Reason clauses in Early Modern English translations:
Observations on extracts from translations
of Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae*
(unpublished, 1999)
Carsten Breul

This paper is concerned with a very specific topic: the translation of *cum*-clauses that potentially express a reason relation in several extracts of Early Modern English (EModE) versions of Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae*.

1   Introduction

1.1   Translation, language history and historical linguistics

The history of a language is a history in terms of change. One of the factors that may cause language change is language contact. Translation is a specific kind of language contact. These statements do of course not logically lead to the conclusion that translation causes language change. But they make the assumption that, under favourable historical conditions of production and reception, the work of translators may have an influence on the history of a language sufficiently plausible and worth considering. Simple as it may seem, this idea has not been made the focus of much work in historical linguistics. N. Blake (1992: 3) writes that "translation is recognised as something that is of tangential importance" for historical linguistics, and the import of his article as a whole from which this assessment is taken is to initiate a change of this situation.

     The early and middle phases of the Early Modern English period, i.e. that between about 1500 and 1640, covers a time-span in which it is known that foreign language influence, especially that of Latin, has had a great impact on the development of the English language. This is certainly true with respect to the lexicon, while Latin influence on English syntax is also discernible but less clear.[1] Within the wider context of the humanist movement, translation activity showed a great increase; and matters of language in general gained an important place in the scholars' and authors' consciousness and were discussed extensively as a consequence of

thinking about the relation between Latin and the vernacular.[2] Thus it seems valuable to study translations from that period and to compare them with each other and later translations, most profitably of the same source text. This might be a way to discover and possibly explain aspects of linguistic change which might go unnoticed without this special perspective. Such an approach – although envisaged much more broadly than can be presented here – is advocated by G. Steiner (1975/1992):

> It is obvious, when one stops to think of it, that intellectual history, the history of genres, the realities of a literary or philosophic tradition, are inseparable from the business of translation. But it is only in the last decades that we find close attention being paid to the history and epistemology of the transmission of meaning (what one would, technically, call a 'diachronic hermeneutic'). In what way does the development of crucial philosophic, scientific, or psychological terms depend on successive translations of their initial or normative statement? (*Ib.*: 285.)

> There is urgent justification for the 'stemmatic' review of major philosophic and literary texts, i.e. for the recension of successive and interrelated translations of a given original in order to provide the history of its diffusion, influence and (mis)interpretation with a sound material basis. (*Ib.*: 287.)

1.2   Translation in the context of genre- and/or text-type theory

The first idea that springs to mind when we think of translation and genres from the perspective of historical linguistics is probably this question: What, if any, effects on the development of a language may translation have, if the translators are confronted with genres or text-types in the source language that are foreign to, or do not fit easily in, the world of texts of the target language? This, I believe, is an interesting aspect, and it shines through at some places in my paper.

My main perspective, however, is different: I would like to think of translation *as such* as constituting a *kind* of genre – a specific textual activity rather – whose relevance for historical linguistics may be explored further, especially as regards the cognitive underpinnings of linguistic change. For according to Steiner (1975/1992), there is an underlying cognitive identity between translation (in its usual sense) on the one hand and communication by means of human language in general on the other hand:

> The model 'sender to receiver' which represents any semiological and semantic process is ontologically equivalent to the model 'source-language to receptor-language' used in the theory of translation. (*Ib.*: 49.)

> Thus, in a general sense [...] there is 'private language' and an essential part of all natural language is private. This is why there will be in every complete speech-act a more or less prominent element of translation. All communication 'interprets' between privacies.

---

[1] See e.g. Barber 1976: 166ff., *passim*, Görlach 1978/1991: 100, 125ff., 154ff.

[2] See e.g. Baugh & Cable 1935/1993: 195ff., Blake 1992: 11ff. For Cohen (1962) the period from Henry VIII until the middle of the 17th century is one of the two "great periods of excellence" for translation, the second one being the second half of the 20th century (see *ib.*: 9, 13f.).

> As we have seen [...], such mediation is at best uncertain. Though generically the same, the uncertainty is of course compounded and made visible where interpretation has to take place between languages. (*Ib.*: 207.)

> [...] all procedures of expressive articulation and interpretative reception are translational, whether intra- or interlingually. The second usage – 'translation involves two or more languages' – has the advantage of obviousness and common currency; but it is, I believe, damagingly restrictive. (*Ib.*: 294.)

