BIBLICAL TRANSLATION: DO DIFFERENT STRATEGIES PRODUCE DIVERGENT TEXTS?

LA TRADUCCIÓN BÍBLICA: ¿ESTRATEGIAS DIFERENTES PRODUCEN TEXTOS DIVERGENTES?

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Abstract

In our paper we intend to verify the effectiveness of the different "translation strategies" applied to the translation of the Christian Bible through a historical and textual analysis of various biblical versions in two vernacular languages of Western Europe (German and Spanish). Because of the anthropological particularity of the books that compose it (the postulate of its divine inspiration), the possible application of a translation strategy will depend on the position that the translator maintains regarding the sacred character of the text: if he/she considers it a sacred and untouchable text, if he/she admits the variation of the formal tenor of the text while the core message is saved, or if, in order to facilitate easy reading and understanding of the message, greater textual alterations are allowed. We will examine whether the translation strategy

(implicit or explicit) has truly been decisive in producing mismatched translations, both in the meaning, and also in the literality and literariety (readability) of the texts.

Keywords: Translation. Sacred texts. Bible. Translation strategy. *Song of Songs*.

Resumen

En el presente trabajo pretendemos comprobar la efectividad de las diferentes "estrategias de traducción" aplicadas a la traducción de la Biblia cristiana a través de un análisis histórico y textual de diversas versiones bíblicas a algunas lenguas vernáculas de Occidente (alemán y español). Dada la particularidad antropológica de los libros que la componen (el postulado de su inspiración divina), la posible aplicación de una estrategia traductiva dependerá del posicionamiento que frente al carácter sagrado del texto mantenga el posible traductor: si la considera un texto sacro e intocable, si admite la variación del tenor formal del texto mientras se salve el mensaje nuclear, o si, en orden a facilitar la fácil lectura y captación del mensaje, se permiten mayores alteraciones textuales. Comprobaremos si la estrategia de traducción (implícita o explícita) ha sido realmente decisiva a la hora de producir traducciones no coincidentes, tanto en el sentido, como en la literalidad y la literariedad (legibilidad) de los mismos.

Palabras clave: Traducción. Textos sagrados. Biblia. Estrategia de traducción. *Cantar de Cantares*.

1. Introduction: Approach to the study

Even in the earliest reflections on translation, made mainly by what Mounin called "practitioners" of translation, it was made clear that the process of translation and, consequently, its outcome, depended on a method or processual strategy. Such principles of translation methods were first formulated in antiquity in the essays of Cicero (*De optimo genere oratorum*, 46 B.C.) and Jerome of Stridon (*De optimo genere interpretandi*, 395 A.D.), respectively. The latter made the dependence between the translation method and the type of text being translated explicit. Centuries later, Schleiermacher (in Über die verschiedenen Methoden des Übersetzens, 1813) summarised the twofold alternative facing those who work on the version of a text: to bring the target text (TT) closer either to the author or to the reader.

Since then, recent translation studies have categorically insisted on the need to project a specific and coherent methodology for the process

of transforming an original text (OT) into a TT, which may depend on various factors. The exemplary methodological guidelines formulated in Paris (Seleskovic, Lederer: translation into meaning) and Heidelberg (Reiss, Vermeer: functional translation) have been outstanding examples of this. However, in the present study we intend to test the practical effectiveness of the different "translation strategies" applied to the translation of the Christian Bible, by means of a historical and textual analysis of several Bible translations into certain Western vernacular languages (German and Spanish). By strategy we refer to the mental representation of the character and purpose of a source text that guides the translator in achieving an equivalent target text. Given the anthropological particularity of the books that make up the Bible, a particularity that derives from the postulate of its divine inspiration, the possible application of a translation strategy will depend on the translator´s position with regard to the sacred character of Scripture: whether he/she considers it a holy and untouchable text, whether he/she admits the variation of the formal tenor of the text as long as the core message is preserved, or whether, in order to facilitate the reading and understanding of the message, greater textual alterations are permitted. There are three basic methodological attitudes to translating the Bible, which theoretically could be applied to other textual species, such as classical works: remaining faithful to the written word and seeing the text as inviolable; reproducing the meaning in which the arcane character of the written word is hidden; and offering easy access to the mystery encapsulated in the words. However, it is important to ask if the strategy adopted from this triple position, "ultimately" (i.e. when producing the TT), is so decisive that the result of this strategy will lead to essential differences in the reformulation of the original and, consequently, in its understanding by the addressee? Can a translation determine the specific understanding that one Christian group (denomination or sect) has of the sacred text and cause it to diverge from another? It is well known that the translation of a passage from *St. Paul's Epistle to the Romans* was decisive for the moral theology of Lutheranism.

It is the aim of the present paper to answer this question, while clarifying that our aim is not to contrast the two terms of the translation process, the *ex quo* or OT and the *ad quem* or TT, but simply to compare different final target texts from the Scriptures in order to test whether the reliance

on the translation strategy (implicit or explicit) used as a starting point by the translators has really been decisive in producing nonconcurrent target texts, both in their meaning and in their literalness and literariness (readability). As formulated in the title of the paper: do different strategies produce essentially divergent texts? This does not prevent us from occasionally using the "original texts" in Greek (the *Septuagint* or LXX) and Latin (*Vulgate*) as *tertium comparationis* for our observations.

The research contains two parts: a synthetic overview, of a historical nature, of the basic methodologies or strategies of biblical translation to which all the proposals can be reduced, and a contrastive analysis of a biblical passage in the different versions translated into vernacular languages, in order to verify whether the different strategies employed do indeed produce essentially divergent texts.

2. Historical note on two (or three) different strategies of biblical translation

2.1. From Jerome of Stridon to Luther and Casiodoro de Reina: contrasting strategies

More than twenty years elapsed between 383, the year in which Jerome of Stridon, at the behest of Pope Damasus, set to work on the version of the Gospels, thus beginning his *Vulgate* (after previously having been engaged in the translation of other works such as Origen's homilies) and 407, the time of completion of his version of the Bible; a period in which translation represented Jerome's psychosphere. The passion with which he pursued this activity did not prevent him from becoming embroiled in dogmatic, exegetical, linguistic and even personal controversies of great depth. Indeed, in the Christian world, as early as the edict of Milan (313), which was socially consolidated but not dogmatically fixed, theological and textual discussions flourished and at the epicentre of many of these debates were Origen's writings. It was precisely one of these writings, or rather the version of one of these writings, that led to Jerome's explicit practice in the teaching of translation. From the prologue to his translation of the Gospels, which the future hermit completed in the lifetime of the Pope who had commissioned it (Pope Damasus), these facets of his personality, determined by his passionate

disposition and the social and intellectual context that he navigated, are revealed. Addressing the pontiff, he defended himself against those who not only criticised his way of translating, but also the mere fact of touching the Scriptures. The interweaving of these various facets of his personality was precisely what produced the little treatise *De optimo genere interpretandi*, known as the epistle *ad Pammachium II*[1], which sanctioned, in contrast to the methodological unicity of the Ciceronian version, the duplicity[2] of the translation strategy: *verbum e verbo* or *sensum de sensu* (395 A.D., in St. Jerome 1993: 542 foll.):

> Ego enim non solum fateor, sed libera voce profiteor, me in interpretatione Graecorum absque scripturis sanctis, ubi et verborum ordo misterium est, non verbum de verbo sed sensum exprimere de sensu.

