

Between French and Breton: The Politics of Translation

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This article explores the political implications of different types of translation between French and Breton. The bilingual parallel text publication practice of militant poets active in 1960s and 1970s Brittany is discussed in relation to their perception of Brittany as an ‘internal colony’, and against the French State’s attitude towards regional languages. I argue that the Breton versions of these poems that appear alongside the French function as a synecdoche for racial and cultural oppression and injustice across the world. Translations into Breton from other minority cultures are shown to allow the mapping of political allegiances, and a sense of solidarity. The literature produced in the wake of *Gwalarn*, a periodical which was characterized by its enthusiasm for translation into Breton, is contrasted with the basically Romantic literature produced by nineteenth-century Breton enthusiasts. For *Gwalarnistes* translation into Breton from world literature was a key in escaping the cliché-ridden Brittany that had become familiar in Breton literature. The article concludes by considering the implications of translation out of a minority language and into the politically dominant language. Drawing on work in postcolonial translation studies, as well as comments by Welsh writers and critics on the issue of translation, I suggest that translation can be complex and indeed dangerous in the case of a minority culture such as Brittany’s, and conclude that there can therefore be no all-encompassing theory of translation.

KEYWORDS Brittany, Translation, Poetry, Internal colonialism, Minority literature

All Francophone Breton literature is written between the two main languages of Brittany: Breton, the indigenous Celtic language, and French, the language of the nation-state of which Brittany forms a part. This modern French-language literature of Brittany, born in the wake of Romanticism,¹ was and arguably still is dependent on the Breton language for its existence. Many French-language texts from Brittany are translations in the straightforward sense of being a French version of a text

originally written in Breton, though these range from the self-translation of a Pierre-Jakez Hélias, whose autobiography *Le Cheval d'orgueil* (1975) is a translation of newspaper columns the author wrote in Breton over a number of years, to the Macpherson-like activities of La Villemarqué, whose edition and translation into French of Breton ballads collected from the mouths of peasants, *Barzaz Breiz* (1839), is most famous for the forgery controversy that surrounded it. Francophone texts that are not based explicitly on a Breton original likewise have an important relationship with Brittany's other language. Auguste Brizeux, one of the founding fathers of Francophone Breton literature (in the sense referred to above), offers his knowledge of Breton as a guarantee of the authenticity of his portrait of Brittany in *Marie*, a collection of poetry from 1831. In the 1960s and 1970s, Breton militants, who referred to themselves as revolutionaries and 'poets of decolonization', seem to apologize on every page of their French-language poetry for not having written it in Breton.² The poetry of Tristan Corbière, a Breton who, unlike Brizeux and the militants, has made it into the French canon, unwittingly relies on Breton to provide the exotic non-Frenchness that so appealed to readers in 1880s Paris. The violence done to French in his turbulent poetic texts was explained by his first champions in the French capital as a consequence of his 'foreignness', and this despite the fact that Corbière was not consciously espousing the Breton cause.³ Breton-language texts can equally inhabit the space of translation; they can be translations or adaptations of originals in French, or other languages, or they can be composed in Breton but be so influenced by mainstream French culture as to provide little more than a reflection or imitation of fashions in the capital through the medium of Breton. Through a consideration of the motivations behind and the political implications of the different types of translation that connect Brittany's two cultures, this article will show why the space of translation is a controversial and even a dangerous one for a culture such as Brittany's, which is bilingual, but whose indigenous language is in steep decline.

Translation into Breton

We are now in an era when virtually nobody requires translation into Breton. While it is difficult to determine precisely when this era began, we can be certain that translations into Breton were a necessity well into the nineteenth century, since there were sufficient numbers of Bretons who knew no French.⁴ The main users of translation into Breton would have been the Church, keen that all Bretons, including monoglot ones, should be as God-fearing as possible.⁵ In the context of education more generally, the motivation to use Breton as a medium for instruction could be similarly a matter of pragmatism. In the hands of some, the decision to use Breton could be cynical, with the indigenous language promoted as a medium for instruction only so as to better teach Bretons to be 'Frenchmen'. In other words, it was used as a tool for hastening its own demise at a crucial time in the development of French national identity, when peasants became Frenchmen in a shift identified famously by Eugen Weber.⁶

My survey of the various motivations for translation into Breton will tell us something of the cross-cultural currents that cut across contemporary Breton identity. Strictly speaking, a Breton version of a text, be it literary, educational, or other, is

today unnecessary. Once Breton had become the language of a minority, and certainly once there were no longer any monoglot Breton speakers, the decision to translate anything into Breton becomes much more interesting.