Translation is not generally regarded to be a genre in literary criticism.[3] But there are occasional suggestions to accord translation a very special place among the genres or to think of it as a 'secondary genre'. For K. Maurer (1976, 1980) it is the aspect of 'backward reference to other texts' ("Rückbindung an a n d e r e Texte"; Maurer 1976: 236) which characterises a group comprising e.g. imitations, parodies, travesties, palinodes, falsifications and literary translations as secondary genres. I do not know if or in how far this special aspect of intertextuality has proved to be relevant or fruitful for literary criticism.[4] But – and quite independent of Steiner's hypothesis quoted above – it may turn out to be significant for cognitively oriented historical linguistics, if we consider that intertextuality in this simple sense is ultimately a prerequisite and a driving force for language change. For language acquisition, linguistic competence and linguistic performance of each individual and thus language stability as well as change are ultimately dependent on and determined by the *textual* context (consisting of texts in one or more languages) in which each individual is linguistically acting in. Translations are special manifestations of intertextuality where two texts from different languages are related in that their meaning is, ideally, equivalent – whatever this means, should mean or can mean in more concrete terms.[5] The production of such an equivalence in the minds/brains of (nearly) bilingual speakers may involve the use of new linguistic means or new or modified uses of established linguistic means and may thus induce language change if they are taken over by other speakers of the target language.[6]

---

[3] The genre theoretic monographs by Hempfer (1973), Fowler (1982), for example, do not mention translation(s).

[4] With respect to translation, this idea re-appears in a paper by C. James (1989: 35f.).

[5] See Steiner (1975/1992), whose monograph as a whole revolves around "the fundamental hermeneutic dilemma, which is whether it makes sense to speak of messages being *equivalent* when codes are *different*." (*Ib.*: 274.)

[6] This hypothesis is not meant to be empirically founded by what follows. Rather, the following is to be understood as a case-study providing a tiny little fragment of linguistic fact by which I elaborate on and explicate this hypothesis with respect to a specific linguistic phenomenon.

2   *Cum*-clauses in the *Consolation* and their EModE translations

The *Consolation*, written in 524 AD, when Boethius was incarcerated and facing execution, is a highly argumentative text in the form of a Socratic dialogue between personified Philosophy and the first person narrator, whom we can identify with Boethius himself. Most of its prose parts consist of sequences of (pseudo-)logically connected speech acts, starting off from a number of assumptions and leading to consoling conclusions for the narrator in his deplorable situation.[7] *Cum* plays an important role as one of the conjunctions that perform this connecting function. It is mostly used to introduce a speech act which serves to justify the truth of the propositional content of the speech act to which the *cum*-speech act is related. In the words of the grammar by Kühner & Stegmann (1912/1971: 346), reason *cum* – or, to resuscitate an archaic grammatical term, 'rational'[8] *cum* – introduces a clause that gives an *Erkenntnisgrund* (*causa cognoscendi*), i.e. one of the premises on the basis of which a conclusion is drawn.

Der Grund, den *cum* c. coni. ausdrückt, ist ein logischer (gedachter), ein Erkenntnisgrund, d.h. ein Grund, aus dem eine Wirkung nicht unmittelbar hervorgeht, sondern erst durch unser Denken geschlossen wird." (Kühner & Stegmann 1912/1971: 346; spacing omitted.)[9]

But the justifying function of a rational *cum*-clause may not only refer to the propositional content of the speech act to which it is related, but also to its illocutionary force. Thus, in the examples (1) and (2), the *cum*-clause is used to justify posing the (rhetorical) questions that follow:[10]

(1)   276; 25: Deum rerum omnium principem bonum esse communis humanorum conceptio probat animorum. Nam **cum** nihil deo melius excogitari queat [subj.], id quo melius nihil est bonum esse quis dubitet?

---

[7] Pemberton (intr. of *Queen Elizabeth's Englishings*: xiii) writes about the original text: "It is mainly formed on the model the best ancient authors of the golden age of literature, particularly Cicero in his philosophical writings, and not seldom reminds us of the manner of Seneca, or of the *Florida* of Apuleius. Boethius diverges chiefly from the style of Cicero in two points; first by a more lucid setting forth of syllogisms, and by a more strictly logical sequence. We gain consequently in Boethius, in perspicacity, what we lose in rhetorical beauty, and this increased adoption of logical forms sometimes borders on the dryness and subtlety of Aristotle and the Scholastics." As to Boethius's interest in logic see also Chadwick (1981), according to whom the *Consolation* is the "the work of a refined humanist scholar [...] fascinated by logical problems almost to the point of obsession." (*Ib.*: 223.)

[8] See OED, *s.v.* 'rational', A.†6.

[9] According to Kühner & Stegmann (1912/1971: 346f.), the function of the other conjunctions in the field of cause/reason is to introduce a clause which expresses a *Werdensgrund* or *Ursache* (*causa efficiens*): "Hingegegen drücken die Konjunktionen *quod*, *quia*, *quoniam*, *quando* c. indic. [...] einen Grund aus, aus dem eine Wirkung unmittelbar hervorgeht. Ein solcher Grund ist entweder ein realer, welcher sich auf die Wirkungen außer uns in der Wirklichkeit bezieht, eine Ursache [...] oder ein moralischer Grund (ein Beweggrund), welcher sich auf die Wirkungen in uns (in unserem Willen) bezieht [...]." (Spacing omitted.) Elsewhere (Breul 1997a, b), I argue that this distinction is also reflected in the syntax, semantics and use of the causal and rational conjunctions in ModE (*because* versus *since* and *as*).

[10] In the passages quoted from Boethius and his translators, bold print is added by me in order to facilitate the identification of the corresponding items of *cum* and its translations. The abbreviations 'subj.' and (below) 'ind.' mean that the verb is in the subjunctive or indicative mode respectively.

