

Maria
Bloch-Trojnar
Anna
Malicka-Kleparska
Karolina
Drabikowska (Eds.)

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Wydawnictwo KUL, ul. Konstantynów I H, 20-708 Lublin, tel. 81 740-93-40, fax 81 740-93-50,
e-mail: wydawnictwo@kul.lublin.pl, <http://wydawnictwo.kul.lublin.pl>

Druk i oprawa: volumina.pl Daniel Krzanowski
ul. Ks. Witolda 7-9, 71-063 Szczecin, tel. 91 812 09 08, e-mail: druk@volumina.pl

How to measure the French influence – Lexical choices in a 14th-century English Psalter¹

Kinga Lis

1. Introduction

The present paper touches upon a few interconnected issues pertaining to a 14th-century English Psalter rendition known under various titles, the most appropriate of which appears to be the most recent one – the *Middle English Glossed Prose Psalter*.² Although descriptive, the title does little to warn the reader about the complexities of the translation, features which render the text anything but standard and predictable.

In order to do some justice to the intricate nature of this Psalter, I will try to draw the reader's attention to an aspect of the rendition which has always been obscured by a different, allegedly conspicuous, feature of the text: a profusion of borrowings from French. However, as shall become transparent in the course of the investigation, the latter does not, in fact, contribute significantly to the exceptional character of the translation.

Before I delve into the details concerning the study, it is necessary to provide the reader with some information concerning the characteristics of the *Middle English Glossed Prose Psalter* (henceforth MEGPP) which render it unusual in the context of the contemporary Psalter translations into English. A proper understanding of the medieval attitude towards the Bible and its renditions is a prerequisite for appreciating this uniqueness, as it provides the backdrop against which to “measure” it. This attitude is delineated by Hargreaves (1965, 123) in the following manner:

The dominant theory of Biblical translation, based on Jerome's discussion of this specialized task rather than on his consideration of translation in general, accepted the principle that every word of the text was sacred: even

¹ I would like to thank Professor Magdalena Charzyńska-Wójcik for all her comments on this paper.

² For an account of the different titles employed to refer to this Psalter, cf. Charzyńska-Wójcik (2013, 77-78).

the order of the words is a mystery, and this mystery must be preserved in translation.

There is no doubt that the single most important feature of medieval Scripture translations was their faithfulness to the original.³ This approach manifested itself at different levels of the rendition in the following ways: (I) rigid word order taken over (almost) wholesale from Latin; (II) literalism of the rendition: biblical renditions were supposed to be word-for-word, not sense-for-sense translations; this is an issue closely related to, though broader than, the point made in (I); (III) treatment of the text as an inviolable whole (despite the status of the original; see the discussion in footnote 2), which allowed for no insertions, additions or omissions to the very body of the text; any additional material could be placed either in the margins or expressed in commentaries (either commentaries *per se* or interlinear glosses accompanying each verse) which served the purpose of expounding on the meaning.

That such an attitude was at the core of the medieval biblical translations is evident upon an examination of the remaining three 14th-century Psalter renditions into English. Paradoxically, the relevant literature voices critical

³ The notion of the “original” is not however as straightforward as it may appear to be. For contemporary translators, the “original” was the Latin Psalter which they used as the source text for their renditions, but the fact is that the “original” differed from manuscript to manuscript. The differences stemmed from two major sources, one of them being the very nature of the medium in which they were transmitted. Individual manuscripts of a given work differed to a greater or lesser extent but, despite scribes’ efforts, they were never identical copies of the same text. This situation changed only with the introduction of the printing press. As argued by West (2006, 245-46) after Gellrich (1985), the fact that “manuscript texts were so very material and individual” reflected itself on the perception of the book – manuscripts were “imagined [...] as exemplars of a logocentric book-beyond-the-books, so that each instance of a text referred to some imagined perfect text beyond it”.

