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Matthew P. McDiarmid

Concerning Sir Gilbert Hay, the Authorship of  
*Alexander the Conquerour* and *The Buik of Alexander*

The Scottish Text Society has published three poems that derive in different ways from *Le Roman d'Alexandre*.<sup>1</sup> Only one is by direct translation, *The Forray of Gadderis* from *Li Fuerre de Gadres* in the *Roman*. It is in *The Buik of Alexander*.<sup>2</sup> There it prefaces the second of the three, *The Avowis*, a version of Jacques de Longuyon's *Les Voeux du Paon* conceived as a sequel to *Li Fuerre*. The third poem, an erratic rewriting in decasyllabic couplets of Sir Gilbert Hay's translation of *The Roman* that was in octosyllabic couplets, represented now only by *The Forray of Gadderis*, is *Alexander the Conquerour*.<sup>3</sup> The new meter meant rewording, but this poet does not stop there, he omits and changes matter. Omissions, not changes, he confesses to in his version of the *Forray* (ll. 3875-8) and in his narrative of battle with the Persians (ll. 6023-33), there mentioning the "auld translatioun," its author not

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<sup>1</sup>*The Medieval French Roman d'Alexandre...Version of Alexandre de Paris Text*, ed. E. C. Armstrong, D. L. Buffum, Bateman Edwards, L. F. H. Lowe (New York 1965) II.

<sup>2</sup>John Barbour, *The Buik of Alexander*, ed. R. L. Graeme Ritchie. 4 vols. STS, New Series, 17, 12, 21, 25 (1925, 1921, 1927, 1929), I-II. Further references will be to volume, page and line number, and will be given in the text.

<sup>3</sup>Sir Gilbert Hay, *The Buke of Alexander the Conquerour*, ed. John Cartwright, STS, 4th Series, 16, 18 (1986-90); John Cartwright, "Sir Gilbert Hay's *Buke of King Alexander the Conquerour*. A Critical Edition of Lines 1-4236," PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1974. Further references will be to the STS volumes, and will be given as line numbers in the text.

yet named, that he uses and abuses. The omissions are due to a willful desire to make the translation something more by introducing matter mainly from *The Avowis* and the prose of Sir Gilbert Hay. In the following discussion shortened titles are often used, the *Roman*, the *Buik*, the *Conquerour*, and others.

Editorial attributions have indeed been odd. The *Buik*, its greater part *The Avowis* with colophon date 1439, has been given by Graeme Ritchie to John Barbour who died in 1395; and the *Conquerour* with epilogue dated 1499 has been claimed by John Cartwright, following an 1834 suggestion of David Laing more boldly asserted in 1867 and since unchallenged by scholars other than myself, for Sir Gilbert Hay born in 1399 or 1400. That Sir Gilbert, said in the epilogue to have translated the *Roman* when in the French king's service, that is, in the 1430s or thereabouts, might have introduced part of his *Forryay* into the *Buik* and been responsible for *The Avowis*, and an unknown author for the *Conquerour*, were possibilities that neither editor wished to consider. They are considered here.

Ritchie is impressed by one fact, the many lines and phrases that both poems in the *Buik* share with the *Bruce*, so impressed that he can accept the wording of the date of *The Avowis* yet shrug it off as an inexplicable error; so impressed that he chooses to see the several kinds of rhyme in the *Buik* that Barbour never uses as without significance.<sup>4</sup> That in his so informative Glossary are many words, including French ones seeming natural to the author, that are not in the *Bruce* he notices but not as relevant. He might have thought it possible for a Scot abroad with a much read copy of the national epic, naturally to employ the phrasing of his great model, but not to this extent he would insist. Nonetheless, I have shown elsewhere that certain words, phrases, descriptions, in the *Buik* are better read as its borrowings and some must be so read.<sup>5</sup> Barbour would never have repeated himself in quite this way, and in some cases so inaptly. For these reasons Ritchie's claim has been rejected by scholars, and I see no point in a further consideration.

Cartwright's reasons for his ascription of the *Conquerour* are these: respect for a tradition seen by him as never seriously disputed; the possibly significant proximity in the Contents list of the Asloan Miscellany c. 1515 of a Hay item to one from the *Conquerour*; agreement with so many previous scholars that the epilogue is scribal, and is to be read as assigning the preceding text to Hay. Arguments from tradition, or proximity without strong

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<sup>4</sup>Barbour's *Bruce*, ed. M. P. McDiarmid and J. A. C. Stevenson, STS, 4th Series, 12, 13, 15 (1980-85), I, 27, 36 n. 3, shows the differing rhyme values of the *Buik*.

<sup>5</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 31-2.

supporting circumstance, are at best conjectures. What is clear is that text and epilogue ask careful analysis. First, however, there is what we know of Hay's life to review, then what the poem, after consideration of its language and meter and style, has to tell us about its date and author. All this, particularly the information that we can obtain from it about Hay and his work, will be found relevant to a concluding argument about the authorship of the *Buik*.

The term "knycht clerk" in *The Buke of Knychthede* applies well to Sir Gilbert as he describes himself in the 1456 Preface to his *Buke of the Law of Armys*: "Translatit be me Gilbert of the Haye, knycht, maister of Arte, and Bachilere in Decreis, Chaumerlayn umquhile to the maist worthy King Charles of Fraunce. . ." The translation, he goes on, was made for "Williamme Erle of Orknay and of Cathnes, Lord Synclere, and Chancelare of Scotland, in his Castell of Rosselyn. . ." <sup>6</sup>

To this information the knowledgeable poet of the *Conquerour's* epilogue, who in his time may have visited, even lived in, Roslin castle beside Edinburgh, and had access to the Hay Manuscript and Hay's verse translations, adds these vital statements, that Sir Gilbert was a full twenty-four years in France, and while in the king's service there, which should mean when he was chamberlain, translated *Le Roman d'Alexandre*.

Bearing in mind the academic titles and absence of his name from the roll of graduates in Arts at Paris, it is reasonable to think that he was the *Gilbertus de Haya* who was a "determinant" at St. Andrews University in 1418, as such having completed the three years of attendance preliminary to his Master's Degree, which he took in April 1419.<sup>7</sup> Since the entrant was supposed to have attained his fourteenth year and the Master more strictly his twentieth, Sir Gilbert, as said, should have been born in 1399 or 1400. The baccalaureate in Decrees that he obtained, after the Scots way would have been sought in France, at Paris, the English having made Orleans dangerous.

Scots forces at the close of October 1419 landed at La Rochelle, at the instance of the then dauphin Charles, seeking help from "the auld ally," but Gilbert would already have been settled in Paris. He would receive his Degree in canon law after the usual three or three and a half years of study, that

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<sup>6</sup>*Gilbert of the Haye's Prose Manuscript (A.D. 1456)*. Vol. I, *The Buke of the Law of Armys or Buke of Bataillis*; Vol. II, *The Buke of Knychthede and The Buke of the Governauce of Princis*, ed. J. H. Stevenson, STS, 44, 62 (1901-14), I, xxii. Henceforth cited in the text.

<sup>7</sup>*Acta Facultatis artium Universitatis S. Andree*, ed. Annie Dunlop, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1964), I, 14.

is, in 1422 or 1423, and then be free to think of joining his countrymen in the field.

In considering other mentions in these years of a Gilbert of the Haye, I have borne in mind the remark of that well-known scholar of Aberdeen University, Leslie MacFarlane, that the baccalaureate could not be attempted without previous possession of a Master's Degree in Arts. No other Gilbert of the Haye in the relevant years attended the University of St. Andrews. Nonetheless these other mentions should be noted here. Sally Mapstone refers me to the name in a muster-roll of 1421, and Cartwright finds it in another of 1422-23, as that of a captain in charge of six men-at-arms, eighteen archers.<sup>8</sup> The two references are surely to the same person. Even if he had obtained the necessary qualification at a foreign university I do not see him leave his captaincy and comrades for the allurements of law.