> Tester: That God, the principle of all things, is good is proved by the common concept of all men's minds; for **since** nothing better than God can be conceived of, who can doubt that that, than which nothing is better, is good?

(2)   280; 95: "**Cum** multa," inquit, "beatitudo continere videatur [subj.], utrumne haec omnia unum veluti corpus beatitudinis quadam partium varietate coniungant an [...] ?"

> Tester: "**Since** happiness," she said, "seems to include many things, do they all join, with a certain variability of parts, to make as it were one body of happiness or [...] ?"

The EModE translation extracts which I have investigated are the three texts to be found in the corresponding part of the Helsinki Corpus plus a fourth one which is not in this corpus. The extracts in the Helsinki Corpus are from works by Colville (1556), by Queen Elizabeth I (1593), and by Lord Preston (1695). The one that I have added is by an anonymous author, usually referred to by the initials 'I.T.' (sometimes 'J.T.') (1609)[11]. For comparisons with ModE, I have used the translation by Tester.

In Tab. 1, all occurrences of *cum* in the Latin extracts of the *Consolation* are listed which have been translated by a causal or rational conjunction in at least one of the translations under consideration including the ModE one. An 'i' or 's' in parentheses means that the verb of the clause introduced by *cum* is in the indicative or subjunctive mode respectively. A '?' means that I was not able to recover an equivalent or that I was in doubt about an equivalent of *cum*; the '∅' means that the respective clauses have been translated by simply ignoring the *cum*; and the abbreviation 'particip.' means that the respective clauses have been translated by a participle construction. The tense is present in all instances. Appearances of *cum* other than those listed in the table (12 with indicative, 4 with subjunctive) are mostly rendered by *when* in all translations and occasionally by a participle construction, or by *while/whilst*, *if*, *once*, *so soon as*, *so long as*, and *whereas*.

---

[11] According to Lathrop (1933: 255) and Patch (1935: 82), following W.E. Houghton, Jr., I.T. is Michael Walpole, a Jesuit (for other suggestions as to the identity of I.T. see Lathrop (*ib.*).

Tab. 1: *Cum*-clauses and their translations case per case

line[12]	Latin	Colville 1556	Elizabeth I 1593	I.T. 1609	Preston 1695	Tester
266; 61	cumque (s)	And when	& whan	particip.	and when	and since
268; 64	cum (s)	when	if	since	whilst	since
270; 99	cum (s)	forsomuch	(as) ?	since	(as) ?	since
276; 25	cum (s)	when	when	since	since	since
278; 52	cum (s)	when	when	since	since	since
278; 72	cum (i)	when that	whan	particip.	when	since
280; 95	Cum (s)	When	when	Since	Since	Since
284; 134	Cum (s)	when that	When	since	Since	since
286; 10	cumque (s)	and ... when	so as	particip.	and ... when	and since
288; 18	cum (i)	∅	when	when	when	since
290; 54	cum (s)	when	when	if	for	since
338; 14	cum (s)	synce that	when	since	Since	since
350; 151	cum (s)	when	as	since	since	since
356; 1	cum (s)	forasmuch as	since	since	because	since
362; 88	cum (s)	when	since	since	since	since
364; 125	cum (i)	when	when	when	since	when
368; 181	cum (s)	For	when	Since	for	when
370; 190	cum (i)	when	when	when	when	since

---

[12] The lines are those of the respective occurrences of *cum* in the Latin original.

The table shows that most of the *cum*-clauses which are rendered by *since* in the ModE text are translated by *when* in the works by Colville and Elizabeth. The share of *since* increases in the translations by I.T. and Preston, but there are still some occurrences of *when* in these texts. I.T. also uses participial constructions to translate the respective cases, thus leaving the semantic relation lexically unspecified. These findings call for a closer examination of the relation between *cum* and *when* and rational *since*.

Cum-constructions are much and controversially discussed among Latin scholars. A prominent problem is the relation between the semantics of the *cum*-clause (temporal, 'causal'/rational, concessive etc.) and the mode of its verb (indicative, subjunctive). I need not go into this discussion here.[13] It suffices to state that it is well possible to have a reason relation expressed by a *cum*-clause either in the subjunctive or the indicative mode in the *Consolation*.[14] What we may have in mind as a school grammatical rule of thumb, namely that *cum* plus indicative is associated with a temporal and *cum* plus subjunctive with a non-temporal meaning, is a simplification with respect to classical Latin and even more unreliable in regard to the post-classical period, to which the *Consolation* belongs. And this remains true despite the fact that the *Consolation* is oriented towards the classical works in style and language in some respects.[15] Hence, the idea that the increase in the use of *since* in our texts may simply reflect improvements in the translations based on improved knowledge of the grammatical rules of Latin, including the 'rule' just mentioned, seems to be too simplistic. It seems equally unwise, however, to conclude from a general characterisation of the translators in the period under consideration as "men to whom Latin was almost a second mother tongue" (Baugh & Cable 1935/1993: 211) that they produced perfectly adequate translations in every respect.[16]

A more cautious view has to take the semantic range of *when* into account, which is of course not restricted to a temporal meaning and which may have been exploited differently in EModE compared with ModE. Let us have a look at some instances of translation:

(3)   266;61: Qui vero solum posse desiderat, profligat opes, despicit voluptates honoremque potentia carentem gloriam quoque nihili pendit. Sed hunc quoque quam multa deficiant vides. Fit enim ut aliquando necessariis egeat, ut anxietatibus mordeatur **cumque** haec depellere nequeat [subj.], etiam id quod maxime petebat potens esse desistat.

