

**The Power of Rewriting.
The Cultural and Political Functionality of Fernández de Villegas's
Translation and Commentary of Dante's *Infierno* (1515).¹**

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La traducción del Dante (Burgos, Fadrique de Basilea, 1515) was commissioned to the archdeacon Pedro Fernández de Villegas by Juana de Aragón, natural daughter of Ferdinand the Catholic and wife of the Constable of Castile, Bernardino Fernández de Velasco. It was the first vernacular translation of the *Commedia* to be printed in Europe and the only one in Spanish to be available to the general public in the Iberian territory until the 19th century, when it was translated again into Spanish and, for the first time, into Portuguese.² The 55 surviving copies of the edition,³ most of which have reading marks (Hamlin 2021a), evidence that this text was a crucial part of the wider reception and dissemination of Dante in Renaissance in Spain and, also, in Portugal.⁴

Villegas's version of the *Infierno* in "coplas de arte mayor" had not only numerous additional verses, as a consequence of the transposition of one or two *terzine* into the Castilian stanza,⁵ but it was also accompanied by an extensive commentary around each stanza, written by the translator himself. Its main avowed source was Landino's *Comento sopra la Commedia* (1481), the most famous and reedited humanist commentary of Dante's text, from which Villegas selected and translated numerous passages. The little scholarly attention this *textus cum commento* has received until fairly recently has focused on the didactic and moralistic tendency of Villegas's rewriting of Dantean—and Landinian—material,⁶ thus disregarding the historical or cultural function that it fulfilled within the literary system from which it emerged. As I have argued in several instances, this text was actually produced within the context of Ferdinand's royal court and shows, in both its hermeneutical instances, highly apologetic characteristics and a new context-oriented political and cultural function. On

¹ This article is based on the homonymous micro-seminar I taught on April 26th as part of my duties as "Iberian Scholar in Residence for the Spring Semester" in the Spanish and Portuguese Department at Yale University.

² Villegas's text was reprinted in Madrid in 1868—this time without the commentary. The following Spanish translation, by Manuel Aranda San Juan, was published that same year in Barcelona and was the first of several others to be published during the 19th century (Camps 2021). The first Portuguese version, by Domingos José Ennes, was not published until 1889 (Lanciani, 2011). As for Catalan, Febrer's translation (1424) was reprinted in 1878 and then it was not until 1908 that the first printed translation, by Antoni Bulbena, was published (Cunill-Sabatés 2021: 29).

³ Since Hamlin 2019 (pp. 46-47), where I listed 48 known copies, I have identified 7 more: Santander, Biblioteca de Menéndez y Pelayo (57); Granada, Abadía del Sacromonte (22-E74-T1); Paris, Bibliothèque de l' Arsenal (FOL-BL-756); Strasbourg, Bibliothèque Nationale et Universitaire (R.11.177); California, Huntington Library (10218); Manchester, John Rylands University Library (R17040); Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, (Ra 18 Dan 1). For the complete list, as well as the links to the available digital copies, see my description in Hamlin (2022).

⁴ In fact, the copy preserved today in Stuttgart presents marginal glosses in Portuguese by 3 different hands (see Appendix, Image 1).

⁵ For the several different procedures in which Villegas fits the Dantean material into one or two stanzas of "arte mayor"—which is far more complex than one or two *terzine* per stanza—see Hamlin (2019: 111-118).

⁶ See Beltrani (1915), Fine (1981), Andreu Lucas (1995), (1996), Recio (1999), Mondola (2011). On Mondola's subsequent monograph, which dubiously uses previous work, see Lucía Megías (2019).

the frontispiece of the edition, indeed, you can see Juana's coat of arms, which is bipartite (see Appendix, Image 2): on the left, the insignia of the House of Velasco and on the right those of Ferdinand the Catholic. This is intriguing and symptomatic of the political and propagandistic function of this text: as Montaner (1994: 29) has stated, the arms allow for a "symbolic presence," that is to say, they replace the personal representation of the monarch (Nieto Soria, 1995: 511). In the case of this coat of arms, its denotative meaning (Montaner, 2010: 46), in other words, the direct reference to Juana, would be evocatively linked to an indirect reference to her father.⁷

The main purpose of this article is to show the extent to which Villegas's text is paradigmatic to illustrate the complex notion of Medieval and early modern translation: a hermeneutical practice in which inter-lingual transference, gloss, paraphrasis and recreation are constantly overlapping and tend to displace "the originary force of its models" (Copeland 1991: 4). As it is commonly known, two contrasting models of translation coexisted at the time: the aforementioned translation linked to *enarratio* and *inventio*, as opposed to literal or *ad verbum* translation.⁸ As Copeland asserts (1991: 95), however, they actually represent the extremes of a *continuum* of exegetical practices that combine or merge in every translation in different proportion: in fact, very few Medieval and early modern translations constitute pure instances of either.

Villegas's version, in fact, is a paradigmatic exponent of the complexity of the translational phenomenon of the time. On the one hand, the Dantean text is translated through mechanisms that involve literal translation, but mostly amplification, paraphrasis, inter-verse gloss, and recreation. I shall exemplify how these procedures merge in the translating process with the following cases:⁹

Example I: Canto I, stanza 16 (c1v)

Por quien tomó muerte la virgen Camilla	107 (LIT)	<i>Di quella umile Italia fia salute</i>	106
será de la humilde Ytalia salud	106 (LIT)	<i>per cui morì la vergine Cammilla,</i>	107
Eurialo y Niso que en su juventud	108 (OM+AMPL)	<i>Eurialo e Turno e Niso di ferute.</i>	108
murieron , y Turno que dio tal manzilla	108 (AMPL)	<i>Questi la cacerà per ogne villa,</i>	109
de todo poblado y de toda villa	109 (AMPL)	<i>fin che l'avrà rimessa ne lo 'nferno,</i>	110
yrá deraygando tal daño del mundo	109 (PAR+AMPL)	<i>là onde 'nvidia prima dipartilla.</i>	111
fasta tornarla al lloroso profundo	110 (LIT+ PAR)		
donde ella y la invidia dexaron su silla.	111 (LIT+ PAR)		(<i>InfI, 106-111</i>)

⁷ In fact, according to Carrasco Manchado (2006: 114), during the reign of the Catholic Monarchs, an intentional and intensive policy of political propaganda was implemented as the basis of their support, in which the use of heraldic figures was one of the most widespread resources.

⁸ For an in-depth description of the specificities of the medieval translation phenomenon, as well as a historic review of the development of translational practices from Antiquity to the Middle Ages, see the works of Buridant (1983), Beer (1989, 1997), Copeland (1991), Rubio Tovar (1997), Santoyo (1999), Djordjevi (2000) y Warren (2007).

⁹ I base my transcriptions of Villegas's text in Madrid, BNE, R-2519. From now on, I will offer between brackets the stanza, verse number and, when needed, the signature of the folio. For the *Commedia*, I follow Petrocchi's edition, aware that his text is a theoretical construction that does not reflect any real copy, neither manuscript nor printed, on which Villegas could have based his translation. In fact, according to my latest research, presented at the Semyr Conference held in Santiago de Compostela in September 2022, Landino's text was Villegas's textual model only in the second part of the *Inferno*: in the first *cantos* I have found numerous separative readings. According to my latest research, it is possible that, for the first *cantos*, Villegas had based himself on Foligno's *editio princeps* (1472), a hypothesis that I will explore further in future studies.