This alternative translation strategy was practically anchored in a theoretical reflection on the version that had been repeated and reformulated in several ways for various centuries. Despite the fact that the intention of his translation was to "vulgarise" the text, i.e. to bring the text within the reach of the general public, that is, to render the sacred text, until then mostly available in Greek[3], more accessible to Latin-speaking Christians, in his

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1. The motivation of this pamphlet was to refute the accusation of alleged libertarian infidelity in the translation of the letter of Epiphanius of Salamis to John of Jerusalem on Origen (394), which Eusebius of Cremona had requested from Jerome *ad usum privatum*. In breach of his word, Eusebius gave publicity to this translation, a translation that was to provoke the astonishment of certain intellectual circles of Roman Christianity. It was to appease them that Jerome wrote his letter.
2. As for earlier translations of the Bible, especially the *Septuagint* and the *Vetus Latina*, since we do not have any explicit statements made by their translators, we can only conjecture about strategic approaches. The fact that the uniqueness of the text of the *Septuagint* version, created by seventy different translators, was postulated as legendary denotes an attitude of servitude to the written word: the supposed seventy (two) translators gathered in Alexandria and produced a single text as proof of divine inspiration.
3. Although Latin versions existed before the *Vulgate* (the so-called *Vetus Latina*, for example), they were not accessible to the general Christian public and diverged on points of interpretation. Therefore, according to tradition, Pope Damasus commissioned Jerome to produce a version that would make a unified sacred text available to the people. The Pope's commission apparently concerned only the NT.

Vulgate (from 383), Jerome, moved by the conviction of "verbal inspiration"[4] from God, chose one of the two possible positions (either translating "word for word" or translation "sense for sense"): to remain faithful to the letter of the sacred text, since the written word was the veil behind which the sacred mystery of the message was or could be hidden textually and beyond which one should not look: *ubi et verborum ordo misterium est.* Hence, in one of his numerous prologues to the versions of the biblical books, the prologue *quod dicitur galeatus* ("helmeted prologue") (St. Jerome 2002: 454 foll.), the Bethlehemite monk boasted of his fidelity to the Hebrew text, which he had used, together with the LXX or *Septuagint* version, as the source text, since he stated: "soy consciente de que yo haya cambiado nada de la verdad hebraica" (2002: 461). In practice, however, he does not seem to have been so strict in his servitude to the written word, as Alfons Fürst (2003: 89), scholar of his life and work, notes:

> Auch in seinen eigenen Bibel Übersetzung hat er das Prinzip wörtlichen Übersetzens nicht durchgehalten. Während er das Buch Ester eng Wort für Wort übersetzte, übertrug er das Buch Judit mehr sinngemäss als Wort fur Wort.

The above-mentioned passage from his letter *ad Pammachium* has been cited as authoritative among Christian authors and versifiers as a behaviour towards the sacred text, which did not prevent Luther from disregarding Jerome's renderings in due course. As the following centuries up to the late Middle Ages were not rich in biblical translations (although there were some: Guyart Desmoulins 1297; Wycliffe 1388; Barthèlemy de Buyer 1476; Jéan de Rely 1487; Tyndale 1525; etc.), and although occasionally a translation method or strategy was proposed, it was the German Reformer's translation practice and theory that explicitly put forth a new translation strategy or method. With the translation of his Testament (*Das Newe Testament. Deutzsch*, 1522), the so-called *Septembertestament*[5], Luther attempted to

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4. According to this theological conception, the sacred author would have been a mere instrument in the hand of God.

5. The first version of a biblical book produced by Luther in his retreat and refuge at Eisenach Castle, the Wartburg, came to be known under this name. As it appeared in September 1522 in Wittenberg, this version became known as the "September

make the word of God intelligible for Christian people, transcending the Jeronimian approach to the Scriptures by proposing the translating attitude or strategy of "readability", even literariness, of the biblical text, which the printing press had brought within the reach of literate Christianity. In the "Circular Letter" that he published seven years later in defence of his version (*Sendbrief von Dolmetschen*, 1529) he significantly proposed the term *Verdeutschung* ('Germanisation'), instead of the term Übersetzung, to describe this task, the result of which the supposed *Junker Jörg*[6] demanded be formulated *recht und gut* ('correctly and well') in the target language. This was an attitude repeated by many later versifiers, even on the Catholic side: the aim of the translation process would be not only to safeguard the meaning of the divine word, but also to formulate it in a linguistically accurate manner for any addressee. Obviously, the choice was based on the assumption of the uniqueness of the meaning of the biblical text, a concept of "meaning" which the exegetical tradition, since Origen and Augustine, had already diversified by specifying its quadruplicity: the literal or historical meaning, the moral meaning, the allegorical meaning and the anagogical meaning. The explanation of each of these is not relevant to the subject, but it is important to point out that Lutheran exegesis only admitted the historical sense (*buchstäblich*)[7]. In order to recover it in the final text, Luther required the expression to be in correct German, proposing as linguistic usage that of the

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Testament". With a print run of 3,000 copies, it was sold out by December of the same year, giving rise to the *Dezembertestament*.

6. The name under which Luther hid his identity while he took refuge in Wartburg translating the Bible.

7. Despite the fact that the theory of the plural meaning of the sacred books had been taken up by the Fathers and Doctors of the Catholic Church, Pius XII (1943: 39 foll.) warned of the importance of attaining the literal meaning in his encyclical *divino afflante spiritu*. Pope Pacelli's magisterium was intended to orientate the Catholic version and exegesis and to accommodate them to the new hermeneutical currents that had been proposed in part from the Reformed side (Bultmann and Dibelius, for example). Chapter 2 of the encyclical ("On Interpretation") spoke of the "importance of the investigation of the literal sense" (Pius XII 1943: 52), although it did not exclude the theological and spiritual sense: "Therefore the interpreter, just as he must find and expound the literal sense of the words, which the writer intended and expressed, so also the spiritual sense, as long as it is legitimately established that it was given by God" (Pius XII 1943: 52).

court of the Duchy of Saxony, of which he was a subject and where the most unified German was supposedly spoken. "Thus should it be said in correct German" was the formula he proposed as a criterion for the acceptability of a particular version.