---

[13] See e.g. Kühner & Stegmann 1912/1971, Hofmann & Szantyr 1965, Lavency 1975, 1976, 1985, Maurel 1995.
[14] To quote one source: "Häufig verbindet Boethius causales *cum* mit dem Indikativ"; "die Modi [hatten] für Boethius ihre specifische Geltung verloren" (Engelbrecht 1902: 33).
[15] See fn. 7 above and Pemberton (intr. of *Queen Elizabeth's Englishings*): xiii, Crabbe 1981: 240, Gruber 1978: 43ff.
[16] Reading e.g. Lathrop (1933), Patch (1935: 75ff.) and Pemberton (intr. of *Queen Elizabeth's Englishings*) provides a more differentiated view in this regard.

> Colville: [...] and yet happethe that he hath sometyme nede of thynges necessarye, and is bitten or greued wyth care and anguyshe. **And when** he cannot put awaye these thyngs, he cesseth and is not myghtye, whych is y=e= thing that he mooste cheyfely desyred.

> Elizabeth: [...] Somtyme he lackes that necessary is, so as his want doth byte him, **& whan** he can not throwe of this, that most he sought, hability he wantes.

> I.T.: [...] For sometimes he wanteth necessaries, and is perplexed with anxieties, **and being not able to** ridde himselfe, ceaseth to be powerfull, which was the thing he onely aymed at.

> Preston: [...] For often he must stand in need of Necessaries, he must be subject to great Anxieties; **and when** he cannot drive away these things, he shews clearly his want of that which he did most affect, I mean Power.

> Tester: Now he who only desires power, squanders his wealth, despises pleasures, and all honour without power, as well as glory, he counts as worthless. But you see how many things are wanting to him too: for it happens that sometimes he lacks necessities, so that he is gnawed by worries, **and since** he cannot get rid of these worries, he loses even that which he most sought after, being powerful.

While it is clear that a purely temporal reading of the *cum*-clause can be ruled out in example (3), it is not obvious that the ModE translation by *since* is really most adequate. The use of *since* implies that the proposition of the *since*-clause, namely that 'he cannot get rid of these worries', can be taken as an established fact. This, however, is not evident from the context. An open conditional reading, paraphrasable as *in case that/given the case that he cannot get rid of his worries* is equally, if not more, plausible in the given context. We may assume that this is the reading the EModE translators intended to express by using *when*. Note that this possibility is also current in ModE. Declerck (1997: 39) gives the following examples (see also Quirk *et al.* 1985: 1086ff.):

(4) There are many stone circles – we call them standing stones even when they are recumbent.
(5) You have much more flexibility when you're a private company.

To my mind, the participial construction used by I.T. suggests more readily a factual interpretation of the proposition of the *cum*-clause, but is less explicit in this respect than *since*.

In the following case, example (6), where only the ModE translation has *since*, we may as well be of the opinion that an open conditional reading of the *cum*-clause as perhaps implied by the use of *when* is more appropriate than a factual reading implied by the use of *since*:

(6) 288; 18: Quae igitur **cum** discrepant [ind.] minime bona sunt, cum vero unum esse coeperint [subj. (Engelbrecht 1902: 30)], bona fiunt; nonne haec ut bona sint, unitatis fieri adeptione contingit?

> Colville: PHIL: Then the thynges that do vary and dyffer, be no goodes. But when they haue begonne to be al one thynge then they be goodes. Do it not happen that these thynges be good by adoption or optaynyng of vnitie?

> Elizabeth: "This is euident," quoth I, "& no man neede to doubte therof, for those that, **when** they disagree, be not good, when they are one, must needes be so."[17]

> I.T.: Those things then, which **when** they differ, are not good, and when they are one, become good, are they not made good by obtayning vnitie?

---

[17] Confusion of speakers.

Preston: (^Ph.^) These things then **when** they are distinct not being Goods, and when they meet immediately being made Goods, do not they owe their Beings of Good to Unity?

Tester: Now those things which are not good, **since** they differ, but become good when they begin to be one, does it not happen that they become good by the acquisition of unity?

Cum with a conditional meaning equivalent to *si* is not mentioned in all grammars and dictionaries of Latin; but it is mentioned in the more elaborate ones.[18] The following observation by Chadwick (1981: 173) is also pertinent:

[...] sometimes [Boethius] uses *si* or *cum* to indicate mutual implication or equivalence, linking two propositions by 'if' in the sense of 'if and only if', where each of the two sentences represents a necessary and sufficient condition for the other.

