CENTRE FOR ENGLISH, TRANSLATION AND ANGLO-PORTUGUESE STUDIES

CETAPS

Translation Matters

Special Issue: Translation In and From the Middle Ages

Guest Editor: J. Carlos Teixeira

Vol. 5 No. 2, Winter 2023

Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia

ISSN 2184-4585

TRANSLATION MATTERS

Volume 5, Issue 2, Winter 2023
Special Issue: Translation In and From the Middle Ages

Guest Editor
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Cover Design
Mariana Selas

Publisher
Faculty of Letters, University of Porto, Portugal

ISSN 2184-4585

Financiado por fundos nacionais através da FCT - Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia, I.P., no âmbito do projecto UIDB/04097/2020, https://doi.org/10.54499/UIDB/04097/2020.

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Translation Matters is a free, exclusively online peer-reviewed journal published twice a year. It is available on the website of the Faculty of Arts of the University of Porto http://ler.letras.up.pt. All articles should be submitted by email to the journal email address (translationality@gmail.com). See the guidelines for submission at the end of this issue. Requests for book reviews should be sent to translationality@gmail.com.

PUBLISHED BIANNUALLY ONLINE

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THE ARTICLES WERE PEER REVIEWED

Translation Matters, 5(2), 2023
https://doi.org/10.21747/21844585/tm5_2

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GUEST EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION
DYNAMICS OF TRANSLATION: NAVIGATING MEDIEVAL TEXTS AND BEYOND

The current issue of *Translation Matters* stems from a symposium hosted by CETAPS in 2021: *Medieval Metamorphosis: Rewritings, Tradition, and Translation*, which aimed to unite medievalist researchers with translation scholars working in different fields. Two main themes were proposed for discussion: (1) The phenomenon of translation during the Middle Ages, exploring various theoretical aspects and practical examples of translating/transmitting texts and genres between two linguistic codes within the medieval context; (2) Methodologies, strategies and challenges involved in translating medieval texts into contemporary languages, addressing both theoretical considerations and practical instances of translating specific texts and genres. The event was conducted online and involved 12 researchers from 8 different universities.

The idea for organizing this symposium came to me during the completion of my doctoral dissertation at the University of Porto/Free University of Berlin. The dissertation focused on German troubadour texts, which I translated into Portuguese to enhance understanding among the reading audience. As an academic endeavor, I aimed to create a translation grounded in scholarly discourse on medieval translation. However, I soon realized that the state of the art in this field was still in its early stages, and I found little about this topic even in well-known encyclopedias or handbooks – in fact, as pointed out by Warren, "[...] neither Critical Readings in Translation Studies (2010) nor *The Routledge Handbook of Translation Studies* (2013) address medieval topics" (2019, p. 165). I believe that the relative scarcity of reflection on this subject is probably connected to the backgrounds of researchers: medievalists typically do not have a background in translation studies, and translation researchers rarely have a background in medieval studies (let alone the vernacular languages of the medieval period). It should be noted, however, that this does not imply that the field is entirely new. As a result, the forthcoming paragraphs will be devoted to providing a concise overview of select works that have already been undertaken in regard to this topic.

Critical texts on translating *in* the Middle Ages have attracted more scholarly attention than translating *from* the Middle Ages, with many scholars adopting for a comprehensive approach to translation in the entire medieval period (a few examples include Copeland, 1991; Beer, 1997 – in conjunction with the book she edited in 1989; Andersen, 2002; Fresco, 2016; or Borsari, 2020). These approaches offer a comprehensive perspective on the translation of medieval texts during the Middle Ages, often supported by specific examples from various spheres, spaces, or periods of the Middle Ages, and the primary focus revolves around rhetoric, linguistics, or hermeneutics (with Fresco's edited work arguably being the most eclectic one from that set of works in terms of thematic representation, as it touches on other fields of study too). Acknowledging that the concept of translation in the Middle Ages largely entails adapting sources to the context into which they are introduced, other

works consistently approach this subject in connection with practices of textual and information transmission (as is the case with Beer and Lloyd-Jones, 1995; Fraenkel, 2011; Wallis and Wisnovsky, 2016; or Classen, 2022). Moreover, these works share a common thread in addressing the undeniable relationship with the political issues intertwined in translations during the Middle Ages, which is also the focal point of several other works on the subject, most of which employ post-colonial methodologies to examine translation during the Middle Ages (Kabir and Williams, 2005; Blumenfeld-Kosinski, 2011; Campbell and Mills, 2012; Campbell, 2018).

The aforementioned works address translation in the Middle Ages as a broad and extensive theme, employing specific examples to clarify their arguments. However, some works explore translation during the Middle Ages while focusing on a specific chronology (such as Butterfield, Johnson and Kraebel (2023), with its focus on the Later Middle Ages), or a specific geography (such as in Rikhardsdottir (2012) examining England, France and Scandinavia, or in Hamilton and Silleras-Fernandez (2022) focusing on Iberia – covered in the review section of this present issue). It is worth noting that there are also works that concentrate on a specific object of study, exclusively specializing in translating a particular text, text typology, or literary genre during the Middle Ages. The translation of religious texts naturally emerges as one of the most recurring themes in criticism (Pezzini, 2008; Kraebel, 2020 – reviewed in this issue of *Translation Matters*), as is the case with historical or juridical documentation (Smets, Goyens and Leemens, 2008; Benham, McHaffie and Vogt, 2018). The translation of literary texts follows a similar trend, with studies often focusing on specific literary genres (Weiss, Fellows and Dickson, 2000) or authors and works (to avoid an exhaustive list, I will mention only two, each addressing one of the most influential figures in medieval literary history: Ginsberg (2015) on Chaucer and Cornish (2010) on Dante).

In contrast, as previously mentioned, there is a noticeable lack of reflections on the challenges associated with translating texts from the Middle Ages into contemporary languages, and this absence is indeed regrettable. However, such works do exist. For instance, in 2017, Birkett and March-Lyons edited a volume on translating early medieval poetry, a compilation originating from an international conference held at University College, Cork in June 2014. This compilation consists of 12 articles that reflect on translation practices applied to medieval texts, with a specific emphasis on poetry. It adopts a pragmatic approach to translation, using specific authors, genres, or texts as starting points, such as *Beowulf* or *Edda*. Beer also edited a similar compendium in 2019, addressing issues related to the translation of (but also in) medieval texts across 15 chapters, along with an introduction and an epilogue (note that this work was also reviewed in this issue). Likewise, more recently, Isabelle Génin and Jessica Stephens edited a number of *Revue de traduction – Palimpsestes* on translation of medieval texts into contemporary languages (11 articles were included in the issue). These works share the commonality of addressing translation from the Middle Ages from a practical standpoint, which can also at times be seen in works where medieval texts are translated into contemporary languages (although,

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unfortunately, this is not always the case). Some examples include Classen's reflections in his 2008 translation of the poems of Oswald von Wolkenstein, or Abbot's reflections in the more recent translation of *Beowulf* (2021), edited by Abbot, Treharne and Fafinski. Certainly, the importance of these works cannot be denied – they are indeed crucial for a better understanding of the difficulties and challenges inherent in translating medieval texts today; however, they generally avoid a direct focus on translation theory. This gap is currently mostly covered not in complete works but in scattered articles across various publications and compendiums (Warren, 2017; Cammarota, 2018; to some extent, Lees and Overing, 2019, although the focus of the authors is on issues related to the understanding of the Middle Ages in the contemporary world); however, there seems to be a need for more in-depth theoretical reflection on these topics.

I would also like to note that lately there has been some conversation not only about translation *in* or *from* the Middle Ages, but also *to* the Middle Ages. Even though the present issue will not delve into this topic, it is interesting to note that this new trend, although still not widely discussed by critics, seems to be emerging alongside the flourishing of neo-medievalism, which tries to reflect about (and even defend) translation of contemporary texts into medieval vernacular languages (Kemmler, 2022; Ferhatović, 2022; Pascual, 2022).

These are some of the most recent or most important works done in relation to the topic of the present issue of *Translation Matters*, which has currently the aim of contributing to the discussion of Translation and the Middle Ages – a theme that, while not novel, is by no means exhausted (if such exhaustion is even conceivable).

The introductory section features an epigraph from *Beowulf*, translated by **Angélica Varandas** and **Luísa Azuaga**, who further elaborate on their translation in an article within this special issue. Both the text and the quote were chosen for their imaginative and fantastical attributes associated with the Middle Ages—qualities that undoubtedly influenced researchers and enthusiasts such as Tolkien and Eco. Indeed, entities that speak, dragons, witches, or melusines are recurring and enduring images from the medieval period that captivated the people of that time and continue to enthrall contemporary audiences. This capacity for fascination forges a link between ourselves and the work's original audience, despite the vast temporal distance separating us. Personally, this is what intrigues me about the Middle Ages: even though they seem so remote, they are remarkably close to us; yet, despite this proximity, they remain remarkably distant.

The articles section opens with a contribution by **Mariana Leite** about universal historiography. Centering on the European context, Leite contemplates the ascent of vulgar languages to the status of cultured languages, culminating in translations of Latin sources that were, in essence, more commonplace and vulgar renditions of the original text and culture. Chronicles establish themselves as conduits for the transmission of worldviews concerning the emergence of the world, shaped within a political context and renovating knowledge based on the culture and language of the destination.

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Continuing the exploration of the conceptualization of the world, **Natalia I. Petrovskaia,** who is concerned with the theoretical boundaries of the term “translation” in the period, concentrates on the dynamic interplay between rewriting and veneration for authority. The work scrutinizes an instance of medieval adaptation, starting with Juan de Mena's well-known *Laberinto de Fortuna*, particularly those parts of the text that encompass a geographical depiction of the world. She analyses this description in connection with its source, a 12th century Latin encyclopedia, while exploring notions of translation, adaptation, and reworking as applied to this specific case study.

This article shares some connection with the next article by **Rob King**, which critically examines the poem *Patience* in relation to the version of the Book of Jonah in the Vulgate Bible, by being juxtaposed with the 18th century concept of ‘poetic imitation’. Focusing on the rhetorical practices found in the Latin Vulgate's Book of Jonah, King shows how these are adeptly incorporated into *Patience* with additional layers of complexity tailored to medieval culture or expectations. The article contends that *Patience* employs the same rhetorical processes of verbal parallelism as the original text while introducing new medieval values deriving from the feudal system, while also proposing a redefined understanding of the virtue of patience.

The following article, by **Margarita Savchenkova**, investigates into the connection between travel writing and translation. More specifically, it examines the encounters of Afanasy Nikitin, a fifteenth-century Russian trader, with both East and West, and shows how Nikitin’s encounters are narrated through the lens of translation, resulting in his text being written in Old East Slavic, albeit with parts in Arabic, Persian, and Turkic. Beyond merely adapting the text to the receiving culture, Afanasy Nikitin adjusts the culture of origin to his individual and even religious beliefs and ideas and, as a consequence, his text is the outcome of both a journey and a translation experience.

The subsequent reflection, by **Angélica Varandas** and **Luísa Azuaga**, represents a shift from translation *in* the Middle Ages to the translation *from* the medieval period. The text describes some of the challenges faced by these translators during their process of translating what is perhaps *the* most influential text in Old English (since it arguably served as the starting point for the whole of the English literary canon): *Beowulf*. By reflecting on the translation process, and by focusing on the first three lines of the poem, the authors provide readers with a comprehensive understanding of the text, encompassing elements such as production, reception and context. They also conclude that translating medieval texts demands a reading and research approach distinct from translating texts written in contemporary languages, given the heightened incomprehensibility of medieval languages.

The subsequent article, by **Richard Huddleson**, is also centered on translation from the Middle Ages. Employing a practical example (*Entremès del Pasquedó* at the 2022 Out of the Wings Festival), the article navigates the intricacies linked to translating and presenting medieval dramatic texts for a contemporary audience. It works with various layers of translation, considering linguistic, temporal, and contextual dimensions (production, reception, and even presentation). In this context, the article scrutinizes the multiple stages

of translation that culminated in an experimental work capable of capturing the dynamics of the stage while underscoring the translator's visibility in the text.

The next article in this section, by **Kelly Washbourne**, discusses archaizing processes in translations of medieval texts, reflecting on the peculiarities of strategies such as patina, pastiche, appropriation, or revitalization. Washbourne emphasizes that, despite contemporary aesthetics largely disapproving of this practice, there are some critics who do defend its usage, and the impulse to archaize is not exclusively modern, having been identified in early premodern thinkers. However, there is no unified theory for this strategy, and thus, the historical taxonomic question is presented as a starting point for future investigations.

The last two articles from this section differ slightly from the previous texts, as they adopt a more essayistic approach, evoking reflections on translation experiences. The first essay, authored by me, **J. Carlos Teixeira**, discusses an experimental translation class conducted as part of the "Introduction to German Culture in the European Context" course at the University of Porto, which focuses on medieval German lyric poetry, particularly the *Minnesang* genre, exploring themes of love, honor, and power. In the 2023/2024 edition of the course, 17 students from diverse cultural backgrounds translated the initial stanza of Walther von der Vogelweide's poem *Under der linden*, and the essay reflects on the challenges and decisions involved in translating the poem across different languages.

The next essay – and last article –, "Beyond Bardcore: Biography of a meme in ten translations" by **Javier Adrada de la Torre**, analyses 'the rise and fall' of a virtual meme with medieval content in the light of Translation Studies and multimodal translation. In 10 phases, the author traces the emergence and development of the meme and its adaptability to the context – past, present, future – culminating in its death and later rebirth – the essay itself.

The special issue concludes with three book reviews, all on medieval themes. **Casandra Artacho Rodríguez** provides an evaluation of *Biblical Commentary and Translation in Later Medieval England: Experiments in Interpretation*, edited in 2020 by Andrew Kraebel for Cambridge University Press; **Maria Joana Gomes** and **Mariana Leite** review *Iberian Babel: Translation and Multilingualism in the Medieval and the Early Modern Mediterranean* edited by Michelle M. Hamilton and Nuria Silleras-Fernandez for Brill; and **Iolanda Rodriguez Aldrei** discusses *A Companion to Medieval Translation* edited by Jeanette Beer for Arc Humanities Press (2019). All three offer new perspectives on some of the questions that have been scrutinized in this special issue.

The dynamics of translation offer a portal into a culture that might otherwise seem irretrievably remote. Whether verbal or otherwise, they serve as a lens through which we can gain deeper insights into how individuals from that era translated and perceived the world. By delving into these translation processes, this issue aspires to make a meaningful contribution to the ongoing dynamic of understanding, perceiving, and dialoguing about the medieval world: of navigating medieval texts and beyond.

J. Carlos Teixeira

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EPIGRAPH

BEOWULF	**BEOWULF**
[…] þa wæs dæg sceacen	[…] O dia finalmente findou,
wyrme on willan; no on wealle læg,	tal como a serpente desejava. Não quis permanecer por mais tempo
bidan wolde, ac mid bæle for,	entre os muros de pedra, antes partiu envolta em chamas,
fyre gefysed. […]	impelida por labaredas. […]
[…] No ðær aht cwices	[…] O hostil voador
lað lyftfloga læfan wolde.	não queria deixar ninguém com vida.
Wæs þæs wyrmes wig wide gesyne,	Foi possível ver, por toda a parte, o poder da serpente,
nearofages nið nean ond feorran, […]	a sua perseguição violenta, ao perto e ao longe, […]
Hæfde landwara lige befangen,	Havia envolvido os habitantes daquela terra em chamas,
bæle ond bronde […].	Labaredas e lume [...]
Linhas 2306-9, 2314-17, 2321-22	*Translated by Angélica Varandas and Luísa Azuaga*

MUNDOS EM TRADUÇÃO: BREVES APONTAMENTOS SOBRE HISTORIOGRAFIA UNIVERSAL EM LÍNGUAS VULGARES

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ABSTRACT: Reflecting on the permanence and longevity of universal chronicles throughout the Middle Ages, a brief reflection is presented on the genre and its diffusion. Associated with the double transmission of biblical and ancient material in medieval Europe, these chronicles are excellent vehicles for imperial, royal or other governing argumentations. Thus, the multifaceted character of medieval world history translations is evaluated: the linguistic translation, with the passage from Latin to vernacular languages, and the political translation, which co-opts the history of the world for different political and ideological argumentations.
KEYWORDS: Medieval Universal Chronicles; Translatio Studii; Vernacular Medieval Historiography; Iberian Vernacular Chronicles

RESUMO: Reflectindo sobre a continuidade e longevidade das crónicas universais ao longo da Idade Média, apresenta-se uma breve reflexão sobre o género e a sua difusão. Associadas à dupla transmissão de material bíblico e clássico na Europa medieval, estas crónicas transmitem por excelência argumentos que sustentam o poder imperial, régio ou de outras formas de governo. Avalia-se, assim, o carácter multifacetado das traduções da História do mundo medieval: a tradução linguística, com a passagem do latim para as línguas vulgares, e a tradução política, que coopta a história do mundo para diferentes argumentações políticas e ideológicas.
PALAVRAS-CHAVE: Crónicas Universais Medievais; Translatio Studii; Historiografia Medieval Em Vernáculo; Crónicas Vernaculares Ibéricas

1. Um panorama sobre historiografia universal na Idade Média

Se todas as culturas humanas têm uma cosmogonia, ou relatos da criação que explicam a formação e/ou existência do cosmos, e sobretudo da Humanidade dentro dele, pode considerar-se que o conceito de historiografia universal é inerente a toda a humanidade. Todas as civilizações, ao estabelecer um relato das origens, inserem-no – inserindo-se também – num contexto universal, que as situa e justifica dentro do conjunto de toda a humanidade, e em linha com o próprio universo existente. Neste sentido, compreende-se também que historiografia universal se funda tão profundamente com a religião, já que desta última depende a mundividência para a compreensão da história humana no seu contexto universal. Num mundo criado ou eterno, as narrativas de origem certamente variam: no entanto, em nenhum dos casos deixam de existir, dando conta da necessidade transversal à experiência humana de compreender (a si e aos outros) no cosmos.

Para o contexto europeu, e especialmente aquele que vai vigorar ao longo da Idade Média e posteriormente, oferecem-se – e acabam por se fundir – duas grandes perspetivas que dão conta também de cosmogonias distintas: por um lado, as heranças pagãs, mormente a greco-latina; por outro, a tradição das religiões abraâmicas, ou seja, heranças hebraica, cristã e islâmica. Com efeito, a historiografia universal que floresce com particular

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vigor a partir do século XII encontra as suas raízes na Antiguidade Clássica, já desde o século III a. C. (Campopiano, 2017, pp. 1-9). Confluindo com a história dos impérios, visa acima de tudo dar conta de todo o conhecimento sobre o passado do mundo e da humanidade. Neste sentido, é em grande medida a partir da história dos grandes impérios que se tecem pontes para a história universal: por um lado, a partir da integração de novos territórios sob domínio imperial; por outro, para também situar cada império no contexto geográfico e político que o envolve. Ao mesmo tempo, encontramos a tradição hebraica, também ela recetora de influências helenísticas, cuja cultura religiosa assenta no princípio escatológico de um mundo criado, partindo de um texto sagrado que regista a história do povo eleito desde a sua génese.

São estes os dois pilares em que assenta a historiografia universal que se vai desenvolver sobretudo a partir da antiguidade tardia (Allen, 2003). Autores como Agostinho, Eusébio de Cesareia e Jerónimo, mais tarde seguidos por Orósio ou Isidoro de Sevilha, reflectem sobre como compreender a história da humanidade partindo sempre da fusão entre as duas tradições que recebem, como autores cristãos herdeiros da cultura grega e latina.

Posto isto, compreender a historiografia universal que se vem a desenvolver ao longo da Idade Média é compreender que, por um lado, esta tem sempre uma contextualização sacralizante (Breisach, 2007, pp. 128-130) – a história sagrada, proveniente da matéria bíblica – e uma contextualização imperial (ou seja, dos que detêm o domínio sobre o mundo): a história dos pagãos, ou seja, gregos, troianos e romanos. Neste sentido, também as crónicas universais vão pautar-se por serem concebidas em contextos que, de algum modo, reclamem uma herança ideologicamente cristã mas politicamente imperial (Campopiano, 2017, pp. 10-18). De facto, o progressivo desenvolvimento de novos textos justificativos de poderes autónomos que vemos despontar sobretudo a partir do século XII dão precisamente conta deste fenómeno (Tyler, 2017; Wittig, 2017; Gaullier-Bougassas, 2017).

O subsequente interesse pelas matérias clássicas que, desde muito cedo, desembocam na justificação de governos seus contemporâneos, verifica-se precisamente na explosão de produtos literários em redor quer de temas clássicos – como Troia, Alexandre, Eneias – quer pela atualização destes tópicos em novas matérias, com figuras como Artur ou Carlos Magno a apresentarem-se como herdeiros diretos de longínquos antepassados forjados nas matérias clássicas de partida. Na realidade, esta filiação numa linhagem clássica não é, de todo, uma inovação medieval – basta atentar, precisamente, no referido Eneias, fundador de Roma que escapa à destruição de Troia. Porém, aquilo a que vamos assistir é a uma multiplicação de antepassados troianos que ou virão a servir de argumento para uma herança imperial diretamente romana ou para ajudar a compreender a fragmentação do poder imperial por várias cortes europeias.

Em simultâneo, também se assiste ao longo do século XII a um significativo incremento intelectual por parte de meios ligados à Igreja, mormente pela fundação das primeiras universidades onde, para compreender disciplinas como Teologia, se torna

fundamental conhecer História. Estes circuitos eclesiásticos, que herdam os autores cristãos previamente mencionados, vão sobretudo pautar-se pela divulgação de história sagrada comentada, que segue fundamentalmente as linhas traçadas por Eusébio e Jerónimo nos cânones crónicos a que, naturalmente, a Ibéria medieval não só não tinha sido alheia (Furtado, 2022) como manteve a produção cronística bem depois dos seus Paulo Orósio ou Isidoro de Sevilha (Jerez, 2006, pp. 12-16), não poucas vezes retomando-os (Furtado, 2023). Com o desenvolvimento da escolástica, vemos diversas obras que promovem a interpretação do texto sagrado através de comentários que, embora quase sempre centrados na história bíblica, poderão já incluir incidências mais ou menos longas sobre temas pagãos coevos. Tal é especialmente o caso da *Historia Scholastica* (1168-1175) de Pedro Comestor (m. 1178), que surge das lições deste mestre de S. Vítor (Clark, 2016), e acaba por se tornar um dos principais modelos e fontes para as crónicas universais subsequentes (Daly, 1957, pp. 67-71; Morey, 1993, pp. 8-9).

2. Entre corte episcopal e imperial, entre latim e vernáculos

Se a historiografia universal já é dúplice na sua fundamentação, revela-se também dúplice na sua produção medieval. Porém, estas duas tendências – imperial ou laica e eclesiástica – não são estanques, fundindo-se muitas vezes e notando-se um claro contacto entre meios produtores e receptores deste tipo de obra. De facto, é significativo que os principais autores de crónicas universais sejam membros do clero que produzem obras dedicadas a figuras de poder temporal. É este o caso das crónicas universais produzidas em honra dos imperadores do Sacro-Império, nomeadamente da *Chronica duabus civitatibus* ([1146] 1912) de Otto de Freising (c. 1111–1158), ou do *Pantheon* ([1185] imp. 1726) de Godofredo de Viterbo (c. 1120–1195). O primeiro, bispo de Freising, dedica a sua *Weltchronik* ao seu sobrinho, o imperador Frederico I. Já Godofredo, capelão e notário da corte do mesmo Frederico I, vem a dedicar a sua crónica universal ao filho deste, Henrique VI (Foerster, 2015; Campopiano, 2017a). Em ambos os casos, tratam-se de crónicas universais em latim – para todos os efeitos, a língua de cultura e também língua imperial – que tomam a figura do imperador como culminar da história.

Será no século seguinte que iremos encontrar as primeiras manifestações da transformação que já vinha ocorrendo no universo literário, mormente romanesco: a ascensão das línguas vulgares ao estatuto de línguas de cultura. Esta transição da escrita em latim para os diferentes vernáculos, sobretudo a que acarreta a tradução de fontes latinas, como é o caso da historiografia, parte de um paradoxo: o desejo de continuidade da tradição antiga (a cultura latina) na língua efetivamente falada pelos promotores e recetores dos textos, ao mesmo tempo que, usando de novas línguas, se acaba por fragmentar a unidade linguística e cultural da tradição latina (Copeland, 1995, p. 106). Por outro lado, ao contrário do que poderia ocorrer na tradução entre línguas com o mesmo estatuto, o latim não só não era definitivamente a língua de prestígio como sobretudo não era percebida como uma língua realmente alheia à realidade cultural dos que a transladavam para os seus vernáculos (Copeland, 1995, pp. 96-97). Nesse sentido, o texto

Translation Matters, 5(2), 2023, pp. 9-18, DOI: https://doi.org/10.21747/21844585/tm5_2a1

em vulgar tornava-se, como até a terminologia implica, numa versão mais comum, e por isso menos prestigiada, do que era transmitido pelo texto latino (Heusch, 2018, p. 12). Por outro lado, as diversas manifestações literárias – mormente poesia – que começam a florescer em diversas línguas um pouco por toda a Europa, sobretudo a partir do século XII, permitirão uma progressiva elevação dos diversos vernáculos.

Embora toda esta produção influa na dignificação das línguas vulgares, para a historiografia universal é particularmente relevante a proliferação dos grandes *romans antiques* – longos textos, inicialmente em verso mas depois também em prosa, sobre grandes figuras ou motivos da Antiguidade. Partindo de versões latinas para se virem a autonomizar plenamente das suas fontes e chegarem a frutificar em monumentais ciclos romanescos, virão a tornar-se também eles fontes e incentivo para a produção de historiografia universal em vulgar. A popularidade destes *romans* acaba por promover, assim, a produção de mais obras sobre as grandes figuras da Antiguidade nas diversas línguas romances – as línguas em que tais textos eram redigidos. Por outro lado, para a plena compreensão das implicações da *translatio* do latim para os vulgares no contexto da historiografia universal, é necessário ainda considerar a importância fundamental da matéria bíblica como esqueleto da História. Sem nos adentrarmos pela problemática complexa da tradução da Bíblia neste período (Lourdaux e Verhelst, 1984; Salvador, 2007; Van Liere, 2014), a verdade é que conceber uma história universal em vulgar requer, também, a tradução e inclusão da Bíblia, muitas vezes através de, ou incorporando, as suas glosas e paráfrases (Sánchez-Prieto Borja, 1994; Rubio Tovar, 1997, pp. 215-216).

A ascensão da escrita em vernáculo irá, assim, ser também acompanhada pela escrita da historiografia universal noutras línguas além do latim. Embora esta não deixe de ser a língua da escrita por excelência, e em grande medida, como veremos adiante, continuará a ser pelo menos concomitante com línguas locais na produção de textos historiográficos, a verdade é que também a vernacularização chegará, e com bastante força, a este género (Campbell, 2018). Logo nas primeiras décadas do século XIII encontramos o caso paradigmático da Estoires Rogier, ou *Histoire Ancienne jusqu'à César* de Wauchier de Denain (Douchet, 2015), que redige em francês a sua história universal em honra do castelão de Lille, Rogério IV, destacando em particular a história de Troia e de Alexandre através da adaptação quer de fontes latinas, quer de fontes em vulgar (Gaullier-Bougassas, 2017). Décadas depois, vemos no projeto de Rudolf von Ems (c. 1200-1254) uma iniciativa semelhante: a de compor, em médio alto-alemão, uma crónica do mundo dedicada, desta vez, ao candidato ao Sacro-Império Conrado IV (Thierry, 2017; Leite, 2020). A estas iniciativas deverão também ser adicionadas as progressivas cópias e traduções, quer de fontes historiográficas de cariz mais bíblico, como a já referida *Historia Scholastica*, quer de romances antigos, os quais antecipam o florescimento exponencial de crónicas universais em línguas vulgares.

3. Da *translatio imperii* à *translatio Historiae* em contexto ibérico

Centrando-nos no contexto ibérico, isto é particularmente notável em Leão e Castela. É verdade que também aqui iremos encontrar crónicas universais em latim, compostas também em honra de figuras régias ou imperiais, como é o caso do *Chronicon Mundi* ([1238] 2003) de Lucas de Tuy (m. 1249), encomendada por Berengária, mãe de Fernando III de Leão e Castela (Martin, 2001, pp. 282), e do *Breviarium Historiae Catholicae* (ed. 1992; Arizaleta, 2003; Carvajal González, 2013) de Rodrigo Ximenes de Rada (c. 1170-1247), autor que, a mando do próprio Fernando III, também compõe a sua *Historia Rebus Hispaniae*. Ainda que estes projetos, da primeira metade do século XIII, sejam em latim, a verdade é que o uso progressivo de línguas vulgares parece acompanhar a promoção de obras latinas (Férnandez-Ordóñez, 2002-2003), mantendo-se estas, muitas vezes, como fonte para obras em vulgar (Martin, 2000). O mais antigo texto deste género em romance produzido na península é o *Liber Regum* (Bautista, 2010), que relata a história das linhagens de todas as figuras régias desde a Criação, vindo a centrar-se depois no contexto ibérico. Traduzido do navarro-aragonês por volta de 1260 para castelhano, onde toma o nome de *Libro de las Generaciones* (Martin, 2010), foi uma das fontes mais fecundas para a historiografia ibérica em vulgar, nomeadamente portuguesa (Cintra, 1950; Catalán, 1962, pp. 355-421; Miranda, 2010; Ferreira, 2010).

Será também em contexto castelhano que iremos encontrar a maior crónica universal da península ibérica – e talvez dos mais ambiciosos projetos do género a ser redigido em vernáculo na Europa medieval: a *General Estoria* (c. 1274-1284; ed. 2009) de Afonso X (1221-1284). Nesta crónica prevê-se compilar toda a história do mundo, desde a criação até ao reinado do próprio Afonso X, apresentando em partes equitativas a matéria pagã e sagrada. O projeto, inacabado, apenas atinge o início da vida de Maria, mãe de Cristo. Ainda assim, apresentara entretanto a tradução completa do Antigo Testamento – incluindo livros que, à partida, não têm interesse historiográfico, nomeadamente os poéticos – bem como de diversos romances antigos ou mesmo de fontes latinas pela primeira vez vertidas para castelhano – como é o caso da *Farsalia* de Lucano, ou de várias das epístolas das *Heroides* de Ovídio. Além daquelas que seriam fontes mais tradicionais para a cronística universal medieval, à *General Estoria* acresce ainda a tradução de fontes árabes, sobretudo relativas a elementos geográficos, tornando-a mais próxima de um projeto como o enciclopédico *Speculum Maius* que Vincent de Beauvais produzira, em latim, por encomenda de Luís IX (Voorbij e Albrecht, 1996).

A valorização da língua régia, o castelhano, como língua de cultura e poder tão capaz quanto a latina de transmitir conhecimentos que verificamos na *General Estoria* não pode ser compreendida fora do contexto da notável produção cultural de Afonso X, na qual joga um papel fundamental a tradução, a seu turno também essencial para a crónica universal afonsina (Sánchez-Prieto Borja, 1994; Rubio Tovar, 2014; Salvo García, 2018). Com as traduções que promove, desde a juventude e ao longo do seu reinado, de obras latinas, francesas e árabes para aquele que irá definir como *castellano drecho*, o monarca está ao mesmo tempo a promover a integração de léxico científico na variante linguística que elege

para o seu reino e a valorizá-la face ao latim de uma forma raramente vista no seu tempo (Heusch, 2018, pp. 14-15). Finalmente, a *General Estoria* apresenta ainda a particularidade de ter a sua autoria reivindicada pelo próprio promotor, diferentemente do que ocorrera com toda a cronística universal até então produzida, quer em latim, quer em vulgar (Leite, 2020); realmente, Afonso X afirma-se como autor da obra, comparando o seu papel de coordenador ao do monarca que ordena a construção de um palácio (Afonso X, ed. 2009, pp. I, II, 393).

Convém não esquecer que Afonso X de Leão e Castela era, por via paterna, herdeiro das reivindicações imperiais ibéricas; por via materna, era um Staufen e neto de Isaac II de Constantinopla. Debalde esta genealogia propícia para ser eleito para o Sacro-Império, em 1272 vê as expectativas da sua candidatura goradas. Assim, de forma diferente do que acontece com os seus antecessores – e também com os que o hão de suceder – o rei e candidato ao império torna-se autor, numa língua vulgar que desde sempre valorizou e colocou ao nível da língua imperial por excelência, o latim, de um dos mecanismos mais utilizados para promover a legitimidade imperial, a cronística universal.

Recebida em Portugal desde o século XIV (Leite, 2012; Miranda, 2016; Leite, 2017), será apenas quando se começam a desenhar novos paradigmas políticos – com a ascensão da dinastia de Avis – que a *General Estoria* se faz traduzir ao português (Martins, 1950; Leite, 2012; Leite, 2017a; Leite, 2022). A ter havido, no entanto, iniciativas prévias de crónicas universais enquanto tal em Portugal, estas ter-se-ão ficado pela segunda metade do século XIII (Leite, 2022a), sobrevivendo com muito mais relevância e vigor outras iniciativas historiográficas e literárias.

Pelo breve panorama apresentado, podemos constatar três aspectos relevantes. Em primeiro lugar, a continuidade e vitalidade da cronística universal, cuja produção e recepção se mantém continuamente desde a Antiguidade Tardia até ao final da Idade Média. Em segundo lugar, a associação que este tipo de crónica terá a figuras imperiais: ao centrar a história no seu promotor/ receptor, inscreve-se essa mesma figura no âmbito da história universal, ao lado das mais reverenciadas figuras e, também, integrada na história da salvação. Finalmente, as crónicas universais vão também ser sujeitas, tal como outras manifestações culturais entre o século XII e XIII, a passagem do latim ao vernáculo, não só oferecendo ao seu público uma história do mundo na sua própria língua como, sobretudo, tornando essa língua numa língua de poder, porque igual em dignidade ao latim para relatar a história sagrada e pagã.

Com isto, verifica-se a translação da cronística latina para o vulgar, a par do que ocorre com as diversas translações dos impérios: uma manifestação da *translatio studii* que implica não só a *translatio imperii* como ainda o que podemos designar por *translatio Historiae* (Gassman, 1973; Campbell, 2018) -- a translação das narrativas que, quando são sobre história universal, implicam translação de mundividências sobre o surgimento do mundo, da humanidade, e do seu lugar no espaço e tempo. Se traduzir é convocar o passado para o presente, atualizando-o e reativando-o (Rubio Tovar, 2013, pp. 114-115), compreende-se que, tal como o *Imperium* passara de Troia para Roma, e depois para diferentes figuras que

reclamam a sua herança – desde a Alemanha até à Ibéria – também a cronística universal passará da língua de Roma para as línguas de cada uma das manifestações subsequentes de um *Imperium* que, para os medievais, nunca sucumbira.

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Translation Matters, 5(2), 2023, pp. 9-18, DOI: https://doi.org/10.21747/21844585/tm5_2a1

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Sobre a autora: Mariana Leite é Doutora em Literatura (U. Porto, 2013) com uma tese sobre a receção portuguesa da General Estoria. Concluiu um pós-doutoramento (2023) sobre a presença da História Scholastica de Pedro Comestor em Portugal. A sua investigação centra-se na presença de fontes para crónicas universais (sobretudo bíblicas e clássicas) na cultura medieval portuguesa.

THE LIMITS OF MEDIEVAL TRANSLATION:
JUAN DE MENA'S USE OF THE *IMAGO MUNDI* IN THE *LABERINTO DE FORTUNA*[1]

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ABSTRACT: This article examines a case of medieval adaptation which is not usually considered as a translation but forms part of a translation continuum in that is loosely adapts its base text into a different context through the insertion of translated extracts into a new narrative. Such 'translation' results in an interplay between rewriting and respect for authority which produces new works which are paradoxically both original and derivative at the same time. A particularly illustrative case in that regard is the insertion of translated extracts from the geographical section of the twelfth-century Latin encyclopaedia *Imago mundi* into vernacular works of different genres. This article takes as its case study the incorporation of *Imago mundi* material into Juan de Mena's *Laberinto de Fortuna*.
KEYWORDS: Imago Mundi; Juan de Mena; *Laberinto de Fortuna*; Medieval Geography; Translation Continuum; Relative Distance

1. Introduction

This article addresses the issue of the range of the term 'translation' with respect to medieval rewritings by looking at the use of very loosely translated extracts from a Latin encyclopaedia in a late medieval narrative text. In doing so, it seeks to further Ivana Djodjević's argument that an emphasis upon formal equivalence in translation 'as opposed to its dynamic aspect' does a disservice to our understanding of the complexities of medieval translingual intertextuality (Djodjević, 2000, p. 9). In proposing to apply the term 'translation' to Mena's use of geographical information derived from the *Imago mundi* in his own vernacular poem, I essentially put into analytical practice the conceptual framework provided by Djodjević, who postulates that "while the kinds of medieval translation that have most baffled translation historians may ignore formal equivalence, their authors do share with later translators a notion of dynamic equivalence which compels them to strive for acceptability (to the recipients) rather than adequacy (to the original)" (Djodjević, 2000, p. 9).

I propose to refine Djodjević's picture by combining it with the concept of 'relative distance' effectively used by Erich Poppe in his analysis of medieval Welsh versions of Francophone romances (2004, pp. 73-74). The idea of 'relative distance' allows translated texts to be mapped onto a spectrum that ranges from works that are verbally and structurally close to the original, through loose adaptations, to others that are ultimately 'original-'inspired new compositions. This article explores how our understanding of Juan de Mena's *Laberinto de Fortuna* can be enhanced by looking at the intertextual relationship of its geographical passages with their Latin source through the prism of 'relative distance'.

Juan de Mena's (1411–1456) *Laberinto de Fortuna* is one of several medieval vernacular texts which contain a geographical description of the world that is heavily reliant

[1] This article presents some of the results of my project "Defining 'Europe' in Medieval European geographical discourse: The image of the world and its legacy, 1110-1500", funded by the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research https://www.nwo.nl/en/projects/275-50-015 (Accessed: 15 September 2023).
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on the twelfth-century Latin encyclopaedia *Imago mundi* of Honorius Augustodunensis.[2] By doing this, Mena brings this text into the family of *Imago mundi*-based texts, which form a continuum ranging from verbatim translations (such as the thirteenth-century Spanish *Semeiança del mundo*) through loose adaptations (like the thirteenth-century French *Image du monde*) to translated extracts inserted into new types of text (such as the fourteenth-century *Catalan Atlas*) (Bull and Williams, 1959; Gossouin de Metz, 1999; Connochie-Bourgne, 1999; Kogman-Appel, 2020). Mena employs geographical knowledge to provide a spatial location for the action he describes. We will see that Mena's *mappa mundi* ('world map') has a specifically Spanish focus, rewriting Honorius's material for the Spanish audience of a literary epic (Clarke, 1973, p. 51). As Joaquín Gimeno Casalduero (1964, p. 125) writes, "Mena *escribe para Castilla, para sus gobernantes y para ciudadanos"* ('writes for Castille, for its governors and for citizens', my translation). The text is also updated, as references to contemporary geopolitical units such as Hungary are added, which had been absent in the Latin source.[3]

Mena appears to have drawn directly upon Honorius's text. Although the Castilian translation of the *Imago mundi*, the *Semeiança del mundo*, predates the *Laberinto* and may have been available to him, variants in the readings suggest it was not his main source. An example which Autesserre gives to show the proximity between Mena's text and the *Imago mundi* is the reference to Chaldea and the invention of astronomy (2009, n.115): the *Laberinto*, as quoted by Autesserre, reads "*[Caldea], do el astronomía / primero fallaron*", while the *Imago mundi* reads: *"Chaldea in qua primum inventa est astronomia*" (Honorius Augustodunensis 1982, p. 56). This can be compared to the more extensive reading in the *Semeiança*: *Caldea, e alli fue fallada primera mienetre la siencia de astronomia* and *Caldea, e al fue falleda prymer mente la çiençia de astronomia* (Bull and Williams, 1959, pp. 64, 65).

Following Autesserre's suggestion that in neither case should the geographical description be perceived as merely a *simple parcours géographique* ('simple geographical record'), the discussion below aims to show that the differences are both in the rhetorical emphasis and geographical focus (Autesserre, 2009, para. 29). I show, for example, that Mena re-focuses his text onto Spain, positioning it first geographically, then temporally (Clarke, 1973, p. 51).

Another important point to note is that though Mena followed Honorius closely, he used the *Imago mundi* in combination with other sources, such as Isidore of Seville's *Etymologiae*, which was also one of Honorius's own sources for his text (Lida de Malkiel, 1950, p. 41; Kerkhof, 2015, p. 234; Autesserre, 2009). Our first point of interest, therefore, is precisely this combination of sources. We will look at how the text flatters its patron/reader with the assumption of great erudition. We will then see what Mena does to the geography specifically, and how he adapts it to re-target the text to Spain (and flatter his patron/reader by highlighting his region's prominence). Finally, we will look at the implications of this process for our understanding of the *Laberinto*'s geographical passage as a borderline translation of Honorius's text.

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[2] There are multiple editions of this text, such as *Juan de Mena* (1979), edited by Cummins. In this article, I use *Juan de Mena* (1997), edited by Kerkhof. Lida de Malkiel (1950) remains a key discussion of Mena and his opus. For more recent discussions, see Moya García (2015). My designation of Mena's text as 'medieval' follows Frank Domínguez (2014, p. 137), who observes that Mena, though often associated with the introduction of Italian Renaissance into Castille, is not entirely a Renaissance writer himself. For a much earlier expression of a similar view, see Post 1912 p. 251.

[3] See, for example, the reference to the *reino de Ungría* ('kingdom of Hungary') in the final line of stanza 44 (Mena, 1997, p. 110), absent from Honorius Augustodunensis's *Imago mundi* (1982, p. 60).

2. The texts

One of the most important texts of medieval Castilian literature, the *Laberinto* is tightly linked both to political events and to literary traditions (Deyermond, 1980, pp. 295-6; Weiss, 1990, p. 17).[4] It was written for Juan II of Castille (1405–1454) and appears to have been intended as support for Álvaro de Luna (*c.* 1390–1453). The text is also known as *Las Trescientas* for the number of stanzas. As an allegorical vision poem addressed to Juan II and his court, the *Laberinto* presents a critique of the current state of Spain, entreating the king to take a firmer stance against the excesses of the aristocracy.[5]

The text's geographical description of the world in stanzas 32–54, which Jessica Knauss describes as a *mappa mundi*, corresponds to the geographical section of the popular twelfth-century Latin encyclopaedia *Imago mundi*.[6] Despite its immense influence in medieval Europe, the *Imago mundi* is not very well-known today and therefore requires an introduction.[7] Composed in very accessible Latin, and following a simple structure, it survives, either whole or in part, in over a hundred medieval manuscripts. It was also the source of a large number of vernacular rewritings, ranging from faithful translations and verbatim quotations to loose adaptations and entirely new works inspired by it (Honorius Augustodunensis, 1982, p. 18; Petrovskaia and Calis, 2019). In Spain, Italy, France, the Low Countries, Germany and Wales, the *Imago mundi* was used and re-used many times by multiple authors independently of each other, creating a complicated network of interrelated texts.[8] A further network of branches is also added to this rich tree by later commentators, such as when a glossator of the Palma de Mallorca manuscript of the *Laberinto* (*c.* 1470–1480)[9] used the *Imago mundi* alongside Isidore's *Etymologies* and *Sententiarum sive de summo bono libri III* as his main sources of information, occasionally quoting *in extenso* (Kerkhof, 2015, p. 241).[10]

The *Imago mundi* is in three Books, dedicated to matters that can be grouped under the labels of 'space', 'time', and 'history' respectively (Honorius Augustodunensis, 1982, p.13; Flint, 1981, pp. 212–13; Twomey, 2000, p. 260; Edson, 1997, pp. 112-13). Book I, dedicated to the description of the physical world, appears to have exerted a particular fascination for medieval audiences. It is organized into four parts, in accordance with the four elements, conceived as concentric spheres encompassing all creation. In terms of contents, the Earth section deals with geography (with a generous helping of historical reference); Water to oceans, rivers, and weather phenomena; Air to aerial phenomena such as tempests, rain, and winds, while the section dedicated to Fire is concerned with astronomy.

[4] The text is described by Weiss as both a 'political poem' and 'a piece of cultural propaganda' (Weiss, 1990, p. 17). As Cristina Moya García (2015a) shows, the text's surge in popularity and entrenchment in the literary canon are linked to the rehabilitation of the figure of Álvaro de Luna, with whom the text is tightly connected.
[5] For the poem and its geographical passages, see Autesserre (2009, pp. 127–70).
[6] The use of *Imago mundi* in this section of the *Laberinto* is discussed in Knauss (2006), López Férez (2010) and Autesserre (2009). For a discussion of the connections between the *Laberinto* and medieval geography, with reference to the *Imago mundi*, see Domínguez (2011).
[7] For a brief summary of the text's contents, see Gilson 1980; originally published in French (1952).
[8] See my forthcoming book *Transforming Europes in the Images of the World Tradition.*
[9] Biblioteca de Fondación Bartolomé March, MS B80-B-17
[10] This type of use is difficult to classify and even more difficult to catalogue, since there may well be similar, yet unidentified further glosses made by commentators and users of other texts in widely different contexts. We will not discuss this case in detail further, but I note it here in the hope that it may spark further investigation).

