**A Digital Humanities Approach to Cultural Translation in**

**Robert Southey’s *Amadis of Gaul***

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**Abstract:**

This essay discusses the Amadis in Translation digital project (http://amadis.newtfire.org), which applies TEI XML encoding to Robert Southey’s 1806 translation *Amadis of Gaul*, comparing it to Southey’s source, the 1547 Sevilla edition of Garci Rodríquez de Montalvo’s *Amadís de Gaula*. The project uses computational methods to align the source at the clause level rather than word-by-word, reflecting the radical compressions and changes Southey made to the source. The essay uses the alignment tables generated by the project to assess Southey’s use of emotion in a set of sample chapters. Contrary to what the aesthetics of the Romantic era might have led us to believe, the data shows that Southey dampened the use of emotion in the late medieval text, potentially for reasons of taste or national and cultural identity. Our digital project illustrates how computational analysis of translations can revise common-sense predictions about texts and make comparisons between translations precise and quantifiable, even when such subjective phenomena as emotions and affect are under discussion.

**Author biographies:**

Stacey Triplette is Assistant Professor of Spanish and French at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg. Her essays on Cervantes and Iberian romances of chivalry have appeared in *Bulletin of Spanish Studies, La corónica,* and *Cervantes: The Bulletin of the Cervantes Society of America*. Her current research engages in Digital Humanities approaches to translations from early modern Spanish to French and English. Her book, *Reading, Chivalry, and Women’s Culture in Early Modern Europe*, assesses imitations and translations of *Amadís de Gaula* andis under contract at Amsterdam University Press.

Elisa Beshero-Bondar is Associate Professor of English at the University of Pittsburgh at Greensburg. Her book, *Women, Epic, and Transition in British Romanticism*, was published by the University of Delaware Press in 2011. Her published articles in *ELH* (*English Literary History*), *Genre*, *Philological Quarterly*, and *The Wordsworth Circle* investigate the poetry of Robert Southey, Mary Russell Mitford, and Lord Byron. She is the architect of the [Digital Mitford Project](http://digitalmitford.org/) and other web-based Digital Humanities projects. She was elected to serve on from 2016 to 2017 on the [TEI Technical Council](http://www.tei-c.org/Activities/Council/), an eleven-member international committee that supervises amendments to the TEI Guidelines.

Helena Bermúdez Sabel is pursuing her PhD in Medieval Studies at the Universidade de Santiago de Compostela (Spain). Her research interests focus on the modeling of philological data and the implementation of quantitative analyses as part of editorial models. She is involved in the publication of digital scholarly editions and the development of tools for text analytics. She is currently working for the ERC-funded project *Poetry Standardization and Linked Open Data* (POSTDATA) and is a member of the Laboratorio de Innovación en Humanidades Digitales (LINHD-UNED).

**A Digital Humanities Approach to Cultural Translation in Robert Southey’s *Amadis of Gaul***

Robert Southey is unique among English Romantic poets for his depth of engagement with Spain and Portugal. He traveled to both countries, spoke both languages, translated medieval and early modern texts from Spanish, and produced a well-regarded history of Brazil. In May of 1802, Southey entered into a contract with Longman, who had published his verse romance *Thalaba the Destroyer* in 1801, to produce a new translation of *Amadís de Gaula*, a medieval Castilian romance whose earliest extant version, compiled by Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, dates to 1508. While Southey’s *Amadis* sold well at its time of publication and has been admired by readers and scholars alike, the changes he made to his source text have been difficult for scholars to quantify. The English poet took a free approach to translation, engaging in radical abridgement, simplification, domestication, and ideological recalibration of the 1547 Sevilla edition of Montalvo. To further complicate the matter, Southey referenced previous French and English translators of Montalvo’s *Amadís*, multiplying, in a sense, his source texts. Our research project suggests a method for comparing a free translation to its source using the guidelines of the TEI (Text Encoding Initiative), an XML language for the analysis and editing of texts. We have created machine-readable versions of sample chapters of Southey and the 1547 *Amadís* and compared them not word-by-word, but segment-by-segment, capturing on the microcosmic level some of the radical challenges Southey made to his source. The alignment tables on the web version of our project (http://amadis.newtfire.org) allow readers to separate and examine each of Southey’s linguistic decisions. In this article, we introduce Southey and his translation and then use our alignment tables to assess one of the major thematic changes Southey made to *Amadís*, which concerns the use of emotion. Contrary to what some readers might expect from a Romantic-era translation, we find that Southey dampened the expression of emotion in Montalvo’s *Amadís*. Though our analysis extends only to a small set of sample chapters, it indicates the ways in which TEI analysis might overturn assumptions about translations created by literary history or by less-quantitative forms of reading.

