

# Translated and Non-Translated Spanish Picaresque Novels in Defense of Dominated Languages

*Rita Bueno Maia*

University of Lisbon Centre for English Studies – ULICES/CEAUL



# Translated and Non-Translated Spanish Picaresque Novels in Defense of Dominated Languages

## 1. Introduction

This article explores a nineteenth-century historical example of how translated texts can work for the benefit of a specific target language. The phenomenon we wish to analyze is the translation of Spanish picaresque novels into Portuguese, which in the nineteenth century was going through a moment of instability and facing a threat that Portuguese intellectuals would call *francesismo* [“Francesism”].

Our corpus will include two nineteenth-century Portuguese translations, one of the anonymous *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1554) and one of *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1599-1604) by Mateo Alemán. The reason for the selection of these two source texts is that they are considered creators of the Spanish picaresque genre (Lázaro, Garrido). The reason underlying the choice of their respective target texts is their overall similar translation strategy.

We will begin by discussing the theoretical framework that we used in our argument as constructed by Pascale Casanova in her 2004<sup>1</sup> book *The World Republic of Letters*. Second, we will argue that the picaresque novels in non-translated version worked in favor of the Spanish language, and will then provide a definition of the Spanish picaresque genre. Third, we will focus on our target texts, giving special attention to how they were imported into Portuguese and by whom. Fourth, we will argue that the Portuguese translations of our two source texts took part in the battle for the defense of the Portuguese language against French dominance.

---

<sup>1</sup> We are quoting the English translation published in 2004. *La République mondiale des lettres* was first published in 1999.

## 2. The Role of Literary Products in Defense of Dominated Languages

Pascale Casanova argues that literary products can take part in the defense of dominated languages against dominant languages. In Casanova's words, literary products function both as symbolical capital and as weapons. Casanova conceives the world republic of letters as being divided between dominant and dominated languages that struggle for the maintenance or acquisition of power through the importation and/or invention of literary products. The power of each language depends on the number of texts considered national propriety, on the age of the literary tradition, and on the number of texts that are part of the universal canon. Agents working within dominated languages, aware of the functioning of the world republic of letters, either publish or import literary products both to empower their languages and to weaken the influence of the dominant language. This paradigmatic strategy becomes clearer as we read Casanova's account of past and present battles in the world republic of letters.

Let us remember three key episodes mentioned by Casanova in order to explain how literary products intervene in the struggle between dominant and dominated languages. The first episode is the battle fought by the French Pléiade in the sixteenth century, opposing French, as the dominated language, to Latin, the dominant language. By means of translation, the French intellectuals diverted Latin literary capital into the French language, marking the differences between Latin (the source language) and French (the target language). By means of the production of non-translated texts, namely grammars, dictionaries and treatises on language, the French Pléiade sought to create a mythical image of the French language.

The second episode is the struggle by the German, English, Spanish, and Portuguese Romantics against the dominant language in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: French. The strategy of European non-French Romantics dates back to Johann Gottfried Herder's (1747-1803) *Treatise on the Origin of Languages* (1772) (*Abhandlung über den Ursprung der Sprache*), which argued for a definition of the different literatures on which nations based their folklore oral literary traditions. Because Herder's philosophy was followed throughout Europe, similar strategies were undertaken by German, English, Spanish and Portuguese intellectuals. Casanova

calls this phenomenon the “Herder effect” (Casanova 78). These strategies included, on the one hand, the production of Gallophobic writings in an attempt to diminish the power and influence of French language. On the other, they included the recovery and creation of popular languages present in folklore traditions prior to French dominance (Casanova 80).