The other source of the discrepancies between the “originals”, as far biblical texts are concerned, is the fact that even the “perfect text” was represented in Latin by more than one translation – *Vetus Latina* and Jerome’s three versions: *Psalteria Romanum*, *Gallicanum* and *Hebraicum* (based on different sources). Additionally, the co-existence of different texts, and, most importantly for the purposes of this study, the co-existence of the different versions of the Latin Psalter in medieval England (the *Romanum* and *Gallicanum*) resulted in mutual contamination of the two texts, which eventually led to a situation where “hardly any copy remained uncorrupted” (Hargreaves 1965, 133).

It might be of interest to note that even these Latin originals were, as indicated above, *translations* themselves. The awareness of this dimension, however, might not have been widespread at that time in Britain (Daniell 2003, 63; Pahta and Nurmi 2011, 230).

remarks concerning too strict an adherence to the “original”, which results in stylistic opacity, in relation to all of them – Richard Rolle’s Psalter (Norton 2000; Paues 1902) and the Psalters of the Early and Late Versions of the Wycliffite Bible (Daniell 2003; Delisle and Woodsworth 1995; Norton 2000).

It is, therefore, all the more surprising to encounter a medieval Psalter rendition – MEGPP – which does not conform to this strict approach to Bible translation. The most conspicuous of the peculiarities of MEGPP is the presence of glosses incorporated into the body of the text, both in the Latin and English texts, which are frequently, but not as a rule, substituted for the original reading of the Psalter. However, MEGPP’s deviance from what appears to have been a standard Psalter rendition (cf. the features enumerated in (I)-(III) above), is notable in a couple more aspects, listed here (cf. i-iv below) after Black and St-Jacques (2012, lxvii-lxix). It is important to add at this point that these “peculiarities” are ascribed by Black and St-Jacques (2012) to the influence not of the Latin source text but that of the French glossed Psalter translation available to the translator of MEGPP (cf. Section 2.3). The characteristics in question are the following:

- i. a more “natural” word order,
- ii. literal usage of those terms idiosyncratic for the French text (e.g. *Nostre Seigneur* rendered as *Our(e) Lord*, *Ha Sire* translated by means of *O Lord*),
- iii. a multitude of loanwords,⁴ which according to Reuter (1938, 19) were “used where [...] good corresponding English word[s] existed” due to the fact that “[t]he suggestive force of the original was apparently too strong in such cases, and the translator did not make enough effort to hit upon a synonymous word of his own language” (Reuter *ibid.*, 19),
- iv. variant and erroneous readings (omissions, additions, inaccurate translations).

As it would be impossible to discuss all of the above within the confines of a single paper, in the present study I will focus exclusively on the third of the “peculiarities” enumerated above, trying to demonstrate that the influence of the French source text upon the lexical layer, although seemingly self-evident, should

⁴ Reuter (1938) enumerates 674 nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs of French origin recorded in the text of MEGPP and ascribes their presence to the influence of the French text. This figure is the result of my own calculations based on the lists of words provided in Reuter’s work. Surprisingly, however, Reuter himself does not provide the total number of French loanwords he cites, but only gives the information that 597 among them are found in the London Manuscript and 578 in the Dublin Manuscript (cf. Section 2.2).

not be accepted at face value despite the abundance of borrowings. I will argue that French-induced lexical choices should be determined rather in relation to a) the base text, b) the French translation and c) the remaining 14th-century Psalter renditions *simultaneously*. I will also endeavour to demonstrate that the actual French influence should not be sought in the formal similarities shared by the lexical items used in MEGPP and the French rendition, but rather in the exceptional vocabulary choices of MEGPP corresponding semantically, rather than formally, to the relevant items employed in the French translation, both those which are context-motivated and, even more so, those which find no contextual justification with respect to other occurrences of the same Latin lemma.