*Amadís de Gaula* was one of the most popular romances of the sixteenth century both in the original Spanish and in translation, and Southey continues a long tradition of making radical changes to the text to suit new audiences. The plot of the Castilian romance chronicles the rise to prominence of a young prince of Gaul. Abandoned at birth, Amadís learns his identity, reconciles with his parents, indulges in a secret marriage with a British princess, and eventually becomes king of Britain and Gaul. Southey translated *Amadís* after traveling twice to the Iberian Peninsula, first in 1795-96 and then in 1801-01 (Speck 2006, 62–65; Zarandona 2006, 310). Juan Miguel Zarandona writes that the Iberian Peninsula had become a Grand Tour destination after the publication of Anglo-Italian Giuseppe Baretti’s 1770 travel diary, and thus travel to Spain might have been expected of a wealthy aristocrat of Southey’s era (2006, 309). Yet Southey, the son of a draper, viewed his trips to Spain and Portugal not as idle travel, but as an economic opportunity, as they allowed him to conduct research for his literary works (Speck 2006, 83–84). As early as 1797, Southey’s letters express his appreciation of *Amadís* and all related texts, including Bernardo Tasso’s poetic adaptation *Amadigi di Gaula* (Southey 2009). Southey’s highly readable version of the medieval romance did, in fact, answer his financial hopes; he wrote to his wife Edith in 1804 that *Amadís* had already outsold *Thalaba* (Southey 2013b).

Southey’s *Amadís* resembles other early nineteenth century translations in its approach, rendering the late medieval Castilian sense-for-sense rather than word-for-word. Southey makes the notoriously difficult language of the Spanish romance pleasant to read in English and alters cultural detail that might not have met the expectations of the English reading public. Susan Bassnett writes that early nineteenth century translators expressed two conflicting tendencies in their work: “One exalts translation as a category of thought, with the translator seen as a creative genius in his own right, in touch with the genius of his original and enriching the literature and language into which he is translating. The other sees translation in terms of the more mechanical function of ‘making known’ a text or author” (2013, 74). Both ideologies are active in Southey’s *Amadís*. The voice of Southey the author is in evidence in many of the sentence-level changes to the text. Southey’s *Amadis* is highly readable, free of the rhetorical flourishes and extended flights of sentiment previous French and English translations by Nicolas de Herberay (1540), Anthony Munday (1590), and the Comte de Tressan (1779) had added to the late medieval Castilian work.

Southey describes his translation practice in the Preface to *Amadis of Gaul* as one that seeks to improve the aesthetics of the original through radical compression. Addressing the source romance’s famous length, he writes: “To have translated a closely printed folio would have been absurd. I have reduced it to about half its length, by abridging the words, not the story; by curtailing the dialogue, avoiding all recapitulations of the past action, consolidating many of those single blows which have no reference to armorial anatomy, and passing over the occasional moralizings of the Author” (1803, xxxi). Southey throughout the Preface takes a dismissive view of the Author, by whom he means Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo, the sixteenth-century editor compiler of *Amadís de Gaula*. Southey’s lack of fidelity to the persona of Montalvo does not reflect his view of authorship in general, but of a figure he believed to be a translator like Herberay, Munday, and Tressan, all of whom he despised.

Southey is correct in his assumption that Montalvo, a minor city official from Medina del Campo, was not the author of *Amadís* in any traditional sense. However, Montalvo is responsible for the medieval or “primitive” text’s survival, and he is the first ‘author’ of *Amadís* whom we can reference by name. The medieval *Amadís*, inspired by French Arthurian texts like the *Lancelot*, emerged sometime around 1350 in the Iberian Peninsula (Riquer 1987, 13). Antonio Rodríguez Moñino’s 1955 manuscript find, which uncovered fragments of a pre-Montalvo *Amadís,* indicated that the legend most likely originated in Castile, though other readers and scholars previously believed it to have a Portuguese or French origin (1957, 15–24). The French origin of *Amadís* has always been a fanciful notion, a misreading of French translator Herberay’s apocryphal claim to have found manuscript fragments of *Amadís* in Picardie (1986, iii). Herberay’s early modern readers, accustomed to the apocryphal manuscript trope, would likely have understood the story of the fragments as proto-nationalistic posturing.

Herberay in fact encountered the famous Spanish romance while serving as master of artillery in François I’s wars against Spanish monarch Charles V (Avalle-Arce 1990, 57; Thomas 1920, 199). Readers of later centuries, however, including Sir Walter Scott, did lend the French thesis some credence (1803, 109). However, greater proof existed for the Portuguese thesis, of which Southey was a proponent. As Southey himself mentions in the Preface, Portugal had a tradition of claiming *Amadís* for itself, with evidence ranging from late medieval poetry to chronicles, much of it plausible (Southey 1803, x, 2013c). The idea of medieval Portuguese courtier Vasco de Lobeira as *Amadís*’s original author had some adherents among nineteenth- and twentieth-century scholars of Spanish literature but has been deprecated in recent decades. Even before Rodríguez-Moñino’s discovery, references uncovered in medieval Spanish poetry suggested that *Amadís* predated the historical Lobeira (Williams 1907, 22–26; Riquer 1987, 13; Avalle-Arce 1990, 69–87). Most scholars of Hispanic Studies now agree that *Amadís* is Castilian (Sales Dasí 2006, 6–7).