The third episode concerns the Portuguese language at the beginning of the twentieth century, and it consists of the battle fought by Brazilian Modernists against the dominant language of the former colonizer. First, the Brazilian Modernists were involved in a series of initiatives aimed to diminish the power of European Portuguese, namely by publicly tearing apart a copy of Camões’ epic poem *Os Lusíadas* (*The Lusiads*). Second, the Modernists tried to create a clear distinction between Brazilian and European Portuguese through the literary use of oral language. Regarding the latter, Casanova analyzes the role of Mário de Andrade’s (1893-1945) work *Macunaíma* (1928). This novel was central to the Modernists’ project because it was written in oral Brazilian Portuguese, i.e., in a completely different literary language from the one practiced by the former colonizer and that had been, until then, the norm in Brazilian literary writing.

Based on these three episodes, Casanova stresses that Andrade’s strategy was *mutatis mutandis* the same one already employed by du Bellay in the sixteenth century, which had consisted in the refusal to use a literary language that imitates the dominant language and, hence, in the creation of a literary language distinct from the dominant one. As Casanova explains in more detail:

In rejecting the “slavish” imitation of ancient texts, du Bellay hoped to put an end to the quasi-mechanical addition to Latin capital made by the productions of French poets. The first and chief method that he recommended — one that has been practiced ever since by writers who find themselves in the same structural position — consisted in asserting a difference of language through the creation of vernacular tongue that, by exploiting the literary forms and privileged themes of a dominant tongue, could hope to displace it as the new literary language. (255)

According to Casanova, the paradigmatic behavior of a dominated language struggling for autonomy lies in the use of a vernacular literary language

different from the dominant one. From our point of view, based on the analysis of initiatives undertaken by agents working within dominated languages and attempting to set up a new and distinct literary language, there are other regularities. Namely: the publication of linguistic works, such as the linguistic treatises, grammars and dictionaries published by the French Pléiade and the Romantics; manifestations against the dominant language such as the Gallophobic writings by the Romantics, or the tearing apart of the European Portuguese most canonical literary work by the Brazilian Modernists; and, finally, the literary use of oral language by the Romantics and the Brazilian Modernists.

### **3. The Role of Spanish Picaresque Novels in Defense of the Spanish Language**

The Spanish picaresque novels were first published in Spain between 1554 and 1646, that is, in Renaissance and Baroque Spain. In these periods, Spanish literature was strongly influenced by two dominant literary traditions: Italian and Latin. We believe the picaresque novels were part of a culture plan that aimed to found a national literary language distinct from the dominant ones (Italian and Latin). In order to make this argument, we will first describe the Spanish Renaissance and Baroque context as, on the one hand, being dominated by two foreign literary languages and, on the other, as struggling for the autonomy of Spanish. Second, we will argue that the Spanish picaresque novels might have been part of this struggle.

Historians of Spanish literature have highlighted the existence of two foreign-influenced Renaissance and Baroque styles, both characterized by the use of an ornamental, artificial language rich in foreign words and neologisms. The first one is known as “the Italian style”, cultivated by followers of Petrarch such as Garcilaso de la Vega (1501-1536); the second is the so-called *culteranismo*, cultivated by the imitators of Luís de Góngora (1561-1627), which is differentiated by its linguistic obscurity and the use of Latin syntax, namely hyperbatons (Collard).

Against these foreign-influenced styles, some Spanish intellectuals fought for the implementation of a new Spanish literary language purged of neologisms and made easier to understand. This struggle for the autonomy

of the Spanish literary language is visible in the number of writings published against the dominant languages, as well as in linguistic works on the Spanish language.

In the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, writers took a position against the Italian and the *culturanist* styles through controversial writings and satires. Alberta Gatti gives some elucidating examples in her 2007 essay “Satire of the Spanish Golden Age”. Referring to the satirical poems by Lope de Vega (1562-1635), the author explains that a recurrent comic scene consisted in a *culterano* (i.e. a practitioner of *culteranism*) not being able to understand his own writing (94-95) due to the use of ornamental language and Latin syntax. Regarding the Italian style, Gatti states that Cristóbal de Castillejo (c.1492-1550) considered that Garcilaso de la Vega should be denounced to the Inquisition because the corruption he had brought into Spanish with the introduction of the Italian sonnet was similar to the introduction of Luther’s Protestantism in Catholic countries (93).