Self-translation

The ‘poets of decolonization’ — Paul Keineg, Christian Keginer, Yann-Ber Piriou, to name the most prominent — were active in Brittany in the 1960s and 1970s, and wrote committed poems that often read almost like political tracts.⁷ It was a time when young Bretons awoke to what they saw as the ‘colonial’ status of Brittany, and used ‘the colonial analogy, and not only as a metaphor but as a slogan’.⁸ Appalled by the behaviour of France on the world stage, not least in Algeria, they wrote of oppressed people the world over, and drew attention to similarities with the way Brittany was treated by France. A pamphlet published by the Breton nationalist party, the Union Démocratique Bretonne (UDB), in 1972, explains the role of the Algerian war in Breton political consciousness:

L’UDB a été fondée en 1964 par un groupe de jeunes qui avaient pris conscience, à la lumière de la guerre d’Algérie et des premières manifestations populaires, du malaise breton, de la situation coloniale de la Bretagne au sein de l’État français. [...] Luttant pour réclamer une solution démocratique en Algérie, ils ont été conduits à réfléchir en même temps à la situation concrète du peuple breton et, par voie de comparaison, à découvrir le caractère colonial de cette situation (mais sans identification simpliste).⁹

Prefaces and dedications to collections of poetry speak of solidarity with other peoples colonized by France. Keineg dedicates a collection to the Basque separatists (ETA) and speaks of a shared pain that unites Bretons, Vietnamese, and Algerians:

c’est un de nos villages qui brûle
quand un de nos frères saccage un village vietnamien
c’est nous tous qu’il assassine
quand il fracasse le crâne d’un enfant algérien.¹⁰

Poems typically describe an un-Romanticized, exploited, ‘colonized’ Brittany. Whereas nineteenth-century poetry extolled idyllic landscapes peopled by uncorrupted peasants, theirs speaks in despair of a suffering, wounded land:

Terre de cicatrices humides
[...]
Nous t’avons aimée.¹¹

Its inhabitants are condemned to work in factories, as described in ‘Rennes Citroën’, where the workers have lost everything: ‘Vous n’avez plus de visage | vous n’avez plus de lèvres | vous n’avez plus de bouche’ (Keineg, 1971: 91) and ‘Transocean, Brest’, where: ‘Les ouvrières ne savent plus sourire’ (Keineg, 1971: 101). Peasants no longer blend seamlessly into the land; rather, they are taken by bus and train at the crack of dawn to work in the towns,¹² or worse, they have left for Paris on the ‘petit train colonial’, leaving behind ‘le pus des choses bien mortes’ (Keineg, 1971: 41).

Many of these writers were ‘néo-bretonnants’, that is individuals who had learnt Breton as adults, although — significantly — they may well have had parents or

grandparents who were fluent in the language, but had not passed it down to their generation. It may seem puzzling that they should go to the trouble of writing their poetry in a second language, often acquired in adulthood, in order to publish in parallel text, since the Breton version would be foreign to a significant proportion of readers. The reason is, of course, political, since the attitude shown towards Breton by the French state is perhaps the strongest argument for Brittany's 'postcolonial' status. With the Revolution of 1789 regional languages became tainted by association with counter-revolution (Brittany being one of the most notoriously rebellious provinces), and considered an impediment to 'égalité'.¹³ The attitude prevailed throughout the nineteenth century, with the State promoting the French language in Brittany, just as it did in its colonies overseas. Louis-Jean Calvet has argued that there was essentially no difference between the linguistic policy of the French Revolution in the Hexagon, and that of the Third Republic in the colonies,¹⁴ and Pierre Nora has called the Third Republic 'une acculturation'.¹⁵ Mona Ozouf highlights the irony of this situation: 'L'égalité scolaire, en réalité, était une égalité meurtrière, puisqu'elle dissimulait un génocide culturel.'¹⁶