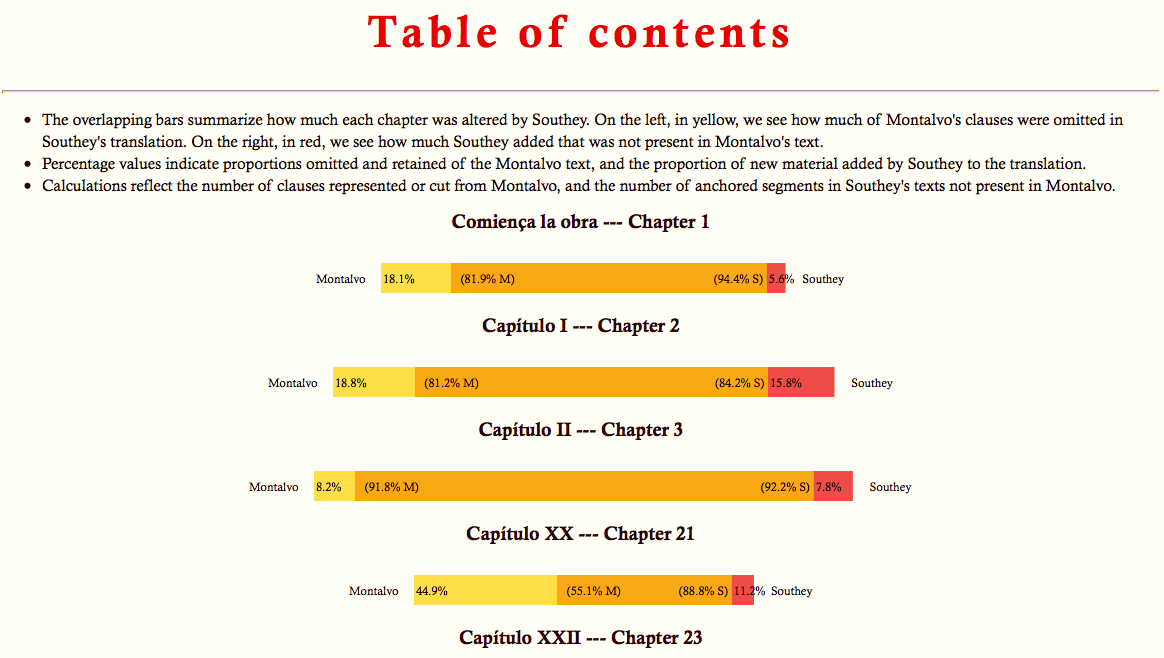
As he translated, Southey attempted to restore an imaginary Portuguese original, unraveling additions to Garci Rodríguez de Montalvo’s early modern Spanish edition of the text by previous translators. By walking back what he perceived to be *Amadís*’s translation history, Southey takes a scholar’s approach to the text. Southey based his translation on the earliest version of *Amadís* he could access, a copy of the 1547 Sevilla printing of Montalvo that belonged to his friend Richard Heber. Abridging from Anthony Munday, who translated Herberay’s *Amadís* into English in 1590, would have been a more expedient option than translating from the Spanish and was in fact Southey’s first plan (2011a, 1803, xxxiv). The choice to use Montalvo instead reflects not only Southey’s facility with late medieval Spanish but also his attention to textual authenticity. Southey remarks in his preface that while writing *Amadís*, he kept Herberay, Munday, and Tressan at hand, sometimes adopting Munday’s wording while rejecting Herberay and Tressan’s anachronisms (Southey 1803, xxxiii–xxxiv).[[1]](#footnote-1)

In some cases, Southey made guesses about the medieval *Amadís* that have since been disproven. For example, he writes: “With the celebration of the marriage, the story obviously concludes. I have ended here, and left the reader to infer that Amadis and Oriana, like the heroes of every nursery tale, lived very happy after” (1803, xv). The medieval *Amadís*, in fact,ended with the accidental killing of Amadís and Oriana’s subsequent suicide, a messy and tragic conclusion that mirrored those of medieval French Arthurian romances (Lida de Malkiel 1969, 150–52). Southey imagines a marriage plot for the medieval romance that suits the aesthetic preferences of his own era much better than those of medieval Iberia. Medieval romances, especially those feature courtly love, end in cataclysm; early modern romances, like Montalvo’s *Amadís*, end in the infinite production of children and sequels necessary to satisfy the demands of serial publication (Williamson 1984, 31; Krause 2003, 121). Indeed, for Daniel Gutiérrez Trápaga, the impulse to form sequels and cycles is constituitive of early modern Iberian romance as a genre and is absolutely essential to its meaning (2017, 6–8). By giving *Amadís* narrative closure, Southey works against its ideological project.