There are other cases in the *Consolation*, however, where the proposition of the *cum*-clause must be taken as an established fact. But still we find translations by *when* among the EModE texts; see example (7):

(7)   284; 134: Cuius vero causa quid expetitur, id maxime videtur optari, veluti si salutis causa quispiam velit equitare, non tam equitandi motum desiderat quam salutis effectum. **Cum** igitur omnia boni gratia petantur [subj.], non illa potius quam bonum ipsum desideratur ab omnibus.

Colville: [...] Therfore **when that** all thyngs be desyred, for the cause and loue of good, they be not desyred rather of al me~, the~ the same good.

Elizabeth: [...] **When** than all thinges be desyrd for greatest good, we desyre not those thinges more than good it self.

I.T.: [...] Wherefore **since** all things are desired in respect of goodnesse, they are not so much wished for, as goodnesse it selfe.

Preston: [...] **Since** therefore all things are sought after for the sake of Good, they cannot be more desirable than Good it self.

Tester: Now the cause for which a thing is sought is seen to be most greatly desired, as for example if a man wanted to ride for the sake of his health, he does not so much desire the motion of riding, but the effect, health. Therefore, **since** all things are sought after for the sake of good, they are not so much desired by all as the good itself.

By the time this *cum*-clause appears in the text, it has been established as a fact that 'all things are sought after for the sake of good'. So the *cum*-clause can hardly be read as an open conditional clause (nor of course as a purely temporal one). And this is reflected by the fact that besides the ModE translator, two of the EModE authors have used *since* here. However, both of the earlier EModE translators use *when*/*when that*. Again I would hesitate to say that this is an inadequacy. An alternative explanation is that Colville and Elizabeth made use of *when* with a meaning which also may still sometimes be found in ModE and which comes very close to a reason meaning, i.e. that which Declerck (1997: 40ff.) calls a 'closed' or 'fulfilled conditional' meaning. Declerck gives a number of examples and says that they have "the connotation of

---

[18] See e.g. Kühner & Stegmann 1912/1971: 335, Hofmann & Szantyr 1965: 620; Lewis & Short 1879: s.v.: *cum*. The paraphrases "At a time or in circumstances when" and "In the situation or circumstances when", given in the dictionary by Glare (1982: s.v. *cum*) come close to the notion of condition as well.

reason or cause" (*ib.*: 40).[19] The following is an example which I have come across in my own reading:

(8)   Prince [...] is essentially in agreement with Kies when she claims that the extracted clause [quote by Prince following]. (Collins 1993: 31.)

That we have a fulfilled condition in the *when*-clause in (8) is obvious: That Prince claims what she has written (as proved by the quotation) is not open but factual.[20]

In the example (9), the proposition of the *cum*-clause (that 'nothing better than God can be conceived of') has not explicitly been established as a fact in the preceding text, but can be taken as a piece of common factual knowledge. Still we have *when* in both of the earlier EModE translations.

(9)   276; 25: Deum rerum omnium principem bonum esse communis humanorum conceptio probat animorum. Nam **cum** nihil deo melius excogitari queat [subj.], id quo melius nihil est bonum esse quis dubitet?

Colville: The common conceyte of mans minde do proue, that God is the soueraygne and cheyfe good of al things. For **whe~** nothyng maye be thought better then God, what man doutyth that thinge to be good when nothynge is better than it.

Elizabeth: The common conceite of mens myndes allowes, that God of all thinges the Ruler, is good hit self. For **when** nothing can be imagined better than himself, who can doute that that is the best, whom nothing can better?

I.T.: [...] For **since** nothing can be imagined better then God, who doubteth but that is good, then which is nothing better.

Preston: That God the Governour of all things is good, is proved by the universal Opinion of all Men. For **since** nothing can be found out which is better than God, who will deny Him to be good, than whom nothing can be better?

Tester: That God, the principle of all things, is good is proved by the common concept of all men's minds; for **since** nothing better than God can be conceived of, who can doubt that that, than which nothing is better, is good?

The examples presented show that a translation of the respective instances of *cum* by *when* is not simply misguided, although there is hardly any trace of temporality involved. *When* can carry an open conditional meaning, which cannot be ruled out with *cum*; and it can also express a fulfilled (i.e. factual) conditional meaning, which is hardly distinguishable from a reason meaning often associated with *cum*.

---

[19] Cf. also Kühner & Stegmann (1912/1971: 388): "Das Verhältnis der Bedingung zum Bedingten ist ebenso ein kausales, wie das des Grundes zur Folge. Die Bedingung wird gleichfalls als Grund, aber nicht als ein wirklicher, sondern als ein angenommener, als ein möglicher Grund, als eine mögliche Voraussetzung gedacht." (Spacing omitted.)

[20] The fact that we have to presuppose a co-operative text-producer who has not changed his/her view in the meantime may leave a trace of openness in using a written statement of this text-producer as a warrant for his/her actually claiming what he/she has stated in print. This may lie behind the use of *when* in examples like (8).