The simplicity of the structure is maintained as we zoom in on the geographical section—the part of *Imago mundi* Book I that is relevant to our discussion. The world it describes has the standard medieval tripartite structure of Asia, Europe and Africa, inherited from classical geography via Isidore of Seville's famous *Etymologiae* (Lewis and Wigen, 1997, p. 22; Woodward, 1987, pp. 301-02; Isidore of Seville, 2006, 1911; Petrovskaia 2022). Visually familiar from the so-called T-O-type *mappae mundi* ('world maps'), this tripartite way of presenting the inhabited world was dominant in the Middle Ages and is shared by all works in the *Imago mundi* tradition.[11]

3. 'Translating' into a new text

The geographical description of the world in stanzas 32–54 of the *Laberinto* closely matches Book 1 of the *Imago mundi*. Within the structure of the poem, the *Imago mundi* section comes at the moment when 'divine Providence', personified by a damsel covered in flowers, shows the poet a vision of the world from above, from the abode of 'Fortune'.[12] This borrowing, already recognised by the text's earliest editor, Hernán Núñez in the fifteenth century, has led to this part of the work being perceived as of lower literary value (Núñez, 1499; Autesserre, 2009, p. 127), reflecting the traditional negative attitude towards medieval translations noted by Djordjević (2000, pp. 8–9).

The description of the world begins at stanza 34, with reference to the five zones (Mena, 1997, p. 97; Domínguez, 2011, p. 156), and according to Autesserre (2009, n. 13), it is based on the *Imago mundi* ɪ.6–36 (Honorius Augustodunensis, 1982, pp. 51–66).[13] Frank A. Domínguez, on the other hand, analyses the section as a description of a *mappa mundi* and describes Mena's technique as 'similar' to that used by Honorius (Domínguez, 2011, pp. 165–66), with one crucial difference: Mena describes the world his narrator sees far below him (using specific terms for seeing and observing) (Domínguez, 2011, p. 166).

Mena begins the Europe section in the *Laberinto* (stanza 42), with a reference to the origins of the name; *E vi más aquélla que Europa dixeron, / de que robada en la taurina fusta / lanço los hermanos por causa tan justa / en la domanda que fin no pusieron…* (Mena, 1997, p.107). In this he follows Honorius, whose text read *"Europa ab Europe rege, vel ab Europa filia Agenoris est nominate",* "Europe is named after King Europs or after Europa, daughter of Agenor" (Honorius Augustodunensis, 1982, p. 59; Mena 1997, p. 107, n. 329-334). Mena makes, however, a significant change that distances the *Laberinto* from other texts in the *Imago mundi* family. While expanding the reference to the Europa myth, as seen from the quotation above, he omits any reference to the alternative etymology provided by Honorius, that of King Europs.[14] Autesserre reads this in the broader context of the two

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[11] T-O-type *mappae mundi* represent the inhabited part of the Earth as a hemisphere, composed of three parts (Asia, Europe and Africa), with the Mediterranean, the Don and the Nile forming a T shape in the centre; Woodward, 1987.

[12] Providence appears in stanza 20 as *cubierta de flores / una donzella* 'a girl covered in flowers' (Mena, 1997, p. 89), identified in stanza 23 (*me puedes llamar Providençia*; Mena, 1997, p. 90) (see Autesserre, 2009). Post describes this geographical section as 'a digression of inordinate length', and a 'tedious passage' (1912, pp. 225, 241), mis-identifying the source as Vincent of Beauvais' *Speculum naturale* (pp. 241–42); the identification is refuted by Lida de Malkiel, 1950, pp. 33–35.

[13] Though Mena does not cite the source by name, López Férez traces the information in the *Laberinto* which derives from the *Imago mundi* point by point, quoting the additions (2010, pp. 249–59, 263–64, 324).

[14] This alternative etymology for the name of Europe, identifying the origin as the name of a king, is widespread among texts of the *Imago mundi* family. King Europe is mentioned in Justin's *Epitome* (2nd or 3rd century?) of the world history of Pompeius Trogus, and this ultimately may have been Honorius's source;

works, pointing out that while the term 'king' is present in multiple etymologies in the Latin text, it appears to have been entirely avoided by Mena (Autesserre, 2009, para.55). Autesserre suggests that this is connected to Mena's more general point about the nature of kingship, querying and undermining the standard notion of secure linear descent, the illusory nature of which is highlighted in his introduction of the concept of Fortune (Autesserre, 2009, paras 55–56). If Autesserre's reading of Mena's changes to Honorius's etymologies is correct, and the removal of Europs is part of a broader trend in the *Laberinto* to avoid the designation 'king', then information adapted from the geographical treatise is being moulded to a new text, context, and message.

Mena continues his discussion of the region of Europe by describing, in the same stanza (42), the boundaries of Europe as *los montes Rifeos e lagos Metroes*, corresponding to the *Rifei montes* and *Meotides paludes* of the *Imago mundi* (Mena, 1997, p. 107). No mention is made in this stanza of the River Don, which in the Latin text had formed part of the sequence with the Ripheian mounains and the maeotian Swamps.[15] In stanza 42, Mena asks the reader to praise the Rifean mountans and Meotidan swamps because they were neighbours of Gothia (*porque vezinos de Gótiga fueron*; Mena, 1997, p. 107).

The importance of Gothia (*Gótiga*) is explained in the following stanza (stanza 43), with its explicit reference to Spain: Mena specifies that the *estirpe de reyes atán gloriosa*, Spain's glorious line of kings, came precisely from that area, providing another link to our recurring theme of princely power (Mena, 1997, p. 109; Autesserre, 2009, para 77). This addition builds on and harks back to an established tradition in medieval and Renaissance Spanish historiography of what Josué Villa Prieto calls the *ideología goticista* (Villa Prieto, 2010).[16] Tracing royal power back to the Gothic kings was part of an established ideological discourse and was also part of a continuing discourse among Mena's contemporaries (González Fernández, 1986, esp. p. 295-96; Villa Prieto, 2010, p. 130). Thus, this is arguably one of those instances where Mena is counting on his audience's contextual knowledge (González Fernández, 1986, pp. 291-2, 194-5; Villa Prieto, 2010, pp. 126-7, 139).

A further alteration made to the material taken from the *Imago mundi*, also of direct relevance to the treatment of Spain in the text, lies in the repositioning of the reference to Britain in *Imago mundi* I.29 and the subsequent re-ordering of the geographical description (Honorius Augustodunensis, 1982, p. 62).

Table 1. Order of Last Regions in Europe in the *Imago mundi* and in the *Laberinto*

Imago mundi	*Gallia* → *Hispania* → *Britannia* → Africa
Laberinto	France → Britain → Spain → Africa

In the *Laberinto*, the reference to Britain is moved to the final line of the stanza about France (stanza 47), becoming a mere casual aside in the description of the extent of France, *que tiende sus fines fasta la mar alta, / que con los britanos tiene que fazer* (Mena, 1997, p. 112). The result of this displacement is that the final stanza of the section dealing with Europe in the *Laberinto* is thus dedicated to Spain (stanza 48), after which the poem moves directly

for discussions, see Eckhardt (2006, 218–20) Oschema (2013, pp. 165, 204–06) and Petrovskaia (2018, p. 26).

[15] The Don, *Tanais*, is, however, mentioned in stanza 44 (Mena, 1997, p. 109).

[16] This is a broad topic the discussion of which is necessarily limited in the present article due to considerations of space; for more, see, for instance, also González Fernández 1986 and Cruz Díaz 2013.

to Africa in the first two lines of stanza 49: *Vimos allende lo más de Etiopia, / E las provincias de Africa todas* (Mena, 1997, p. 113) (See Table 1).

It is just possible that Mena might have been inspired in this by the Spanish translation of Honorius's *Imago mundi*, the *Semeiança del mundo* (1173×1223) (Bull and Williams, 1959, p. 1; Kinkade, 1971).[17] Both texts move Britain and Ireland from their original position in the final chapter in the section on Europe to the section on islands. Spain, which in the *Imago mundi* was in the penultimate chapter on Europe, I.28, thus ends up in concluding position in both Spanish texts (Honorius Augustodunensis, 1982, p. 62). Whether this is influenced by the *Semeiança* or an independent example of the same re-positioning of Spain in the text, it remains striking because although Britain is re-positioned in a different manner, the result for Spain is the same – it becomes the culmination of the European trajectory. It may also be that the move in the two texts is coincidental, and a result of the re-focusing of the geographical description on the host country in both cases.

While Mena generally follows the order of the *Imago mundi* in enumerating the parts of the world (Asia, Europe and Africa), he tends not to define their limits, and alters the order in which regions are named within these larger units, occasionally returning to a previously discussed area. He also does not provide transitional passages, as Honorius does, when moving between parts of the world.[18] Together, these alterations make his translation of Honorius structurally and spatially entangled, transforming the itinerary into a labyrinth.[19] The additions of references to the glorious kings of Spain and the 'neighbours of Gothia', mentioned above are all the more striking given the general trend in Mena's geographical passage to abridge and summarise information derived from Honorius (Autesserre, 2009, paras 68-70, 102-104).

4. Translating into new genre for a new purpose

According to Julian Weiss, Juan de Mena's *Laberinto de Fortuna* was not merely 'a political poem' but 'a piece of cultural propaganda', whose "learned style encourages the confident belief that the reader's gentility was based on more than just noble blood" (Weiss, 1990, p. 17). The poem was composed in the metrical form *copla de arte mayor* (used in the Castilian tradition of the time for poems dealing with lofty matter) in the tradition of the *Divina Commedia*; and the text was similarly heavily glossed and commented (Street, 1953, pp. 155 n.6, 156 n.3, 161; Marfany, 2013, pp. 271-72).[20] Mena was known to his contemporaries for his erudition, and the poem uses a wide range of classical and medieval sources, of which the *Imago mundi* is but one (Street, 1953, p. 154). Mena appears to have used a combination of sources in Latin and in the vernacular, including the grandiose historical compilation of Alfonso X, 'El Sabio', known as the *General Estoria* (Parker, 1978, p. 16; Linda de Malkiel, *Juan de Mena*, pp. 11-13, 41-42).[21] To quote Weiss once again, "It would be impossible, even without the glosses to ignore entirely the ambitiously learned nature of *El*

[17] A close comparison of the text with the *Imago mundi*, *pace* the text's editors who state that it is based on Isidore's *Etymologies*, yields the conclusion that it is largely a verbatim translation of Honorius's text. For a recent discussion of the qualities of this text as translation, see Lacomba (2008, pp. 341-66, esp. pp. 342-343, 351, 356-59).

[18] See Autesserre (2009, paras 39-40, para.44). The lack of transitional passages also distinguishes Mena's text from the *Semeiança*.

[19] As Autesserre observes, this causes relative 'imprecision' and 'discontinuity' (2009, para.40).

[20] For Dante's influence, see Post, 1912 and more recently Hartnett, 2011.

[21] For the *General Estoria,* see Alfonso X El Sabio, 2009; for an earlier edition, see Alfonso el Sabio, 1930 and 1957-61.

Laberinto, with its wealth of classical allusion and linguistic innovation" (Weiss, 1990, p. 123). The poem thus combines overt praise to its dedicatee in the opening passages with subtle flattery by implication: the reader is expected to be learned enough to understand the text.[22] The work is very consciously targeted at a king who had a reputation for literary and artistic interests and patronage (Moya García, 2014, p. 491). This point is important for understanding the positioning of the text's geographical description as a translation vis-à-vis the *Imago mundi*.

As well as being an epic poem, the work as a whole has also been considered an example of the medieval Spanish genre of *mester de clerecía*, (Clarke, 1973, pp. 61-62), defined by Dorothy Clarke as '"learned" poetry, didactic or at least informative, entertaining, and stylistically refined, often involving reworking of pieces (some fictional) from other languages' and which "had always been chameleonic and constantly metamorphosed in form as well as content" (1973, p. 62). The drawing of *Imago mundi* into this new genre by Mena is comparable to the process we find in thirteenth century France, whereby the *Imago mundi* is drawn into the *livre de clergie* genre. *Clergie* in medieval France was essentially a term for 'learnedness' (Waters, 2016, p. 10); a *livre de clergie* being thus a book of learning. In this case, its Book I becomes, in translation, Book II of the *Image du monde* by Gossouin de Metz, which identifies itself explicitly as a *livre de clergie*[23] Defining its purpose as the improvement of the spiritual well-being of its lay audience, [24] this work focuses more strongly on religious matters than the original Latin text, and relates its material to biblical events much more than Honorius's version does in the *Image du monde*. In essence, Mena does something similar, like Gossouin combining Honorius with other sources and repurposing it within a new literary context. In his case, the purpose, as we have seen, is largely political, and the way he formulates his message relies heavily on the audience's knowledge of Spanish historiographical traditions and contexts.

Before concluding this article, I would like to add a note on the later reception of Mena's text. The *Laberinto* has a rich manuscript tradition of its own, also going through multiple print editions in the Early Modern period (Street, 1953, p. 149).[25] In the process, the text underwent further repurposing and further re-interpretation. Particularly notable in this respect is the work of commentators who annotated the text in the later manuscript tradition. As Julian Weiss points out, a commentator "has the power to influence the reader's perceptions about a work, by highlighting those aspects which are of particular interest to him" (Weiss, 1990, p. 126). The glossator of the mid-fifteenth-century Paris manuscript, for example, who does not appear to have been aware of the *Imago mundi* (Kerkhof, 2015, pp. 230, 234), attributed the geographical information in the *Laberinto* to the Latin translation of Strabo's *Geographica*, thus placing it as the continuation of the classical tradition.[26] He also explicitly presents the work as "an imitation of a classical epic" (Weiss, 1990, p. 126, see also p. 123). By contract, the glossator of the Palma de Mallorca manuscript (*c.* 1470–1480), for his part, quotes passages, and occasionally entire chapters

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[22] It has also been argued that the dense use of obscure nomenclature in such passages as the geographical description in the *Laberinto* also play an aesthetic function in this poetic tradition (Carreter, 1980, pp. 319-20).

[23] Ribémont (1991, p. 291); Centili (2006, pp. 184–85). For a discussion of the *Image du monde* as a *livre de clergie*, see Centili (2006, p. 163), Connochie-Bourgne (1998, 1999, 2013) and Petrovskaia (2019, p. 206).

[24] For a discussion of this, see, for instance, Connochie-Bourgne (1999, pp. 146-47).

[25] For in-depth discussion of the editions of the *Laberinto*, see Kerkhof and Le Pair (1989) and Kerkhof (1984).

[26] Kerkhof, 2015, p. 220. The reference is to the glossator (Kerkhof's 'commentator A') of Paris, BnF, MS Esp. 229 (s. xv^2); https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b8436399x (Accessed: 6 April 2023)

from *Imago mundi* I in his comments to the geographical passages,[27] thereby re-integrating the *Laberinto* with its source, and presenting "a compendium of learning, especially of geographical knowledge" (Weiss, 1990, p. 126). This diversity of interpretation, and indeed the fact itself that the *Laberinto* accrued glossaries and commentaries of its own shows that the text also acquired, in its turn, the status of *auctoritas* (Kerkhof, 2015, p. 252).[28]

5. Conclusion

Given the freedom with which Mena adapted, abridged, adjusted, and re-ordered the material from his source, the geographical section of the *Laberinto* is best described as a rewriting of *Imago mundi* I. Indeed, to return to Djodjević's article, which provided the springboard for this analysis, there is, in terms of modern conceptions of intertextuality, a tension, in Mena's unacknowledged use of the Latin source (in vernacular translation), between quotation, adaptation, and plagiarism (Djodjević, 2000, p. 10).[29] If we are to consider translation not in terms of a binary mode of relationship with the original, or even relationship with the audience, but in terms of relative distance from the original text being translated, it becomes possible to position even such intertextual relationships as Mena's use of Honorius's geography on the translation spectrum. This is necessary because, as the argument in this article hopefully has shown, seeing Mena's geographical description as a translation of Honorius allows us to appreciate the nuances he introduced in order to appeal to his audience and to adapt the text to the style, needs, and political objectives of his own original composition.

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[27] The glossator also used Isidore's *Etymologies* and *Sententiarum sive de summo bono libri III*. The *Imago mundi* quotations were identified by Kerkhof as coming from chapters 1, 2, 4, 6, 14, 8, 11, 14-16, 18-21, 24-25 and 32 (Kerkhof, 2015, p. 246). He does not cite an edition, but presumably uses Migne's Patrologia Latina edition. If so, the corresponding chapters in the more recent edition by Valerie Flint are: 1, 2, 4, 6, 13, 8, 10, 13–15, 17–20, 23–24, and 30–31 (Honorius Augustodunensis, 1982).

[28] For more on the interplay between translation, transmission, and authority, see Petrovskaia, 2020.

[29] On the tension between medieval practice of tacit use of other texts as translation versus plagiarism, Djodjević quotes Bassnett-MacGuire, 1991, p. 53.

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"FETTLED IN ON FORME": READING *PATIENCE* AS A "POETIC IMITATION"

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ABSTRACT: This study offers a critical analysis of the Medieval poem Patience and its relation to the Vulgate Bible's version of The Book of Jonah. The poet's translation method is seen as being much closer to the Eighteenth-Century idea of 'poetic imitation', rather than 'paraphrase'. The article is in two sections, the first of which offers a detailed appraisal of the Latin text of the Vulgate, with the focus being on the system of parallelism which characterises the Biblical style; the second section explores the poet's response to this structural system and relates his significant transformation of the source to the poem's 'homiletic' theme. The critical method is that of close textual reading.
KEYWORDS: Imitation; Patience poem; Middle English; Translation

1. Introduction

The anonymous late fourteenth century English poem *Patience* is a 'homiletic' re-telling of the Old Testament Book of Jonah, written in the dialect of the North-West Midlands, and in the alliterative poetic style common to that region. Most critical studies of *Patience* have involved some analysis of the relationship which the poem has to the Vulgate Book of Jonah, terms including homily, paraphrase, sermon, translation; in the words of one of the most recent commentators, "much criticism on *Patience* begins from the premise that the work is at base vernacular paraphrase" (Gustafson, 2022, p. 1; Bowers, 1971, p.61). This study seeks to posit the term 'poetic imitation' as being the most appropriate to describe the relationship between 'source' and 'version', with particular attention given to the system of rhetorical internal parallelism which characterises each text.

The term 'imitation' has a complex history in literary criticism, and we can only touch on certain essential points here. Inevitably Aristotle's term "mimesis" is evoked; however, as one translator of the *Poetics* writes:

> …'imitation' is the least adequate translation of 'mimesis'. Aristotle nowhere offers a definition of it … I usually offer the translation 'representation…' (Halliwell, 1987, p. 71)

Aristotle's 'mimesis' has a much broader reference than our term 'imitation', which is specifically used to denote a certain kind of translation. The term *imitatio* became fundamental to the theory of translation during Augustan Roman times, as Rita Copeland has masterfully shown in her examination of Roman translation, and imitation, of Greek literature:

> The ideal of imitation…is that of organic recreation from an earlier text, in the sense of formal or substantive adaptation. Translation, on the other hand, is recognised as necessarily replicative… (Copeland, 1991, p. 30)

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Translation Matters, 5(2), 2023, pp. 31-52, DOI: https://doi.org/10.21747/21844585/tm5_2a3

The concept of "organic recreation from an earlier text" is essential when considering the relationship which *Patience* creates with its Vulgate source. The term used in this present study – "poetical imitation" - involves the poetical fusion of source and version; a method of translation which, developing from the Roman model, became perfected in the Eighteenth Century, notably by Samuel Johnson in his imitations of Juvenal. Dryden's seminal definition of the act of translation into the three stages of 'Metaphrase', 'Paraphrase' and 'Imitation' is crucial here:

> The Third way is that of Imitation, where the translator (if now he has not lost that name) assumes the liberty not only to vary from the words and sense, but to forsake them both as he sees occasion: and taking only some general hints from the original, to run division on the ground-work, as he pleases. (Dryden, 1680, Preface)

Dryden's musical metaphor can be aptly applied to the approach which the *Patience* poet adopts in his 'rendering' of the Vulgate. We can regard the 'ground' as the Vulgate, and the 'division' as the Medieval poem, with both 'musical lines' having equal artistic stature, each one enhancing the other, and each being necessarily present. If we combine Dryden's model with Copeland's definition of imitation as the "organic recreation from an earlier text", then I would argue that this is a far more accurate way of describing the *Patience* poet's working relationship with the Vulgate source. I would add, crucially, that "organic recreation" must mean that the 'source' always remains present in the 'version' – as it does in Johnson's method, which I would consider the epitome of the "poetical imitation" genre.

Regarding the poet's translation method, Anderson says:

> The Patience-poet develops the biblical narrative not allegorically but realistically … His technique of elaboration is consistently directed towards making the story illuminate a moral quality. (Anderson, 1977, p. 19)

The *Patience* poet in his imitation of the Book of Jonah, and in his re-creation of some aspects of its poetics, does create a tightly controlled moral structure; however, 'elaboration' in the case of *Patience* has also a poetic, as well as a theological purpose. It is important to recognise that the relationship between the Vulgate and the poem is not as simple as that between "source" and 'version'. *Patience* in its dealing with the Vulgate could actually be regarded as not really a 'translation' at all – and here Dryden's metaphor becomes even more telling – because the poet does *not* give us the story "as holy writ telles" – instead, the Vulgate poem acts as an accompanying, authoritative basis for a new, highly original, didactic poem. As Anderson and Bowers have stressed, the poem is unique in using the Vulgate Jonah story as an *exemplum* of patience (Anderson, 1977, p. 19; Bowers, 1971, p. 62); yet this 'exemplum' is not only significant in its theme, but also in its very rhetorical, poetic, stylistic form.

In order to appreciate the nature of this poetic imitation, we need first to examine the text of the Vulgate itself.

2. The Vulgate Book of Jonah

Erich Auerbach's study of the Book of Genesis provides us with a valuable point of departure here. In discussing the story of Abraham and Isaac (Genesis XIII), Auerbach stresses the absence of narrative detail in Biblical poetics, and the consequent freedom given to the reader's imagination:

> God appears without bodily form … the story unrolls with no episodes in few independent sentences whose syntactical connection is of the most rudimentary sort … God gives his command in direct discourse, but he leaves his motives and his purpose unexpressed: Abraham, receiving his command, says nothing and does what he has been told to do. (Auerbach, 1953, pp. 9-11; quoted by Spearing, 1970, p. 56)

Auerbach's points here are most important for the Book of Jonah, which even by Biblical standards has a notable terseness of expression. As with the story of Abraham, in the opening phrase of the book 'God appears without bodily form':

> *Et factum est verbum Domini ad Jonam [Caput I, 1]*[1]
>
> [Now the word of the Lord came to Jonas …][2]

This emphasis upon the 'word' of God is appropriate, since the line introduces a story about the fate of a man who disobeys God's command. The exact phrase is again used to begin Caput III, to mark Jonah's reconciliation with God after the experience of the whale. This has the effect of dividing the story into two parts: the opening of Caput III creates the sense of a 'second beginning', following the crisis of Caput II (presenting the whale scene and Jonah's prayer). There are strong bonds between the two main parts, one of which is created by further elaboration on this opening phrase, elaboration in which speech is crucial:

> *Caput II, 3: de ventre inferi clamavi, et exaudisti vocem meam.*
>
> ["... I cried out of the belly of hell: and thou hast heard my voice."]
>
> *Caput IV, 2: obsecro, domini, numquid non hoc est verbum meum…?*
>
> ["… I beseech thee, O Lord, is not this what I said …?"].

These verbal parallels present the two sides of Jonah presented in Capita II and IV: Caput II contains Jonah's hymn of reconciliation with God, and behind the phrase '*exaudisti vocem meam'* lies the confidence of the prophet in God's willingness to hear and succour him. In Caput IV, however, '*verbum meum*' reminds us of Jonah's rejection of God's command in Caput I:

[1] The Vulgate text referred to is that printed in Anderson's edition: Anderson (1977, pp. 70-72).
[2] All translations of the Vulgate are taken from the Douay Version, unless stated as my own.

Surge, et vade in Nineven civitatem grandem... [Caput I, 2]

[“Arise, and go to Nineve the great city …”]

Et surrexit Jonas, ut fugeret in Tharsis a facie Domini [Caput I, 3]

[“And Jonas rose up to flee into Tharsis from the face of the Lord…”]

This passage has its contrasting parallel in Caput III, 2 and 3:

Surge, et vade in Nineven civitatem magnam.
Et surrexit Jonas, et abiit in Nineven juxta verbum Domini.

[“And Jonas arose and went to Nineve, according to the word of the Lord.”]

This parallel also tacitly relates *‘Verbum Domini’* to ‘*Facie Domini’*, with *‘Verbum’* denoting Auerbach's sense of the insubstantial nature of God, but *facies* denoting a more concrete representation of God such as the storm (and, as will be suggested here, the woodbine) might be seen to signify.

The Vulgate rhetorical style creates in this parallel the thematic implication that *‘Verbum’* (the ‘word’) and *‘Facies’* (the ‘countenance’) of God have equal ‘substance’. In Caput I, the passage ‘*surrexit … ut fugeret … a facie Domini*’ – “he arose, in order to flee from the countenance of God” – conveys the sense of guilt which Jonah is feeling in that very act of disobedience. A subtle irony is created here in the very grammar of the Vulgate, with God’s direct, *spoken* imperatives *‘Surge, et vade’* (‘Arise, and hasten …’) being ironically ‘subverted’ by the ‘answering’ *narrative*, where the initially strong, indicative *‘surrexit’* (answering ‘surge’) is ironically deflated by the weaker (and in this context, bathetic) subjunctive form of *‘fugeret’*, “that he might (be able to) flee”. In this juxtaposition the Vulgate ‘poet’ uses grammar as a kind of thematic, didactic symbol, signaling in its very simplicity of language a profundity of expression which enforces the moral of the story.

In fleeing *‘a facie’*, Jonah is fleeing in fear not only of martyrdom but of sensible punishment for disobedience, and this is made more obvious by the echo of the same phrase at the height of the storm:

Et timuerunt viri timore magno, et dixerunt ad eum: Quid hoc fecisti? (Cognoverunt enim viri quod a facie Domini fugeret, quia indicaverat eis.) [Caput I, 10]

[And the men were greatly afraid, and they said to him: “Why hast thou done this?” (For the men knew that he fled from the face of the Lord, because he had told them.)]

We can see emerging here a detailed system of internal parallelism in the Vulgate, highlighted by the austerity of its form, which allows it to be read both as a well-wrought poem and as the essential accompanying text for *Patience*, whose sophistication in terms of structure and resonant diction is essentially derived from it. The Vulgate’s parallel

patterning is a stylistic technique which again fulfils a moral role, inviting and indeed enforcing greater concentration upon the major theme of disobedience.

A further echo of Caput I, 1 – 3 invites a contrast between Jonah and the Ninevite king. Having had the eventual, contrite obedience of Jonah emphasised through parallelism by the progression *"factum est verbum ... Surge ... Et surrexit Jonas…"* in Caput III, 1 - 3, we find a further parallel in Caput III, 6:

> *Et pervenit verbum ad regem Nineve: et surrexit de solio suo, et abiecit vestimentum suum a se, et indutus est sacco, et sedit in cinere.*
>
> [And the word came to the king of Nineve: and he rose up out of his throne and cast away his robe from him, and was clothed with sackcloth, and sat in ashes.]

The syntactic parallel between the verbs *'pervenit'* and *'surrexit'* emphasises the autonomy of the king, who *'surrexit de solio suo'* as soon as he heard the word of God, a positive reaction whose immediacy parallels Jonah's equally immediate, but contrary, reaction to *'verbum Domini'*. This sense of immediacy is conveyed by the "syntactical connection ... of the most rudimentary sort" noted by Auerbach, allowing for the forceful relation of *'pervenit'* to *'surrexit'*, and implying that the action of the first verb causes the action of the second. Also implied, by the echo in *'surrexit'* of Caput I, 3 and Caput III, 3, is a contrast with Jonah's reaction upon receipt of *'verbum Domini'*. *'Verbum'* initiates in the king's case the progression *'surrexit ... abiecit ... indutus est ... sedit'*, verbs which follow hard upon one another, conveying the speed and determination of the king's contrition; *'surrexit'* and *'sedit'*, connote respectively action then passivity – passivity being a characteristic of *Patientia*. Every verb attributed to the king here is prompted not so much by a divine command as by speculation upon divine forgiveness; this is made apparent by his speech in verses 7 – 9, ending with its speculative question:

> *"Quis scit si convertatur, et ignoscat Deus … et non peribimus?"*
>
> ["Who can tell if God will turn and forgive … and we shall not perish?"]

Jonah's disobedience is highlighted by contrast with the actions of the Ninevite king. Jonah *'surrexit ... ut fugeret'*, and this purpose clause, modifying *'surrexit'*, is bathetic when seen as the response to the divine word in *'Surge, et vade...'* [Caput I, 2], emphasising the abuse given to the divine command. Next in Caput I, 3 we have the progression of the verbs which, as in the case of the passage describing the king, is related to *'surrexit'*: *'descendit ... invenit ... dedit ... descendit'* – but which, in contrast to the king's case, indicates not a movement towards but away from God. The progression ends not with a verb of 'passivity' but with a verb of action portraying lack of patience: *'descendit'*. This begins a downward movement, continued through Capita I and II, in which physical descent becomes a metaphor for spiritual decline.

Caput I, 5 is important here:

Et timuerunt nautae, et clamaverunt viri ad deum suum: et miserunt vasa, quae erant in naví, in mari, ut alleviaretur ab eis: et Jonas descendít ad interiora navis, et dormiebat sopore gravi.

[And the mariners were afraid, and the men cried to their god: and they cast forth the wares, that were in the ship, into the sea, to lighten it of them: and Jonas went down into the inner part of the ship and fell into a deep sleep.]

The phrase *'vasa, quae erant in navi'* has an ironic effect, since what must be ejected from the ship to ensure the sailors' safety is Jonah himself. This irony is pointed by the close following of *'in navi'* by *'descendit ad interiora navis'*, which creates the sense of Jonah retreating into the hold as the *'vasa'* are coming out. We also feel the sense of continued descent, or falling, in the repetition from Caput I, 3 of *'descendit'* here. This is increased by the phrase *'sopore gravi'*, since the adjective *'gravis'* holds both meanings of 'deep' and 'heavily laden, heavy' and in this context allows the reader to infer that Jonah is suffering from spiritual as well as physical torpor.[3] Thus Jonah, heavily laden with guilt and sin, is hiding *'a facie Domini'* - and *'in aeternum'* falling away from God's grace.

We can associate *'sopore gravi'*, uttered in the ship's hold, with *'tribulatione mea'* in Caput II, 3, uttered from the belly of the whale, and thus see an implied connection between *'interiora navis'* and *'interiora piscis'*. This connection is encouraged by the further use of the verb *'descendit'* in Caput II, 7, transferred now from the narrative voice to Jonah's speech. There is an important interaction of narrative and direct speech at the beginning of the passage:

2. Et oravit Jonas ad Dominum deum suum de ventre piscis.
3. Et dixit: Clamavi de tribulatione mea ad Dominum, et exaudivit me: de ventre inferi clamavi, et exaudisti vocem meam.

The Douay Bible translates:

And Jonas prayed to the lord his God out of the belly of the fish. And he said: I cried out of my affliction to the Lord, and he heard me: I cried out of the belly of hell, and thou hast heard my voice. [Douay Bible, p. 1173]

One important detail makes the passage one of severe complexity and spiritual optimism (which, as will be seen, the *Patience* poet fully recognises): Jonah's use of the past tense elevates his utterance from the level of a prayer in affliction to that of a psalm expressing confidence in salvation. Jerome's exegesis emphasises this:

Non dixit "clamo", sed "clamavi": nec de future precatur, sed de praeterito gratias agit.[4]

He then quotes Psalm CXIX, 1, which bears a close resemblance to II, iii here:

[3] Jerome adduces a sense of grief here: *"ideo descendit ad interiora navis, et tristis absconditur"* - *Patrologia Latina (1844)*, 25, coll. 1125.
[4] *Patrologia Latina (1844)*, 25, coll. 1117 – 1152: "He did not say 'I beseech', but 'I DID beseech': nor does he pray concerning the future, but [instead] gives thanks for that which has passed" [my translation].

Ad Dominum cum tribulatione clamavi, et exaudivit me

[In my trouble I cried to the Lord: and he heard me.]

Thus begins the first of a series of 'Gradual Canticles' (Psalms CXIX to CXXXIII), perhaps the most cited of which in literature is Psalm CXXIX:

1. De profundis clamavi, ad te Domine;
2. Domine, exaudi vocem meam.

[Out of the depths I have cried to thee, O Lord.]
[Lord, hear my voice.]

The note to these gradual psalms in the Douay-Rheims Bible is important:

> The following psalms … are called gradual psalms or canticles, from the word *'gradus'*, signifying steps ... as the degrees by which Christians spiritually ascend to virtue and perfection…[5]

We should also bear in mind here Jonah Caput II, 5:

verumtamen rursus videbo templum sanctum tuum

[… but yet I shall see thy holy temple again]

The use of the future indicative, [my emphasis] here – in favour of (for example) a '*utinam*…' ['would that…'] optative subjunctive construction – makes it clear that Jonah's 'hymn' is the Vulgate poet's imitation of a gradual psalm uttered in complete confidence of salvation: the sense is "my deliverance *is* assured: I *will* see the holy temple". This confidence is vindicated by Caput II, 11:

Et dixit Dominus pisci: et evomuit Ionam in aridam

[And the Lord spoke to the fish: and it vomited out Jonas upon the dry land.]

The emergence of Jonah from the sea is a parallel event to that of God's forgiveness of the Ninevites. The Ninevite king's speech presents a close parallel to Jonah's Psalm for purposes of contrast. The parallel is announced in Caput III, vii:

Et clamavit, et dixit in Nineve ex ore regis et principum eius, dicens …

[And he caused it to be proclaimed and published in Nineve from the mouth of the king and of his princes, saying …],

which corresponds to Caput II, 2 and 3:

[5] Douay Bible, p. 764.

Et oravit Jonas... Et dixit: Clamavi ...

However, the similarities cease from this point. The king's speech is, as stated above, speculative; this is no 'De Profundis', as in Psalm CXXIX. First, he utters a series of jussive subjunctives in verses vii - viii:

non gustent...nec pascantur…operiantur...clament...convertatur,

which themselves impart less of sense of authority than would direct imperatives. Added to this, the king's speech ends with a question in Caput III, 9:

> *Quis scit si convertatur, et ignoscat Deus: et revertatur a furore suae, at non peribimus?*
>
> [Who can tell if God will turn and forgive and will turn away from his fierce anger: and we shall not perish?],

where the conditional sense contrasts with Jonah's unblinking:

> *Hebraeus ego sum, et Dominum Deum caeli ego timeo, qui fecit mare et aridam. [Caput I, 9]*
>
> ["I am a Hebrew, and I fear the Lord the God of heaven, who made both the sea and the dry land."]

The certainty of Jonah's 'indicative' belief, and the confidence which it engenders in him, are therefore thrown into sharp relief in the story by the contrasting 'subjunctive' gentile element; and there is a strong sense that Jonah's state of spiritual health is of far greater importance, both to the biblical account and to God, than that of the Ninevites. For this reason, Jonah's psalm, resting as it does in the confidence of his belief in God's mercy from the depths of his soul, is given central positioning and a whole Caput to itself, in contrast to the Ninevite king's speech, which has only three verses.

It is the transmission of this sense of confidence in Jonah via the forcefulness of the Vulgate's grammar, patterning and verbal echo which puts into strong relief Jonah's position at the end of the book. His speech in Caput IV, 2 reveals that same confidence which informs the psalm in Caput II, but here it forms (with notable irony created by the changed context of the verbal echo) the explanation for the confrontation which we examined earlier between *'verbum meum'* [Caput IV, 2] and *'verbum Domini'* [Caput I, 1]:

> *...propter hoc praeoccupavi ut fugerem in Tharsis, scio enim quia tu Deus clemens, et misericors es, patiens et multae miserationis, et ignoscens super malitia. [Caput IV, 2]*
>
> […therefore I went before to flee into Tharsis: for I know that thou art a gracious and merciful God, patient and of much compassion and easy to forgive evil.]

However, there could also be seen here an admission by Jonah that he was the more confident in his flight since ('*quia'*) he knew God to be merciful. This ambiguity, created by the closeness of *'praeoccupavi ut fugerem'* and *'quia'*, with no sense of the sins of the Ninevites specifically, is important when viewing the presentation of Jonah in *Patience*. The

Patience poet, as we will see, fuses the spiritual senses of Jonah's confidence in God's mercy (which are manifest in Jonah's conception of himself both as 'Hebraus' and as God's prophet) with the secular confidence which was a vassal's right to possess regarding his feudal lord.

A further contrast between Caput II and Caput IV is created by the fact that, whereas Jonah's psalm reveals a confidence in salvation by God (Caput II, 10: *"quaecunque vovi, reddam pro salute Domino"*), in Caput IV Jonah's speech leads to a prayer for death:

> *Et nunc, Domine, tolle quaeso animam meam a me [Caput IV, 3]*
>
> [And now, Lord, I beseech thee take my life from me]

The episode of the woodbine (*'hedera'*, IV, 6) only confirms that resolution. This episode is strongly related to that of the whale via parallel verbal patterning:

> *Et praeparavit Dominus piscem grandem ut deglutiret Ionam [Caput II, 1]*
>
> [Now the Lord prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonas]

> *Et praeparavit Dominus deus hederam, et ascendit super caput Jonae, ut esset umbra super caput eius, et protegeret eum [Caput IV, 6]*
>
> [And the Lord prepared ivy, and it came up over the head of Jonas, to be a shadow over his head, and to cover him]

The subjunctive '*protegeret*' is gramatically parallel to '*deglutiret*', but contrasting in meaning. Also, there is an ambivalence as to the subject of '*ascendit*' in IV, 6 since the subject of the sentence is '*Dominus Deus*', but the literal sense demands '*hedera*' to govern the verb; thus we have a suggestion through this 'implied duality of subject' that the ivy is a manifestation of God, contrasting with Auerbach's God of Genesis, who "appears without bodily form". Consequently, the progression

> *Deus... ascendit... ut... protegeret eum [Caput IV,6],*

forms a strikingly ironic, contrasting parallel to Caput I, 3:

> *Jonas ascendit... ut iret... a facie Domini,*
>
> [Jonas rose up ... to flee ... from the face of the Lord],

presenting God and Jonah moving in contrary motions to one another.

Thus the Vulgate poem creates its depth of resonance. Through this pattern of internal parallelism and contrast, Caput IV, 6 ensures both a close relationship between '*piscis*' and '*hedera*' and a strong contrast between Jonah and God. Also, the parallelism noted immediately above has the effect of connecting the storm episode with the whale and woodbine episodes. These last two contrast Jonah's two inconsistent attitudes: when

Translation Matters, 5(2), 2023, pp. 31-52, DOI: https://doi.org/10.21747/21844585/tm5_2a3

under duress in the whale he praises God in the confidence of anticipated salvation; but once he has been saved he criticises God for those same qualities which prompted that salvation.

Caput IV is divided into three sections: the first two, verses 1 - 4 and verse 5 - 9, are governed by two characteristics: God's repeated question,

> *Putasne bene irasceris tu? [Caput IV, 4 and IV, 9]*
>
> [“Do you really think you have a right to be angry?” (my translation)],

and Jonah's maintained anger, first at the sparing of the Ninevites, then at the destruction of the vine. The Vulgate creates strong structural patterning here. Jonah's response to the first question is to say nothing and to exit the city, taking his station where the bower is to be built; there then follows the episode of the woodbine, which finishes with God's second question, building on the first: “*Putasne bene irasceris tu super hedera?*” Jonah's reply,

> *Bene irascor usque ad mortem [Caput IV, 9]*
>
> [I am angry with reason even unto death],

in its intransigence and brevity, and in its positioning at the end of verse 9 (with the following final two verses being wholly occupied by God's direct comment upon the whole story), has the air of being Jonah's answer to all three questions. Thus, as the story is centred upon Jonah, it is infused with a deep but perhaps not a total pessimism; for the pessimism can be understood to be tempered by the final example of parallelism in the poem, which is created in Jonah's answer itself in verse 9, which refers us back (through the verbal echo of the last phrase) with profound irony to Jonah's ‘gradual psalm’ in Caput II:

> *Circumdederunt me usque ad animum [Caput II, 6].*
>
> [The waters compassed me about even to the soul]

This parallel reference at this final stage in the story to the gradual psalm raises the question, which is not fully answered in the Vulgate poem, of whether Jonah has come any closer to God in the scale of spiritual *gradus*. Also, there is resolution in the statement “*Bene irascor ego ad mortem*”, where *‘ego’* creates considerable emphasis, conveying the sense that Jonah is retreating into himself and therefore is in a lower position spiritually than he was in the whale. However, during the course of Caput IV Jonah shifts between two extremely contrasted emotional states, which are placed in parallel:

> *Et afflictus est Jonas afflictione magna [Caput IV, 1]*
>
> [And Jonas was exceedingly troubled, and was angry]
>
> *… et laetatus est Jonas super hedera laetitia magna [Caput IV, 6]*
>
> [… and Jonas was exceedingly glad of the ivy.]

We should compare here also the actions which follow immediately after each of these: when '*afflictus'*, Jonah '*oravit ad Dominum'* [IV, ii]; but when *'laetatus'*, far from praying to God, he retreats from him. There is a profound narrative irony created here in these two parallel episodes. Both the whale and the woodbine are God's creation; in the whale, Jonah addresses God as if he were present, whereas under the woodbine he hides from God, and becomes one of those whom he himself has condemned in psalm uttered inside the whale:

> *Qui custodiunt vanitates frustra, misericordiam suam derelinquunt. [Caput II, 9]*
>
> [They that are vain and observe vanities forsake their own mercy.]

This verse had an air of mystery in its immediate context, but now can be seen to be applicable to Jonah himself, *'laetatus super hederam'*, since '*hedera'* can be accurately designated '*vanitas, quae sub una nocte nata est, et sub una nocte periit'*. It is an indication of the presence of internal parallelism and the extent of rhetorical patterning in the Vulgate that a criticism can be levelled at Jonah through a statement which, with the greatest irony, is uttered by himself at the height of his confidence in God's mercy.

Thus Jonah's position at the end of the book is far from simple. In Caput IV the issues raised by the story of Jonah are brought together, and we see Jonah displaying a series of extreme attitudes, as we have illustrated above. The Vulgate in its austere but highly structured form presents these attitudes very forcibly; with no equivocality, but also with no overt comment. The moral comment upon Jonah is, however, covertly expressed by its system of internal parallelism; and in his response to this system the *Patience* poet offers a highly developed form of 'poetic imitation as interpretation'.

This last section of the Vulgate story is marked by questions - and ends with God's final question. The '*-ne'* suffix in the first two questions is emphatic, creating a sense of more colloquial intimacy between God and Jonah in this last exchange – the overall sense being:

> "Do you *really* think you have a right to be angry? – you grieve for the woodbine, which you didn't plant or care for, and which appeared in one night and was gone the next – don't you think I have the right to spare the Ninevites…?"

God's first two questions to Jonah have the air of dialectic – the attempt to draw his interlocutor, by questioning, to an understanding of a plain truth. One can compare Boethius (1973) – "*Videsne igitur quanto in caena probra volvantur, qua probitas luce resplendeat?*" – "Don't you see, then, in what deep mire wickedness wallows, with what brightness goodness shines? (*Consolatio* IV, iii). This is the tone of the ending of the book, bringing Jonah and God into a more intimate, less antagonistic relationship. These final questions by God create a 'calming' effect on the mental anguish that Jonah has experienced; the miniscule words, *"…-ne … tu … ego* " – all emphatic, and not essential to the meaning in this inflected language, create a sense of intimacy between God and Jonah.

This 'Boethian' intimacy the *Patience* poet greatly elaborates, and celebrates, in his imitation.

3. Patience: The Poem

The poet purports at the end of the Prologue to follow the Vulgate story of Jonah closely:

> I schal wysse yow þer-wyth as holy wryt tells… [60].

However, as he engages with the source on a stylistic level, responding to the system of parallelism which we have observed in the Vulgate, '*holy wryt'* becomes transformed into a new poem which, in using the source to explore the virtue of *Patience* in all its aspects, seeks to present the homiletic exploration of that virtue via exemplum, and to convey a sense of spiritual elevation over its whole movement; this is implied in the "fettled" (ME "belted") relationship between the first and last lines, between which the quality of "patience" undergoes an elevation from 'poynt' to 'nobel poynt'.[6]

This quality of patience is first presented both as a practical skill and as a spiritual asset,[7] an active principle which by experience one can accept as being necessary in the diminution of suffering, as is apparent in line 6:

> And quo for þro may noȝt þole, þe þikker he sufferes.