Example II: Canto XIII, stanza 10 (v7v)

Después de lançados sospiros muy graues	(AMPL)	<i>Io son colui che tenni ambo le chiavi</i>	58
nos dixo ‘yo soy el que del coraçón	58-59	<i>del cor de Federigo, e che le volsi,</i>	59
retube sin dubda en aquella sazón	(AMPL)	<i>serrando e diserrando, sì soave</i>	60
del grand Federico entrambas las llaves,	58-59	<i>che dal secreto suo quasi ogn’ uom tolsi</i>	61
abriendo y cerrando por modos suaves	60 (LIT)		
y siempre guardando mi cargo tan neto,	(AMPL)		(<i>Inf.</i> XIII, 58-61)
que a todos eché del su alto secreto	61 (LIT)		
¡O falsa pribaça firmeza no sabes!	(GLOSS)		

References:

LIT: Literal translation **AMPL:** Amplification **OM:** Omission **PAR:** Paraphrasis

In the first example, we can see how verses 16a and 16v are *ad verbum* translations of Dantean verses 106-107, though inverted in their order. The first hemistich of verse 108 (“Eurialo e Turno e Niso di ferute”) is divided into two different verses (“Eurialo y Niso”, 16c; “y Turno” 16d)¹⁰, while the second (“di ferute”) is omitted and replaced by the amplification “que en su juventud/ murieron”. Villegas also adds the second hemistich of verse 16d (“que dio tal manzilla”) and the first hemistich of verse 16e (“de todo poblado”). This last hemistich duplicates the one that translates “in ogne villa” (v. 109): “y en toda villa”. The translator paraphrases the other half of verse 109 (“la cacciarà”, i.e. will be banished) into verse 16a “irà deraygando” (i.e. “will be uprooted”), the second part of which is an amplification (“tal daño del mundo”). Finally, Dantean verses 110 and 111 correspond to 16g and 16h, respectively, although the translator paraphrases some of their components: “ne lo ‘nferno” is translated as “al lloroso profundo” (16g), whereas “prima dipartilla” is rendered as “dexaron su silla” (16h). In the second example, stanza 13 of Canto XIII, Villegas uses the same translating procedures, though here four Dantean verses turn into an 8-line stanza. Villegas adds the entire content of three verses (10a, 10c, 10f), while verse 10h, also an amplification, actually functions as an internal gloss in which his voice (and opinion) intrudes.

On the other hand, the commentary that surrounds each stanza is mostly based on Landino’s exegetical material and it is therefore –and to a great extent– a translation itself –which, of course, also involves diverse mechanisms of gloss and recreation of the source. This text is also paradigmatic to illustrate how translation and rewriting, from the point of view of cultural appropriation, are powerful forms of exegetical action that are always context-oriented. Indeed, the numerous additions, omissions and changes that Villegas introduced in his rewriting both of Dante’s verses and Landino’s *Comento* may have had didactic or moralistic purposes, but most of them were meant to refashion the political and historical connotations of the source text, so as to make it *significantly powerful* in the new context. In the second example we can see how Villegas, through and inter-verse or intra-stanza gloss reinterpreted the character of Pier Della Vigna, the secretary of Frederick II, according to the Castilian phenomenon of *privanza* (*vid infra*), following a precise apologetic objective. As mentioned above, this text was actually

¹⁰ It is possible that the order in which these three characters appear, which varies from the reading established by Petrocchi’s critical edition, was not due to a translation choice made by Villegas but was in the actual model he used: “Eurialo, Niso e Turno” is, in fact, the variant transmitted in the manuscript Ash (Petrocchi 1994: 17) and, not coincidentally, in that of Foligno (1472) as well: “eurialo enixo e turno deferute” —my transcription is based on the copy held in Oxford, Bodleian Library Auct. 2Q 2.18 (available at <https://digital.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/objects/53f5a87b-cfde-46b5-b6d8-c159c05cbc8c/surfaces/bc033567-9c56-472e-a3ec-9864a6f96791/>).

produced within the context of Ferdinand's royal court and shows, in both its hermeneutical instances, highly apologetic characteristics and a new context-oriented political and cultural function. The most striking example is the prophecy in the first canto. Through numerous additions, intra-verse variations and strategically inserted historical allusions in the gloss, it was reshaped so that it could be easily interpreted within the system of prophetic material that circulated about the Catholic King – identifying him as the Universal Monarch.¹¹ In regard to the gloss, the changes implemented in the new text were also meant to satisfy, through the centrifugal potentiality of the *prosa soluta*, the literary and intellectual interests of both the glossator and the readers of the time. They actually attest to the various strains and disciplinary interests characterizing Spanish Humanism at the dawn of the 16th century, such as Poetics, Philology, Lexicography, History, Geography, Archeology.¹² Within these diverse interests, the development of the “narrative potential of the mythical or historical allusions of the main text” (Weiss 2005: 521) is surely one of the most striking and pervasive: Villegas rewrites the interpolated biographical or mythological stories through which Landino presented Dante's characters in a rather innovative – stylistically and narratologically – manner. In the meantime, of course, he subverts their historical or political connotations in accordance with the ideological intention of the new text.

However, one of the most interesting features of this text is that the interdependence between translation, paraphrasis and gloss operates not only at a micro compositional level, but also at a macro or structural level, and has a direct impact on the instance of reception. In fact, Villegas's text as a whole is a complex literary artifact that is only sustained, both materially and hermeneutically, by the constant interaction of text and commentary. This is not a figure of speech: it is a phenomenon that is intimately connected (albeit not exclusively) with the first, or most important, translational decision: that of the type of verse. Indeed, the choice of the “copla de arte mayor” is absolutely pertinent to accommodate the foreign matter into the Castilian literary system, both from a formal, literary and ideological point of view: this is the type of verse and stanza preferably used in compositions of apologetic, prophetic and political contents and, specifically, in those that respond to the allegorical-Dantean school.¹³ However, this choice has devastating consequences at a semantic level.




In fact, “arte mayor” verse is anisosyllabic and isorritmic: though it tends to vary between 10 and 13 syllables (Gómez Redondo 2016: 395-396), it answers to a very rigid prosodic pattern that Lázaro Carreter (1972: 251) called “coacción de los ictus”. As it has been analyzed by Lida de Malkiel (1950) with respect to Juan de Mena's *Trescientas* —an allegorical-Dantean composition—, this rhythmic (syllabic-accented) verse structure called “adónico doblado” (constructed in an alternation of dactyl and

¹¹ I have analyzed Villegas's rewriting of this prophecy in the first two sections of my article published in *Bulletin of Spanish Studies* (Hamlin 2016: 369-395), later expanded in Hamlin 2019 (157-172).

¹² A paradigmatic example of the topicality of Villegas's commentary are his reflections on poetry and fiction, as well as his particular stance on the very current polemic between arms and letters (see Hamlin 2012). For a more detailed account of Villegas's interest in the other disciplines in vogue at the time, see Hamlin 2019, chapters 2 and 6.

¹³ As examples, I shall mention the cases of Mena's *Trescientas* and Santillana's *Comedieta de Ponza* and, specifically in the age of the Catholic Monarchs, Juan de Barba's *Consolatoria de Castilla*, the “Egloga hecha por Francisco de Madrid”, Guillén de Segovia's *Panegirico a la Reina Isabel*, Juan del Encina's *Triunfo de la fama* and *Traslación de las Bucólicas*, among many other propagandistic texts. For a more in-depth exposition and analysis of this, see Hamlin 2019: 172-182 and Hamlin 2016.

trochee feet [o] óoo óo | [o] óoo óo),¹⁴ compels the poet to use a series of poetic licenses and metaplasms – hyperbaton, Latin structures, such as delaying the verb to the end of the clause—, accentual dislocation, etc.— in order to fit the linguistic material to the stipulated rhythm. As an example, the *Trescienta*'s famous second stanza:¹⁵

Tus casos fallaces, Fortuna, **cantamos**,  Verb at the end (Latin structure)
 estados de gentes que giras y trocas,
 tus muchas mudanças, tus **firmezas** pocas,  Accentual dislocation
 y los que en tu rueda quexosos **hallamos**,
 hasta que al tiempo de agora vengamos:
de hechos passados cobdicia mi pluma,  Hiperbaton
y de los presentes, hazer breve suma;
 dé fin Apollo, pues nos començamos.

(stanza II)

The consequence is a dislocated syntax the main characteristic of which is the “disorder as rule”, and a highly artificial poetic language. The panorama worsens ostensibly in the case of Villegas’s text, since he was working with foreign linguistic material: to make it fit into the new format, he stretches and subverts Dantean verses to such an extent, both syntactically and semantically — see above the analyses of examples 1 and 2—, that he must restore their meaning –or at least the meaning he wants to convey–, through the gloss.