In the work of the poets of decolonization, the arguably redundant text that appears in parallel alongside the French text acts as a reminder in black and white that their generation of Bretons had been deprived of their mother tongue, and that they considered themselves a colonized people. In describing his generation of poets Yann-Ber Piriou draws comparisons with Algerians who have lost their mother tongue, and with Basques, and dedicates the collection to those who know what it means to be colonized: 'aux Africains et aux Antillais qui savent ce qu'"être colonisé" veut dire; aux Français; aux Occitans, aux Catalans; aux Basques de l'Hexagone'.¹⁷ Prefatory remarks and theoretical statements on the 'revolutionary' nature of the militants' poetry confirm that the issue of language loss was a key to their aesthetic as well as to their politics. In 'Une poésie révolutionnaire bretonne existe' Christian Keginer explains that producing revolutionary poetry involves more than taking revolution as subject matter, since it requires the poet to 'non pas poétiser la révolution, mais la faire dans le poème'.¹⁸ This comes, he claims, as an inevitable consequence of a Breton writing in French. A Breton who is committed to the decolonization of Brittany, and who is forced (by ultimately political circumstances) to write in French, the language of the oppressor, is necessarily creating a revolution by using French in a very specific way — reclaiming it, subverting it — as Keginer puts it: he is actually speaking Breton even though he is forced to use French words. His case is compared by Keginer to that of the Black writer:

le poète noir qui écrit en français doit *saisir* qu'il est Noir pour cesser d'écrire dans la langue française, et parler enfin dans la *langue noire*, même si c'est avec des mots français. Ce changement est véritablement une révolution. Il s'accompagne forcément, et c'est la même démarche, d'une analyse radicale de la situation coloniale du pays, l'un et l'autre ne naissant que l'un par l'autre, pour finir par ne faire qu'une seule attitude combattante. On comprend donc qu'il est inutile d'ajouter le mot *révolutionnaire* à l'expression *poésie bretonne de langue française* qui signifie, par le caractère subversif de sa seule existence: poésie révolutionnaire. (Keginer, 1972: 69)

The Breton version printed side by side with the Francophone text thus functions as a synecdoche for racial and cultural oppression and injustice across the world. Its

mere presence as parallel text highlights the fact that — politically — this generation of Bretons, and their whole culture, have been ‘translated’ out of their native tongue. This situation is all the more poignant since the language they have been translated into is that of the State and culture that these Breton militants hold responsible for the demise of Breton. Thus the very redundancy of the Breton version shows how dependent the work of the ‘poets of decolonization’ is on the Breton language, and how heavy a political charge can be carried by the term ‘translation’.

***Gwalarn* and translation**

*Gwalarn*¹⁹ was a Breton-language literary review founded in 1925 by Roparz Hémon and Olivier Mordrel, which was characterized by an enthusiasm for translation into Breton. It was originally the literary supplement of *Breiz Atao*, but soon became independent in 1926, with in all 166 issues published up to 1944. *Gwalarn*, though, was more than a journal, as the name has come to refer to a whole movement, and to the bold new attitude towards Breton as a modern literary language that is found in the work of writers such as Youenn Drezen, Jakez Riou, Langleiz (Xavier de Langlais), and Maodez Glanndour. *Gwalarn* marked the first systematic break with the Brittany invented by nineteenth-century enthusiasts in thrall to Romanticism, and its explicit aim was to save the Breton language by producing literature in Breton that looked outwards to the wider world, and that treated universal themes. The aim was ‘une littérature bretonne qui, tout en s’efforçant de puiser sa sève dans le génie de la race, veut être d’esprit européen, s’inspirant des méthodes littéraires d’aujourd’hui, tant dans l’expression que dans la pensée’.²⁰ The subject-matter that readers had come to expect of ‘Breton’ writers in either language — peasants living in harmony with nature, landscapes dominated by gorse, broom, and heather, dramatic seascapes with tragic fishermen, a spiritual people obsessed with the *culte des morts* — was deliberately avoided, since Bretonness was to come from the medium rather than the content. Hémon condemned readers who could not cope with this radical change in subject-matter, and who complained that *Gwalarn*’s literature was not ‘Breton’ enough, in the following terms:

Qu’ils accusent notre littérature de n’être pas bretonne, d’être antibretonne! Elle n’en a cure. *Elle est écrite en breton.* [...] Ah, ces braves Bretons francisés qui, de confiance, admirent la littérature en langue bretonne comme ils admirent le Kreiz-Ker et les broderies bigoudenn — qu’ils seraient navrés s’ils savaient à quel point notre littérature se soucie peu de ‘faire Breton’, combien, au contraire, elle s’efforce de rechercher l’universel et répugne à toute entreprise de terroir.²¹

To fulfil their ambition of creating a modern Breton literature, *Gwalarnistes* set about translating works from the world canon since this would enrich and stretch the resources of the Breton language, just as French had been enriched when writers translated ancient and foreign works into the vernacular in sixteenth-century France. Ironically *Gwalarn* was embarking on the same basically nationalist process that French had embarked on in the Renaissance, and was described in du Bellay’s *Défense et illustration de la langue française* (1549).

Thus translations from a wide range of languages regularly appeared in *Gwalarn*. Some were canonical works from English or American, such as works by Poe,

Shakespeare, Shelley, Blake, Chaucer, Longfellow, Marlowe, and others were translated from a wide range of other languages.²² Translating directly from languages other than French avoided France and denied French as a cultural intermediary, since *Gwalarn*'s aim was to broaden Bretons' horizons by providing them with reading material not confined to or by the French view of the world. Roparz Hémon produced an Esperanto supplement to *Gwalarn* called *Nord Okcidento* (1928–1931) because he saw Esperanto as a means of bypassing French, and indeed, of communicating with fellow Celts. *Gwalarn*'s philosophy was a deliberate reaction to the way that Breton literature had been limited by its unequal relationship with French culture in the nineteenth century. Then, many Breton-language works were direct translations from French, and still more were adaptations, or slavish imitations of French Romanticism, such as Joachim Guillôme's *Livr ar Labourer*, which consists of imitations of Virgilian Georgics, a genre that was equally popular with minor French poets. Jean Le Dû and Yves Le Berre, in a survey of Breton literature in the nineteenth century, have written of the sterility of the Breton-language literary milieu, and explain that there are simply no tragedies, comedies, or novels that are truly original compositions (1987: II, 251–91). Indeed, even the few works thought to be original reveal themselves, on closer scrutiny, to be heavily indebted to, or even translated from, material previously published in French. Such is the case of *Emgann Kergidu*, by Alain-Marie Insian, a Breton novel recounting the Revolution of 1789 from the viewpoint of a royalist priest in Léon, which Le Dû and Le Berre have described as a 'mosaïque d'emprunts au français, habilement assemblés, traduits et adaptés au temps et au lieu de sa publication' (1987: II, 264).

Breton-language publications from the nineteenth century could be seen as little more than a translation of French culture. According to Gwendal Denez, Breton-language literature before *Gwalarn* was a provincial literature dominated by imitations of the popular songs collected by nineteenth-century collectors, or of simple French models, or otherwise propaganda of the religious, anti-alcoholism or save-the-language type. This derivativeness is, for him, best conveyed by the metaphor of translation: 'En ce sens, la plupart de la production littéraire bretonne peut être considérée comme traduction: traduction d'une pensée, d'une idéologie plus que traduction littéraire, bien entendu!'.²³ According to this way of thinking, the Breton-language work of a poet such as Auguste Brizeux, who staked his career on celebrating Bretonness in verse, is best described as a 'translation' of French culture. Indeed the artificiality of the Breton poems produced by this minor French Romantic was commented on in his day by his critics, who accused him of writing 'pseudo-breton' that was acquired in Paris rather than in Lorient or Scaër: 'C'est à Paris, et non à Lorient ou à Scaër qu'il devint auteur bretonnant'.²⁴

Translation of other minorities

Translation into Breton from other minority languages tells a different story, with each work translated amounting to a statement of solidarity with another people suffering cultural oppression. Through the patterns of translation between minority languages one can map political allegiances. For instance, just as it did in politics,