We are then presented immediately with an essential difference between the source and the version under discussion here: the elemental word of God is placed against the interpretative, moralistic, but also humanising 'word' of the poem. The lines

> Goddes glam to him glod þat him vnglad made,
> With a roghlych rurd rowned in his ere [63 - 4]

transform the austere Biblical:

> *Et factum est verbum Domini [Caput I, 1]*

There is, of course, also humour here, heightened by the alliteration, especially in the first line: God's 'glam' ('word') makes Jonah 'vnglad' – exactly the opposite reaction that

[6] The 'circular structure' of *Patience* has often been noted, e.g. by Burrow (1971, p. 64) re: the qualities of *Patience* and *Purity*. Quoting *Patience* lines 37-8 (concerning 'Beatitudes'): "For in þe tyxte þere þyse two arn in teme layde, / Hit arn fettled in on forme, þe forme and þe laste, …", Burrow applies this idea to the structure of the whole poem. This study seeks to assess the pervading internal structural methods of the poet within this overall design, and to relate these to the same qualities found in the Vulgate.

[7] I am inclined take 'poynt' to mean 'virtue', with Anderson (1977, p. 50) (citing *SGGK*, line 654); also Burrow and Turville-Petre (1992, p. 162). My reasons are that a definite 'moral' meaning seems to be implied by the concessive phrase 'þaȝ …' immediately following; also, the word appears in the opening line of the poem, linked strongly to the 'titular' word 'Patience' by alliteration – which suggests a meaning with a force equivalent to that word. However, a convincing argument for a meaning closer to 'condition, quality' can be found in Putter and Stokes (2014, p. 573). Cf. also Hatt (2015, p. 224) *et al.* re: the '*apoynt*' reading.

Auerbach's Abraham presents – and in this one line we have an encapsulation of the tone and focus of the whole poem:

> The poet's treatment of the story of Jonah is comical and irreverent … this treatment … powerfully evokes the ineluctable nature of the Word of God and moreover helps to raise the subject of Jonah's mistaken affirmation of self as an autonomous controller of events. (Hatt, 2015, p. 15)

The poet thus develops his character from the outset. The epithets 'vnglad' and 'roghlych' convey Jonah's psychological reaction to God's command and clarify the mystery of the biblical progression which we have already examined in the related Vulgate passage: '*Surge, et vade ... Et surrexit Jonas, ut fugeret* ...' [Caput I, 2 - 3]. Here the command and contrary execution were presented with no overt explanation, but as we have seen this presentation implied a profound, but tacitly-expressed, moral. In *Patience* the related phrases, "Rys radly... [65] and "þenne he ryses radly…" [89] are separated by twenty-three lines which elaborate both God's command and Jonah's related action, and in which:

> … we are given a detailed insight into Jonah's thought process, something that makes his selfish motivation clear, but in so doing gives him a humanity that readers are encouraged to recognise". (Hume, 2021, p. 132)

In God's command we can detect significant echoes of the Prologue:

> "… her malys is so much, I may not abide,
> Bot venge me on her vilanye and venym bilyue.
> Now sweȝe me þider swyftly and say me þis arende." [70 - 72]

Here, a kind of narrative irony presents God himself as expressing a tendency contrary to the poem's declared tenet, or maxim; Jonah in turn responds to God's 'impatience' with the same quality. God's word 'malys' refers us back to the prologue, in which the narrator relates the necessity of patience to himself:

> For ho quelles vche a qued and quenches malice ...
> Þen is better to abyde þe bur vmbe-stoundes,
> Þen ay þrow forth my þro, þaȝ me þynk ylle. [4, 7 - 8]

Thus the poem's elaboration of 'verbum domini' conveys a thematic concentration, developing elements of patience put forward in the prologue; here these elements are tolerance and obedience, the latter being closely associated with the acceptance of one's ordained fate. God's position becomes reversed, however, by the end of the poem:

> "I may not be so malicious and mylde be halden,
> For malyse is noȝ to mayntyne boute mercy with-inne." [522 - 3]

These lines echo the 'malys' of lines 4 and 70, thereby indicating a considered exercise of patience by God – a parallel presenting the divine exemplar in accordance with the thematic

maxim. This is contrasted with Jonah's effective adherence to disobedience, established by the correlation of the following lines:

> Þenne he ryses radly and raykes bilyue,
> Jonas toward port Japh, ay janglande for tene [89 - 90]

and,

> Jonas al joyles and janglande vp-ryses,
> And haldeȝ out on est half of þe hyȝe place [433 - 4]

This parallel encourages a correlation between Jonah in initial disobedience and Jonah in anger – anger at the contravening of the prophecy which he was enjoined to utter. Both disobedience and anger are contrary to the code of patience as set out in the Prologue, but they are connected here with great subtlety in the poem's equivalents to Vulgate Caput I, 3 and Caput IV, 5 respectively:

> Et surrexit Jonas, ut fugeret… [Caput I, 3]
>
> [And Jonas rose up, to flee…]
>
> Et egressus est Jonas de civitate, et sedit contra orientem civitatis. [Caput IV, 5]
>
> [Then Jonas went out of the city, and sat towards the east side of the city.]

The poem is thus being generated by close analogy to the internal parallelism of the Vulgate, which stresses by verbal echo the connection between Jonah's first disobedience and his later contrite obedience, expressed in Caput III, 3: "*Et surrexit Jonas, et abiit in juxta verbum Domini*". This sense of the poem being *'generated'* by the source is a crucial aspect of poetic imitation as a type of translation. It is important to bear in mind that, despite the *Patience* poet's obvious piety, he is also *primarily* poet, and he is in this poem responding as much to the artistry of the Vulgate as he is to the spiritual message. As Celia Hatt has said, expanding upon the idea of "… the place of art in the conversation between God and humanity":

> We may observe in the poems the idea of reciprocal giving being applied to conscious artistic creation … in *Patience* the gift is a divine message that demands human collaboration for its realization. (Hatt, 2015, p.12)

The poet's imitation of the Vulgate poetics thus becomes a perfect blending of piety and poetical endeavour.

A significant addition made by the poem to the source (perhaps prompted by the relation between 'iuxta' and 'contra' quoted above) is evident in the parallel created between Jonah's escape to Tarshish and his exit from Nineveh. The Vulgate presents no overt parallel between these two episodes, but *Patience* does. Here the poet exhibits a profound subtlety, and exercises what might be termed "analogous imitation": that is,

imitation of an aspect to be found in the source but which is not in the particular passage which the version is at present addressing. In each passage (89-90 and 433-4) Jonah progresses from 'janglande' (90; 433) to 'joyful' (109) or 'so glad' (457) within about the same number of lines; and in each case that joy is seen to be illusory and subject to destruction by God. In relation to the lines 89 – 90 quoted above we have the quatrain:

> Watʒ never so joyful a jue as Jonah watʒ þenne,
> Þat þe daunger of dryʒten so derfly ascaped;[8]
> He wende wel þat þat wyʒ þat al þe world planted
> Hade mo maʒt in þat mere no man for-to greue. [109 - 112]

And in relation to lines 433 – 4 we have:

> Þenne watʒ þe gome so glad of his gay logge,
> Lys loltrande þer-inne lokande to toune;
> So blyþe of his wod-bynde he balteres þer-vnder,
> Þat of no diete þat day - þe deuel haf! - he roʒt. [457 - 60]

Through this parallel the poem thus connects, with very close reference to its *exemplum*, the two vices of disobedience and anger, demonstrating that, whatever temporary reward (or relief) they might offer, they are both subject to retribution by God. This sustained engagement with the source is such as to produce a tightness of structure and strength of statement which elevates the poem to 'imitation as homily'. In the first instance here [109-112], the joy which Jonah is showing is connected tonally to his disobedience through the description of the embarkation, which represents a substantial elaboration of the Vulgate text. There is a strong sense of progression and connection traceable in the lines:

> Þenne he ryses radly ... [89]
>
> Þus he passes to þat port ... [97]
>
> Þen he tron on þo tres ... [101]
>
> Gederen to þe gyde-ropes ... [105]
>
> Þe blyþe breþe at her bak ... [107]
>
> Watʒ neuer so joyful a jue ... [109]

The brisk movement connects the sense of exhilaration at the embarkation and Jonah's joy at the idea of freedom from God's effective jurisdiction. However, one of the most important elements here is the wind, which is at first central to the sense of happiness at embarkation - but is of course to be instrumental in the destruction of that happiness. This *motif* is thematically significant to the poem: as happiness contains the seeds of

[8] Cf. Putter (2018, p. 199): "As far as he is concerned, he is not a coward, shirking his duty, but a hero embarked on a brave mission to stand up 'derfly' ('boldly') to God's tyranny. Of course, the poet knows better …".

unhappiness, so in the same way unwillingness to suffer and suffering itself are intimately connected. Here, line 107,

> be blyþe breþe at her bak be bosum he fyndes (107),

anticipates the ensuing

> An-on out of þe norþ-est þe noys bigynes,
> When boþe breþes con blowe vpon blo watteres [137-8]

Similarly, in the woodbine episode part of the plant's beauty is expressed in the lines,

> Þe gome glyȝt on the grene graciouse leues,
> Þat euer wayued a wynde so wyþe and so cole [453-4]

However, it is 'Ȝeferus' in line 470 which has a major part creating discomfort for Jonah after the worm's destruction of the vine. The embarkation and the woodbine episodes are also connected by the similarity of the kinds of happiness portrayed. With the embarkation, Jonah's 'joy' is rooted in the illusion of freedom, complemented by the sense of exhilaration at setting sail; with the woodbine, the excessive nature of his happiness shuts God out of his mind – the irony being, of course, that it is God himself who has created the vine for him. The poet creates a metaphor for this during the description of the vine:

> Þe schyre sunne hit vmbe-schon, þaȝ no schafte myȝt
> Þe mountance of a lyttel mote vpon þat man schyne. [455-6]

Here, the traditional association of God with the sun is used to complement the *motif* that happiness and unhappiness have the same root. We see Jonah completely shielded from the sun by the woodbine, which is God's gift; the *motif* is completed four stanzas later as the poem modulates to the retributive theme again:

> And syþen he warneȝ þe west to waken ful softe,
> And sayeȝ vnto ȝepherus þat he syfle warme,
> Þat þer quikken no cloude bifore þe cler sunne,
> And ho schal busch vp ful brode and brenne as a candel. [469 - 472]

The excess of Jonah's happiness while the vine is flourishing is thus presented in the poem as an exhibition of the lack of patience, which God confirms at the end of the poem: "be pacient in payne and in joye" (525). Jonah's excessive 'joye' inevitably leads to unhappiness, as his 'impatient' (but initially joyful) flight to Tarshish inevitably led to his incarceration within the whale.

The strength of expression in the poem resides, to a great extent, in the 'imitative' nature of the process of its composition: the poet 'celebrates' and reacts imaginatively to the Vulgate's perfection of structure and resonance of statement, which are secured tacitly

through the implication of the parallels. However, the poet connects the three parts of the Vulgate story concerning the ship, the whale and the woodbine in ways other than those evident in the Vulgate. There, as we have seen, the idea of 'descent' linked the ship and the whale, and verbal parallelism [Caput II, 1; Caput IV, 6] linked the whale with the woodbine. *Patience* adds both imagery and the idea of the accomplishments, or creations, of God and man. In the ship episode the activity of the mariners precedes the expression of Jonah's joy [109]; in the same way his joy at God's creation of the woodbine follows the description of his own efforts in creating the shelter:

> Þer he busked hym a bour, þe best þat he myȝt,
> Of hay and of euer-ferne and erbeȝ a fewe [437-8]

The use of 'bour' here is important, as it connects the woodbine with the whale:

> Þer in saym and in sorȝe þat sauoured as helle,
> Þer watȝ bylded his bour þat wyl no bale suffer. [275-6]

There is a contrast here between the passive construction 'watȝ bylded' and the active sense of 'he busked hym' in the first passage: these indicate the actions of God and Jonah respectively. Related to this there is a change in the descriptive mode from the *metaphorical* in the whale episode to *literal* in that of the bower. The contrast in size between Jonah and the whale is strongly stressed by the lines:

> And þrwe in at hit þrote with-outen þret more,
> As mote in at a munster dor, so mukel wern his chawleȝ …
>
> Til he blunt in a blok as brod as a halle. [267 – 8; 272]

These lines work in parallel to the description of the bower:

> For hit watȝ brod at the boþem, boȝted on lofte,
> Happed vpon ayþer half, a hous as hit were…
>
> The schyre sunne hit vmbe-schon, þaȝ no schafte myȝt
> Þe mountance of a lyttel mote vpon þat man schyne… [449 – 50; 455 - 6]

We see here an elaboration of the kind of verbal interchange noted in the Vulgate parallels; the actual correspondence is to Vulgate Caput II, 1 (greatly expanded by the *Patience* poet):

> *Et praeparavit Dominus piscem grandem…*

and Caput IV, 6:

> *Et praeparavit Dominus Deus hederam…*

Jonah's ‘bour’ is described in terms of a house, connecting it to the whale described as a ‘halle’; and the ‘bour’ and the whale share the epithet ‘brod’. Greater resonance is created by the use of the word ‘mote’: in line 268 it this used in a simile related to Jonah, conveying the idea of his vastly diminished stature - in which he can still make the whale ‘wamel’, however; and, more importantly, can still be seen by God. In contrast, passage 455-6 quoted above makes a definite distinction between ‘mote’ and ‘man’, ‘mote’ being a part of the ‘sunne’ which, via line 445, is closely connected with God and symbolic of his power, as is the wind. In the image of Jonah being protected from the sun by God's woodbine there is the idea of God creating a barrier between Jonah and divine wrath, an idea which complements one of the last lines in the poem,

> “For malyse is noȝ to mayntyne boute mercy with-inne”. [523]

The poem's parallel patterning thus emphasises three different attitudes exhibited by Jonah: in the ship he hides from the wrath of God as represented and conveyed by the storm caused by his disobedience; in the whale he utters the equivalent to the Vulgate gradual psalm, which in the English has also the quality of a penitential prayer (aligning him with the Ninevite king); and in the bower he waits vainly in anger for the destruction of Nineveh, anger which is only temporarily alleviated by the appearance of the woodbine, and increased at its destruction.

However, in the second of these attitudes, that expressed in the gradual psalm, Jonah is exhibiting an aspect of the complex Medieval notion of *patientia*, a spiritually highly-placed, active virtue. The poet begins his psalm thus:

> “Lorde, to þe haf I cleped in careȝ ful stronge,
> Out of þe hole þou me herde of hellen-wombe;
> I calde, and þou knew myn vn-cler steuen.” (305 - 7)

As we have seen, the Vulgate is presenting an *imitation* of the ‘Gradual Canticles’; but here it exploits the metaphorical nature associated with these Canticles by giving that imitation a literal context. ‘Canticles’ make frequent use of metaphor to express the condition of the soul fearing the consequences of being forsaken by God; for example, in Psalm CXXIII:

> 5. Our soul hath passed through a torrent: perhaps our soul had passed through a water insupportable … [Douay Bible, p. 812]

Here, the imagery is a metaphorical representation of the depth of affliction from which the mercy of God can rescue the soul. But in the Book of Jonah this kind of imagery has an obvious literal quality. When Jonah says (Caput II, 4):

> “Et projecisti me in profundum in corde maris, et flumen circumdedit me: ommes gurgites tui, et fluctus tui super me transierunt”,

the ‘metaphorical’ imagery of the gradual psalm is given a literal meaning: Jonah has, literally, been thrown ‘in profundum’. The *Patience* poet has added a passage in lines 289 – 292 presenting an answer from God to his prayer that is actual and immediate: “With þat he hitte to a hyrne and helde him þer-inne”. This provides a new setting for the prayer which immediately follows: “I calde, and þou knew myn vn-cler steuen.” Thus, line 307 here expresses two distinct thoughts: gratitude for actual benefit received from God, and confidence in complete reconciliation with God and in God's willingness to alleviate Jonah's affliction. This second point, taken in conjunction with lines 305 – 6 here, supports very strongly the idea of Jonah in his prayer exhibiting *patientia*: the ‘careȝ ful strong’ and the realisation of being in ‘hellen wombe’ are expressed with no sense of complaint, but with, on the contrary, a sense of acceptance that they exist for that time in accordance with divine necessity. The maintenance in the poem's language of the demeanour of the Biblical gradual psalm is also of fundamental thematic importance, since it follows the theological thinking that confidence in salvation must be a sound basis for endurance of affliction on earth.[9] This imitation of the gradual psalm expresses profound conviction – revealing a strength in adversity which is central to the ‘patience’ theme, just as Jonah's prayer is central to the poem. Being centrally placed in the Vulgate, commanding a whole Caput to itself as we have seen, it becomes the subject in the English poem of an intense piece of poetic imitation. The stylistic ‘engagement’ with the source has a strength, and communicates a strength of expression, which in itself is a complement to the primary sense in the poem of patience as an active, strong quality, a heroic virtue. Jonah in uttering the prayer is embodying patience: the dwelling upon the details of his suffering, as in the stanza:

> Þe grete flem of þy flod folded me vmbe;
> Alle þe goteȝ of þy guferes and groundeleȝ powleȝ,
> And þy stryuande stremeȝ of stryndeȝ so mony,
> In on daschande dam dryueȝ me ouer [309 - 312],

presents Jonah in the position of actively bearing the brunt of his allotted fate. In this expression of his affliction the human and the personal element is presented very strongly, as it is in the lines following this stanza. This is so also in the Vulgate, but the English poet makes an addition by including the sense of the feudal relationship between a lord and his ‘man’:

> To laste mere of vche a mount, man, am I fallen.
> Þe barreȝ of vche a bonk ful bigly me haldes,
> Þat I may lachche no lont, and þou my lyf weldes.
> Þou schal releue me, renk, whil þy ryt slepeȝ,

[9] For the commonly-accepted reading of Jonah's psalm in the Vulgate as being a later, ‘satirical’ addition (also re: the ideas of ‘metaphorica’ as opposed to ‘literal’ meanings discussed here), see Hatt (2015, p. 138).

Þurȝ myȝt of þy mercy þat mukel is to tryste. [320 - 324]

Here, the force of 'man' and 'renk' suggests the respective roles of feudal vassal and his lord; also, the line "þou schal releue me, renk, while þy ryȝt slepeȝ", is densely packed, which accounts for the 'charismatic' quality which it seems to have in the poem. The ME word *schal* serves two purposes: it conveys the predictive sense (without volition) of 'It is inevitable that you will take me out of this affliction'; and it also conveys a sense of obligation, a standard ME sense of the word, referring to the duty of protection which a feudal lord owes to his vassal. The line also maintains a very close relation to the source text, since ME *releve* picks up the Vulgate Latin *sublevis* in the line "*et sublevabis de corruptione vitam meam, Domine Deus meus*" [Caput II, 7] - not offering an exact translation, but a closely related kind of echoic pun on the word. There is therefore, here, a perfect fusion of the Biblical and contemporary medieval elements, and the most significant aspect here is that the poet, so perfectly, fuses his modernising interest with his interpretation of the poem's major source. This is evident also in the more colloquial exchanges between God and Jonah towards the end of the poem, where the poet seems to be responding to the 'dialectic' nature of the exchanges in the final part of the Vulgate, as we have earlier observed.[10]

Although this shows Jonah exhibiting the quality of patience, he is nevertheless presented through the parallelism in the poem as a man who turns to God only in affliction; even then we can detect an assertiveness[11] above and beyond the sense of confidence communicated by the stylistic elements of the Psalm as noted by Jerome. This assertiveness connects again the lines:

"Þou schal releue me, renk, whil þy ryȝt slepeȝ [323]

and

"Hit is not lyttel," quoþ þe lede, "bot lykker to ryȝt" [493]

where we have a rather final note of dissatisfaction in Jonah, increased by his following line, which is an expression of an attitude exactly opposite to the medieval virtue of patience:

"I wolde I were of þis worlde, wrapped in moldeȝ" [494]

However, the poem's structural system which we have been assessing here allows no one line to stand upon its own; the strong network of internal parallelism compromises any sense we might have of line 494 representing Jonah's final and irrevocable position; the poem encourages us to weigh this attitude with its opposite, expressed in the prayer at the centre. God's final words to Jonah:

[10] Cf. Gustafson (2022, p. 504): "…the depiction of divine speech may also suggest the limits of representing God in human terms…".
[11] Cf. Anderson (2005, p.135): "…the language of Jonah's appeal seems unduly assertive".

> Be noȝt so gryndel, god-man, but go forth þy wayes,
> Be preue and be pacient in payne and in joye … [524-5],

reveal the poet's appreciation of the more colloquial, calming, 'Boethian'[12] intimacy which we saw at the end of the Vulgate Book of Jonah – and these lines, with this reading of the source, facilitate a smooth transition, "fettling" Jonah with the figure of the poet/narrator himself in the last stanza:

> For-þy when pouerte me enpreceȝ and payneȝ in-noȝe,
> Ful softly with suffraunce saȝttel me bihoveȝ … [528 – 9],

where the two centrally-placed, alliterative, juxtaposed words in line 529 create a strong structure, conveying a celebratory sense of completion in the poem. The AN word *suffraunce*, 'patience', is twinned with *saȝttel*, derived from OE *sæhtlian*, 'to be reconciled' - reconciliation implying, of course, a previous conflict which is now smoothed over by the softer-sounding *suffraunce*[13]. This line also demonstrates the rich vocabulary of the *Patience* poet, the main characteristic of which is a fusion of words derived from Anglo-Saxon / Old Norse, and Old French / Anglo-Norman. Here we can perhaps surmise that the poet is revealing a consciousness of these two contrasting linguistic aspects of his poetic discourse, and that this is a deliberate, linguistically-inspired, juxtaposition - the 'marriage' of two very different languages complementing the theme of reconciliation so central to the poem. The poetical mastery of this line transforms the concept of 'patience' into a state of calm, something to be welcomed into oneself, rather than a state to be endured.

Thus the imitation of Biblical poetics in *Patience* is geared towards supporting the poet's interpretation of the Vulgate story, in which he presents a balance between the qualities of 'patience' and its opposite. He achieves this balance without compromising his portrayal of the two contrasting attitudes in Jonah, and much of this achievement is possible through the poet's mastery of the medium of poetic imitation. In celebrating and thus illustrating the perfect structure of his source, the poet can be seen to be making a profound critical appraisal of the Book of Jonah itself, as a discrete work: that it is, in its entirety, a metaphor for the potentially intimate connection between God and man – an idea which gains strength from the colloquial exchanges which he creates between Jonah and God, and also from the surprising level of humour which characterises the poem.

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[12] Cf. Bowers (1971, p. 62): "…the poet regards Jonah throughout from a Boethian point of view".
[13] Cf. Stokes (1984) re: the poet's use of the word 'suffer'.

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AFANASY NIKITIN'S MULTILINGUAL TRAVEL ACCOUNT: TRANSLATING AN ENCOUNTER BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

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ABSTRACT: Afanasy Nikitin's *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* [*Khozhenie za tri morya*], one of the most famous Old Russian travel accounts, was created in the second half of the fifteenth century, at the boundary of the late medieval and early modern periods. By understanding travel writing as a translation phenomenon, this paper will focus on how this merchant from Muscovite Russia translates an encounter between East and West during his seven-year journey through Persia, India, and other foreign lands, adapting linguistically to the exotic environment. Nikitin's multilingual travelogue, written in Old East Slavic and a patois of Arabic, Persian, and Turkic, reveals a complex hybrid identity manifested through the traveller's syncretic Christian-Muslim habits.
KEYWORDS: Travel Writing, Fifteenth Century, Linguistic Hybridity, Translation, Afanasy Nikitin

1. Introduction

This paper focuses on travel writing as a translation phenomenon (Bassnett, 2004, 2019; Cronin, 2000; Di Biase, 2006; Pickford, 2020; Polezzi, [2001] 2016; Sales, 2013; Thompson, 2011; Vidal Claramonte, 2012) that involves intercultural mediation between the centre and the periphery, across linguistic and geographical boundaries. In light of the manipulation of cultural differences, inherent in both translated texts and travel accounts (Bassnett, 2004, p. 75; Vidal Claramonte, 2012), it is particularly interesting to study late medieval and early modern narratives produced in Europe. At that time, Europeans were beginning to realise that the world was much bigger than they had imagined (Campbell, [1988] 1991; Thompson, 2011; Youngs, 2013), and, through contact with Otherness, interpreted unfamiliar civilisations from the perspective of their own religious and moral beliefs, translating the witnessed reality through the lens of their own culture.

Voyage Beyond Three Seas [*Khozhenie za tri morya*][1] is one of the most famous Old Russian literary monuments reflecting this cultural dissonance between the domestic and the exotic. The text was written by Afanasy Nikitin, a merchant from Muscovite Russia, who described his journey through the territories belonging to present-day Iran and India (1468-1474). In his travel account, known as *khozhdenie,* a genre originally related to pilgrimage narratives, Nikitin depicts an encounter between East and West, shuttling back and forth between the Orthodox system of values and the sphere of influence of other religions, such as Islam and Hinduism, and turning his voyage into a kind of antipilgrimage to a profane land (Uspenskiy, 1994). Although *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* is written in Old East Slavic, the reader regularly comes across Persian, Arabic, and Turkic words spelled in Cyrillic.

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[1] In this paper, I used two original versions published in Nikitin, A. (1986a) '*Khozhenie za tri morya* [*Voyage beyond three seas*]' and Nikitin, A. (1986b) 'Troitskiy (Ermolinskiy) izvod [Trinity (Ermolinskiy) version]'.

As he was the first Russian to visit India and provide testimony on this experience, Nikitin occupied a singular place in Soviet and post-Soviet official Russian historiography: he was considered "the pioneer cultural ambassador who established a Russian-Indian friendship" (Tillett, 1966, pp. 161–162), "Russia's own 'Marco Polo,' who reached India thirty years before the Portuguese Vasco da Gama" (Maxwell, 2006, p. 246). I suggest an interdisciplinary approach that brings together history and translation studies to analyse Nikitin's pre-colonial heterolingual travelogue, exploring how he translated the culture of the Other through foreign words and phrases, as well as descriptions of different religions.

2. Travel writing as translation

As Dora Sales (2013, p. 177) states, "*viajar implica traducir, traducir implica viajar*".[2] In line with Sales' approach, many studies from different epistemological fields analyse the similarities between translation and travel writing in order to highlight a conceptual link between these two phenomena. In the following, I will attempt to explain why "the metaphor of translation is often used as an image of travel (and vice versa)" (Polezzi, [2001] 2016, p. 1).

The first point to consider when drawing parallels between translation and travel is "the etymological link between the two activities, exemplified by the Latin roots *translatio* and *traductio* which imply movement, transportation, displacement, both on a physical and a metaphorical level" (Polezzi, [2001] 2016, p. 79). Campbell ([1988] 1991, pp. 1–2) also pays attention to etymology by pointing out that "*metaphor* itself is etymologically (and metaphorically) a 'change of place'; its equivalent in Latin rhetoric, *translatio*, was a word often used quite literally in this sense". In this regard, translation "takes the form of words that suggest (rather like the situation of the traveler)[3] transposition: terms like translate, transfer, explain, expound, explicate, interpret, construe, and represent are strikingly close in etymological sense" (Cinquemani, 2006, p. 65).

Several researchers suggest that, in general, "travellers are shown to be translators" (Cronin, 2000, p. 4), as they translate their personal journeys into written accounts (Campbell, [1988] 1991, p. 2). As Thompson (2011, p. 62) explains:

> The scenes and incidents we encounter in a travelogue necessarily come to us in a filtered form, refracted first through the perceiving consciousness of the traveller, and secondarily through the act of writing, the translation of 'travel experience' into 'travel text'. […] This translation involves at the very least a selective process whereby the writer prioritises some aspects of the travel experience over others.

Campbell ([1988] 1991, p. 6) defines travel writing as a "translation of experience into narrative and description, of the strange into the visible, of observation into the verbal construct of fact". Di Biase (2006, p. 9) believes that the traveller "must translate in order

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[2] Translation: "travelling implies translating, translating implies travelling". All translations in this paper are by the author.

[3] When the word *traveler* appears in a quote with one "l", I maintain this spelling.

to make sense of foreign places and foreign people". Meanwhile, for Polezzi ([2001] 2016, p. 77), "questions of translation can […] be seen as complex practices involved in the construction of images and identities, and in the interaction between cultures"; and these complex translation practices are reflected in travel accounts (Vidal Claramonte, 2012, p. 55).

At the same time, as Bassnett (2004, p. 75) acknowledges, "travel writing and translation are parallel processes of textual manipulation, forms of rewriting that each in different ways contain inherently the idea of a journey, whether actual or linguistic". Just like in the translation process, manipulation, "language, power and representation […] are central both to the production and the reception of travel writing" (Polezzi, [2001] 2016, p. 1). In Bassnett's (2019, p. 556) words, "translation […] is never an innocent activity; similarly travel writing is a genre that exposes both explicit and implicit structures of power and knowledge".

Both phenomena are examples of intercultural communication. Travel narratives "help shape the recipient culture and its various polysystems, bringing in new words to describe alien concepts" (Pickford, 2020, p. 85). I would like to recall Polezzi's ([2001] 2016, p. 102) metaphor, which states that "the traveller is a translator of cultures", or Bassnett's (2019, p. 550) observation that both translator and interpreter are "mediator[s] between cultures, Janus-faced being[s] who inhabit two different worlds and whose task is to bring those worlds into contact". And, like translation, travel writing is sometimes a dangerous tool that can lead to the creation of stereotypes: "*la traducción en ocasiones se ha utilizado para imponer exotismo y formar imágenes canónicas y estereotipadas de otras culturas, y […] también puede ser esencial para el pensamiento fronterizo, viajero*"[4] (Sales, 2013, p. 180).

The border-thinking issue mentioned by Sales and the "liminal geographical and/or linguistic space" (Pickford, 2020, p. 79) are also relevant to both phenomena. Thus, "the translating agent like the traveller straddles the borderline" (Cronin, 2000, p. 2), and, furthermore, "travel narratives move across language boundaries" (Pickford, 2020, p. 85). In other words, "*el viaje, como la traducción, revela la alteridad, y al tiempo nos enseña cosas de nosotros mismos, nos sitúa en un límite, en una frontera...*"[5] (Sales, 2013, p. 178). Bassnett (2004, p. 70) identifies another interesting parallel between travel writing and translation, since both phenomena require the existence of an "original":

> Translation is a literary activity that involves the transfer of a text written in one language into another; hence, there must always be a source that exists somewhere else before translation can take place. Without that source in that other language, a translation would be a piece of original writing. Similarly, without the journey, a travel account would be simply a piece of fiction.

[4] Translation: "translation has sometimes been used to impose exoticism and to create canonical and stereotypical images of other cultures, and [...] it can also be essential for a borderline traveller's thinking".
[5] Translation: "travel, like translation, reveals otherness, and at the same time shows us things about ourselves, it puts us at a limit, at a border..."

According to Pickford (2020, p. 79), "negotiating linguistic alterity is central to both the traveller's and translator's experience". The results of their writings are linked to the concept of faithfulness:

> The translator as traveller, the traveller as translator: both are ambiguous and deeply suspicious figures, who ask to be trusted in their faithfulness to the reality or the words they interpret, in their reading and rendering of places, people, texts which we can only access through them. (Polezzi, [2001] 2016, p. 79).

Finally, it is important not to forget that "travellers find themselves in a foreign country and in a foreign language" (Cronin, 2000, p. 3) and have to communicate with people who do not speak their language. Therefore, "all travel (at least all travel into other countries and cultures) implies, literally, some form of translation" (Polezzi, [2001] 2016, p. 77).

In light of the above, I consider it appropriate to refer to the narrative, written by Afanasy Nikitin as a translation of his travel experience in several countries. In his testimony, the reader sees how the values of an Orthodox Christian trader meet Islam and various religions practiced in India. Likewise, Nikitin's translation of Otherness is evident in his use of foreign words from Arabic, Turkic, or Persian, as well as his manipulation and domestication of the foreign phenomena he witnessed, as he sought to identify parallels and differences between life in India and Muscovite Russia.

3. Travel writing in the late medieval period

Given that people's desire to travel has been a constant throughout much of history, travel writings have also existed for thousands of years (Das and Youngs, 2019; Youngs, 2013): travel can even be found "in our myths of origin, in our earliest literatures" (Campbell, [1988] 1991, p. 2). Perhaps the most important characteristic of travel writing throughout the ages has been its hybrid nature, often including letters, diaries, memoir, scientific modes and fictional forms of narrative (Das and Youngs, 2019, p. 11). Polezzi ([2001] 2016, p. 1) makes a similar point:

> Travel writing is a complex genre, often defined as hybrid or heterogeneous. Just as travel crosses boundaries, cultures and languages, so travel writing produces texts which are marked by alterity, by distance, and by multiple allegiances, crossing fact and fiction, autobiography and description, ordinary life and extraordinary adventure.

Although Campbell ([1988] 1991, p. 5) calls the history of the travel book before the seventeenth century a "*prehistory*, a history of the slow assembling of the features that now identify a work as a 'travel literature'", travel writing was an emerging and fairly widespread genre in the Middle Ages. Despite the belief that medieval people didn't travel much (Romano, 2020, p. xi) due to the limited encouragement of personal mobility in feudal

society (Thompson, 2011, p. 38), the medieval period produced a diverse range of texts about travel experiences.

Pilgrimage dominated medieval travel texts and was by far the most common paradigm and the most characteristic form of exotic travel in this period (Campbell, [1988] 1991; Kinoshita, 2019; Thompston, 2011; Youngs, 2013). *Peregrinatio*, or pilgrimage narratives, were first-person accounts that introduced a sense of individual experience. One possible reason for emphasising the pilgrim's voice was perhaps to persuade the reader of the authenticity of the miraculous tales frequently found in them. This is how Thompson (2011, pp. 38–39) characterises *peregrinatio* as a genre:[6]

> Typically, there is little effort to record the events of the actual journey, or the traveller's subjective thoughts and feelings. Nor do these accounts usually evince much interest in the natural world, or in the other cultures encountered during the journey. [...] It was the education of the soul that was the text's first concern, a homiletic agenda that often makes the medieval pilgrimage narrative little more than a compilation of passages from the Bible.

Crusade chronicles may be considered a subgenre of pilgrimage narratives, as the two had much in common. According to Davies (1992, p.14), before setting off, both crusaders and ordinary pilgrims would take steps to discharge their debts, and, at the prescribed pilgrim mass, were invested with insignia (a scrip and a staff) and had a cross marked on their garments. Indeed, several vernacular accounts of the crusades actually refer to them as "pilgrimages": Davies (1992, pp.13–14) mentions Fulcher of Chartres's prologue to the *Historia Hierosolymitana* (1105-06), which describes the First Crusade as a 'pilgrimage in arms' made by the Franks to Jerusalem 'in honour of the Saviour'; Robert de Clari's *Conquête de Constantinople*, which refers to the Fourth Crusade as '*li pelerin'*, as well as Villehardouin (ca. 1215) and Joinville (ca. 1290), who speaks of the '*pelerinaige de la croiz*'.

Another example of medieval travel writing can be found in missionary narratives, with one such example being William of Rubruck's 1255 letter, addressed to the French King Louis IX, detailing his mission to the Mongol empire (Kinoshita, 2019, pp. 52-54; Campbell, 2019, p. 45). The distinction between peregrination and missionary narrative lay in their divergent interpretations of the medieval concept of *curiositas* wherein curiosity about the physical world was seen as a sinful temptation for pilgrims yet regarded as an intellectual virtue for missionaries (Howard, 1980, p. 108).[7]

Among the medieval travel texts describing journeys organised for other than spiritual purposes, Kinoshita (2019) mentions Marco Polo's *The Travels*, a travelogue that

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[6] For further insights into the genre, please refer to: Taylor, L. J. et al., (eds.) (2009) *Encyclopedia of Medieval Pilgrimage*. Leiden: Brill.

[7] As Zacher (1976, p. 4) puts it: "Generally defined, the temptation of *curiositas* referred to any morally excessive and suspect interest in observing the world, seeking novel experiences, or acquiring knowledge for its own sake. [...] *Curiositas* was a vice related to pride and sloth, and by the late Middle Ages it gradually came to be seen as a threat to pilgrimage […]. As a form of religious worship, pilgrimage allowed men to journey through this present world visiting sacral landscapes as long as they kept their gaze permanently fixed on the invisible world beyond. It excluded from sight and undue speculation that same arena of interest *curiositas* tempted men to enter."

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has been extensively studied. Accounts of fictional journeys also existed in the Middle Ages: for example, the *Book of John Mandeville*, written in the late 1350s or early 1360s, is a first-person account by a fictional knight from England of his journey to the Holy Land.[8]

As we might expect, Latin was the dominant language of pilgrims' and missionaries' written accounts until the thirteenth century, when narratives in the vernacular began to appear (Youngs, 2013, p. 24). At the same time, translanguaging is also present in some medieval travel accounts of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Marco Polo's *Travels*, for example, were written in Franco-Italian, while Benjamin of Tudela's travelogues in Hebrew were suffused with Arabic (Kinoshita, 2019).

It should be noted that there is a considerable debate in academic circles about the medieval/modern divide, as it is difficult to establish a chronological boundary between what is considered 'late medieval' and 'early modern'.[9] For this reason, it seems appropriate to speak of the second half of the fifteenth century—the period of the creation of Nikitin's text analysed in this paper—as a hybrid period, that can be labeled both late medieval and early modern. Indeed, as we will see, *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* also occupies the borderland between medieval and modern travel accounts, as it possesses characteristics of both the spiritual *peregrinatio* and the early modern travel report written by a trader.

4. Afanasy Nikitin and his *Voyage Beyond Three Seas*: a hybrid text

According to Lurie (1986, p. 87), Afanasy Nikitin's *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* is one of the most important works of Old Russian literature. Postnikov (2003, p. 859) states that it "stands alone in Old Russian literature as the writing of a layman bent on a commercial enterprise". And Maxwell (2006, p. 246) adds that "although very little scholarship in English exists concerning Nikitin, most Russians […] are well-acquainted with their compatriot". Indeed, his name remains known in modern Russia: *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* is mandatory reading for analysis in Russian secondary schools.

Afanasy Nikitin was a merchant from Muscovite Russia, who undertook a journey through the territories of present-day Belarus, Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Oman, Somalia, Turkey, Iran, and India, which he described in his *Khozhdenie za tri morya.*[10] Thus, he became "the

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[8] For more on this work, see Campbell (2019, pp. 45–46), Howard (1980, pp. 53–76), Kinoshita (2019, pp. 59–61), Zacher (1976, pp. 130–157).

[9] No general agreement has been reached on this, as "the boundaries of each [period] depend heavily on the nationality, date and preoccupations of the historians who draw them" (Hutton, 2015, p. 5). Thus, some researchers choose symbolic dates to mark the boundaries, such as the fall of Constantinople (1453), the appearance of movable type printing technology (the 1440s), or the beginning of Spanish colonisation of the Americas (1492), etc. Ellis (2015, p. 12) draws our attention to the next phenomena as artificial boundaries between the Middle Ages and the modern period: "In the realm of intellectual ideas, for instance, we think of the Renaissance and humanism. We might also classify as early modern overseas expansion and colonization which was sparked by demographic growth in Europe. Economically, we would probably also include, as a marker of modernity, inflation – the 16th-century European price rise – also fuelled by demographic growth. And in religious terms, the Reformation marked a clear watershed".

[10] In English literature I found various translations of the title: *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* (Maxwell, 2006; Shlapentokh, 2012), *The Journey Beyond Three Seas* (Postnikov, 2003), *Voyage Across Three seas* (Tillett, 1966). In this paper, I will refer to this travel narrative as *Voyage Beyond Three seas* or simply *Voyage*.

first Russian who had seen India and provided a description of the exotic land" (Shlapentokh, 2012, p. 172). As Maxwell (2006, p. 244) puts it:

> This account occupies a unique place in Russian historical and literary studies because it was quite unusual for a Russian merchant to travel the distance Nikitin traveled and even more extraordinary for a merchant to document his journey. Furthermore, Nikitin recorded his personal thoughts and feelings, offering scholars a glimpse into heart and mind of a common medieval Russian.

In the nineteenth century, Sreznevsky proposed to date Nikitin's trip to 1466–1472. In the mid-1980s, however, Semyonov demonstrated that the traveller started his journey in 1468, was in India from 1471 to 1474,[11] and returned to Russia in the spring of 1475. Today, researchers agree with Semyonov's proposal (Maxwell, 2006; Postnikov, 2003).

So, what is known about Nikitin's long trip? He departed from Tver, not even thinking of reaching India: his goal was to trade furs in the "land of Shirvan", in the eastern Caucasus (part of present-day Azerbaijan). Nonetheless, near Astrakhan, he was attacked by Tatars and lost his goods. Nikitin then chose to venture through Persia and onward to India, aiming to recover his losses. He stayed in India for over three years and, finally, decided to return to Russia. However, he did not make it back to his hometown, as he died near Smolensk in 1475.

Another important point needs to be explained: the specificity of Nikitin's *Voyage* from the perspective of the genre *khozhdenie* or *khozhenie* (*voyage*). According to Maleto (2005), *khozhdeniya* were travel narratives in which Russian pilgrims described their journeys in search of spiritual meaning (such as *peregrinatio*). In this context, Nikitin, a merchant and traveller to India, stands out dramatically. One might even suggest that the attribution of the *khozhdenie* genre to his manuscript is wrong. But the author himself begins his text with the following words: "Herewith I wrote about my sinful voyage beyond the three seas"[12] (Nikitin, 1986a, p. 5), he describes his experience as *khozhdeniye*. After studying Nikitin's journal, Uspenskiy (1994) stresses that the travelogue resembles Old Russian pilgrimage writings in its compositional and genre characteristics. Since Nikitin himself refers to his work as "my sinful voyage", Uspenskiy (1994) suggests that the journey should be understood as an anti-pilgrimage, a pilgrimage to a profane and unclean place.

I believe that the word *hybrid* is appropriate to describe Nikitin's narrative. First of all, Nikitin's text is hybrid in genre due to the amalgamation of autobiographical details, cultural insights, and economic information (as is often found in travel writing). At the same time, the travelogue is created in the hybrid era, between the late medieval and early modern periods, which is evident in the writing. The reason for his journey was commercial; Nikitin travelled to lands unimaginable for medieval society. However, Nikitin's text is *khozhdenie*

[11] According to Maxwell (2006, p. 245), "most likely, Nikitin began writing his notes in India following a two-year stay in Persia".
[12] Original: "Се написах свое грѣшное хожение за три моря".

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and his way of thinking portrays him as a primarily religious person with values similar to a medieval pilgrim.

The text is also linguistically hybrid: the lexicon ranges from colloquial Russian to high Church Slavic, while includes utterances in a patois of Arabic, Turkish and Persian, spelled in Cyrillic. According to Zenkovsky ([1963] 1974, p. 334), some parts of *Voyage* are written "in the 'basic Islamic' business dialect of the Near East in which Arabic, Turkic, and Persian words are interwoven". Maxwell (2006, p. 258) adds the following: "Not only was this dialect the language of traders, but also of the faithful Muslims. As a merchant and as one of the faithful, Nikitin shed his Orthodox identity and increasingly wrote his account in the language of the Qur'an".

In his prayers, Nikitin, a devout Orthodox Christian, invokes God's name in Arabic, Persian, Turkic, and Old East Slavic. Like his travel writing, his own identity seems to be hybrid. While trading in Persia and India, he wore Muslim clothing, participated in Muslim prayers, fasted on Muslim holy days, and even assumed a Muslim name. Some researchers go as far as to suggest that he converted to Islam (Lenhoff and Martin, 1989), or was in the process of doing so, having adopted new syncretic Christian-Muslim habits (Maxwell, 2006). Lurie (1986), however, argues that Nikitin remained an Orthodox Christian despite his long absence from his homeland because he always wanted to return to Muscovite Russia and actively avoided travelling to Mecca: Indeed, before making the decision to return, Nikitin laments the impossibility of traveling through Mecca:

> I have trusted in you, save me, Lord! I don't know the way—where to go from Indostan [...] *[here Nikitin outlines various options, all of which are dangerous*] There is no other way. To go to Mecca means to accept the faith of the Muslims. Therefore, for the sake of faith, Christians do not go to Mecca: there they are converted to the Muslim faith.[13] (Nikitin, 1986a, p. 14).

5. Translating an encounter between East and West

Nikitin's writing offers a unique testimony to how Asia might have been seen "before Orientalism" (Phillips, 2014). Nevertheless, his testimony reveals signs of "prejudices and childlike naivete" (Tillett, 1966, p. 163) in its portrayal of Indian culture. For example, his first contact with India is described as follows:

> And here is the land of India, and people go unclothed; [women] wander bareheaded with exposed breasts, their hair braided into a single plait. All [the women] are pregnant, giving birth every year and raising many children. The men and women, all of them, are black. Everywhere I went, a crowd would follow, marveling at the sight of a white man. […] Women go about bareheaded with their breasts uncovered, while young boys and girls remain naked until the age of seven and do not hide their shame.[14] (Nikitin, 1986a, p. 7).

[13] Original: "Господи боже мой! На тя уповах, спаси мя, господи! Пути не знаю, иже камо пойду из Гундустана […] [here Nikitin outlines various options, all of which are dangerous] А иного пути нѣт никуды. А на Мякку итти, ино стати в вѣру бесерменьскую, занеже кристьяне не ходят на Мякку вѣру".

[14] Original: "И тут есть Индийская страна, и люди ходят всѣ наги, а голова не покрыта, а груди голые, а власы в одну косу заплетены, а всѣ ходят брюхаты, а дѣти родятся ж на всякый год, а детей у них много.

