga has the form *Sigimor* (nom.) 38,26; *Sigamors* (gen.) 38,35; *Sigamors* (acc.) 39,4 (probably a scribal error, as the genitive appears shortly before that—39,2). *Yonez*, *Yonet* (with variants *Yvonez*, *Yvonet* in MSS B and T—915, etc.) appears occasionally in the French MSS with -t in the nominative as well—particularly in MS M. The saga’s form is *Íonet* (7,1 etc.) (see below). The name of the master of the squire who fills Gauvain in on the stituation in Tintaguel appears twice in the work, once in the nominative (4828) and once in the oblique (4831). The most varied forms appear in the different French MSS; nom.: *Traez d’Anet* (A), *Traedenez* (B), *Traezdenez* (C), *Treasdanez* (H), *Traez davez* (L), *Travez datier* (M), *Teudavés* (P), *Traienavez* (Q), *Trebesdaves* (R), *Treenzdanez* (S), *Droesdavez* (T), *Tresches dainnes* (U); acc.: *Traé d’Anet* (A), *Traedene* (B), *Traezdenez* (C), *Treasdanez* (H), *Trabedavez* (L), *Travezdavez* (M), *Teudaves* (P), *Traienavez* (Q), *Trebes davie* (R), *Treenzdanez* (S), *Droesdaves* (T), *Tresches dainnes* (U). The saga’s form, *Grediens* (42,14), seems to have been an oral misunderstanding of a variant close to the forms in B or C.

The only woman character in the French romance who is actually named is Perceval’s beloved, *Blancheflor* (2417). Her name appears in the saga as *Blankiflúr* (22,27 etc.) (see below).

A few names in the saga seem due to misinterpretation of the French text. Perceval’s cousin tells him that to get his sword repaired he must go to the lake above Cotoatre (“Au lac qui est sor Cotoatre”—3675). The saga construes *lac* as a personal name, and speaks of “a rich man called *Loc*”: “(til) hins ríka manns, er *Loc* heitir. . .” (33,17).

In the *þáttur* the wounded knight tells Valver that he should not proceed in the direction he is going, because a knight is sitting by the wayside whose name is *Baredogane*:

Nú bið ek þik, at þú ríðir ekki þenna veg fram,  
þvíat einn riddari sitr á veginum, er Baredogane heitir. (57,12-14).

This is somehow corrupted from the French original, which says that he should not proceed because no knight can go there, as it is the bourn of Galvoie:

Einz chevaliers n’an pot venir  
Qui ça alast ne chanp ne voie;  
Que c’est la bosne de Galvoie (6600-02)

In the *þáttr* the Queen tells Valver that the name of the knight following his beloved is *Prinsmas*:

. . . en nú fylgir henni hinn bezti riddari  
er í heimum er, er heitir Prinsmas. (64,27-28)

This is baffling, as he is unnamed in Chrétien's work, and there is no phrase remotely like the name in the Old French text (8316 ff.).

#### ANIMAL NAME

Gauvain's horse is called "le gringalet" in most of the French MSS—Hilka writes it with a small letter, and Roach with a capital (6209 and 7136). In his apparatus Hilka cites the older and etymologically more correct form *guingalet* for MSS B and C only, but in his notes (p. 736) he cites Baist, who declares it to be in MS R as well. At any rate, the saga has the form *Guingvillot* (51,11), obviously derived from the older form.

#### PLACE-NAMES

Many of Chrétien's place-names are also lacking in the saga. Many of the personal names that were left out were linked with geographical names, which of course, are lost too: Phelipes de *Flandres* (13,53); Ban de *Gomeret* (467); Melian de *Lis* (4825); l'Orgueilleuse de *Logres* (*Nogres*) (8638-39); li Orgueilleus de la *Roche* (del *Passage*) a l'*Estroite Voie* qui garde les porz de *Galvoie* (8646-48); in the name of *Traez d'Anet*, etc. (4828; 4831) *Anet* (*Avés*, etc.) appears to be blended in with the personal name in the Norse form *Grediens* (42,14). The phrase *des Iles* in *Clamadeu des Iles* (2005) is rendered in the saga by *ur suðreyjum* "from the Southern Isles" (19,3).