Brittany looks to other Celts, particularly to Wales and Ireland, for material to translate. From Welsh we see translated into Breton the *Mabinogi*, some work by Kate Roberts,²⁵ and numerous individual poems. From Ireland we notice in particular translations from Anglo-Irish of work by Joyce and Yeats, as well as Irish-language texts. We also see Bretons translating work from France's other colonies; for instance, protest poems by Algerians are translated into Breton in the journal *Al Liamm*.²⁶ We also find Black poets represented, for instance, Langston Hughes's work is translated by Ronan Huon,²⁷ Yann-Ber Piriou,²⁸ and Per Denez, in *Al Liamm*.²⁹ While such a sense of affinity with other minorities is understandable, and in Brittany's case perhaps inevitable given the French lack of acknowledgement that Breton culture is anything beyond folklore, there is nevertheless a danger that minorities will slip even further from the view of larger cultures if they talk only to one another. To remedy this, minorities would have to be translated into major languages too, but these are invariably perceived as the language of the oppressor.

Translation out of Breton

Translation of Breton material into other languages is unproblematic as long as this language is not French, because when the very existence of one of the languages is threatened by the presence of the other translation becomes a political act. This idea is a familiar one to any student of postcolonialism. In their *Postcolonial Translation*,³⁰ Bassnett and Trivedi go as far as to suggest that all postcolonial writing is a kind of translation, because it brings the reader up against the reality of difference, calling into question the supremacy of the standard language. For Breton militants 'translation' into French is a kind of colonialism, because the translation of a given text cannot fail to bring to mind the 'translation' of a whole generation's culture. But, however problematic, translation into French was not something that could be avoided easily: they would certainly not be the first regional writers seeking the sanction of Paris for their work,³¹ and furthermore these 'decolonizing' poets wanted to be read by other 'victims' of France, from Occitania to Africa, and for this French was *lingua franca*.

The case of Wales has been examined by Wynn Thomas, who is in no doubt that the issue of translation is inseparable from the postcolonial situation of Wales. He refers to the comment by Steiner in *After Babel* that there is a 'touch of treason' in every act of translation, in his discussion of a minority language: 'Given the parlous state of the Welsh language, a volume [...] of successful translations may assume [...] the grim aspect of a veritable series of Welsh poets' heads triumphantly mounted, like Llywelyn's, on the victorious towers of English culture'.³² He explains it further: 'Welsh speakers could naturally see in [translation] a strategy of colonial appropriation, a means of bankrupting the language of its assets prior to liquidating its entire culture'.³³ Ned Thomas has described translating from the Celtic languages into English as cultural grave-robbing.³⁴ He implicates the very discipline of Celtic Studies in the crime, because, like some distant echo of Matthew Arnold's view that the Welsh should express themselves through English, it is guilty of treating Celtic culture as if it were dead. This is the reason why contemporary Welsh poet Twm

Morys refuses to be translated. He explains why he refused to be included in an anthology of Welsh poetry in translation:

But the strict-metre poet's work is at least three quarters as old as Christ. His craft has become another language yet again within the language. His words have a comet-tail of references and nuance. They really do lose so much in translation as to make the effort almost worthless [. . .]. When I have occasionally wanted to reach an audience that doesn't speak Welsh, I've written in English.

The real reason is political, since by refusing he ensures that: 'the little Welsh world [. . .] keeps a little more of its integrity'.³⁵ Translation, then, can ultimately mean the death of a culture, as Michael Cronin, author of *Translating Ireland*, has argued in his brilliant study *Across the Lines*:

It is resistance to translation, not acceptance, that generates translation. If a group of individuals or a people agree to translate themselves into another language, that is if they accept translation unreservedly, then the need for translation soon disappears. For the *translated* there is no more *translation*. On the other hand, if they refuse to translate themselves and insist on speaking and writing in their own language, then the need for translation becomes imperative if communication of any kind is to be established.³⁶

Very little theoretical work of this type has been undertaken on the literatures of Brittany; however, the anonymous authors of the UDB's pamphlet *Bretagne = colonie* of 1972 recognized that the linguistic hybridity of Brittany was a step towards Breton's death, rather than a richness to be celebrated:

Dans la société colonisée, le bilinguisme lui-même, ailleurs source de richesses culturelles n'est qu'une phase de la guerre d'usure que la langue du pouvoir colonisateur livre à celle du colonisé, progressivement écrasée, étouffée, éliminée. Munis de leur seule langue, les colonisés sont des étrangers dans leur propre pays. (*Bretagne = colonie*, 1972: 33)

Welsh writers have been able to go further down this route than the Bretons, simply because the language is stronger, and the audience therefore larger.