The study is based on the nominal layer of the first 50 Psalms exclusively and its structure is as follows. First, the English rendition and its Latin and French sources are discussed (Sections 2.1-2.3), then the methodological aspects of the research are expounded upon (Section 3). The two sections are followed by the study proper (Section 4), whose results indicate that more attention at the lexical level should be paid to aspects of the rendition other than loanwords (Section 5). The conclusions following from the study are gathered together in Section 6.

2. The texts

2.1. *The English rendition*

The available literature does not abound in information concerning MEGPP. As regards the issue of authorship, the researchers have no viable candidates, with two names put forward back in the 19th century having been long rejected.⁵ Moreover, the exact date of the translation remains unspecified, with the following datings having been suggested in the literature: 1325–1350 (St-Jacques 1989, 136), or 1330–1349 (Hanna 2003, 144). It has, however, been postulated that the extant manuscripts of MEGPP should be regarded as copies of an even earlier,

⁵ The initial proposal by Forshall and Madden (1850, iv) of attributing the rendition to William of Shoreham, whose poems are bound together with the London manuscript of MEGPP, was refuted already in the 19th century (Konrath 1878 and Bülbring 1891) on the basis of the dialectal differences between the texts. The translation was also, for some time, attributed to a John Hyde whose name in the scribe's hand appears at the end of the Dublin manuscript. However, since the two manuscripts were proved beyond any doubt to be simply two versions of one rendition, and it was established that the Dublin manuscript is the younger of the two, the idea was abandoned.

archetypal manuscript (Black and St-Jacques 2012, I-IV). Despite the varying manuscript survival rate conditioned by numerous factors, the fact that only four manuscripts of MEGPP have been preserved suggests that the translation did not enjoy widespread popularity. The extant manuscripts in question are the following:

- i. London, British Library, MS Additional 17376 (i.e. the London manuscript),
- ii. Dublin, Trinity College, MS 69 (i.e. the Dublin manuscript),
- iii. Cambridge, Magdalene College, MS Pepys Library 2498,
- iv. Princeton, Princeton University, MS Scheide 143.

It is generally accepted that the London manuscript is the oldest of the four. Its scribe, presumably, was not conversant in English and Latin, which resulted in numerous corrupt word-forms both in the Latin text and its gloss, e.g. *cautela*, *cautelae* “caution, precaution, care, carefulness; security, surety”⁶ instead of *catulus*, *catuli* “young dog, puppy, whelp; dog (any age); young of any animal, pup/cub; fetter” in 28.6, and in the English rendition, e.g. *do benignlich* instead of *do blisfullich* in 50.19. This claim was first formulated quite bluntly by Bülbring (1891, ix):

Judging by the mechanical manner in which he did his copying, he must have been a very ignorant man, who understood neither much Latin nor English [...]. He has often produced most ridiculous results. In such cases he does not seem to have used his brains at all, but to have purposely abstained from making emendations.

Despite the fact that four copies of the text are available and all are provided in Black and St-Jacques’ (2012) publication, in the present study I focus exclusively on the London (MEGPP L) and Dublin (MEGPP D) manuscripts, as edited by Bülbring (1891) and presented in Charzyńska-Wójcik (2013). This decision was motivated by the fact that Black and St-Jacques’ (2012) edition exhibits some discrepancies with respect to the text presented in Bülbring (1891), whose work is generally respected, while the manuscripts themselves have not been digitised as yet and one cannot consult them to ascertain which readings are correct.

⁶ This and the following translation are taken from Whitaker’s *WORDS Latin-to-English & English-to-Latin Dictionary*.

2.2. The Latin source text

As mentioned above, none of the manuscripts of MEGPP has been digitised so far and up to 2012 no portion of the Latin text accompanying the English rendition in each of the four Psalters was available outside of the original manuscripts. Black and St-Jacques' (2012) edition of MEGPP (based primarily on the Cambridge manuscript) provides the glossed verses of the Latin text, but the Psalter in its entirety, however, is not available as yet. For this reason I used the *Gallicanum* edited in Charzyńska-Wójcik (2013) as the base Latin text, and juxtaposed it with the fragmentary Latin from Black and St-Jacques (2012) where possible.