Some exotic place-names mentioned in passing are omitted by the translator. Chrétien speaks of gold from Arabia and Greece, and orfray from Venice:

Li ponz de l'espee fu d'or,  
Del meillor d'Arrabe ou de Grece,  
Li fuerres d'orfrois de Venece. (3162–64)

This passage is simply omitted in the saga.

One of the towers of the Grail Castle is so beautiful, says Chrétien,



that its like cannot be found as far as Beirut:

Lors vit devant lui an un val  
Le chief d'une tor qui parut;  
L'an ne trovast jusqu'a Barut  
Si bele ne si bien assise. . . (3050-53)

This comparison is not made in the saga. Gornemant gives Perceval a coat made of silk from India (*Inde*) (1603-04). The saga says simply that he was given shirt and breeches of white silk ("skyrtu ok brók af hvítu silki"—16,3). When the townspeople rise up in arms against Gauvain in Escavalon, Chrétien says there was a hubbub such as does not even occur in Lombardy when they attack snails:

Ainz por assaillir la limace  
N'ot an Lombardie tel noise. . . (5946-47)

This reference is also lacking in the saga, as is the following, where the castle at Galvoie is said to be worth little less than Pavia:

Petit valoit mains de Pavie  
Li chastiaus, qui mout estoit nobles. (6662-63)

There are a couple of similar references involving French names. The bowers to which Perceval is led at the Grail Castle are unequaled in beauty as far as Limoges:

Puis l'an menerent jusq'as loges,  
Et bien sachiez jusq'a Limoges  
Ne trovast an ne ne veïst  
Si beles, qui les i queïst. (3075-78)

Probably the choice of *Limoges* was dictated by the need for a rhyme with *loges*, but, at any rate, there is no such comparison in the saga.

The river that flows by Gornemant's castle has a stronger current than the Loire (1316)—again a comparison that is not made in the saga.

At three points in the epic Perceval is referred to as *Percevaus li Galois* (*Galeis*—3575; 4562; 4604), or "Perceval the Welshman"; at one other point he is called the Welshman (235), and Welshmen in general are mentioned in connection with him at two further points (243; 609). His mother dresses him in the manner of a Welshman (or of Wales,

according to other MSS) when he goes off to Arthur's court (603). She has already put on him breeches in the manner of Wales (*Gales*—501). Arthur holds court at Disnadaron in Wales (2732; 2753). At another point Keu swears by Saint David, "whom one worships and prays to in Wales" ("Que l'an aore et prie an Gales"—4135). All of these references to Wales and things Welsh have been omitted from the saga. The only vestige remaining is perhaps in the strange form *Pacuvaleis*, which Parceval guesses to be his name (32,12). The *-valeis* part seems to be a scribe's blend of *Perceval le Galeis*. At another point Arthur's subjects are called Bretons (*li Breton*—4320), and this too is lacking in the saga.

Some other toponyms present in the epic are missing in the translation. When Perceval first comes to Arthur's court it is at *Carduel* (*Cardoeil*) (336; 839), but the place is not named in the saga. However, the name *Korboél* (38,3), *Korbuél* (41,7) appears at two points, apparently a distortion of *Carduel*, but corresponding to *Carlion* in the French text (4003; 4155; 4606). At one place the French MS C has the form *Carduel*, according to Hilka (4003), so it seems likely that the Norse form is derived from *Carduel* in the French original. Perceval and his mother live in *la Gaste Forez* (392; 2959), to which there is no corresponding phrase in the saga. Chrétien's Kahedin vows to climb Mont Dolereus (4724-25), but in the saga Kinderin vows to go where the maiden sat on the mountain ("En Kinderin kvezk þangat skyldu fara sem mærin sat á fjallinu"—41,30). The ugly maiden tells of a damsel besieged on a hill beneath Montescleire (4706), but the saga says simply "on a high mountain" ("í einu miklu fjalli"—41,23). Guiromelanz's castle is called *Orquelenes* (*Orqueneseles*, etc.—8626) in the epic, but is not named in the *þátrr*. Arthur is holding court at *Orcanie* (*Orquenie*) at the time when Gauvain must send a message to him to invite him to witness his duel with Guiromelanz (8889; 9101; 9163; 9191), but the name is not mentioned in the *þátrr*. Yguerne's castle Chrétien calls *Roche de Chanpguin* (*Changuin*, *Canguin*, *Sanguin*—8817), and is not named in the *þátrr*. Even Tiebaut's castle, the famous Tintaguel (4835; 4884), is not named in the saga. Young Perceval points to the Pass of *Valdone* (*Valbone*—298) also omitted in the saga.