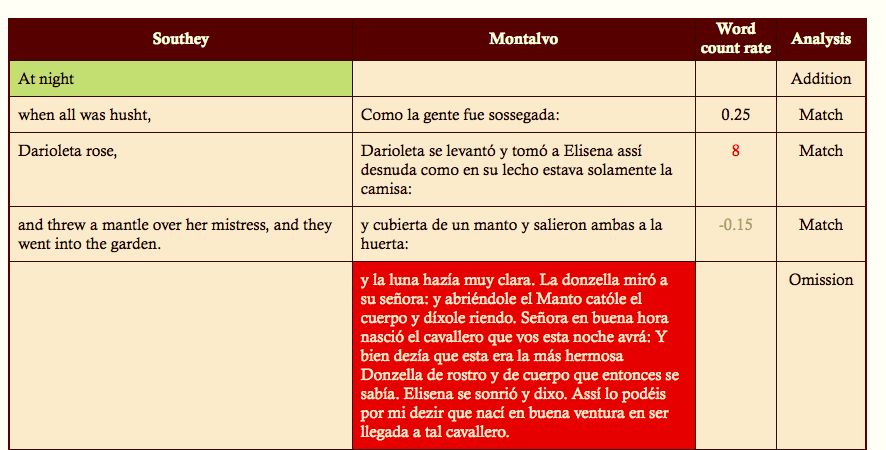
Southey’s scholar’s instincts and his attention to the slow changes *Amadís de Gaula* experienced throughout its translation history well reward closer study for those of us interested in the history, theory, and practice of translation. Even though Southey follows a dead-end path in literary scholarship, his choices offer insight into the aesthetics and ideology of translation both in the nineteenth century and more generally. We are not the first to study Southey’s Spanish-to-English translations; Zarandona has described Southey’s translations as “pragmatic” and “medievalizing,” and on the whole, our results show that conclusion to be correct (2006, 313). The digital methodology the Amadis in Translation project, however, can shed light on Southey’s work at the level of the word, the clause, and the paragraph much better than traditional methods can. *Amadís de Gaula* has an extent of approximately 2,000 modern-equivalent pages, and human reading cannot account for each translation decision in a systematic way. [[2]](#footnote-2) Our digital project uses machine reading to assist, track, and record different types of human reading. We use our TEI encoding to test Southey’s statements about his own practices in the Preface and to identify phenomena he did not discuss. Producing results from the project requires a combination of the quantitative analysis enabled by computational methods and the traditional methods of literary scholarship. We have customized the TEI XML language to help us mark the smallest comparable phrases we can locate in the source and the translation, and our markup allows us to see alignments and distortions. The TEI is a very adaptable tool for this approach because of its controlled markup vocabulary for linguistic segment categories, including clauses, sentences, phrases, and words, as well as its attribute classes that facilitate “stitchery” work, to point out where pieces of Southey’s text connect with pieces of Montalvo’s.[[3]](#footnote-3)

Our project website, http://amadis.newtfire.org, offers what we term “aligned contents” for five sample chapters from Montalvo and Southey drawn from Book I, the most faithful part of Southey’s translation.[[4]](#footnote-4) The selection covers three episodes: the meeting of Amadis’s parents, their clandestine liaison, and the birth of Amadis in the first two chapters, the false report that Amadis has died in Chapter Twenty-One, and Amadis’s combat with his brother Galaor in Chapter Twenty-Three. These well-known episodes all contain moments of high emotional intensity, and the feelings they express in word and gesture range from joy to sorry. Chapter Two, about Perion and Elisena’s love affair and Amadis’s birth, is rich in the language of happiness and despair, and Chapter Twenty-One overflows with Oriana’s grief. Amadís’s combat with Galaor, meanwhile, shows off surprise, anger, and hatred. In choosing these chapters, we attempted to find a sample for *Amadis of Gaul* that included all its major characters and its emotional range. Though we plan to add chapters in the future, we believe that this test bed of texts represents Southey’s translation—at least in Book I—accurately. Figures 1 and 2 show how we present these chapters to the reader of our website, first with a visualization that indicates the degree of overlap between Montalvo and Southey, and then in segments, with indications of omissions in red and additions in green.

**Figure 1: Aligned Table of Contents**



**Figure 2: Sample Alignment Table**



Within the sample chapters, we have uncovered a striking feature of Southey’s translation that he did not preview in the Preface, a systematic dampening of the language of emotion. Southey declares in the Preface that he minimizes repetition and combat detail from the 1547, but he only mentions objectionable expressions of emotion when he references the two French translations (1803, xxxi). We discovered that, in fact, Southey calmed down the Castilian *Amadís*, reflecting the same range of emotion words as the source but using each with less frequency. Southey’s suppression of sentiment is silent, pervasive, and so subtle that, even for the member of our team who specializes in Iberian romance, it passed unperceived until we looked at it with digital methods. Southey both omits full clauses in which descriptions of emotions appear and fails to translate the diction of emotion in clauses he compresses. We term this change a cultural translation, recognizing that the expression of emotion in language obeys cultural rules and can vary quite a bit from one genre or time period to another (1803, xxxiv). While there is much that is universal in human feeling, we agree with Jan Plamper’s argument that specific iterations of emotion, in this case emotional language, are “framed and pre-structured” by the media in which they are imbedded (Plamper 2015, 74). Though both might be termed “romance,” Montalvo’s Iberian chivalric text obeys one set of cultural instructions, while Southey’s obeys another. Though we expected Southey’s translation to deviate from the source, it did not always do so according to stereotypes about Romantic literature or even according to our knowledge of Southey’s other works, like the verse romance *Thalaba*. For example, we expected the sex scene in Chapter Two to be truncated, but we did not guess beforehand that the amount of emotional suppression would be greater in the chapter that features grief than in the chapter that showcases love and sex.