As we can see, Nikitin focuses primarily on the appearance of the Indians, emphasising the differences between himself as a white man and them as black. Notably, when describing Indian women, the merchant first highlights their uncovered hair and then their exposed breasts. Throughout the travelogue, he reiterates negative characteristics, amalgamating skin color with generic stereotypes: "And all of them are black, and all of them are bad, and all the women are whores".[15]

However, this power asymmetry is not evident in his translations of Muslim culture, which is treated with more respect. For example, we see him not only fasting with the Muslims (Nikitin, 1986b, p. 24) but also greatly admiring their armies (Nikitin, 1986b, pp. 28–29). Maxwell (2006, p. 265) explains that Nikitin's favourable predisposition toward Muslim cultural and religious habits is the result of Rus' longstanding relationship and trade with Islamic people.

Although Postnikov (2003, p. 859) considers *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* a "sober and realistic narration"—and Tillett (1966, p. 163) adds that "it contains a great deal of detailed information about prices, commodities, trade routes, and travel conditions in the fifteenth century"—, the data appearing in the text should be treated with caution, since, in this period, "even the apparently faithful eyewitness accounts are not always reliable as they often include hearsay material and snippets of older myths of the Orient" (Phillips, 2014, p. 9). Therefore, it is convenient to regard Nikitin's narrative not as "a very objective description of [Hindustan]" (Postnikov, 2003, p. 860), but rather as an interpretation, a translation of the world he encountered through the lens of his personal experience, which speaks more about the identity of its author than about a situation experienced by the merchant from Tver in the countries he visited.

So, how does Nikitin translate his experience? The description of religious practices occupies an important place in his testimony. For example, he reports that in India there is a cult devoted to the so-called буты (*buty*), which "are Adam and his whole kin"[16] (Nikitin, 1986b, p. 23). Although it is difficult to trace the origin of the word *buty* (it may be a Persian term or etymologically derived from *Buddha*), from the context it can be understood that Nikitin is using this term to refer to deities and idols. As for the presence of Adam in Indian culture, this worship was obviously difficult to imagine in India: the reader is probably dealing with a transliteration of some god's name or a translation of a story that reminded Nikitin of the Biblical legend. The traveller further states that "there are in all 84 faiths in India, and all believe in *buty*; people of different faiths do not drink, eat or marry those of another"[17] (Nikitin, 1986b, p. 23). The merchant provides a detailed description of food and sculptures related to the *buty*, and points out that the Indian people, like Orthodox

А мужики и жонкы всѣ нагы, а всѣ черны. Яз куды хожу, ино за мною людей много, да дивуются бѣлому человѣку. […] А жонки ходят головане покрыта, а сосцы голы; а паропки да девочки ходят наги до семи лѣт, сором не покрыт".

[15] Original: "А все черныя, а все злодѣи, а жонки все бляди".

[16] Original: "есть Адамъ и род его весь".

[17] Original: "вѣръ въ Индѣи всѣх 80 и 4 вѣры, а все вѣрують в бута; а вѣра с вѣрою ни пиеть, ни ясть, ни женится".

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Christians, face the East when they pray. Despite these similarities, however, he regards the religion of the Hindus as perverse, seeking solace instead in the “familiar monotheism of Islam” (Maxwell, 2006, p. 260).

As Phillips (2014, p. 11) explains, “the perception of the Christian faith as true and all others as erroneous led travelers frequently to make pejorative comments on the ‘idolatrous’ or otherwise faulty religious traditions of Asian cultures”. It should also be added that Nikitin does not label Muslims as infidels or robbers; this distinction is reserved only for Hindus. In general, he attributes sexual promiscuity to Indians and exaggerates certain facets of their daily life, such as the affection of Indian women for white European men. In turn, he pays particular respect to Muslims.

According to Maxwell (2006), the Russian merchant embraced Islam not only for commercial reasons but also to satisfy his religious needs. Throughout the text, he prays several times in creolised Arabic. He refuses to accept the polytheistic beliefs prevalent in the Hindu community and becomes a quasi-convert to Islam: “Nikitin assimilated into Islamic culture easily because their monotheistic beliefs paralleled his Christian faith. His genuine spiritual conviction that the ‘one God’ of the Muslims was the same as the Orthodox Christians” (Maxwell, 2006, p. 263).

In addition to the inclusion of Arabic prayers, which gave rise to such speculation about his religious orientation, words in languages like Persian, Arabic and even Turkic frequently appear in this account. After analysing the source, I have come to the conclusion that they have been adopted for three main reasons.

First of all, I believe that Nikitin utilizes Russian words or phrases and promptly supplies their translations—thus creating linguistic doublets—to infuse an exotic essence into his writing.[18] Nikitin simply transliterates the foreign words and phrases into Old East Slavic; he does not use any other alphabet instead of the Cyrillic one. However, it is important to note that the transliterated words were not familiar to his compatriots in Russia. Instead, they could understand the text thanks to the Russian words he provides alongside the exotic ones. It is a linguistic device through which the author translates an ‘alien’ feeling of his stay in distant lands.

Secondly, he may also be using foreign languages to encode information that he regards as private, as when he provides a description of how to hire an Indian prostitute in a patois that mixes various Oriental languages and dialects (Nikitin, 1986a, p. 10). He describes in extensive detail the physical characteristics of the prostitutes and offers a price list. It is likely that Nikitin considers this information intimate and encodes it through his

[18] For example, the use of the word море (*more*), a Russian word meaning ‘sea’, is immediately followed by its literal translation into Persian, дорѣя (*doria*) (Nikitin, 1986a, p. 5). *Дорѣя* (*doria*) is a transcription of دریا, which means ‘sea’ in Persian. On the other hand, in the sentence “*Kachma* – ‘do not run!’ [Качма — не бѣгайте]” (Nikitin, 1986a, p. 6), качма (*kachma*) means ‘do not run’ in Tatar, so the second part of the phrase again is its literal translation. Finally, in the sentence “The wine is made from big nuts—Indian *kozi* [Вино же у нихъ чинять в великы орѣсех — *кози* гундустаньскаа]” (Nikitin, 1986b, p. 20), the author preserves the words *великы орѣсех* (*big nuts* in Russian), as well as *Indian kozi* (*gouz-i* is the Persian term for nuts), while referring to coconuts. Again, *kozi* (*кози*) is a literal translation of орѣсех.

multilingual statement. At the same time, a passage in which the merchant accuses the Russian rulers of fighting against each other (Nikitin, 1986b, p. 27) is also written in a patois. Perhaps by writing this political statement in a non-Old East Slavic language, Nikitin wants to avoid getting into trouble if he returns to Russia.

Finally, in many cases, the merchant uses foreign words that convey an object or a phenomenon belonging to the exotic culture, for which there may be no ready translation in his own language. These include terms for clothing (фота – *fota*, turban), food (кичирисъ – *kitchari*, a traditional Indian dish), ships (*тавы* – *tavy*, Indian ships), etc, and also political offices, such as султан (*sultan*), which are also described with non-Old East Slavic words, although the trader occasionally draws parallels between Russian and Indian rulers by domesticating the terms. It should also be noted that Nikitin also uses vulgar Russian words for Indian women, such as бляди (*whores*), and when referring to the maritime trade, he uses naval slang (Lenhoff and Martin, 1989, pp. 339–340), again showing the traveller's linguistic adaptation to the situation in which he finds himself.

6. Conclusions

Afanasy Nikitin's *Voyage Beyond Three Seas* stands as a peculiar example of late medieval travel writing. During his ventures in distant exotic lands, this fifteenth-century Russian trader is immersed in a rich tapestry of languages, cultures, and religions. His insights and observations can be understood as translations or interpretations shaped by the perspective of a medieval individual with religious inclinations. Simultaneously, he expresses genuine fascination with unknown territories while fervently critiquing societies different from his own. The term 'translation' accurately encapsulates Nikitin´s experience: not only is his text a translation of his voyage, but throughout his journey, he exists within the realm of translation, consistently navigating the intricacies of communication across various linguistic and cultural borders.

While Nikitin's account is filled with information about his economic endeavors and the cultures he encountered—particularly the exotic culture of India—, his primary focus lies in the exploration of various religious aspects, ranging from Orthodox Christianity to the various religious practices found in India. In this sense, its genre, *khozhenie*, originally associated with pilgrimage narratives, is particularly significant. If the text had been composed centuries later, it might have included more diverse details about the countries Nikitin visited, their inhabitants, and the natural environment, delving further into the forbidden *curiositas* that was discouraged in medieval *peregrinatio*. Nevertheless, the account does offer insights into life in India and, notably, provides economic information, connecting it to the early modern travelogue genre. This period saw an increased awareness of trade, conquest, and colonization opportunities, resulting in a stronger emphasis on empirical enquiry and eye-witness observation, thereby shifting the focus of travel writing towards detailed reporting. In sum, representative of medieval culture, Nikitin's text also demonstrates certain characteristics that would foreshadow travel writings from the early modern era.

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Translation Matters, 5(2), 2023, pp. 53-66, DOI: https://doi.org/10.21747/21844585/tm5_2a4

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AS TRÊS PRIMEIRAS LINHAS DE *BEOWULF*: DESAFIOS DE TRADUÇÃO

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RESUMO: O único manuscrito que contém o poema anglo-saxónico Beowulf – Cotton Vitellius A.x – terá sido produzido no ano mil. Separam-nos, pois, dele mil e vinte e três anos. Nele se discorre sobre questões universais, como a inevitabilidade da morte, por exemplo, ou que caminhos tomar numa era marcada pela violência e os comportamentos monstruosos dos homens.
Embora se tenha tornado uma obra acarinhada por leitores em todo o mundo, nunca havia sido traduzida no nosso país. A sua tradução para português a partir do Inglês Antigo ofereceu-nos muitos problemas de difícil resolução a variados níveis, desde a métrica, a sintaxe e o léxico ao próprio contexto em que foi produzido. Neste artigo, pretendemos, considerar alguns desses problemas, motivados pelas primeiras três linhas do texto.
Palavras-Chave: Beowulf; Tradução; Anglo-Saxões

ABSTRACT: Beowulf survived in a single manuscript produced by the year 1000 (Cotton Vitellius A.x), thus existing a thousand-and twenty-three-years gap between it and our time. In the poem, we can find a deep reflection about universal themes, such as the inevitability of death or the several paths opened by an age characterised by violence and the monstrous behaviour of men.
Even though it is a work cherished by readers all over the world, it had never been translated in Portugal. Its translation from Old English offered many problems of difficult resolution, at diverse levels, such as metre, syntax, and lexicon, as well as many others regarding the context in which the text was produced. In this article, we intend to explore some of those problems, caused by its first three lines.
KEYWORDS: Beowulf; Translation; Anglo-Saxon

Beowulf é um longo poema de 3182 versos, um dos mais antigos em língua vernácula na Europa e o mais importante da poesia anglo-saxónica. Está incluído num volume constituído por dois manuscritos com data e origem diferentes, o *Southwick Codex*, copiado na segunda metade do século XII, e o *Nowell Codex*, copiado nos finais do século X, ou primeiras décadas do século XI, que foram reunidos quando passaram a fazer parte da biblioteca de Sir Robert Bruce Cotton (1571 - 1631).[1] Esta foi doada ao povo inglês em 1700, conservando-se actualmente na British Library, em Londres. Como tal volume se encontrava colocado na estante que tinha um busto do imperador romano Aulus Vitellius, na primeira prateleira, a prateleira A, no décimo quinto lugar, é conhecido, desde o século XVII, por *MS. Cotton Vitellius A. XV*, ou *Manuscrito Beowulf* (ff 132r–201v).

Beowulf vem a seguir a três textos em prosa no *Nowell Codex*, precedendo o poema *Judith*. Não é o original, mas uma cópia, a única existente, talvez datada do ano 1000 e predominantemente escrita no dialecto do Wessex, o saxão ocidental (*West Saxon*), um dos

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[1] O *Southwick Codex* contém adaptações em inglês antigo dos *Solilóquios* de St. Agostinho de Hipona, do *Evangelho de Nicodemos*, dos *Diálogos de Salomão e Saturno* e da *Homilia sobre St Quintin* e o *Nowell Codex* inclui *A Vida de São Cristovão*, *As Maravilhas do Oriente*, *A Carta de Alexandre a Aristó*teles e dois poemas, *Beowulf* e *Judith*.

dialectos do inglês antigo. Dorothy Whitelock, no seu livro consagrado *The Audience of Beowulf*, de 1951, sustenta que terão havido versões orais a circular muito antes do poema ter sido registado por escrito.

Não se sabe a quem atribuir a sua autoria, apenas que foi escrito em Inglaterra; porém, toda a acção do poema decorre na Escandinávia, sendo as suas personagens figuras historicamente associadas aos finais do século V, princípios do século VI, anos que precederam largamente a adopção do cristianismo pelos Anglo-Saxões, facto importante na elaboração do poema. A data da sua composição escrita é incerta; talvez finais do século VII, ou meados, ou finais do século VIII, ou ainda o século IX, ou até mesmo entre os séculos IX e X. Por sua vez, o local da composição está naturalmente relacionado com a data da produção do texto escrito; terá sido Nortúmbria, ou talvez Mércia, ou até Wessex, conforme defendermos que essa data está relacionada com a época do Venerável Bede e o período da renascença nortumbriana, no início do século VIII, ou com o tempo do rei Offa de Mércia, entre 757 e 796, ou ainda com a hegemonia do Wessex, a partir da governação de Alfredo, o Grande, nos séculos IX e X.[2]

O público a quem se direciona *Beowulf*, esse público a quem o poeta se dirige, logo no início, na 2ª palavra, ao usar o pronome *WE*, pertenceria a uma comunidade inglesa cristã que ainda mantinha muitas das suas tradições germânicas (Whitelock, 1951). Os autores Mitchell and Robinson (2006, p. 13) propõem que essa sociedade seria composta pela nobreza guerreira inglesa do século VIII, que não seria exclusivamente laica, podendo abranger membros da própria Igreja.

O poema não tem um título: de facto, passou a chamar-se *Beowulf* a partir da edição de John Mitchell Kemble (1807-1857), em 1833; aliás, Kemble foi também o autor da primeira tradução completa do poema para inglês moderno, feita em prosa.[3]

Já foi traduzido para as mais variadas línguas, entre as quais o francês, o castelhano, o italiano, o alemão, o sueco, o sérvio, o húngaro, o finlandês e o japonês, conforme informação recolhida em, por exemplo, *Beowulf's Afterlives Bibliographic Database* ou *Old English Newsletter Bibliography Database*.[4]

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[2] A obra de Frederick Klaeber, *Beowulf and the Fight at Finnsburg* (1936), contém, na sua quarta edição, de 2008, uma introdução e um comentário onde os editores, Robert Dennis Fulk, Robert E. Bjork e John D. Niles, procurando manter o leitor actualizado no que diz respeito a áreas controversas na investigação centrada no poema, como a data e o lugar de composição, incorporam uma vasta informação relativamente ao estudo desenvolvido sobre *Beowulf* realizado a partir de 1950 e fornecem um guia bibliográfico pormenorizado dos temas tratados pela crítica moderna e contemporânea.
Ainda a respeito da controvérsia sobre a autoria e datação do poema, ver, por exemplo, Neidorf, 2014.

[3] A primeira tradução completa de *Beowulf* para inglês é feita em prosa por John Mitchell Kemble, em 1837, com o título *A Translation of the Anglo-Saxon Poem of Beowulf* (London: William Pickering). Por curiosidade, a primeira tradução completa do poema foi para latim, da autoria de Grímur Jónsson Thorkelin: *De Danorum Rebus Gestis, secul. III et IV: Poëma Danicum Dialecto Anglosaxonica*, de 1815. Sobre as traduções de *Beowulf* e respectiva herança crítica, ver H. Sauer (2011) e Shippey e Haarder (1998).

[4] *Beowulf's Afterlives Bibliographic Database* (2018-2022) tem sido expandida e desenvolvida após a sua data de publicação em 2018. Segundo Britt Mize, o seu autor, existem 688 traduções e versões do poema, em pelo menos 38 línguas, desde que surgiu a sua transcrição por Thorkelin em 1787. Também Chauncey Brewster Tinker (2008) apresenta uma lista comentada das traduções feitas desde as primeiras tentativas de Sharon Turner em 1805 até à tradução do próprio Tinker de 1902. Desde 1967 que a *Old English Newsletter*

A nossa tradução foi feita do inglês antigo, a partir da edição revista de Bruce Mitchell e Fred C. Robinson, de 2006 (Azuaga e Varandas, 2022). Naturalmente, consultámos outras edições, como a de Klaeber de 1936 e a de Wrenn, na revisão efectuada por Bolton (1973), que são apontadas ainda hoje como canónicas; porém, escolhemos essa edição citada, pois é uma das mais actuais, contribuindo para interpretações renovadas de alguns momentos do poema, embora reconheçamos que qualquer edição crítica do texto, permanente resultado de um grande esforço interpretativo, pode não ser sempre consensual, como sugerem as obras de Osborn (1997, pp. 341–372) e Magennis (2011).

A intenção que nos levou a traduzir *Beowulf* teve lugar há doze anos, altura em que nos começámos a debater com as primeiras linhas do poema. São elas que nos convidam a mergulhar na narrativa, estabelecendo os seus padrões rítmicos, a versificação e o estilo, bem como alguns dos seus aspectos vocabulares, sintácticos e temáticos.[5] É certo que a tradução de qualquer texto implica um conhecimento de todos estes elementos aos quais acresce o contexto em que foi escrito. No entanto, no que diz respeito a obras medievais, a tarefa complica-se, pois, na sua generalidade, os manuscritos em que se encontram registadas são posteriores à data da sua composição. No caso de *Beowulf*, esta circunstância é particularmente relevante, uma vez que entre a época em que o poema terá circulado em Inglaterra e a sua fixação por escrito, distarão cerca de 400 anos e que, como verificámos, não nos chegou por intermédio do manuscrito original, mas por meio de uma cópia. Além disso, as obras medievais encontram-se redigidas em línguas ainda numa fase antiga da sua evolução, algumas de difícil compreensão para os leitores modernos. *Beowulf* constitui, novamente, um caso singular, dado que o inglês antigo é hoje uma língua praticamente incompreensível até para a vasta maioria dos ingleses, sendo conhecida apenas por aqueles que, pacientemente, se dedicaram e dedicam ao seu estudo.

Todavia, até mesmo para estes, o inglês antigo resiste ao seu total entendimento. Por exemplo, há palavras variadas que surgem apenas uma vez em toda a produção literária anglo-saxónica, deixando dúvidas quanto ao seu certo significado, e há termos que aludem a práticas e costumes dos quais não temos registo, entre os quais alguns que se referem a supostos rituais religiosos. Dado que os Anglo-Saxões não nos deixaram nada que se assemelhe a uma mitologia, existem vocábulos e expressões que parecem apontar para crenças a propósito das quais apenas podemos especular.

Acrescente-se ainda que certos fólios do manuscrito se encontram danificados e que nem sempre é possível descortinar as palavras que lá se encontram escritas. Existem variadas sugestões, propostas por diversos críticos, nem todas concordantes, o que complica a interpretação do poema, como se torna evidente no artigo de Robert E. Bjork, intitulado "The Reception History of *Beowulf*" (2020).

Bibliography Database é uma fonte de informação sobre o estudo da cultura e história da Inglaterra no período anglo-saxónico, de 550 a 1066.

[5] Sobre estes assuntos, bem como outros relacionados com a história e a cultura dos Anglo-Saxões, veja-se a introdução de Azuaga e Varandas (2022, pp. 17-113).

Nos desafios enfrentados durante a tradução de *Beowulf* para português, além da compreensão do texto, considerámos, no quadro tradicional da problemática associada à obra, a sua origem temporal e geográfica, e o seu contexto de produção, o ambiente cultural no qual foi composto e apresentado e, em todos estes aspectos, deparámo-nos com inúmeras questões, pois o poema é um autêntico enigma do ponto de vista histórico, literário e cultural, sendo a crítica muito vasta, um mar agitadíssimo.[6]

Apresentados muito sucintamente certos problemas que encontrámos, passamos a alguns apontamentos da nossa tradução, centrando-nos nos desafios colocados nas primeiras linhas do texto.

HWÆT![7]
WE GAR-DEna in geardagum
þeodcyninga þrym gefrunon,
hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon.
(l. 1-3)

A primeira palavra em inglês antigo, *hwæt*, que evoluiu para *'what'* em inglês actual, apresenta desde já várias dificuldades para a tradução. Jakob Grimm, na sua *Deutsche Grammatik*, de 1837, considera tratar-se de uma interjeição, e é como tal que muitas vezes tem vindo a ser interpretada por diversos editores e tradutores da obra, que lhe atribuem a função de chamar a atenção do interlocutor do texto e a fazem seguir de um ponto de exclamação, como é habitual no caso deste tipo de palavras. Adoptando esta perspectiva, surgem diferentes traduções, como, por exemplo, Kemble (1837) e Tolkien (2014), que apresentam '*Lo*!', ou Alexander (1973), que sugere '*Attend*!'. Heaney (1999), por sua vez, emprega '*So*!', explicando, no prefácio à sua tradução, que esta escolha deriva do uso desta palavra no dialecto irlandês do norte, *Northern Irish*, para terminar tudo o que foi antes proferido e marcar o início de um novo tópico. Todavia, há autores como Chambers (1959), Klaeber (1950) e Sedgefield (1935), que consideram que se deve traduzir por '*indeed'*, advérbio com várias funções, podendo ser usado para dar ênfase, para expressar concordância ou admissão, para confirmar ou destacar uma frase anterior e, ao assumir esta interpretação, retiram o ponto de exclamação e substituem-no por uma vírgula. Entretanto, repare-se que quer este sinal de pontuação quer o outro não se encontram a seguir a *hwæt* no manuscrito: aí, escrita com letras maiúsculas, a palavra é seguida por *We* e *GARDE*, sem sinais de pontuação.

[6] Muitos são os problemas sobre as quais os críticos ainda não chegaram a acordo; alguns dizem respeito não só a *Beowulf*, mas a toda a poesia anglo-saxónica. Por exemplo, tais poemas foram compostos oralmente para assim serem apresentados, ou foram escritos para serem lidos como aparecem nos manuscritos que chegaram até hoje? Hoje, considera-se que, muito provavelmente, os poemas anglo-saxónicos foram primeiro cantados ou recitados por um *scop*, ou bardo, e só foram passados à escrita num período muito posterior (cf. O'Keeffe, 1990; Niles, 1993).

[7] O formato que apresentamos, HWÆT!, onde a palavra surge destacada e seguida de um ponto de exclamação, no qual também WE e GAR-DE se encontram com maiúsculas e as restantes três linhas com cesura, é o utilizado na edição que seguimos, a de Bruce Mitchell e Fred C. Robinson (eds.) (2006).

Num sentido diferente dos autores anteriores, George Walkden, professor de linguística na Universidade de Manchester, num artigo de 2013, sugere que o vocábulo não deve ser entendido como uma interjeição, mas sim como uma partícula interrogativa não acentuada cuja tradução mais próxima seria '*how'*.

Em 2020, Maria Dahvana Headley, que pretende veicular uma leitura feminista do poema, traduz *hwæt* por '*Bro*!', numa nova versão em inglês moderno em que recorre maioritariamente ao calão, de modo a denunciar a brutalidade do mundo masculino.

Entendendo *hwæt* como uma chamada de atenção e um pedido de silêncio muito enfáticos, proferidos pelo poeta que, num momento de festa no salão, se prepara para começar a recitar o poema e assim pede aos seus interlocutores que escutem o que se vai dizer, pensámos em hipóteses possíveis para, em português, alguém numa festa, por exemplo, pedir silêncio para se ouvir o que tenciona proferir seguidamente. Surgiram-nos palavras e expressões como:

Escutai! Escutem!
Ouvi! Oiçam!
Prestai atenção! Prestem atenção!
Ora bem!

À excepção da última, todas recorriam a formas verbais; porém, *hwæt* não é uma forma verbal, daí termos escolhido traduzir *hwæt* por 'atenção', encontrando nesta nossa proposta a vantagem de ser uma forma nominal e de se empregar apenas uma palavra que também sublinha a natureza oral da narrativa.

Consideremos o segundo termo, *We*. Uma vez que o poema parece dar destaque a este pronome da primeira pessoa do plural ao usar maiúsculas, optámos por traduzir *'We'* 'Nós'.[8] Na verdade, em português não é sempre necessário expressar o sujeito pronominal., todavia, a sua inclusão como que permite uma maior aproximação ao texto original que, deste modo, subtilmente, lembra aos ouvintes anglo-saxões (e, hoje, ao leitor) a distância histórica entre esse 'nós' e os seus antepassados, os *Gardene*, os 'Dinamarqueses da Lança', cujas façanhas vai começar a narrar.

A terceira palavra do poema, *Gardena*, é a forma genitiva do nome *Gardene*. Trata-se de um nome composto por *gar-* 'lança' e *-dene* 'dinamarqueses', que sublinha o carácter e as qualidades bélicas dos Dinamarqueses e que nos introduz num universo guerreiro, vindo estabelecer uma relação sinonímica, tanto com *þeodcyninga*, 'reis do povo', como com *æþelingas*, 'príncipes'. É interessante notar que estes termos surgem sequencialmente nas três linhas – *Gardena* na 1ª, *þeodcyninga* na 2ª e *æþelingas* na 3ª – num processo gradativo de reiteração semântica por hiperonímia, em que *Gardena* poderia ser hiperónimo de *þeodcyninga* e, este último, hiperónimo de *æþelingas*: de entre os dinamarqueses reconhecidos pelas suas notáveis proezas militares, destacam-se os reis do povo, que foram, na sua maioria, príncipes de sangue real. Por sua vez, todos estes três vocábulos

[8] Foi sempre utilizado, neste trabalho, o dicionário *Bosworth-Toller's Anglo-Saxon Dictionary Online* (https://bosworthtoller.com), bem como o glossário da edição de Bruce Mitchell e Fred C. Robinson (2006).

encontram-se referidos a duas palavras que partilham o mesmo campo semântico: *þrym*, ‘façanhas valorosas’, e *ellen*, ‘fama gloriosa’, na 2ª e na 3ª linha, respectivamente. O facto de o poema acentuar, desde o início, a importância destes reis e príncipes entre os Dinamarqueses da Lança, bem como os seus feitos marciais, exigiu a compreensão da hierarquia social da aristocracia anglo-saxónica, cuja organização é dotada de profunda complexidade. Obrigou ainda à necessidade de entender o modo como estes guerreiros se relacionavam entre si e o papel que desempenhavam no seu meio social. Efectivamente, ao longo da narrativa, os vários intervenientes na hierarquia guerreira vão ser constantemente mencionados, esperando-se do público que a escutava o reconhecimento das diferenças de estatuto que mantinham entre si.

É, pois, evidente que, no topo desta pirâmide, está o rei, *cyning*, que governa o seu povo, *þeod*, e que também pode ser designado de príncipe, *æþeling*. Desta forma, traduzimos a maioria das ocorrências de *æþeling* por ‘príncipe’, como acontece na 3ª linha, embora nem sempre tenha sido esse o caso.

> he his leodum wearð,
> eallum **æþellingum** to aldorceare;
> (ll. 905-6)

Na realidade, o termo também engloba os nobres mais conceituados entre os que fazem a guerra, pelo que em *æþellingum*, forma de dativo plural de *æþeling*, refere-se aos nobres seguidores de Heremod, rei lendário dinamarquês, que é apresentado como um exemplo de crueldade, orgulho e tirania, de modo a advertir Beowulf para os perigos da sede de poder que conduz a uma má governação. Traduzimos, assim, essas linhas por:

> tornou-se, para as suas gentes
> e para todos os seus **nobres**, pesada preocupação;

Por fim, como afirmámos, a palavra pode ainda significar ‘rei’, o que claramente acontece em:

> Scealt nu dædum rof,
> **æðeling** anhydig
> (ll. 2666-7)

Aqui, *æþeling* refere-se a Beowulf, que já se havia tornado rei dos Geats. Daí que a nossa tradução tenha sido:

> Agora, **rei** resoluto,
> famoso por teus feitos gloriosos, deves

Na antiga cultura germânica, o rei era um chefe militar, conduzindo os seus homens na guerra, onde provava ser merecedor da sua soberania e de governar sobre outros

guerreiros igualmente experimentados.[9] Assim, ainda que houvesse, por parte do soberano, a vontade de manter o trono no seio da família, como, de resto, *Beowulf* comprova, esse título poderia caber a qualquer um que revelasse valentia e coragem superiores a todos os outros, no campo de batalha. O poema detém-se nesses tempos de outrora – *in geardagum*, como se anuncia na 1ª linha –, dos antepassados dos Anglo-Saxões, mas é produzido após a sua fixação em Inglaterra e sua cristianização, pelo que a hierarquia militar que nele se descreve, embora de influência germânica, possui também características inglesas.[10]

Na verdade, a palavra *cyning* significa literalmente 'filho de cynn', sendo uma palavra formada pelo nome *cynn-*, que quer dizer 'nação', 'povo', 'família' ou 'linhagem' e pelo sufixo *-ing*, usado para formar patronímicos, com o sentido de 'filho de', pelo que o estatuto de rei é identificado com o facto de ser membro ou descendente de uma determinada família. A sua função, a de protector do povo, é, contudo, transmitida não pela palavra *cyning* mas por *hlaford*, isto é, 'o senhor do pão', 'aquele que dá o pão', tendo *hlaf* o sentido de 'pão' e *ford* o de 'senhor', termo que dará origem à palavra *lord*. Também *dryhten*, 'senhor', pode aludir às obrigações do rei para com o seu povo.

O soberano necessitava dos seus homens para com ele fazer a guerra. Em contrapartida, estes também dele dependiam, pois, em troca, o monarca oferecia-lhes protecção, tecto, sustento e bens materiais, como ouro e jóias, de entre as quais se destacavam os anéis. Por conseguinte, para além da proeza bélica, o soberano deveria pautar-se por actos de enorme generosidade que lhe garantiam a presença constante de combatentes entre o seu *fyrd*, ou força militar, que o defendiam e por ele davam a vida, se necessário fosse. Existia, assim, entre ambos, um código de honra severamente respeitado e um forte elo indissociável de lealdade: o *comitatus* – que subjaz à formação do *fyrd* do rei.

O estatuto de um guerreiro dependia do seu serviço para com o soberano. Perto do monarca estariam os seus conselheiros e combatentes de mais alto estatuto: os *eorlas*, que podiam, inclusivamente, substituir o rei na sua ausência ou governar alguns distritos em seu nome. Este é um dos títulos da nobreza militar mais repetidos no poema, aí surgindo quarenta e seis vezes, e traduzimo-lo por 'nobres guerreiros'. Logo abaixo, na escala social, encontravam-se os *gesiðas*, os *duguð* (por oposição aos *geogoð*) e os *þegnas*.

Os *gesiðas*, embora também de origem aristocrática, possuíam um estatuto inferior ao dos *eorlas*. Eram considerados os nobres mais fiéis ao rei, os seus companheiros mais próximos. Trata-se de um termo comum para nobres que refere os guerreiros veteranos

[9] Em *A Germânia*, possivelmente produzida no ano 98 d.C., Tácito afirma: "Reges ex nobilitate, duces ex uirtute sumunt. Nec regibus infinita aut libera potestas, et duces exemplo potius quam imperio, si prompti, si conspicui, si ante aciem agant, admiratione praesunt." (cap. 7.1) "Escolhem [os Germanos] os reis pela nobreza, os chefes pelo valor. O poder não é ilimitado nem arbitrário para os reis, e os chefes impõem-se pela admiração, mais por exemplo do que por autoridade, se são ousados e insignes, se actuam à frente da linha de batalha." (citado em Gonçalves, 2011, p. 23).

[10] Sobre a organização militar dos Anglo-Saxões e equipamento bélico, ver Hollister (1962), Chadwick Hawkes (1989) e Esposito (2022).

que tinham já dado grandes provas do seu valor em várias batalhas e cujo prestígio lhes tinha garantido a doação de largas porções de terras por parte do soberano. Relativamente a estes aspectos, ou seja, tempo e qualidade de participação em combate, os *gesiðas* pertenciam ao grupo dos *duguð*, enquanto os combatentes ainda jovens e, consequentemente, pouco experimentados, constituíam o *geogoð*. Traduzimos, assim, *gesiðas* por 'companheiros', *duguð* por 'veteranos', e *geogoð* por 'jovens guerreiros'.

O termo *þegn*, que evoluiu para *thane*, significa literalmente 'aquele que serve outrém', embora possa referir um largo espectro de estatutos sociais.[11] Em geral, tratava-se de alguém de nível social elevado, porém inferior ao dos *eorlas*, que servia o rei directamente em áreas administrativas e militares. A partir do século VIII, a palavra começa a ser alvo de preferência no léxico corrente, vindo substituir, em larga medida, o vocábulo *gesið*. No entanto, o último permanece na poesia e, em *Beowulf*, ocorre por oito vezes, ainda que *þegn* se repita por muitas mais – vinte no total.[12]

De facto, já no século IX, quando se verifica o aumento do poder real em Inglaterra, os *þegnas* crescem em número e importância, tornando-se mais poderosos, começando a ser cada vez mais abundantes as fontes que incluem referências às funções por eles desempenhadas junto dos soberanos ou *æðelingas* e até mesmo de outros *þegnas*. Neste sentido, também se verifica nos códices legais a sua mobilidade social ascendente, expressa, por exemplo, nas leis de *wergild*, ou nos registos das doações de terra feitas pelos reis em seu favor.[13] Pelos finais do período anglo-saxónico, um *þegn* real podia possuir uma substancial quantidade de terras e representar o monarca nas reuniões do *scir*, hoje *shire*.

Deste modo, o exército do rei era maioritariamente constituído por *þegnas* - o próprio Beowulf é um deles - que acompanhavam o monarca dentro do salão e no campo de batalha, formando, pois, o núcleo duro da aristocracia guerreira, embora houvesse, dentro dele, vários graus de prestígio, como afirmámos acima.

Depois da conquista normanda, o título de *þegn* cai em desuso e surge um outro: o de barão. De resto, a maioria dos títulos militares e nobiliárquicos que conhecemos hoje em dia, exceptuando o de rei, *cyning*, e o de rainha, *cwen*, como barão, conde ou duque, só

[11] O sentido de *þegn* como "servidor" mantém-se em inglês antigo no verbo *þegnian*, "servir". Em termos legais, o termo surge pela primeira vez no código eclesiástico de Wihtræd, em 695, atribuído ao rei de Kent com o mesmo nome. Este texto faz parte do *Textus Roffensis*, de cerca de 1123, que se encontra na colecção da Catedral de Rochester (cf. Oliver, 2002).

[12] Para o desaparecimento da palavra *gesið* pode ter contribuído a extinção de uma secção da nobreza, cujo prestígio advinha das gerações anteriores, a emergência da Casa de Wessex a partir do reinado do Rei Alfredo no século IX e ainda os conflitos com os Vikings e sua posterior fixação na Danelaw, depois da paz de Wedmore assinada entre Alfredo e Guthrum, em 878.

[13] Outro aspecto que pode ter colaborado para a emergência dos *þegnas* terá sido a Bookland, que se institui na Inglaterra anglo-saxónica a partir do século VII, acompanhando a cristianização do território, vindo substituir a Folkland. Esta última obedecia a leis antigas segundo as quais a terra era atribuída a uma pessoa dentro de um grupo familiar sem a intervenção de documentos. A família deveria manter a terra no seu seio e só poderia doá-la com consentimento do rei. A Bookland chega a Inglaterra por via do direito romano e implica a atribuição de terras por intermédio de cartas reais de modo perpétuo, pelo que as famílias podiam transferi-las para as mãos de outrém sem a intervenção do rei, o que muito agradou à recém-fundada Igreja, que assim não tinha necessidade de procurar rendimento na acção guerreira. Este facto também contribui largamente para a evolução da composição do *fyrd*.

são introduzidos em Inglaterra com os Normandos, a partir do século XI, bem como a cavalaria e a nova organização feudal (Baugh & Cable, 2002).

No que diz respeito a este último aspecto, é também importante notar que, no período anglo-saxónico, não existia cavalaria, enquanto instituição com regras próprias: os guerreiros montavam a cavalo, mas, em geral, não lutavam em cima de cavalos no campo de batalha. Em *Beowulf* surge o termo *cniht*, que dá origem à actual palavra *knight*, significando 'rapaz', e não 'cavaleiro'. Consequentemente, são anacrónicas todas as traduções de textos anglo-saxónicos que utilizem o termo 'cavaleiro'. Designa-se um guerreiro montado a cavalo por meio de *ridend*, que, embora seja uma só palavra em inglês antigo, terá de ser traduzida por uma expressão como a indicada – 'guerreiro montado'.

Tendo em conta estes aspectos, regressemos à palavra *þegn*, que possui, pois, vários significados, pelo que pode ser traduzida por diferentes vocábulos, considerando o contexto em que aparece. Como verificámos, o seu sentido mais imediato é o de 'servidor', sinónimo de 'aquele que serve'. Chegou a ocorrer-nos a palavra súbdito, mas esta só é introduzida em Portugal no século XV e, em Inglaterra, no início do século XIV, a partir do francês *sogit*, *suget* e *subget* (palavras atestadas em França desde o século XII, derivadas do latim *subjectus*).[14] Assim sendo, pareceu-nos mais fiel à época utilizar 'servidor', como, por exemplo, na linha 235, onde se menciona a sentinela que, a serviço de Hrothgar, há muitos anos se dedica à vigia da costa marítima e que acolhe Beowulf e os seus homens na chegada destes à Dinamarca

> Gewat him þa to waroðe   wicge ridan
> **þegn** Hroðgares,   þrymmum cwehte
> mægenwudu mundum
> (ll. 234-6)
>
> Então, dirigiu-se para a praia, montado num cavalo,
> o **servidor** de Hrothgar, nas mãos segurando com firmeza
> a lança poderosa.

No entanto, nem sempre é este o sentido da palavra *þegn.* É também possível traduzi-la por 'guerreiro' ou 'herói'; 'nobre'; 'homem' e 'seguidor'. Vejamos os seguintes exemplos: Beowulf é referido pela primeira vez no poema por intermédio da expressão *Higelaces þegn*, na linha 194. Ora, Beowulf estava certamente ao serviço de Hygelac, mas, se traduzíssemos a palavra por 'servidor', estaríamos a sugerir que teria um estatuto inferior ao que realmente possuía, pois era neto do rei Hrethel. Daí que tenhamos optado por 'o guerreiro de Hygelac'. Quanto ao sentido de *þegn* como 'nobre', encontramo-lo, por exemplo, na linha 2032, onde a palavra alude a todos os guerreiros de Ingeld, chefe dos Heathobards, sejam eles de que estatuto forem:

> Mæg þæs þonne ofþyncan   ðeodne Heaðobeardna
> ond **þegna** gehwam   þara leoda,

[14] cf. *Online Etymology Dictionary* in https://www.etymonline.com/

þonne he mid fæmnan on flett gæð,
dryhtbearn Dena, duguða biwenede.
(ll. 2031-4)

Pode então constituir uma ofensa para o príncipe dos Heathobards,
bem como para qualquer um dos **nobres** desse povo,
que um dos filhos de alta linhagem dos Dinamarqueses,
da escolta da noiva, entre com ela no salão, sendo regiamente acolhidos.

Finalmente, decidimos traduzir por 'seguidores' a ocorrência de *þegn* na linha 2869, na qual Wiglaf admoesta os homens de Beowulf por o terem abandonado na luta fatal contra o dragão. Diz ele a propósito do protagonista da narrativa:

he on ealubence oft gesealde
healsittendum helm ond byrnan,
þeoden his **þegnum**, swylce he þrydlicost
(ll. 2867-9)

quando, senhor para os seus **seguidores**, dava muitas vezes
aos que se sentavam no salão, nos bancos da cerveja,
os mais esplêndidos elmos e cotas de malha,

Pareceu-nos que, neste passo, a palavra 'seguidores' acentuaria ironicamente o facto de os homens de Beowulf, tendo embora o dever de seguir o seu rei em batalha, desvirtuarem esse ideal, uma vez que fogem com medo, assim desrespeitando os laços que os uniam ao seu soberano, que, contrariamente a eles, sempre respeitou as regras do *comitatus*.

Ainda dentro da esfera dos homens livres, mas com um estatuto inferior ao dos *þegnas*, existiam os *ceorlas* que trabalhavam no campo, cultivando a terra, por conta própria, quando eram os seus donos, ou por conta de um senhor, que lhes garantia protecção em momentos de guerra; com o andar dos tempos, muitos passaram a dedicar-se a diversas actividades artesanais, como carpintaria, tecelagem e trabalho com metais preciosos. Trata-se de uma palavra com vários significados, um título também muito debatido e controverso entre os críticos, que podia apenas referir um homem, mas ter também um sentido associado ao estatuto social de camponês ou ainda um sentido com cariz legal, denotando alguém membro da classe dos homens livres. Este estatuto legal permitia-lhe, por exemplo, usar armas e assistir às assembleias locais. O preço que a sua família tinha o direito de receber em vez de exercer vingança se fosse morto, ou seja, o seu *wergild*, era de 200 *shillings*, 1/6 do que era exigido no mesmo caso por um *þegn*.

Tendo o direito de empunhar armas, os *ceorlas* podiam integrar o *fyrd*, sem terem obviamente o mesmo estatuto dos *þegnas*, como se verifica até pelos diferentes valores dos respectivos *wergilds*. No entanto, há uma forte controvérsia quanto ao tipo de serviço dispensado por estes homens no *fyrd* e, consequentemente, sobre a formação deste exército: se incluiriam apenas nobres ou se incorporavam, de igual modo, estes homens livres. Sabe-se que os *ceorlas*, em Inglaterra, podendo receber terras, tinham um estatuto

superior ao dos seus antepassados germânicos. Talvez por essa razão, críticos como Hollister (1962) e Abels (1988) defendam que eram eles a combater no *fyrd* do rei e dos nobres mais prestigiados do reino, sendo esse, portanto, por eles predominantemente composto. De acordo com esta perspectiva, os *ceorlas*, enquanto homens livres, eram obrigados a lutar com os seus líderes, sem, contudo, terem grande treino em armas. Assim sendo, sugerem ainda que os combatentes profissionais só surgem a partir do século XV. No entanto, a crítica mais recente propõe o contrário, adiantando que o exército anglo-saxónico era essencialmente constituído por uma força militar aristocrática (cf. Lavelle, 2011, p. 92).[15] A este respeito, Paul Hill (2012, pp. 52-53) afirma que o *ceorl* está no centro da polémica em redor da constituição do *fyrd* e que, embora ao longo do século XIX e grande parte do XX, se tenha defendido que o *fyrd* seria largamente composto por estes homens, a verdade é que a ideia utópica de uma nação armada está hoje ultrapassada:

> Central to the historic arguments over how Anglo-Saxon armies were formed was the role of the "ceorl". […] Ideas varied for centuries as to whether an Anglo-Saxon army was essentially one of noble warriors […] or whether it was a general levy of able-bodied freemen, or even a mixture of both. […] The view often held by Victorian historians that the Anglo-Saxon army was somehow a 'nation at arms' is not generally accepted today but remnants of the idea of it still can be found in the modern literature.

O *fyrd* do rei seria então composto principalmente por nobres guerreiros, de grande proeza bélica e militar, como, de resto, *Beowulf* parece testemunhar. Apesar disso, os *ceorlas* que estavam ao serviço do soberano ou de um dos seus nobres de alta linhagem podiam integrar o *fyrd* se este fosse por eles convocado, de modo a ganhar prestígio por via militar, como afirma Lavelle (2011, p. 99): "*[…] a young man in the pre-Viking period might have been able to use the opportunities of service in a warband to gain aristocratic credibility and royal favour.*" De facto, não existindo uma hierarquia guerreira completamente estática na cultura anglo-saxónica, qualquer um que demonstrasse o seu valor em batalha poderia atingir um estatuto mais elevado.

Na generalidade, a palavra *ceorl* foi por nós traduzida por 'homem', dado que os *ceorlas* constituíam a maior parte da população nas comunidades anglo-saxónicas. Em quatro das seis ocorrências de *ceorl*, isto é, nas linhas 202, 416, 908 e 1591, o termo aparece sempre antecedido da palavra *snotor*, que significa 'sábio', 'prudente' ou 'sensato'. Assim, na maioria dos casos, traduzimos esta expressão nessas linhas por 'homens prudentes ou sensatos' ou ainda por 'homens sábios'. Nas duas restantes situações, nas linhas 2444 e 2972, *ceorl* é antecedido respectivamente por *gomelum* e *ealdum*, dois sinónimos para 'velho' ou 'ancião'. Nestas instâncias, decidimos traduzir *ceorl* por 'homem' e, para manter

[15] Um dos mais conceituados críticos que escreveu sobre o *fyrd* e influenciou toda a posterior historiografia militar foi Hollister. Em *Anglo-Saxon Military Institutions*, obra de 1962, propõe os termos "select fyrd" assim se referindo aos guerreiros mais experimentados que acompanhavam o rei e que possuíam cinco ares de terra, e "great fyrd", que entendeu como a camada de combatentes menos experimentados, convocados a partir da população de *ceorlas* em alturas de emergência.

a distinção entre as palavras sinónimas, optámos por 'velho homem' para *gomelum ceorle* (l. 2444) e 'homem ancião' para *ealdum ceorle* (l. 2972).