Doubt comes later. When Charles VII was crowned at Reims in July 1429, Joan of Arc having preceded him there, present among the knights was a Gilbert of the Haye, and among lesser witnesses another Gilbert of the Haye.<sup>9</sup> The same year, after the taking of Senlis, just north of Paris, from the English, several Scots were knighted, one of them, according to a Scots Latin Chronicle, a *Gilbertus Hay*, doubtless the one at the coronation who was not a knight.<sup>10</sup>

It was not for distinction in battle, however, that Charles chose his chamberlain. In the early 1420s he must already have felt the need of an interpreter to explain exactly what these Scots lords and commanders were saying. His Gilbert of the Haye would have been recommended as being of noble birth, well educated, fluent in the French of Paris where he had lived. The appointment, with knighthood to suit, would please his Scots allies, and his main requirement was met. Sir Gilbert's linguistic gift was to be illustrated later in translations from the French.

It is because Charles's need was not new in 1429, that I think the Sir Gilbert at Reims may then have been the chamberlain. Ability not only to interpret, but also to converse with the king's French entourage and with persons seeking audience, would have been a requirement of his office. About Sir Gilbert's personal relationships, actions of note, we know nothing. His life would have been involved in that of his "maist worthy King" as history narrates it.

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<sup>8</sup>William Forbes-Leith, *The Scots Men-at-Arms and Life-Guards in France*, 2 vols. (Edinburgh, 1882), I, 155.

<sup>9</sup>*Ibid.*, I, 43; Francisque Michel, *Les Ecossois en France* (London, 1862), pp. 173-4.

<sup>10</sup>*Scotichronicon* by Walter Bower, ed. D. E. R. Watt (Aberdeen, 1987), VIII, 296.

We know from the reliable epilogue-writer that he lived fully twenty-four years in France, so that determining the year of his return to Scotland depends on our view of the most probable time for his going. I have given my opinion and the reason for it, he went abroad before the last quarter of 1419. He returned therefore in late 1443 or 1444. Cartwright's suggestion is one of sentiment, that the return was after the death of the Scots Dauphiness in August 1445.

Returned, we have a glimpse of him in a Papal Letter. He had loaned money to the late John Stewart, called Rector of Felsle, the rector's brother and executor of estate had refused payment, Sir Gilbert had a judgment in his favor by an ecclesiastical court, the brother appealed 16 December 1448 to the apostolic see, the court was told to reconvene and reconcile the parties.<sup>11</sup> About this rector of an unlocated Felsle, the place-name obviously due to scribal error, I can discover nothing. The only John Stewart of the relevant years that I can find was Provost of the Collegiate Church of Methven, conceivably also rector of the adjoining Perthshire parish of Fowlis. He died between 21 December 1443 and 14 July 1445, but such an identification supposes too much.<sup>12</sup>

At least we can be almost sure that he visited Lord Erskine whose request had made him a translator, and sure that he visited Lord Sinclair whom he must have met when the latter brought Princess Margaret to France. He may have been a guest in Roslin castle before the 1450s.

It was one of the fancies of J. H. Stevenson, editor of Hay's prose works, not so extreme as his momentary vision of a centenarian poet dictating in 1499 to his scribe, that Sir Gilbert became a priest, presumably officiating as such for the Sinclair household. There was his Degree in canon law, but more than such learning there were the requirements of a devout calling and ordination. Sir Gilbert's writings do not hint at his having received them. But, says Stevenson, in the 1456 Preface after the proud self-description "knycht" comes the apostolic blessing. He does not seem to have known that the Hay Manuscript was scribed towards the close of the century, seen as a single labor by the scribe, perhaps a priest, and so the blessing likely to be his and not that of the good knight.

What finally convinces him, and John Cartwright, is the 1456 will of Hay's companion at Roslin, Sinclair's father-in-law, Alexander of Dunbeath, bequeathing to Sir Gilbert a silver collar, and asking that he say ten psalters

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<sup>11</sup>*The Calendar of Papal Registers, Papal Letters*, ed. J. A. Twemlow (London, 1915), X, 397.

<sup>12</sup>*Fasti Ecclesiae Scoticanæ*, Second Draft, ed. D. E. R. Watt (Edinburgh, 1969), p. 367.

for Alexander's soul (Stevenson, I, facsimile facing xxii, xxvii). The ornamental gift was proper for a knight, for a priest, even then, I am not so sure. Also I know of no ruling of the Church in these days that on no account should one layman say psalters for another. Psalter books were common possessions. Hary's Wallace goes to his horrific death reciting from his boyhood's psalter book.

Stevenson, still confusing author with scribe, a strange confusion since he speaks of evident dictation, the original translations with the late Hay Manuscript, mesmerized by the scribal form of words, "Heir endis . . . heir beginnis," can see Sir Gilbert "almost without turning in his chair," ending, beginning. The separate translations, of course, would be undertaken with natural intervals, perhaps within the limits 1455 and 1460; *The Buik of the Governauce of Princis*, his most influential if not most pleasing performance (which is the almost idyllic *Buik of Knychthede*) probably being his last. His name, always be it noted "Sir Gilbert the Haye" or "Sir Gilbert Hay," is lost to contemporary record after 1459, when he received a robe of honor from James II.<sup>13</sup> It seems unlikely that he lived much beyond 1470, if till then.

The relevance of these life-dates as affecting our understanding of both the *Conquerour* and the *Buik* will become increasingly clear. In the following argument the facts that we must particularly bear in mind are the early year of his departure from a Scots environment for a French one, and the long duration of his stay in the latter. In brief, circumstance must have made Hay in anything that he wrote a man of the opening decades of his century, and this should be true of language, meter, style and matter. If a work differs in these respects from his period and early experience it is not Hay's.

My first argument for denying the *Conquerour* to Hay and giving it to an unknown and much later poet is the degree, not the simple fact, of its use of certain kinds of rhyme, placing it far beyond the time in which rhyming habits, or notions of accepted Scots rhyming, would have been formed. It is an argument that takes special account of two of the several sound changes in fourteenth-century Scotland that only become very notable in the fifteenth century, the chosen two being the most patent. To have included the others in my count might have been confusing, and would certainly have added greatly to an already very laborious and tedious piece of statistical research, only to reach the same foreseen conclusion.

And first, for the reader's convenience may I advise that wherever italicized *e* appears it represents original long close *e* as in French *liberté*, similarly italicized *i* has the close front unrounded sound of the final vowel in *ami*.

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<sup>13</sup>*The Exchequer Rolls of Scotland*, ed. George Burnett (Edinburgh, 1883), VI, 489.

The two chosen sound changes affecting rhyme are the loss after *e* of final syllables with *ʒ* or *g*, and the approximation of *e* from whatever source to *i*.<sup>14</sup> These changes allow words with once guttural *e*, such as *de* "die" from ON *deyja* or OE *deȝan*, *ee* "eye" from OE *eage*, words in pure *e* native or French in origin as *me* pron., *cite* from *cit *, and words in *i* like *parti* "part," *company* from OF *compagnie*, *trewli*, all to be matched with each other in rhyme. Of course, adoption of this new freedom of rhyming was at first very conservative, but ever less conservative as the century advanced. The bearing of this progressive rate of adoption on the question of the date of the *Conquerour* will be evident. Since the longer poems best illustrate rhyming practice my count is from them.

Wyntoun's *Chronicle*, completed in his old age about 1420, in its more than 36,000 lines has a mere twenty-two rhymes having both *de*-type guttural *e* and pure *e*, one dubious *e:i* rhyme involving a name in "y." *The Kingis Quair* of c. 1435 has more Scots usage, because of the Scots company and visiting that were allowed to James, than is generally recognized.<sup>15</sup> Proportionately in his 1370 lines he makes much greater use than Wyntoun does of the new freedom. In all but a very, very few cases Wyntoun avoids *de*-type *e* in rhyme, James has nine cases, in two of them with words in *i*.

*The Buik of Alexander* (1436-9) that we have already noticed, with more than 14,000 lines, has rhymes that Barbour did not use, but making very rare appearances. Of the twenty-nine rhymes having a *de*-type *e* only seven also have a word in pure *e*, and in the whole *Buik* are only five *e:i* rhymes. Ritchie Girvan, a truly great scholar, does right in his Introduction to *Ratis Raving* to rebuke Herrmann for not seeing sound change in even these few cases. Yet the error is understandable. The influence of Barbour's remembered lines and rhymes on any other early Scots heroic poem would naturally have been great, especially if its author were circumstanced as was Hay. If he had been shown a part of Wyntoun's uncompleted work he might not have noted any change from Barbour's practice. It is unlikely that a copy of the *Quair* would reach him in France. His own speech, like that of other Scots, would have the new pronunciations, but his only model in verse had to be Barbour. With few deviations his rhyming would be traditional, as was that of the *Buik*.