Let us return to the first example, stanza 16, which is part of the “veltro” prophecy. For the sake of comprehension, I shall include the previous stanza (15), along with images of both the folios in which they are transmitted:

Con más animales que son de su pelo
 se casa; y serán fasta el can corredor
 que venga y la faga morir de dolor
 sus obras juzgando en jurídico zelo,
 aqueste no ceba de bienes del suelo
 mas sabiduría, amor y virtud
 dará a los mortales descanso y salud,
 será su nación de lo humano y del cielo.

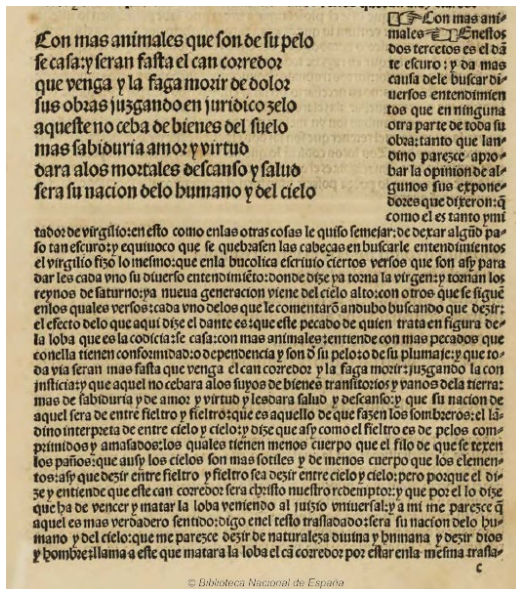
Por quien tomó muerte la virgen Camilla	107	<i>Di quella umile Italia fia salute</i>	106
será de la humilde Ytalia salud	106	<i>per cui morì la vergine Cammilla,</i>	107
Euríalo y Niso que en su juventud	108	<i>Eurialo e Turno e Niso di ferute.</i>	108
murieron, y Turno que dio tal manzilla	108	<i>Questi la cacerà per ogne villa,</i>	109
de todo poblado y de toda villa	109	<i>fin che l'avrà rimessa ne lo 'nferno,</i>	110
yrá deraygando tal daño del mundo	109	<i>là onde 'nvidia prima dipartilla.</i>	111
fasta tornarla al lloroso profundo	110		
donde ella y la inuidia dexaron su silla.	111		

InfI, 106-111

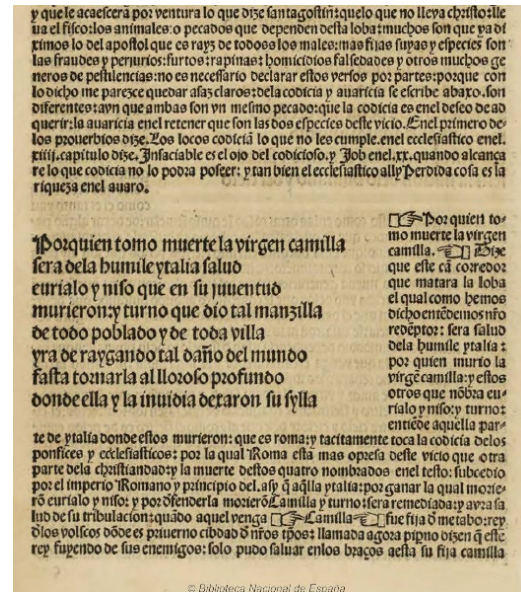
Canto I, st. 15-16 (clr-clv)

¹⁴ For more specifications on this verse pattern and the so-called “copla de arte mayor” see Gómez Redondo (2013, 2016).

¹⁵ Quoted from De Nigris’s edition (1994).



fol. c1r



fol.

As we can see, in the previous stanza, as well as in the gloss that surrounds it, the “can corredor”, translation for “veltro”, was mentioned. However, when reading the first verse of st. 16 we have a problem: we do not know to whom this “Por quien” refers to: for whom did Camilla die, the *can corredor*? Or is this stanza self-sufficient and we should understand that she died for Eurialo or Niso mentioned later? Additionally, it is unclear if “será de la humilde Italia salud” refers to Camilla or to Eurialo. The problem here, derived from a rearrangement of the verses and their components to fit into the prosodic pattern and rhyme (see the numbers in the Italian verses), but also from the fragmentation of the Dantean *terzine incatenate* into an 8-line stanza (leaving the referent of the actions far away, on the previous page), is only resolved in the commentary, where Villegas restores the order and sense of the original and we learn that none of these options was correct:

→Por quien tomó muerte la virgen Camilla ← Dize que este can corredor [*i.e.* veltro], que matará la loba [...] será salud de la humilde Ytalia, por quien murió la virgen Camilla, y estos otros que nombra Eurialo y Niso y Turno [...] y la muerte de estos quatro nombrados en el testo sucedió por el imperio Romano y principio dél, asy que aquella Ytalia por ganar la qual morieron Eurialo y Niso y por defenderla morieron Camilla y Turno: será remediada y avrá salud de su tribulación, quando aquel venga. (fol. c1v)

Therefore, on the one hand, Camilla died for Italy (second verse), as did Eurialo and Niso; on the second hand, “la salud de Italia” refers to the “can corredor,” mentioned in the previous stanza. This is just an example of how the reader is constantly forced to resort to the gloss as the only way to follow the narrative thread of the *Inferno*.

But the reader is also lured by the gloss. There they find (in addition to theological and moral disquisitions) anecdotes of all kinds, including biographical or mythological accounts of Dantean characters, as well as allusions to the context, such as historical events (the execution of Álvaro de Luna gloss to I, 6, fol. b2r); battles and conquests (Granada and Naples, gloss to IV, st. 12, fol. g8 and h1r; Ravenna gloss to XXVII, st. 6, fol. H4v); Spanish historical and literary characters (Rodrigo de Vivar or the *Gran Capitán*, gloss to IV, st. 12, fol. g8 and h1r); references to state-of-the-art cultural debates (arms and letters, gloss to IV, st. 12, fol. h1r; courtly and rustic language, gloss to VIII, st. 18, fol. p2r), towards which Villegas stance is paradoxical

and thus intriguing. A paradigmatic example is the treatment of the aforementioned literary polemic. After an *amplificatio* in which Villegas explicitly praises the recent Hispanic victories and, especially, the war policy of Ferdinand the Catholic, he closes the passage as follows:

Pues representados ante mis ojos **tan altos triunfos de armas**, y tan prouechosos a la xristiana república, **diera yo sentencia contra el Cicerón que disputó esta materia, y concluyó diciendo, den logar las armas a la toga**, y la corona de laurel dese a la lengua y a las letras, **determinando ser aquellas de más excelencia que las victorias armadas. Y no solamente dixera yo el contrario**, mas condenara en las costas al Cicerón, como mandan los derechos que sea condempnado el juez que da mala sentencia. Mas ocurrieron los grandes prouechos y glorioso alumbramiento que rescibió el mundo y la cathólica fe de los santos doctores de la Yglesia, Hieronymo, Agostino, Gregorio, Ambrosio, Crisóstomo y Bernardo, con otros muchos que nos mostraron el camino de la gloria, **retube pues la pluma, dexando esta qu[e]stión indecisa**. No me pareciendo peso tolerable a mis tan lánguidas fuerças y torpe ingenio, remitolo a quien mejor supiere fundar la parte que tomare. (IV, copla 12, h1r)

The choice of arms over the toga is easily explained by taking into account the immediate textual context: the construction of this passage demonstrates the ideological support that Ferdinand's imperial policy received and, at the same time, how court writings tended to legitimize and propagate it. In this sense, Villegas limits himself to expounding one of the most widespread opinions about the king's actions: in his case, arms "yield" or serve religion and, above all, the Christian empire. The "irreverent" attitude against the classical authority, Cicero, who declared otherwise, seems to emphasize his choice. It is interesting, however, that after choosing the "active life," he ends the passage with a hesitant attitude, listing the saints who, through their writings, have (evidently) contributed all the more to the Christian religion. As a clergyman who is also a court member, the archdeacon faces a paradox, which he cannot solve except by "deteniendo la pluma".