To illustrate how Southey alters the emotional language of the Montalvo 1547, we have prepared a number of charts from the project data. One of the major features we track is the number and extent of clauses Southey omitted wholesale from Montalvo’s text. Indeed, because the source and translation do not compare well word by word, we have identified the “clause-like unit” as the smallest unit of comparison we can use between the texts. Our data on emotion is partly machine-generated and partly hand-coded. In order to compare the texts clause by clause, we match them by hand in XML. From there, we use machine reading to compare their extent and align them. Once we have positioned them side-by-side, we use human reading again to flag a list of emotion words and note where Montalvo’s diction is missing from the translation. One of the surprises of working in this method has been to see that Southey occasionally adds emotion words to Montalvo, as in the phrase “the pleasure of sleep,” in Chapter 2, while the Montalvo simply uses the verb *dormir* (“to sleep”). We have also noticed that Southey occasionally sustitutes a weaker emotional word for an expression of feeling, rendering the sense without the intensity. For example, in Chapter Twenty-One, the character Arcaláus expresses *vergüença* (“shame”) at having to sing his own praises, but Southey translates with the milder “albeit I must be content to declare mine own praise.”

Some of the differences between Southey and Montalvo, however, have less to do with emotion than cultural codes for the presentation of texts. The 1547 Montalvo presents a particular challenge for translation, as it bridges the textual aesthetics of the medieval and early modern periods and lacks modern paragraphing and punctuation. Indeed, early sixteeth century romances of chivalry printed in Castile, including the copy of *Amadís* Southey had to hand, look very much like their manuscript forebears and employ a number of practices that allowed printers to maximize the number of characters on the page, including substituting the calderón symbol (similar to the modern paragraph symbol) for white space, hyphenating words at the end of lines regardless of where syllable breaks occurred, and using the tilde (~) to mark the elision of letters. Paper was a printer’s most expensive resourse, and these techniques make it possible to print long texts like *Amadís* with relatively little of it (Lyons 2010, 38). In the 1547, moreover, even in-line punctuation is difficult for modern readers to interpret. Periods, colons, and forward slashes are used in a freely alternating pattern, and it is difficult to say where sentences begin and end. The spelling is not consistent in the 1547, and archaic forms alternate with early modern ones with no discernible logic. In our coding, we accommodate the 1547’s premodern features, measuring in “clause-like units” (drawn from punctuation mark to punctuation mark, whatever they happen to be) rather than in sentences. Southey, however, had to modernize for publication: he uses vastly different clause and sentence boundaries that obey modern puncutation rules.

Southey’s modernization of the text’s grammar and typography, so essential in communicating with English readers, also tended to simplify the text at the level of diction and theme. Omissions are a primary vector for this simplification. In our five sample chapters, we found that Southey omitted 111 clauses. Most of the full-clause omissions eliminate repetition or wordiness in the source text, but some address matters of culture or taste. Iberian romances of chivalry were notorious by the late sixteenth century in Spain for their poor style, and critics up until the mid-twentieth century tended to judge them to be of scant aesthetic quality (Menéndez y Pelayo 1925, 1:278).[[5]](#footnote-5) Southey follows a well-established line of criticism on Montalvo in correcting perceived deficiencies. Though most of the omissions in the set are style-related, we identified 34 related to emotion, eight related to expressions of courtesy, eight that eliminated religious diction, and 6 that suppressed combat detail (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: Omissions by Category**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Reason for omitting clause | Definition | Number of occurrences | Percentage of total (out of 111; rounded to nearest half percent) |
| style | clauses containing repetition | 57 | 51% |
| emotion | clauses that contain specific diction related to emotion | 34 | 31% |
| courtesy | clauses containing late medieval hierarchical forms of address | 8 | 7% |
| religion | clauses containing reference to Catholic practices | 6 | 5.5% |
| combat | clauses containing the specific diction of battle | 6 | 5.5% |

Of the clauses that appear to have been omitted for reasons of content rather than style, the emotional clauses predominate. Clauses with overt sexual diction (sexual acts, sexualized body parts) comprise only 8% of the emotional clauses (three clauses in the sample), which means that the suppression of sexuality is not the primary reason for changes to emotion in this part of the text. This contradicts our original hypothesis, formed based on prior knowledge of Southey.