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<sup>14</sup>*Ratis Raving*, ed. Ritchie Girvan, STS, 3rd Series, 11 (1939), lxxi-lxxviii, discusses this sound change and others. Further references will be to this edition.

<sup>15</sup>*The Kingis Quair of James Stewart*, ed. M. P. McDiarmid (London, 1973) reviews date, language, the king's Scots company as a prisoner.



The alliterative *Buke of the Howlat*, c. 1446, composed by Richard Holland, has in its eighty *e*-rhymes no *de*-type word and only two words in *i*.<sup>16</sup> The guttural after-sound may have been better remembered in the extreme north. *Lancelot of the Laik* was probably written earlier than has been thought, about 1470, and has been seen as reflecting the new Humanism, but the poet with the "laiting toung" to whom its author confesses such indebtedness is not Virgil but Chaucer. His invented "maister Amytans" preaches to Arthur on the duties of kingship, the matter and phrasing of his sermon being from Hay's *Governance*. In it he intrudes his own significant question, should young kings be excused misrule? This can only refer to the young James III. His odd Anglicizing does not explain his rhyming, only a fairly early period can do that. In his *Lancelot* and *Quare of Jelusy* counted together are ninety-five *e*-rhymes, only six of these having a *de*-type word, only five a word in *i*.<sup>17</sup>

Such in Sir Gilbert's youth and age was the use made of the two kinds of rhyme that concern us here, almost negligible in the century's opening decades, still very conservative at the point that we have reached. All that is changed with Hary's *Wallace* c. 1478. Not so long as the *Buik*, a little more than two thirds of its length, it has yet seventy-eight cases of *de*-type *e* matched with pure *e*, seventy-four *e:i* rhymes. Robert Henryson does likewise in his three major poems, the *Morall Fabillis*, *The Testament of Cresseid* and *Orpheus and Erudices*, the three together comprising a third, not much more, of Hary's lines, and none the less having fifty-seven rhymes of the former kind, fourteen of the latter, in the first case having proportionately a greater number than does the *Wallace*. What has happened? I can only think that these writers addressed themselves not only to clerks but had a popular aim, and therefore, unlike the author of *Lancelot* and the *Quare*, whose matter is more literary, made full and free use of the real values of Scottish speech. The Barbour tradition in rhyming had long since lost the influence that it once had.

The religious writers would have a like aim and practice. In *The Contemplacioun of Synnaris*, a tiresome devotional work of something less than 1560 lines in its defective more Scottish version, in its more English version published at London in 1499 and probably composed not long before by Friar William Touris of Aberdeen, are fourteen rhymes of pure *e* with the *de*-type *e*, thirty-six *e:i* rhymes. Finally Walter Kennedy's only slightly

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<sup>16</sup> *Scottish Alliterative Poems in Riming Stanzas*, ed. F. J. Amours, STS, 27, 38 (1892-7), I, 47-81.

<sup>17</sup> *Lancelot of the Laik*, ed. M. M. Gray, STS, 2nd Series, 2 (1912); *The Quare of Jelusy*, ed. J. T. T. Brown in *Miscellany Volume*, STS, 3rd Series, 4 (1933), 195-212.

longer *Passioun of Crist*, of about the same time as the *Contemplacioun*, has seventeen cases of the *de*-type *e* matched with pure *e*, thirty-four *e:i* rhymes.<sup>18</sup>

These figures illustrating the progressive rate of adoption of the two kinds of rhyme that relate to this argument, an adoption barely commenced in the 1439 *Buik*, but much more extensive in the century's last three decades, should prepare us to recognize the *Conquerour's* end-of-the-century placing. A quarter again longer than the *Buik*, longer by a third than the *Wallace*, the meaning of the figures for its case should none the less be plain. It has 158 rhymes with a *de*-type word and a word in pure *e*, fifty rhymes of the *e:i* kind. As with the work of other poets surveyed here, Henryson and Kennedy for example, it is not important that one kind of rhyme has a much higher frequency than the other, both frequencies point plainly to the period to which the poem belongs. Another careful counter may modify the figures slightly, perhaps because of convenient changes in the pronunciation of place names, the significant result will be the same.

A note in agreement with the above is in place here. It concerns the comparative disuse, in one case completely, of the older words *anerly* "alone," *alsua* "also," and disappearance of *foroutin* "without," which as Girvan observes happens "as we approach the close of the fifteenth century."<sup>19</sup> It appears once in *Wallace*, not at all in the verse of Henryson, or in the late religious poems examined here. The use of the relative forms *the quhilk(is)* and *quhilk(is)* has some relevance. They are used with almost equal frequency in the prose of Hay. The former persists in the *Conquerour*, as it does in later verse, but *quhilk(is)* as will again be noted in considering the latter poem's "Regiment," greatly outnumbers the other form, as it does in any really late poem. A consideration here is that the poet works, as he tells us, with the "auld translatioun" before him, and its use might naturally make him retain words and forms found there that he himself would not use, or use to the same extent. Indeed it may be partly to this effect of the old text that he refers when expressing a fear that his language is not like that of the *laife* "rest" of the poets of his day (*l.* 19307). Two peculiarities do win notice: he repeatedly sends Alexander riding through "glak and glen," two words with much the same meaning, but the former unknown to me in any poet of his time, and today known only, among Scots-speaking areas, in Aberdeenshire; also he prefers the unique *noutherane* "neither" with "na" or

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<sup>18</sup>*Devotional Pieces in Verse and Prose*, ed. J. A. W. Bennett, STS, 3rd Series, 23 (1955), 7-169, suggests on p. vii that Touris was from Aberdeen.

<sup>19</sup>*Ratis Raving*, p. liv.

"nor" to the elsewhere used "nouthur" with "na" or "nor," possibly again a usage of the north-east.

Further indications of period that for Scottish verse at least are as factual as the evidence from rhyme are the meter of the *Conquerour*, and its poet's end-of-century over-indulgence in rhetoric; notably in its device of *repetitio*. Meter is considered first.

All early Scots narrative that does not have a stanzaic form, as do *The Kingis Quair* and the alliterative *Howlat*, uses the octosyllabic couplet. This is true of the two poems in the *Buik*. Its dominance is shown by the fact that it does not occur to any Scots poet to use the five-stress couplet for a religious theme, as it did to John Lydgate. The moralistic poems published in Ritchie Girvan's *Ratis Raving* use the same meter as does all narrative verse. It was the meter of the "auld translatioun" of the *Roman*, as the surviving fragment *The Forray of Gadderis* bears witness. The term "auld" indeed refers mainly to this meter, which the poet of the *Conquerour* felt must be replaced by a metrical dress of his own time, what he felt to be a "worthe weid," the decasyllabic couplets (*l.* 19335).

It seems to have been the very oddly Anglicizing author of *Lancelot of the Laik*, who declares that compared to the poetry of Chaucer "our ryming is all bot derysioune," that introduced the new kind of couplet. If so, his example of about 1470, not later, was soon followed in the *Wallace*, later in the *Conquerour*, still later in Gavin Douglas's *Eneados*. We have thus again facts that deny to our poet a place in Sir Gilbert's poetical world.

A rhetoric cultivating repetition does not show in Scots verse before Hary's *Wallace* and there only twice, in laments by the hero unfortunately modelled on one in Chaucer's *Complaint of Mars*. After this, however, it is a much favored feature in verse of religious exhortation, in complaints against the unstable goddess Fortune, expressions of grief and loss. One can regret the passing of the more sober language that had a dignity, so that Barbour can think it fitting to the dying speech of Bruce, and the poet of *The Avowis* to the search for Cassamus, "They socht him all day to the nicht, / And fand him with the euin licht." (Ritchie, IV, 427, *ll.* 10673-4).