As we can see, Martin Luther and his followers had added a claim beyond mere faithfulness to meaning for the Reformed Bibles, namely the "readability" (*lisibilité* as French theorists have called it) of the target text, i.e. the agreement of the TT with the correct linguistic code of expression that makes it possible to read it comfortably. Therefore, according to him, a *sine qua non* condition for an acceptable translation would be good diction. Complaining about criticism on the accuracy of his translation, he described his critics as long-eared animals (= asses), as they could not speak well, therefore they would be even less capable of translating:

> Also gehet mir's auch. Diejenigen, die noch nie haben recht reden können, geschweige denn dolmetschen, die sind allzumal meine Meister, und ich muss ihrer aller Jünger sein [...]. Ich hab mich des beflissen im Dolmetschen, daß ich rein und klar Deutsch geben möchte. (Luther 1530[8])

According to this strategy or method of translation, the Reformer criticised, for instance, certain formulas in the biblical target text in use for not being in accordance with what he considered to be correct and elegant German diction. He gave as an example of a linguistically erroneous translation of the passage in Luke (Lk. 1:28) that narrates the Incarnation. He rejected the translation of the angelic greeting *gratia plena* (Lk. 1:28) as the formula in use in Germany at the time ("full of grace" = *voll Gnade*):

> [...] da der Engel Mariam grüßet und spricht: Gegrüßet seist du, Maria voll Gnaden, der Herr mit dir. Nun wohl, so ist's bisher einfach dem lateinischen Buchstaben nach verdeutschet. Sage mir aber, ob solchs auch gutes Deutsch sei? Wo redet der deutsch Mann so: Du bist voll Gnaden? Und welcher Deutscher verstehet, was da heißt: voll Gnaden? Er muss denken an ein Fass voll Bier oder Beutel voll Geldes; darum hab ich's verdeutscht: Du Holdselige, worunter ein Deutscher sich sehr viel eher vorstellen kann, was der Engel meinet mit seinem Gruß… Aber hier wollen die Papisten toll werden über mich, daß ich den englischen Gruß verderbet habe, wiewohl ich dennoch damit nicht das beste Deutsch habe troffen. Und würde ich hier

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8. Quoted according to the Brandenberger edition (Luther 2002: 58).

das beste Deutsch genommen haben und den Gruß so verdeutscht: Gott grüße dich, du liebe Maria (denn soviel will der Engel sagen, und so würde er geredet haben, wann er hätte wollen sie deutsch grüßen), ich glaube, sie würden sich wohl selbst erhängt haben vor übergroßem Eifer um die liebe Maria, daß ich den Gruß so zunichte gemacht hätte. (Luther 1530[9])

This strategy of stylistic correctness would later be reinforced by the current of the so-called "beautiful infidels"[10], albeit by applying it to the translation of the classics. Both strategies, that of respect for meaning and that of respect for ultimate linguistic correctness, could be included within what has been called the target-oriented strategy, a strategy that will always entail the danger of subjectivism, given that both the grasping of the meaning of the OT and of the ultimate correctness of the target text (which begs the question whether correctness relies on the system, the norm or the spoken language as its point of reference) will always have an individual, subjective component. Indeed, given the often esoteric and cryptic nature of the OT, universal understanding of the meaning of the text may be hindered by the fact that the text is or may be polysemous, which will make it possible, if not inevitable, for the version proposed by one translator to be in contradiction with another versifier's understanding of the text. Moreover, the perception of textual correctness, its readability, may also be different and subjective, as each user of the target text may have his or her own particular literary taste.

The scarce tradition of translating the Bible in the Spanish-speaking world (as we know, there were barely half a dozen versions, mostly partial, which circulated before Reina's translation: the Alfonsine, those of Ferrara, Alba, Francisco de Enzinas, etc.) gradually drifted towards legibility, as demonstrated by the version of Casiodoro de Reina, a Hieronymite monk who voluntarily expelled himself and joined the Lutheran camp. This Spanish Reformer, who ended up in exile in Lutheran regions, set about the task of translating the Bible from Hebrew into Spanish in order to make the biblical word accessible to Christian people, and he brought to the press in Basel his *Biblia del Oso* (1569), a work that was revised and finished by his

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9. Quoted according to the Brandenberger edition (Luther 2002: 58).
10. Zuber's book cited below is a good source of information on the French strategies of the 20th century.

former religious brother Cipriano de Valera. In the preface to his translation of the sacred books, apart from advocating for vernacular versions for the wider dissemination of the gospel, Casiodoro de Reina (1569) defended the understanding of the final text by the addressee as the aim of all biblical translation:

> De donde es necesario que concluyan: Que prohibir la divina Escritura en lengua vulgar no se puede hacer sin singular injuria de Dios… Los misterios de la verdadera Religión son al contrario, pues quieren ser vistos y entendidos de todos.

The same intention of disseminating the word had been the intention of the version by Francisco de Enzinas (1543)[11], who in the presentation of his translation, addressed to Emperor Charles V, offered his popularising aspirations as the reason for his New Testament. The Catholic Church had lost the habit of vulgarising the sacred text:

> Las otras naciones luego la voluieron en su lengua como Aegiptios, Arabes, Persas, Aetiopes, Latinos: y en aquella lengua cantaban, como lo affirma S. Hieronimo con el epitaphio de Paula: EI qual tanbien a sus Vngaros la voluio en Iengua Vngara. Los Latinos luego vsaron de la Latina. En la yglesia Latina duro esta costumbre por más de 600 años, hasta Phoca y Heraclio Emperadores y Gregorio Magno Papa. Perdiose despues esta costumbre que la sagrada escritura se leyese en lengua que todos la entediesen, no porque no fuese muy bueno, sino porque entrado gentes estrañas en Europa perdióse la lengua Latina en el vulgo, y començaron a hablar otras. Y el uso de la yglesia quedose como de antes. La qual costumbre dura hasta nuestros tiempos. (Enzinas 1543: 10)

As we can see, at least since the beginning of the Reformation onwards, the desire to maintain the mystery and cryptic nature of the revealed word as proposed by Jerome was always opposed to the desire to understand and comprehend the biblical text, a desire that clashed with the reality of the linguistic and conceptual disparity between the original text and the vernacular target language. An outstanding formulator of the divergences between the two ends, the source text and target text, was Fray Luis de León

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11. El nueuo testamento de nuestro redemptor y saluador Iesu Christo / traduzido de griego en lengua castellana por Françisco de Enzinas (1543). This translation would be used by Casiodoro de Reina.

from Salamanca, who dared to render the biblical *Song of Songs* in Romance directly from Hebrew, with an explanatory preface.