Realmente, o conceito de *fyrd* é alvo de bastante polémica, até porque a formação do exército foi sofrendo alterações ao longo do período anglo-saxónico. Inicialmente, a palavra referia-se a uma viagem ou expedição liderada por um rei ou por um chefe em busca de saque ou de novas terras para conquistar, mas, a partir do século VII, o termo passa a adquirir uma conotação puramente marcial, aludindo à participação numa expedição militar. No entanto, também esta definição não reúne a concordância de todos os críticos. Paul Hill (2012, p. 52) por exemplo, salienta o facto de a palavra *here* designar, de igual modo, um exército, e defende que, enquanto o *fyrd* denota um exército de tipo defensivo, o termo *here* seria utilizado para referir um de carácter ofensivo. Os dois vocábulos são utilizados em *Beowulf*, onde ambos significam 'guerra' ou 'exército'.[16] No que diz respeito a *fyrd*, encontramo-lo, não enquanto vocábulo isolado, mas em várias palavras compostas, como, por exemplo, *fyrdgestealla*, *fyrdhom*, *fyrdleoð*, *fyrdsearo* e *fyrdwyrðe*. Traduzimos estes vocábulos respectivamente por: 'companheiros de armas' (*gestealla* significa 'convidado' ou 'companheiro'), 'veste de guerra' (*hom*, 'veste'), canção de guerra (*leoð*, 'canção'), 'equipamento de guerra' (*searo*, 'armamento' ou 'equipamento') e 'distinto na guerra' (*wyrðe*, 'digno', 'merecedor', 'distinto'). O termo *here* possui bastantes mais ocorrências, aparecendo três vezes enquanto palavra simples e catorze vezes em compostos, como, por exemplo, *herebroga* ('temor de uma guerra'), *heregrima* ('máscara de guerra', isto é, elmo), *heresped* ('bem-sucedido na guerra'), *herewæsm* ('capacidades bélicas') e *herewisa* ('líder do exército'), e ainda aludindo a equipamento militar, como *herebyrne*, *herepad* e *heresyrce* (todos significando 'cota de malha'), *heresceaft* ('hastes de batalha', isto é, lanças) e *herestræl* ('flecha').

Todos estes termos colocam ao tradutor problemas variados: 1) muitos deles não possuem correspondência na nossa língua; 2) o seu significado e função na cultura anglo-saxónica não é consensual; 3) alguns sofreram alterações ao longo do próprio período anglo-saxónico; 4) quase todos eles referem nobres e guerreiros; 5) e, além destes termos específicos, os Anglo-Saxões possuíam ainda um vasto número de palavras com o significado de 'guerreiro', que não conseguimos hoje distinguir entre si, como: *beorn*, *cempa*, *drythguma*, *freca*, *frumgar*, *oretta*, *rinc*, *scealc*, *sceaþa*, *wiga* ou *wigend*.

Dada a produtividade da composição no inglês antigo, bem como a necessidade de vocábulos que cumprissem o propósito da aliteração, designam ainda 'guerreiro' vários compostos, muitos deles formados por intermédio da junção das palavras anteriores a termos que possuem a conotação de 'guerra', 'batalha', 'luta' ou 'combate', como *here*, a que já aludimos, bem como *beado*, *guð*, *heaðo*, *hild* e *wig*. Desta união vocabular são exemplos: *beadorinc*, *guðbeorn*, *guðfreca*, *guðrinc*, *guðwiga*, *heaðorinc*, *hererinc*, *hildemecg*, *hilderinc*, *hildfreca*, *oretmecg*, *wigfreca*.

[16] Ao mesmo tempo, o autor sublinha que, no âmbito dos estudos militares dedicados à cultura anglo-saxónica, o conceito de *fyrd* é, porventura, o mais enigmático e controverso.

É certamente impossível encontrar na nossa língua tantos sinónimos para o termo 'guerreiro' como aqueles que surgem no poema: por vezes, traduzimo-los por 'guerreiros', outras por 'combatentes' ou 'lutadores', não recorrendo a 'soldado', dado que *soldier* só é introduzida no léxico inglês a partir do século XIII por via do francês antigo *soudier* que, por sua vez, encontra a sua origem no latim *soldarius*.[17]

Regressemos às primeiras linhas de *Beowulf* nas quais mais desafios são colocados ao tradutor. Dissemos anteriormente que este universo da aristocracia guerreira nelas se começa a delinear, encontrando-se semanticamente relacionado com os termos *ellen* e *þrym*. De facto, aqui se declara que os reis e príncipes desempenharam façanhas valorosas que lhes granjearam fama gloriosa. Todavia, os grandes feitos destes líderes de povos ocorreram em tempos remotos – *in geardagum* – tendo chegado até ao momento da narração por intermédio de histórias de que o poeta ouvia falar. Esta é a informação transmitida pela forma do pretérito perfeito do verbo *gefrignan*, *gefrunon*, que se encontra na linha 2. Considerando a sua morfologia, verificamos que o infinitivo é formado pelo prefixo *ge-* e por *frignan*, forma verbal que significa 'perguntar'. O prefixo *ge-* transmite uma ideia de completude, tornando este verbo perfectivo. Deste modo, o verbo *frignan*, ao ser prefixado para *gefrignan*, passa a veicular o sentido de 'perguntar e obter resposta', o que, em português, poderia eventualmente ser traduzido pelo verbo 'saber', ou seja, neste caso, 'soubemos'. No entanto, querendo acentuar o carácter oral da narrativa, decidimo-nos por 'ouvimos falar'. Por outro lado, *gefrignan* é um verbo transitivo, desempenhando *þrym* 'fama gloriosa' e a oração seguinte *hu ða æþelingas ellen fremedon*, 'como os príncipes façanhas valorosas realizaram', na terceira linha, a função de complemento directo. Acentua-se assim a ideia de que é pelas proezas marciais que os grandes guerreiros atingem a glória imorredoura. Para ela contribui a forma pretérita do verbo *fremman* – *fremedon* – que tem o sentido de 'praticar activamente uma acção', e daí que o tenhamos traduzido por "realizar".

Embora produzido em período cristão, o poema não repudia os tempos pagãos de outrora, nos quais os reis e os príncipes venciam a morte, não porque acreditavam em Cristo, mas porque, por actos heróicos, inscreviam o seu nome nas narrativas que circulavam de boca em boca, de geração em geração. As três primeiras linhas do texto são exímias em evidenciar, desde logo, como o poema se equilibra num balançar constante entre um passado longínquo – os tempos remotos do paganismo – e o tempo da narração – os do cristianismo, que se fundem muitas vezes de forma ambígua, contribuindo largamente para muitas das dificuldades de interpretação do texto e, por consequência, também da sua tradução. Por exemplo, como traduzir, em certas instâncias, a palavra *metod*, 'criador', ou ainda *god*, 'deus', sendo que o poema não as grafa com maiúscula inicial? Trata-se do Deus dos cristãos ou simplesmente de um deus de uma mitologia à qual não temos acesso?

Foquemos agora um outro traço importante do poema. Consideremos aspectos relacionados com a versificação, pois a poesia em inglês antigo apresenta princípios muito

[17] cf. *Online Etymology Dictionary* in https://www.etymonline.com/

diferentes dos que ocorrem na moderna poesia inglesa e até mesmo na portuguesa, língua onde não existem vogais longas.

De facto, a poesia inglesa é acentual e silábica, desde o século XIV, portanto, no que respeita o acento, podemos dizer que existem semelhanças, mas, enquanto aquela apresenta muitas vezes rima, em inglês antigo o que deve ocorrer é aliteração. O metro é acentual, dependendo do número de sílabas acentuadas, mas sem considerar o número das sílabas não acentuadas (cf., por exemplo, Pascual, 2014). No português, o metro é silábico, obedecendo ao número de sílabas tónicas num verso, pelo que não considera para efeitos de métrica a quantidade vocálica.

Note-se que os versos são escritos no fólio de forma contínua, como se de prosa se tratasse, ocorrendo, apenas esporadicamente, um ponto inserido entre eles, para indicar, por exemplo, uma pausa, a cesura no manuscrito. Os indicadores da estrutura métrica e poética são, particularmente, a aliteração e o ritmo, embora aspectos estilísticos, vocabulares e sintácticos também sejam bastante identificadores.

Uma das singularidades da poesia anglo-saxónica é, por conseguinte, a sua estrutura métrica. Nesta poesia, há um sistema de versificação comum a praticamente todos os poemas, baseado na aliteração, na acentuação, na quantidade vocálica e em padrões específicos de sílabas acentuadas e não acentuadas. Consideremos duas das suas características principais: a aliteração e o ritmo. Realmente, para além de um sistema aliterativo, muito marcante, há também que considerar um esquema rítmico específico; aliás, o padrão rítmico básico do verso é, por vezes, ainda mais marcante do que a própria aliteração, sendo o verso, em inglês antigo, muito uniforme, muito controlado, na sua métrica, como salienta Terasawa (2011).

Vejamos a aliteração. Sistema métrico herdado do germânico consiste na repetição de certos sons, em geral no início da palavra, de modo a haver uma ligação entre as duas metades do verso, ou melhor, entre as duas metades da linha poética.

Temos vindo a falar de versos, mas devemos referir-nos a linhas. Uma linha é constituída por duas meias linhas, ou dois versos, o verso a e o verso b, e está dividida por uma pausa ou cesura; cada meia linha, ou verso, contém, em geral, duas sílabas acentuadas, chamadas *lifts*, e duas ou mais sílabas não acentuadas, chamadas *drops*. As sílabas acentuadas contêm uma vogal longa ou terminam em duas consoantes e, relativamente à sua distribuição, podem seguir ou anteceder as sílabas não acentuadas, mas as sílabas não acentuadas só podem ocorrer em certas posições no verso.[18]

Os poemas apresentam, portanto, aliteração; neste sistema, as duas meias linhas têm de ser ligadas, de modo que uma das duas sílabas acentuadas na primeira meia linha, ou verso a, deve começar com o som (ou com a letra, no texto escrito), com que começa a primeira sílaba acentuada da segunda meia linha, ou verso b. Por sua vez, a primeira sílaba tónica da segunda meia-linha, ou verso b, alitera com uma ou ambas as sílabas tónicas da primeira meia-linha, ou verso a, enquanto a segunda sílaba acentuada no verso b não alitera

[18] A respeito da métrica em *Beowulf*, ver Burns e Pascual (eds.) (2022).

com as sílabas acentuadas do verso a. Como todas as sílabas que aliteram são também acentuadas, ou tónicas, o verso de *Beowulf* é chamado aliterativo-acentual.

A linha aliterativa é, então, o resultado da ligação de duas meias linhas, ou dois versos, de acordo com um de cinco padrões rítmicos básicos de aliteração que afectam apenas as sílabas acentuadas.

Vejamos de novo as primeiras três linhas, chamando a atenção para o facto de *hwæt* ser um elemento extra-métrico, ou seja, não estabelecer uma relação em termos de métrica com as palavras seguintes, e, por isso, não ser habitualmente considerado para efeitos de contagem das linhas

1ª meia linha (verso a)	cesura	2ª meia linha (verso b)
WE GAR-DEna		in **g**eardagum
þeodcyninga		**þ**rym gefrunon,
hu ða **æ**þelingas		**e**llen fremedon.

Observando as duas meias linhas, *We Gardena*, verso a, e *in geardagum*, verso b, bem como a pausa ou cesura, na primeira linha, a ligação entre as duas meias linhas faz- se por aliteração consonântica, entre **G**ar-, uma sílaba acentuada na 1ª meia linha, e **g**ear-, a primeira sílaba acentuada da segunda meia linha; acidentalmente, ocorre aliteração entre -**d**ena e -**d**agum. Na segunda linha verifica-se a repetição do mesmo som consonântico na primeira sílaba acentuada do verso a, **þ**eod, e a primeira sílaba acentuada do verso b, **þ**rym. Já na terceira linha, a ligação entre as duas meias linhas faz-se por aliteração vocálica, verificada entre as primeiras sílabas acentuadas, **æ**-, de *æþelingas* e **e**- de *ellen*. Repare-se que todas as vogais aliteram entre si, enquanto as consoantes só aliteram, quando existe repetição do mesmo som.

Na linha 11 a seguir, a ligação entre as duas meias linhas faz-se por aliteração consonântica, mas note-se que, na segunda meia linha, não é uma das primeiras palavras, *þæt* ou *wæs*, que alitera com **g**om, a 1ª sílaba acentuada da primeira meia linha, mas **g**od, visto ser esta a 1ª sílaba acentuada da segunda meia linha:

gomban gyldan: (l. 11)	þæt wæs **g**od cyning

O que acabámos de apresentar sobre versificação é muito pouco, mas parece que ilustra já a dificuldade de ser fiel a tais características numa tradução. É evidente que obedecer a estes esquemas e padrões em português seria impraticável. Decidimos, por isso, usar sempre que possível a aliteração e, à semelhança da maioria das traduções em verso de *Beowulf* que têm vindo a ser propostas nas mais variadas línguas, optámos também por não grafar a cesura e propor a forma de verso livre.

É também impossível, numa tradução para português, manter a sintaxe do inglês antigo, e, logo, preservar a ordem das palavras no verso original, ou obedecer estritamente ao tamanho que este ocupa no texto de partida. A própria estrutura morfológica e sintáctica da nossa língua não nos permite, por vezes, condensar numa só palavra ou num só verso os

vários sentidos veiculados pelos itens lexicais do inglês antigo, altamente flexionado e com regras de formação de palavras muito diferentes.[19]

Reflectindo sobre estes aspectos, verificamos, por exemplo, que muitas palavras remetem para ideias que, em português, dificilmente podem ser traduzidas apenas por um vocábulo. É o caso de *gefrunon,* de *Gardena*, mas também de *þeodcyninga* ou *þrym* e *ellen*. *Gardena*, cuja estrutura morfológica analisámos acima, é um composto e *þeodcyninga*, forma flexionada do nome *þeodcyning*, é outro composto formado por *þeod-*, 'povo' ou 'nação', e *-cyning* 'rei', significando literalmente 'dos reis do povo', pois, como *Gardena*, está no caso genitivo plural. Ora, além das expressões em português não serem compostos, a nossa primeira sugestão foi 'dos Dinamarqueses da Lança, dos reis do povo', mas as pós-modificações excessivas de sintagmas preposicionais seguidos pareceram-nos exageradas, daí que, tendo em conta que este povo são os *Gardene*, o povo dinamarquês, interpretámos como 'reis dos Dinamarqueses da Lança'. Quanto a *þrym* 'glória' e *ellen* 'actos de coragem', traduzimos por 'fama gloriosa' e 'façanhas valorosas', respectivamente, estabelecendo uma relação aliterativa com 'falar'.

Assim, na tradução das três linhas iniciais do poema, acabámos por seguir uma estrutura sintáctica diferente, uma ordem sujeito-predicado-objecto, acabando por, inevitavelmente, dar ênfase a uma expressão, 'fama gloriosa', *þrym,* relegando 'dos Dinamarqueses da Lança', *Gardena,* e 'em tempos remotos', *in geardagum*, para as linhas subsequentes.

Esta tarefa de reconstituição da ordem sintáctica, bem como a compreensão da estrutura morfológica das palavras em inglês antigo e da sua espessura semântica, são, pois, indispensáveis para a tradução dos textos anglo-saxónicos. Deste modo, tendo em conta todos os aspectos que aqui referimos, a nossa tradução das linhas iniciais do poema foi:

> Atenção!
> Nós ouvimos falar da fama gloriosa
> dos reis dos Dinamarqueses da Lança, e de como tais príncipes,
> em tempos remotos, façanhas valorosas realizaram.

Cabe-nos ainda acrescentar mais algumas considerações relativamente ao início do poema. As linhas em apreço permitem ao poeta recuperar, logo de seguida, o passado glorioso que remonta à fundação da dinastia dinamarquesa por parte de Scyld Scefing, grande herói lendário, antepassado de Hrothgar. Por um lado, expõe, de forma evidente, os códigos da aristocracia guerreira e de como os seus membros poderiam chegar ao trono numa altura em que a monarquia não se regia ainda pela lei da primogenitura, como já mencionámos. Por outro, introduz no texto uma dimensão mítica que se cruza com a história e dela não se desliga, radicando a genealogia de Hrothgar, rei dos Dinamarqueses, numa origem mítica, de modo a engrandecer a sua linhagem.

[19] Sobre a estrutura linguística do inglês antigo, ver Azuaga (2007).

Poderíamos, portanto, considerar que as três primeiras linhas do poema que temos vindo a explorar condensam, de modo absolutamente prodigioso, alguns dos seus temas e motivos centrais, abrindo-nos a um mundo simultaneamente heróico e lendário, centrado numa sociedade de reis, príncipes e nobres, que, em dias de antanho, marcados por crenças pagãs, realizaram actos de grande valor que irão ser contados a uma comunidade aristocrática cristã. Tudo nos leva a crer que estamos prestes a entrar em contacto com uma narrativa épica, à semelhança das que se produziram na Antiguidade. Todavia, se é certo que o texto possui um tom épico, este é, apesar de tudo, abafado por uma dimensão elegíaca que o poeta soube esconder nestas linhas iniciais para a revelar um pouco mais à frente, a partir das linhas 82-85:

Sele hlifade,
heah ond horngeap, heaðowylma bad,
laðan liges; ne wæs hit lenge þa gen
þæt se ecghete aþumsweorum,
æfter wælniðe wæcnan scolde.

O salão erguia-se firme,
de grandiosas empenas cruzadas, esperando o ardente fogo
da furiosa chama; não estava assim tão longe o dia
em que o ódio da espada entre sogro e genro
se iria desencadear, devido a mortal inimizade.

De facto, é particularmente após este momento que o poeta nos surpreende ao acrescentar à sua narrativa de teor épico uma nota lamentosa que, sublinhe-se ainda, se segue à partida de Scyld Scefing para os desconhecidos destinos da morte:

Men ne cunnon
secgan to soðe, selerædende,
hæleð under heofenum, hwa þæm hlæste onfeng.
(ll. 50-2)

Na verdade, homem algum
soube dizer, nem sábio conselheiro nem herói guerreiro
sob os céus, quem acolheu essa carga.

Deste modo, é admirável como se vai construindo uma nítida dimensão elegíaca que afasta *Beowulf* das épicas clássicas com que tem sido frequentemente assemelhado e o aproxima da singularidade da poesia lírica anglo-saxónica com a qual partilha muitos temas e motivos, entre os quais a inevitabilidade da morte que, implacável, porá fim à vida de todos os homens e suas obras (Tolkien, 1997).[20]

Para esta ordem de ideias colaboram as três linhas finais do poema que estabelecem com as três iniciais um curioso diálogo:

[20] Ao ser fortemente influenciado por *Beowulf*, Tolkien também imprimiu um tom elegíaco a *The Lord of the Rings* (Varandas, 2022).

> cwædon þæt he wære wyruldcyninga
> manna mildust ond monðwærust,
> leodum liðost ond lofgeornost.
> (ll. 3180-2)
>
> disseram que, de todos os reis do mundo, ele era
> o mais generoso dos homens e o mais amável,
> o mais gentil para o povo e o mais sedento de glória.

Ao acentuar o carácter excepcional de Beowulf parecem regressar ao tema épico. Sabemos, contudo, que este enaltecimento heróico, que tão perto se encontra da 'fama gloriosa dos reis do povo dos Dinamarqueses da Lança' e das 'façanhas valorosas' dos 'príncipes' de 'tempos remotos', acompanha a morte do herói que simboliza também o desaparecimento da nação dos Geats. Como Tolkien bem afirma (1997, p. 31):

> *Beowulf* is not an "epic", not even a magnified "lay". No terms borrowed from Greek or other literatures exactly fit: there is no reason why they should. Though if we must have a term, we should choose rather "elegy". It is an heroic-elegiac poem (…) one of the most moving ever written.

Com estes exemplos que aqui trouxemos, julgamos ter mostrado como a tradução de *Beowulf* e de outros textos anglo-saxónicos em geral, obriga a um profundo trabalho de leitura e investigação, dada a sua complexidade, que é acrescida pela dificuldade da língua que até para a vasta maioria dos ingleses é incompreensível. Na verdade, *Beowulf* é hoje lido sobretudo em tradução. O facto de existirem também muitas palavras sem correspondência directa na realidade portuguesa, bem como termos que ainda hoje suscitam discordância entre a crítica, torna esta tarefa tradutória ainda mais exigente, mas, também por essas razões, mais aliciante.

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MAKING MALLORCAN MISCHIEF: TRANSLATING, REHEARSING, AND PERFORMING THE *ENTREMÈS DEL PASQUEDÓ* AT THE 2022 *OUT OF THE WINGS* FESTIVAL

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ABSTRACT: Catalan-language theatre from the Middle Ages is completely unknown in the Anglophone world, even though the Catalan Countries have rich performance histories from this historical period. An unknowing audience presents both opportunities and challenges to any theatre translator, but the transition from page to stage is not a simple transaction. Considering translation as a space for playful probing and creative intervention, this article reflects on the rehearsal process for the Mallorcan cuckoldry play, *l'Entremès del Pasquedó*, which was performed as part of the *Out of the Wings* festival in the summer of 2022. By looking at how the rehearsal process led to (re)translating, as well as (re)negotiating the jump from text to body, this article highlights that theatre translation is a never-ending process and, much like texts from the Middle Ages, it can continually be reimagined and reworked in new contexts.
KEYWORDS: Theatre Translation, Translation for Performance, Rehearsal, Cuckoldry, Catalan

1. Introduction

From beautiful stained-glass windows and vivid manuscripts to public spectacle and complex religious ceremony, performance permeated every aspect of life in the Middle Ages. The religiosity of these creative outbursts, whilst important, is all too often overplayed in our collective imagination and perception of the Middle Ages, much to the detriment of comic cultural outputs that revel in lust, gluttony, and sadism – or rather, those attributes that we may deem 'low brow', or indeed all-too-human. The ongoing survival of supposedly lewd texts speaks to their sociocultural and political importance, but that does not necessarily guarantee their transferral into other languages. Translation and theatre, as bridges between languages, geographies, and temporalities, and as potential power brokers, have a vital role to play in reimagining the Middle Ages, challenging stereotypes and misconceptions, and providing entertainment to contemporary audiences. Plenty of ink has been spilled in celebrating Early Modern theatre from certain contemporary European states, and bringing those theatrical gems to contemporary audiences is often framed as a grand cultural affair, which is then validated by specific theatre venues. Over the years, these established canons have certainly benefited from 'a reiterative process of reshaping and reframing', a definition for the cultural dynamics of reception offered up by Coolahan (2020), which has only served to entrench them further. But what does that mean for those minoritised theatre cultures on the periphery and far from the booming centres of Empire? And, considering the theatre translator, what additional demands condition the translation process and eventual move from page to stage when dealing with a late medieval text?

The purpose of this article is to document and reflect on the process of (re)translating, rehearsing, and performing my English-language translation of the anonymous Mallorcan

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cuckoldry play, *L'Entremès del Pasquedó* (Huddleson, 2022), at the *Out of the Wings* Festival, which took place at the Omnibus Theatre in London, in July, 2022. As Boehm observes, performance is 'intrinsically ephemeral' (2001, p. 28), and so we must consider this performance as a one-off, but the rehearsal process itself, as I argue here, serves as a moment for reflection and creative intervention as we move from page to stage, from written text to spoken language, and from stage direction to physical embodiment. Throughout this article, I refer to performance itself as a form of translation, moving away from the framing of translation as one-dimensional, interlingual exchange. This is because theatre translation, as noted by Lass (2023, p. 128), requires 'multi-level acts' as we work across the warp and weft of signs. At the heart of this layered inquiry, I ask: What does it take to successfully translate and stage a relatively unknown Mallorcan cuckoldry play from the late Middle Ages for a contemporary audience? By considering how we translate, rehearse, and perform this play, I want to point to where performance takes us and how the languages of the stage, going above and beyond an actor's utterances, enable a new way of (un)seeing and understanding theatre from the (late) Middle Ages. Such a contribution is timely, given that whilst there is already a slew of academic writing dedicated to translating and performing Early Modern and contemporary plays, theatre from the Middle Ages is found wanting. Valuable contributions from Enders (2011) and Parsons and Jongenelen (2012) have helped put translated plays from the Middle Ages into the hands of readers and actors alike, but there is no additional reflection on how these translated plays take to the stage itself.

In this article, acknowledging the gap between a translated play from the Middle Ages making that perilous jump from page to stage, the main focus will be on the developments that emerged during our rehearsals via Zoom and onsite at the Omnibus Theatre. Several absorbing accounts of what happens when a piece of theatre in translation enters the rehearsal room have been documented by Marinetti and Rose (2013), Stevens (2016), Jeffs (2018), Maitland (2019), and Pfeiffer, Richardson, and Wurm (2020). There are also engaging explorations of the power dynamics that come to life within the rehearsal room, such as those that affect deaf actors (Richardson, 2019), and questions of relatability when performing a rehearsed reading in translation through digital means (Balduino P. Fernandes and Corbett Garcez, 2022). Whilst invigorating and pioneering, none of these accounts emerge from translating and performing plays from the Middle Ages, and this gap in the literature may lead some to think that there is nothing exciting to be said about translating and performing theatre written before 1500 A.D, particularly that which exists beyond the dusty literary canon. As I shall argue in this article, there is plenty to be thought about as these texts still speak to us, and, at the same time, there is lots of room for experimentation and creative inquiry, if only we are ready to take risks in our translations and our performances. It is my hope that this account will encourage more translators to experiment and reimagine plays from the Middle Ages and grant them a new life onstage.

Throughout this piece, I have implemented a performance-as-research approach, given that actors (Daniela Cristo, Elena Sanz, and Joshua Welch) and a director (Sergio

Maggiolo) led the endeavour in the rehearsal room, and this framing serves as a conduit for better understanding the transition from page to stage and what kinds of changes took place as we moved from translation through to rehearsals and finally performing to a live audience. Performance-as-research is perhaps best defined as "hybrid enquiries combining creative doing with reflexive being" (Kershaw, 2011, p. 64). In the case of the *Entremès*, that involved experimenting with the actors and director, letting them make decisions on what worked best, and then reflecting on and dissecting the decisions we made as researchers-practitioners. Whilst this model is flourishing in Theatre Studies, it has also been adopted by theatre translators. For example, Angela Tiziana Tarantini (2021, p. 6), who has researched the process of translating a contemporary Australian play from English to Italian, uses this approach to better understand rhythm and gesture. This is an enlightening process as we may deem something to be appropriate when translating on a page, but then reconsider when we arrive at the stage. For theatre translators, such an approach is beneficial as it acknowledges that the stage is not only a place for presenting our work, but also a vibrant site of knowledge production. In my discussion around the translation and rehearsal of the *Entremès del Pasquedó*, to better navigate the gaps in existing scholarship on theatre translation and what happens in the rehearsal room, I rely on the two interconnected approaches (playful extending and foolish disrupting) outlined by Julia Gray and Pia Kontos (2018, p. 442), both of which will be expanded on later in the article, in their own practice of devising research-informed theatre.[1]

2. Meddling monks and advantageous adultery: the *Entremès del Pasquedó* in context

The *entremès*, as genre across Iberian theatres, has undergone a number of transitions from its medieval origins through its Baroque manifestations up to the modern day. What is common throughout that timeline is the genre's aim to excite and delight by dancing on the fine lines of social acceptability, thus enduring as a subversive force. During the Middle Ages, the entremès certainly had acquired saucy overtones in the Catalan-language traditions. Nowhere is this more apparent than in Jaume Roig's *Espill*, from 1460, as a 'bon pagès' (good farmer) is no longer able to control his ravenous sexual desires after having seen an unspecified entremès (1978, p. 48). This is also apparent in the fragmentary play, *Diàlegs del cançoner d'Híjar* (n. d., but reproduced in Romeu i Figueras, 1962, pp. 31-33), as a young debauchee directly addresses a woman with: '*Com estau espituflada*' (p. 31, literally: How's it going, big breasts?).[2] Whilst other characters are shocked at this upstart, the female addressee seems to accept his utterance as a compliment and is eager to grant him some attention. Within the context of Mallorca in the Middle Ages, a number of

[1] Gray and Kontos developed and identified their approaches through an attempt to create research-informed theatre that would reflect and share the experiences of people living with dementia. In their work, Gray and Kontos deploy a third approach (inventive disrupting), which relates to space. As we had limited time for rehearsals and were fixed to one venue, we could not explore this particular approach in great depth.

[2] Despite its comedic nature, the reality that this play only survives in fragments makes it difficult to assume whether it is fully part of the *entremès* genre.

entremesos appear in the Middle Ages and Early Modern period, all dealing with cuckoldry, marriages in tatters, and women usurping men's power. The *Entremès del Pasquedó* falls within that family of texts, and whilst the play is largely unknown beyond Mallorca, it is unique in that it has been continually revived at the local level throughout the centuries.

The *Entremès del Pasquedó* (hereinafter refered to as the *Entremès*) tells the story of a nameless Mallorcan fisherman and his wife, Llacinta.[3] Beset by hunger and distressed by poverty, the pair find themselves at the bottom of the social ladder. The arrival of Easter hails a potential change in their economic circumstances as Christians swap meat for fish over Lent, resulting in a boon for fishing communities.[4] The couple bicker over their lot in life, continually teasing one another, and then the fisherman reveals that he has heard that his wife is all too eager to chat with the local friar. Llacinta dismisses his revelation, stating that he is the only one she could ever love. Satisfied with her response, the fisherman makes his way to the sea. However, on his way there, the fisherman decides to enjoy some wine from his flask, but he is unable to stop himself from drinking the lot. This overindulgence knocks him into a deep sleep. A meddling friar finds the fisherman and reports back to Llacinta. The two of them then conspire and decide to dress the fisherman up as a friar. Upon awakening, the fisherman is bamboozled by his sudden 'transformation', albeit a rise on the social ladder. The fisherman pays his wife a visit to see if there is some solution to his predicament, but Llacinta and the friar, who is now posing as a fisherman, reject him and send him off. The rejected fisherman, aware of being duped and yet unable to do anything, brings the action to an end by acknowledging his own failures and warning the audience to learn from his mistake.

The world that we see onstage, wherein a priest and a woman can outsmart a fisherman, is part of a social imaginary taking shape, or a 'not-actual (or not-yet-actual) world' as Fairclough and Fairclough (2012, p. 103) would describe it. This imaginary is, perhaps, part of a larger ploy that seeks to 'give people reasons for actions' (*ibid.*, p. 102). Whilst the fisherman could certainly be seen as a representation of corrupted pride (for his dislike of priests) or gluttony (for his fondness of the drink), neither his wife nor the priest, considering their own mischievous schemes and intentions to flaunt social order, could be deemed counterbalanced personifications of virtue. Furthermore, at the end of the play, the fisherman's wife and the priest are awarded new lives following the fisherman's ousting. The fisherman, the backbone of the community, has fallen and yet, rather paradoxically, by becoming a priest, has also risen on the social ladder.

Whilst the ribald content of the *Entremès* may surprise some of us, we can see that, as the power of the Catholic Church waned over the peoples of Christian Europe, contumacious priests and their unruly ilk became easy targets for searing ridicule. Such figures populate literary canons across Western European languages from the French

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[3] It is worth noting that Llacinta is the only character in the play to be named.
[4] Texts, such as *El Llibre de la Cort de les Roses*, reveal special financial agreements for Lent being drawn up between fishermen and the universities of Castelló d'Empúries and Roses during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, in order to prevent overly exploitative pricing.

fabliaux such as Guèrin's *Du prestre ki abevete* ('The Priest who peeked'), and short plays such as the fifteenth-century *Farce de Martin de Cambray*, to the well-endowed, yet regrettably celibate, priest who is celebrated in Iseabail Ní Mheic Cailéin's Gaelic poem, *Éistibh, a Luchd an Tighe-se* (circa 1500), or the priest in John Heywood's English farce *Johan Johan The Husband* (1520). Even in religious texts themselves, priests are fair game for satire. For example, in the Galician *Cantigas de Santa Maria* number 327, one priest becomes deformed after fashioning himself some undergarments from a stolen altar cloth. Whilst Van Liere (2008, p. 32) argues that "the notion of a corrupt medieval church has its roots in the Protestant historiographical tradition of sixteenth and seventeenth centuries", it is clear from these literary examples that humour and laughter, at the expense of a priest or that of the larger institution of the Catholic Church, were commonplace.

Aside from these literary sources, there are also historical documents which present us with concrete examples of priests behaving badly. Drawing on cases from across fourteenth-century Catalonia, Armstrong-Partida asserts that priests "went to great lengths to engage in a relationship that could offer them a sexual outlet, companionship, and perhaps even love" (2017, p.82). Thibodeaux (2015, p. 152) notes, whilst there had been an active 'resistance' throughout Europe to the new ideal of a celibate clerical masculinity, there was a clear understanding of what was deemed appropriate behaviour for a priest by the late Middle Ages. This newly established ideal of clerical masculinity, which supposedly went hand in hand with celibacy, would become rich material for comedy. As the *Entremès del Pasquedó* has no recorded performance history from the Middle Ages, and its vexatious content could be seen as an attack on the Church, I believe it is important to consider whether this dramatic text, in its manuscript form, could well have been written simply for private reading by an individual (perhaps even a priest), and not entirely intended for live performance. Such a textual reality would pose challenges for any translator, but we should recognise that the infrequent and rudimentary stage directions indicate that our anonymous playwright had some understanding of how theatre works.

If the text was indeed meant for performance, or even just guilty reading in private, it is clear that searing political criticism prowls along between the lines. In his analysis of the carnival satirist, Charles (2005, p. 11) reminds us that underneath the "overt comedic façade often lurks a more politicized agenda predicated on a particular form of laughter". In the *Entremés*, it is clear that the bountiless cuckold, as a clown-like figure, is the target for our collective laughter from start to finish. The fisherman's masculinity is under constant scrutiny and re-negotiation, as is that of the priest. The strict social hierarchy that sets them on specific rungs is also being undone and twisted around through their role reversal. As Classen (2010, p. 3) argues, laughter is an invitation to 'either join a community or invite others to create one'. And it is clear that our collective laughter, arising from this fisherman's misfortunes and the priest's role switch, is creating a community. However, reflecting on this, we may want to ask ourselves what sort of community is taking shape or coming into being as a result of our collective laughter. Is this a community of *criticism*? And if so, how might that shape the translation? And, continuing along with the practical

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purposes of translating and performing the text, how does that contemporary community differ from or perhaps resemble that of the Middle Ages?

3. By hook or by crook: Bringing Mallorca Out of the Wings

The *Out of the Wings* Festival, which first began in 2016, is a celebration of theatre in translation from across Iberia and Latin America. The translations selected for the Festival are treated to a reading in a London theatre with actors and a director. Over the years, the Festival has seen over thirty translated plays come to life onstage, several of which have been picked up by larger theatres, publishers, and other festivals. However, the majority of work that makes the cut for the Festival is either ultra-modern or relatively contemporary, with fewer older texts being presented and reaching the stage. This is, admittedly, a result of what is pitched for the Festival. As the translator of the *Entremès* and being intimately aware of certain textual features within the text, I was concerned whether a Mallorcan *entremès* could pass muster when presented alongside exciting and provocative work from the present day. When bringing a humorous piece to the stage, the last thing anyone wants is to be met by an audience in the grips of a painful silence and a state of bewilderment. And what's more, considering the potential for error between the jump from page to stage, would the translation and performance elicit laughter for the *right reasons*? How do we carry the humour of cuckoldry and the socio-political discourse of the play across temporal, geographic, and linguistic boundaries? And within that complicated juggling act, what is going to be left behind?

Mallorcan theatre, regardless of its time period, is largely a stranger on the Anglophone stage. At the same time, and somewhat paradoxically, Mallorca, with its sun-soaked, sandy beaches, is both exotic and, thanks to the package holiday and ethically questionable reality TV shows, quite familiar to a British audience. This mediated familiarity also works against the task of the translator as saturated beaches, high-rise apartments, and hordes of oily or sunburnt tourists do not scream 'high culture'. Offerings from popular culture, such as the sexual exploits made immortal through song by Ivor Biggun or the sickeningly sweet island extolled by Chris Wolff, do not help matters. Yet, in reality, Mallorca plays a central role in performance in the Middle Ages, but this legacy is rarely packaged for and sold to contemporary tourists. The *Cant de la Sibil·la*, a religious chant from late Antiquity that describes the Christian Apocalypse, continues to draw in crowds on an annual basis and is broadcast on local television and radio. The ritual even goes on tour and is performed in churches in Andorra, Catalonia, and Valencia. Furthermore, the *Consuetes mallorquines*, a rich collection from the twelfth century, featuring religious plays depicting events from the Bible, alongside the lives of Saints, are continually mentioned in academic scholarship. These plays, as Massip and Kovács (2017, p. 425) note, are not just textual treasures, but the detail in their staging gives us an insight into the ritualistic life of the Cathedral of Mallorca. And yet, despite their cultural significance, these plays, performances, and rituals remain untranslated.

Translating from the Mallorcan context into the Anglophone means starting from zero, or perhaps even starting in the red. In light of this reality, the driving force throughout the translation and rehearsal processes was that of eliciting laughter (for all the right reasons) and showing a contemporary audience, our community built through communal laughter, that a five-hundred-year-old play still has a place on today's stage. Humour is, as D'Arcens qualifies it, 'notoriously difficult to anatomise' (2014, p. 5). This view is echoed by Milner Davis (2013, p. 3), who contends that whilst farce is traditionally considered a 'lowly dramatic genre', its execution on the page and on the stage is 'very challenging'. Translation, if anything, further complicates this very messy affair as we grapple with the element of another language, in this case, Catalan, and the temporal framework that engulfs the *Entremès*. Chiaro (2010, p. 1) warns that verbal humour 'travels badly', and this evident not only in the jump between languages, but also within the temporal shifts that a language may undergo. Looking to the English language itself, Derrin (2020, p. 4) considers the fool's various jests that arise in Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1606) are no longer funny to us, and it is the 'elements of absurdity and surprise in performance' that bring us to laugh. What time has cruelly robbed from spoken language, the performing body can and may have to make up for, and this will become apparent later in this article.

4. Performance leading translation: actors as textual agents and creative collaborators

As stated earlier, the comical nature of the *Entremès*, and its desire to evoke laughter in an audience, and thereby create a community of sorts, was something that we always had in the back of our minds as we entered the rehearsal room. This nagging thought would shape and influence many of the decisions taken by the actors and director as a creative team working from my translation. Considering the temporal gap between the writing of the text in medieval Mallorca and its contemporary performance in London, the play's internal drive to make people laugh brings with it a burning question: Is this *Entremès* still funny today or has its humour been lost to time? And, if interventions are needed, what strategies could actors and directors implement to make the play comical again?

The first thing that strikes any translator who glances at the *Entremès del Pasquedó* is its rich variety of rhyme schemes, some of which are frayed and imperfect, that punctuate the different characters' verse. Translating verse is an arduous and imperfect affair, as something is always going to be lost along the way. This reality often leads some translators to focus exclusively on meaning, often at the expense of the rhyme. In his reflection on translating Spanish-language *Comedia* into English, Matthews (2008, p. 39), for example, affirms that audiences should 'experience the play as verse', but also admits to certain worries regarding the textual form as it can 'become too distancing'. This concern, however, is rather suspect. Considering the temporal and cultural divides that exist, how distanced *should* theatre from another century be for a contemporary audience? If, as Venuti (2013) reminds us that translation 'changes everything', how much of a change should we expect to see in ourselves, triggered through exposure to different theatres? Theatregoers in London can regularly take in a Shakespearean play performed in verse at the Globe, and so

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I saw no reason to shy away from verse when translating this Mallorcan text, but, going back to Chiaro's warning (2010, p.1), therein lies an important caveat: How has humour weathered the passage of time?

Considering that eliciting laughter was the main goal of the translation and performance, and it is certainly the *raison d'être* that pulsates through the *Entremès*, it is worth noting that the play itself does not rely heavily on verbal and linguistic humour. Instead, it is the onstage action, those non-verbal and non-linguistic acts, that serve as humorous moments.[5] As London (2010, p. 212) reminds us, the text is 'just a part of the translational enterprise'. If anything, the emphasis on bodies to deliver humour is a relief for the translator as some of the risky acrobatics of communication are taken on by the director and actors. There are also some textual matters that have to be addressed in order to approach the *Entremès*, or indeed any other text that has come down to us from another age. When we reflect on the fragmented reality of the source text, the *Entremès del Pasquedó*, which finds itself spread across several manuscripts, and the many hands that it has passed through on its journey to the present day, it may be worthwhile considering how malleable the text is. In my own opinion, and after reading through various plays that recycle the *Entremès* and present it once again to Mallorcan society, such as the 1980 reimagining put forward by Llorenç Moyà Gilabert, it is worth considering the *Entremès* as a performance for the people and, therefore, a textual chameleon that wants to change itself for each new reading. As Emmerich (2017, p. 2) reminds us, we need to move away from the notion of a stable source text and begin to reframe it as 'a volatile compound that experiences continual textual reconfigurations'.

One of the issues with any older text is that language is subject to decay. In the following segement, Llacinta's utterance reveals issues in the rhyme scheme, and my initial translation failed to bring it to order:

Llacinta	**Llacinta**
Vols que jo y tu, per riure, el vestiguem de aquests àbits que dus y que el dexam al mitx des ras?	What say you if we, for fun, were to dress him up in one of your habits and then leave him out in the middle of nowhere?
Frare	**Friar**
Per Déu, que bé has pensat ! Serà bon cas!	By God! What an idea! We are indeed a devilish pair!

In the rehearsals, the sudden thud in the rhyme scheme was apparent to all. The actors and director were not convinced at rhyming 'nowhere' with 'pair', and asserted that the rhyme

[5] This textual reality, the need for a moving body, creates a paradox. As I have mentioned earlier in this article, and taking into consideration the lack of a performance history for this play in the late Middle Ages and Early Modern, I suspect that the play may only have been read by an individual or to a private group.

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needed to keep flowing, despite what the text itself may indicate. After working through several alternatives, we arrived at a new translation incorporating 'under the sun' and carrying the rhyme forward into the friar's utterance with 'Our devilish trick is done!':

Llacinta	**Llacinta**
Vols que jo y tu, per riure, el vestiguem de aquests àbits que dus y que el dexam al mitx des ras?	What say you if we, for fun, were to dress him up in one of your habits and then leave him out under the sun?
Frare	**Friar**
Per Déu, que bé has pensat ! Serà bon cas!	By God! What an idea! Our devilish trick is done!

By making such a change to the translation and resulting performance, it is clear that we are subduing the text. However, in performance, an audience can follow the rhyme scheme and will not be perplexed by any unanticipated change in rhythm. It is 'obvious', as Malmkjær (2005, p. 71) admits, that any text that is translated from one language to another will sound different. As seen in the example above, textual instability in older texts should not be seen as a stumbling block, but rather as an invitation for creative intervention and imaginative play. Furthermore, rather than framing the performative turn within translation studies as a move *away* from written and spoken language, it is here that we see actors engaging with a translation to wed spoken language with the written.

5. Performance as creative intervention: invoking the languages of the stage

In this article thus far, my focus has been on grappling with spoken language in translation, as we navigate the shift from page to stage, and where performance can lead translation, taking us back from stage to page through linguistic interventions. However, the stage does not rely solely on spoken language, instead it is polysystemic when it comes to meaning-making. As translation for performance demands that we consider this reality beyond spoken language, I want to pay some attention to how performance can go above and beyond the translated text thus leading us to creative interventions as we engage with the languages of the stage itself rather than the articulate, moving bodies that traverse it. Playful extending, as defined by Gray and Kontos (2018, p. 444), is focused on developing interrelations, particularly how we convey a character onstage and how an audience then relates to that character. This process is 'experimental' and 'responsive' but relies heavily on paying "attention to things and people other than oneself" (*ibid.*). In Gray's own practice (2023, p. 316), after working with her target group (individuals living with dementia), the process involved working through a range of gestures, movements, and word choices in order to come to an understanding of the character she sought to present. The desire to create a clear relation between the performer and the spectator is also echoed by scholars

within Translation Studies. Weighing up the loyalties that a theatre translator must navigate in the jump from page to stage, Johnston (2013, p. 366) recognises this need to establish interrelations, stating that the 'concluding perspective of the spectator' is the most important factor. In the case of the *Entremès*, these moments of playful extending would come through our experimentation with and use of light to add further meaning to a scene, adding another layer of comedic value to the *Entremès* which our audience could enjoy, and playing with props. Furthermore, as the translator, I wanted to ensure that an audience would come away from the theatre with a new interest for or an openness to Mallorcan theatre, which remains relatively unknown to Anglophone audiences.

The priest's discovery of the sleeping fisherman and his subsequent plotting with Llacinta are pivotal moments within the *Entremès*. It is clear that power, oozing from sexuality and intimacy, is obtained by Llacinta through her interactions and dealings with the priest. During our rehearsals, we worked through the scenes involving the friar and Llacinta and continually asked ourselves how each character would occupy space onstage, how far or close to one another they would be, and whether they would perhaps touch one another. We felt this investigation was relevant, given that the fisherman is aware that Llacinta often talks to the priest and even mentions this early on in the play. In their argument for inventive disrupting, Gray and Kontos place an emphasis on how performers transform a space through actions that unlock its potentiality (2018, p. 445). In the theatre space, meaning can be unlocked through a gesture, e.g., an actor fanning herself to reflect how hot it is in their world onstage, or movement, e.g., actors moving around the stage to indicate travel. Whilst we cannot be entirely sure of a Mallorcan women's sexual agency in the Middle Ages and how this would influence gesture and movement, Llacinta is a woman who knows what she wants out of life and is determined to get it. At the same time, the friar is set on starting a new life beyond his religious order. Our director then decided that we would explore the sexual nature of Llacinta conspiring with the priest. As we brought our actors closer together onstage during our rehearsals, we began to see that a sexual connection between the two made sense. Our inquiry would now begin to interrogate the languages of the stage to find an appropriate vehicle for expressing this sexuality.