But rhetoric is common if intermittent throughout Henryson's *Morall Fabillis*, though used there chiefly for serio-comic effect. There is a seven-line stanza in "The Paddock and the Mous" that has the word "now" at both beginning and middle of each line, conveying the alternation from moment to moment of state and mood that man is subject to. Here *repetitio* is well used. His "Annunciation" is generally rhetorical, yet I can only think its opening wonderful, "Forcy as deid is likand lufe." again, the vain protests of poet and Cresseid against foolishly blind forces represented as gods are rhetoric, yet win our sympathy. Still, it is a reversion to the simple style that moves most, so much in her epitaph is meant by the phrase "Cresseid of

Troyis Toun." Dunbar may not have so much to say, but he is the poet most variously effective in the use of refrain or repeated phrase, as in *Timor mortis conturbat me*, or "O mankynd for the lufe of the." In the very fine "Tabill of Confessioun" repetition has a quiet voice, and makes the same device in the religious poems that we have noted seem tastelessly loud. Douglas's *Palice of Honour* c. 1501 and several Prologues of his *Eneados* use the technique, with a somewhat florid eloquence in the first case, as a poetical game, a relief from serious writing in the second.

With his contemporaries the poet of the *Conquerour* is very much addicted to rhetoric, but of the affected, not affecting, kind, and it will be agreed that no such labored artifice is in the poetry of Sir Gilbert's day. Straining to give his leading characters pathetic effect, a further degree of sad humanity, he deprives them of what they had. They die not as men but as rhetoricians. The kingly simplicity of Alexander in life as *Roman* and *Buik* convey it is lost in a wordy death.

Darius dying, deserted by traitors, bleeding in greatest pain, both hands cut off, addresses the flesh that he must leave as if it were a person setting out on a journey, to be plied with anxious and helpful questions:

Quhare gais þow now? in quhat land will þow leynd?  
 How art þow pur[v]jait? quhare thinkis þow to pas?  
 Quhame has þow send before to graith þai plais? (ll. 6857-9)

Meaningless morbid wit of this kind, along with untimely laments for golden beds and "palaice desolait," does not win the sympathy that the wretched man deserves.

Alexander faces death no longer the unrivalled adventurer but the counter of kingdoms lost that his gods and oracles had so often told him he was to lose, and in the prophesied way, the poisoned cup. In the eighteen lines given him for vain protest are ten with the refrain "Quhat wailþeis now?" ending with the inevitable "Quhat vaiþeis me my state imperiall?" (ll. 18056-74). A little later the queen comes in, as if on cue, with four lines of "Adew"s (ll. 18104-7). One remembers how in this poet's version of events in the foray of Gadderis that simple warrior Emenidus is made dramatically to despair, and thrice say "Adew" to the absent Alexander, once "Adew my lufe," a mode of address that has no source but the poet (ll. 3576-8). With this theatrical language reality disappears.

Battles too had been described, or rather the method used to avoid description of individual deeds, with a series of lines beginning "And," or as a variation "And mony," no doubt to impress on us how much was happening. We are assured again and again that the "douzeperis" did valiantly, though we are not always told what they did. At such times his rhetoric seems to

want an object. It is plain that the poet seeks to emulate the poets that I have mentioned, but wants the art and judgment to make their technique effective.

Such mere wordiness, so far from the spare, essentially simple utterance of Hay in prose, that is as natural-seeming as expression always is in the *Buik*, was partly due to more language-loving times, as the rhyming and change of meter, which gave him the freedom to completely reword his original, were due also to those times. The wordiness, however, also belonged to himself and it went with his desire to say more than Hay had said, and this leads to our considering the poet's peculiar conception of his undertaking.

Cartwright was correct in saying that what was made was a new poem, though not correct in thinking it Hay's poem. What the poet intended was a "making," an original composition, as he claimed it to be, though made for the most part of another man's materials (*ll.* 19291). With this oddly conceived ambition he does as he pleases, adds, omits, entertains, instructs, no orderly method kept that the Hay known to us would have recognized as such. And still he must finally return to the path set for him by the old translation.

The necessary shortening of original and added matter, with sorry consequences, is the feature of this procedure that will be most noted here. Addition requires omission, often of the most memorable matter: from *The Forray* the greater part of Emenidus's vain pleading with comrade after comrade to leave the field and ride to warn Alexander of the plight of his forayers, omitted too the famous ride of the sorely disabled Aristé, even so reluctant, whose saving role is given to herdsmen, whom Emenidus seems to have forgotten that he sent on that vital errand, herdsmen whose strangely unhindered and successful mission brings Alexander early to the rescue, and allows many scenes of fighting to be cut; from *The Avowis* the fierce Porrus who made a "lardnare" of his foes, in his place a quite harmless, almost inactive fellow of the same name, his vengeful killing of Cassamus unmentioned, as is his desire to marry Fesonas, that spirited lady who made the advances to him being quietly wedded to a quite unknown lord, to whom our poet in a hurry does not even trouble to give a name, this abrupt treatment of the lovers being due to the poet's recollection that after defeat in battle Porrus must be sent fleeing to India, there to assume his appointed role, as in the translation, of antagonist when Alexander arrives.

Inconceivable as it is that Hay would have so remade his own early work, it is equally inconceivable that he would have allowed farce to enter the heroic tale, but in it comes. It enters with a shortened version of *Le Lai d'Aristote* by Henri d'Andeli: an infatuated Aristotle lets a young woman

saddle, bridle and ride him, since when, we are told, clerks have taken a fitting revenge (*ll.* 7163-219).<sup>20</sup>

We now find our borrower turning more appropriately to Hay's *Governance* (pp. 75-6). He will turn to it again for the suggestion of a fantastic tale, also for much the same purpose as had the author of *Lancelot of the Laik*, the latter rendering Hay's discourse on kingship with admirable concision and force, our poet interpreting in more general and religious terms. Now he tells us, as did Hay, how Alexander asked Aristotle's advice on the treatment of intractable Persian lords, and taking it the king showed them justice, clemency and generosity, thus making them the most obedient of his conquered subjects, they never having known such treatment from Darius (*ll.* 7305-66).

The lengthy selection from *The Avowis* which follows was indeed ill considered (*ll.* 7451-9268). The seductive popularity of the tale may have betrayed him, scenes in both it and *The Forray*, but it especially, are reflected in the *Wallace*.<sup>21</sup> Yet, as in the case of the episode of the foray in the "auld translatioun" that was "in þis cuntrie sa comoun" (*ll.* 6029-30), popular, it does not seem to have troubled him that his necessary cuts, or rather rents, would be recognized as such by many disappointed readers.

What would have made *The Avowis* specially popular in his day was its portrayal of courtly love in "Venus chalmer" in the palace of Effesoun. and it is here that I have to record a much appreciated debt to Dr. Sally Mapstone, her communicated notice of the very revealing use of a source quite outside the poet's reading of Hay. In the course of a love-game of question and answer presided over by a chosen "King of lufe" the lady Ydory asks, "Quhilk [ar] the thewis of ane gud women," and the King answers at length. The irregular line is a natural slip, for both question and answer (*ll.* 8478-596) are a plagiarizing selection from the early fifteenth century poem *The Thewis Off Gud Women*, published in Professor Girvan's already cited work. The poet who would amuse with farce that even he felt somewhat inappropriate, for his Alexander disapproves and just barely smiles, can also interrupt courtly gaiety with a sermon.

The interest for me of Dr. Mapstone's communication was not only the source, or her observation that here was a more line-for-line rendering of a used original than any that I had noted, but that it was this writer's practice to convert early Scots octosyllabic couplets, wherever he had a use for them,

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<sup>20</sup>Henri d'Andeli, *Le Lai d'Aristote*, ed. Maurice Delbouille (Paris, 1951). Most likely Sir Gilbert had a copy and translated it, but not for this use.

<sup>21</sup>*Hary's Wallace*, ed. M. P. McDiarmid, STS, 4th Series, 4, 5 (1968-9), II, Notes, pp. 177, 191, 221, 260. My belief in Hay's authorship of the *Buik* is stated in I, cx.

into decasyllabic ones. He had done this with the contents of the *Buik*, *The Forray* that was from the *Roman* and the 1430 *Avowis*, I had no doubt that the statement in my 1985 Introduction to *Barbour's Bruce*, that it was an early octosyllabic translation of the *Roman* that the poet knew and made decasyllabic in the *Conquerour*, was correct (I, 29).