The paradox is the following: while the most important figures of peninsular humanism, at this historical moment, attempt to embody the dichotomy in the figure of the learned nobleman, Villegas, on the contrary, manages to sharply separate the waters and present them as irreconcilable spheres, through the same image—the arms and the toga—that humanist noblemen used for their union. In other words, from his particular enunciative situation—a literary cleric in the service of the court, Villegas convincingly executes his task of praising the exercise of arms, and, especially, Fernandine politics. At the same time, however, he subtly presents it as the opposite of literary practice, whose paradigmatic exponents are, according to him, the leading figures of the ecclesiastical institution, the Doctors of the Church. At the end of the argument, through the almost casual mention of his "pen" ("retuve pues mi pluma"), an obvious synecdoche for literary activity, he places himself in this group.

This paradox reveals the real problem underlying such a strong separation: the tension between "professional literati"—schooled clerics who defend literary practice as a private domain, and the emergence of the "lay literacy," the new noble writers and readers. In the end, the particular reformulation of the topic in Villegas's text is nothing more than his textual response to a "historical change".¹⁶ The archdeacon is thus implicitly advocating the restitution of literary knowledge and practice to the hands of

¹⁶ Lawrance (1991: 94) describes this change excellently: "El perfil general del cambio histórico que vengo esbozando está claro: el ideal de literatura, "lo escrito", como un tesoro celosamente guardado por un estamento especial de hombres profesionalmente capacitados para ese oficio en la "cosa pública", iba cediendo ante el ideal de la literatura como posesión exclusiva de una clase dominante de amateurs cultos y "liberales".

the “elite” of professionals where he includes himself. Therefore, he reformulates the topic of arms and letters in terms of the defense of his sector and his own practice as a literary clergyman.

Given what I have hitherto argued, the two complementary notions of translation as domestication and violence, drawn from current “Translation Studies,”¹⁷ seem not only pertinent but highly enlightening about Villegas’s mechanisms of appropriation and rewriting. The Castilian translator/commentator domesticates the source text in two ways: by exercising a violence on its linguistic and narrative subject-matter, a domestication that enables it to penetrate the poetic and literary system of the new context —*vid supra* note 13—; at the same time, by displacing its narrative and hermeneutic force to the gloss, of which he is the guiding and ruling will, the author, and the authority. The interaction between poetic coercion, syntactic violence, semantic disorder, and artificial re-ordering may perhaps be considered —this is a very incipient idea— in terms of the dialectic relation between form (text) and context. In other words, the form in the case of Villegas’s translation may be considered as another type of discourse capable of reproducing tensions inherent to the political-cultural context, that is, the dynamics of social and ideological subjection imposed by the Catholic Monarchs —and the Church, of course.

I will illustrate some of the context-oriented rewriting mechanisms at play in this translation and gloss by focusing on three phenomena. But first I would like to emphasize that, in the course of my research, I concluded that the translation procedures usually described by Medieval Translation scholars —i.e. *amplification*, *abbreviation*, and the rhetorical practices that are subordinated to them— are not always sufficient as textual analytical tools. Indeed, besides the fact that they are techniques of creation ubiquitous to the entirety of medieval literary practice, they cannot be applied as descriptive devices in the analysis of the linguistic material that is actually transferred from one text to the other, i.e. that which is present (exists) in both texts. In this sense, applying analytical tools drawn from Translation Studies —especially the Descriptive Studies of the practice of translation and its mechanisms (transposition, modulation, explicitation, etc.)— to the analysis of medieval and early modern translation turns out to be very productive, as they allow us to describe at a micro-textual level the syntactic, morphological, and semantic variations implemented in the target text.¹⁸ Indeed, the three cases of paraphrasis mentioned in example 1 (*vid supra*) are, in reality, different types of the procedure known as “modulation,”¹⁹ which is a change in the category of thought, that implies a change of point of view. Thus, on the one hand, “yrá deraygando” (16f) instead of “cacerà” (109) is a case of metonymic modulation, specifically of “cause for a consequence” (cause: exile/consequence: uprooting). On the other hand, “al lloroso profundo” (16g) instead of “ne lo ‘nferno” (110), and “dexaron su silla” (16h) instead of “prima dipartilla” (111) are both cases of metonymic modulation, specifically of “consequence for cause”. Furthermore, in verse 16a there was a case of the procedure known as “transposition,” in other words, a change in the grammatical category.²⁰ Villegas translated the verb “mori” through the periphrasis “tomó muerte,” in which the idea of dying was expressed by a noun.

¹⁷ I am referring specifically to Venuti (1995: 18-19), who developed these concepts in *The Translator’s Invisibility. A History of Translation*.

¹⁸ See Hamlin 2014a.

¹⁹ For a more detailed description of this procedure see Vázquez Ayora (1977: 251-384), Hamlin 2014a and 2019 (120-122).

²⁰ See Vázquez Ayora (1977: 268-274), Hamlin 2014a and 2019 (119-120).

That being said, the first phenomenon to be discussed is the textual impact on the translation of one of the most extended mechanisms of royal propaganda: the diffusion of a theocentric discourse, phenomenon studied by Cátedra (1989: 25-29) in relation to Barba's *Consolatoria de Castilla* –also in *arte mayor*— and other texts of the period. For example:

Asý vine a ti como ella mandó (II, 8a)	<i>e venni a te così com'ella volse</i> (Inf II, 118)
La eterna justicia asý lo ha ordenado [...] que su damnación le venga en deseo (III, 22ac)	<i>ché la divina giustizia li sprona</i> <i>si che la tema si volve in disio</i> (Inf III, 125-6)
O ciega maluada y peruersa cobdicia que en la corta vida nos punge tu fambre después en la eterna nos vaña en la sangre segund que lo ordena la eterna justicia (XII, 9ad)	<i>Oh cieca cupidigia e ira folle</i> <i>che si ci sproni ne la vita corta</i> <i>e ne l'eterna poi si mal c'immolle</i> (Inf XII, 49-51)
Que loca es y muerta la tal piedad que aestos se tiene enemigos de Dios de aquello contentos debemos ser nos que tiene ordenado su justa bondad quien es zelerado y de más crueldad quel que ha compasión al juizio diuino (XX, 5af)	<i>Qui vive la pietà quand'è ben morta;</i> <i>chi è più scellerato che colui</i> <i>che al giudicio divin passion comporta?</i> (Inf XX, 28-30)
soy vno que baxó de vn valzo en otro y es me mandado mostrar lo aquestotro (XXIX, 14fg)	[...] <i>I' son un che discendo</i> [...] <i>giù di balzo in balzo</i> <i>e di mostrar lo 'nferno a lui intendo</i> (Inf XXIX, 94-96)
la justicia rígida quiere y ordena traher mayor pena de do fue el pecado que aquello afligendo sea mas suspirado (XXX, 11ce)	<i>La rigida giustizia che mi fruga</i> <i>tragge cagion del loco ov' io peccai</i> <i>a metter più li miei sospiri in fuga</i> (Inf XXX, 70-2)
El mi buen caudillo le dixo 'Carón, no te congoxes, que asý esta mandado allá do se puede lo que es ordenado ' (III, 17ac)	<i>E'l duca lui: 'Caron, no ti crucciare:</i> <i>vuolsi così colà dove si puote</i> <i>ciò che si vuole, e più non dimandare'</i> (Inf III 94-6)
[esta jornada/ que le es concedida y estale fadada asý esta mandado donde es el poder no cumple que desto más quieras saber (V, 4eg)	<i>Non impedir lo suo fatale andare:</i> <i>vuolsi così colà dove si puote</i> <i>ciò che si vuole e più non dimandare</i> (Inf V, 22-4)

Through small variations, such as changes in the point of view (*i.e.* modulation: see, in the first 6 examples, the verses II, 8a; III, 22a; XII, 9d; XX, 5d; XXIX, 14g; XXX, 11c) or changes in the grammatical category (*i.e.* transposition: in the last 2 examples, the verses III, 17bc and V, 4f), Villegas's text constructs a divine figure with much more authoritarian characteristics than the one in the Dantean source: His main actions are “mandar” (to command) and “ordenar” (to give orders), and His main characteristic is the “poder” (power) He holds (to the detriment of Dantean *volere*) and yields (“cede”) to His ministers (among them the King). These changes are the trace –

premeditated or unconscious?— of a widespread pro-monarchical ideology that influences the representation of power, divine or earthly. Indeed, while in the literary texts of the period —such as Barba’s *Consolatoria de Castilla*— the earthly king receives divine attributions, and theologizing images are assigned to him in order to strengthen and justify the new authoritarianism (Cátedra 1989: 25), the immediate counterpart of these procedures in the translation is the construction of a divine image that holds more authority than that of the king, and thus legitimize his power.