Lighting, as a non-verbal language of the stage, was very much part of performance in the Middle Ages, just as it still is today. In Christian liturgical performance, as observed by Tydeman (1978, 166-167), light was a means of drawing attention to the sacred and righteous, as well as moments of revelation. That religious significance would be later lost with the rise of the Renaissance. Reflecting on staging performances in the candle-lit Sam Wanamaker Playhouse, Tosh (2018, p. 105) notes how such a theatre demands that directors and actors adapt to and work with the unsteadily lit space.[6] One constraint in the space is that the lack of electrical lighting makes it harder to see the actors' faces (p. 99). A few weeks prior to the rehearsals and performance of the Mallorcan *Entremès*, I was able to watch several scenes from the Spanish Golden Age being brought to life in a

[6] It should be noted that this is a space designed for Early Modern theatre, but it does serve to highlight some of the issues that would also shape and influence theatre in the Middle Ages.

Performance-as-Research workshop, run by Barbara Fuchs and UCLA's Diversifying the Classics, in the Wanamaker. It became clear that actors would rely heavily on gesture, casting their bodies out towards the audience, to make up for the complications of performing in candlelight. With regard to the *Out of the Wings* Festival, we were fortunate enough to be performing in a contemporary theatre space, with a full array of technological tools to deploy as we wished. However, by comparing the two spaces, a new question for performance began to take shape: Considering the possibilities granted by modern technology, and the use of light historically to signal revelation, what comedic value does lighting bring with it?

Theatre translation scholars, such as Edwards (2007), Pavis (2003, p. 192), and Zatlin (2005, p. 171), have acknowledged the role of lighting in performance, but concrete case studies of how lighting can be used in theatre translation to convey meaning are in scant supply. In the case of the *Entremès*, through experimentation within our rehearsals and paying closer attention to mounting sexual tensions within the text, we noticed that the moment of conspiring between Llacinta and the priest has a particular intensity to it. As a result, we decided to introduce a sudden blackout as Llacinta and the friar discuss their plan to fool the fisherman. The lights would quickly come back on a few seconds later to reveal the two conspirers recovering from the heated throes of passion. In the final performance, as Llacinta tucked in her skirt and tried to tame her dishevelled hair, whilst our priest lay sprawled out on the table with a flask resting between the legs, our audience burst into riotous laughter. Lighting, as our means for articulating sexual tension, had heightened the comedic value of the scene. Furthermore, considering the temporal divide between Mallorca in the Middle Ages and a contemporary London, this intervention was a way of showing an audience that sexuality has always been a factor in human history. This creative intervention through lighting and the further accentuation of sexual possibilities certainly opens the performance up to criticism, as we are moving away from the source text and reimaging sexual norms from the time period. Sexuality, which engulfs the idea(l)s of chastity and monogamy, is a complex social construct. Within that maelstrom, it is important to remember that no one source can manage to encapsulate the entirety of it. Therefore, whilst we should not consider the *Entremès* to be a true depiction of sexuality in Mallorca at the time, I believe there is an artistic license to brush away the prudish image that we may project onto the Middle Ages.

6. Riotous revelations? queer(y)ing and sexualising Mallorca?

Looking back to Gray and Kontos' performance framework (2018), we come across the concept of 'foolish disrupting', which is described as those moments where we pay attention to 'points of tension' or 'disorientation' (p. 444). This can often be moments where the actor, or indeed the translation, meet a moment of uncertainty or disconnect and there is a need to experiment further in order to find a way of moving things along. Gray (2023, p. 317) later expands on the idea of foolish disrupting, placing an emphasis on how the performer should 'experience and enact differently' in order to engage an

audience. In the case of performing the *Entremès*, both Sergio Maggiolo, as our director, and myself, as translator, were eager to tease at any queer potential within the play, in an attempt to disorientate our audience and to add other readings to the text. This desire was satisfied through our casting as we chose to have two female actors onstage, with Elena Sanz playing the role of Llacinta and Daniela Cristo playing that of the priest. It is important to acknowledge the subversiveness of this casting as it adds a further layer to the play's comedic value and would challenge our audience to rethink the gender dynamics of the play. Whilst the priest's gender swap has the potential for comedy in itself, it is also a deliberate attempt to question this male figure, as the priest serves as a representative of institutional and gendered power in Mallorcan society.[7] Female sexuality, as a plural force in the Middle Ages, has been explored by several scholars, including Karras (2005), Evans (2012), and Harvey (2021), but there is very little on women's sexuality in Mallorca. The *Entremès*, by creating a world in which Llacinta can conspire with a priest, offers us some insight, however. We can see in the *Entremès* that laughter is being used to create a community and when that outburst is aimed at the priest and the cuckolded fisherman, both of whom are representative of power in Mallorcan society, we recognize its subversive quality.

Furthermore, through her jocose onstage dealings, the reality of a new, more successful life for Llacinta is all the more interesting when we consider how women who seek self-improvement in other plays are often the targets of collective laughter in theatre from the Middle Ages, as part of a wider trend of misogyny. For example, as a reflection and outburst of male anxieties, the learned ladies in the late medieval *Farce des femmes qui apprennent à parler latin* are mocked and undermined for having the desire to engage in learning. Even beyond the theatre stage, skimmingtons, as noted by Stokes (2012, p. 36), represent cruel public spectacles that 'mocked' any women with aspirations, reducing them to 'usurpers (of male authority), shrews, rebels, brawlers, or bawds'. Whilst acknowledging an active disenfranchisement of women, Bloch (1987, p. 8), in his article *Medieval Misogyny*, argues for a re-assessment of misogyny in medieval texts, asking whether it is an exclusively male enterprise or rather part of a 'larger cultural discourse in which women also participate'. In the *Entremès* itself, Llacinta is clearly the one who suffers from her husband's negligence, and yet she is clever enough to find a way of exchanging her liability for a boon.

Playful extension is a common reality in many translations for performance, given that it can be deployed in new circumstances to explore the dramatic moment, particularly for emphasising a character's feelings, thus making them all the more palpable for an audience. In Sarah Grunnah's 2021 translation of Calderón's *No hay cosa como callar* (c. 1639), this dramatic quality is brought sharply into view. At the end of the play, as a means of solving the reality of dishonour, Leonor is proposed to by her rapist, Don Juan. In Grunnah's

[7] Given that the two men, the fisherman and the priest, are the targets of our communal laughter, I would argue that this play has its own proto-feminist edge. Our casting was an attempt to tease out the potential of such a reading.

translation, the line, 'Here is my hand, Leonor', is repeated over and over in the audio performance, each time with a different tone. This voiced repetition, as a playful extension of the text, is an invitation for a contemporary, Western audience to further contemplate the troubling scene. Despite our collective outrage at Leonor's circumstances, we must accept that marriage, as a means of litigating sexual assault, is perhaps the only remedy at hand for her. It was unlikely to have been Calderón's original intention, but the repetition of the line in Grunnah's translation and performance, as a point of reflection, serves to create a community around Leonor.

In addition to queering through casting and expressing sexuality through light, following through with the notion of foolish disrupting, we decided to further explore the props that we could use for our rehearsals and eventual performance. As Barthes (1972, p. 26) reminds us, theatre relies on a 'density of signs and sensations', hence the theatre translator cannot overlook props and their potential meanings. From tissues and handkerchiefs (Kyd's *The Spanish Tragedy*, Shakespeare's *Othello*) to lockets (Calderón's *No hay cosa como callar*) and the majestic arrival of angels and Saints, usually brought onstage within a mandorla or on a separate float, many plays hinge on discoveries and revelations, and it is through props that such disclosures are made. In the case of the *Entremès*, the only significant prop that serves as a vehicle for the action is the fisherman's flask. Despite its importance, the flask is only mentioned in the source text when the fisherman indulges in its contents, and when the priest notices it when he comes across the sleeping fisherman. Through our rehearsals, we noted that the flask was too important to have linger in the background. Although there is no stage direction to indicate that the flask is taken by the priest, in our rehearsals we decided that the priest should do just that. By taking the flask along to Llacinta, this prop, with its phallic symbolism, becomes a new representation of masculinity being transferred from the fisherman to the priest. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier in the article, this prop was set between the priest's legs for when the lights came up following our brief blackout, creating an allusion to an erection. Whilst the flask was not going to elicit many laughs in the hands of the fisherman, when it was wielded by a female actor, playing the role of a male priest, our playful gender-bending became all the more humorous for our audience. This was certainly a deviation from what was on the page, in both the original and translated play, but as Boyle (2013, p.215) argues, theatre translation entails moving into a 'newly constituted space'. The *Entremès* obliges the translator, the director, and the actors to unlock its playful and jesting nature through performance, hence such a move made sense.

Putting the gender-bending agenda to one side, our actor, Daniela Cristo Mantilla, had recently broken her arm, leaving it in a cast. As director, Sergio Maggiolo decided to play with this physical feature, as part of our approach to foolish disrupting. The actor's bright pink cast was readied for our performance with the improvised symbol of a cross made from black masking tape, rendering it a comedic prop. When Daniela first came onstage to voice the friar's laments, she thrust forward her arm, revealing the black cross to the audience. This silly moment, as would be the case with the flask, evoked instant

laughter from our audience. Similar interventions, brought through by the actors themselves, have been noted in other rehearsal situations. Stevens (2016) notes that, in her own rehearsals for *Bailando sola cada noche*, actors were able to build on and go beyond the text by bringing in gesture, in this instance, putting a finger to one's lips as a hush to another actor. Through creative play with the body, the actor draws the audience's attention to the duplicitous nature of a male character.

7. Mallorcan mischief made and mastered: returning to the wings

Whenever we read, translate, or perform a play, we must always remember that theatre is a social ritual that seeks to create community and that it is more than mere words on a page. Reflecting on a collection of plays from the Middle Ages, as part of Chester 2010, Mitchell remarks that 'a true sense of communitas' (2010, p.102) was created through theatre as audience members discussed the play they had just seen. With its own desire to create community, the *Entremès*, by its own form and design, has a set of specific conditions that need to be satisfied: social order must be troubled, and an audience must be entertained. In rehearsing the translated text, which in turn led to making adjustments to both language and stage directions, we can clearly see how this play has travelled in linguistic, geographic, and temporal terms, but we would do well to observe how one thing, the play's very objective, remains the same: eliciting laughter. And that goal was met with our performance at the *Out of the Wings* Festival 2022 through a string of enhanced translation acts that came to life in the rehearsal room. However, as Aaltonen observes, theatre translation unleashes its own complications as, in comparison to literary translation, it is "more tied to its immediate context", and that a performance comes to life within "a severely restricted time and place" (2000, pp. 40-41). In that sense, it remains to be seen whether the *Entremès* can rise again elsewhere, imitate, or even innovate with the same interventions, and continue to generate laughter through performance.

In this article, I have demonstrated through this case study from the Catalan-language canon that translating and performing the theatre of the Middle Ages, whether manifested as the work in progress that takes shape in the rehearsal or the refined outcome that comes to life before a live audience, answers many questions, but also raises new ones. As evidenced in this article, the rehearsal room is, in many ways, an extension of the translation process. It may well be a workshop of refinement, and a site of playful interrogation and creative intervention, but the rehearsal room is also where we can clamp down, albeit for a fleeting moment, the never-ending process of translation. In the translation and rehearsal process, given the adherence to rhyme and verse, we are indeed guilty of what Boehm qualifies as 'instances of petty or high treason against the original text' (2008, p. 27). Concurrently, we need to recognise that the performance-oriented translator exercises a role that is under 'extensive reconsideration' (Bigliazzi, Kofler, and Ambrosi, 2013, p. 11). In light of our textual transgressions, calculated risks, and numerous interventions in staging and embodiment, I am sure that our anonymous playwright can

forgive us for these crimes of passion, as many a laugh was to be had in London when a play from late medieval Mallorca took to the stage.

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'COLONIZING' THE PAST? ANTIQUARIAN TRANSLATION REVISITED

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ABSTRACT: This study seeks a comprehensive dialogue between the adherents of archaizing translation, its opponents, and those in the middle. It revisits archaism as a literary strategy, comparing the practice with archaizing translation as a translation strategy, and surveying its grammatical and syntactic features. Why have contemporary archaizing translations been held to be failed, and why—less often--have they been championed? Three main positions--the theoretical defenses, compromises such as Robinson's 'strange loop', and excoriations of the practice--are chronicled. I attend to each side's (sometimes faulty) assumptions. Is translational pastness but patina, pastiche, and appropriation, or a revitalization?
KEYWORDS: Antiquarian Translation; Archaism; Archaic Style; Archaizing Translation; Diachronic Translation; Pastiche; Patina/Patinization

> ...we should be forced to send a rejection to Shakespeare should he send us one of his sonnets. But, of course, he wouldn't; he would write today in a language as fresh as his was in 1600.
> Robert Bly (1959, p. 20)

> Many of those poems were composed in previous centuries; in my versions I tried to give them the age of all works of art: that of today.
> Octavio Paz (2000, p. 15, my translation)

1. Introduction

Certain approaches to translation and translation practices, including indirect translation, rhyming translation, and antiquarian translation, are known to trigger polarizing aesthetic rejections in some translation theorists and readers. The debate over archaization is itself a pastime from earlier eras (Krzysztof, 2019, p. 7), although rekindlings make the topic perennial. I will examine positions on archaizing as it is argued in the theory, concentrating on broad questions: What is translation archaization's relationship to literary archaism? How have theorists of archaization conceived of the practice, and what rationales have they used for or against it?[1] I aim to give a fair hearing to both sides, though I will also hold all arguments up to critique.

If literary translation works with texts that often are "crucially time-marked", as Jones (2006, p. 191) phrases it, what is the status of this markedness in different translation perspectives, a range he calls from 'ageing' to 'updating'?[2] Yet Hjorth contends that translation involves a "temporal instability" (2014, p. 136, in Gulden, 2020, p. 19), and comments on the linear time orientation of theory: "Conservative philosophies of translation are based on a temporal structure that stresses a fixed immutable original and

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[1] For reasons of space I have not extensively theorized premodern theories of archaic translation, leaving for future scholars the question of the archaic in the medieval era.
[2] See also Vladova's (1993) four kinds of *historical distance*.

fundamentally denies conflictual points of contact or overlapping", a "stable original across time" (ibid., p. 20), and invites non-linear alternatives. Perhaps texts are both time-marked and recursive, or as St. André writes, they "belong to more than one period, shifting from point of creation (translation as process) to its role/function in the modern world (translation as artifact)" and the translator creates a "wormhole" between non-Cartesian times (2020, pp. 37-8). Certainly, Andrienko has stumbled upon a distinction worth pondering in asserting the Greeks' differentiation of "chronological, or sequential time, and kairological time which refers predominantly to the qualitative, not quantitative aspect, indeterminate time […]" and links the problem to Bakhtin's artistic time, or chronotope (2016, n.p.).

2. Literary archaism

Let us consider time-markedness through a metaphor from astronomy. Languages age, as we do, making of archaism a kind of textual parallax; that is, if the Object (Fig. 1) is the source text, the Distant background stands for the linguacultural system that fuses in translation perceptually to the Object. The angle of approach, whether in time or space, thus creates a parallactic drift relative to any other angle:

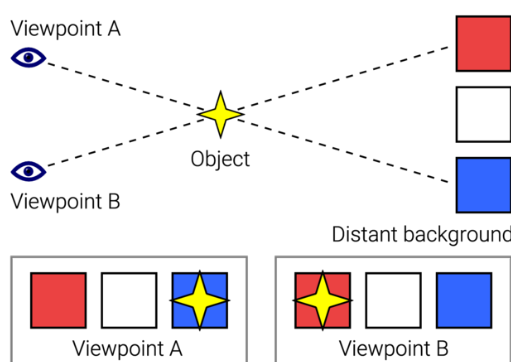

Fig. 1 parallax[3]

Viewpoints A and B alike are mutable: no translator is the same translator at the beginning as at the end of a project, and no corpus is strictly contemporary with itself, as words have longer or shorter histories relative to one another.[4] Hence, from no space or time can the Object be observed as an in-itself; no temporal vantage point can claim omniscience—

[3] By JustinWick at English Wikipedia - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0
Available at: https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=315718 (Accessed: 8 February 2022)

[4] A contemporary translator may even 'filter' a perspective through a former one; Bethany Cole's translation (2022) uses a beloved writer-translator's aesthetic to triangulate an ancient text; the project is advertised thus: "... Tolkien's stories were greatly inspired by the myths and tales of Old English literature, and this poem in particular reveals these influences [...]. The translator has [chosen] words and concepts from Tolkien's works that allow the nuances of the original text to come through [...]." Thus, following our parallax grid: a new translation, Viewpoint B, of an Object *that includes Viewpoint A*--Tolkien's language--in the line of sight. Viewpoint A is thus, in a way, an Object as much as the source Object properly speaking.

nowhen--from which to inhabit the text. To speak of the archaic is to speak of the *relative* and *changing* status of styles, such as when scholarship made

> Old English language available to literary writers, leading to its use in quotation and, in time, original writing; changing attitudes towards medieval literary style made the cultural position of writers such as Chaucer and Gower productively unstable. The result was a proliferation of archaic styles and modes, as successive generations of writers capitalised on the aesthetic and cultural opportunities that archaism offered them. (Munro, 2013, p. 239)

In the context of this special issue of *Translation Matters*, the reader can consider how archaism, 'original' or translated, might figure in the goals of *pseudomedievalism* (the suggestion of the era without being it), which was already in vogue by the time of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1590), and the later Gothic Revival is inextricable from the mock antique style.

Archaism creates a texture, a divide, requiring a triangulation between points, a relation. Déprats argues (2004, p. 78): "If we regard translation more as a *relationship* than as a transfer or a means of *transport*, archaism and modernism are no longer antinomic terms: they merely express two ways in which the present can establish its links with the past." T.S. Eliot wrote that "No poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists. You cannot value him alone; you must set him, for contrast and comparison, among the dead" ([1919] 1998, p. 28). Archaism disturbs this relation:

> Archaists' time is, in the terms adopted by recent scholars, queer time – out of joint, askew, at odds with conventional notions of temporality. In its impersonation of the past, archaism unsettles relationships between past, present and future even as it seemingly attempts to inscribe them. Archaists reject, implicitly or explicitly, some of the conventions of their own day; however, they do not slavishly imitate outmoded forms. [...] Archaism's backward glance is not, therefore, purely nostalgic. Instead, the archaising writer seeks to reshape the past, to mould the present, and proleptically to conjure times yet to come; he or she creates a temporal hybrid [...]. (Munro, 2013, p. 5)

Traxel laments (2012, pp. 42-43, 46) that, while the Renaissance writer may have archaised into Chaucerian neo-Middle English, literary pastness has now become a single homogenized thing, and that it looks inevitably like Shakespeare or King James. He decries the simple rules that seem to obtain, and the 'pseudo-archaic', forms that never existed, that emerges. Archaic English for some has become synonymous with Wardour Street style. Named by William Morris, this type of foreignization uses "an amalgam of obsolete words from many different periods, mingled with contemporary language to create a diction no one ever actually spoke", and was used by Victorians and Edwardians for evoking mythical time, though its abuse led to it being associated with 'translatorese' (Apter and Herman, 2016, pp. 36-37). Even Coleridge used it until he revised archaisms out of his subsequent *Rime* due to reader revolt (Sonmez, 2002).

We can attempt to crystalize archaizing's workings and aims. Munro sets out four theses that can serve as a starting point for further argument:

> 1. Archaism is a form of imitation.[5]
> 2. Archaic words and styles undermine linear temporality, reconfiguring relationships between past, present and future.
> 3. Archaism is intertwined with national identity.
> 4. Archaism is self-conscious and artificial, yet capable of arousing strong emotion.
> (2013, p. 12)

We see these ideas at work in Borges' well-known satire, "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote" (1962), whose hero writes archaically even though he is writing verbatim what Cervantes wrote:

> The contrast in style is also vivid. The archaic style of Menard-- quite foreign, after all--suffers from a certain affectation. Not so that of his forerunner, who handles with ease the current Spanish of his time. […] He dedicated his scruples and his sleepless nights to repeating an already extant book in an alien tongue.

By showing a verbatim rewriting as an archaizing translation, Borges' text powerfully dramatizes the concept in #2, that words' meanings are not fixed. But #1 and #2 come to clash when we consider archaism more as strategy than aspiration. The contemporaneity of all eras is a precept closely associated with Ezra Pound. "Much depends on how one chooses to interpret archaism as a poetic practice," writes Richard Sieburth:

> Is it simply a vestige of the pseudo-historicist Wardour Street diction of the Victorians, an elitist desire, as Marxist critics might claim, to steep the commodity in nostalgia, to fetishize or glamorize the cultural capital of the past? Or are we to understand archaism as a more modernist strategy, that is, as an attempt to violently estrange language from its current linguistic norms by displacing it into an anachronistic—or indeed an a-chronistic—dialect . . . untimely, out of date, and which thereby calls into question what exactly it might mean to speak as a "contemporary"? "All ages are contemporary," Pound observed in 1910. To which one might add Mallarmé's more post-modernist insight: "No age is ever contemporary with itself." (in Perloff, 2003)

This view finds in archaism not an imitative but a recreative vein, one that displaces rather than returns the text to a fixed time, and points to the estranging function of art. A case of interlingual translation demonstrates how translators have chafed against the argument that the original's "thoughts will lose of their original beauty by the innovation of words", as in the case of Dryden as translator of Chaucer. He defends his contemporization with the idea that without updating, "not only their beauty, but their being is lost, where they are

[5] Munro makes it clear elsewhere that it is no mindless mimicry: "Literary archaism recurs whenever writers are attentive to the precise detail of the voices of the past and are determined to build on their aesthetic and cultural potential" (2013, p. 241).

no longer understood... ". One step further in this line of the creative advantage of the future readers of an author is found in Bakhtin (1986, p. 5), who, in Petrilli's words,

> would have us observe that distance, temporal, epochal remoteness, enhances understanding of a text when it is capable, as occurs with a text endowed with artistic value, of living in the 'great time'; so that we can make the claim that neither Shakespeare, nor his contemporaries knew the great Shakespeare we know today; and this is because we are in a position to know not only the close contexts of the meanings of his work, but also the remote contexts. This is also true *à propos* the relationship between the author and the original text and between the translator and the translated text. (2016, para. 60)

Petrilli concludes that the source text's semiotic "absolute otherness" evades total interpretation (ibid.); by extension, a writer is--to pirouette on Pound--never quite a self-contemporary, as remoteness has not yet taken hold.

One of the difficulties in the reception of archaisms is gauging with certainty *what they are*. Albaladejo Martínez (2012, p. 68) distinguishes 'primary' or synchronic archaisms that are intratextually archaic, and 'secondary' or diachronic archaisms that result from temporal displacements in translation. Lefere's model features *hyperarchaïsme* (hyperarchaism) at one pole, where language was current at the time the source text is set but fallen out of use (1994, p. 242), or the target text language or passage is pitched older than the corresponding segment of the source (in Jones and Turner's adoption of the term, 2004, p. 5). Archaisations, by the same token, do not have to match the time of the source; where there is no congruent form, such as a fourth-century-BCE English, for example, ancient Greek would have to default to either an 'updated archaic'—a more modern English--under Lefere's scheme, or a 'superficial modernisation' (Jones and Turner, 2004, p. 6). The challenge may lie in knowing what seemed archaic to the original reader (Albaledejo Martínez, 2012, p. 57). *Don Quixote* offers a classic example of the former: Cervantes used everyday Spanish, but the protagonist's old-fashioned, bookish chronolect stands out from that of other characters, and should in translation as well--though often does not. In fact, this complication to the parallax (Viewpoint-Object-Distant background), one of many, may be said to blur background and object into two-dimensionality, or to where another background (a pluperfect time relative to the setting) becomes lost to future readers, especially in light of the single pastness phenomenon. And Rudyard Kipling gave the animals in *The Jungle Books* a language at once high-register Victorian English and timelessly utopian, in contrast to apes and even the human villagers. Archaism may even be used in a hybrid with colloquialism, as Hemingway famously does in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*: "I obscenity in the milk of thy tiredness" (Hemingway, 1940, p. 98 in Lonsdale, 2018, p. 108), a line that uses pseudotranslation as well.

Archaism in different word categories and genres:
How is archaism encoded? Delabastita defines archaism in translation as text elements that stand out: "words or utterances which are historically marked [as 'old'] and therefore neatly separated from the large majority of cross-temporally unmarked language

elements" (2004, p. 883). But let us consider different word categories. We tend to define archaism unconsciously as language's syntax, but it also registers quite visibly in morphology ('cometh'), and on the level of semantics, that is, verbal archaism. For instance, lexical items that are historical, such as this architectural curiosity, the *casa a malicia* (Gracián, 1939 [1653], p. 468, lit. the 'house of wickedness'), which were deceptive architectural tricks used to earn hospitality tax relief in early modern Spain. This example illustrates that it is the *concept* that is archaic.[6] The inextricability of law, social stratification, taxation, and architecture in this case presents a problem of terminology solvable through a projective fabrication to create a domesticated functional equivalent from our times, for instance something to do with eminent domain, but tax cheating to avoid royal abuses have no exact experiential correlates today. Information density in literary translation, even synchronic translation, can easily be distinguished by the translator ('need to know' from 'do not need to know'), but style lies in the vast middle ground of 'nice to know'.

The idea of archaism as metonymy takes us beyond the language proper: "Metonyms for the past" Sonmez tells us, may not be verbal but rather the story or the manner of telling (Sonmez, 2002, p. 29). Gary Miranda (n.d., n.p.), for instance, discusses Rilke's exclamations of "Oh" in the Elegies, and argues they are less tolerated today (not perhaps, that we do not use the exclamation, but that we do not inscribe it explicitly). The shift is not only in norms but in the *semanticity* of emotion, that is, in the ability of an emotional cue in a poem to represent more than an intrusion or a bit of 'literariness'. And therein lies a translation constraint, in this sense: if we choose texts from the past, we are already in the realm of archaism. Arguably, for some readers even masculine-generic forms present a problem of ideological archaism, we can call it: to render gender-free—to update—or to keep antiquated. Frequently missing in discussions of literary archaism is this idea that *genre* itself is determinant of perceptions of quaintness or modernness. Forms such as the Socratic dialogue (4th C. BCE) can seem bound to their origins; the reception of other genres fluctuate with entire belief systems, for instance the ghost story's coming into or falling out of favor depending on an age's rationalism, or the present-day reader's (dis)connection with allegory's didacticism. The prescient Holmes wrote (1972, p. 104) the following: "On the linguistic level, the translator must find a solution for the fact that the poem is written in an older *état de langue* or "temporal dialect," and decide what to do with the rondel "now a relic of the bygone tradition…". And he or she must contend with the reality "that the central image of the poem, young men riding on horseback to impress the girls, has lost its compelling force…" (ibid.). This conceptual entropy, a byproduct of cross-temporal dialectical translation, perhaps accounts more for the doctrine of untranslatability still holding sway than the incommensurabilities of nuance and

[6] Krzysztof defines archaism tentatively as "a word, expression or structure now perceived as non-contemporary, and indeed belonging to an earlier epoch, whose denotation no longer exists or which has usually been supplanted by a newer word" (2019, p. 59). That is, a word intralingually translated out of existence; this does not wholly account for the *casa a malicia*, however, which is foreign *and* archaic, a larger gap.

connotation. But emotional evocation and rational denotation both can be lost in archaic language. Steiner writes simply, "Not everything can be translated now. Contexts can be lost, which in the past made it possible to interpret a piece of writing which now eludes us. We no longer have an adequate Rückenfühlung, as Nicolai Hartmann called the gift of retrospection" (1975, p. 249). Or perhaps: We can translate it, but its relevance may be too heavy a burden for the reader to reconstruct. Let us proceed now to our three stances.

3. Anti-archaizing

Déprats (2005, p. 81) draws on Berman to make the case that a 'period piece' results when the text is not anchored in the target language:

> The deliberately archaic translation refuses to lie by translating what is old intosomething new. It does not attempt to erase the passage of time and, in this case, it even draws attention to the age of the text and displays it. In so doing, however, it tends to deny us access to the text. Its only horizon is erudition; its only literary affinity is the pastiche. […] "The great problem in philological translation," says Antoine Berman, "is that it has *no* horizon. By that I mean not only in terms of the principles of translation, but by being *anchored* in the language and the literature of the culture into which it is being translated." (Berman, 1985, p. 134, ctd. in Déprats, 2005, p. 81)

Jones calls Anglo-American publishing unsympathetic to the archaic, noting that 'minimal modernization' has the most favored status, "archaization is largely disfavoured, and violent modernization meets with a mixed reception", or rather a norm of "concealing time-markings, rather than highlighting them by foregrounding the historicity or present-day relevance of the translated literary text" (2006, p. 192). What are the principles that account for the aversion to archaizing translation? Bassnett summarizes J. M. Cohen's belief that this translation style was out of step with the polysystem of the receiving culture and contributed to its own marginality. But note the last point below, a fascinating concession: if it is a strategic 'error', how can it *also* be theoretically defensible? Bassnett (2002, p 77) writes of Cohen's (1962, p. 24) view

> that the theory of Victorian translation was founded on a 'fundamental error'(i.e. that of conveying remoteness of time and place through the use of a mock antique language), and the pedantry and archaizing of many translators can only have contributed to setting translation apart from other literary activities and to its steady decline in status. [...] But although archaizing has gone out of fashion, it is important to remember that there were sound theoretical principles for its adoption by translators.[7]

The point about translation exiling itself from other literary production is fundamental. Let us consider Steiner's views at more length; here he argues for readability and for avoiding what amounts, to his mind, to an intralingual translation into an archaic register: generally, he writes, "only the translator of a contemporary text synchronizes."

[7] See Steiner, 1975, p. 341.

Why put Dante into kinds of French or German that those who need translations cannot access? "But although a total reconstructive archaism [...] is rare, archaism to some degree and a displacement of style towards the past are pervasive in the history and craft of translation" (1975, p. 341). Steiner cites the classics, scripture, and history as usually avoiding contemporary idiom. But as in Bassnett, the hedges should not be lost sight of, as an admission of archaism's role in translation history can be discerned. Steiner indirectly points to a paradox in archaic translation, as in his discussion of the Authorized Version of the Bible (1611), a version "somehow native to the spirit of the language and as a document uniquely interwoven with the past of English feeling", an "entirely alien world of expression and reference" that produces "at-homeness" in readers (1975, p. 248). The result is "a new pivot of English self-consciousness" and an appropriation (ibid.). This paradox, verging on the mystic, is perhaps more logical where the author discusses this style in terms not of pure datedness but of hybridization:

> Translators may opt for forms of expression centuries older than current speech. They may choose an idiom prevalent only a generation back. Most frequently, the bias to the archaic produces a hybrid: the translator combines, more or less knowingly, turns taken from the past history of the language, from the repertoire of its own masters, from preceding translators or from antique conventions which modern parlance inherits and uses still for ceremony. The translation is given a patina. (Steiner, 1975, p. 360)

To revisit our parallax image, a viewpoint ‘C’ could represent this hybrid, whereby the Object is seen polychronically: against and *through* multiple palimpsestic backgrounds, foregrounds, and middle grounds at once. Steiner's choice of words, 'patina', is telling in that it is a word deriving from *pinos*, referring to tarnished bronze, including connotations of rust or dirt (Kim, 2014, p.380, p.380n61). Kim, discussing Dionysius' writings, relates that "to call a style 'patinated' is not just another way1 to describe it as 'ancient'. Patina is not something that is originally part of a work of art; it emerges over a long period [...]." Metaphorically, the image calls to mind not the "timeless 'classical' beauty" but something marked as "old-fashioned", as "archaic" (ibid.), consistent with what Jones and Turner (2004, pp. 12-13) call the “stigmatized norm” or “outmoded genre stance” of archaisation. Elsewhere Steiner uses the same image to stand for the artificial language or stylistic defect that mars translation:

> The archaic reflex extends far beyond the presumed solemnity and apartness of the classics. The bulk of literary, historical, philosophical translation, even where it concerns fiction, political writings, or plays intended for production, shows symptoms of retreat from current speech. When we score a translation as being lifeless, as being cast in 'translationese', what we are usually condemning is the patina.[8] (1975, p. 346)

[8] Consistent with this distinction is Krzysztof’s (2019, pp. 19-20) observation that archaization attempts painstakingly to recreate a given epoch’s syntax and lexis, while patinization is enveloping a text in ‘pastness’ without the historical accuracy of the former.

Crissafuli (2003, p. 189), discussing Cary's *Divine Comedy*, even considers archaism a kind of style unto itself, the ‘standard archaic usage’ that acted as a kind of toolbox for attaining proper scansion; in short, archaism served as a metrical padding or crutch. This recognition, consciously or unconsciously through literary history, may have contributed to the resentment of archaic textures. We will see below (in pro-archaizing) that others have seen pastness as an *inherent* feature of certain texts, not as one that accrues.

If Cohen is correct that 'mock antique' is wrong in all circumstances, that is, that it presents a false view of what translation is, what are we to make of Bassnett's reminder, via Steiner, that it is, or was, justifiable, a question of taste? The concession is odd given what immediately follows:

> The proposition 'the foreign poet would have produced such and such a text had he been writing in my language' is a projective fabrication. It underwrites the autonomy, more exactly, the 'meta-autonomy' of the translation. But it does much more: it introduces an alternate existence, a 'might have been' or 'is yet to come' into the substance and historical condition of one's own language, literature and legacy of sensibility. (Steiner, 197, p. 334 in Bassnett, 2002, p. 78)

Bassnett concludes, then: "The archaizing principle, then, in an age of social change on an unprecedented scale, can be compared to an attempt to 'colonize' the past" (ibid.) We can call this the stylistic 'parallel worlds' theory: archaizing inserts in the past an event that never happened. But then, is not all translation always a uchronia, an alternate history, an anachronistic event, inevitably belated? If writing a 'projective fabrication' is objectionable for its altering of history, does this not keep translation time-bound artificially to its own present? An assumption theorists make is that *archaisms are attempts to reproduce a parallel world writer from the target culture*, rather than their task being something perhaps much more mundane: deliberate, impressionistic representations of a kind of otherness to which we aspire to have access. In other words, not a false interloper masquerading as a contemporary of the author, but a text retrofitted, antiqued, to feed an honest illusion of pastness. One Shakespeare translator, in fact, is at pains to prevent the opposite, to “avoid the time discrepancy of reading Shakespeare as a false contemporary" (García García, 2013, p. 37). Steiner's view is subtler, considering the violence of his hermeneutic motion more generally: that the archaizing translation is not foreign at all, but an awakening of what is already a part of the 'receiving' tradition, what he calls an "illusion of remembrance":

> The translator labours to secure a natural habitat for the alien presence which he has imported into his own tongue and cultural setting. But archaizing his style he produces a *dejà-vu*. The foreign text is felt to be not so much an import from abroad (suspect by definition) as it is an element out of one's native past. It had been there 'all along' awaiting reprise. It is really a part of one's own tradition temporarily mislaid. (1975, p. 347)

It is not so much a temporal 'appropriation', perhaps, but a problem of *vraisemblance*, the artistic illusion of reality; in other words, a disconnection from lived

truth. LeShan (1983, p. 185) quotes Andre Malraux's observation that "We do not mind a Rembrandt looking modern but resent a modern picture looking like a Rembrandt." Malraux's reasoning is that the latter reproduces mere "outer landscapes" (ibid.). But we might compare Venuti, who argues for an *analogous* style, not a counterfactual, appropriative, or illusory one. He relates that drawing upon a "historically specific language to produce certain effects, whether literary, cultural or social", noting that Ezra Pound often used an equally archaic poetic tradition, regardless of temporal stylistic mismatches, to evoke certain effects or qualities, even if filtered through a contemporary sensibility (Venuti, 1995, pp. 190-200), and the "most important effect of Pound's archaizing strategy was to historicize his translations, to suggest – indirectly, through his very choice of archaic English forms – that the Italian texts had been produced in a historically remote culture" (Venuti, 2005, p. 807). Pound even concedes the objections of turning a "serious poem" into "a mere exercise in quaintness", in addition to the *feel* of antiquity varying between languages ([1919] 2000, p. 33).

Finally, consider this in light of the idea that translations that purportedly 'age', the source text going on in its glory. Eco (2001, p. 22), following the now-familiar nineteenth-century debates on translation, asks:

> … given a translation from Homer, should the translation transform its readers into Greek readers of Homeric times, or should it make Homer write as if he were writing today in our language? To see how this question is not nearly as preposterous as it seems, we should consider the fact that translations age. Shakespeare's text, in English, is always the same, but if modern French readers read a Shakespearean translation from the last century they feel uncomfortable and cannot take it seriously. This means that every translator, even when trying to give us the flavor of a language and of a historical period, is in fact *modernizing* to some degree.[9]

The last line, true to form for Eco, says more than it intends: to some degree, a translator must modernize, that is, must *fail to archaize*. Thus, Eco's view is not so much anti-archaizing as confident that writers inescapably textualize their situationality.

It is curious that the paradox of *prochronism*--the use of language from the future of the time of utterance, or more broadly the misplaced object, event, or word, in time--does not trouble translation theorists. An example: can a town crier in a translation of a 17th-century novel 'broadcast' his proclamation, when that verb came into English in the 19th century (its first figurative use was in 1829)? How do characters speaking a language from the future require less willing suspension of disbelief than speech appropriated from a language's past? Or how is time-trespassing one-directional? Roberts describes the hypertextual relationship whereby "translators in their belatedness may read and therefore write a work as referring to […] texts not yet written at the time of the source

[9] We can venture a qualification of the hypothesis that translations 'age': translations age *if they are perceived as translations*. Were translations and 'originals' indiscriminately mixed, would readers tell them apart based on the perception of 'datedness' or another defect that they assign to (the texts they deem to be) translations but not to (the texts they deem to be) 'originals'?

text," and thus the opening words of translator Stanley Lombardo's version of Homer's *Odyssey*, "Speak, Memory", are alluding to Vladimir Nabokov's memoir (Roberts, 2007, pp. 259-260). The logic of this translation by anachronistic quotation is: "if Homer can speak twentieth-century English, why can't he quote Nabokov?" (ibid., 261). This reasoning brings Homer not only to the reader, but to the reader's universe of discourse (which would fashion a Homer that theoretically inhabits a time contemporary with not only the latest English-language Homer, or Nabokov, but a telescoped timeline in which he can quote any or all his own past translations: Homer as reader of the *Odyssey*).

4. The middle course

Commentators, sometimes despite themselves, may steer for a middle course:

> Those who argued that older works should be allowed to 'die' and those who thought that they merely demanded greater effort from readers represent two extremes. More moderate, and practical, solutions were offered by those who sought to connect old texts with new readers through tactics such as glossing, updating and various forms of translation. (Munro, 2013, p. 70)

Robinson (2019, n.p.), following Hofstadter,[10] locates archaizing as one of translation's 'strange loops':

> Finally, should the translator of, say, Homer's Odyssey, or the Bible, archaize the target language, because the source text is archaic? Or should they modernize it, because (we're told) the source text was not written to be archaic, and was originally heard by source listeners as ordinary contemporary speech? The marketplace norm in this case vacillates, but tends to lean more toward modernization - or rather, toward a cautious kind of modernization that is also just elevated enough to create the illusion (audience-effect) of being old and venerable. Nothing slangy; nothing impenetrably ancient; nothing in the target reader's face: just enough hints in both directions to allow the target reader to feel comfortable projecting some kind of idealized normative coherence onto the text.

The language here is studiously forked, leavened with many qualifiers and attenuating verbs to suggest a negotiated concession to both sides: 'vacillates', 'learn more toward', 'cautious', 'just elevated enough', 'illusion', 'hints in both directions'. The implications here are a language not moored in either direction (native neither to our time nor to another), a language rooted nowhere, a strategy rather than a native tongue.

Jones (2006, pp. 202-3) differentiates approaches based on the emphasis one wishes to give and cites many variables including the relative status of the cultures, the tension between desire to communicate (or persuade politically) over the stylistic imperative, and the hybridity of the poles in practice. His conclusion is worth considering at length:

[10] "... 'strange loop' is ... not a physical circuit but an abstract loop in which, in the series of stages that constitute the cycling-around, there is a shift from one level of abstraction (or structure) to another, which feels like an upward movement in a hierarchy, and yet somehow the successive 'upward' shifts turn out to give rise to a closed circle. That is, despite one's sense of departing ever further from one's origin, one winds up, to one's shock, exactly where one had started out." (Hofstadter, 2007, pp. 101-102).

> Minimal modernization, for example, is seen by its proponents as stressing the universality of the text and writer. But how far it forces the text into the aesthetic/communicational norms of the target culture and time (i.e., domesticates, in Venuti's terms) or validates the text and writer's place in the source culture and time (i.e., foreignizes) appears to depend on other factors. Among these are the underlying relationship between the cultures concerned, and the aspects of textuality modernized. Thus, as we [see] with some Agamemnon, when vocabulary and grammar are updated but devices such as poetic discourse are not modernized away, and the source text/writer/culture carries high status in the target culture, audiences appear to be guided into the source-culture world rather than have their own world confirmed. However, the more an ideology of plain communication leads translators to delete aspects of the stylistic remainder which they see as archaic (e.g., conventional bardic phrasings in Homer's Iliad), the more the source-culture world or its writer will actually have been reshaped to fit the norms of the target culture and time.
> Archaization, it seems, can validate the source work, particularly (as Venuti's theories predict) if it is part of a minoritizing drive to reproduce the source's textual richness while keeping a clear semantic/pragmatic message […].

But archaism above the word level, he contends, lessens readability and sociopolitical impact; he argues that multiple strategies can attend to both politics and the "mythic timelessness" (ibid.).

Jones is not alone is positing hybridizations, which he finds, can "reinforce, complement, or oppose" one another, suggesting translations are multi-temporal and multi-strategic, an implication that ought to be explored further in specific works or translators. Steiner referred to the hybrid King James as a successful model (see above). Déprats gestures to the temporal hybrid in describing the stage director as a kind of translator, transforming, revealing, and overlapping temporal disjunctures (2005, pp. 75-76), and in the process inhabiting more than one time through prototypicality. This is the middle ground, analogously, of our archaism debate: not either/or but both/and (as 'Neither' is another manifestation of the middle). The author, in describing two poles, validates pro-archaizing as well: by accentuating the reader's time or the author's time, he makes the point that the historical approach stresses "what is unique and discontinued", whereas actualizing "emphasizes underlying affinities". The past is not gone in the latter, but History returned in disguise (ibid., p. 77). This is at bottom a conciliatory view of non-opposing aesthetics. Leighton, following the early 1990s Soviet writers he surveys, is similarly diplomatic in calling for the middle path or synthesis: "in term of text-oriented versus reader-oriented translation: there is a degree to which the integrity of the text must be upheld, and the reader expected to be accommodating" (Leighton, 1991., p. 59).

Holmes (1972) distinguished two hypothetical poles: *historicizing* (historically marked language, writerly, 'othered', with critical apparatus) and *modernizing* (written in the language of the target reader). The former he called 'retentive' translation and the latter, 're-creative' (p. 105). But he then began to suspect that it was not a matter of one versus another, but that multiple possibilities were allowable, such as 1) a replica of the language of the past; 2) 'standard archaic'; or 3) two different varieties of modern idioms, the early

or traditional modern and an experimental or contemporary modern. His findings (ibid., p. 109) on a small-scale corpus of poetry translations suggested that no translator surveyed had modernized in all identified areas (verse form, linguistic, and socio-cultural dimensions), revealing not the inconsistency of translators but the complexity of the 'cross-temporal' factor in translation, which he found to be a problem equal to the interlingual (ibid., p. 103).

We can apply the same rigor to the middle ground as we did in the Anti-archaizing section by asking rhetorically: Is a temporal compromise not also a projection, a 'mid-Atlantic' Esperanto that no one ever really spoke?

5. Pro-archaizing

Let us propose for debate some suppositions that might strengthen a hypothetical case for archaizing:

1. Archaizing occurs in 'original' creative fiction and poetry; why should translation be denied the full range of expressive resources, particularly when it seeks to renovate language (and does pastness alone mean language cannot renew or surprise)?[11] If the plot and diction of all translations are to be set in the present day, are we not reducing translation's role to mere access, and its status to commentary?

2. Archaizing need not be all or nothing, but rather a stylistic effect used proportionately (Jones identifies: ‘time-matched archaization’, ‘superficial archaization’, ‘minimal modernization’, ‘violent modernization’ [2006, p. 191]).

2b. The obsolescence of individual words does not make whole passages or works inaccessible.

3. The language of any given historical moment is anachronistic, 'impure', reflecting that of its own era but also previous ones.