The characteristic glosses in the Latin text I have mentioned in the Introduction are in general of two kinds – they are either additional, with respect to the base text (1), or they “explain” the original reading by means of the *id est*-phrase (2).⁷

- (1) 44.3: *Speciosus forma, o Christe, es pre filiis hominum; diffusa est gracia in labiis tuis; propterea, benedixit te Deus in eternum.*
 ‘Your form {o Christ,} is beautiful before men’s children. Grace is spread out in Your lips, because God has blessed [Y]ou in eternity.’⁸
- (2) 29.11: *Que vtilitas in sanguine id est penitencia meo, dum descendo in corrupcionem id est peccatum?*
 ‘What use is there in my blood {that is my penance}, while I go down to corruption {that is sin}?’

The latter sort of gloss (2) receives, though not as a rule, different treatment in the English translation preserved in the two manuscripts analysed here – it is

⁷ Reuter (1938, 4) contends that glosses are “[m]ostly [...] very dull and mechanical, substituting a prosaic expression for the beautiful and forceful phrases of the Vulgate”. This practice, as can be expected, led to the text’s deprivation of the metaphorical layer and thus to its impoverishment (Paues 1902, lx). Dodson (1932), having examined the glosses, arrived at the conclusion that such supersession induced numerous changes in the reading of the Psalms which can be broadly categorised as those resulting in a shift of meaning and such, which influenced the style. She states that “[i]n many passages the relationship between the gloss and the original word cannot readily be determined, and the resulting translation seems therefore inaccurate” (Dodson 1932, 11).

⁸ The English translation comes originally from Cunyus (2009) but is presented here as amended by Charzyńska-Wójcik (2013). The portions of the text corresponding to the additional material found in the Psalter have been supplied by the author of the present paper in curly brackets. The parts of the text representing the glosses or translating them have been underlined throughout.

predominantly substituted for the original reading of the text but at times – in MEGPP D – both the original lemma and the gloss are rendered into English.

2.3. *The French text*

The other text which shaped the English rendition to a considerable extent is the French glossed translation mentioned in the Introduction. The actual French manuscript which the translator of MEGPP had at their disposal has not been discovered so far. Yet there is an extant later copy of the text – Paris, Bibliothèque nationale, MS fonds français 6260 (vaguely dated to 1401-1500), whose edition has been available since 2012 Black and St-Jacques' publication. The manuscript itself, however, is readily accessible in a digitised form from Bibliothèque nationale de France and, since there are occasional differences between Black and St-Jacques' (2012) edition and the original, it is in this latter form that the French text was employed in the process of the database creation.

3. Methodology

The study focuses exclusively on the nominal layer of the text, treating as nouns only those items which are assigned such labels in the relevant dictionaries employed in the course of the research: for Latin it was Whitaker's *WORDS Latin-to-English & English-to-Latin Dictionary*, for French *Dictionnaire du Moyen Français*, whereas for English two dictionaries were used: the *Middle English Dictionary* (MED) and *The Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). The process of the database creation commenced with the extraction of all the nouns (2873) from the Latin source text (proper nouns (42) being excluded), and was then followed by the process of annotating them with the Psalm and verse numbers, and the grouping of all the occurrences of a single Latin lemma under one headword. The next step in the course of the research was to provide each Latin noun with the corresponding lexical items from the French glossed Psalter and the two manuscripts of MEGPP,⁹ along with the etymological information from the MED and the OED. The complete database was then narrowed down to 2008 nominal occurrences for each Psalter, since all of the nouns which did not meet the criteria imposed by the methodology adopted in the study had to be excluded. These were:

⁹ In the contexts where the Dublin manuscript rendered both the original reading and the gloss, I took into consideration only the first of the items provided.