3   Rational *since* in the Helsinki Corpus – *cum* and *since* in EModE dictionaries and
     grammars of Latin

Occasional use of *since* and its variants with a reason meaning can be found far back in ME, but
still in the earlier stages of EModE its use seems to have been rather restricted. Rissanen (1989:
16, fn. 6) mentions that 'causal'/rational *since/sith* plays only a very minor quantitative role (ca.
30 instances) in the first sub-period (1500-1570) of the EModE part of the Helsinki Corpus as
compared to *because* (ca. 200) and especially *for* (ca. 500). My check of this figure for *since* and
its orthographic variants results in an even lower number, namely ca. 24. My count of *since* (and
possible orthographic variants of it) for the whole of the second EModE sub-period (1570-1640)
of the Helsinki Corpus results in ca. 21 instances (four of which from the Boethius translation).
Thus there is no rise in the frequency of rational *since* to be registered in this sub-period
compared with the previous one. For the whole of the third EModE sub-period (1640-1710), I
have counted ca. 42 instances (11 of which from the Boethius-translation). Here then we register
a significantly higher frequency than in the previous sub-periods.[21] It is interesting to see that in
the translations of the *Consolation* a clear surge in the use of *since* for *cum* can be noted with I.T.
(see Tab. 1 above), whose text (from 1609), however, falls into the second sub-period of
EModE, i.e. that which does not yet show a rise in the frequency of rational *since* with respect to
the corresponding part of the Helsinki Corpus *in toto*.

     A cursory survey shows that in the earlier dictionaries and grammars of Latin, *cum* is not
yet mentioned explicitly as a rational conjunction; see e.g. the dictionary by Elyot (1538/1970),
the grammars by Linacre (1523?/1971) and LaRamée (1585/1971).[22] A translation of *cum* by
when is suggested in the short but very influential grammatical treatise by William Lily and John
Colet ("known for four centuries as 'Lily's Grammar' or the 'Royal Grammar'" (Lily & Colet
1549/1970, editor's "Note"). In the "Introdvction of the eyght partes of speche", section "Of a
verbe", sub-section "Modes", the authors write:

The Subiunctiue mode hath euermore some coniunction ioyned with hym: as, *Cum amarem*, whan I loued. And it is
called the Subiunctiue mode, because it dependeth of an other verbe in the same sentence, eyther goyng afore, or
commyng after: as, *Cum amarem eram miser*, whan I loued, I was a wretche.

---

[21] a) The three EModE sub-periods in the Helsinki Corpus contain a roughly equal amount of text. b) The
figures given for the instances of *since* in the Boethius translations are not equal to the sum of instances given in
Tab. 1. This is because *since* is also occasionally used to translate other Latin conjunctions than *cum* such as
quoniam or *per quam* or has no direct equivalent in the Latin original. c) The 'ca.' going with the figures is due to
the fact that a few occurrences are not definitely rational.
[22] But note that the dictionary by Elyot (1538/1970) lists *for* and the one by Thomas (1587/1972) lists *seeing
that* as one of the meanings of *cum*.

Here, too, it is hard to decide which meaning precisely (temporal, conditional, rational) the *cum*-clause in the example is supposed to have.

From those works that I have looked at, the grammar by Granger (1616/1971) is the first to explicitly mention *cum* as a 'ratiocinative' conjunction. Note that the date of publication of this grammar is later than that of I.T.'s translation of the *Consolation*. Information similar to that in Granger's grammar is then also to be found in those by Busby (1647/1972), Hoole (1651/1969) and Burles (1652/1971). Of these works, the last mentioned one is the first to give *sith that*, i.e. a (by then already archaic) variant of *since*, as an equivalent of *cum*.

These facts seem to suggest that, at least with respect to the translation of *cum* and the use of rational *since*, the text by I.T. is innovative and progressive. It originates in a period when the distinction between a temporal, conditional (open and fulfilled), and rational meaning of *cum* is not yet clearly and explicitly reflected in dictionaries and grammars, and when the use of *since* as a rational conjunction is not yet well established. Despite these conditions, I.T. shows a – to my mind – remarkably safe hand in using different means to express the different semantic options of *cum*, especially the use of *since* where the rational meaning of *cum* seems most likely. It is obvious that I.T. did not rely on one of the prior translations of the *Consolation* in this respect.

4   Summary and conjectures

Using *since*, as almost always done in the ModE translation of the *Consolation*, means treating all of the respective *cum*-clauses as factual, which is appropriate in most of the cases, but not in all. Using *when*, as almost always done in the earlier EModE translations, means leaving the clauses unspecified with respect to an open or a fulfilled conditional reading.