A certain justice could also be recognized in Dr. Mapstone's suggestion that one could be too hard on the transformer. By changing Hay's verse he might have removed all possibility, except for the happily surviving *Forray*, of appreciating Hay's achievement in his earliest and most ambitious work, but he had at least preserved much of its matter. Indeed I will later notice an interesting personal comment of Sir Gilbert that was thus preserved. It is to the same poet that we owe important information about Hay and his translation. Perhaps I would have found it easier to be lenient, if with the change of meter and with rewording there had been no interference with matter, but there is.

Having ended his treatment of *The Avowis* as described, he at once turned to *Governance*. This treatise represents itself as a book given by Aristotle to Alexander at leave-taking; the *Roman* speaks only of *un livre de sermons*. In it is a reminder how vital Aristotle's advice had once been (p. 110). The vengeful queen of India had presented the king with an attractive girl nourished on serpents' venom, but Aristotle's searching scrutiny had diagnosed her condition, and he advised the king to have her nature tested. From Hay's brief account we learn that this was done, that observation of her confirmed Aristotle's suspicion, which was "approvit before the clerely," but not how it was proved. This we learn from the poet's tale (ll. 9281-350). He tells us that a prisoner slept with her and died. Clearly Hay and the poet know the same tale, though the queen's motivation, the deaths of her brother Duke Melchis, who is only now given that relationship, and of Clarus who figured in *The Avowis*, here said to be her cousin, can only be the poet's invention.

The shared basis of the story is interesting for the support that it gives to my conjecture that the author of the *Conquerour* had lived in Roslin castle and had access not only to the Hay Manuscript but also to Hay's other work, perhaps a version of *Le Lai d'Aristote*. Certainly he would find translations of the *Roman* and *Les Voeux*, the English treatise used in his "regiment," with it a physiognomy. There is a hint too that he read *The Buik of Knychthede*, not only for its statement that Alexander's generosity attracted his enemies, but for its report of Judas Maccabeus exhorting his men, "traist nocht that grete multitude makis grete victory" (Stevenson, II, 55). In the poet's version of *The Avowis* is a line not in the *Buik*'s, Cassamus exhorts his nephew not to fear the Indian host, "For multitude makis na victory" (l. 7861).

After telling his fantastic tale the poet shows no sign of being in a hurry to get to India and its marvels as he had once said he was (*ll.* 6037-8). Now his aim is to versify and improve on selected matter of the *The Buke of the Governauce of Princis*, fetching further matter from an English version of the *Secreta Secretorum*. His use of both Hay's French description of his work, a "regement" (government; Stevenson, I, 77), and Hay's title are in these two lines, "Ane Regiment I sall compile and mak, / The quhilk salbe of princis gouernance" (*ll.* 9356-7).

Our known borrower classifies his kings as does Hay under the heading "the foure maner of kingis," but orders them in his own way. This, like the different wording, is not a material difference, but one such must be recognized, and here the conjecture comes in, as it will again, that it is not a man of the world like Hay who speaks, but a priest. The king so generous that, like one who renounces the world, he gives all, keeps nothing and dies poor but honored, is if anything admired, not denounced as he is by Hay for *fule largess* "a fool's prodigality." Yes, a king should show himself generous, but give nothing to those that need nothing, reward those that give good service, and bear always in mind the needs of his office.

The same practical bent, responding to what was practical in his text, strengthened by years of observation of a "maist worthy King," shows again when he uses the topic of the five senses to comment on the demands that government makes. The poet like his English source, an MS like the Lambeth one,<sup>22</sup> speaks of the mind's five entries and five "portaris" (*l.* 9739) that carry intelligence to it, and gives to the descriptive fancy a spiritual direction that is not in *Governauce*, and here will have its statement later. Sir Gilbert speaks simply of the five "wittis," kinds of knowledge, and proceeds to a more congenial fancy, a governmental application. The king cannot himself attend to all the departments and particular issues of government, so, addressing himself to Alexander Aristotle is made to advise: choose "fyve souveraine baillies governouris under the, and fyve counsailouris" (Stevenson, II, 147). Using the term "baillies" Hay has in mind the French *baillifs* which "governouris" translates exactly, one, for example, to have charge of the king's exchequer, others as men discreet in their judgments to exercise his authority. Hay returns in *Governauce* to this idea of discreet "baillies."

The chapter of *Governauce* that treats of decision-making is entitled "How a king or a prince suld ken him self" (Stevenson, II, 147). That concluding pregnant phrase gets a difference of interpretation, still more of expression, from prose writer and poet. It is to Dr. Mapstone that I owe my serious attention to what the poet has to say. The comment is my own.

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<sup>22</sup>"The Governauce of Lordschips," in *Three Prose Versions of the Secreta Secretorum*, ed. R. Steele, EETS, Extra Series, 74 (1898).



Hay's Aristotle begins with an admonition profound and simply said, as is ever Hay's way, know "how worthy thy saule is and thy lyf," (Stevenson, II, 147) then decisions will be made by "rycht and reason." To the prose writer it seems that this needs only to be stated to be recognized as true, so he does not dwell on it, but proceeds to the actual process of reaching a decision: the king should know his own mind in any given case, by all means consult with his counsellors, but separately so that the presence of another does not influence the advice given, and let none know where his mind tends. In this way, his decision being announced as his own, he wins respect.

The poet does not take the phrase in its two meanings, at least he does not seem to, single-mindedly he develops Aristotle's opening advice. Self-knowledge is a spiritual undertaking. A man may be defined as the kingdom of a soul. The kingdom's judgment-seat and parliament is the mind. There sit the soul's three agents, Understanding, Reason that judges, its remembrancer Memory. Yet Reason may err, then comes in the great corrector Conscience. The king and final actor of this spiritual realm is Will (*ll.* 9703-814).

It is a clever, even impressively imagined, construction, yet to think or speak in these abstract terms would have been alien to Hay's mental habit. Rightly he would have thought the simple admonition that his Aristotle gives to kings more immediately meaningful and recognizably right. Aristotle, he would have thought, gives direct counsels, both spiritual and practical, not an allegoric circumlocution. Hay with his chamberlain's close observation of politics would probably have objected that what the poet describes is the process of salvation without reference to government.

My comment, however, should refer strictly to the claim that Hay is the author of the "Regiment," and so of the *Conquerour*. The personalities as revealed, in thought and mode of expression, of Hay and the poet are quite different, an opposition that we have witnessed already in their judgments on what Hay denounces as "fule largess." Again, one has to ask, why should he want to versify his sufficiently forceful prose, prose that along with its matter had the compliment of imitation? And there is the point that allegorical thinking and personifying is most affected in Scots verse as the century nears its end, in *King Hart*, in certain poems of Henryson, Dunbar, Douglas.

This late dating of the "Regiment" is certified in its language. The 643 lines in question display ten cases of once guttural *e* matched in rhyme with pure *e*, a greater number than in any of the much longer poems of Hay's lifetime. Wyntoun's *Chronicle* need not be taken into account. The old words "anerlie," "foroutin," are gone, "alswa" gives way to "als." For two cases of "the quhilk(is)" there are fifteen of "quhilk(is)," the later preference.

Still in connection with language one notes the absence of Hay's Gallisms, characteristic as his prose shows. Verse would not check them as the *Buik* proves. We should look at a few examples within a few pages: ; "bryssis the reugle," *brise la règle* "breaks the rule," p. 81, line 26; "pais the balaunce," *pèse la balance* "weights the balance," p. 82, line 10; "sufficiency of conduyt," *sufficiency de conduit*, "enough guidance," p. 85, line 20; "corrumpis and desturnis," *corrompt et détourne* "corrupts and turns aside," p. 88, line 14; "tailyd," *taillé* "cut out, fitted," p. 88, line 18; "trevisse," OF *travise* "turns," p. 91, line 20. Adjectives can follow nouns as in "delectacioun naturale," p. 97, line 3, and "the magestee ryale," p. 98, line 7. The relevance of this obtrusive feature of Hay's language to the determination of his authorship of a work seems to have gone unremarked. It is quite absent from the *Conquerour*.