- i. 401 items which were not nouns proper, were whole phrases rather than individual nouns, or were missing in any of the analysed texts;
- ii. items which represented forms erroneous to the extent that they could not be lemmatised or interpreted to represent a word-form of a noun that would be expected, or at least acceptable, in the context (26);¹⁰
- iii. occurrences of the following Latin lemmata – *Deus, Dei, dius, dii* and *dominus, domini* (438).¹¹

The data obtained in this manner were then examined from the perspective of etymology and source of influence upon the noun choice. Attention was also paid to the correlations between the French and English texts not warranted by Latin. The objective of the analysis was to determine the extent of the impact the underlying Latin text and the French source text each exerted upon the translation.

4. The etymological make-up of the English translation

As already explained, MEGPP is usually perceived as relying heavily on borrowings from French due to the assumed considerable influence of the French glossed Psalter (Reuter 1938). Yet, as it is impossible to draw a clear-cut division between loanwords from broadly-understood French and Latin,¹² I refer to all such borrowings as loanwords from Romance languages, and treat them here jointly. The source of the influence – the French versus Latin Psalter – will be examined further on in this paper and not based exclusively on the etymologies provided by the dictionaries, but rather on the formal similarities between the English, Latin and French texts.

The analysis conducted in the course of the study, outlined in Section 3, allowed me to determine that the etymological make-up of the nominal layer of

¹⁰ Erroneous forms in the French text which still allow one to determine whether the item meant by the translator influenced the English rendition are not excluded.

¹¹ These Latin nouns, along with their ME and French equivalents, are excluded from the study as, due to their abundance, they would be certain to somewhat skew the results obtained in the course of the research. Their exclusion will inevitably result in a greater percentage of borrowings among the analysed nouns, but their inclusion would not, nevertheless, contribute much to a study devoted to loanwords, since the ME renderings of the three Latin lemma are exclusively of native origin.

¹² Problems inherent in the distinguishing between lexical items of French and Latin provenance, as well as between words originating in different varieties of the broadly-understood French language, are discussed at some length in Lis (2014).

the two manuscripts of MEGPP is the following:

Table 1. The etymological make-up of MEGPP

	MEGPP L		MEGPP D	
Native ¹³	1412	70.31%	1443	71.86%
Romance	585	29.13%	553	27.54%
Old Norse ¹⁴	11	0.55%	12	0.60%
total	2008		2008	

Upon viewing the data given in Table 1, the number of borrowings seems to be substantial (almost 30%). Yet, it has to be emphasised that these are numerical and percentage data presented in isolation. When one juxtaposes them with the relevant information obtained from the remaining ME Psalter translations (Table 2), the figures exhibit a close correlation.¹⁵

Table 2. The etymological make-up of the remaining 14th-century Psalter translations¹⁶

	Early Wycliffite Psalter		Late Wycliffite Psalter		Richard Rolle's Psalter	
Native	1484	70.70%	1480	71.18%	1483	74.22%
Romance	604	28.78%	594	28.30%	456	22.83%
Old Norse	11	0.52%	11	0.52%	56	2.80%
Middle Low German	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	3	0.15%
total	2099		2099		1998	

¹³ The term *native* is employed to refer to all the items of OE or ME origin, as well as to borrowings from either Old Norse (ON) or Romance languages introduced into the English language already in the Old English period, and which were subject to the same morpho-phonological processes as the “truly” native items.

¹⁴ By Old Norse borrowings I mean those lexical items which were borrowed already in the Middle English period.

¹⁵ Note that the number of items compared is different for these texts.

¹⁶ The source of the Psalter translations analysed in this study was Charzyńska-Wójcik (2013), after Forshall and Madden (1850) for the Early and Late Wycliffite Psalters, and Bramley (1884) for Richard Rolle's rendition.