2.2. *Fray Luis de León: a return to origins*

Faced with this "libertarian" and subjective attitude towards the divine word, typical above all of the Reformed versions, Fray Luis de León would explicitly formulate a variant of the foreignising strategy, which Schleiermacher would characterise as "bringing the reader closer to the text" (source-oriented), which, while proposing respect for the word, demanded a complementary extratextual paraphrase for its correct understanding by the reader. In other words, Fray Luis de León opted for a version which, while being faithful to the written word, would add the complementary exegesis, essential in the case of a sacred text which, by nature or, at least, by editorial convention, would be cryptic, to which he added the reality of the different linguistic idiosyncrasies of the two contrasting languages, what Humboldt (1820-1822: 255) would later call *die Weltansicht*. The Hebrew language differed radically from the spirit of the Castilian language, a difficulty to which he added the diatopic hiatus existing between the original text and the state of the target language: "Lo segundo que pone oscuridad es ser la lengua hebrea en que se escribió, de su propiedad y condición lengua de pocas palabras y de cortas razones, y esas llenas de diversidad de sentidos"[12], he said in the prologue to his version of the *Song of Songs* (1559), continuing:

> […] y juntamente con esto por ser el estilo y juicio de las cosas en aquel tiempo y en aquella gente tan diferente de lo que se platica agora; de do nace parecernos nuevas y extrañas, y fuera de todo buen primor las comparaciones de que usa este libro, cuando el Esposo o la Esposa quiere más loar la belleza y gentileza de las facciones del otro, como cuando compara el cuello a una torre, y los dientes a un rebaño de ovejas, y así otras semejantes.

The result of this kind of translation strategy could be called a "supplemented literal version". In it he made explicit the moments of his peculiar TT. He began by alluding to the difficulty for any faithful reader to understand a text

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12. Quoted from the Cervantes Virtual Library edition: https://www.cervantesvirtual. com/obra-visor/cantar-de-cantares-de-salomon--0/html/01e17fb4-82b2-11df-acc7-002185ce6064_2.html

which, being divinely inspired, for the sake of comprehensibility adopted human forms, not always very exemplary:

> A cuya causa la lección deste libro es dificultosa a todos y peligrosa a los mancebos, y a los que aún no están muy adelantados y muy firmes en la virtud; porque en ninguna escritura se exprimió la pasión del amor con más fuerza y sentido que en ésta; y así, acerca de los hebreos no tienen licencia para leer este libro y otros algunos de la ley los que fueren menores de cuarenta años.

Accordingly, the Augustinian friar conceived translation, at least biblical translation, as a complex task, as a double activity that would result from the textual version plus an extra-textual commentary that included exegesis and hermeneutics:

> Lo que yo hago en esto son dos cosas: la una es volver en nuestra lengua palabra por palabra el texto de este libro; en la segunda, declaro con breve-dad no cada palabra por sí, sino los pasos donde se ofrece alguna oscuridad en la letra, a fin que quede claro su sentido así en la corteza y sobrehaz, poniendo al principio el capítulo todo entero, y después de él su declaración.

Such a procedure of "literal translation + extratextual paraphrase" would be required by the communicative situation. Fray Luis claimed that God expressed himself in the Bible from different communicative situations as he noted the variable perspectives that God adopted with the aim of communicating intelligibly with mankind:

> […] es cosa maravillosa el cuidado que pone el Espíritu Santo […] en conformarse con nuestro estilo, remedando nuestro lenguaje e imitando en sí toda la variedad de nuestro ingenio y condiciones: hace del alegre y del triste, muéstrase airado, y muéstrase arrepentido, amenaza a veces y a veces se vence por mil blanduras; no hay afición ni cualidad tan propia a nosotros y tan extraña a él en que no se transforme; y todo esto a fin de que no nos extrañemos de Él y que, o por agradecimiento, o por afición o por vergüenza, hagamos lo que nos manda, que es aquello en que consiste toda nuestra felicidad y buena andanza.

Secondly, it is the textual typology, to which Fray Luis implicitly alludes, and in doing so anticipates the modern proposals that make the method of translation depend on the type of text (Reiss 1976), that also calls for this procedure of complementing a translated version with an exegesis. The

different textual types and species in the biblical collection had already been noted by Origen, who had distinguished between narrative texts and legislative texts. Fray Luis also clearly observed the diversity of types and genres in the biblical texts when he remarked that they contained stories, sermons, prayers, songs, etc.:

> De semejantes argumentos y muestras están llenas las historias sagradas, los sermones y oraciones proféticas, los versos y canciones del salmista, y así mismo los consejos de la *Sabiduría*; y finalmente toda la vida y doctrina de Jesucristo, luz y verdad y todo el bien y esperanza nuestra.

For this reason, as a processual conditioning, and as a warning before reading his version of the book of Solomon (the *Song of Songs*), he considered the type of text he had been confronted with and classified it within the "pastoral genre", more specifically in its variant of "eclogue".

Finally, Fray Luis noticed the diastratic hiatus that would be implied by the supposedly pastoral and coarse speech in which the conversation between the pharaoh's daughter, the supposed wife, and Solomon takes place: "[...] it is all a pastoral eclogue, where with the words and language of shepherds, Solomon and his wife speak, and sometimes his companions, as if they were all villagers".

Consequently, the Augustinian versifier provided his translation with a critical apparatus to guide the reader in grasping the meaning of the translated "letter". All his translations were accompanied by a "declaration" in which he explained the meaning, not only the literal/historical meaning of each of the verses. By way of example we include some passages from the "statements" (interpretation + exegesis) accompanying the final text itself. They will be sufficient to understand the peculiar concept of Fray Luis' version, which produces a type of version that could be called a "complemented version" or paraphrased version:

> *No me desdeñéis si soy morena, que mirome el sol.*
> Responde esto bien al natural de las mujeres, que no saben poner a paciencia todo lo que les toca en esto de la hermosura. Que según parece, bien pagada quedaba esta pequeña falta de color con las demás gracias que de sí dice la Esposa, aunque en ello no hablara más; pero como le escuece, añade diciendo y muestra que esa falta no le es así natural que no tenga remedio,

> sino venida acaso, por haber andado al sol, y aun eso no por culpa suya, sino forzada contra su voluntad por la porfía de sus hermanos. Y así dice: *Los hijos de mi madre porfiaron [encendidos] contra mí; pusiéronme por guarda de viñas*; *la mi viña no guardé.*
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> Donde dice *mi viña*, en el hebreo tiene doblada la fuerza, que dice [mía, remía], dando a entender cuán suya propia es, y cuanto cuidado debe tener de ella, como si dijera: «la mi querida viña o la viña de mi alma», que por tal es en la estima de las mujeres todo lo que toca a su buen parecer y gentileza.

If, later in time, Ortega y Gasset said that every translation is a journey to an unknown land, it seems as if the doctor from Salamanca was providing the readers of his translation with the necessary items for a good journey towards the unknown land of the *Song of Songs.*

The specification and identification of translational strategies in dealing with the version of the Bible could be nuanced by probing more broadly into the history of Bible versions (*Great Bible, King James Version*), but these are the basic strategies that we can synthetically characterise by stating their respective "invariants".

Jerome and his followers (Fray Luis de León), convinced of "verbal inspiration", choose to preserve the "mystery" of the divine word, since in it, as Simmel & Stählin (1958: 34) state: "hüllt das Absolute ein ins Relative".