Cartwright notes the possibly significant proximity of a Hay item in the Contents list of the Asloan Miscellany, written about 1515, to one that names two sections of the *Conquerour*.<sup>23</sup> What the Hay item was we can only guess. It is described as his "document," which should mean teaching. Mapstone suggests, as did Cartwright, that the description refers to instructive verses, and this is possible.<sup>24</sup> The alternative title to *The Thewis Off Gud Women*, that Mapstone discovered reworded and inserted in the *Avowis* section of the *Conquerour*, was *Documenta Matris Ad Filiam*. A consideration here, however, is that, just as in that case, if the verses had a specific theme they would have a specific or at least generally, perhaps poetically, indicative title. Asloan takes his secret with him.

By itself, without supporting circumstance, proximity provides no arguments with it at best conjecture. The miscellany is what the name implies: pieces of prose or verse are set side by side with little or no connection. Thus in the list, its texts sadly lost, after an English homily on good manners and upbringing comes Hay's "document," next the "Regiment" with the "phisnomye" from the *Conquerour*, then a "ballat of þe Incarnacioun" that is probably Robert Henryson's poem on that theme, "The Anunciation." And so the listing with only the occasional name proceeds. Where there is no method no deductions are possible.

Of course, the Alexander and *Governaunce* matter in the *Conquerour* would have brought Hay to mind, but Asloan having read that poem's epilogue giving the early popular translation of the *Roman* to Hay, and being uninfluenced by the Laing tradition, would not have thought of Hay as author

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<sup>23</sup>*The Asloan Manuscript, A Miscellany in Prose and Verse Written by John Asloan*, ed. W. A. Craigie, STS, 2nd Series, 14, 16 (1923-4), I, xiv.

<sup>24</sup>For the *Documenta* see *Ratis Raving*, pp. 80-100.

of the *Conquerour*. Nor would so omnivorous a reader have needed instruction from the epilogue; he would have read the translation in octosyllabic couplets, and had no difficulty in distinguishing its author from the poet who wrote in decasyllabic ones.

It is not outside the *Conquerour* but in it that evidence concerning its poet, particularly the date of his poem and Hay's part in it, is to be found. It is, as shown, in the very late fifteenth century rhyming. It is in the comparative disuse of words and forms common in the prose and poetry of Hay's lifetime, complete in the significant case of "foroutin." It is in the absence of Gallicisms from the *Conquerour*. It is in the transformation of the octosyllabic couplets of early non-stanzaic verse to a meter that only came into use about 1470. It is in the end-of-the-century addiction to rhetoric, and its device of repetition. It is in the shortening and mutilating of important parts of the translated story of the *Roman* that Hay would never have perpetrated. It is in the difference of persons, ways of thought and expression that comparison of *Governaunce* with the "Regiment" reveals. Indeed it is in the patent difference of personality that all Hay's writings display from the one that we encounter in the *Conquerour*. Above all it is in two statements, one made early in the latter poem's text, the other in its epilogue, when considered together, and in the interconnection of so-called poet's text and editorially separated "Scribal epilogue."

The first statement has been noted and cannot be thought other than the poet's, that there was an "auld translatioun" of which he availed himself to describe Alexander's wars (*ll.* 6027-32). It is the description "auld" that is significant, for it gives the translation to someone from a time much earlier than the poet's, and puts him late in the century. Cartwright found the statement puzzling and could not think to what it might refer.<sup>25</sup> Yet in the last lines allowed by him to the poet the latter breaks off his "awin excusatioun" to give Hay's, actually not a proper excusation but a statement of facts about Hay's early work and life, promising to return to his own excusation later.

Why does he break off for this purpose? It occurs to him that contemporaries, recognizing his many-sided indebtedness to Hay, will expect him to do justice to the older poet, at least to mention the work to which he owed most. So he begins to tell us about "him that maid the first translation" of the *Roman*, the first, he assures us, that ever Scotland knew, Sir Gilbert Hay writing in France (*ll.* 19312-34). The only name that he gives to Hay's work is "þe romance" (*l.* 19338), and I have sometimes wondered if the reason why he uses, without naming, *The Avowis* is that he thought of it as part of the same romance. Be that as it may, plainly the "auld" and the "first" are

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<sup>25</sup> Cartwright, Diss., p. xxxix.

the same. The poet is writing at one end of the century about a poet who wrote at the other. Put very simply, the poet of the *Conquerour* and Sir Gilbert Hay are two persons from different times.

The above reading of the close of the text precedes the supposedly scribal addition and begins my illustration of the interconnection and unity of the two unwarrantably separated texts. Just before the happy end of work designated as the poet's, when the last of the story has been told, the cry goes up, "Lovit be þe Lord the drop of grace me send" (l. 19288), and goes up again at the close of the epilogue, "Lovit be þe Lord, that gaue me grace þarto" (l. 19365). As we saw, in the last lines editorially granted him the poet promises to "agane eftir rehears" his excusation. Like the statement on Hay for which he broke off his first attempt, the renewed rehearsal could only be in the epilogue, where indeed it is given. To the earlier expressed fears that his language is not "lyik the laife," the rest of contemporary poets (l. 19307), and that he has misspelled words, he now adds the fear of having carelessly omitted "Sillabis or wordis" (l. 19348).

The connection and unity are clear also in the continued habit of repetition. Not only in the last lines of his assigned text does he promise to "rehears" Hay's excusation, but in the aforesaid lines he needlessly brings in the information, "And with my awin hand wreittis," a wording used previously in line 18571, and in the epilogue must say about Sir Gilbert "Richt sua he wreit with his awin propir hand" (l. 19332). If, improbably, we had any doubt about this love of the repeated word surviving as the writer reached his epilogue, the love having been shown so often in the poem, it must have vanished as we read his praise of Hay's translation:

Thus worthe war it hade a worthe weid,  
For the great honour of the worthe king . . .  
Als for the worthyne of þe romance.

(ll. 19335-6; 19338)

The "worthe weid" we know.

But my point has been made, the arbitrarily separated texts are one and of no poem by Hay. It was no scribe but the poet of the *Conquerour* who wrote into his epilogue the date 21 August 1499. How could an unargued conjecture win such uncritical acceptance, and the date in an epilogue become the date when a scribe laid down his pen? True that unknown and nameless poets are unpopular with the historians of literature, and Sir Gilbert a known poet is mentioned, but it was never likely that a scribe would so intrude as to write an author's epilogue, and in its conclusion address as an author might, "ȝe worthe readeris" (l. 19346). One line might be read as referring to the actual author or a previous scribe, "With help of him that maid the first indyt" (l. 19344), but only refers in the poet's repetitive way to

"him that maid the first translatioun," that is, to the writer's very helpful copy of Hay's translation (*l.* 6031). The word "indyit" or "endite" in the poet's time commonly meant a composition, poem, thus Gavin Douglas praises the *Aeneid* as Virgil's "fresche endite."

At this point we can begin to consider Hay's claim to the *Buik* and its contents, *The Forray* and *The Avowis*, our starting point being what the unknown poet tells us about the translation of *Le Roman d'Alexandre*:

Quba causit this buike agane to wreittin be,  
 Quhair and be quhome, quhat tyme it wreittin was, . . .  
 Translaittit it was forsuith, as I hard say,  
 At þe instance off Lord Erskine, be *Schir* Gilbert þe Hay,  
 Quhilk into France trewl[i]e was duelland  
 Weill [four-and-twenty] ȝeir out of Scotland,  
 And in the King of Franceis service was,  
 (*ll.* 19314-5; 19319-23)

So far as it goes nothing could be clearer, and I fail to understand how the lines could be misread, even ignored, as they were in part by Ritchie, who chose to pay no heed to statements about time and place by a supposed scribe or *remanieur* "reviser." The poet's facts, as I have shown reason to think, derive from the Hay tradition at Roslin. The "Quhair" of translation was France; the person "be quhome" the romance was translated was Sir Gilbert Hay; the "tyme" was during his service with the king, and by "service" would be meant his well-known office of chamberlain to the king, which would begin about 1429 or a little later. With that office would come the means and moments of leisure that it could provide better than the years in the field. Even a following statement that he felt the want of Scots-speaking company points away from military duties shared with other Scots to converse that was mainly with French nobles, soldiers and churchmen.