To explore in more detail the nature of these unexpected suppressions, we separated out the omitted clauses and generated a list of emotions. We found Montalvo’s text to cover a range of positive and negative emotions. Love (*amor*) and sorrow (*cuita*) dominate Montalvo’s emotional vocabulary. This usage suits the content of the sample chapters, which contain one happy event, Perión and Elisena’s love affair, and two sad ones, the abandonment of the infant Amadis and the apocryphal report of Amadis’s death. We found a total of 67 emotion words in the omitted clauses, 30 of which are unique (Figure 4).

**Figure 4: Emotion in Omitted Clauses**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Emotion word | Number of occurrences in omitted clauses |
| alegría (happiness) | 5 |
| amargura (bitterness) | 1 |
| amor (love) | 10 |
| angustia (anguish) | 1 |
| cativo (unhappy) | 1 |
| congoja (anxiety) | 1 |
| consuelo (consolation) | 2 |
| contento (happy) | 2 |
| corazón (heart) | 4 |
| cuita (sorrow) | 6 |
| descanso (relief) | 2 |
| deseo (desire) | 1 |
| dolor (pain) | 1 |
| enojo (anger) | 2 |
| esperanza (hope) | 1 |
| gozo (enjoyment) | 1 |
| grave (grievous) | 2 |
| maravilla (amazement) | 2 |
| padecer (to suffer) | 3 |
| pasión (passion) | 1 |
| piedad (pity) | 1 |
| placer (pleasure; used in expressions of courtesy) | 5 |
| querer (to love; excluded when it means “to want”) | 1 |
| reír (to laugh) | 1 |
| sobrealto (distress) | 1 |
| sonreír (to smile) | 1 |
| sufrir (to suffer) | 1 |
| temer (to fear) | 2 |
| tormento (torment) | 2 |
| tristeza (sadness) | 3 |
|  |  |
| unique words = 30 | total emotion words = 67 |

Though Southey appears to suppress emotional clauses systematically, these omitted clauses do not, on their own, tell the whole story of Southey’s the sentimental transformation of *Amadís* for its new audience. When we examined the portions of the aligned contents that were not omitted from the translation, we found that some of Montalvo’s emotion words had been suppressed even when Southey rendered all other content in English. To ascertain approximately what percentage of Montalvo’s emotional vocabulary Southey eliminates from his translation, we analyzed the alignment charts for Montalvo and Southey for the two most emotional chapters in the sample, Chapters Two and Twenty-Two. In both instances, Southey makes dramatic changes to emotion, but the percentage of emotion suppressed varies widely. To calculate the numbers below, we determined that an emotion word in Southey matched the Montalvo if the translation rendered it at all, either freely or literally (Figure 5).

**Figure 5: Emotional Suppression by Percentage**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Chapter number | Number of emotion words in Montalvo | Number of emotion words in Southey | percentage of Montalvo’s emotion words present in Southey |
| Southey 2 | 57 | 40 | 70% |
| Southey 21 | 63 | 23 | 36.5% |

We also generated a list of the emotion words in both chapters and compared them against each other. In the two sample chapters, we found only two instances where Southey omitted an emotion word in one clause and recuperated it in another. These appear in the chart as co-occurences (Figure Six).

**Figure 6: Comparison of Emotion Words for Two Chapters**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Emotion word | Number of occurrences in the two Montalvo chapters | Occurrences in the two Southey chapters | Percentage suppressed |
| afición (affection) | 2 | 0 | 100% |
| alegría (happiness) | 7 | 3 | 57% |
| amor (love) | 12 | 9 | 25% |
| angustia (anguish) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| bien (joy) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| congoja (anxiety) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| consuelo (consolation) | 3 | 1 | 66% |
| corazón (heart) | 8 | 6 | 25% |
| cuita (sorrow) | 13 | 7 | 46% |
| deleite (delight) | 3 | 2 | 33% |
| descanso (relief) | 3 | 2 | 33% |
| desprecio (spite) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| deseo (desire) | 2 | 0 | 100% |
| dolor (pain) | 6 | 4 | 33% |
| duelo (grief) | 2 | 1 | 50% |
| enojo (anger) | 4 | 1 | 75% |
| espanto (fright) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| holganza (enjoyment) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| gozar (to enjoy) | 3 | 2 | 33% |
| grave (grievous) | 2 | 0 | 100% |
| lágrimas (tears) | 2 | 1 | 50% |
| llorar (to cry) | 9 | 6 | 33% |
| maravilla (amazement) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| miedo (fear) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| orgullo (pride) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| padecer (to suffer) | 3 | 1 | 66% |
| pagar (to gratify)[[6]](#footnote-6) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| pesar (to aggrieve) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| piedad (pity) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| placer (pleasure) | 4 | 3 | 25% |
| querer (to love)[[7]](#footnote-7) | 2 | 0 | 100% |
| reír (to laugh) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| sentir (to feel)[[8]](#footnote-8) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| sobresalto (distress) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| sonreír (to smile) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| sufrir (to suffer) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| temer (to fear) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| tormento (torment) | 1 | 0 | 100% |
| tristeza (sadness) | 3 | 0 | 100% |
| vergüenza (shame) | 1 | 1 | 0% |
| vicio (pleasure) | 2 | 1 | 50% |
| total unique emotion words in sample: 42 | total uses = 117 | total uses = 61 | overall suppression = 48% |

Though our sample size for this comparison, two chapters, is quite small compared to the overall extent of the Montalvo and Southey’s texts, we think that the figure we have generated for the suppression of emotion words, 48%, suggests that the suppression of emotion is not a fluke, but a consistent practice. We believe this figure, which seems high, might even grow once we expand the project to include Montalvo’s Book IV, which Southey abridged even more heavily than the first three parts of the text.

