*Amadís de Gaula* presents particular challenges to the translator because of its complex textual history. Robert Southey based his 1803 translation on the Sevilla edition of 1547, which is nearly identical to the first extant edition, the Zaragoza 1508. There is no “original” *Amadís*. The romance as we know it descends from a medieval legend modeled on the Vulgate *Lancelot.* A “primitive” *Amadís* may have been composed as early as 1290, and the earliest references to the story in other texts date to 1350 (Avalle-Arce 101; Riquer 13). The earliest surving material trace of the text is a fifteenth-century manuscript fragment in Castilian, discovered in 1955, which is thought to be unrelated to Montalvo’s text (Rodríguez-Moñino 15–24). Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, a local official in one of Isabel la Católica’s royal villages, copied an existing manuscript, changed the story’s tragic ending, and added a new Book IV and Book V*.* Montalvo’s *Amadís* became one of the greatest publishing successes in the early modern period, and it was soon translated into French, Italian, English, German, Dutch and Hebrew (Cacho Blecua 86). Marian Rothstein estimates that there were 500,000 readers of the French *Amadís* alone*,* and José Manuel Cacho Blecua counts 527 editions of *Amadís* printed before 1694 in various formats and languages.

*Amadís* is an interesting case for a translation study both because it was so popular and because it is particularly unmoored in time, space, and authorship. The *Amadís* of the sixteenth century was a text without an author. Sixteenth-century Spanish editions, including the 1547 Sevilla, misreported the author’s name as Garci Ordóñez de Montalvo. Translations often did not record any form of Montalvo’s name, referring to him instead as “the Spanish author.” Through the nineteenth century, translators and scholars alike imagined a French or Portuguese origin for the medieval text. Nicolas de Herberay des Essarts, who translated *Amadís* into French in 1540, claimed that “our Amadis” simply *must* be French, because he hails from Gaul. The Portuguese thesis attributed the text to fourteenth-century courtier Vasco de Lobeira. Twenty-first scholars have uncovered documentary evidence of Montalvo’s existence and have come to agree that *Amadís* probably traces its roots to Castile, but this is as close as we are likely to get to the origins of *Amadís*.

The text itself is just as complex as its transmission history. [show image] *Amadís* is a romance of chivalry in prose in four, eleven, or fourteen volumes, depending on which sequels one wishes to count. It differs from the story of Lancelot and Guinevere on which it is modeled in that its two protagonists, Amadís and Oriana, overcome their familial struggles, marry, and rule the kingdoms of Britain and Gaul in a dual monarchy modeled after that of Isabel and Fernando of Castilla and Aragón. The 1547 *Amadís* looks like a block of undifferentiated text, but in fact it does have some internal divisions, which we are referring to as pseudo-markup. It contains numbered chapters with summaries at their head, punctuation marks, and occasional paragraph marks. [show images of these including the calderón] As you can see from the images, the punctuation is quite different from modern Spanish or English. The three marks appear to be non-hierarchical, and the punctuation mark after *dixo* [show example] takes the place of the em dash or quotation mark for dialogue attribution. One of the tasks Southey undertook for his translation was to divide the text into pieces that his audience would find readable.

Our first challenge in coding Montalvo and Southey using TEI was to decide how to code comparable units across texts. We rejected the idea of comparing sentence-like units to sentence-like units; while the Southey has clear sentence boundaries, the Montalvo does not. The three punctuation marks [ point to : . /] alternate freely in the 1547, and if you look at modern critical editions of Montalvo, the editors have had to repunctuate the text and decide where the sentences divide. To put this in Pedro Sánchez Prieto Borjas’s terms, critical editions propose a certain reading to the public, and as such they have to make changes to the original orthography and typography. Southey is doing the work of a critical edition as well as a translation, and to retrace that in our code, we decided that the best unit of comparison between the two texts is the clause-like unit with the <cl> tag. It’s only a clause-*like* unit, because in the Montalvo, punctuation marks usually but do not always correspond to grammatical divisions. It’s better to think of them as breath marks, places where an out-loud reader would take a pause, and as such each unit is quite short, which suited our purposes. [show code] Each clause-like unit in the Montalvo, measured from punctuation mark to punctuation mark, gets its own xml id based on its chapter, paragraph, and clause number. They are sequential rather than nested because we wanted to be able to reveal when Southey reverses clause order, weaves two of Montalvo’s units together, or jumps ahead or back in Montalvo’s text. We used a self-closing <anchor> element in the Southey chapters to tether Southey’s language to its source in Montalvo in a way that is quite fine-grained: not word-by-word, but in the smallest units that made sense. We also encode other types of information in the anchor tags, specifying when Southey adds a word or phrase for which no antecedent can be found in Montalvo and recording the moments when Southey converts direct discourse in Montalvo to indirect and vice-versa.