4. Arguments against who can use language of the past might be said to fail on the same grounds as defenders of directionality orthodoxy (that is, translation only into one's L1). One's L1, moreover, is imperfect, like one's command of archaized language.

5. Archaizing is a facet of foreignizing (per Venuti), avoiding the violence of radical accessibility.

6. Archaizing does not seek authenticity, but translation *effects*.

7. Archaizing does not produce immersivity, but a heightening of language awareness, particularly if done contrastively within a work (i.e., styles in a range of time-markedness).

8. Archaizing performs across the same temporal distance as modernizing, only in the opposite direction (from the receiving culture's repertoire to the target's).

9. The translator may perceive the original language, in Roberts’ words, as “in some sense ‘absolutely’ or essentially archaic” (2007, p. 268), in effect treating it as timeless, and rendering the parallactic perspectives (Fig. 1) inoperative.[12]

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[11] Not all readers accept the pseudo-archaic in non-translated works, of course.

[12] Roberts cites Newman’s argument with Arnold to this effect, wherein he claims: “Was Homer of this class? I say, that he *not only was* antiquated, relatively to Pericles, but is *also* absolutely antique, being the poet of

Jones observes that temporally adapting Homer to modern norms, for example, would create a barrier between the reader and otherness, at the same time it would present Anglo-America as universal, implicitly the form the bard 'naturally' takes (pp. 195-196); he cites Venuti's advocacy of foreignization, the production of a 'stylistic remainder', or the use of the non-standard dimensions of the target ('minoritization') to create an analogous remainder. "Here," he writes, "archaization, archaizing- modernizing polychrony, and violent modernization are among the techniques at the translator's disposal" (pp. 195-96; Venuti, 1995, 1996).[13]And Lefere makes an argument for archaizing in observing that a 'discordance' between the reader's language and the "exotic" world described may attend the reading of a modernized text (1994, p. 243).

Wilson finds that archaizing (time-mismatched prochronism) can wrench the reader into awareness. Krzysztof presents the archaizing impulse, rightly, as more than decorative; but he also verges on describing its adherents' indulgence in it in fetichizing, even pathologizing, terms, calling forth timeless order, stability and immutability (2019, p. 263):

> archaization, far from being merely an idle ornament, serves as a powerful vehicle for frequently suppressed emotions, doubtless constituting the very core of human experiences. The yearning for stability, the innocence embodied in culturally conditioned images of the prelapsarian bliss, the simplicity of the bygone existence, and the sepia-tinged visions of Arcadian harmony – all these subtly intertwined pictures and mental constructs constitute, to a variable degree, the very core of the archaizing motion. Moreover, archaism implies stability and cohesiveness, which are seen as markedly absent from contemporary experience... (ibid., pp. 7-8)

Archaization's survival today, the author continues, is reduced to "postmodern pastiche, revived, resurrected and recreated" as mere entertainment, despite the serious "crytpo-religious attitudes" and desires with which it is actually imbued (ibid., p. 9). Krzysztof is a thorough and careful thinker about the issue, but how does holding a notion of the past as refuge and perfection lead to embracing its language, and rejecting one's own?

Déprats (2005, p. 78) employs the familiar and utopian metaphors of the translator as a revivalist of the forgotten, and "takes on the role of curator for the history of the language," though he concedes that creating a fictitious language contemporary to a text can create a "distance" that harms the living relationship of reader/viewer and text, he also notes that the deliberately modern translation cannot avoid the "falsehood" of a denied historicity (2004, p. 72). And Kharmandar sees revitalization of "national language reservoirs" in archaizing, even "safeguarding the language from the risk of being colonized"

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a barbarian age" (Newman, 1914, p. 343 in Roberts, 2007, p. 268). Roberts distinguishes three kinds of antiquity that translators might employ (often without specifying): relative to ourselves, relative to an earlier reader, and relative absolutely (ibid., p. 269). This range of attributions of an essence divided translators: for some, "the Classics are always (though in a variety of senses) *old*, and should be so rendered; but to others, both before and after, they are (for various different reasons) *new*, and our translations must keep them so" (ibid., p. 274).

[13] This study assumes chronological unity in translation, but it need not obtain: experimental polychronic translation might lead to productive effects.

(2014, p. 44). But it is Robinson who taps into what is perhaps the strongest and most common defense of archaizing; it is notable in characterizing a kind of *always already ancient* essence in given texts, ostensibly venerable ones:

> One fairly widespread opinion is that the Odyssey and the Bible are not only ancient texts but valuable specifically for their hoary antiquity, and therefore should be archaized in translation as well. What is then being rhetorically stabilized is not an imaginary past origin-moment at which the source text was "modern" but an *imaginary present noble-rust-moment* (see Schlegel 1791; Robinson 1997/2015, p. 214 in English) at which the source text is always respectably 'old.' (Robinson, 2019, n. p., emphasis in original)

This 'noble rust' school of thought reminds us that archaic language is semantically, not only stylistically, charged: archaic language *means aesthetically*, we might say. Ben Jonson captured this sentiment best:

> Words borrow'd of Antiquity, doe lend a kind of Majesty to style, and are not without their delight sometimes. For they have the Authority of yeares, and out of their intermission doe win to themselves a kind of grace-like newnesse (Jonson in Herford et al., 1947, p. 622)

The quotation serves as a reminder that 'contemporary' and 'archaic' are functions of reception as much as inherent qualities of language.

6. Conclusion

We have traced how contemporary theorists have assigned value to, or disparaged, archaizing translation; the pendulum of contemporary aesthetics has swung against the practice, but the poles have not vanished, and that is perhaps the key point: the impulse to archaize is not even a modern one but can be found in the earliest premodern thinkers. Cases where qualified support appears, or concessions in either direction, show none holds claim to a unified field theory of archaic language. It often comes down to where and in what measure the technique is applied, and crucially, how well, for we are squarely in the realm of stylistics, or as Holmes calls these problems, *literary and socio-cultural* (1972, p. 104). Much work remains, whatever happens in future cycles of argument and backlash, starting with a historical taxonomic question: How does late modern intralingual translation from medieval texts intersect with other kinds and modes of text production, and how did these practices color past and the present aesthetics? Then, how can we better integrate Bahktin's heuristic of the chronotope ('space-time'), intersecting time studies and translation studies, particularly to reveal how time-markedness assumes *form*: "time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history" (Bakhtin, 1981, p. 84)? In what circumstances, and for what reasons, have archaized originals been modernized in translation? Are originals allowed greater leeway or creative license than translations in the use of archaic registers? Have archaic concepts been conceptually contemporized, tempo-localized, to any extent, and do proponents of verbal modernization also favor

conceptual modernization? Do distinctions between obsolete and archaic matter in perception (attitudes toward translations) or readability? Which triggers more rejection from readers, syntactic or lexical (verbal) archaism? Of what would a 'timeless' translation consist? What value system imbues Robinson's collocation above, 'respectably old', with sense, namely, one in which the antique is venerated? And, are translators as consistent in applying one or another approach? Only more research, and time, will tell.

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TANDARADEI AND THE LOVERS' *BETTE*: A TRANSLATION EXPERIMENT OF *UNDER DER LINDE*

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ABSTRACT: This essay discusses an experimental translation class conducted as part of the 'Introduction to German Culture in the European Context' course at the University of Porto. The course focuses on medieval German lyric poetry, specifically the *Minnesang* genre, exploring themes of love, honor, and power. In the 2023/2024 edition of the course, 17 students from diverse cultural backgrounds translated the initial stanza of Walther von der Vogelweide's poem *Under der linden*. The essay reflects on the challenges and decisions involved in translating the poem across different languages.
KEYWORDS: Transculturality, Minnesang, Walther von der Vogelweide

The translations presented in appendix below are the outcome of an experimental class held within the framework of the 'Introduction to German Culture in the European Context' course at the Faculty of Arts, University of Porto. This course, designed for master's students in Transnational German Studies, aims to explore German and transcultural archetypes by delving into medieval German lyric poetry, particularly the poetry of the *Minnesang* – a literary genre created and propagated in the German courts of the 12th and 13th centuries, and which closely aligns with the troubadour tradition prevalent throughout medieval Europe. Within this genre, the lyrical I, often embodied as a knight, directs his affection and devotion towards a lady of higher social standing who, in turn, rejects his advances. Conversely, some poems also portray women passionately drawn to knights they cannot attain due to societal divisions and physical distance. As such, the *Minnesang* encapsulates an intricate realm of impossible and idealized relationships, where men and women typically do not unite. This was the chosen genre for this class, as it serves as a literary sphere housing a multitude of archetypes pivotal to German literature, including themes of love, honor, and power.

In the 2023/2024 edition, the class comprised 17 students from 17 different countries, each bringing unique and occasionally divergent perspectives on culture and its components. Consequently, translation became necessary, allowing students to approach the concepts under study by attempting to render into their own languages elements and motifs discussed in class. Yet, at times, divergence was inevitable. In an intercultural classroom, the challenge arose of how to define a notion such as *poetry* when, in Arabic (شعر) and Turkish (*şiir*), the term is intricately linked to the perception and comprehension of the world, which does not happen in other languages. Similarly, the definition of *to love* became a nuanced endeavor, encompassing German's *lieben* and *minnen* (in the medieval sense), Spanish's *amar* and *querer*, or the rich diversity of over ten types of loving in Arabic

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(الْهَوَى, الْكَلَفُ, الْعِشْقُ, اللعَاج, etc.). Likewise, the word *medieval* posed its own set of challenges, particularly as students from Africa and the Americas perceive this historical period as both temporally and spatially distant.

In this multicultural context and in this atmosphere of complete skepticism towards cultural elements and archetypes, I suggested to the students that we embarked on the translation of the initial stanza of a poem slated for study: *Under der linden* by Walther von der Vogelweide. Like many medieval poets, Walther von der Vogelweide remains a figure shrouded in mystery, with scant details available beyond what can be gleaned from his own poems or other textual sources. Born around 1170 and likely passing away around 1230, Walther composed numerous poems of various lyrical subgenres.

Under der linden, a poem that stands out as a quintessential representation of German culture and medieval creativity, probably dates from early 13th century. This text serves as a fresh portrayal of lovers within the *Minnesang* lyrical and troubadour tradition, expanding upon established ideas. Unlike most songs where lovers do not unite, *Under der linden* tells the tale of a young woman (potentially a lady) confessing to moments spent with her beloved beneath the lime tree, and reflecting on her passion and sin. I hereby present the first stanza of the poem[1]:

Under der linden
an der heide
dâ unser zweier bette was,
dâ mugent ir vinden
schône beide
gebrochen bluomen unde gras.
vor dem walde in einem tal,
tandaradei,
schône sanc diu nahtegal.

The initial stage of the translation involved delving into the interpretation of the text (the poem has four stanzas, but for the purpose of this exercise, only the first stanza was translated). In it, a female lyrical persona – possibly a courtly lady – confesses her passionate transgression with her beloved. The text opens with an alliterative melody (*un****der der*** *lin****de****/auf* ***der*** *hei****de***) referring to the lime tree (l.1), on a heath (l.2) under which the lovers made their bed (l.3). Naturally, the bed serves as a metaphorical, almost metonymic representation of the space of transgression: it is the *locus amoenus* where the lovers reclined. Transitioning from the description of the space, the lyrical I leaps metaleptically to the tangible realm and informs its audience (or us, the reader) that we can find something ‘there’ (l.4): crushed and beautiful flowers and grass (l.4-5). In a normative troubadour poetic tradition where sexual acts are condemned (as mentioned above, troubadour love is invariably deemed impossible), the flower can be interpreted as

[1] I have myself edited the poem by having compared the two extant versions of it (in the *Weingartner Liederhandschrift* and *Codex Manesse* manuscripts). See Teixeira, 2021 (p. 693).

the lady's own virginity now breached; however, the feminine impulse of assertion affirms that the flower is still beautiful, thereby challenging the normativity of poetry and the audience/readers' expectations. The final three lines make it clear that the lovers were not alone in the heath, as there was a witness to the transgression: a nightingale, the symbol of poetry, singing beautifully in the woods. This singing is presented through the onomatopoeia *tandaradei* in the penultimate line, which emerges almost like a refrain in every stanza of the poem.

The interpretation of the poem naturally prompted a more extensive analysis of the entire poem in class. However, for the purposes of this article, I shall focus on just some of the insights that the participants had to retain during their translation.

After the analysis, a moment of methodological reflection about translation followed. It was decided from the outset that the translation could not be entirely free or excessi. On the other hand, even though we aimed to get close to the source language, the translation would not be too literal, as there are grammatical characteristics in Middle High German that do not correspond to the structures of the languages the participants would be working with. In fact, creating a translation methodology that made sense in all languages seemed utopian – and doing so could lead to the complete fragmentation of the original text or even a profound disregard for the possibilities of each target language. Nevertheless, we identified some points students should follow:

- The poem should be segmented into units of meaning, each to be translated as a distinct unit. Each line is, therefore, treated as an individual unit.
- The source text did not exhibit any syntactic awkwardness, and therefore, the translation should steer clear of syntactic structures that might introduce such sensation.
- The *topoi*, representing recurring themes or motifs, should not be altered to better align with the target cultures. That is to say, the translations should employ connotative equivalents (e.g., *nahtegal* should not be translated as 'bird,' 'creature,' or 'poet,' but rather as 'nightingale' – unless, of course, such an equivalent does not exist in the target language). The identified *topoi* include: *linden, heide, bette, bluomen, gras, tal, nahtegal*, as well as the onomatopoeia *tandaradei.*
- Formal elements such as rhyme, meter, cadence, or rhythm would not be considered for this translation exercise.
- Whenever the guidelines themselves came into conflict (as, for instance, when maintaining a given unit of meaning in a specific language resulted in awkwardness), participants should contemplate translation alternatives, providing justifications for their choices.

The overall translation process unfolded smoothly and with relative ease. This can be attributed to the text's intrinsic characteristics: the stanza possesses a notably narrative quality and employs structures and imagery that, according to participants, have

remarkably close equivalents in their respective native languages. While these may conjure specific ideas, images, or sounds, the main lexical items (such as flowers, woods, and nightingales) boasted direct counterparts in all the languages used in this exercise. Nevertheless, the stanza's translation posed challenges, prompting a discussion of a couple of specific issues within the text. These were the translation of *bette* and the rendering of the onomatopoeia *tandaradei*. The following reflections are, therefore, the outcome of the discussion I had with the students.

The initial challenge arose in the third line when participants tackled the translation of *bette*. This word, which we could translate into English as *bed*, denotes not only the piece of furniture, but also, through metaphorical extension, a place where someone or something lies or is lain down. In fact, the same happens in English: in the expression 'I'm going to bed', the term 'bed' differs from its usage in 'the seabed' or in 'flower bed'. The translation of the term into New High German or Luxembourgish proceeded seamlessly (both cases yielding 'Bett'), and the same seemed to be the case in Bengali (*শয্যা*), Hungarian (*ágy*), French (*lit*), Russian (кровати) and Lithuanian (*lova*). According to the participants from each language, a singular word adequately captured the essence of the term.

In the remaining languages used in the exercise, the different meanings are expressed by different terms. In Portuguese, Spanish, and Galician, for example, there is *cama* to refer to the piece of furniture, and *leito* (or *lecho* in Spanish) to refer to the sleeping surface (which could also be the part of the bed that supports the mattress, the seabed, or figuratively, marriage). The same occurs in Indonesian, where *bette* is translated as *ranjang* (as opposed to *tempat tidur*, which would refer to the material object), and in Thai, with *ที่นอน* as opposed to *เตียง.* None of the participants from this set of languages opted to use the word corresponding to the piece of furniture. Opting to translate *bette* into an equivalent that pertains to the act of lying down rather than the object itself implies that, in the poem (or shall I say in the translator's eyes and interpretation), there is no literal bed – *bette* only symbolizes a metaphorical conceptualization of space.

In Chinese and Turkish, a similar problem emerged, but the translations of *bette* in these two languages appears to intensify the notion of lying down, as well as the sexual encounter. In Chinese, *bette* is translated as *卧床*, a combination of the characters for *lying/lying down* and *bed*. According to the translator, the concept of a bed exists only through the character *床*; however, the text would seem peculiar without the character *卧*, which means that *bette* had to be converted to *the bed where we lay down*. A similar situation can be seen in Turkish, where the translation of *bette* is rendered as *yattığı yerde*. Although *yatak* serves as the equivalent of *bette*, the translation explicitly refers to *the place [bed] where we were lying*. In contrast to the other languages where the image of the bed only implicitly alludes to the idea of a sexual encounter, the translation into these languages intensifies the idea of the lovers lying down together, hence transgressing the courtly rules.

The lovers' transgression on this bed of grass and flowers is, as previously noted, observed (and maybe even narrated) by a nightingale, who continuously sings *tandaradei* throughout the poem. Translating onomatopoeias poses a challenge, given their frequent use in literary works to evoke a musical resonance within the poem; musical quality, however, is often lost in translation. Nevertheless, the *tandaradei* had to be translated for this exercise to ensure the reader's comprehension of the source text. This has presented a unique challenge as this onomatopoeia is a neologism coined by Walther von der Vogelweide and lacks equivalence in the languages used for this exercise.

Among the 15 languages into which the poem was translated, six retained the onomatopoeia *tandaradei* as it is: German, Luxembourgish, Spanish, Galician, French, and Turkish. In Lithuanian, the sound that we imagine to be that of Middle High German (/'tan.da.ra.daj'/) was maintained, with the diphthong *dei* changed to *dai* (*tandaradai*). In Thai, the sound was transliterated into pairs of sounds recognized by speakers of the language – *ทันดาราได* (/ˈ ta:n-ˈda.ɐ-ˈʁa.ɐ-ˈdaj/) – as was done in Chinese – *唐达拉达* (in pinyin, *tángdálādá*).

In the remaining six languages, the translators decided to translate the onomatopoeia, as they considered that the original term would not make it clear that it referred to the nightingale's singing. As it is a neologism, this was also the only part of the exercise that required a true adaptation:

Target language	**Target text**	**Phonetic transcription**
Hungarian	*tyú tyú tyú tyü tyü tyí tyí*	ti.ˈu ti.ˈu ti.ˈu ˈtiü ˈtiü t.ˈi t.ˈi
Portuguese	*Ó larai, ó larai*	ˈɔ lɐ.ˈɾaj, ˈɔ lɐ.ˈɾaj
Indonesian	*trilili*	trɨ.lɨ.ˈli
Russian	*Чик-чирик*	ˈt͡ɕiˈkt͡ɕirʲɪk
Arabic	عندلة	ʕaˈndalæ
Bengali	*কিচিরমিচির শব্দে*	ˈkit͡ʃir ˈmit͡ʃir ˈʃɔbde

The process of adapting *tandaradei* for Hungarian and Portuguese followed similar principles: the translators aimed to find onomatopoeic sounds that readers in the target language could interpret as mimicking the sound of a bird. However, the choice of phonemes varied significantly between the two languages. In Hungarian, the onomatopoeia retained the initial alveolar plosive /t/, which is repeated seven times, interwoven with closed vowels /j/ and /u/, creating a pattern reminiscent of a bird's song. Conversely, in Portuguese, the translator selected the lateral approximant /l/ to transition from the open vowels /ɐ/ to /a/, and then closing them again in /j/. The inclusion of the interjection 'Ó' further enhances the musicality of the line, which aligns with the imagery of the bird and its song.

In Indonesian, a combination of these two principles was employed, using the alveolar plosive /t/ and combining it with the lateral approximant /l/. However, the use of *trilili* was inspired by an existing onomatopoeia in Indonesian, specifically taken from a

traditional children's song, *Burung Kutilang*, in which a bird sings *trilili* on a champak tree. Similarly, the Russian translator also opted for a choice already ingrained in Russian culture and language, selecting the existing onomatopoeia *Чик-чирик* (/ˈt͡ɕiˈkt͡ɕirʲɪk/). The translator expressed concerns that using *tandaradei* in the translation might cause confusion for the reader, and introducing a new word might not effectively address the issue. Hence, the decision was made to use *Чик-чирик* (/ˈt͡ɕiˈkt͡ɕirʲɪk), this representing the commonly employed onomatopoeia in Russian to convey the sound of birds.

It is noteworthy that all four languages share the use of alliteration and repetition in this onomatopoeia, as in the original *tandaradei*. This repetition also occurred in Bengali with *কিচিরমিচির* (/ˈkit͡ʃir ˈmit͡ʃir/), whereby the only phoneme that does not repeat being the transition from the plosive /k/ to the nasal /m/, and this occurs at the beginning of each word. It should also be noted that the translator considered that this option would still not be sufficient to understand the text, so he added *শব্দে* (/ˈʃɔbde/), which can be translated as a *call*. As such, the Bengali translation of *tandaradei* differs from all the others, as *কিচিরমিচির শব্দে* could be rendered as *the call kitchir michir.*

Finally, in Arabic, the onomatopoeia was translated as عندلة (ʕaˈndalæ), which does not have the same sonority or repetition which we can find in all the other languages. According to the translator, the auditory representation of the nightingale in Arabic can be encapsulated in the term عندلة, as this lexical choice, which already includes the image of the nightingale, functions as a linguistic alternative for the distinctive vocalization produced by the bird, even though it is not considered to be an onomatopoeia. This linguistic paradigm is consistent with the representation of the nightingale's sound in Arabic, عندلة being the already existing term for *the sound which the nightingale produces*, created by the process of making the noun *nahtegal* (in Arabic) into a verb (comparatively, as if in English one could say "*to nightingale*" to express the nightingale's singing).

Certainly, there are other problems and points worthy of consideration in this experiment. Regrettably, I find myself unable to delve into the intricacies of most of these aspects due to my limited proficiency in the respective languages. Nevertheless, what I wish to posit in conclusion is that this experiment has unveiled a previously undiscovered poem to me – a creation that would have remained obscured without the aid of translation. Without it, I would never have pondered on the *bette* where the lovers are and I would not have thought about the explosive and open sound of the nightingale in *tandaradei*, which seems so intrusive, and yet so melodic.

But there were additional discoveries which I will present briefly here for consideration. The main verb that I always read in line 4, *vinden* (in English, *there you can find*), acquired a new inflection when the Thai translator explained that its Thai 'equivalent' has a narrower semantic range, which led her to translate the verb as *see*. But is the lyrical I metaleptically asking the reader to see their bed? And what is that bed made of? The poem states that it is made of *gras*, but what would that look like in Galician – *herba, pasto,* or *céspede*? And where are the lovers? The preposition *vor*, in Middle High German is so versatile, that the lovers might be in front of a forest, as in New High German (*vor einem*

Wald) or in Turkish (*Oradaki bir vadinin*), in a forest, as in Hungarian (*Az erdő előtt*), or just near the forest, as in Portuguese (*Perto do bosque, num vale*). And in *front of/near/in* this forest, was the bird singing continuously (*chantait*) or did it sing just once in a more circumscribed and completed fashion (*a chanté*)?

I read the poem for the first time in 2012, and since then have immersed myself in it, revisiting and scrutinizing its lines on numerous occasions. For a while, I was sure that the poem had achieved closure, in the sense that it no longer yielded new meanings or interpretations to me. Despite my persistent engagement, it was during this particular experiment that I understood I had to challenge my own certainties, as I was given the opportunity to unlock a poem that I believed to be inherently resistant to further exploration. In translating these poems into so many different languages, I had to abandon my convictions – and as such, I am now left with little more than an exciting landscape of uncertainties.

TRANSLATIONS

§§§

লিন্ডেন গাছের তলায়
সুদূর ঊষর প্রান্তরে,
যেখানে আমাদের শয্যা খানি পাতা ছিল,
সেখানে তোমরা খুঁজে পাবে
সুন্দর, মলিন
ঝরে পড়া পুষ্প ও তৃণাংশ।
কাননের সামনের বিস্তীর্ণ এক প্রান্তরে,
কিচিরমিচির শব্দে,
মধুর স্বরে গেয়ে ওঠে নাইটিঙ্গেল।

Aishik Surana (Bengali)

§§§

Debajo de los tilos en el brezo,
donde nuestro lecho estaba,
encontrarán
ambas bellas
flores y hierbas quebradas.
Frente al bosque,
en un valle,
tandaradei,
bello cantó el ruiseñor.

Ana Maria Cortés Madiedo (Spanish)

§§§

Sous les tilleuls
sur la lande
là où était notre lit,
là vous trouverez
tout à la fois
de belles fleurs et de l'herbe écrasée.
Dans une vallée à l'orée de la forêt,
tandaradei,
chantait le rossignol.

Bengaly Camara, Emilie Cayre and Larissa Tiwa (French)

§§§

Debaixo dos tilos
no brezal
onde estaba o noso leito
alí atoparedes
ambas as dúas belas
flores e herba
esmagadas.
Fronte ao bosque nun val,
tandaradei,
belo cantou o reiseñor.

Casandra Artacho Rodríguez (Galego)

§§§

Под липой
на пустоши,
где были обе наши кровати,
Вы можете
найти разбросанные красивые
цветы и траву.
Перед лесом в долине,
Чик-чирик,
красиво пел соловей.

Daria Sitnikova (Russian)

§§§

Ënnert der Lann
op der Heed
do war d'Bett vun eis zwee,
do kënnt dir
béides fannen
schéi gebrache Blummen a Gras.
Virum Bësch an engem Dall,
tandaradei,
schéin huet d'Nachtigall gesongen.

Dorine Weisgerber (Luxembourgish)

§§§

Ihlamur ağacının altındaki
Fundalıkta
İkimizin yattığı yerde,
Kırılmış çiçekler ve otları
Yerlere yayılmış bir şekilde
Görebilirsiniz
Oradaki bir vadinin önünde bulunan ormanda:
tandaradei,
Ne hoş şarkı söylerdi bülbül.

Hakan Shen (Turkish)

§§§

A hársfa alatt
a pusztán,
ahol kettőnk ágya volt,
ott találod
mindkettő szépet
virágot és füvet szétzúzva.
Az erdő előtt egy völgyben,
tyú tyú tyú tyü tyü tyí tyí,
a fülemüle szépen énekelt.

Josephine Scharf (Hungarian)

§§§

Po liepa,
laukuose,
štai stovėjo mudviejų lova,
ten galit rasti
gražiai išbarstytas,
skintas gėles ir žoleles.
Slėnio pamiškėje,
tandaradai,
gražiai giedojo lakštingala.

Justina Vrašinskaitė (Lithuanian)

§§§

Debaixo das tílias,
Na charneca,
Lá onde estava o nosso leito,
Lá podeis encontrar,
Ambas belas,
Flores e erva maceradas.
Perto do bosque, num vale,
Ó larai, ó larai,
Cantou belamente o rouxinol.

Luís Dantas (Portuguese)

§§§

Di bawah pohon tilia
di hamparan lahan kosong,
dimana terletak ranjang kita,
di sana dapat kalian indahnya
temui tersebar
bunga-bunga dan rumput yang dipetik.
di depan hutan di atas lembah,
trilili,
burung bulbul bernyanyi indah.

Margaretha Inez Griandini (Indonesian)

§§§

Unter der Linde
auf der Heide,
wo unser beider Bett war,
da werdet ihr finden
beides schön
zerdrückte Blumen und Gras.
Vor dem Wald in einem Tal,
tandaradei,
sang schön die Nachtigall.

Sanja Henrike Lobeck (German)

§§§

ใต้ต้นลินเดน
บนผืนหญ้า
ที่นอนของสองเรา
ที่เธอจะได้มอง
ความงามของ
ดอกไม้ช้ำๆและใบหญ้า
ตรงหน้าผืนป่าในหุบเขา
ทันดาราได
นกไนติงเกลร้องเสียงใส

Wannapon Ngamlamom (Thai)

§§§

تحت شجرة الزيزفون
على المرج
حيث كان سرير استلقاءنا
ستجد في كل مكان
زهور واعشاب مفتتة
أمام الغابة في الوادي
عندلة
جميلة غناها العندليب

Washeel Almuwadea (Arabic)

§§§

在草地上,
菩提树下,
那儿是我俩的卧床,
你们可以找到采好的鲜花和绿草,
在那儿摊开的多漂亮。
山谷间的森林前,
唐达拉达,
夜莺在婉转歌唱。

Xingzi Liang (Chinese)

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Teixeira, J.C. (2021) *Poética da tensão na poesia lírica do Minnesang: edição, tradução e estudo.* Dissertation. Universidade do Porto.

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BEYOND BARDCORE:
BIOGRAPHY OF A MEME IN TEN TRANSLATIONS

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ABSTRACT: This paper offers an unconventional analysis of a multimodal translation: a meme's metamorphosis from September to November 2023 in ten different phases. Such phases are nothing other than translations, for they transform already existing meanings and forms into new artistic products. Also, this meme format draws on a music genre known as bardcore, whose will to render the world medievally and ironically is one of the key features of the phenomenon we address. In such a process, the meme —either on Instagram or TikTok— explores various cultures, historical times, animal species, and other dimensions of our semiotic universe, to the point of turning the format into a meme of itself.
KEYWORDS: Bardcore; Meme; Middle Ages; Multimodality

The first time I came across it was September 24. It showed up in my Instagram feed as an algorithmic revelation, and I shared the good news with my colleague and friend Javier Arroyo Bretaño. Both of us had already researched and written about bardcore from the perspective of Translation Studies, in a kitsch attempt to unironically dignify what creators themselves could not conceive without irony. The advent of a new meme, which paid tribute to the neomedieval music genre of bardcore, made us both wonder —were we beholding that genre's Second Coming?

For those who are not familiar with it, bardcore translates all kinds of popular songs into a medieval aesthetic in terms of verbal language, music, image, and cultural correspondences. It came onto the scene on April 20, 2020, at the dawn of the covid-19 pandemic, when the German youtuber Cornelius Link released his medieval rendition of Tony Igy's *Astronomia*[1]. He fired the starting signal for an endless number of medieval covers of popular songs, from David Bowie to Soviet folklore or the Tetris theme. These multimodal translations were aesthetically closer to widespread stereotypes about the Middle Ages than to actual Middle Ages' musical forms —this, far from being a flaw, was functionally ideal for the community.

Back in March, 2020, Tony Igy's *Astronomia* had already inspired the illustrious Dancing Pallbearers meme[2], which probably served a cathartic purpose in such pandemic circumstances —hence the reason why Cornelius Link decided to version it only one month later. Since then, countless medieval covers of all kinds of songs have been uploaded to online platforms like YouTube, Spotify, Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Reddit, etc. However, after the once underground genre became almost mainstream, I perceived a considerable

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[1] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R16cVvg2OyY (Accessed: 27 November 2023).
[2] The Dancing Pallbearers video-format, also known as Coffin Dance, which involves four Ghanese pallbearers dancing while carrying a coffin on their shoulders, is available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j9V78UbdzWI (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

decline not only in the number of new covers, but especially in the interest of the community towards the phenomenon. Bardcore, which had held a significant position within the imaginary of our generation, was inevitably succumbing to the rapid obsolescence so typical of our times.

But something found me (because it is information that finds you on social media, and not the other way round) two months ago. I ran into this brand-new meme — a multimodal product that combined a brief archaizing text, bardcore music, a medieval background, and a chroma videoclip of an old woman dancing. Although in Spanish, a picture is worth a thousand words:

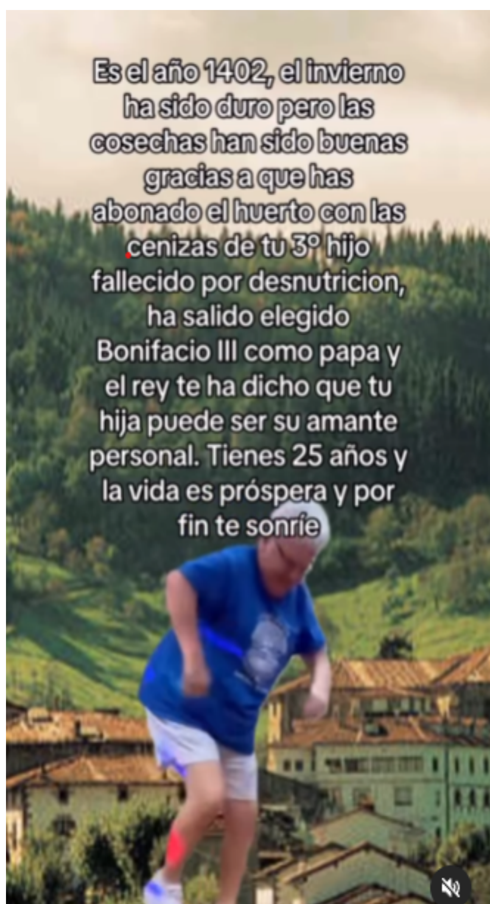

Figure 1.

Figure 1. Post by @hendricksity on Instagram[3]
My translation: “The year is 1402, winter was hard, but harvest has been good because you fertilized your land with the ashes of your 3rd son, dead from malnutrition, Boniface III has been elected as Pope and the King said your daughter can be his personal lover. You’re 25 years old, life is prosperous and finally smiles at you”.
Sidenote: in the Instagram reel, the old woman can be seen actually dancing, while Beedle the Bardcore’s medieval cover of *Because I Got High* is playing in the background.

Since I shared this meme with a friend, the algorithm understood that I wanted more, so I ran into many similar posts in the following days. After the third one, I found myself observing them, with a certain academic detachment, as if this was a newborn species finding its place in the digital ecosystem. A couple weeks later, the young meme was

[3] Available at:
instagram.com/reel/Cx3PovfR6Fy/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=NTYzOWQzNmJjMA%3D%3D
(Accessed: 27 November 2023).

already a grown creature and had begun to evolve through the different stages of its own (translational) life cycle.

Spoiler: as I write these lines at the end of November, the meme is officially dead, except for some residual, anachronistic content creators that refuse to accept that the format no longer holds a relevant position within the memesphere. Now, still mourning but with some hindsight, I feel I have the moral duty to record the meme's progress through the cyberworld, and to give an account of the various phases of its metamorphosis. These phases are nothing other than *translations*, for they involve the transposition of original meanings and forms into new ones, regardless of the semiotic codes, modes, or media transformed in the process.

Translation 0. A new meme is born. Although I built a good-sized corpus[4], I struggled to identify the inaugural meme, the very first one that translated the original videoclip medievally —indeed, these are usually impossible to trace with total certainty, except for some cases. Following the translational analogy, could this be a sort of unstable source text, such as the Bible or the Thousand and One Nights'? Drawing on the multiple earliest manifestations of the meme, we can conjecture that Translation 0's nature was multimodal from the beginning, combining various semiotic codes, as well as modes and media, but that it was still relatively impoverished in terms of formal structure and collective consistency.

Translation 1. Consolidation of a format. The awareness that other people were using the format led to the tacit stabilization of an arbitrary structure. An insightful analysis of our corpus suggests that many memes had several features in common:

a) Beedle the Bardcore's medieval covers (frequently *Because I Got High*, *Candy Shop*, or *Real Slim Shady*) were chosen as soundtrack. Note that the artist's name comes from a witty (?) adaptation of J. K. Rowling's *The Tales of Beedle the Bard*.

b) The dancing old woman is present in almost every meme. The source of the video-meme will be disclosed in Translation 8. Other dancing characters have been documented, but she is by far the most popular. None of them is related to the Middle Ages at all, which probably serves the purpose of deliberately mismatching the medieval narrative in order to make the product even sleazier.

c) The background picture, which acts as a chroma wallpaper, usually conveys the idea of a medieval landscape, with an at least questionable degree of accuracy. Illustrations of old villages and cities, tavern settings, or martial scenes, many of them generated by AI, are amongst the most common. Although some of them represent battles of the Roman Empire or even Egyptian monuments,

[4] A total of 76 memes (34 from Instagram, 42 from TikTok) were documented from September 24 to November 16. Most of them (48) are in Spanish, followed by English (21) and other languages, like German (4) or French (3), that I cannot speak so fluently.

well before the Middle Ages, they still transmit a key idea: whatever it is, it happened a long ago.

d) The verbal message presents a recurrent structure. First, an indication of the year, sometimes preceded by "pov" ('point of view'). Second, a variable number of ironically optimistic allusions to some of these topics: food, work, family/body members, diseases, religion, or warfare. Following this, one or two references to historical figures or events that are considered relevant for a culture, regardless of the faithfulness of such references. Then, a happening that, although being pitiful from today's perspective, could be viewed as successful back then (e.g., being the king's lover). And, finally, a sarcastic mention to your fictitious self's age, often implying that dying after 30 was a privilege in the Middle Ages.

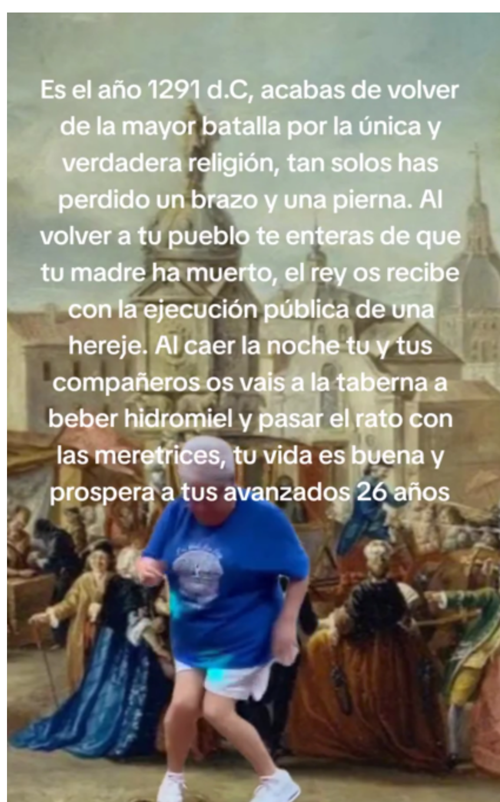

Figure 2.

Figure 2. Post by @idkwsiw on TikTok[5].
My translation: "The year is 1291 AD, you have just come back from the greatest ever battle for the true and only religion, you have only lost an arm and a leg. Back in your village, you find out that your mother has died, and the king welcomes y'all with the public execution of a witch. Come nightfall, you and your companions go to the tavern to drink mead and have a good one with the harlots, your life is good and prosperous at your advanced age of 26".
Sidenote: again, Beedle the Bardcore's version of *Because I Got High* is playing.

Naturally, the cultural references change between contexts, as memes are interculturally translated across boundaries. In Spain, references to the Reyes Católicos or El Cid are common, along with renowned religious characters, while Anne Boleyn is the undisputed superstar of the English memes (although she hardly belongs to the Middle Ages). The level of historical inaccuracy is in some cases so ludicrous that I believe —or hope— it must be intentional (for instance, Figure 1 refers to Pope Boniface III, who lived mostly in the 6th century, while the meme is dated in the 15th). As regards the linguistic

[5] Available at www.tiktok.com/@idkwsiw/video/7283204120629087521 (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

style, some memes seem to try to emulate archaizing forms and vocabulary (though they sometimes mistake *archaic* for *formal* or *literary*, with grotesque results). Others even dare to write in a sort of medieval English, which, according to current stereotypes, ends up sounding more like Shakespearian speech.

Translation 2. Exploring a more recent past. Some memes, while maintaining the basic format and medieval aesthetic, venture into closer periods of our past. Such an enterprise is probably not as conscious as one could believe —it is likely that some users announced "the year is 1689" with the conviction that this was long enough ago to be considered medieval. See this example:

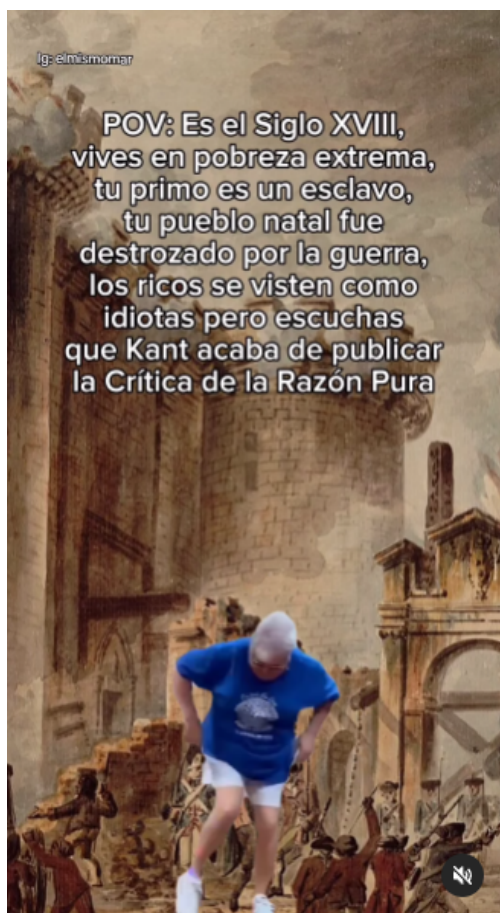

Figure 3.

Figure 3. Post by @elmismomar on Instagram[6].
My translation: "POV: It's the 18th century, you're living in extreme poverty, your cousin is a slave, your hometown has been devastated by war, rich people dress like idiots, but you hear that Kant has just published his Critique of Pure Reason".
Sidenote: the illustration is taken from the Wikipedia entry "Storming of the Bastille"[7], which is chronologically close enough. On the contrary, Beedle the Bardcore's *Because I Got High* was still picked as a backtrack for this one, even though its medieval vibes have little to do with 1781 (*Critique of Pure Reason*'s year of publication).

At this point, we can openly state that the meme is no longer a translation of reality, but a translation of itself —a metalanguage whose changing structure is a subversion of its own original form. The meme is now a third-stage simulacrum, a segment of human language celebrating its newfound autonomy.

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[6] Available at: www.instagram.com/reel/CxobPfcrb5-/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=NTYzOWQzNmJjMA%3D%3D (Accessed: 27 November 27 2023).
[7] Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Storming_of_the_Bastille (Accessed: 27 November 27 2023).

Translation 3. Exploring a more distant past. As we travel back in time across the centuries, borders between ages get blurrier and blurrier. That is why the Middle Ages may be confused with ancient times, since both of them are often perceived as remote. In the following example, though, the creator was quite conscious of the difference. The bizarre combination of imprecisions, redundancies, and witticisms makes this meme one of my favorites:

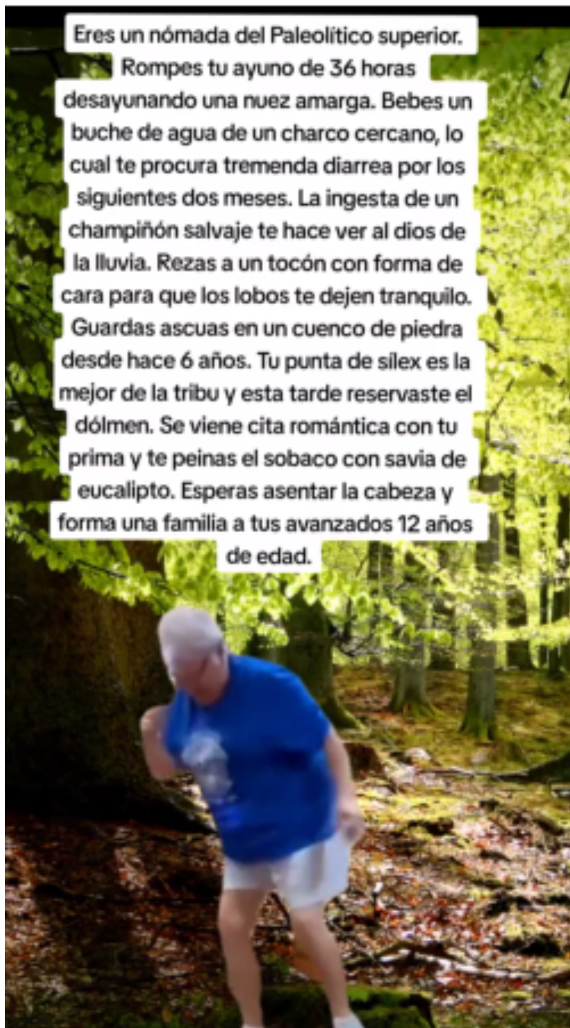

Figure 4.

Figure 4. Post by @opinion.impopular on TikTok[8].

My translation: "You're an upper Paleolithic nomad. You break your 36-hour fast with a bitter walnut. You take a sip of water from a nearby pool, which gives you terrible diarrhea for the next two months. Your ingestion of a wild mushroom makes you meet the god of rain. You worship a face-shaped stub to keep the wolves away. You've been keeping embers in a stone bowl for 6 years. Your silex arrowhead is the best in the tribe and the dolmen's booked for you this evening. You're going on a date with your cousin and you comb your armpit with eucalyptus sap. It's time to settle down and raise a family at your advanced age of 12".

Sidenote: even here, Beedle the Bardcore's *Candy Shop* medieval cover is playing.