On the basis of the above data, one can already voice some scepticism with respect to Reuter's (1938) assertion. The number of loanwords in MEGPP may well be significant but it cannot be claimed, based on these data, to be exceptional in relation to other 14th-century Psalter renditions. So far, then, there are no grounds for ascribing the abundance of loanwords attested in the translation to the availability of the French source. It may well be, in fact, that the multitude of Romance vocabulary is rather a reflection of the contemporary linguistic situation in medieval England and of the attitude towards biblical translations (Lis 2015 and *in press*).

Yet, even if the general numerical data indicate no considerable divergences between the different texts, it may still be the case that the texts opted for different nouns and did so for different reasons. For three of them, the choices might have been reinforced by the presence of certain items in the Latin base text which were also available in the English language (borrowings), or might have simply come naturally in the context, whereas for MEGPP the loanwords employed in the rendition might have been induced rather by the presence of their French counterparts in the French glossed Psalter. For this reason, it seemed necessary to go one step further and, concentrating on the Romance loanwords, try to determine whether, in fact, the presence of some of them could not be ascribed to the use of formally similar items in the French and/or Latin texts in question, as well as for how many nouns this could not be claimed to be the case. For this purpose, I divided all the Romance loanwords into four groups:

- I. those which are akin to the items employed in the French text,
- II. those which are similar to the nouns used in the Latin source text,
- III. those which exhibit similarity to both the Latin and French corresponding items present in the relevant verses,
- IV. those for which there seems to be no formal motivation in the shape of either Latin or French nouns employed in the parallel verses of these Psalters.

The number of the items which can be ascribed to each of the categories is given in Table 3.

In the light of the below it would appear that there might be at least a grain of truth in the assertion about the abundance of borrowings being warranted by the presence of formally similar nouns in the French text, as these are the items ascribed to groups (I) and (III) which receive the greatest representation in MEGPP.

Table 3. Number of nouns assigned to categories (I)-(IV)

	MEGPP L		MEGPP D	
	I	258	44.10%	226
II	19	3.25%	11	1.99%
III	256	43.76%	241	43.58%
IV	52	8.89%	75	13.56%
total	585		553	

However, it is still reasonable to suspect that some of the Romance loanwords would have been employed in the text regardless of their presence in the French Psalter but rather due to the fact that they were felt to be a “natural” choice in the context. Since it is well nigh impossible to establish now whether a word felt a “natural” choice in the 14th century, I consulted the remaining 14th-century English Psalters to determine whether the words in question also happened to be employed in the relevant verses there, and the results of this investigation are provided in Table 4.¹⁷ Each of the cells under the headers “MEGPP L” and “MEGPP D” also provides information concerning the number of lexical items attested as renderings of the corresponding Latin nouns in the other examined 14th-century Psalters for each of the categories (I)-(III). For instance, 173 (out of 223) loanwords in MEGPP L classified as being akin to the items employed in the French text appear also in the remaining Psalters: 127 are shared with RRP, 147 with EV and 153 with LV; 35 items (out of the total of 258 given in Table 3) had to be excluded from this investigation (cf. footnotes 16 and 17).

The data presented below clearly indicate that the availability of the French text was not *the* factor to have a determinant influence upon lexical choices, as the Romance-derived items employed in the text were, in fact, used in *exactly the same contexts* in other 14th-century Psalter translations in ca. 90% of cases. Certainly, one cannot exclude some secondary reinforcement on the part of the French rendition, but the claim that the decisions of the translator of MEGPP as

¹⁷ The nouns from group IV were naturally excluded from the calculations, as their presence in the translation has been determined not to stem from the influence of the French rendition. Additionally, such a juxtaposition necessitated excluding the nouns which were glossed in the Latin base text, as then one is dealing with the renderings of the glosses and not of the nouns from the Latin text common to all the translations.

regards vocabulary selection hinged upon the shape of the French text in question is not justified in any case.