Thus it is easy to see how translation can become a matter of treason in the context of a minority language culture, as happened during the controversy surrounding Pierre-Jakez Hélias's *Cheval d'orgueil*. Hélias is perhaps the most famous 'regional' writer in France in recent times, but it is difficult to separate his major French-language work *Le cheval d'orgueil: mémoires d'un Breton du Pays bigouden* (1975) from the fierce debate provoked when it was first published in 1975, most notably the book-length critique, or reply, by Xavier Grall entitled *Le Cheval couché* (1977). Hélias was found guilty by Grall and others of dwelling on the past, being an 'être tombal', and of perpetuating a number of damaging myths about Brittany — rural-ity, poverty, spirituality. The book's success can be measured by the fact that it has been translated into a number of different languages. What is less well known is that these were translations of a translation, as Hélias's book had previously been published in the form of some 150 separate episodes, written in Breton, in various papers. As far as his detractors were concerned, his translation into French was an attempt to render obsolete a whole culture, as the translatable is superfluous. Hélias, just like Brizeux a century and a half earlier, was exploiting Breton to provide a guarantee of

‘authenticity’ for his own French-language publications. Brizeux stresses in the preface to *Marie* (1831) that he had known the Breton language from a young age, and that this makes his portrait of Brittany reliable: ‘Bien peu de gens ont des idées exactes sur la Bretagne. Pour apprécier les peuples simples, il faut avoir été élevé parmi eux, de bonne heure *avoir parlé leur langue*, s’être assis à leur table: alors se découvrent leur poésie intime et cachée, et la grâce native de leurs mœurs’ (my emphasis).³⁷ Later in his career he self-translated into Breton in order to further stress his authenticity. In the case of Hélias, his self-translation into French was so successful *because* of the authentic Breton that was known to be behind it, and whose influence could be felt in the French style and lexis.³⁸ The *Cheval d’orgueil* was built on the authenticity of the author, whose perspective could not be more different from that of the *néo-bretonnants* of the same decade, ‘translating’ in the opposite direction by learning Breton and writing in it.

Conclusion

Any self-translation by an individual author is dangerous because such a translation can be taken for an original. It is for this reason that the ‘translation’ into French undertaken by Breton-speakers such as Brizeux and Hélias has attracted such controversy. Since in their work Brittany, or Breton culture, is seen to be translating itself, their representation in French is taken to be an original; and this, as far as Breton nationalists are concerned, makes them more damaging than, say, a negative representation of Brittany written in French by a visitor such as Balzac would be. The French-language texts produced by self-‘translators’ such as Brizeux and Hélias are problematic because their denial of the difficulty of translation brings danger for the ‘original’ language. Once every aspect of a culture is seen to be translatable, then that culture can soon be thought of as superfluous, and in this way translation can contribute to the death of a culture. If translating into a minority language is a political act, then translating out of a minority language, and into a dominant linguistic and cultural system, is not just political, but rather it amounts to a perpetuation of the colonizing process. Investigation of the work of those who have translated into and out of Breton at various times has revealed something of the politics surrounding modern Breton culture and identity, as well as something of the complexity of the issue of translation.

Notes

¹ Of course, French-language texts were produced by writers in Brittany well before this period. Around 1830, however, we find for the first time Breton-born writers who stake their career on describing Brittany and Bretonness in French. For the argument that Francophone Breton literature was born at this time, see Heather Williams, ‘Writing to Paris: Poets, Nobles and Savages in Nineteenth-century Brittany’, *French Studies*, 57:4 (2003), 475–90, and also her more recent *Postcolonial Brittany:*

Literature Between Languages (Oxford: Peter Lang, 2007).

² For an overview of the poetry of the period in its political context, see Nathalie Caradec, ‘Des voix s’élèvent . . . contestations et revendications dans la poésie bretonne de langue française des années soixante-dix’, in *Identités et société de Plougastel à Okinawa*, ed. by Ronan Le Coadic (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2007), pp. 263–79.