It appears that in the early stages of EModE *when* suggested itself more readily than *since* as a translation even of non-temporal *cum* (see sect. 3). This may have been supported by the conditional meanings of *when* being more prominent in EModE than they are in ModE. This situation, however, results in indeterminacy between the open and the fulfilled conditional meanings, and it may have caused increasing discomfort for translators and authors in general and especially in texts in which much depends on logical cohesion and argumentative clarity. In the translations of the *Consolation*, argumentative clarity has been increased in the course of the EModE phase by using *since* instead of *when* for *cum* more frequently. The indeterminacy of *when* between an open conditional meaning on the one hand and a fulfilled conditional meaning

very similar to a rational meaning on the other hand has been increasingly resolved in favour of the latter by using *since*. This may not be in accordance with the original in every case of a *cum*-clause, but it is certainly more adequate than the use of *when* with respect to the argumentative character of the text as a whole.

The fact that *since* with a reason meaning has generally begun to be exploited more frequently in the later stage of EModE was perhaps partly triggered by translators from Latin who have increasingly felt uncomfortable with an inherently indeterminate translation of non-temporal *cum* by *when*. It is conceivable that the massive confrontation of the educated English speaking world in the 16th and 17th centuries with a semantically diffentiated system of conjunctions in the fields of cause, condition and reason as displayed by Latin, and the necessity to manifestly (i.e. not only mind/brain-internally, but on paper) cope with this lexical differentiation in translations, contributed to the establishment of *since* as a rational conjunction in written ModE (see Breul 1997a). The indeterminacy of *when* in this field may have been felt increasingly intolerable in an age in which the ancient philosophers were rediscovered,[23] in which modern science and modern philosophy are said to have begun and in which the vernacular began to be used for scholarly writing ever more extensively, i.e. in a genre in which much depends on argumentative consistency and stringency.[24]

Bibliography

a) Boethius's *De consolatione philosophiae* and its translations (as concerns the translations by Colville, Elizabeth I and Lord Preston, I relied on the extracts from the Helsinki Corpus; see Kytö 1993):

[Boethius (Latin original), Tester (ModE translation)] *The Theological Tractates.* Transl. H.F. Stewart, E.K. Rand, S.J. Tester. *The consolation of philosophy.* Transl. S.J. Tester. The Loeb Classical Library 74. London: Heinemann; Cambridge (MA): Harvard University Press, 1973.
[Colville] *Boethius' Consolation of Philosophy*. Transl. George Colville, 1556. Ed. E.B. Bax. The Tudor Library 5. London: Nutt, 1897.
[Elizabeth] *Queen Elizabeth's Englishings*. Ed. Caroline Pemberton. Early English Text Society, O.S. 113. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co, 1899.
[I.T.] *Five Bookes of Philosophicall Comfort, full of Christian consolation, written 1000 yeeres since.* Transl. I.T. [or J.T.]. London: John Windet, for Mathew Lownes, 1609.

---

[23] 'Invented' according to Steiner (1975/1992: 259f.): "The criteria, the hermeneutic distances aimed for or unconsciously brought about by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century translators were various and sometimes contradictory. Antiquity was 'invented' more than it was discovered – it had, after all, been present, though sometimes surreptitiously, in the awareness of the Middle Ages – and this invention in turn led to new sight-lines on the present and the future."

[24] Of course, the amount of data presented in this paper would need to be amplified enormously and an extensive study of the history of reception of a wide range of translations would need to be done in order to count as a warrant for this hypothesis. But see also fn. 6 above.

[Preston] *Of the Consolation of Philosophy*. Transl. Richard Lord Viscount Preston, 1695. London: Printed by J.D. for Awnsham and John Churchill and Francis Hildyard, 1695.

b) Others:

Baugh, Albert C. & Cable, Thomas. 1935/1993. *A History of the English Language.* 4th edn. London & New York: Routledge.

Barber, Charles. 1976. *Early Modern English.* London: Deutsch.

Blake, Norman F. 1992. "Translation and the history of English". In: Rissanen, Matti & Ihalainen, Ossi & Nevalainen, Terttu & Taavitsainen, Irma (eds.). *History of Englishes: New Methods and Interpretations in Historical Linguistics.* Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter. 3-24.

Breul, Carsten. 1997a. *Grammatik und Bedeutung der kausalen Satzverbände:* Because*,* as*,* since *und* for *im schriftsprachlichen Englisch.* Tübingen: Niemeyer.

Breul, Carsten. 1997b. "Explanation versus Argument, Cause versus Reason, and their Linguistic Correlates". In: Weingartner, Paul & Schurz, Gerhard & Dorn, Georg (eds.). *The Role of Pragmatics in Contemporary Philosophy: Papers of the 20th International Wittgenstein Symposium, August 10 - 16, 1997, Kirchberg am Wechsel.* Bd. 1. Contributions of the Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society 5. Kirchberg am Wechsel: The Austrian Ludwig Wittgenstein Society. 135-140.

Burles, Edward. 1652/1971. *Grammatica Burlesa.* English Linguistics 1500-1800 307. Menston: Scolar.

Busby, Richard. 1647/1972. A Short Institution of Grammar. English Linguistics 1500-1800 316. Menston: Scolar.

Chadwick, Henry. 1981. *Boethius: The Consolation of Music, Logic, Theology, and Philosophy.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Cohen, J.M. 1962. *English Translators and Translations.* London: Longman.