Table 4. Number of nouns assigned to categories (I)-(III) that also appear in other renditions¹⁸

	MEGPP L		MEGPP D	
I	173 (127 RRP, 147 EV, 153 LV) out of 223 (258)	77.58%	168 (125 RRP, 143 EV, 146 LV) out of 198 (226)	84.85%
II	13 (10 RRP, 12 EV, 13 LV) out of 14 (19)	92.86%	9 (9 RRP, 8 EV, 9 LV) out of 9 (11)	100.00%
III	231 (182 RRP, 208 EV, 217 LV) out of 235 (256)	98.30%	219 (181 RRP, 198 EV, 206 LV) out of 223 (241)	98.21%
total	417 (319 RRP, 367 EV, 383 LV) out of 472 (533)	88.35%	396 (315 RRP, 349 EV, 361 LV) out of 430 (478)	92.09%

5. Areas for future investigation

It is now evident that the issue of MEGPP's dependence upon the French rendition at the level of the lexicon needs to be approached from a different angle. Namely, I would like to suggest that in order to determine the extent of the reliance of the English translator upon the French source, one should focus not on the formal similarity of vocabulary items but rather on certain peculiar lexical choices "shared" by the French rendition and MEGPP whose presence cannot be

¹⁸ I considered only those instances in which exactly the same *nouns* were employed, i.e. I did not take into account the cases in which English nouns used in MEGPP and other text(s) agreed in root but differed in suffixes (equivalents of *sterilitas*, *sterilitatis* 34.14: *barainnesse* in MEGPP and LV, *baraintē* in EV, and *barainhēde* in RRP, *captivitas*, *captivitatis* 13.11: *caitiftē* in EV and LV, *caitīf* in RRP, and *caitīfnes*(*se* in MEGPP L, with MEGPP D employing a different noun, *varietas*, *varietatis* 44.11: *dīversitē* in EV and LV, *dīversenes* in MEGPP D, with RRP and MEGPP using different nouns) or in the presence of a prefix (equivalents of *causa*, *causae* 3.7: *chēsōun* in RRP and *enchēsōun* in MEGPP L). Furthermore, all gerunds and verbal nouns in all of the translations have been excluded (e.g. those employed to render *deprecatio*, *deprecationis*, *exultatio*, *exultationis*, *inrepatio*, *inrepatiois*, *miseratio*, *miserationis*).

accounted for by the Latin base text but which at times appears to stem from semantic and/or contextual considerations (1-7 in Table 5). Additionally, it would be necessary to establish whether some of the word choices that deviate from the default renderings for a given Latin lemmata attested for its remaining occurrences in the same Psalter would find close correspondence in the French glossed Psalter (8-9 in Table 5).

Due to limitations of space, this is not a line of investigation I can attempt to follow in detail here, but I list a few items whose presence in MEGPP might stem precisely from this sort of French influence (Table 5).

Table 5. English nouns whose use in the translation might have been motivated by the French text

N ^o	Latin Psalter	MEGPP	French Psalter	Other English texts	Comment
1.	filia, filiae 47.10	chīld	enfant [m] <enfant>	doughter	<i>Chīld</i> is attested in only one out of the five analysed cases; the remaining four occurrences are all glossed, which makes it impossible to determine how the noun would have been translated in different contexts.
2.	filius, fili 10.5, 17.49 (2)	chīld	enfant [m] <enfant>	sōne	The noun <i>filius</i> , <i>fili</i> has 22 occurrences in the first 50 Psalms (four are glossed and cannot be taken into account); in seven of them the French glossed Psalter uses <i>enfant</i> , which in three cases corresponds to English <i>chīld</i> ; its appearance does not seem to have been context-conditioned.