The second phenomenon I shall discuss is the one that I have denominated the “apologetic relocation of meaning” (Hamlin 2014b), *i.e.*, the displacement of the hermeneutical power of the text and its political connotations to the gloss, a process activated by the incorporation or variation of brief verses and images that function as hermeneutical triggers. These micro-textual changes in the main text actually enable the commentator to insert in his gloss either explicit encomia to the Catholic King or to his policies, both digressions that dwell on various, highly current issues or on allusions to the immediate historical context. In all these cases, the glossator enriches his exposition by drawing on different topics constantly used in monarchical propaganda —such as tyranny, the just/unjust nature of war, the “privança” phenomenon (see Hamlin 2019: 244-282), thereby endowing his text with a prominent political-contextual functionality.

Let us return to the stanza where Pier Della Vigna, secretary of the emperor who killed himself after being exiled due to accusations of having betrayed him with the pope, talks:

Canto XIII, stanza 10 (v7v)

Después de lançados sospiros muy graues	(AMPL)	<i>Io son colui che tenni ambo le chiavi</i>	58
nos dixo ‘yo soy el que del coraçón	58-59	<i>del cor de Federigo, e che le volsi,</i>	59
retube sin dubda en aquella sazón	(AMPL)	<i>serrando e diserrando, sì soave</i>	60
del grand Federico entrambas las llaves,	58-59	<i>che dal secreto suo quasi ogn’ uom tolsi</i>	61
abriendo y cerrando por modos suaves	60 (LIT)		
y siempre guardando mi cargo tan neto,	(AMPL)		(<i>Inf. XIII, 58-61</i>)
que a todos eché del su alto secreto	61 (LIT)		
¡O falsa pribança firmeza no sabes!	(GLOSS)		

In relation to the source text, Villegas adds “y siempre guardando mi cargo tan neto”, which alludes to his innocence, and the inter-verse gloss “O falsa priuanza, firmeza no sabes” (“O false *privanza*, firmness you do not know”). His office is reinterpreted as “privança”, a strictly Castilian political phenomenon which refers to the non-institutionalized office exercised by the king’s favorite, who would have increasingly excessive governmental attributions, even mediating with the royal authority; the office of the *privado* was considered, at the end of the 15th century, as the cause of Castile’s problems.²¹ This verse will trigger the following excursus in the gloss:

y siempre guardando el su cargo y oficio neto, quiere dezir limpio y sin reprehensión al menos justa [...] quéxase de no le auer durado la **engañososa priuança**, diciendo o falsa priuança firmeza no sabes. Este verso no es del texto del Dante y **viene bueno en este logar**, que así lo vemos muchas vezes acaezcer a los grandes privados dar **grandes caýdas** [...] y así también acaezció al maestre de Santiago don Álvaro de Luna de quien diximos arriba en el primer canto.

²¹ For a detailed analysis of this phenomenon in the Trastámara’s Castile See Foronda (2004: 153-156), and also his work from 2006.

Villegas refers here to the episode of Álvaro's execution, curiously narrated in the gloss to stanza 6 (fol. b2r), immediately before the appearance of the she-wolf (st. 7), to whom he symbolically connects Álvaro's character.²² The added intra-verse gloss allows him, therefore, to develop in the commentary his opinion on *privanza* and to explicitly compare Della Vigna's case with that of the "privado" *par excellence*, the Constable of Castile in the time of John II, Don Álvaro, identified at the end of the 15th century as the main culprit of Castile's ills. The first added verse, moreover, has a specific function: it induces the reader to contrast both figures, since Della Vigna's office was "clean and without reprehension", unlike Álvaro's *privanza*. However, both the negative and positive figures will end in the same way, that is, in a "grande caída". Let us add that the "fall of the constable" was a widespread literary topic.²³ Indeed, after this excursus Villegas introduces his translation of Landino's biographical account of Piero's life and suicide. Landino's *racconto* reads:

Per queste virtù fu assumpto da Federigo in cancelliere et segretario, *et in brieve tempo con la sua industria divenne in tal grado che lui solo poteva tutto con lo 'mperadore*. Di che incorse in tanta invidia di molti baroni di quella corte, che alchuni astutamente chon lectere adulterine et contrafacte, et chon testimonii subornati et falsi poterono persuadere allo 'mperadore che messer Piero havea secreta practica con papa Innocentio allhora inimico dello 'mperadore, et che havea rivelatogli segreti d'importanza. Federigo troppo credulo lo fece abbacinare in forma che rimase ciecho, *et privollo della dignità*. Dopo questo messer Piero andò ad habitare a Pisa, et quivi, o per che e Pisani non lo tractassino chome a llui pareva meritare, *o perchè la sua infelicità ogni dì più lo tormentassi*, indocto in somma disperatione domandò un giorno *chi lo guidava* in che luogo di Pisa fussi; et inteso che era appresso alla chiesa di san Paolo in riva d'Arno, si fece voltare el viso al muro della chiesa; et dipoi mossosi con quanto maggiore impeto poteva et chol capo innanzi a guisa di montone che vadi a cozare decte di cozo nel muro, *et chosì franto el cervello di subito morì*. Altri dicono che havendolo facto abbacinare lo 'mperadore, el quale in quegli tempi era in san Miniato al Tedesco, lo fece porre a cavallo et condurre a Pisa, et quivi posato avanti alla chiesa di sancto Andrea domandando dove fussi et intesolo, *potè in lui tanto lo sdegno d'essere stato falsamente accusato et condannato*, tanto percosse el capo al muro che s'uccise. **Alchuni dichono** che s'uccise essendo incarcerato. *Altri che essendo in Capua nel suo palazzo et passando lo 'mperadore si gittò dalle finestre*. [...]. (Landino, *Comento*, XIII, 58-60)²⁴

Compared with Villegas's version:

[...] fue tomado por chanciller y secretario del Emperador y en breve tiempo por su industria **subió en tal grado** que solo él **podía fazer y desfazer todas las cosas del imperio** (que estonces hera mucho mayor cosa), porque debaxo de su mano estaba casi toda Ytalia y Nápoles y Cecilia y todo lo más de la christiandad estaba en su obediencia. **Esta priuança** de Micer Pedro de las Viñas fue tan odiosa a muchos señores de aquella corte que le reuoluieron con el emperador diciendo que tenía inteligencia con el papa Inocencio, por lo qual le mandó sacar los ojos y **echole del oficio seyendo sin ninguna culpa**. El desventurado se fue a morar a Pisa, donde le auía quedado **una pobre hazienda**, y allý, seyendo menospreciado y maltratado y cresciéndole cada día más **el dolor de su caída**, vino en última desesperación. Y, guiándole un día el moço que lo solía levar a la iglesia demandole que dónde estaba y respondiendolo el moço que cerca del muro de la iglesia de sant Pablo, fizo que le volviese la cara fazia el muro y, baxándose, corrió contra él con quanta fuerça, a manera de cabrón o carnero que va a topar, **y dio**

²² See Hamlin 2019:164-167.

²³ The fall of Álvaro became a constant topic as a paradigmatic example of a sobering fall since his fervent enemy, the Marquis of Santillana, wrote several poetic texts on the subject — the "Coplas contra Don Álvaro" and the "Doctrinal de Privados". The theme was revisited by numerous court poets, including Diego de Valera, Fray Iñigo de Mendoza and Juan de Barba (Hamlin 2019: 273-274). For the influence of the death of Juan II's private in literature, see Round (1986), especially pp. 211-19.