It seems quite clear to us that Southey has dramatically altered the emotional content of the romance for his translation, though especially with a small sample, the reason for the suppression of emotion is not so clear. Southey’s efforts here give us perspective in the field of Romanticism on its complex engagement with emotional content. It is commonplace to consider Romanticism as concerned with the engagement of readerly sympathies and the expression of affect, but Romantic authors (including Southey’s friends, William Wordsworth and Samuel Taylor Coleridge) took emotion very seriously as a sublime, motile force that could drive the mind from measured reason. Their interest in the emotion-laden texts of past centuries may have been modulate, dilute, and refine it for a modern age, attenuating the diction of emotion to account for the susceptibility of the mind to overwhelming emotion.[[9]](#footnote-9) Moreover, Jan Plamper, citing examples going back to John Huizinga’s seminal work in the field, writes that it has been traditional in the history of emotion to represent the people of the Middle Ages as “hyperemotional medieval children” (2015, 39). While scholars in recent years have questioned the idea of a progressive notion of human emotion defined by epochal increases in emotional control, it may be that Southey calms Montalvo’s *Amadís* as a means of suiting his audience’s modern taste (Plamper 2015, 49). Yet Southey is not, as a rule, unemotional, even in *Amadis of Gaul*. His parting comment to the reader of the Preface, indeed, is rich in sentiment, in this case his own fond affection for his inconvenient source text: “Perhaps others may not see the beauties which I perceive; the necessity of dwelling upon every sentence has produced in me a love for the whole” (1803, xxxv).

Based on clues from Southey’s Preface, we have another hypothesis to suggest: Southey suppressed emotions in the Montalvo text in reaction against the two French translators who expanded rather than contracted Montalvo’s sentiment. While Southey’s Preface does not criticize emotions in Montalvo, it does critique expressions of feeling in both Herberay and Tressan. Southey accuses the sixteenth-century Herberay, his least favorite *Amadís* translator, of “abominable obscenities” and complains that the late eighteenth-century Tressan concealed true expressions of chivarly under a “varnish of French sentiment” (1803, xxxiii–xxxiv). To our project team, it seems plausible that for Southey, the language of sentiment in the Montalvo simply felt too French to be acceptable in a text for English readers.[[10]](#footnote-10) In a curious moment of reverse causality, it appears that *Amadís*’s translation history might have caused the source text to seem overly emotional.

Indeed, Southey’s own feelings—anti-French feelings, that is—appear to be quite strong by the time of composition of *Amadis of Gaul*. In the Preface, Southey frequently mentions France and French translators in a disparaging way, and in a letter to Richard Heber, owner of the copy of the 1547 *Amadís* Southey used, he expresses disapproval for the widely appreciated French Vulgate romances that influenced *Amadís* (2013f). Southey’s strong dislike of France was not universal among English readers of *Amadis*. In the Edinburgh Review, Walter Scott expressed his belief in the French thesis about the text’s origin, which appears to have annoyed Southey (Scott 1803, 109). Southey laments Scott’s disagreement in five letters to different recipients and finally writes Scott directly to debate the question in 1808, five years after the review appeared (2013e). W.S. Rose’s English versification of Book I of Herberay’s *Amadis*, which appeared in 1803, the same year as Southey’s translation, constitutes another English vote for an *Amadís* liberally varnished in Frenchness (Moore 2004, xxii; Thomas 1920, 256).

Regarding France, Southey is perhaps more nationalistic—at least in 1803—than Scott or Rose. The threat of war with Napoleon forms the backdrop for Southey’s Preface and letters about his *Amadis* translation, and it seems likely that the looming conflict informed Southey’s negative opinion of French translators and French sentiment. Caught up with anti-French sentiment, moreover, are positive feelings for Portugal, which Southey believed to be the true origin of *Amadís*. In an 1803 letter to Charles Watkin Williams Wynn, Southey jokingly references Napoleon: “if this war shuts me from Portugal & cuts off my supplies of books – it will almost break my heart. God send that Bonaparte may come in person with his Invaders. [H]e had better come with a diving-bell instead of a helmet, in readiness—for if he do not feed the crabs in the channel […] the Crows shall have him ashore.” The boast in Southey’s letter perhaps conceals a degree of anxiety about conflict on English soil. Yet war brings opportunity as well as chaos. In the same letter, Southey wonders if war might lead to work in Portugal: “It has come into my head that France will go to war with Portugal—& if so perhaps we may send an army there, & if so—perhaps it might not be impossible that I could get a civil appointment’ (2011b). France, not Spain, is the source of Southey’s fears about England’s political future, and Portugal, not Spain, is the site of his hope to profit from it. Between these two fantasies, there is little room left for Spain, or for late medieval Spanish emotion.