³ On the complex issue of the Bretonness of Corbière’s work, see Pascal Rannou, *De Corbière*

- à Tristan. *Les Amours jaunes: une quête de l'identité* (Paris: Champion, 2006), and for a recent evaluation of his disruptive language, see Katherine Lunn-Rockliffe, *Tristan Corbière and the Poetics of Irony* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).
- ⁴ See Rhisiart Hincks, 'The Breton Language in the Nineteenth Century', in *Language and Community in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. by Geraint H. Jenkins (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1998), 369–95; and Fañch Broudic, *La Pratique du breton de l'Ancien Régime à nos jours* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 1995).
- ⁵ See Jean Le Dû and Yves Le Berre, 'Un Siècle d'écrits en langue bretonne (1790–1892)', in *Histoire littéraire et culturelle de la Bretagne*, 3 vols, ed. by Jean Balcou and Yves Le Gallo (Paris/Geneva: Champion-Slatkine, 1987), II, 251–91, esp. p. 265.
- ⁶ Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France 1870–1914* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1976). Weber's model has since been exposed as an oversimplification; see Stephen Sawyer, 'Locating the Centre: Confining and Defining the Power of Paris', *Nottingham French Studies*, 44:1 (2005), 20–37. For other models, see Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La Création des identités nationales: Europe, XVIIIe–XXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 1999), and 'Des fictions créatrices: les identités nationales', *Romantisme*, 110 (2000), 51–62; Caroline Ford, *Creating the Nation in Provincial France: Religion and Political Identity in Brittany* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- ⁷ See William Calin, *Minority Literatures and Modernism: Scots, Breton, and Occitan, 1920–1990* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000), pp. 273–81 for a summary of the poetry and politics of the 1960s and 1970s.
- ⁸ Calin, *Minority Literatures*, p. 313. For discussion of Brittany's 'postcoloniality', see Williams, *Post-colonial Brittany*.
- ⁹ *Bretagne=colonie* (Rennes: UDB, 1972), pp. 105–06.
- ¹⁰ Paol Keineg, *Hommes liges des talus en transes, réédition augmentée de Le poème du pays qui a faim, et suivi de Vent de Harlem*, préface de Gwenc'hlan Le Scouëzec (Paris: P. J. Oswald, 1969), p. 52.
- ¹¹ Paol Keineg, *Chroniques et croquis des villages verrouillés, comprenant, en édition bilingue, Barzhonegou-trakt (poèmes-tracts)*, préface by Yves Rouquette (Honfleur: P. J. Oswald, 1971), p. 105.
- ¹² Sten Kidna, 'Bemdez da c'houlou-deiz', in *Du a Gwyn: Cerddi Cyfoes o Lydaw*, ed. by Dewi Morris Jones and Mikael Madeg (Talybont: Y Lolfa, 1982), p. 92.
- ¹³ On France and regional languages, see Michel de Certeau, Julia Dominique, and Jacques Revel, *Une Politique de la langue. La Révolution française et les patois: l'enquête Grégoire* (Paris: Gallimard, 1975); Valérie Lachuer, *L'État face à la langue bretonne* (Rennes: Klask, 1998); D. Ager, *Identity, Insecurity and Image: France and Language* (Clevedon: Multilingual Matters, 1999).
- ¹⁴ Louis-Jean Calvet, *Linguistique et colonialisme: petit traité de glottophagie* (Paris: Payot, 1974), p. 15.
- ¹⁵ 'La République', in *Lieux de Mémoire*, 3 vols, ed. by Pierre Nora (Paris: Gallimard, 1992), I, p. ix.
- ¹⁶ Mona Ozouf, *L'École de la France: essais sur la Révolution, l'utopie et l'enseignement* (Paris: Gallimard, 1984), p. 21. As recently as the twentieth century, schoolchildren who were caught speaking a regional language would be given a 'symbole' to wear as a marker of their failure to modernize; see Klaoda an Du, *Histoire d'un interdit: le breton à l'école* (Lesneven: Hor Yezh, 1991).
- ¹⁷ Yann-Ber Piriou (ed.), *Défense de cracher par terre et de parler breton: poèmes de combat (1950–1970. Anthologie bilingue)* (Paris: Oswald, 1971), p. 36.
- ¹⁸ Christian Keginer, *Un dépaysement, précédé d'une mise au point et suivi d'un point de départ (Une poésie révolutionnaire bretonne existe)*, préface de Paol Keineg (Paris: Oswald, 1972), pp. 69–72.
- ¹⁹ *Gwalarn* the journal and the ideology of school is discussed in Calin, 2000: 99–105.
- ²⁰ Manifeste de *Gwalarn*, cited in Alain Déniel, *Le Mouvement breton* (Paris: Maspéro, 1976), p. 69.
- ²¹ Roparz Hemon, *Kornog* (1929). Cited in Morvan Lebesque, *Comment peut-on être breton?: essai sur la démocratie française*, préface de Gwenc'hlan Le Scouëzec (Paris: Seuil, 1970), p. 175.
- ²² For a list of translations, see Gwenno Sven-Myer, 'Y Cylchgrawn Llydaweg Gwalarn (1925–1944): ei amcanion, ei iaith, ei gyfraniad i lenyddiaeth', unpublished MPhil thesis, University of Wales Aberystwyth, 1998.
- ²³ Gwendal Denez, 'Littérature et traduction', in *Littérature et traduction: séminaire sur la traduction littéraire* (Rennes: Institut culturel de Bretagne, 1993), pp. 55–75 (69).
- ²⁴ Francis Gourvil, *Théodore-Claude-Henri Hersart de La Villemarqué (1815–1895) et le 'Barzaz Breiz' (1839–1845–1867): origines, éditions, sources, critique, influences* (Rennes: Impr. Oberthur, 1959 [i.e. 1960]), p. 27.
- ²⁵ Ronan Huon (trans.), *Al Liamm*, 11 (1948), 18.
- ²⁶ In the body of an article by Yann-Ber Piriou, 'Barzhed er Gorventenn', *Al Liamm*, 88, (1961), 339–47. This journal, founded in 1948 (but connected to a journal of 1946 of the same name) is considered as the heir to *Gwalarn*, which ceased publication in 1944.
- ²⁷ 'Kanaouenn evit ur plac'h du', trans. by Ronan Huon in *Al Liamm*, 24 (January–February 1951), 8.