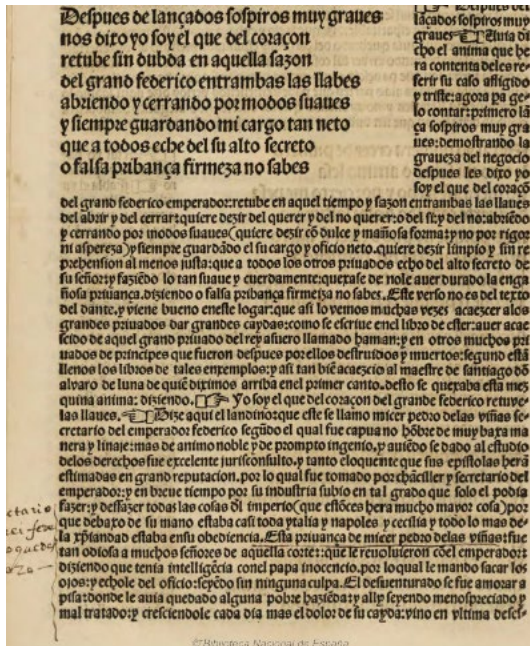
²⁴ From now onwards, my quotes from Landino's *Comento* come from Procaccioli's edition (1999), available in *Dante Dartmouth*.

tan grand golpe de la cabeça en el muro que se echó los sesos fuera. Y así murió desesperado en cuerpo y ánima. (XIII, stanza 10, v7v y v8r)

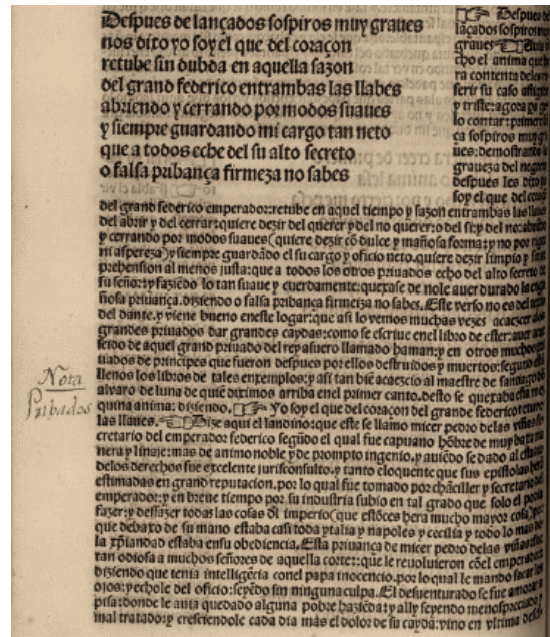
The three most interesting changes of the Spanish version are as follows: compared to the source, where Della Vigna is simply an advisor, by means of minimal changes (for example, “podia fazer y desfazer”) Villegas presents him as the one who effectively held power and authority over the Empire and the Emperor, while adding the idea of the rise—a necessary condition for the “fall”. Thus, he introspectively justifies Della Vigna’s suicide by the “pain of his fall”: the reconfiguration of the story according to the pattern of the rise and fall of power is made explicit here. He also chooses one of the four probable types of deaths to which Landino referred, having gathered them from various sources (chronicles, etc.: *alcuni dicono, altri...*). Moreover, he rewrites the ending, the *deinumá*, alluding to how “he hit his head so hard against the wall that his brains came out”: by cutting the gloss here, he places the focus on this death and the added image of cerebral matter, and thus increases the exemplary effect of the story and the pathos he intends to associate with the fall. Villegas designs the whole passage with the aim of making Pier Della Vigna a perfect inverse paragon of Don Álvaro, and conveying the following idea: the office of the “privado” is negative in itself, for even when it is carried out justly, it turns into tragedy. Indeed, the negativity of “privanza” and the reference to Don Álvaro as its embodiment is a legitimizing topic widely used—in this case implicitly—in the propaganda of the Catholic Monarchs, who were believed to be the ones who put an end to this phenomenon and restored the peace that Álvaro had endangered.²⁵

As this case demonstrates, the “apologetic relocation of meaning” functions in the gloss not only through explicit digression, but also through the translation and rewriting of Landino’s passages, the hermeneutic force of which is recast according to the translator’s apologetic interest. The material proof that this “apologetic relocation of meaning” is a real phenomenon—and that it was successful—are the reading marks that this and other passages receive. Indeed, the reader’s attention is constantly drawn to the gloss, which is where, in 97% of cases, the handwritten underlinings, *maniculae*, and marginal glosses are centered.

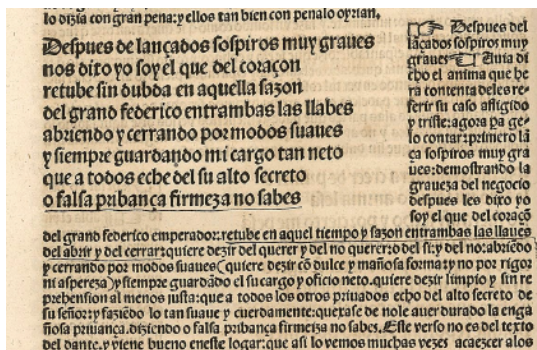
²⁵ See Foronda (2004: 158, 196-7) and Carceller Cervió (2009: 111-112). For some literary examples, extracted from Fernando del Purgar’s *Letras* and from Fray Iñigo de Mendoza’s “Dechado” see Hamlin (2019: 277).



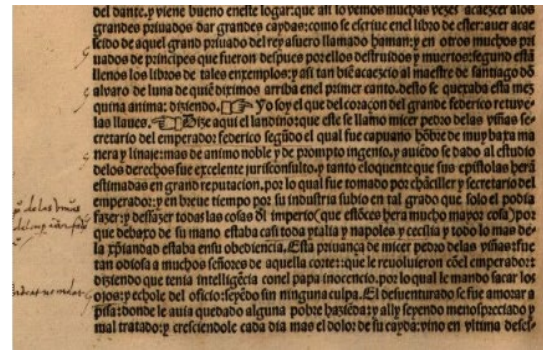
Madrid, BNE, R2519, fol. v7v



Escorial, Real Biblioteca, I-B-21, fol. v7v



Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Ra 18 Dan 1, fol. v7v



Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, 80.Bb.1, fol. v7v

Finally, I would like to illustrate how Villegas’s rewriting of Landino’s gloss also had a profound artistic (specifically literary) power, through a singular case that may be historiographically meaningful. Indeed, the case of Della Vigna is one of many biographical or mythological micro-tales that Villegas finds embedded in Landino’s *Comento* and rewrites to cover the timely issues of Castile’s social and political life. In my previous studies I focused on the reappropriation of certain biographical or mythological embedded tales that had political connotations in Landino’s *Comento* – which Villegas consistently reformulated to meet timely issues of Castile’s social and political life (Hamlin 2013: 113–50 and 2019: 225–282). There are, however, other striking features in Villegas’s narrative rewriting: he exploits their narrative potential to their fullest expression, developing the source tale in a more ludic and esthetically effective manner, using stylistic and narratological techniques that, while still functional to his ideological aim, tend to improve them. Indeed, in assessing the nature of the narrative elements interspersed in his gloss, there is a fact that cannot be overlooked: not only does Villegas adopt the hitherto rare Italianism *novela* to designate this specific narrative form he includes in his gloss, but he is also the first Spanish author to give a definition of the genre, stressing, in Boccaccio’s footsteps, that the *novela*’s main goal is to please or entertain –and thus departing from the medieval unresolved tension

between *delectare et prodesse*: “[...] de lo qual es novela contada y escripta entre las otras novelas que se cuentan por placer y pasatiempo” (“[...] of which [matter] a *novela* is told, written among the other *novelas* that are told for pleasure and entertainment”, XVIII, gloss on st. 8). Moreover, my recent research has revealed, based on an array of textual evidence (Hamlin 2021b), that Villegas actually refashioned Landino’s tales, from which he translates parts literally, using a secondary source, Boccaccio’s *Esposizioni sopra la Commedia*, a text that in fact contains, as Russo points out, ‘strutture tipiche del narrare boccaccesco’ (Russo 1983: 116), i.e. embedded *novelle*. My analysis of the tales of Lucrecia, Gualdrada and Pier Della Vigna shows how the secondary use of the Boccaccian source determines an aesthetically superior narrative to that of Landino. I have already mentioned that Villegas reformulates the ending of Della Vigna’s story as narrated by Landino. In fact, as we can see in the following chart, he takes the image of the brain from Boccaccio, as well as the details of the previous scene: the young man who guides him, the dialogue in which they engage, and the way in which he hits his head.