Additionally, there was a considerable number of works published on the Spanish language. Their aim was to convey a Spanish norm and establish a literary Spanish purged of all foreign influence. Among these works were *Diálogo de la lengua* (first published in 1737) (*Dialogue on Language*) by Juan de Valdés (1509-1541), *Del Origen y principio de la lengua castellana* (1606) (*On the Origin and Beginnings of Castilian Language*) by Bernardo José de Aldrete (1560-1641), *Tesoro de la lengua castellana o española* (1611) (*Treasure of the Castilian or Spanish Language*) by Sebastián de Covarrubias (1539-1613), *Vocabulario de refranes y frases proverbiales* (n.d.) (*Vocabulary of Refrains and Proverbs*) and *Ortografía castellana, nueva y perfecta* (1630) (*Spanish Orthography, New and Perfect*) by Gonzalo Correas (1571-1631) (Alvar 375).

Juan de Valdés’ *Dialogue on Language* exemplifies the main arguments in defense of the Spanish language by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish intellectuals. This dialogue is between four different characters: Marcio, Valdés, Coriolano, and Pacheco. Recently arrived from Italy, Valdés had written several letters to the other three characters during his stay. These letters are the starting point for a debate on the origins, grammar, orthography, lexical choices, and style of the Spanish language. From the characters’ interventions we can pinpoint the following arguments. The first argument is that Spanish and Latin are equally important



languages. When Marcio asks Valdés to justify some of his linguistic choices in Spanish, Valdés does not take him seriously, because vernacular language is considered too low to be debated, although he would not mind debating his linguistic choices in Latin. Marcio then argues that every speaker is obliged to “illustrate and enrich his natural language, which he sucks from his mother’s breast”<sup>2</sup> (Valdés 44). The second argument is that Spanish and Tuscan are equally elegant languages: immediately after, Valdés agrees that the only difference in elegance between Tuscan and Spanish is that the former has been illustrated and enriched by great authors (44). The third argument is that Spanish language rules are to be found in its oral use, especially in proverbs and in (oral) popular literature, where it has not been corrupted by Latin or Italian. Discussing the sources available in Spanish to use in case of doubt, Valdés and Pacheco agree that the only sources they can use are either proverbs or sayings, which, contrary to what Coriolano deduced, are very different from the Greek and Latin ones, or *coplas*, i.e., popular verse (collected in song books).

In other words, while trying to establish a Spanish literary language distinct from the dominant languages (Latin and Italian), popular oral language is considered the most “authentic” and “pure” version of Spanish. This argument is related to a growing interest in popular oral literary forms in sixteenth-century Spain. The first literary product created through a re-elaboration of these traditional literary forms is *Lazarillo de Tormes*. Indeed, it was constructed by the insertion of a number of folkloric oral anecdotes into fictional narrative (Alvar 225).

Picaresque novels such as *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache* can be read, from our point of view, as having taken part in the defense of the Spanish language because, on the one hand, they are a product of the re-elaboration of Spanish folklore forms. On the other hand, very similarly to Andrade’s *Macunaíma*, they are literary products that are written in the oral popular variety of Spanish. The “oral style” of the picaresque genre has already been commented upon by different scholars,

---

<sup>2</sup> “(...) ilustrar y enriquecer la lengua que nos es natural y que mamamos en las tetas de nuestras madres (...)” (Valdés 44).



among whom Mikhail Bakhtin and Fernando Cabo. In “The Discourse in the Novel”, Bakhtin distinguishes between “official literary language”, only used in literature, and “extra-literary language”, present in real life and characterized by its “heteroglossia”, i.e., the coexistence and relation of different languages and linguistic varieties with different social status. Bakhtin considers picaresque novels to have been the first to import “extra-literary language” into literature. In his 1992 work, Fernando Cabo devotes a chapter to “the oral style of the picaresque novel”. From the analysis of *Guzmán de Alfarache*, Cabo finds the following oral discourse markers in the narrator’s discourse: apostrophe, “colloquial tone”, sayings, repetitions, asides from the narrator and a paratactic construction, namely the frequent use of copulative conjunctions (103-106).