The translatable place-names in the epic are generally translated in the Norse version, but scarcely considered proper names. *Belrepeire* (*Biaurepaire*—2386; 2406; 2687; 3123) "fair castle," for example, is rendered both by *fagr kastali* (29,23-24) and *fögr borg* (22,23.30)—see below. *Chastel Orgueilleus* (4689; 4723) is rendered as "proud castle"—(*til*) *prúða kastala* (41,29). *Gué Perilleus* (8508) "perilous ford" is rendered by *báskavað* (66,12).

Not very many toponyms remain in the saga/þátr. In the romance Trebuchet apparently lives by the lake above *Cotoatre* (*Cototatre*, *Coteatre*, *Costelacre*, *Costeatre*, *Cothoatre*, *Toceatre*—3675). The saga places Loc “undir *Kurvatus* fjalli” (33,17), so that the name is distorted and Latinized, but without the proper Latin inflection. The kingdom known as *Escavalon* in MS A (463; 4791; 5316) appears in some of the other MSS without the first syllable: *Cavalon* (B, L, Q, S 463; P, Q 4791; Q 5316); *Canelon* (F, M 463); *Quavalon* (S 4791); *Kavalon* (S 5316). In some MSS it is confused with *Carlion*: C, B, F, U 4791; C, U 5316. The saga has the form *Kapalon* (42,5; 47,9)—see below. The Red Knight comes from the forest of *Quinqueroi* (*Quinquerei*—951; 4127), and in the saga this forest is called *Qvinqvarie* (7,18). *Rome* (12; 1672; 2689; 2779), which can be construed either as the empire or the city, appears only once in the saga as *Rómaborg*: “. . . ekki heldr fyrir allan *Rómaborgar* ríkdóm” (25,1-2).

At one point the saga contains a toponym not found in Chrétien: the collier tells young Parceval that Arthur had fought against the city (castle) of the Rim Islands and was victorious: “Artús konungur barðist við *Rimeyja borg* ok vann sigr. . .” (6,1-2). This seems to be a corruption of the following French lines, which say that he fought against King Rion, and the King of the Isles was vanquished:

Li rois Artus o tote s'ost  
S'est au roi Rion combatuz.  
Li rois des Isles fu veincuz. . . (850-52)

## NAMES OF INANIMATE OBJECTS

Some inanimate objects bear names in the epic, or appellations which verge on being proper names. Gauvain has his trusty sword *Escalibor* with him in *Escavalon* (5902), but in the saga the sword is not named (p. 50). The ugly maiden speaks of the Sword of the Strange Baldrick (*l'Espee as Estranges Ranges*—4712), but this is not mentioned in the saga. The Grail (*Graaus*, *Graal*) is mentioned many times in the epic (66; 3239, etc.), but the word seems to have confounded the translator of the saga. The word itself appears only once, and then in the distorted form *braull* (30,17).<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> This form must have been due to the mistake of a Norwegian or Icelandic scribe who misread the \**graull* of the Norse text he was copying; cf. Jean Fourquet, *Wolfram d'Eschenbach et le Conte del Graal*, 2d ed (Paris, 1966), p. 44, fn. 1.

The lance that is mysteriously carried at the Grail Castle is also called *lance* in French (3199), and is rendered in Norse by *spjót* (30,3). It is called *blanche lance* (3192; 3197), for which there is no correspondence in the saga; *la lance dont la pointe sainne*,/ *Et si n'i a ne char ne vainne* (3549-50), rendered in Norse by *spjótit er oddrinn blæddi á ok er þar eigi á hold né sinar* (32,6-7); *la lance qui sainne* (4653) (omitted in the saga); 4737 (omitted in the saga); 6198 (omitted in the saga); *la lance don li fers*/ *Saigne toz jorz* (6113), rendered by *þat spjót er blæðir ur oddinum* (51,6); *la lance don la pointe lerne*/ *Del sanc tot cler que ele plore* (6166-67), omitted in the saga; *la lance*/ *Don li fers sainne sanz dotance* (6373-74), rendered in the saga simply by *spjótit* (52,15); *le fer qui ainz n'estancha*/ *De seignier* (6410-11), rendered in the saga by *spjótit er jafnan blæðir ur oddinum* (52,21-22).