Villegas	Boccaccio	Landino
Y, guiándole un día <i>el moço</i> que lo solía levar a la iglesia demandóle que dónde estaba y respondiéndolo el moço que cerca del muro de la iglesia de Sant Pablo, fizo que le voluiese la cara fazia el muro y, baxándose, corrió contra él con quanta fuerça, a manera de cabrón o carnero que va a topar, y dio <i>tan grand golpe</i> de la <i>cabeca en el muro</i> que se <i>echó los sesos fuera</i>. Y así murió <i>desesperado</i> en cuerpo y ánima” (v8 r)	e domandato un fanciullo, il quale il guidava, in qual parte di Pisa fosse, gli rispuose il fanciullo : – Voi siete per me’ la chiesa di san Paolo in riva d’Arno. – Il che poi che udito ebbe, disse al fanciullo: – Dirizami il viso verso il muro della chiesa . Il che come il fanciullo fatto ebbe, esso, sospinto da furioso impeto, esso, sospinto da furioso impeto, messosi il capo inanzi a guisa d’un montone, con quel corso che più impetuoso potè, corse a ferire col capo nel muro della chiesa, e in quello ferì di tanta forza che la testa gli si spezò e sparseglisi il cerebro, uscito del luogo suo , e quivi cadde morto. Per la quale disperazione , l’autore, si come contro a se medesimo violento, il dimostra in questo cerchio esser dannato.	[...] domandò un giorno chi lo guidava in che luogho di Pisa fussi; et inteso che era appresso alla chiesa di san Paolo in riva d’Arno, si fece voltare el viso al muro della chiesa; et dipoi mossosi con quanto maggiore impeto poteva et chol capo innanzi a guisa di montone che vadi a cozare decte di cozo nel muro, et chosi franto el cervello di subito mori . Altri dicono che havendolo facto abbacinare [...]

Thus, he uses elements found in Boccaccio’s version²⁶ to make the story more vivid —especially in the climax, which presents a greater degree of drama and detail than Landino’s— and, at the same time, to give it an effective closure in accordance with his propagandistic objective. An intriguing case is that of Gualdrada, mentioned in canto XVI as the Florentine grandmother of a condemned character, whose embedded story, centered on how her beauty triggered the infatuation of Emperor Otto, in Villegas’s version shows all the characteristics of a Boccaccian *novella*: realistic details of the urban setting (“estando entre las otras muchas damas florentinas en una grand fiesta que se fazia al emperador Oto quarto en Florencia el día de Sant Juan Baptista – que en aquella cibdad es la fiesta más principal aquel día”), introspection of the characters (“Quedó marauillado y atónito el emperador de ver con tanta fermosura juntada tal honestidad y ánimo tan generoso y altero y respondió que, si él no fuera casado, fuera él el su legítimo esposo que ella dezía, mas que le daría prestamente otro más fermoso que no él”), direct dialogue and the centrality of the word or speech as salvation in a complex situation. I would like to focus on the tale’s ending, which is

²⁶ All quotes of Boccaccio’s *Esposizioni* come from the edition that is offered in *Dante Dartmouth*, which is based in Padoan 1965.

quite sparse in Landino's version: "Stupì lo 'mperadore della casta et prudente risposta della fanciulla; et di subito chiamò a sè uno de' suoi baroni nominato Guido et in quel puncto gliene fece sposare et in dota gli dette el Casentino et parte della Romagna et fecelo conte" (Landino, XVI, vv. 37-39). Villegas, however, rewrites it as follows:

Y luego, faziendo llamar a un gentil cavallero suyo de singular velleza, linaje y estado llamado Guido, le mandó que se desposase con ella, *el qual reputó ser fecha maravillosa merced*. Y el arçobispo de Florencia, que hera presente, los desposó luego con voluntad de su padre y madre; y el emperador fue el padrino y dioles en dote el Casentino y mucha parte de la Romaña *con otras muchas joyas y riquezas*. (copla 6, f. z6r)

This passage has, in relation to both the sources,²⁷ several additions: the detail that they were married by the Archbishop of Florence, the fact that the marriage was celebrated with the parents' agreement, and that the emperor was the godfather. On the one hand, Villegas adds characters and clarifications that allow the story to close with the wedding scene. On the other hand, the role of the emperor as the godfather of Gualdrada's marriage is a logical derivation of the anecdote. At the same time, it justifies the other additions: Otto's gifts and liberality. The monarchic figure is thus portrayed throughout the tale in a positive—and propagandistic—way. Villegas offers a new and more aesthetic ending while adding elements that rationalize the story and turn the reader's eye to the new principal figure, whom he depicted as a counterpart of the model King.

There are many Boccaccian details and procedures thanks to which Villegas develops and improves the story he finds in Landino. Most importantly, however, is that he does it only for the pleasure of narration, as the new ending—absent in both Landino's and Boccaccio's tales—proves. In short, Villegas's micro-tales are skillful literary compositions meant to display his narrative techniques and rhetorical expertise through a masterful recounting of tales. While this is a common practice among 15th-century glossators as one finds in Mena's *Coronación* and Santillana's *Proverbios*,²⁸ the stories they craft still manifest an unresolved tension between *delectare et prodesse*. But in most of Villegas' tales *delectare* seems to be an intentionally specific feature of the narration. We are witnessing, in short, the emergence of a different manner of recounting a story; one that is more in tune with a new humanist sensibility and more concerned with the esthetic impact of the work.

I would like to end by exemplifying the ludic interest that drives many of Villegas's narratives, through his rewriting of a small anecdote, about the death of the heretical Pope Anastatius.

[E]stos persuadieron al papa Anastasio de tomar su seta herética y maluada, en la qual estuvo tan obstinado que **acordó de la afirmar asý en público consistorio**; y como ya contra su pertinacia

²⁷ Villegas's second source is Boccaccio's version, which reads: "Lo 'mperadore, che ottimamente la 'ntese, *commendò maravigliosamente le parole e la fanciulla*, affermando seco medesimo queste parole non poter d'altra parte procedere che da *onestissimo e pudico* cuore; e *perciò subitamente venne in pensiero di maritarla*. E fattosi venir davanti un nobile giovane chiamato Guido Beisangue [...] il quale ancora non avea moglie, e lui confortò e volle che la *sposasse*; e donògli in dote un grandissimo territorio in Casentino e nell'Alpi e di quello lo intitolò conte" (XVI 37, párr. 16-20).