The place, and generally the stated time, are confirmed by an unexpected witness, Sir Gilbert himself. The confirmation, only recently noted by me, is in a personal insertion into his translation that the version of the 1499 poet had retained. An intending assassin, hoping to please Darius and be rewarded with the daughter that he loves, wins access to Alexander's presence on account of the ensign that all his men wear, on which follows Hay's comment, "As we do here the cors of Sanct Andrew, / Or Sanct Denys of France þe kynd awow" (*ll.* 6452-3). This last term, shortened for rhyme in the 1499 rewording, is in *The Forray* as "avowie," correctly trisyllabic, from *avoué* "patron" (Ritchie, I, 20, *l.* 606). Hay comparing as he translates is plainly in wartime France, where Scots declared their side by displaying the saltire cross or the fleur-de-lys. After the 1430s no great bodies of Scots re-

mained in France. The later Scots Guard was a lesser thing. The personal reference could not have been made in 1460, Laing's date for the *Conquerour*.

The traditionary idea that the *Conquerour* itself was Hay's translation of the *Roman* is thus countered not only by my demonstration of a single text, a 1499 date, the origin of the epilogue's statements being the author, not a scribe, but also as it were by Sir Gilbert speaking in person. Since this early dating means that the Lord Erskine involved was not Thomas, as Laing supposed, but his more adventuring father Sir Robert, the question arises how the latter, who did not know Hay could have thought of him, and found him a willing translator. The obvious, only possible, answer is that he met the chamberlain in France, found that they shared an interest in the Alexander epic, and what he asked appealed to Hay.

Opportunity came knocking at Erskine's door. He was the keeper of Dumbarton Castle, guardian of the port.<sup>26</sup> In March 1436 the young Princess Margaret came there. A French ship waited to take her to France, where she would be married to the dauphin Louis at Tours 25 June. Lord Sinclair as his king's representative was in charge, the man who with Erskine would always figure in Sir Gilbert's story. On his barren rock Sir Robert would welcome the change of scene, presence at a great event. So, if my view of what must have happened is correct, Erskine made the voyage, met the chamberlain, found him interesting and interested company, and had his request granted. Some time after June Sir Gilbert turned his mind to translation.

That the translation was made in the 1430s we know, and I have shown cause why Hay might have been at work on it in 1436-37. This agrees with, indeed is indicated by, a closely following date, that suggests a reasonable ascription. Unless by strange circumstance there was an unknown Scot around just then with the same linguistic competence and peculiarity, his natural recourse to Gallicisms, the same poetical tendency and talent, the same motived interest in the Alexander stories, Sir Gilbert was translator not only of the *Roman* but also of *Les Voeux*, as he had been of *Li Fuerre*, of which *The Forray* is a partial version.

The date of *The Avowis* has always been misstated as 1438, by myself among others, but what its epilogue says is that since the birth of Christ fourteen hundred and thirty years are past, "And aucht, and sumdele mair I

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<sup>26</sup>Sir Robert Erskine's estates on the south side of the Firth of Clyde faced Dumbarton Castle. He had seized it and had himself recognized as its keeper. Later he claimed the earldom of Mar, and his claim being unjustly denied still used that title. He had fought in England and been a hostage for James I.

wis" (Ritchie, IV, 442, l. 39). That is to say, the year 1438 is past and a fair part of 1439 also.

A little less than three years would not be too brief a term for the translator's two labors. There may sometimes have been a Scots scribe available for dictation, and apart from that there is his method as stated in the epilogue, "Bot said furth as me come to mouth" (Ritchie, IV, 442, l. 14), a run-on rendering into the first Scots phrasing that came to him. As we have seen, he remembers his *Bruce*. In brief, he translates well, yet makes the work his own.

That the translator of the one story should proceed naturally to work on the other can be understood, they were popularly associated. Paul Meyer not only found MSS of the *Roman* that had *Les Voeux* as a sequel, but also some that inserted it at the very point where *The Avowis* begins.<sup>27</sup>

It is a suggestion of Graeme Ritchie that *The Forray*, which narrates the rout of Duke Betys by Alexander's men, and which prefaces *The Avowis* in the *Buik*, was a translation made "subsequently no doubt."<sup>28</sup> His reason is the independent appearance of *The Avowis* complete with prologue and epilogue. He does not question the common authorship, presumably because of similar style, shared linguistic features and common use of phrasing from Barbour. Without question he is right about the placing of *The Forray* being an afterthought, a later recognition of *The Avowis* having to be read as its sequel.

In the famous foray Duke Betys recognizes defeat and flees, leaving Gaudifer to be the hero of a rearguard action, fighting so ably and bravely for his lord that both his slayer Emenidus and Alexander regret his death. It is that regret that explains events in *The Avowis*. Alexander later meeting the grieving half-brother of Gaudifer is moved to make amends and defend the dead hero's family in the besieged city of Effesoun.

Ritchie is wrong, however, in his assumption that the later placing meant a later translation, and this because he thinks only of Barbour. Yet Hay had done with his translation of the *Roman* and in it *Li Fuerre* some time before *The Avowis* of 1438-39, and his translation of *Li Fuerre* was there to be used. Is not the simplest, the only permissible supposition, that Hay, having completed *The Avowis* and had his afterthought, made the necessary selection from his fuller account of the conflict with Duke Betys, and gave its prefatory placing?

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<sup>27</sup>Paul Meyer, "Etude sur les Manuscrits du *Roman d'Alexandre*," in *Romania*, XI (1882), 247.

<sup>28</sup>Ritchie, I, l.

However, before the particular arguments for Hay's authorship of *The Forray* are reviewed, an interesting point concerning the relationship of that poem and *The Avowis* should be made. That the author of the two poems, for it becomes plain that they had the one author, wished them to be read as a single story is made clear not only by the use of one of them as introduction to the other, but also by a simple alteration in the two opening lines of *The Avowis* that seems to have escaped notice. It is a departure from the French text that in a writer who makes no such changes elsewhere cannot be accounted for by oversight, carelessness, and must be on purpose.

Where *Les Voeux* has "Après ce qu'Alexandre ot Dedephur conquis / Et a force d'espée occis le duc Melchis," *The Avowis*, though in lines 3 and 4 it mentions the taking of a city "Dedifeir" with an unnamed ruler, has for its first two lines, "Qvhen Alexander, the King of prys, / Had discumfit the duke Betys." (Ritchie, II, 107, ll. 1-2) Nothing, it will be noted, is said here of any action of the foray outside the scope of the introductory *Forray*, nothing of the slaying of Betys, only as in that poem of his being put to rout. The effect of this small connecting change, doubtless made at the same time that *The Forray* was excerpted and given its placing, is the clear understanding that the two tales are one, action and sequel, and have one author.

It seems likely that the connection being thus made, the two tales circulated as one, in one copy, alongside and independent of the "buikis" of the "auld translatioun" that had Hay's fuller narrative of the foray, the one that, altering greatly, the 1499 poet uses.

It is proper now to review the points that can be made for Hay's claim to the connected *Forray* and *Avowis* in the *Buik*. It is proper because he is the one known Scots translator of their decade in France, and because the case for his claim has never before been made. My few statements in editions of the *Wallace* and the *Bruce* do not amount to a case.

Sir Gilbert is the only Scot whose name can be given to the translation of a romance of Alexander, and that the romance containing *Li Fuerre* from which *The Forray* derives, and to which *Les Voeux* was the recognized sequel. It was also from *Le Roman d'Alexandre* that the appeal of Gracien to Alexander against Duke Melchis came, the appeal that was to suggest in *Les Voeux* that of Cassamus against Clarus of India. Indeed it was at the close of the Melchis incident that scribes inserted *Les Voeux*, as if considering it an episode of the *Roman*. In other cases it was appended. Certainly it would be natural for Hay to translate both romances, and to preface *The Avowis* with a selection from his translated *Li Fuerre*. One should remember too the popularity of *Les Voeux* in Scotland. It is used in the *Bruce*.