Furthermore, we believe the Spanish picaresque novel as a literary genre perfectly suits the literary use of oral language, or “extra-literary language”. The picaresque novel can be defined as the fake autobiography of a *pícaro* [a rogue], a marginalized character who tells and writes his wanderings while serving multiple masters. The authors of picaresque novels adapted the discourse of the narrator and the style of the novel to suit the identity of its supposed author: the *pícaro*, a social nobody with hardly any education. Since the *pícaro* could not master literary language, his autobiography would be written as it was spoken.

In brief, we have tried to explain that our source texts were first published when the Spanish language was dominated by Italian and Latin. At the same time, there were a number of agents engaged in establishing a Spanish literary language distinct from the dominant ones. This “pure” and “authentic” Spanish language was to be found in oral use, as in proverbs and in folklore literature. The Spanish picaresque novels were literary products that used this new Spanish literary language because they were based on folklore texts, and they applied extra-literary language to literary discourse. For these reasons, we hypothesize that these novels took part in the battle for the defense of Spanish language against the dominant languages, Italian and Latin.

#### 4. The Transfer of the Spanish Picaresque to the Portuguese Readership

Having partially presented the source texts, we will look at the target texts, thus describing how they were imported by the Portuguese literary system and by which agents. The Spanish picaresque novels were first translated into Portuguese in the first half of the nineteenth century. In this period, Portuguese language was dominated by the French, hence the concept of *francesismo*. *Francesismo* is a central, even though ambiguous, concept in Portuguese Romanticism. As Álvaro Manuel Machado explains in his 1984 work *O “Francesismo” na literatura portuguesa (Francesism in Portuguese Literature)*, the word *francesismo* refers simultaneously to two opposed attitudes by the Portuguese Romantics towards France: an admiring attitude and a Gallophobic attitude. On the one hand, the French ideals of the *Lumières* were admired by Portuguese Romantics, and Paris, the place of exile for many of them, was seen as a mythical place of freedom, culture and progress. On the other, there was a growing Gallophobia based on two phenomena: an overwhelming presence of French cultural products in Portugal, and the interference of French language phrases, words and syntactic constructions in Portuguese.

These two phenomena can be introduced by describing the importation via translation of the Spanish picaresque novels into the Portuguese literary system. With this description we want to show firstly how central the French literary system was in mediating communication between two peripheral systems (in this case, Spanish and Portuguese) and, secondly, that Portuguese was dominated by the French language and culture after the seventeenth century. Finally, by looking at other works published by the agents responsible for these target texts, we will argue that they may have been engaged in the battle against *francesismo*, namely by fighting against the introduction of Gallicisms in Portuguese language.

For this task we will be using the concept of “transfer map” (Pym 91-110), understood as a pictorial or schematic representation embodying two kinds of movements: “object transfers, which basically move texts, and subject transfers, which basically move translators and text seekers” (Pym 97). In terms of object transfers, we will be describing the importation of Spanish picaresque novels in translated and non-translated versions before

the publication of the 1848 Portuguese translation of *Guzmán de Alfarache*; as regards subject transfers we will be focusing on the Portuguese translator of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, José da Fonseca, and the canonical Romantic writer Almeida Garrett, who worked together with Fonseca in one particular literary project.

#### 4.1. Object Transfers

We will organize our findings in two different moments, the first one being chronologically previous to the publication of the translations of our corpus.

The first moment consists in the selling of the Spanish picaresque novels in non-Portuguese versions in the second half of the eighteenth century and beginning of the nineteenth century by Lisbon booksellers, which preceded the importation via translation of our two source texts. From the analysis of fifty-eight Lisbon bookshop catalogues published between 1774 and 1842, we find that twenty contained entries regarding picaresque novels. Even though the sample is rather limited, we find a clear trend in the importation of Spanish picaresque novels by Lisbon booksellers. As we move towards the end of the eighteenth century, more and more Spanish source texts of picaresque novels are replaced by their French translations.