The Bed of the Marvel (*li Liz* [*le Lit*] *de la Mervoille*), is variously rendered in the *þáttr*: at 7805 merely by *hvíla* (63,14.19); at 8671 by (*i*) *rekkju þess hins mikla undrs* (67,26-27), and at 9007 by (*i*) *rekkju undranna* (70,26).

At the Grail Castle one of the articles brought forth in the ritual is the *tailleur d'arjant* (3231; 3567) "silver tray" (MS P has the reading *une taule ensemment* "a board [table] likewise"). The saga has as a translation the word *tön* (30,23) which Peter Foote assumes to be a deformation of *töfl* or *töflu* (acc. of *tafla*), from Latin *tabula*.<sup>8</sup> The *Table Ronde* is mentioned only once in the romance (8125), and not at all in the saga/*þáttr*.

Several Church holidays are mentioned in the epic, but not in the saga: Ascension Day (*jorz d'ascension*—2940); Easter (*la pasque*—6512); Christmas (*natevité*—8249), but Trinity Sunday (*Trinité*) in MS T and V.

## DISCUSSION

The translator's technique with regard to the quasi-names that are really descriptive phrases is of some interest compared with the techniques of other translators. As we have noted above, these phrases, if not ignored completely, are invariably translated into Norse. This takes on almost the quality of a name in one instance, where Parceval says he came "from the castle which people called 'fair castle'" ("Ek kom ur þeim kastala, er menn nefnda fagra kastala"—29,23-24). However, at other points in the narrative the name appears in a different form,

<sup>8</sup> See P. G. Foote, "Gangandi greiði," *Einarsbók. Afmælistkveðja til Einars Ól. Sveinssonar 12. desember 1969* (Reykjavík, 1969), pp. 49-51.

*fögr borg* (for example, 22, 23.30), with the synonymous *borg* instead of *kastali*, indicating that he seemingly regarded the phrase as appellative. Similarly, the Proud Knight is sometimes called *hinn dramboísi riddari*, sometimes *hinn drambláti riddari*, and once simply *dramblátr*, “the proud one.”

Wolfram von Eschenbach, the translator-author of the Middle High German *Parzival* romance, often uses the opposite technique, retaining the core of the French phrase and making a real name out of it. Thus, *Li Orgueilleus de la Lande* becomes *Orilus*, *l’Orgueilleuse de Logres* (*Nogres*) becomes *Orgelúse*, *Biaurepaire*, *Belrepeire* is *Pelrapeire*, etc.

As names often vary considerably in the different French manuscripts, it is reasonable to assume that the forms which appear in the Norse version might help us to determine which manuscript the Norwegian redactor used. Unfortunately, the evidence does not present a clear picture. The Norse form *Grinomelas* seems closest to the forms *Grinomelanz*, *Grinomelans* which appear in manuscripts C, L and U. *Gingvarus* is apparently closest to the form *Aguingeron* in manuscripts F and R. The Norse form *Íonet* conforms to the form *Yonez*, *Yonet* found in the majority of French manuscripts, and contrasting to the forms *Yvonez*, *Yvonet* found in manuscripts B and T. On the other hand, the Norse *Grediens* seems closer to the form *Traedene* in manuscript B than any other, while Saint Julian, mentioned in the Norse text, is mentioned only in the French manuscripts T and U. The form of the name of Valver’s horse *Guingvillot* corresponds most closely to *Guingalet* in manuscripts B, C and R. Norse *Kapalon* seems closest to *Cavalon*, attested in manuscripts B, L, P, Q and S. The evidence forces us to conclude that there was a distinct manuscript line unknown to us from French sources.