Southey is interesting as a translator because his output is just as hybrid as the source text. It reflects both the scholar’s drive to render a source author’s text intelligible, linguistically and culturally, and a Romantic poet’s desire to turn a text that could be considered defective in many ways into art. Our code [show] reveals how the logic of Southey’s translation works on the clause level. Southey could be considered a bad translator or a good one depending on the translation theory one uses as a standard. Southey was conscious of this, and his preface gives clues as how to place him in the history of translation. He has taken a scholarly thesis—that *Amadís* is a medieval text, originally Portuguese rather than Castilian—and developed it into a translation practice. The result is a text that, for Southey, is both better in artistic terms and closer to a medieval original than Montalvo’s version.

Both Southey’s preface and our code reveal that he was making conscious choices among types of translation, and that he did not make the same choice for every clause in the text. Susan Bassnett talks about the history of translation from ancient Rome to the end of the nineteenth century as a tension between word-for-word translations versus sense-for-sense translations. Horace in *Ars Poetica* famously argues for the sense for sense approach; that is, adapting the source text for the target language and culture. Sense-for-sense translations tend to take more liberties than modern scholarly translations. Etienne Dolet, a French translator, Humanist, and contemporary of Herberay likewise advocated for sense-for-sense translations, with the caveat that the translator should carefully preserve the source author’s meaning. Alexander Tytler, writing in 1790, favors a balance of the word-for-word and sense-for-sense strategies that pays close attention to the source author’s word choice and style. The Romantics, according to Susan Bassnett, were firmly on the sense-for-sense side of the debate, in an even more exagerrated fashion than Renaissance translators. What we would expect from Southey is a translation that alters the source text for reasons of literary taste.

Our code reveals that Southey is not quite what we would expect. For the most part, we have a “faithful,” even scholarly translation. Southey employs word-for-word translations when the Spanish syntax is comparable to English and sense-for-sense translations when it is not. [show] Southey prefers non-archaic, matter-of-fact diction contemporary to his own historical moment, which was Dolet’s recommendation for translations between closely related modern languages. Southey also sounds like a scholar in his footnotes, which help his English readers understand certain conventions of medieval Iberian culture. [show example] Southey makes a number of brief additions to the text which render the translation intelligible to a nineteenth-century English reading public accustomed to much more pseudo-markup in their books than Montalvo’s first readers would have been. [show example] These include adverbs of time, which would help readers sequence events across long sentences and paragraphs, and proper names instead in the place of Montalvo’s strings of pronouns, which often render antecedents unclear. Southey’s additions are much more restrained than those of the early modern French and English translations he references in the preface. Throughout, Southey expresses a literary value for compression, which was a feature that did not interest the early modern market for chivalric romance, which privileged long texts.

Southey’s omissions are of much greater significance than the additions. [show Helena’s table with red blocks] Our code has shown that these large blocks of red have an internal logic. First, as he says in the preface, Southey eliminates repetitive passages, which have long been seen as a defect in Montalvo’s style; in the fashion of the Romantics, Southey seeks to improve upon the source material. Such omissions are permissible, even laudable, in the “sense-for-sense” translation. Second, Southey omits, as he explains in the preface, what he found to be the early modern Spanish author’s ill-conceived additions to the text. Montalvo’s sermons and sex scenes, both in poor taste in Southey’s opinion, are missing in the translation. We can attribute this choice to Southey’s implied preference for the “medieval,” “original,” or “authentic” aspects of *Amadís* in his preface, though it must be admitted that features are mostly the imaginary products of subjective reconstruction. Southey’s omissions have also leveled some of the complexity of Montalvo’s text. He omits Montalvo’s prologue, the framing device of the real and apocryphal manuscripts, and the scattered instances of authorial intrusion, resulting in a univocal translation. Southey’s morally motivated omissions may be not just a reading of Montalvo, but also a reaction against early modern translators Herberay and Munday, whom he finds repugnant. For early modern French and English audiences, the translators took out Montalvo’s sermons and lengthened the sex scenes, with salacious results. Southey takes out both the sex and the sermons, as we can see in the table based on the first chapter of the work. [talk about image] Notions of taste and decorum are cultural, and they depend on the perceived audience for a work. Montalvo’s *Amadís* intended to instruct and entertain, and he absolves himself of moral qualms by including sex scenes and then apologizing for them. Herberay and Munday produced *Amadises* meant only to entertain and thus and celebrated the libertine qualities of the source. Southey attempts to make *Amadís* a work of art, and content that is either too moralizing or too scandalous does not suit his notion of literary decorum.