Based on our findings, we can divide the catalogues into two main groups: those published prior to 1780 and those published afterwards. In the first group, we find three catalogues by the bookseller João Bautista Reycend publicizing altogether two editions of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, one from the sixteenth century and the other from the beginning of the seventeenth century, and five editions of *Guzmán de Alfarache* from the first half of the seventeenth century.<sup>3</sup> Still in the first group, there is a 1774 catalogue

---

<sup>3</sup> *Catalogo de alguns livros, que tem chegado de novo a JOÃO BAPTISTA REYCEND E COMPANHIA, Mercadores de Livrios de frente do Calhariz em Lisboa* (1780) includes “Aleman (Matheo) Vida del Picaro Guzman de Alfarache, en 4. Lisboa 1600; Idem en 4 Burgos 1619; Idem en 4 Madrid 1641” (42). *Catalogo dos livros portuguezes, e alguns latinos, francezes, hespanhoes e italianos que João Baptista Reycend e Companhia* (1780) includes “Aleman (Matheo) Vida del Picaro Guzman de Alfarache

by Borel Martin & C.<sup>a</sup> advertising a French translation of *Guzmán de Alfarache*.<sup>4</sup>

However, in the catalogues published after 1780, Spanish editions become scarcer whereas the number of the French translations of *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache* increases. In the first catalogue in the second group, a 1788 catalogue by Pedro José Rey, we find the following editions: a French translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, a French translation of *Guzmán de Alfarache*, and a non-translated 1775 edition of *Guzmán de Alfarache*. In the later catalogues we could only find titles referring to French translations of the Spanish picaresque novels: in two catalogues by Borel & Borel (1822 and 1830) there are two references to the same 1801 edition of a French translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes* and one reference to a French translation of *Guzmán de Alfarache*; in two catalogues by Manuel José Machado (1842 and n.d.) reference is made to two different French translations of *Guzmán de Alfarache*.

We would like to briefly comment on the names of the Lisbon booksellers. Borel, Martin, Rey, and Reycend are not Portuguese family names, but French ones. In eighteenth-century Portugal, the book market was held by French booksellers that had immigrated from Briançon, a commune in the Hautes-Alpes department, France, and has established bookshops, especially in Lisbon and Coimbra (Guedes).

In summary, in the second half of the eighteenth century there was a lack of interest in the picaresque novels in Spanish, followed by an increasing presence of French translations of these novels, commercialized by French booksellers.

---

en 12 2 vol; (...) Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes, y de sus fortunas, y adversidades en 8 Milan 1587". *Catalogo de los libros españoles que se venden en la libreria de Juan Bautista Reycend y Compañia en Lisboa* (17--) includes "Aleman Matheo Vida del Picaro Gusman de Alfarache, en 12. 2 vol. Barcelona 1600. Idem in 12 2 vol. Milan 1615. Aleman Matheo Vida del Picaro Gusman de Alfarache, en 8. 2 vol. En uno Milan 1603 (...) (1) and "Vida de Lazarillo de Tormes, en 12: Mil. 1615" (30).

<sup>4</sup> *Catalogo de varios livros, que se esperão de varias partes da Europa, por todo o mez de Outubro de 1774. E se venderão na logea de Borel, Martin, e Companhia* includes "Vie de Gusman de Alfarache, 3 vol. 12" (36).

The second moment in our transfer map is the publication of the Portuguese translations of *Lazarillo de Tormes* (1838) and *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1848). As far as these object transfers are concerned, we would like to show how the French language, French cultural entrepreneurs, and the city of Paris are constantly mediating the importation of Spanish picaresque novels into Portuguese.