3.	finis, finis 7.6	cōntrē(e)	pays [m] <pais>	cōste (EV and LV) ēnde (RRP)	Only four of the 14 occurrences of this Latin noun are translated into English by nouns other than <i>ēnde</i> (three in MEGPP D), and all four correspond to “exceptional” – in relation to the remaining renderings of the same Latin lemma – choices in the French Psalter; the divergent choices might stem from contextual differences: the four occurrences in question refer to the spatial, as opposed to the temporal, aspect.
finis, finis 18.4	cōntrē(e – L only ēnde – D	part [f] <part>	ēnde		
finis, finis 21.28	cōntrē(e)	contree [f] <contree>	ēnde (EV and RRP) cōste (LV)		
finis, finis 47.9	lōnd	pays [m] <pais>	ēnde		
4.	hysopu [m/s], hysopi / <hysop [m/s], hysoppi> 50.8	mercī	merci [m&f] <merci>	isōpe	This reading is not, at least in the light of the information provided in Black and St-Jacques (2012), warranted by the Latin text and is absent from all the remaining 14th-century Psalter translations.
5.	impietas, impietatis 5.12	ivel – L only	mal [m] <mal>	wikkednes(se (EV and RRP) unpītousnesse (LV)	<i>Ivel</i> renders one out of the two occurrences of <i>impietas</i> , <i>impietatis</i> ; it does not seem to have been context-conditioned.
6.	injustitia, injustitiae 36.7	wrong	tort [m] <tort>	unrightfulness(se (EV) unright-wīsnes(se (LV and RRP)	<i>Wrong</i> renders <i>injustitia</i> , <i>injustitiae</i> in one out of the four occurrences; it does not seem to have been context-conditioned: in a different verse in an analogical context the usual rendering – <i>unrightfulness</i> (se – is employed.

7.	tabernaculum, tabernaculi 41.4	purgātōrī (e)	purgatoire [m] <purgatoire>	tabernacle	<i>Purgātōrī(e)</i> translates only one out of the ten occurrences of <i>tabernaculum</i> , <i>tabernaculi</i> ; pure <i>Gallicanum</i> does not account for such a rendering.
8.	mons, montis 47.2	mōunt	mont [m] <mont>	hil(le (EV and RRP) mōunt (LV)	<i>Mōunt</i> appears in one out of the 14 occurrences of <i>mons</i> , <i>montis</i> ; most probably due to the context, but its presence might have been reinforced by the French source.
9.	terra, terrae 17.17 18.4 23.1	world	monde [f] <mund>	17.17 ērthe 18.4 world (EV and RRP) ērthe (LV) 23.1 world (EV and RRP) lōnd (LV)	<i>World</i> is attested as a translation of <i>terra</i> , <i>terrae</i> in four out of its 54 occurrences; they seem to be context-conditioned: all four occurrences of <i>world</i> appear to render <i>terra</i> , <i>terrae</i> in the “orbis terrarum/terre” phrase.
	terra, terrae 49.13		siecle [m] <secle>	world (EV and LV) ērthe (RRP)	

The next step would be to consult the then-available Psalter commentaries to establish whether such peculiar renderings could not have been induced by the interpretations presented there. Yet, even if this is so, and assuming that the translator was familiar with these, it still does not preclude the French source being an intermediary or its providing some form of reinforcement, even in these cases.

6. Conclusions

It has been proved in this study that, despite the claims about the abundance of French borrowings in MEGPP, stemming from translator's dependence upon the French glossed Psalter (Reuter 1938), the number of Romance loanwords whose presence in the rendition can be ascribed to the influence of this French intermediary is only seemingly substantial. In fact, as much as approximately 90% of all the Romance-derived nouns analysed in the course of the research appear in the relevant verses in the three remaining 14th-century Psalter translations I juxtaposed with MEGPP. The profusion of borrowings from Romance should be rather perceived as a manifestation of the contemporary linguistic situation in medieval England and a reflection of the perceived inviolability of the biblical text (Lis 2015 and *in press*)

What is, however, well worth further investigation are the unusual lexical choices as well as deviations from the default renderings, whose presence in the translation does not find any justification in the Latin source text, but rather appears to have been motivated by the French rendition.

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