- ²⁸ 'Kan ar glav e miz Ebrel', trans. by Yann-Ber Piriou in *Al Liamm*, 189 (July–August 1978), 231.
- ²⁹ 'Ar Vorianed e lennegezh hag arzoù an USA', trans. by Per Denez in *Al Liamm*, 24 (p. 12).
- ³⁰ *Postcolonial Translation: Theory and Practice* (London: Routledge, 1999).
- ³¹ On this paradox generally see Ann-Marie Thiesse, *Écrire la France: le mouvement littéraire régionaliste de langue française entre la belle époque et la libération* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1991), and on the case of Brittany Williams, 'Poets, Nobles and Savages'.
- ³² *Poetry Wales*, 22:4 (1987), 79–81. Cited in M. Wynn Thomas, *Corresponding Cultures: The Two Literatures of Wales* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1999), p. 111.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, p. 114. The fears of the Welsh were discussed in a special issue of *Modern Poetry in Translation* (Spring 1995).
- ³⁴ Ned Thomas, 'Bedd-ladron diwylliannol', *Tu Chwith*, 8 (1993), 95–99.
- ³⁵ Twm Morys, 'A Refusal to be Translated', *Poetry Wales*, 38:3 (2003), 55.
- ³⁶ Michael Cronin, *Across the Lines: Travel, Language, Translation* (Cork: Cork University Press, 2000), p. 95.
- ³⁷ Preface to *Marie, Œuvres de Auguste Brizeux*, 4 vols, ed. by Auguste Dorchain (Paris: Garnier Frères, 1910–1914), I, 1–2.
- ³⁸ Instead of providing a smooth, 'neutral', translation, he produces slightly odd-sounding French, in a careful attempt to offer the French reader a safe degree of alienation, or the charm of exoticism. For a critique of his language, see Pascal Rannou, *Inventaire d'un héritage: essai sur l'œuvre littéraire de Pierre-Jakez Hélias* (Relecq-Kerhuon: An Here, 1997).

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