Luther and his followers (Casiodoro de Reina, Cipriano de Valera), although also convinced of verbal inspiration, propose the "sense" as an "invariant" of the translation (i.e. as something which must not be modified in the message in its passage from the OT to the TT), and add to it the correct expression in the target language.

We hereby restate our objective: to check whether these different strategic choices (letter, meaning/style) produce divergent versions: critical apparatus aside, do the different strategies produce divergent texts? To do so, we will analytically contrast a biblical passage, the opening chapter of the *Song of Songs*, one of the most characteristic biblical texts, in the versions of Fray Luis, Casiodoro de Reina and Luther, "horizontally", that is, not in relation to the original, but in comparison with each other, in an intralinguistic range (Fray Luis's TT versus the Casiodoro de Reina's TT_1) and in an interlinguistic range (these texts versus the Martin Luther's TT_2). In our textual contrast we shall check the possible morphosyntactic, lexical-semantic and meaning variations, possible products of the strategy.

3. Textual contrast: three versions of the *Song of Songs*

3.1. *The Song of Songs: general considerations*

Throughout history, the *Song of Songs* has been subject to a variety of inter-pretative alternations. It is one of the most difficult biblical texts for exegesis. This is what at least some of the introductions to the numerous annotated editions of the Bible in various European languages state. One such exam-ple: the *Einheitsübersetzung* or German unified translation (V.V.A.A. 1980: 728) states that this book is the most difficult of all the Old Testament scriptures to interpret: "Das Hohelied, woertlich übersetzt das Lied der Lieder, d. h. 'das schoenste Lied' [...] bei keinem alttestamentlichen Buch klaffen die Auslegungen so weit auseinander". And in the opinion of the renowned scholar from Madrid Trebolle Barrera (1998: 177), quoting M. H. Pope, the text "has undergone a long history of literal and allegorical inter-pretation which comprises one of the most typical developments of biblical hermeneutics".

From the generic point of view, it is a poetic text, as is shown by the title given to it by the anonymous author: "Song", in Hebrew שִׁיר הַשִּׁירִים, Shir Hashirim; ᾆσμα, ᾄσματος in Greek, translated into German as *Hohelied*, into French as *Cantique des Cantiques*, into English as *Song of Solomon* or *Song of Songs*, into Italian as *Cantico dei Cantici*. Despite its classification within the wisdom books, the way it was written is entirely poetic, judging by its final form: the metaphorical and figurative level of expression and the use of parallelism typical of Jewish literature. Its date of composition is imprecise, but, in any case, it is after the Babylonian exile. Trebolle (1998: 177) states: "the composition seems to be from the period of the Exile, although some of the individual poems could go back to such an earlier period". It has been proved that, at the time of its writing, the LXX version was already available, as it was allegedly written from 285 B.C. onwards, as, in the opinion of exe-getes that we cannot specify here, there is more than one linguistic vestige of Greek (or *Grecism*).

It may be asked whether such a division of opinion in interpreting it exegetically would be based on the different final form of the verses. As we know, the fact that Fray Luis dared to take on the version of this text was decisive in his difficulties with the Holy Office. Due to space constraints,

we limit ourselves to the initial passage of this collection of poems: it is the first utterance of the wife, the Shulamite, addressed to the husband, which presents a sufficient array of translation cases to lead to a possible conclusion, at least based on the evidence[13].

3.2. *Three versions of the same text*

1. TT Fray Luis de León:

1. Béseme de besos de su boca; que buenos [son] tus amores más que el vino.
2. Al olor de tus ungüentos buenos, [que es] ungüento derramado tu nombre; por eso las doncellas te amaron.
3. Llévame en pos de ti, correremos. Metióme el rey en sus retretes: regocijarnos hemos y alegrarnos hemos en ti, acordarnos hemos; membrársenos han tus amores más que el vino. Las dulzuras te aman.
4. Morena yo, pero amable, hijas de Jerusalén, como las tiendas de Cedar, como las cortinas de Salomón.
5. No me miréis que soy algo morena, que mirome el sol; los hijos de mi madre porfiaron y forcejearon contra mí; pusiéronme [por] guarda de viñas. La mi viña no guardé.
6. ¡Enséñame, Amado de mi alma, dónde apacientas!, dónde sesteas al mediodía; porque seré yo como descarriada entre los ganados de tus compañeros.

2. TT$_1$ Casiodoro de Reina:

1. O si me besase de besos de su boca: porque mejores son tus amores que el vino.
2. Por el olor de tus suaves unguentos, unguento derramado es tu nombre: por tanto las mozas te amaron.
3. Tirame en pos de ti, correremos. Metióme el Rey en sus camaras: gozarnos hemos, y alegrarnos hemos en ti: acordarnos hemos de tus amores, mas que del vino. Los rectos te aman.

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13. As it is not possible to expand due to the constraints of the paper and in order to avoid prolixity, we concentrate our analysis on a brief passage, the first song of the Shulamite, which, nevertheless, can prove the proposal of our study.

4. Morena soy, ó hijas de Ierusalem, mas de cobdiciar, como las cabañas de Cedar, como las tiendas de Salomon.

5. No mireys en que soy morena, porque el Sol me miró: los hijos de mi madre se airaron contra mi, hizieronme guarda de viñas y mi viña, que era mia, no guardé.

6. Hazme saber, oh tú a quien mi alma ama, dónde repastas, dónde haces tener majada al mediodía; porque, ¿por qué seré como la que se aparta hacia los rebaños de tus compañeros?

3. TT$_2$ Luther:

1. Er küsse mich mit dem Kusse seines Mundes; denn deine Liebe ist lieblicher als Wein.

2. Es riechen deine Salben köstlich; dein Name ist eine ausgeschüttete Salbe, darum lieben dich die Jungfrauen.

3. Zieh mich dir nach, so laufen wir. Der König führte mich in seine Kammern. Wir freuen uns und sind fröhlich über dir; wir gedenken an deine Liebe mehr denn an den Wein. Die Frommen lieben dich.

4. Ich bin schwarz, aber gar lieblich, ihr Töchter Jerusalems, wie die Hütten Kedars, wie die Teppiche Salomos.

5. Seht mich nicht an, daß ich so schwarz bin; denn die Sonne hat mich so verbrannt. Meiner Mutter Kinder zürnen mit mir. Sie haben mich zur Hüterin der Weinberge gesetzt; aber meinen eigenen Weinberg habe ich nicht behütet.

6. Sage mir an du / den meine Seele liebet / Wo du weidest / wo du rugest im mittage? Das ich nicht hin vnd her gehen müsse / bey den Herden deiner Gesellen.