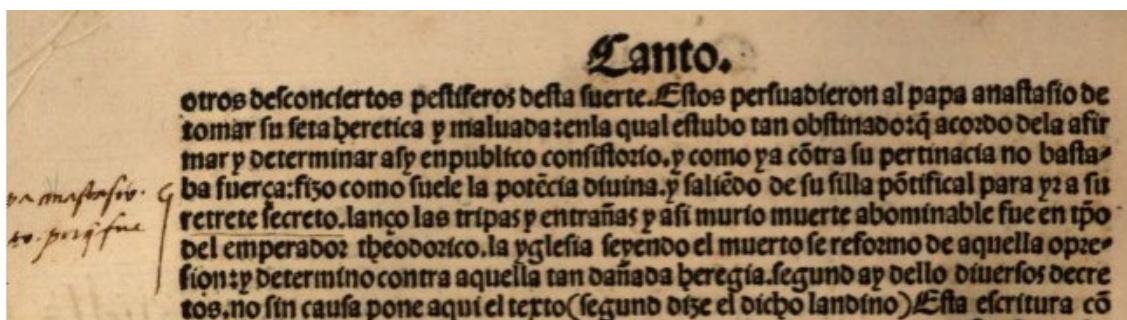
²⁸ As Weiss (1990a: 104) rightly points out, from the fourteenth century onwards in Castile, the exegetical commentary began to be also used "as a literary form, to develop the narrative potential of the mythical or historical allusions of the main text". Lida de Malkiel (1950: 131) called it "ese novelar desinteresado," by which "poets like Mena, Santillana, and Pedro de Portugal sometimes turned their explanations of classical myth and history into carefully wrought anecdotes, notable for the quality of their literary style. In other words, glosses could possess a purely ornamental function, enabling a writer to indulge in the simple pleasure of telling a tale" (Weiss 1990b, 125).

no bastaba fuerça, fizo como suele la potencia diuina y **saliendo de su silla pontifical para yr a su retrete secreto, lançó las tripas y entrañas** y así murió muerte abominable. (XI, gloss to st. 2, fol. s1v)

As evidenced in the following chart, Villegas followed Landino's account, pointing out that the pope wanted to affirm the sect in public consistory, but then rewrote the details surrounding his death:

Villegas	Landino	Boccaccio
[E]stos [Fontino e Acaçio] persuadieron al papa Anastasio de tomar su seta herética y maluada, en la qual estuvo tan obstinado que acordó de la afirmar asý en público consistorio ; y como ya contra su pertinacia no bastaba fuerça, fizo como suele la potencia diuina y saliendo de su silla pontifical para yr a su retrete secreto, lançó las tripas y entrañas y así murió muerte abominable.	Et tale heresia [Fontino e Acacio] persuadectono ad Anastasio pontefice. [...] et faccendo aperta professione di tale heresia, et essendone ripreso da molti prelati, venne in tanta obstinatione che volle obtenerla in publico consistorio ; ma intervenne che disputando fu constrecto dalla necessità del ventre andare a por giù el peso, dove a un tracto gl'uscirono tutte le 'nteriora, et chosi peri;	[...] per la quale eresia il detto Fotino fu dannato e rimosso dalla comunione de' cristiani. Et volendo Anastasio papa ridurre [Fontino] nella comunione cristiana, essendosi contro a ciò levati molti santi padri, e a questo resistendo, avvenne che, essendo il detto papa seduto già un anno e undici mesi e ventitrè di, andato al segreto luogo dove le superfluità del ventre si dipongono, per divino giudicio , si come per tutti universalmente si credette, per le parti inferiori gittò e mandò fuori del corpo tutte le interiora , e così miseramente nel luogo medesimo spirò .

The comic irony of the scene determined by the contrast between the “pontifical chair” and the “secret toilet”, is pure playful invention by Villegas, who is inspired by Boccaccio, who referred to the Pope as being “seated” in office for a year and to the setting where he died as the “Secret Place” where people evacuate their bowels. Villegas contrasts two types of spaces and chairs, the pontifical and the eschatological: first from a narrative perspective (he leaves one to be received by the other), and also from a symbolic perspective (the Pope transits from the highest and most sacred position to the lowest and most grotesque). At the same time, through the image of the “retrete secreto”, which stands in contrast not only to the pontifical chair but also to the “public consistory,” he highlights the very medieval symbolic contiguity between the “public” and the “private”: his secret death is reconfigured as a visual image of his public heresy and corrupted interiority. Therefore, despite the exemplary intention of the anecdote, Villegas's rewriting renders it more effective and powerful than that of its two sources, inasmuch as it is more ludic and attractive. Indeed, the reader of the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek copy (80.Bb.1, fol. s1v) found the passage particularly interesting—especially the “retrete secreto” bit, as his reading marks show:

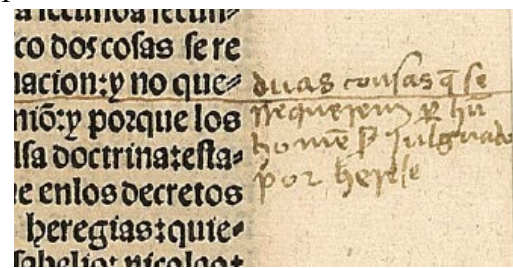


Not only does this anecdote demonstrate Villegas's ability as a storyteller, but also his special interest in the entertaining function of narration. In other words, it shows how *delectare* as the main objective of storytelling was gaining ground. Lastly, although at this stage of my research it is perhaps excessive to suggest that the case of some of Villegas's narratives may attest to an early emergence of the *novela* in Castile—given that the first known Spanish *novelle* are dated around the mid-16th century (González Ramírez, 2018)—, it does raise the question of whether it should be included as an antecedent within the literary historiography that describes its development. Indeed, his narratives display a Boccaccian influence and an aesthetic taste that may have helped to prepare the ground for its emergence—or that at least account for the fact that the ground was almost ready for it. In this sense, Villegas's case attests to a well-known fact: translation plays a major role in the shaping of literary systems.

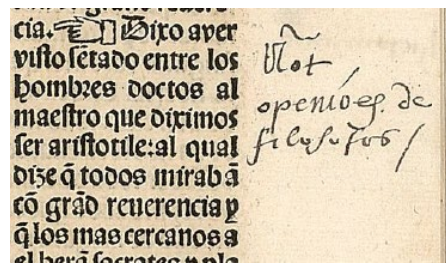
To conclude, I have discussed how translation, paraphrasis and gloss are powerful mechanisms of cultural appropriation and rewriting, insofar as they transform and transfer the semantic force of the text to make it operative and significant in the new context, to invest it with a cultural or political functionality. Villegas rewrites the Dantean text, he domesticates it, exercising a power that displaces it, within its own center—that of the Dantean verses—and, by means of the gloss, from the center towards the margin (in which he is the absolute authority), in order to accommodate it to new literary and historical-political parameters and, above all, according to his own interests and those of his benefactor, Juana de Aragón. These coincide mostly with an apology of the monarchy—explicit or veiled—, but also with a defense of the clerical estate and its attributes. In other words, the power of rewriting of *La traducción del Dante*, as in many pieces of the period, lies mostly and paradoxically in the writing and rewriting of power.

Appendix

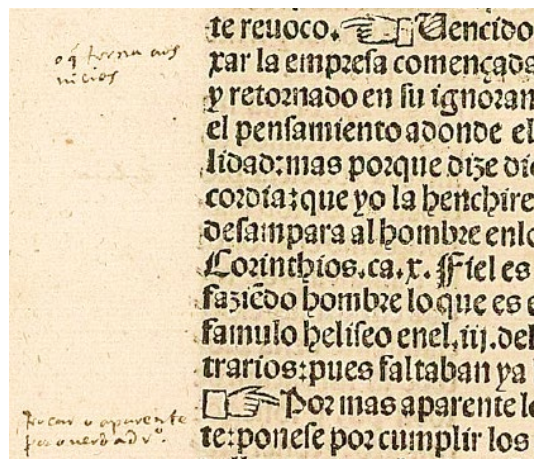
1-



Stuttgart, WL (Ra 18 Dan 1), fol. q8r

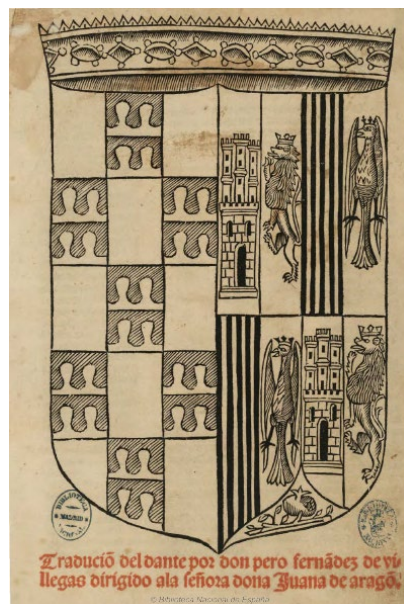


Stuttgart, WL (Ra 18 Dan 1), fol. h5v



Stuttgart, WL (Ra 18 Dan 1), fol. B4v

2-



Madrid, BNE, R-2519

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