The presence of names in other *riddara sögur* known to the translator may have exerted a certain influence, so that the form in question could be due to one in another Norse work rather than in a French manuscript of Chrétien’s Grail romance.<sup>9</sup> That this influence was indeed present seems to be proved by the situation with regard to *Girflez*, the name of a knight mentioned only twice in the French text, where he is called the son of Do (see above). The fool who plays a role in the romance when Keu strikes the maiden in *Perceval*’s presence is not named, but simply called “a fool” (*sos*, *sot*). There is nothing in the work to indicate that this fool is *Girflez*. However, in *Möttuls*

<sup>9</sup> The comparative chronology of the early *riddara sögur* is not easy to determine. I have mentioned only those which probably preceded (or at least could have preceded) the *Parcevals saga*. Cf. Schier, *Sagaliteratur*, pp. 102-103.

saga<sup>10</sup> (ch. 9) Gerflet is called “fól konungs” (“the King’s fool”), and it may well be that it was familiarity with this work that led the translator of *Parcevals saga* to call him “konungs fól,” and perhaps to adopt the oblique case form, when in the *Graal* it appears only in the nominative. Thus the form *Artús* appears in *Tristrams saga*<sup>11</sup> (ch. 71); *Möttuls saga* (ch. 1); *Ívens saga*<sup>12</sup> (ch. 1); *Kæi* in *Möttuls saga* (ch. 4) and *Ívens saga* (ch. 1); *Íonet* in “Íonets ljóð” of the *Strengleikar*<sup>13</sup>; *Lot* in *Ívens saga* (ch. 15); *Sighamors* in *Ívens saga* (ch. 1); *Blankiflúr* in *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*.<sup>14</sup>

The most likely explanation for the form *Valver* is that it is a misreading of *Valven*, which appears in both *Möttuls saga* (ch. 3) and *Ívens saga* (ch. 1). Admittedly, at first blush it is hard to understand how there could be such a misapprehension of a name that appears as often in the MS as does *Valven*, but it is quite conceivable that it appeared only once spelled out, and otherwise was abbreviated, as is so often the case in Norse manuscripts. The form *Valven* must have been derived from the earlier French form, attested as *Walwains* in Marie de France’s “Lanval” (227, etc.).<sup>15</sup>

A number of the names discussed above seem to owe their form to a misreading of the French manuscript. Thus *Gariús* seems to be an obvious mistaking of the *n* in French *Garins* as a *u*. *Trebuçer* appears to be a misreading of *Trebuçet*.

On the other hand, other names are distorted in such a way as to make oral transmission seem most likely. Thus *Gandilbrasil*, *Grandilbrasil* from *Guinganbresil*; *Grediens* from a form similar to *Traedene*, *Traezdenes*; *Gingvarus* from *Aguingeron*. Possibly oral transmission is responsible also for the distortion of *Cotoatre* to *Kurvatus*; *Cavalon* to *Kapalon*; *Quinqueroi* to *Qvingvarie*, or even *Tiebaus* to *Saibaz*. In some cases it is difficult to determine whether the distortion occurred through a misreading or an oral misunderstanding.

Assuming that both types of misunderstanding are present, perhaps we should assume the translation process involved two people: the actual translator and the composer of the saga. I visualize the process as taking place in the following manner: the translator renders the French

<sup>10</sup> See *Saga af Tristram ok Ísönd samt Möttuls saga*, ed. G. Brynjúlfsson (Copenhagen, 1878), pp. 217-42.

<sup>11</sup> *Op. cit.*, pp. 3-213.

<sup>12</sup> See *Ívens saga*, ed. Eugen Kölbing (ASB 7), (Halle, 1896).

<sup>13</sup> See *Strengleikar eða Lióðabók*, ed. R. Keyser and C. R. Unger (Christiania, 1850), pp. 74-81.

<sup>14</sup> See *Flóres saga ok Blankiflúr*, ed. Eugen Kölbing (ASB 5) (Halle, 1896).

<sup>15</sup> See *Les lais de Marie de France*, ed. Jean Rychner (Paris, 1971), pp. 72-92.

text orally into Norwegian, and the scribe transcribes the rough translation into a more polished form, often condensing or omitting, often translating quite freely, occasionally, especially when the passage is an important one, translating almost literally. When a strange name comes up, he sometimes has it spelled out to him, or looks at the manuscript. He occasionally Latinizes the name he sees or hears, occasionally uses a form which concurs with a form he knows from another saga. But at times, especially if the name is not particularly important, he writes down what he thinks he has heard, and unfortunately he does not always hear too well.

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