Collins, Peter C. 1993. "Extern constructions in English". *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 13: 23-37.

Crabbe, Anne. 1981. "Literary Design in the *De Consolatione Philosophiae*". In: Gibson, Margaret (ed.). *Boethius: His Life, Thought and Influence.* Oxford: Blackwell. 237-274.

Declerck, Renaat. 1997. When-*clauses and temporal structure*. London & New York: Routledge.

Elyot, Thomas. 1538/1970. *Dictionary.* English Linguistics 1500-1800 221. Menston: Scolar.

Engelbrecht, August. 1902. "Die Consolatio philosophiae des Boethius: Beobachtungen über den Stil des Autors und die Überlieferung seines Werkes". *Sitzungsberichte der philosophisch-historischen Klasse der kaiserlichen Akademie der Wissenschaften* 144. Wien.

Fowler, Alastair. 1982. *Kinds of Literature: An Introduction to the Theory of Genre and Modes.* Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Glare, P.G.W. 1982. *Oxford Latin Dictionary.* Oxford: Clarendon.

Görlach, Manfred. 1978/1991. *Introduction to Early Modern English.* Cambridge *et al.* Cambridge University Press.

Granger, Thomas. 1616/1971. *Syntagma Grammaticum.* English Linguistics 1500-1800 270. Menston: Scolar.

Gruber, Joachim. 1978. *Kommentar zu Boethius* De consolatione philosophiae. Berlin & New York: de Gruyter. Hempfer, Klaus W. 1973. *Gattungstheorie: Information und Synthese.* München: Fink.

Hofmann, J.B. & Szantyr, Anton. 1965. *Lateinische Syntax und Stilistik.* München: Beck.

Hoole, Charles. 1651/1969. *The Latine Grammar.* English Linguistics 1500-1800 131. Menston: Scolar. James, Carl. 1989. "Genre Analysis and the Translator". *Target* 1: 29-41.

Kühner, Raphael & Stegmann, Carl. 1912/1971. *Ausführliche Grammatik der lateinischen Sprache.* Part 2:

Satzlehre. Vol. 2. Hannover: Hahnsche Buchhandlung.

Kytö, Merja. 1993. *Manual to the diachronic part of the Helsinki Corpus of English texts: Coding conventions and lists of source texts.* 2nd edn. Helsinki: Department of English, Univerity of Helsinki.

LaRamée, Pierre de. 1585/1971. *Latin Grammar.* English Linguistics 1500-1800 305. Menston: Scolar.

Lathrop, Henry Burrowes. 1933. *Translations from the Classics into English from Caxton to Chapman 1477-1620.* Madison: University of Wisconsin.

Lavency, Marius. 1975. "Les valeurs de la 'conjonction' *cum* en latin classique". *Les Études Classiques* 43: 367-386.

Lavency, Marius. 1976. "Les valeurs de la 'conjonction' *cum* en latin classique (suite)". *Les Études Classiques* 44: 45-59.

Lavency, Marius. 1985. "Problèmes du classement des propositions en *cum*". In: Touratier, Christian (ed.). *Syntaxe et latin: Actes du IIème Congrès International de Linguistique Latine, Aix-en-Provence, 28-31 mars 1983.* Aix-en-Provence: Université de Provence. 279-287.

Lewis, Charleton T. & Short, Charles. *A Latin Dictionary: Formulated on Andrew's Edition of Freund's Latin Dictionary.* Oxford: Clarendon.

Lily, William & Colet, John. 1549/1970. *A Short Introduction of Grammar.* English Linguistics 1500-1800 262. Menston The Scolar Press.

Linacre, Thomas. 1523?/1971. *Rudimenta Grammatices*. English Linguistics 1500-1800 312. Menston: Scolar.

Maurel, Jean-Pierre. 1995. "*Cum*, ou la subordination dans tous ses états". In: Longrée, Dominique *et al.* (eds.). *De Usu: Études de syntaxe latine offertes en hommage à Marius Lavency.* Louvain. 189-200.

Maurer, Karl. 1976. "Die literarische Übersetzung als Form fremdbestimmter Textkonstitution". *Poetica* 8: 233-257.

Maurer, Karl. 1980. "La traduction comme genre littéraire 'secondaire'". In: Köpeczi, Béla & Vajda, György M. (eds.). *Actes du VIIIe congrès de l'Association Internationale de Littérature Comparée.* Vol. 2. Stuttgart: Bieber. 965-968.

Patch, Howard Rollin. 1935. *The Tradition of Boethius: A Study of His Importance in Medieval Culture.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Quirk, Randolph & Greenbaum, Sidney & Leech, Geoffrey & Svartvik, Jan. 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. London: Longman.

Rissanen, Matti. 1989. "The conjunction *for* in early Modern English". *North-Western European Language Evolution* 14: 3-18.

Steiner, George. 1975/1992. *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation.* 2nd edn. Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press.

Thomas, Thomas. 1587/1972. *Dictionarium linguae latinae et anglicanae.* English Linguistics 1500-1800 330. Menston: Scolar.