3.3. *Intralinguistic contrast: the versions by Fray Luis de León and Casiodoro de Reina*[14]

Contextual presuppositions of the versions: The so-called *Sitz im Leben* (a concept of biblical exegesis also applicable to version criticism) is very

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14. For a possible verification of the "original text" we attach the texts of the LXX and the Vulgate.

similar in both versions. The diachronic distance between the two texts is practically nil, hence no textual differences due to chronological differences are evident. Both Casiodoro and Fray Luis also write for a diatopically similar audience: although the former publishes in Geneva, the implicit readers are not only those from the Spanish reformed diaspora, but also the standard Castilian readers in the Peninsula. Only from a diasporic perspective would it be possible to identify any difference concerning the addressee: it is evident that the Augustinian translates for an addressee with greater religious culture, who cultivates reflection on the sacred texts, while Casiodoro´s aim is a version for general use.

LXX Version

1Φιλησάτω με ἀπὸ φιλημάτων στόματος αὐτοῦ,// 2 ὅτι ἀγαθοὶ μαστοί σου ὑπὲρ οἶνον, 3 καὶ ὀσμὴ μύρων σου ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ἀρώματα,//μύρον ἐκκενωθὲν ὄνομά σου.//διὰ τοῦτο νεάνιδες ἠγάπησάν σε,//4 εἴλκυσάν σε,//ὀπίσω σου εἰς ὀσμὴν μύρων σου δραμοῦμεν.// Εἰσήνεγκέν με ὁ βασιλεὺς εἰς τὸ ταμιεῖον αὐτοῦ.//Ἀγαλλιασώμεθα καὶ εὐφρανθῶμεν ἐν σοί,//ἀγαπήσομεν μαστούς σου ὑπὲρ οἶνον·//εὐθύτης ἠγάπησέν σε.// 5 Μέλαινά εἰμι καὶ καλή,// θυγατέρες Ιερουσαλημ,//ὡς σκηνώματα Κηδαρ, ὡς δέρρεις Σαλωμων.//6 μὴ βλέψητέ με, ὅτι ἐγώ εἰμι μεμελανωμένη,//ὅτι παρέβλεψέν με ὁ ἥλιος·υἱοὶ μητρός μου ἐμαχέσαντο ἐν ἐμοί,//ἔθεντό με φυλάκισσαν ἐν ἀμπελῶσιν·//ἀμπελῶνα ἐμὸν οὐκ ἐφύλαξα.// 7 Ἀπάγγειλόν μοι, ὃν ἠγάπησεν ἡ ψυχή μου,//ποῦ ποιμαίνεις, ποῦ κοιτάζεις ἐν μεσημβρίᾳ,//μήποτε γένωμαι ὡς περιβαλλομένη ἐπ᾽ ἀγέλαις ἑταίρων σου.

(https://www.academic-bible.com/en/online-bibles/septuagint-lxx/read-the-bible-text/bibel/text/lesen/stelle/22/10001/19999/ch/735554e252efefd1cadbcd5dbe2c6f1b/)

Vulgata

1 *Osculetur me osculo oris sui* ;//quia meliora sunt ubera tua vino,// 2 fragrantia unguentis optimis.// Oleum effusum nomen tuum ;//ideo adolescentulæ/ dilexerunt te.// 3 Trahe me, post te curremus// in odorem unguentorum tuorum.// Introduxit me rex in cellaria sua;// exsultabimus et lætabimur in te,//

memores uberum tuorum super vinum.// Recti diligunt te.// 4 N*igra sum, sed formosa, filiæ Jerusalem,*// sicut tabernacula Cedar, sicut pelles Salomonis.// 5 Nolite me considerare quod fusca sim,//quia decoloravit me sol.//Filii matris meæ pugnaverunt contra me;//posuerunt me custodem in vineis ://vineam meam non custodivi.// 6 Indica mihi, quem diligit anima mea, ubi pascas,// ubi cubes in meridie,// ne vagari incipiam post greges sodalium tuorum.

(https://www.bibliacatolica.com.br/vulgata-latina-vs-la-biblia-de-jerusalen/canticum-canticorum/1/).

(1) Verse 1

The differences in textual formulation are nil on the lexical level and only the morphosyntactic forms employed show some variations, which are minor in any case: the imperative form of the verb *besar* ("béseme": Φιλησάτω με ἀπὸ φιλημάτων στόματος αὐτοῦ in the LXX) is modulated into a desiderative form, which would imply a modification or transformation of the grammatical category which, in any case, maintains the sense and almost the letter: the "o si me besase" diverges only slightly morphologically, but not in the meaning (*Bedeutung*) or in the sense (*Sinn*). In any case, the variation on the part of the former Hieronymite monk alludes to a greater desire for style, not always achieved. Fray Luis aims at a formula that dispenses with possible poetic expression, since he wants to uncover the meaning, including the allegorical meaning hidden in the word, and to reduce it conceptually through the commentary or "declaration".

(2) Verse 2

There are two lexical-semantic variations, again of no great importance for the understanding of the text: Fray Luis' "ungüentos buenos" are transformed by Reina into "suaves ungüentos", which constitutes a clear "specification" or explication of the possible semantic content, polysemy, of the term "bueno" as of few others (ἀγαθοί in LXX or *Septuagint; meliora* in *Vulgate*); and "doncellas" (νεάνιδες in the LXX; *adulencentulae* in *Vulgate*) becomes "moza" in the text of the former Hieronymite, which does not entail any deviation of meaning; it does, however, entail a nuancing of the behaviour of female youth. In contrast to the youth expressed by both terms, the Augustinian's lemma "doncella" would imply an added connotation of "virtuous modesty" (by deriving the semantics of the term towards the field of virginity) which is not implicit in the lemma "moza", referring to an unmarried young woman. La vaquera de la Finojosa in Serranilla VII of the Marquess of Santillana, "moça tan fermosa", lives with other shepherds and perhaps she would not be an example of "doncellez" ('maiden-like qualities') but of young, strapping beauty. It is not in vain that the Oxford dictionary of Spanish defines "doncella" as "young woman, especially a virgin". Mary, before the Incarnation,

could hardly be described as a girl, but as a "maiden" (*doncella*). The Lutheran version mentioned below derives the lemma to mean virginity: *Jungfrau*.

(3) Verse 3

There are some notable lexical differences in this verse: the phrase "llevar en pos de ti" of the TT corresponds to "tirar en pos de ti" in TT_1 (Reina); and the lemmas "retretes[15] to "cámaras", "regocijar" to "gozar", "membrarse" with "acordar". These are differences that do not affect either the meaning or sense of the verse. Both the meaning and the sense of both TTs, which a possible reader of both versions would grasp, would be perfectly equivalent. Only the last Louisianian phrase "las dulzuras te aman" ('sweetnesses love thee'), ("dulzuras" is meant as a translation of the term εὐθύτης of the LXX -εὐθύτης ἠγάπησεν σε; recti te *diligunt* in the *Vulgate*-, connected with correctness) differs shockingly from Reina's version ("los rectos te aman") and from other vernacular versions, both ancient and modern, which give, for example, the following meaning to the phrase: "a ragione ti amano!" (*La Bibbia*, ed. Marietti, 1980), "Dich liebt man zu Recht" (*Die Bibel. Einheitsübersetzung*, Herder, 2004), "the upright love thee" (*King James Bible*). The Louisianian version of the term, strange to the extreme, is perhaps due to some misinterpretation of the Hebrew term, which we do not know, but in any case it would not derive from the strategy adopted by Fray Luis, but rather from the different meaning that the translator has given the lemma. Since this hemistich has not been commented on or paraphrased by the Augustinian in the corresponding statement, it is not possible to conjecture much more on this issue.