Translation 4. Exploring other cultural traditions. In a bid to challenge a narrow-minded, colonialist Western conception of the centuries comprised by the Middle Ages (or maybe just for fun), other creators have translated the format into different cultural contexts. Among the various examples, which range from the Vikings to the Mongols, I enjoyed this one especially:

[8] Available at: https://www.tiktok.com/@opinion.impopular/video/7283570416709422368?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=7212930782641374726 (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

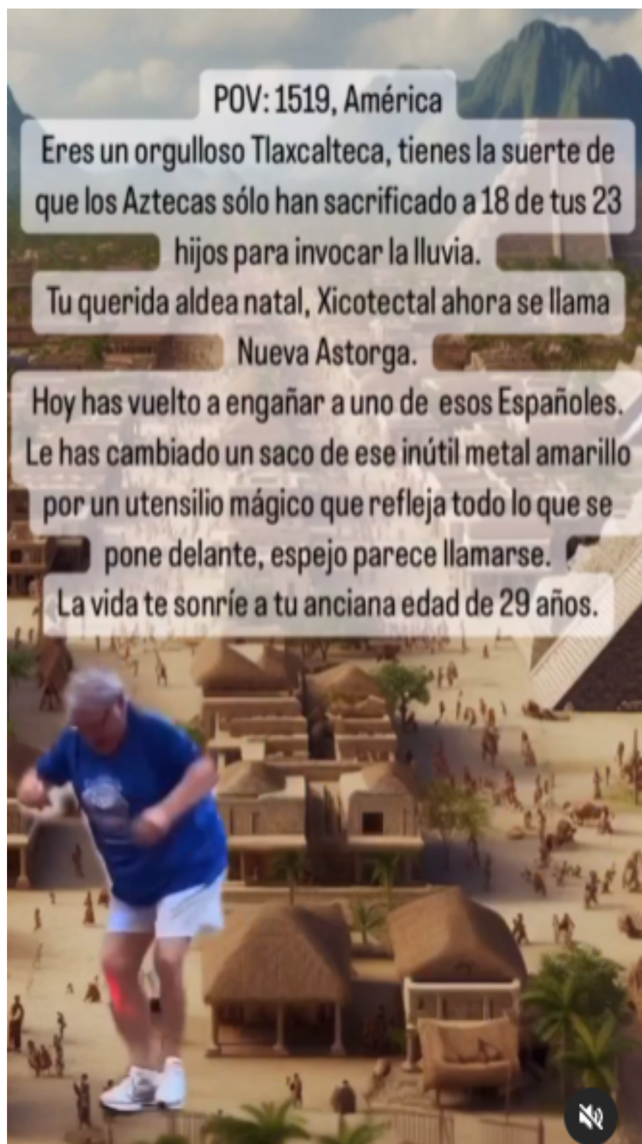

Figure 5.

Figure 5. Post by @aldeanoafortunado on Instagram[9].
My translation: "POV: 1519, America. You're a proud Tlaxcaltec, lucky that the Aztecs only sacrificed 18 of your 23 children to invoke the rain. Your cherished hometown, Xicotectal, is now called Nueva Astorga. Today you fooled one of those Spaniards again. You gave him a sack of that useless yellow metal in exchange for a magical instrument that reflects everything, apparently known as mirror. Life is happy at your ripe old age of 29".
Sidenote: this post is puzzlingly inaccurate, since Nueva Astorga never existed, nor any city called Xicotectal (the closest reference is Xicotencatl, a memorable Tlaxcallan warleader from Tizatlan), among other historical aspects. *Because I Got High* makes it even funnier.
Also, @aldeanoafortunado kindly said to me that the background image was created with DALL·E.

Translation 5. Exploring the present. Inevitably, the meme was predestined to project into the year 2023 at some point of its natural evolution. The joke here entails an intriguing implication —if the format can be applied to our days, it might be because not so much has changed after several centuries. From a collection of excellent examples (a sarcastic catalogue of concerns about late capitalism), I chose to share this one:

[9] Available at: www.instagram.com/reel/CyNsKNXMd17/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=NTYzOWQzNmJjMA%3D%3D (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

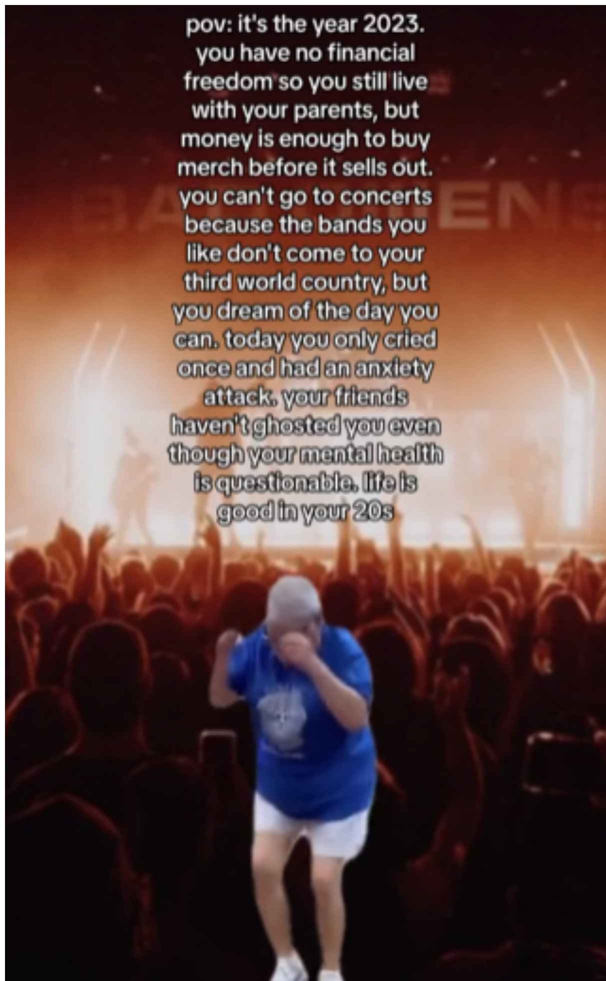

Figure 6.

Figure 6. Post by @_taurus.baby on TikTok[10]. Sidenote: Beedle the Bardcore's *Because I Got High* is once more the official soundtrack, confirming the medieval, musical substratum's irremovability throughout all the data.

Translation 6. Exploring the future. It is difficult to stipulate with any precision if the focus on the present appeared prior to the focus on the future, so we decided to follow the traditional order. However, the translational nature of memes does not correspond to the linear, unidirectional way we perceive history —even if we accept that the future is a translation of the present, and that the present is a translation of the past, memes travel carelessly through time and bring meanings from other epochs, either past or future, to (re)shape the present in which they were born. In this sense, memes about prospective centuries are particularly symptomatic of our current worries and fears —perhaps even more than those that start with "the year is 2023".

[10] Available at: https://www.tiktok.com/@_taurus.baby/video/7290716702260595974?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id=7212930782641374726 (Accessed: 27 November 27 2023).

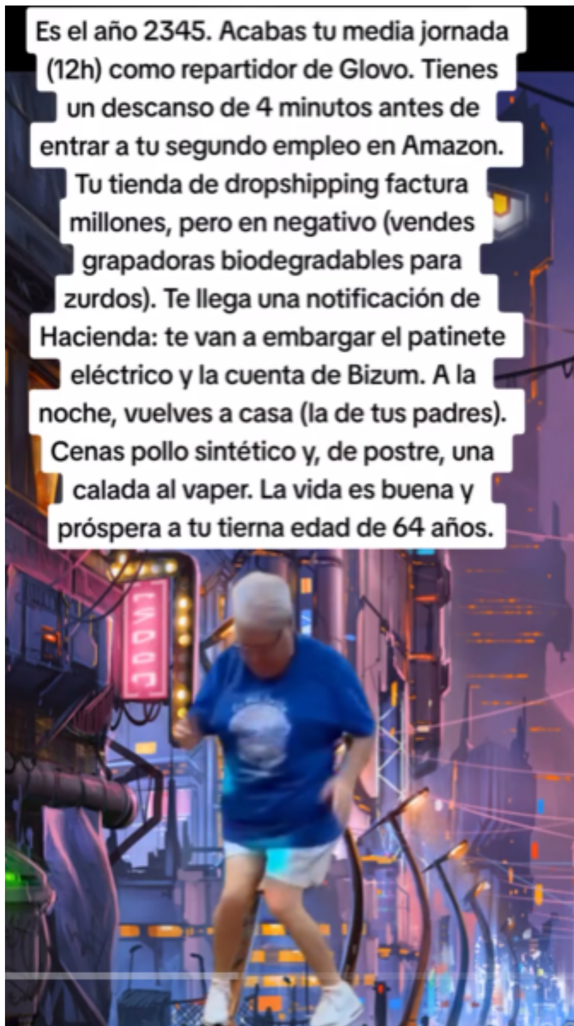

Figure 7.

Figure 7. Post by @opinion.impopular on TikTok[11].
My translation: "The year is 2345. You just finished your part-time job (12h) as an Uber Eats rider. You have a 4-minute break before your second job in Amazon starts. Your dropshipping business is now millions of dollars worth (you're selling biodegradable staplers for left-handed people) in debt. You receive a notification from the tax office —your e-scooter and your Venmo account are being seized. At night you go back home (to your parents'). You have cell-cultivated chicken for dinner, and a vape puff for dessert. Life is good and prosperous at your youthful age of 64".
Sidenote: guess the song.

Translation 7. Exploring other species. Again, despite my numbering, some of the memes of this phase may have been posted before some of those from Translations 5 or 6. However, I thought this would be the right order to present the transformation. In this case, having already covered almost every segment of human history, some geniuses extrapolated the format to other species of the biological kingdom Animalia. Among mammoths and oysters, I chose a much more common —but sublime— form of life: cats.

[11] Available at: https://www.tiktok.com/@opinion.impopular/video/7283212599372614945?is_from_webapp=1&web_id=7212930782641374726 (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

Figure 8. Post by @badboymoosh on Instagram[12].
Sidenote: the background song is Beedle the Bardcore's medieval version of *Real Slim Shady*. Aside from the use of English and the animal perspective, I think this meme is somewhat poor.

Figure 8.

Translation 8. The Big Crunch. The end of a meme's life cycle is not so different from that of the universe. After they are formed, memes expand in all potential shapes and materials, like a semiotic, multimodal Big Bang. During the process, memes leave reality behind and become self-sufficient constructs, fourth-stage simulacra, in which nothing but the format itself is (hyper)real. And like the universe, at the end of their evolution, saturated by their own growth and infinite possibilities, memes collapse and go back to their original form – a fossilized palimpsest of superposed, but no longer circulating, meanings. This may sound vague and presumptuous. Well, it definitely is. But the following meme will surely make things clear:

[12] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/reel/CxuosSbuhpB/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=NTYzOWQzNmJjMA== (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

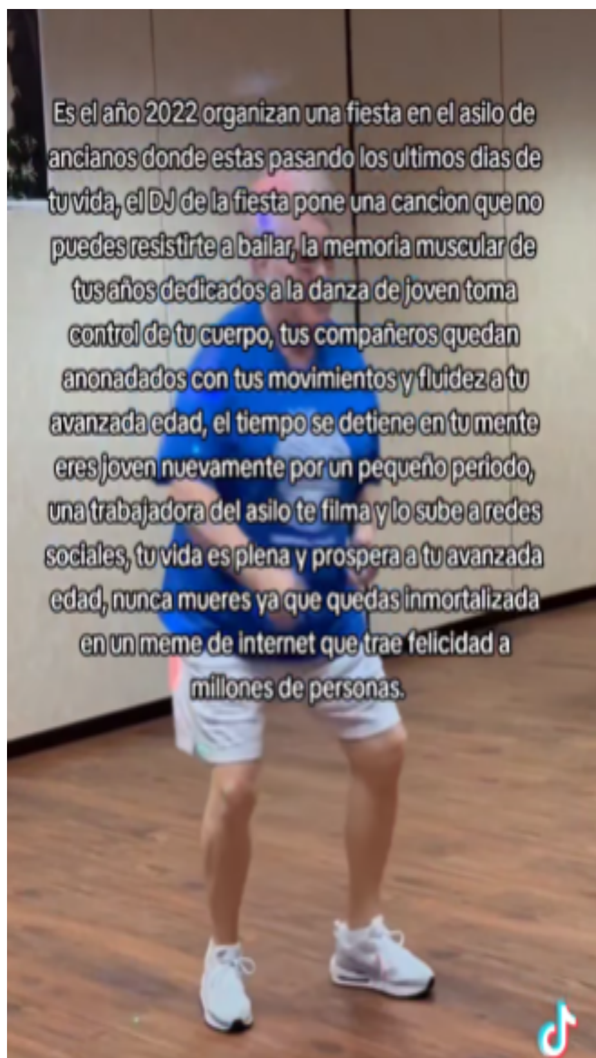

Figure 9. Post by @vidigoztv on Instagram[13].
My translation: "It's the year 2022, the nursing home where you're spending the last days of your life is throwing a party, the DJ plays a song you can't help dancing to, the young dancer you used to be takes over your muscles, your fellas are astounded by your moves and skills at such an advanced age, time stops, you're young again for a few seconds, a nurse videotapes you and posts it on social media, your life is full and prosperous at your advanced age, you'll never die because you are immortalized by an internet meme that brings happiness to millions of people".
Sidenote: in the original video, DLOW's *Do It Like Me* is playing in the background, along with other people's loud voices.

Figure 9.

Far from being a nursing home resident, this woman was actually attending a family reunion, as can be read on the wall in the background (check the very first upload of the original video on a TikTok post by @reneedavis573[14]). After a long sequence of translations, it is in Translation 8 that we finally learn the origins of the videoclip that spawned the meme in the first place. At this point, lacking more realms of reality to ironize, and having fully twisted its own format, the meme becomes the ultimate parody of itself by unveiling its raw nudity. This means announcing the end of its own life by offering the audience one last trick —its magnificent self-destruction.

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[13] Available at: https://www.instagram.com/reel/CywFeCePpVm/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igshid=NTYzOWQzNmJjMA== (Accessed: 27 November 2023).
[14] Available at: https://www.tiktok.com/@reneedavis573/video/7126538094995721518?is_from_webapp=1&web_id=7212930782641374726 (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

Translation 9. The scholarly afterlife. Reaching this stage should be considered a privilege, for very few memes have ever received academic attention. I have already written about shitposting and the hermeneutic nature of memes[15], but in a casual overview, rather than the analysis of a single format's evolution. In my opinion, memes in general should be a matter for academic study; but this one was a particularly complex and interesting multimodal product, as well as a great example of how all manifestations of a format are consciously translating each other in different ways.
As of December 2023, scarcely two months after its birth, the meme has entered the scholarly realm. And this, I think, is great news: as a pop, kitsch, ephemeral, ever-changing, acidly sardonic, sometimes antiesthetic form of art, its acceptance as research-worthy material is a wonderful achievement. Translation 8 has meant the conclusion of the meme's functional life, which makes the once capricious format now steadier and easier to study.

Translation 10. The meme's scholarly afterlife becomes a meme itself.

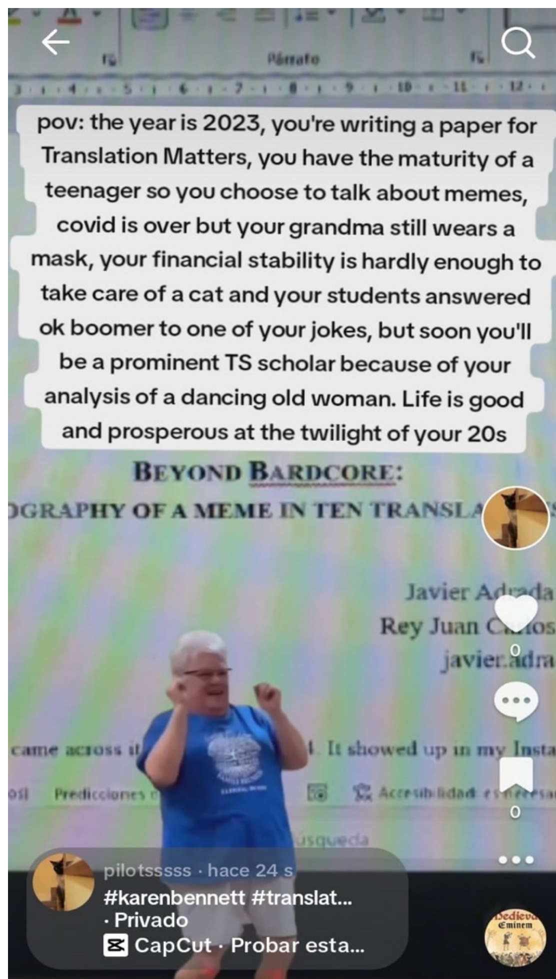

Figure 10. Private post on the author's TikTok account.

[15] Stavans, Ilan, and Adrada de la Torre, Javier, "Sobre la gramática del *shitposting*", *Nexos*, November 18, 2021. Available at: https://cultura.nexos.com.mx/sobre-la-gramatica-del-shitposting/ (Accessed: 27 November 2023).

Translation Matters, 5(2), 2023, pp. 136-148, DOI: https://doi.org/10.21747/21844585/tm5_2a9

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BOOK REVIEW

BIBLE TRANSLATIONS AND COMMENTARIES IN THE ENGLISH MIDDLE AGES: DIVERSITY OF EXEGESIS

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Biblical Commentary and Translation in Later Medieval England: Experiments in Interpretation, Andrew Kraebel. Cambridge Studies in Medieval Literature. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020, 326 pages, €26,83 ISBN: 978-1-108-48664-4

The fascinating diversity and profound complexity of biblical interpretation in medieval England is comprehensively explored in Andrew Kraebel's work *Biblical Commentary and Translation in Later Medieval England - Experiments in Interpretation*. The book focuses on significant aspects of exegesis and sheds light in particular on Richard Rolle, an outstanding representative of the 14th century, who "turns commentary into a form of writing that is at one scholastic and devotional" (2020, p. 3). Kraebel's analysis shows how Rolle skilfully fused traditional explanations with a personally pious approach, expanding the scholastic framework. This work sheds light on the highly creative and experimental nature of 14th-century scholastic exegetes, who viewed biblical commentary as a tool of authority and skilfully juggled between different interpretations to appeal to readers from different social and spiritual backgrounds (ibid.).

By analysing a variety of texts, Kraebel emphasises the complexity of exegesis and stresses the need for a more comprehensive view of medieval biblical interpretation to avoid misunderstandings, or "falling into easy binarisms, of intellectual and affective, Latin and vernacular, elite and demotic" (2020, p. 4). This work provides a deep insight into the evolution of exegesis from medieval to early Reformation thought, refuting simplistic historical categorisations. It shows how the scholastic exegetes not only interpreted Scripture but also developed new ways of reading and interpreting it, which illustrates their innovative power and love of experimentation.

Andrew Kraebel's *Biblical Commentary and Translation in Later Medieval England – Experiments in Interpretation* expands our understanding of the multi-layered nature of biblical commentary and emphasises the depth of interpretation that emerged during this period, offering a detailed and varied consideration of different perspectives on the interpretation of biblical texts, ranging from individual interpretation to broader social and spiritual contexts. Nevertheless, Kraebel also wants to stress "works that include translations of individual biblical books *and* extensive interpretive prose, glosses compiled from Latin sources or devised by the English exegete himself" (2020, p. 7). This gives him the impetus to

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call them "commentary-translation" (ibid.) so as not to diminish their equal weight [he also coins the expression "hermeneutic eclecticism" for "commentaries that include an unpredictable variety of interpretive approaches to a single biblical text" (2020, p. 89)].

The book is structured in several chapters that deal with various facets of medieval biblical interpretation in England in the 14th century. The first chapter of the work focuses on the interpretative theories and traditions that flourished in medieval England, emphasising the variety of biblical commentaries available and the tendency of medieval commentators to favour alternative interpretations and to appreciate the complexity of the text. In particular, it stresses the multifaceted nature of biblical interpretation and hermeneutical diversity created by the scholastic exegetes of the 13th and 14th centuries. Readers are encouraged to explore the wide range of interpretations and to appreciate the significance of this diversity.

Different hermeneutical approaches to biblical interpretation are presented in the second chapter of the work, with particular attention given to the commentaries of John Wyclif, who was the first commentator known to have adopted an indexing system in his work (2020, p. 62). Wyclif attempted to go beyond (super)traditional approaches to interpretation, which he saw as literal and conventional, which in turn raises the question of not only what counts as "ordinary interpretation", but also how he understood the literal meaning of the Gospels (2020, p. 67). An in-depth analysis of these approaches offers potential readers the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of the diversity of medieval exegesis.

At the centre of the third chapter is Richard Rolle and his integration of personal mystical experiences into biblical commentaries, which had a significant impact on the development of exegesis in the 14th century and greatly influenced the understanding of religious progress and spiritual experience in this period (2020, p. 94). Rolle is portrayed as a prominent mystic and authority of medieval England (2020, p. 91). His unique approach to biblical interpretation, which included an emphasis on personal mystical experiences and the integration of scholastic resources (ibid.), significantly shaped the contemporary understanding of biblical texts.

Dedicated to various texts and commentaries exploring diverse hermeneutical approaches to biblical interpretation, the fourth section, entitled "Moral Experiments: Middle English Matthew Commentaries," illustrates the ongoing dynamics and intricate nature of biblical interpretation across the Middle Ages. The commentators of this period endeavoured to make the biblical text accessible to a wider audience (2020, p. 135), offering various interpretations and superimposing moral meanings onto the literal meaning of the Scriptures.

Finally, the epilogue examines the views of John Bale and William Tyndale on the interpretation of Scripture and illustrates the challenges faced by the reformists of the 16th century. In particular, it deals with the difficulties that arose when trying to separate the work of biblical translation from that of commentary. This section also outlines the development of exegesis up to the Reformation period and emphasises the remarkable diversity and experimentation in biblical interpretation. Kraebel's work emphasises the efforts of these exegetes not only to preserve traditional explanations, but also to develop new interpretations in order to make the biblical text accessible to different audiences. The consideration of different groups of readers – from religious women to monastic lay brothers – emphasises the

transition from Latin to Middle English commentaries and their importance for the dissemination of biblical texts in the vernacular.

The hermeneutical variety that juggled literal meaning, allegorical interpretation and other hermeneutical approaches are addressed in the book. It also emphasises the integration of personal experiences and mystical interpretations that scholars such as Richard Rolle incorporated into their exegesis.

This work is recommended for all those who wish to gain a deeper understanding of the complex approaches to interpretation and the development of biblical exegesis in medieval England, as it provides a solid basis for exploring the diversity of hermeneutical traditions. However, the reader must either know the Bible very well in order to recognise all the passages cited or must have one at hand to refer to. However, Kraebel translates the Latin quotations into English, thus helping those who do not read that language to understand the text. As for the Middle English quotations, these are discussed in sufficient detail to render them accessible to the non-specialist reader.

Overall, this study offers valuable insights into the transmission and interpretation of biblical texts in different languages and contexts, which is of particular interest to translation studies. I would have liked to have had a little more about translation theory, but I understand that the book is more a work of biblical studies than of translation studies. Kraebel manages to present critical viewpoints from the field of “commentary-translations” while taking a broader look at various scholars so that the reader can contextualise everything he explains.

About the author: Casandra Artacho Rodríguez completed her Bachelor's degree in German Studies at the University of Santiago de Compostela in 2023. She is now studying the Master's degree: "Erasmus Mundus: Transnational German Studies". Her field of research is the (German-language) literature of the Middle Ages, especially *Minnesang* and heroic epic poetry.

BOOK REVIEW

TRADUÇÃO OU MULTILINGUISMO

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Iberian Babel: Translation and Multilingualism in the Medieval and the Early Modern Mediterranean, edited by Michelle M. Hamilton and Nuria Silleras-Fernandez, The Medieval and Early Modern Iberian World, vol. 82, Leiden/Boston, Brill, 2022, 200 pp, ISBN 9789004464094 (hardback), ISBN 9789004513563 (e-book).

A investigação do multilinguismo no mundo medieval e moderno tem engendrado a publicação de vários estudos na última década. Este interesse tem sido motivado por vários fatores, entre os quais podemos destacar três. Primeiramente, há uma tomada de consciência por parte da comunidade académica de que as dicotomias linguísticas comumente entendidas como características do período escondem, de facto, uma realidade mais complexa e não linear no que diz respeito ao conhecimento e uso de línguas. No contexto medieval e moderno, reconhece-se que a diversidade e a não linearidade das interações linguísticas constituem elementos intrínsecos às suas dinâmicas políticas, sociais e culturais. Em segundo lugar, há que notar que a presença de um conjunto diversificado de enunciados linguísticos em várias áreas do conhecimento, na documentação e em vários géneros literários, não apenas reflete a coexistência de comunidades linguisticamente diversas, mas também as dinâmicas associadas a migrações, viagens, conquistas e perdas territoriais e intercâmbios culturais (sejam eles forçados ou não). O crescente interesse pelo estudo das comunidades ditas marginais, muitas das quais contam com membros bilingues ou trilingues e que acabam por desempenhar papéis determinantes na transmissão cultural e na intermediação social e política, torna essencial o estudo da relação entre as línguas por elas faladas e as de outras comunidades e instituições sociais. Por fim, a importância dada ao estudo das redes como parte integrante da história intelectual, política e social, obriga a ter em conta o papel dos tradutores, intérpretes, diplomatas, e outras figuras no contexto de produção escrita do mundo ibérico.

A obra *Iberian Babel*, editada por Michelle M. Hamilton e Nuria Silleras-Fernandez, constitui a mais recente contribuição para o estudo do multilinguismo e da tradução na Idade Média e no início da Idade Moderna no espaço mediterrânico ocidental. O livro é composto por uma introdução cuidadosamente elaborada pelas duas editoras, seguida por oito artigos, a maioria dos quais da autoria de académicos norte-americanos especializados na Ibéria medieval e moderna, como é claro pela leitura das minibiografias dos autores colocadas antes da introdução. Esta proporciona um enquadramento teórico delineando os propósitos gerais do livro e destacando a complexidade do multilinguismo e em particular da sua relação com a

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Translation Matters, 5(2), 2023, pp. 152-155, DOI: https://doi.org/10.21747/21844585/tm5_2a11

tradução, incluindo, na parte final, resumos detalhados de cada um dos artigos. O volume integra ainda algumas ilustrações a cores, o que enriquece a experiência de leitura, pois proporciona uma representação visual de alguns dos elementos referidos nos textos. Por fim, o índice final é bastante completo, o que auxilia na busca de um tema ou de um autor em específico. É evidente que um tema como o proposto é extremamente vasto, pelo que se compreende a opção por estudos de caso que possam oferecer uma visão panorâmica; no entanto, cremos que o afunilamento de cada um dos capítulos não permite realmente obter a visão de conjunto que a introdução – e até o título do volume – prometem.

Primeiramente, as relações interlinguísticas centram-se, na grande maioria dos casos, no estudo de uma tradução operada entre duas línguas, sobretudo no árabe e vernáculos peninsulares, sendo a excepção o capítulo de Jason Busic (*A Clear Book,* كتاب مبين*. Translating the Psalms and Christian Identity into the Language of the Qurʾān in Ninth-Century Cordoba*, pp. 15-38), que explora o trabalho de tradução dos Salmos para árabe por Ḥafṣ b. Albar, estando assim em questão a relação entre o latim como língua de partida e o árabe como língua de chegada. Não deixa de ser significativo que o estudo de Noam Sienna (*Ask Now the Beasts and They Shall Teach You. Qalonymos ben Qalonymos and his Hebrew Translation of the Epistle of the Animals*, pp. 105-123) se debruce sobre a tradução para hebraico de um texto árabe, deixando-se assim na sombra as demais traduções de e para esta língua nas demais línguas peninsulares. Porém, mais notório é que, ao fazer-se uma apreciação da cultura de tradução na Ibéria medieval, tantos ângulos sejam desaproveitados. De facto, não encontramos artigos sobre a importância da tradução do latim para vernáculos, ou mesmo do árabe, que parece ser a língua de foco do volume, para latim; de facto, muito tangencialmente, Anita J. Savo (*Translation as Transaction in the Poema de Alfonso Onceno*, pp. 39-57*)* alude à diglosia detectável no *Poema de Alfonso XI*, onde se coloca tanto o latim como o árabe como línguas de prestígio intelectual. Tampouco uma perspetiva mediterrânica, mesmo que focada no Ocidente, convidou a apreciar as traduções a partir do grego, não só relevantes para o Oriente peninsular como prementes para a compreensão da passagem da Idade Média para a Modernidade.

Os estudos acabam por confluir 'tradução' com 'multilinguismo' o que, embora seja aplicável naturalmente aos tradutores, acaba por deixar de fora espaços poliglotas no território ibérico. De facto, a apreciação de diversas instâncias multilinguísticas nas várias cortes ibéricas medievais eclipsa-se perante o foco na tradução, omitindo a avaliação, por exemplo, da produção literária nas cortes de João II, Manuel I e João III, onde realmente se verifica uma certa diglossia entre português e castelhano, esta última com um estatuto literário mais condigno. Embora seja compreensível que a predominância da corte de Afonso X como exemplo de ambiente multilinguístico em plena Castela ducentista possa ter levado a que se tenha preterido o caso afonsino para destacar exemplos menos conhecidos, a verdade é que a exemplaridade desta corte poderia oferecer diversos ângulos quer para abordar a questão da tradução quer, significativamente, a do multilinguismo, especialmente no que respeita à produção poética.

Outra área linguística que tem bastante destaque neste volume é a região de Aragão/Catalunha. Contexto especialmente apelativo pelo seu contacto privilegiado com o centro e sul do Mediterrâneo, mormente com a Sicília e o Sul de França e com o mundo islâmico. O destaque dado à região como território de aprendizagem de línguas e até de

formação dos tradutores no capítulo já referido de Noam Sienna, a importância da identidade linguística destes na troca de correspondência entre a Coroa de Aragão e o Reino de Granada no excelente capítulo de Roser Salicrú i Lluch (*Between Trust and Truth. Oral and Written Ephemeral Diplomatic Translations between the Crown of Aragon and Western Islam in the Late Middle Ages*, pp. 124-146) e a aproximação por via de traduções francesas de um texto catalão hoje perdido e que, por sua vez, teria sido tradução de um texto árabe (*Translation as the Sincerest Form of Plagiarism. Translation and Linguistic Repatriation in ʿAbd Allāh al-Tarjumān's Disputa del ase*, pp. 147-169) da autoria de John Deganais saciam a curiosidade sobre o tópico.

A apreciação das verdadeiras linhagens de tradutores que se formam e circulam no território aragonês, já unido a Castela, ao longo da Idade Moderna, e o seu contacto com o Norte de África, no estudo de Claire Gilbert (*Empire of Translation. Multilingual Administrative Dynasties in Habsburg Spain*, pp. 170-194), novamente parece sucumbir à centralização das relações linguísticas dos territórios ibéricos com o árabe e, mais importante, apenas menciona a competência linguística de tradutores e intérpretes na corte régia espanhola sem, no entanto, sublinhar o estatuto poliglota dos próprios membros da corte que, de resto, permitiria estabelecer ligações com o resto da Europa.

Apesar destas idiossincrasias, que se justificam até pelo escopo tão lato apontado quer pelo título, quer pela introdução, o volume oferece uma interessante aproximação ao problema da tradução e até à reflexão metodológica sobre o processo de transição entre línguas na Ibéria medieval. As ausências que notamos acima no que respeita o plurilinguismo em ambiente cortês são de certa forma sanadas pelo já mencionado trabalho de Anita Savo e ainda o de Emily C. Francomano (*Translation in the Libro de buen amor and the Libro de buen amor in Translation*, pp. 79-104), ambos destacando o reconhecimento da poliglossia em contexto peninsular como elemento estruturante de textos literários. O caso do estudo de Emily C. Francomano revela-se particularmente interessante para tradutores e tradutólogos por não só avaliar o multilinguismo subjacente a alguns episódios do *Libro del Buen Amor* como, sobretudo, ao avaliar também as traduções da obra para inglês.

Pressupondo a historiografia medieval como literatura, o capítulo de Marcelo E. Fuentes (*From Great Muslim Warriors to Good Christian Subjects. Translating and Converting the Iberian Legend of the Infantes of Lara*, pp. 58-78), propõe-se a estudar as várias versões da lenda dos Infantes de Lara desde o seu surgimento na *Estoria de España* afonsina até à sua incorporação na *Crónica de 1344* de Pedro de Barcelos. Aqui, procura-se acima de tudo mostrar como a reescrita desta lenda caminha no sentido de se tornar um instrumento de poder e controlo sobre o Outro muçulmano. Neste particular, pouca atenção é dada às questões relacionadas com a relação entre reescrita e tradução. Sendo este o único artigo que, em alguma medida, trabalha com textos em galego-português, ficamos com a sensação que o assunto poderia ter sido mais bem explorado e mais bem documentado bibliograficamente no que diz respeito a este particular.

Em suma, o volume em questão oferece um conjunto de estudos de qualidade algo desigual relativamente àquele que se anunciou como sendo um dos seus temas centrais: o multilinguismo. Se a importância de uma publicação dedicada a este tipo de assuntos é inquestionável e louvável, a inclusão de mais um ou dois capítulos que contemplassem as interações linguísticas mais deficitárias que fomos apontando ao longo desta recensão no

conjunto dos artigos apresentados teria constituído uma mais-valia para esta publicação. Esperemos que estas observações possam motivar os editores a aprimorar o trabalho em futuras publicações do mesmo tipo e inspirem os autores a persistir na exploração da riqueza e importância da tradução e do multilinguismo no âmbito dos estudos medievais e modernos peninsulares.

Sobre as autoras:
Joana Gomes holds a PhD in Medieval Literature (2017) and is currently a junior researcher at Instituto de Filosofia. Her main research project deals with the representation of political power of women in medieval historiography. Her diverse interests span medieval translation, cinema, and the Middle Ages, reflecting a multifaceted passion for exploring.

Mariana Leite Mariana Leite é Doutora em Literatura (U. Porto, 2013) com uma tese sobre a receção portuguesa da General Estoria. Concluiu um pós-doutoramento (2023) sobre a presença da Historia Scholastica de Pedro Comestor em Portugal. A sua investigação centra-se na presença de fontes para crónicas universais (sobretudo bíblicas e clássicas) na cultura medieval portuguesa.

BOOK REVIEW

A COMPANION TO MEDIEVAL TRANSLATION

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A Companion to Medieval Translation, Jeanette M. A. Beer (editora), Leeds, Arc Humanities Press, 2019, 208 pp, £140, ISBN: 9781641891837.

A professora emérita da Purdue University e membro sénior do Lady Margaret Hall e do St. Hilda's College de Oxford, bem conhecida pelas suas obras sobre língua e literatura medieval, Jeanette Beer, proporciona neste livro, redigido integramente em inglês, uma 'boa companhia', como o título promete, para a tradução medieval, oferecendo uma brilhante apresentação do contexto e da realidade das traduções na Idade Média. A introdução antecede a colaboração de mais quinze especialistas que, juntamente com a própria Beer como autora de um capítulo, oferecem um abrangente panorama da obra dos tradutores medievais. Contudo, a coletânea também reflete acerca de tradução da Idade Média, que Beer considera imprescindível para o encontro de tempos, conhecimentos e culturas, bem como para a preservação de textos, ideias e narrações, pois, em palavras da autora:

> Translation bridged the gap between past and present, but the legitimization of *imperium* and the transfer of culture were lofty abstractions in comparison with translation's daily agenda in an age which as a whole was, according to Michel Zink, one vast translation enterprise: "Le Moyen Age tout entier est une vaste entreprise de traduction (Beer, 2019).

A partir da citação anterior inserida em "Preface to Galderisi", *Translations médiévales*, vol. 1, p. 9 (Zink, 2011), a autora corrobora a importância da tradução medieval ("Translation was never more vital than in the Middle Ages") e introduz a *translatio studii* e a *translatio imperii* como produtos heterogéneos que sustentam a comunicação escrita desde o reconhecimento das línguas vernaculares que, para se configurarem como veículos da 'modernidade', necessitaram de "(...) a variety of texts to make legal, administrative, commercial, scientific, or medical material comprehensible; to gloss; and to provide devotional material for a lay congregation".

A impecável redação da obra permite contemplar o panorama a partir dos contributos de M. J. Toswell (Chapter 1. The European Psalms in Translation), Clive R. Sneddon (Chapter 2. The Old French Bible), Ian Johnson (Chapter 3. Middle English Religious Translation), Henry Ansgar Kelly (Chapter 4. Bible Translation and Controversy in Late Medieval England), Matthew Cheung-Salisbuty, Elisabeth Dutton e Olivia Robinson (Chapter 5. Medieval Convent Drama: Translating Scripture and Transforming the Liturgy.), Erin Michelle Goeres

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(Chapter 6. Translating Romance in Medieval Norway: Marie de France and *Strengleikar),* Jeanette Patterson *(*Chapter 7. Christine de Pizan, Translator and Translation Critic), Thomas Hinton (Chapter 8. Translation, Authority, and the Valorization of the Vernacular), Alison Cornish (Chapter 9. Vernacular Translation in Medieval Italy: *volgarizzamento), Christopher Kleinhenz (*Chapter 10. Dante and Translation), Marilyn Corrie (Chapter 11. Chaucer and Translation), Eoin Bentick (Chapter 12. Alchemy and Translation), Anthony Hunt (Chapter 13. Scientific Translation: A Modern Editor's Perspective), Michelle R. Warren (Chapter 14. Modern Theoretical Approaches to Medieval Translation) e da própria Jeanette Beer (Chapter 15. Observations on Translation by a Thirteenth- Century *Maître*: *Li Fet des Romains*), para além do epílogo de Simon Armitage (Observations on Translation by the Oxford Professor of Poetry: *Pearl)* que Beer apresenta na sua Introdução enquanto uma obra que se destaca pela sua pluralidade temática, espacial, temporária e até genealógica.

Acreditamos na necessidade de tratar cada um dos textos que se integram neste macro-texto de maneira particularizada, pelo que atenderemos ao conteúdo de cada capítulo, começando pelo primeiro, que descreve a importância da tradução dos salmos na Europa medieval. Toswell mostra, a partir do estudo da história das versões bilingues e mesmo trilingues dos salmos, a sua pertinência pedagógica e a sua importância para os desenvolvimentos da devoção individual e comunitária. De seguida, o Capítulo 2 de Clive R. Sneddon explora a antiga Bíblia francesa, ainda considerada como o livro dos livros e, portanto, passível de ser estudada em relação à tradução de partes individuais até à versão da obra completa no século XIII. No Capítulo 3, Ian Johnson analisa textos do inglês médio resultados de traduções religiosas, insistindo na necessidade de transmitir a interpretação e, portanto, de complementar a transferência linguística com a elaboração interpretativa que resulta do trabalho de tradutores, compiladores, comentaristas e pregadores. Johnson comenta textos particulares como Orm's *Ormulum,* o Saltério de Richard Rolle ou a Bíblia Wycliffite, entre outros, que são resultado da organização e da hibridação textual. De seguida, o Capítulo 4 proporciona uma continuidade a respeito do anterior, uma vez que também se centra na tradução de textos religiosos para o inglês, embora Henry Ansgar Kelly se centre nas adaptações e traduções da Bíblia para o inglês medieval tardio e nas controvérsias e debates que suscitaram no século XV. No Capítulo 5, Matthew Cheung-Salisbury, Elisabeth Dutton e Olivia Robinson analisam os manuscritos do Chantilly, Musée Condé MS 617, do final do século XV e copiado no convento carmelita das Dames Blanches em Huy (na Bélgica moderna), bem como uma versão posterior do início do século XVII do arquivo do convento de Liège, que contém cinco peças traduzidas para o francês. Segundo esta análise, as mulheres medievais contribuíram para a tradução como ouvintes, recetoras, benfeitoras, escritoras, escribas e atrizes.

Viajando mais para norte, o Capítulo 6 trata da tradução medieval na Noruega. Em concreto, Erin Mihelle Goeres centra o seu artigo na ação do rei Hákon (que viveu entre 1217 e 1263) como promotor da tradução de textos a partir de outras línguas. É de sublinhar o interesse pelos textos da literatura cortês adaptados à cultura de chegada, particularmente distinta da cultura de partida. Também é importante o tratamento que no

artigo se dá à tradução dos textos do nórdico antigo. Jeanette Patterson analisa, no Capítulo 7, a figura de Christine de Pizan não apenas como tradutora mas, também, como crítica da intervenção da tradição clerical sobre os textos originais, com traduções que denuncia como enganosas e glosas misóginas. Patterson contempla também as técnicas de Pizan como tradutora e como a mesma descontextualiza e transforma o material *De civitate Dei,* de Agostinho, para fornecer uma visão atualizada do retrato da mulher. No Capítulo 8, Thomas Hinton trata os conceitos do vernáculo e da diglossia a partir da seleção de territórios e textos bem como do contraste entre espaços como o occitano, o catalão, o francês ou mesmo o italiano, onde os vernáculos se fortalecem, em oposição a línguas celtas da Grã-Bretanha ou de áreas de fala flamenga ou neerlandesa. Atendendo a áreas onde se fala a língua italiana, o Capítulo 9 ocupa-se da importância das fontes para a literatura vernácula não clerical italiana, com as quais está relacionada, começando pela tradução a partir do occitano. Alison Cornish oferece uma análise da situação dessa literatura vernácula, com o toscano como língua dominante devido à maior produção textual. A necessidade de responder à demanda criou produtos notariais ou narrativos na língua vernácula e promoveu o *volgarizzamento* do francês e do latim, nomeadamente entre meados do século XIII e do XIV. No Capítulo 10, a obra de Dante, que já tinha sido apresentada por Cornish a respeito da literatura italiana e da tradução, é tratada como central no estudo de Christopher Kleinhenz. O autor contempla (desde a taxonomia de Chienti) o *transferimento,* a *traduzione parola-per-parola o uno-a-uno,* a *traduzione letterale o fedele,* a *traduzione modulate, a traduzione libera* ou a *tradução de serviços.* Dante apresenta-se como um mestre que compreendeu a tradução como um veículo para o enriquecimento da sua obra. Dante é capaz de compreender contextualmente os textos e de utilizá-los para novos fins. Ainda aborda o *Fiore*, a tradução italiana do *Roman de la Rose*, e a sua atribuição a Dante, que, para Kleinhenz, não parece certa e apenas se justificaria como um exercício de juventude. Atendendo também aos autores literários como tradutores, no Capítulo 11, sobre Chaucer como tradutor, Marilyn Corrie descobre como a tradução é para o poeta um desafio, já que o autor deve trasladar estruturas linguísticas românicas e, consequentemente, alheias à língua inglesa, mas que possibilitaram usos enriquecedores para o inglês e aportaram novas formas poéticas. Chaucer foi um tradutor reconhecido na sua época, embora esse aspeto do seu trabalho tenha sido opacado pela sua poesia original; ainda assim, podemos compreender qual foi a importância de Chaucer como tradutor na sua época, a partir da citação do seu contemporâneo Eustache Deschamps: “Grant tradutor, nobre Geffroy Chaucier”.

Entrando na importância científica da tradução, no Capítulo 12, Eoin Bentick trabalha a tradução como veículo para a transmissão da alquimia do Egito do século III ao século XV inglês. Passando pelo grego, latim, árabe e pela Escola de Tradutores de Toledo, os textos alquímicos confrontaram a necessidade de preservar o segredo e, de modo simultâneo, serem levados para as línguas vernáculas. Também o capítulo 13 se relaciona com a tradução científica, embora desde a perspetiva dos problemas da edição moderna dos textos traduzidos na Idade Média. As dificuldades na transcrição não contribuem para

facilitar o estudo e a edição atual desses textos científicos, segundo Michelle R. Warren. O investigador informa sobre o escurecimento editorial que provocam abreviaturas, signos hebraicos, ou falta de autoria unitária da tradução em diversos textos que não podemos esquecer que partem previamente de fontes diversas e de traduções sobre a tradução, com fontes gregas, árabes ou hebreias.

No capítulo 14, Michelle R. Warren trabalha, de uma perspetiva não dogmática, sobre a abordagem moderna da tradução medieval após a queda do pós-estruturalismo dos anos 90 do século XX, com presença da teoria dos polissistemas e do cruzamento dos estudos medievais e os pós-coloniais. Ainda no capítulo 15, a própria Jeanette Beer explora a obra do tradutor anônimo de *Li Fet des Romains* que é a primeira tradução da historiografia antiga e a primeira biografia traduzida do latim para uma língua vernácula europeia. Os materiais referidos a Júlio César fornecem comentários (contextualizados no Paris do século XIII) que promovem a nossa compreensão da vida e da tradução medieval.

Em jeito de conclusão, o epílogo de Armitage mostra a tradução na atualidade como uma atividade tão necessária e valorizada como o foi na idade Média e, como prova da sua afirmação, sublinha o facto de ter recebido, pela tradução de O Professor de Poesia da Universidade de Oxford, o Prémio Tradução do PEN Poesia em 2017.

Para finalizar, Beer oferece um apêndice com uma lista de artigos apresentados em sessões anuais de Teoria e Prática da Tradução Medieval organizadas pela editora para o Congresso Internacional de Estudos Medievais.

"*A Companion to Medieval Translation*" é um bom companheiro e também um compêndio, no que à polifonia diz respeito, estudando a tradução na Idade Média a partir de diferentes perspetivas, nos diferentes espaços da Europa Medieval e nos âmbitos científico, literário ou religioso, incluindo também o papel da mulher como tradutora. Jeanette Beer coordena especialistas e permite, deste modo, abrir à polifonia e ao multiperspectivismo a abordagem do tema, de tal modo que a obra, no seu conjunto, possa ser interessante para investigadores incipientes e para especialistas. As limitações que a autora poderia ter na hora de aportar os frutos da própria investigação numa obra deste tipo são superadas pelo facto de utilizar, até às últimas consequências, uma metodologia colaborativa, na qual ela se integra como científica, apresentadora e 'costureira', de modo a que possa, através dos temas, promover uma verdadeira viagem pela tradução medieval.

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