We know what good reason there is to place Hay's version of the *Roman* in the decade to which *The Avowis* 1438-9 belongs, and what reasons of circumstance put it as close as 1436-7 or 1437-8. This close dating, since there



is no rival claim, suggests common authorship, and this would include *The Forray*. The shared characteristics of language in *Forray* and *Avowis* will duly be noted, and with the more than probable origin of the former in Hay's version of the *Roman* will again indicate the one author.

Ritchie notes in the opening of *The Forray* a remarkable condensing of the text being translated, as if epitomizing were intended.<sup>29</sup> It would indeed be a remarkable method. He attempts no explanation but there is a simple one. It is a translation that is being condensed, Hay's. He has made his version of *Li Fuerre*, and the sooner to have done with the selection from it that is to preface *The Avowis*, a task deemed proper but for the repetition involved felt tedious, he begins by abbreviating and rewording, then finds it easier to repeat what he has already written, his full translation. This explanation of a changing procedure not at all remarkable for Hay connects not only *The Forray* but also *The Avowis* with the translator of the *Roman*, which has *Li Fuerre*.

And now the poet of the *Conquerour* makes his useful contribution to this argument. His text poses two questions: first, whether he considers his three selections from *The Avowis* to be from a work of Hay, and second, whether his rewriting of Hay's version of *Li Fuerre* retains anywhere a wording close enough to that of *The Forray* to indicate a common original text. His surprising retention of Sir Gilbert's inserted comment on the ensigns borne by Scots soldiers in France may be remembered.

In discussing the first question the main point made is the poet's habitual and apparently exclusive recourse to other work of Hay, when making additions to the latter's translation that relate to the princely virtues as illustrated in Alexander, and especially as taught by Aristotle. This recourse may not show simply in direct borrowing, but in the development of topics in, or suggested by, that other work. However it shows, the source is Hay.

The additions from, and developments of the content of *The Buik of the Governauce of Princis*, a series of instructive letters from Aristotle to Alexander, are many and have been noted and discussed. The most considerable example of both kinds of indebtedness is "Off the Regiment of Princis," in which title and much of the matter are from Hay, but the poet's own interpretation is added. The "Phisnomye" or physiognomy that follows, and is the last important addition, was meant to guide princes in the choice of officers, such guides being occasional supplements to Aristotle's "Secrete of Secretis," of which *Governauce* is a sample, so that it may have been written by Hay or, as we have it, rewritten by the later poet. Certainly parts of its advice are in Hay's prose work.

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<sup>29</sup>Ritchie, I, li.

What these additions indicate is that like them the three selections from *The Avowis* should be viewed as deriving from the unknown poet's preferred source, Hay's own work. In agreement with this view is the point that it is not at all likely that the greatest of the selections, amounting to almost two thousand lines (*ll.* 7451-9268), a version of *The Avowis* pretending to completeness, though radically cut and altered, would have been incorporated in Hay's narrative if it were known to have another author. *The Avowis* was popular as Hary's borrowings in the *Wallace* illustrate, and such popularity should mean that its author was known.

The two other selections are from Marcien's sermon to his uncle and king, Clarus, on the avarice that makes him be hated and lose the loyalty of his men (*Ritchie*, III, *ll.* 6698-735). In the *Conquerour* Marcien's complaint is given to the embittered lord Nestades writing to Darius (*ll.* 5475-80), and elsewhere his warning to Clarus that the man who covets all loses all (*Ritchie*, III, *ll.* 6732-5) is repeated almost word for word (*ll.* 5879-82). In *The Buke of Knychthede* (Stevenson, II, 38-9) Sir Gilbert remembers not only the sermon's words on disloyal soldiers but also its contrast of a covetous king with Alexander, whose liberal giving has helped him to conquer all the world.

The answer to the first question has been given, and the answer to the second question is to the same effect. As remarked it is Hay's fuller version of *Li Fierre* that the unknown poet has before him, and follows in his own way. Unfortunately it is not Hay's way as regards expression, except for two moments, at the beginning and close of *The Forray*'s story, when we see that *Forray* and *Conquerour* use the one text, Sir Gilbert's translation. The fuller wording that was a consequence of replacing Hay's octosyllabic couplets with decasyllabic ones should be remembered. The order of quotation at both the significant points will be first the *Conquerour*, then *The Forray*.

In the first case Alexander builds a castle on a seagirt isle closely facing Tyre:<sup>30</sup>

Ane litill ile, ane crag out in þe sey,  
And þair gar big ane stark castell suld he,  
And garnis it with men and with victale, (*ll.* 3039-41)

Vpon a craig, was in the sie,  
Ane stalwart Castel gart he mak,  
& garnison & vittal tak. (*Ritchie*, I, 1, *ll.* 4-6)

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<sup>30</sup>Hay's text in both *Conquerour* and *Forray* refers to this line, "Armes et garisons i fait assés porter" (*Ritchie*, I, 1). The French says nothing of a crag in the sea, yet both quotations mention it.

Emenidus after his encounter with Gaudifer, fatal to the latter, swoons for loss of blood. Alexander fearing him dead, laments over him:<sup>31</sup>

. . . "Allace, my God, in The I traist—  
Now am I sikker, and I tyne þis doery,  
Adew fra me the floure of wictory;  
Now sall I neuer haue ioy into my hert . . ." (ll. 3958-61)

. . . . . "allace,  
Gif that thow deis, gentill knicht,  
The flour is done of all my micht.  
I trow neuer mair ioyous sall I be  
Into my hart, gif I tyne the . . ."  
(Ritchie, I, 103, ll. 3262-6)

That the first two quotations are related is plain. The second two make the connection quite clear. Allowing for the 1499 poet's known love of the rhetorical "Adew," and ignoring the words supplied after "Allace" in his first line and before "and" in his second, the correspondences become plain: in both laments "allace," "neuer haue ioy" and "neuer mair ioyous . . . be," "and [=gif] I tyne" with "gif I tyne," the shared phrases, "the floure," "into my hert." The connection is the use of the same text, Hay's translation, the important difference being that *The Forray* represents that text unchanged in both meter and words. My notes to the quotations should make the connection of texts yet more clear.

A final point in agreement with the attribution of these poems to Hay is the observation of Graeme Ritchie, perhaps more learned in the French medieval literature than the Scottish, that the author of the two poems is much inclined to Gallicisms.<sup>32</sup> We have seen this inclination very plain in Hay's p[rose] translation. In verse it is modified by a tradition-oriented medium, and in his case, writing heroic verse, by the strong influence of Barbour's *Bruce*. Yet the French element is still plain.

The number of his French-derived words not in *The Dictionary Of The Older Scottish Tongue*, or not there in a sense that he gives to them, or cited only as his, for he has words in all these categories, is, of course, not re-

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<sup>31</sup> See *The Medieval French Roman d'Alexandre...Text of the Arsenal and Venice Versions*, ed. Milan S. La Du (New York, 1965), I, 125:

"Gentil, se vos morez, je me tieng per ataint  
Ne non cuit que ja mais mis cuers joie demaint..."  
(Venice version, ll. 2645-6)

<sup>32</sup>Ritchie, I, liv.

markable, but it is remarkable when compared with the count of such words in any one other Scots poet of his time. What is very notable is the frequency of occurrence of his French words. So many of them are taken direct from the French text as if natural to him, for example, "auancement" from *avancement* "advancement"; "musardy" from *musardie* "idle dreaming"; "nyste" from *nicete* "foolishness."

Also he tends to prefer them to Scots equivalents. A few examples will serve: "beauschir" pronounced as in *beausire*; the ever-recurring "bounte" with so many meanings probably pronounced as in *bonté*; "blason" much preferred to "scheild"; "droury" trisyllabic as in *druerie*, and as common as "lufe"; "riuage" which is *rivage*, his one word for "shore." This natural recourse to French words, its degree only paralleled in *Governaunce* and *Knychthede*, agrees, of course, with his long service in France.

These listed points make clear Sir Gilbert Hay's good claim to the unspoiled *Buik of Alexander*, where alone the poet admired by William Dunbar and Sir David Lindsay is now to be found.

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