(4) Verse 4

The only lexical-semantic differences to be observed are the lemmas "tiendas" ('tents') and "cortinas" ('curtains'), which in Casiodoro' version appears as "cabañas" ('huts') and "tiendas" ('tents'), both correct forms, although the term "cortina" could appear shocking, but it is perfectly valid as paraphrased

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15. With the meaning of 'chamber'.

in the commentary by giving the synonym "tendejón". The *King James Bible* reproduces the term *curtains*. Below we shall further insist on this term.

(5) Verse 5

Given the similarity of the translation solutions offered, it could be said that both translators have produced what, in the terminology of Vinay & Darbelnet (1958), is called the "direct version" or "version 1/1" of the OT. There is only one divergent textual occurrence that stands out: the lexical doublet of the Augustinian "porfiaron y forcejearon contra mí" ('they strove and struggled against me') as opposed to Reina's "se airaron contra mí" ('they released their anger upon me'), which the *Vulgate* had translated as *pugnaverunt* in accordance with the single term of the Greek text ἐμαχέσαντο, which indicates that, despite his literalist will, Fray Luis was well aware of the need for activating versioning "techniques" as Cicero had already pointed out by proposing that the criterion be the weight and not the number of words.

As in the case of his predecessors, Fray Luis was aware that on some occasions the versifier must translate one word for several or vice versa. In short, starting as they do from a different translation strategy, both final texts are totally equivalent, and do not only coincide in meaning but also, to a large extent, in letter. Even in spite of the stylistic intent of Reina, whose translation is considered one of the most beautiful versions of the Bible, the two versions do not differ in literary quality and it would be difficult to diagnose which of the two is literarily superior to the other.

3.4. Interlinguistic contrast: Reina and Fray Luis versus Martin Luther

In this following section, we shall contrast the two previous versions of the chosen passage of the *Song* with another one which, while under the same parameters of diachrony, relies on a different strategy, as there is an emphasis on the stylistic intention projected upon the final text: it is none other than the version published in 1545 by the German Reformer in his complete edition of the Bible. In it, just as he had intended in his *Sendbrief*, the Reformer tried to win over the German-speaking Christian public and bring them closer to the reading of the Bible by bringing the text within the linguistic and communicative reach of the common people. The *Sitz im*

Leben of this version is Martin Luther's attempt to justify his own particular interpretation of Christianity, an interpretation which made him break away from the tradition of the Church. It is, therefore, a "confessional" translation.

None of the verses of the Lutheran version display any significant differences with respect to the two Spanish versions; indeed, both the versions of the two Reformed texts, Luther's and Reina's, and that of the "papist" (such was Luther's alleged insult to Catholics) Fray Luis coincide in varying the lexical content of some passages, which would indicate that even while operating under different strategies they process the original text in a similar way. However, there are some nuances in meaning owed to the lemmas used, which are noteworthy. Thus, for example, in:

(1) Verse 1

For the comparison between the love and the wine of the beloved which in the LXX reads ὅτι ἀγαθοὶ μαστοί σου ὑπὲρ οἶνον and which the Vulgate translates as *quia meliora sunt ubera tua vino* (literally "for better are thy breasts than wine"), both Luther and Fray Louis, as well as Casiodoro, offer a prudish version: the expression, metaphorical as it may be, bears in its signifier an erotic connotation. Both the term "breasts" (*mastoi* in LXX, *ubera* in *Vulgate*) and the term "wine" belong to a level of physical reference (perhaps as a metaphorical basis for "love"); it is this concreteness which the translators eliminate in the first case and elevate to an abstract, generic category (love), stripping away any erotic connotation from the term: "your love is kinder than wine". On the other hand, the term *agathós* ('good'), is subjected by Luther to a grammatical category change (from positive to comparative) and semantically displaces or modulates it ("lieblicher" = 'kinder').

The whole verse shows that the techniques used by the Reformer are reliant on a strategy focused more on the addressee, and less on the source text. Perhaps the German reader, like the Spanish reader of the two versions cited, would be surprised to see such an obvious erotic allusion which is still avoided today in vernacular versions: Maretti's Italian version translates it as "tenerezze".

(2) Verse 2

"*Deliciosamente huelen tus ungüentos*" ('How delicious your ointments smell') would be the direct version of the first sentence of the verse belonging to the Lutheran version ("Es riechen deine Salben köstlich"), whereas the direct version of the LXX would read as "and the smell of your ointments [is] above all smells" (καὶ ὀσμὴ μύρων σου ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ἀρώματα). The morpho-syntactic transformations that the German version exhibits in comparison with the Spanish and, of course, the Greek and Latin versions, are evident. It suffices to note that the Greek syntagma ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ἀρώματα ('above all perfumes') which the Spanish versions offer as a causative complement ("por el olor / al olor"), are transformed by Luther into a predicative adjective within an affirmative sentence: "riechen [...] köstlich" ('they smell deliciously'). Once again Luther has oriented his version towards the readability of the final text.

(3) Verse 3

Here the great coincidence of the three versions is noteworthy, and it is only the last sentence of the exerpt of Fray Luis' translation, as we have seen above, that represents a variant on the two versions we have called "reformed": "Los piadosos" ("die Frommen" in Luther's translation) and "los rectos" ('the upright', in Reina's text) have little to do with "las dulzuras" ('the sweetnesses').

(4) Verse 4

Only the rendering of the Greek terms σκηνώματα ("tabernacula" in Jerome's version) and δέρρρεις (*pelles*) demonstrate a certain lexical-semantic diversity, again of no great significance.

A question arises on whether such a division of opinion on its exegetical interpretation could be based on the different translated forms of the verses. As is well known, the fact that Fray Luis dared to take on the translation of this text was decisive in his difficulties with the Holy Office. The three versions employ semantically kindred terms, albeit with certain nuances of variation: "Hütten" ('huts') and "Teppiche" ('tapestries') as opposed to "cabañas" and "tiendas" ('huts' and 'tents' in Reina's version) and "tiendas"

and "cortinas" ('tents' and 'curtains' in Fray Luis' version). "Teppich" in German designates a one-dimensional vertical covering, as does "cortina" (*Vulgate*), while "tienda" in Reina's version would allude to a two-dimensional covering structure, with a vertical part and an horizontal part over it. According to the Grimm dictionary, "Teppich" means "eine zierdecke (mit eingewebten oder eingestickten bildern, mustern und bunten farben zum behängen der wände (wandteppich), bedecken des fuszbodens (fuszteppich), der möbel, des tisches [...]", a lemma which semantically expresses a piece of furniture, mostly decorative, which can not only hang ("behängen") but also cover ("bedecken"). Fray Luis' version offers the terms "cortinas" o "tendejones", which is a more exact translation, referring to pieces of leather furniture that protect vertically and laterally from the rain, as the friar states in the corresponding "declaration" about the term "curtain":

> [...] Y como los tendejones de que suele usar en la guerra Salomón; que lo de fuera es de cuero para defensa de las aguas, más lo de dentro es de oro y seda y hermosas bordaduras, como suelen ser los de los otros reyes.