Southey’s changes to the expression of emotion in *Amadís* might well be an attempt to peel back the text one layer beyond Montalvo, to the apocryphal Portuguese author Lobeira. From our twenty-first century perspective, the task is impossible, as it is certain that Lobeira did not write the primitive *Amadís*, but it is nonetheless compelling to Southey, not least for its emotional resonance. For Southey, Lobeira represented “the age of chivalry, the noon-day of heroism and honour;” in other words, the kind of medieval authenticity Herberay, Tressan, and even Montalvo obscured (1803, xxiii). According to Southey, Montalvo came from a comparatively fallen world: “a Spaniard who described humane and generous valour in the days of Ferdinand and the Austrian family could paint only from a dim recollection of the past” (1803, xxiii). Lobeira is less a real person for Southey than the focal point for projections about a glorious Middle Ages. Twice in his letters, Southey imagines meeting Lobeira in heaven (2013a, 2013d). The fantasy recalls Dante’s journey through the afterlife with Virgil in the *Divine Comedy* and positions Lobeira as a spiritual guide. Montalvo, the earliest “author” who can be attached in truth to *Amadís*, earns neither respect nor longing from Southey.

The Romantic poet provides the clue to this difference in his comment about the “Austrian family,” i.e., the Spanish Hapsburgs, including Charles V, whose aunt Catherine of Aragon was queen of England, and Philip II, husband to Mary Tudor and sender of the “Invincible” Armada. Southey’s distaste for Spain has its origin in Spain’s imperial past, and specifically, in its early modern rivalry with England. While early modern Portugal was an empire in its own right, Spain emerged in the sixteenth century as the greater power. Indeed, due to the consanguinity of the two monarchies, Portugal and Spain were united for a brief period, 1580-1640. Spain, a fiercely Catholic and fiercely militaristic nation in the early modern period, was a consistent threat to England, while Portugal was not. For Southey, it may have been ideologically easier to dream of medieval Portugal than to dream of medieval Spain.

Though we are persuaded by our theory that nationalism inflected Southey’s rendition of emotion in *Amadis of Gaul*, we also recognize wide cultural gap that lies between Montalvo and Southey. One of the strengths of our digital project has been to suggest that translation decisions are incredibly complex, and that even a translator’s description of his method can only give an incomplete acounting of them. Though we began the project with a belief that translation decisions could be sorted according to simple typologies like “literal” v. “free,” our project team has come to view all translations as cultural and multivalent. Going forward, we hope to expand the project, revisiting emotion and taking on more topics to get a more complete picture both of how Southey’s early nineteenth century translation worked and how translations function on a more general level.

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1. Anthony Munday translated *Amadis* based on Herberay, not the Castilian original, as was a usual practice for English translators in the early modern era. Most educated Englishmen and women knew at least some French in Munday’s era, but because of military and political conflicts, knowledge of Spanish was less common, and texts from Castile were less frequently available. See O’Connor 1970, 208–9. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. In this essay, we use the term “human reading” as a catchall for the traditional methods of non-computer assisted literary analysis, which continue to be an important part of our work. We contrast this term with “machine reading,” a generalized term we use for all computer-based text processing. We prefer these terms to “close” and “distant” reading, because both machines and humans can read closely and distantly, and because we like to ground our human and machine readings in literary history in a way that has not always been a part of close or distant reading. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. See especially the TEI Guidelines 17.1 Linguistic Segment Categories: <http://www.tei-c.org/release/doc/tei-p5-doc/en/html/AI.html#AILC> . [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. In general, deviations from the source increase as Southey’s translation progresses, and Montalvo’s Book IV is mostly missing. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Curiously, in France, Herberay’s translations of Montalvo, though word-for-word in some places, were considered masterpieces of prose style. The English market also held Munday’s translation from Herberay to be elegant and fashionable. See Giraud 1986, 18–19; Rothstein 1999, 36; Moore 2004, xix. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. The verb *pagar* usually means “to pay.” We have an archaic use here in *Amadís*, “muy pagado de su amiga,” very pleased/gratified with his lover. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. When *querer* means to want, as in “I want a sandwich,” rather than to love, we have not included it in the chart. *Querer* can be a synonym for *amar*. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
8. We include *sentir* only when it means “to feel an emotion” not when it means “to hear.” [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
9. For a representative sampling of Southey’s contemporaries theorizing engagement with the emotions, see Wordsworth’s Preface to the second edition of *Lyrical Ballads* (Wordsworth 1800, xiii–xiv, xxx–xxxvi), and Joanna Baillie’s preface to the 1798 *Plays on the Passions* (Baillie 2001). [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
10. Marian Rothstein and Yves Giraud have discussed Herberay’s tendency to add to Montalvo’s erotic scenes. See Rothstein 1999, 55; Giraud 1986, 14. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)