First, these two texts are indirect translations mediated by French texts. *Aventuras e astúcias de Lazarinho de Tormes, escritas por elle mesmo* (1838) (*Adventures and Crafts of Lazarinho de Tormes Written by Himself*) is a translation of the French translation titled *Aventures et espiègleries de Lazarille de Tormès, écrites par lui-même*, first published under this title in 1765. This French version is based on the 1678 French translation by Jean-Antoine de Charnes (1641-1728, commonly known as “Abbé de Charnes”) combined with another French translation by P. B. P. Diamo (?-?) (Martino 60-62). *Historia de Gusmão d’Alfarache* (1848) (*Story of Gusmão d’Alfarache*) has as its source text Alain-René Lesage’s (1668-1747) 1732 translation, *Histoire de Guzman d’Alfarache, nouvellement traduite et purgée des moralitez superflües* (*Story of Guzman d’Alfarache, Newly Translated and Expurgated of Superfluous Moralities*).

Second, these two Portuguese translations were published and sold by Parisian booksellers. *Lazarillo*’s 1838 translation was published by Beulé et Jubin; *Guzmán*’s 1848 translation was published by the typographer Pillet Aîné, well known for his *Bibliographie de la France: journal de l’imprimerie* (published since 1811). The publication of these Portuguese translations in Paris is hardly surprising, since between 1800 and 1850 more than 500 books in Portuguese, both translated and non-translated, were published there (Ramos). Beulé et Jubin published 12 Portuguese titles between 1836 and 1839 and Pillet Aîné published 48 Portuguese titles between 1830 and 1848.

The publication of books in Portuguese in Paris can be explained by the presence of exiled Portuguese intellectuals in the French capital. In the beginning of the nineteenth century, Portuguese intellectuals fled to Paris and started publishing there because of the censorship in Portugal, which would be in force until 1834. In 1808 Portugal was invaded by the Napoleonic troops, an event that led to the exile of some intellectuals suspected of collaborating with the French troops. After 1820, the number



of Portuguese exiles in Paris increased as the result of a moment of instability between the two political factions: the Liberals, who supported the principle of a constitutional monarchy, and the Absolutists, who favored an absolutist monarchical regime. This moment of instability would lead to a two-year civil war. In 1834 the Liberal victory was achieved, so the Portuguese exiles publishing either translated or non-translated works after 1834 in Paris were mainly Absolutist partisans.

Third, we have been unable to find any evidence of these two Portuguese translations published in Paris having been exported to Portugal. We could not find either of these two titles neither in the Portuguese bookshop catalogues, nor in the Portuguese catalogues of private libraries, nor indeed in the catalogues of Portuguese-based lending libraries. Yet many translated and non-translated Portuguese texts that had been published in Paris before 1834 had also been sold in Portugal.

Although we still lack conclusive evidence, it seems to us that by the end of the first half of the nineteenth century, Portuguese books published in Paris were no longer revered by Portugal-based readers. There is one paratextual detail and one historical reason that have led us to this conclusion. The paratextual detail is present in an 1840 non-translated Portuguese novel titled *D. João da Falperra ou aventuras jocosas d'esse célebre personagem escritas por elle mesmo* (*Dom João da Falperra or the Comical Adventures of this Known Character, Written by Himself*). Even though this novel was published in Paris and sold by Beaulé et Jubin, the place of publication and the bookseller identified in its paratext are Lisbon and it is said to be “sold by the most important booksellers”.<sup>5</sup> This misleading information suggests that the book would be better received if it were published in Portugal. The historical reason is the Liberal victory in 1834. If we bear in mind that after 1834 the Liberals were in power and political stability was finally achieved in Portugal, an ideological embargo (Duarte 98) on the literary products published by their former political enemies, the absolutist exiles, is likely to have been imposed.