In any case, the overall meaning of the verse remains unchanged in the three versions and the choice of terms varies only slightly, which may depend more on the interpretation of its meaning by each of the versifiers, and less on the strategy adopted.

(5) Verse 5

Here what is striking is the Lutheran version of the passage, which in the LXX reads ὅτι παρέβλεψέν με ὁ ἥλιος, corresponding to the final text "the sun has burnt me so" ("die Sonne hat mich so verbrannt"), while the Castilian versions retain the term "mirar" ("mirome el sol"), giving a metaphorical expression of great beauty to the text.

(6) Verse 6

There is one construction in Reina's text that strikes the reader as peculiar: "tener majada al mediodía." Fray Luis renders the phrase more accurately as "sestear al mediodía", referring to the shepherd's work break, while Luther translates it as "rugest (=ruhest) im mittage" (*Vulgate: ubi cubes in meridie*; the LXX ποῦ κοιτάζεις ἐν μεσημβρίᾳ). If the term "majada" ('sheepfold') has

traditionally designated the place of rest and guarding of the flock at night (as defined by the Royal Spanish Academy), it goes against the meaning and sense of the sentence that the shepherd gathers his cattle at noon in a covered enclosure, when the meaning intended by the sacred author is that of *cubere/*κοιτάζειν which is merely that of resting, lying down. It is true that the term "majada" has also had the meaning of "inn" or "hostel" but nowadays this meaning is in disuse. However, in any case, it would go against the customs of shepherding to seek accommodation at midday. Is this perhaps a hyper-translation on the part of Reina?

4. Evidence-based conclusion

The conclusion derived from this contrast is clear at least on a circumstantial level: despite the different strategies used in each of the versions examined, the reader's grasp of the meaning of the sacred text, both then and now, would appear practically identical after a careful reading, which, moreover, show a similar tendency towards "literariness" and a "literalness" that is to some extent parallel. However, in TT_2, Luther's translation, one can perceive an effort to achieve linguistic "normality" (even tending towards "speech", in Coseriu's terminology). It was not in vain that in his *Sendbrief*, the Reformer confessed to have listened to the conversations of the average German and to those of ladies at the market place before formulating his TT:

> […] pues no hay que preguntar a las letras del latín cómo se debe hablar en alemán […] hay que preguntar a la madre en la casa, a los niños en la calle, al hombre corriente en el mercado y mirarles en la boca cuando hablan y según ello traducir. (Vega 1994: 109)

Indeed, the "populist" strategy of the Lutheran version sometimes produces a greater distance between the OT and the TT which, however, and except for specific cases, does not hinder the transmission of meaning. In any case, projecting the communicative norm of the colloquialism of the target audience onto the meaning of the original text can give rise to interpretative variants marked by subjectivism. When, in the above-mentioned passage from Luke 1:28, to which we have previously alluded, Luther rejects the then current translation of the Latin phrase *gratia plena* (in the αρχαία ελληνική

or Ancient Greek κεχαριτωμένη, adjective derived from χάρις[16]) for "voll der Gnade" and proposes as an alternative, meant for the "ear" of the intended reader, the expression "holdselig" ("Und der Engel kam zu ihr hinein und sprach: Gegrüßet seist du, Holdselige! Der HERR ist mit dir, du Gebenedeite unter den Weibern!"[17]), he is crossing the red line of faithfulness not only to the letter, but also to the phenomenology of the sacred text. Therefore, we could consider the *Sitz im Leben* of the passage and its message, which is outside communicative normality, as it is affirming the mystery of an abnormal fact: the incarnation of the divine in humanity through parthenogenesis. This red line of faithfulness to the character of the text is crossed not so much by means of applying a strategy (which is also the case, but to a lesser extent), but for the sake of a specific interpretation (more or less successful, more or less subjective) of a certain term or passage. A current "evangelical" version (ed. by Lancelle 2002) of the passage that follows Luther's methodology, "in moderner, leicht verständlicher Sprache" ('in modern, easily intelligible language'), varies the tenor of the Reformer's final text as follows: "Der Engel kam zu ihr und sagte: sei gegrüsst, Maria! Gott ist mir dir! Er hat dich unter allen Frauen auserwählt", which in turn does not coincide with the "unified translation", also partially signed by the Lutheran bishops[18]: "der Engel trat bei ihr ein und sagte: sei gegrüsst, du Begnadete, der Herr ist mit dir". We see that the gratia plena of the *Vulgate* becomes "holdselig"[19] in Luther, "Begnadete" in the "Unified version", only to disappear in the edition of the German IBS (International Bible Society). In some of these solutions to the textual problem (of meaning or style), is there not a certain drift towards

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16. The word χάρις (transliterated *jaris*) is one of the biblical terms with the most diversified meaning. Strong's dictionary (https://bibliaparalela.com/greek/5485.htm) gives as its usage: "It is used chiefly in regard to the favour of the Lord, freely extended to give himself to the people". Strong's concordance gives the following definition: (a) grace, as a gift or blessing given to man by Jesus Christ, (b) favour, (c) gratitude, thanks, (d) a favour, kindness. In another place (5463) it is interpreted as "divine influence on the heart, and its reflection in life; including gratitude".

17. Quoted from http://www.bible.club/luther-bibel-1545/lukas.html

18. In the credits of the Herder edition published in 2004 (*Die Bibel. Einheits Ubersetzung. Altes und Neues Testament*) it is stated: "Für die Psalmen und das Neue Testament auch im Auftrag des Rates des Evangelischen Bibelwerks".

19. The Grimm dictionary gives the meaning of the motto as "freundlich gesinnt, geneigt, gewogen", terms which do not reflect the theological semantics of *gratia plena*.

subjectivism, which over-interprets, eliminates or varies the tenor of the text? Such, for example, is the passage in *Romans 3* about justification by faith, which today's Unified German version strips of the extreme personal meaning given to it by Luther, who otherwise had the merit of creating the modern German language with his translation.

In response to the approach to the study stated in the title, of the three methodologies proposed, oriented respectively to the letter, the meaning and the addressee, only the last one produces divergent passages, when the translator wants to force the expression of the OT by subjecting it to a communicative hyper-normality in the TT. In short, different translation strategies produce or can produce different versions, not necessarily divergent ones unless the subjective behaviour of the translator, based on stylistic ambition, means to say, as the French translator Nicolas d'Ablancourt intended, not only what the author said, but what he could have said.

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