In conclusion, by the end of the eighteenth century, the importation of Spanish non-translated picaresque novels seems to have stopped, and

---

<sup>5</sup> “Vende-se em Casa dos Principais Livreiros.”

despite the linguistic proximity between the Spanish and the Portuguese languages, the Lisbon booksellers imported French translations of the Spanish picaresque novels. These booksellers were French immigrants or their descendants. Two indirect Portuguese translations of the Spanish picaresque novels, mediated by French source texts, were published in the first half of the nineteenth century. These Portuguese translations were published and sold in Paris by Parisian booksellers.

#### 4.2. Subject Transfers

The person responsible for the 1838 Portuguese version of *Lazarillo de Tormes* was José da Fonseca (1787-1866). José da Fonseca fled to Paris in 1817 and never returned to Portugal. The cause of this permanent exile was his support for the Absolutist regime. He worked in Paris, as did many Portuguese intellectuals, as a journalist, a language teacher, and a translator. His works were all published in Paris and, as far as we could investigate, were published between 1822 and 1853. He died in misery, living on a pension given by King Pedro V (Innocencio).

We believe José da Fonseca's list of published works shows his commitment to the defense of the Portuguese language. The core of Fonseca's work can be divided into three types of publications. The first is connected with his professional activity as teacher of French and Portuguese, and it consists of bilingual conversation guides (in French and in Portuguese), bilingual dictionaries (French and Portuguese), a French grammar and a History schoolbook. The second group of publications comprises his translations, mainly translations of novels, adaptations of novels for young readers and, toward the end of his career, technical books. The third is composed of anthologies and editions of "Portuguese literary classics" and Portuguese language dictionaries. We believe this third group of works might show Fonseca's engagement in defending Portuguese language.

With regard to the anthologies and re-editions of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Portuguese works, Fonseca organized a six-volume anthology titled *Parnaso lusitano ou poesias selectas dos auctores portuguezes antigos e modernos* (1826-1827) (*The Portuguese Parnassus: Selected Poems by Ancient and Modern Portuguese Authors*), which was preceded by the canonical essay by the Portuguese Romantic author Almeida Garrett



(1799-1854) “Bosquejo da história da língua e poesia portuguesa” (“Outline of the History of Portuguese Poetry and Language”). The sixth volume of this anthology was published autonomously in 1834, under the title *Satíricos portugueses* (*The Portuguese Satirists*). In 1837 he published *Prosas selectas ou escolha dos melhores logares dos auctores portuguezes antigos [sic] e modernos* (*Selected Prose Works: a Selection of the Best Works by Classical and Modern Portuguese Writers*). Finally in 1840 he organized a new edition of the Portuguese epic poem titled *Os Lusíadas: poema épico restituído á sua primitiva linguagem* (*The Lusíads: the Epic Poem Restored to Its Primitive Language*). With regard to the organization of Portuguese dictionaries, Fonseca published a *Novo dicionário da língua portuguesa* (*New Dictionary of the Portuguese Language*) in 1829 followed by a *Dicionário de synonymos portuguezes* (*Dictionary of Portuguese Synonyms*) in 1833; in 1836 these two parts were republished together.

This considerable output of literary and linguistic works by just one person might also be interpreted as a sign of Fonseca’s commitment to defend Portuguese against the dominant language, in this case French. Dictionaries are, on the one hand, an attempt to regulate the Portuguese language; on the other, they display the richness of Portuguese by putting together words and synonyms. Anthologies are a privileged means to accumulate literary capital for the Portuguese language by creating the image of an old and rich literary language, especially through an emphasis on (sixteenth-century) Portuguese classics.

Moreover, the paratexts of these works explicitly inform the reader of their commitment to protect the Portuguese language from French dominance. The following is from the 1840 anthology *Selected Prose Works*:

Only through the reading and reflection upon our wise authors may the reader know the strength and nature of his language, its richness; contrary to the reading of those foreign work versions, which are filled with hybrid phrases and drawling Gallicisms.

We should study the Classics, drink their style, copy their phrases and words and imitate their discursive tone and contexture [...]. Let us take from Latin various words that we lack in our language, let us use them with good ideas, and I

promise you that, shortly, our Portuguese language will be wealthier and there will be no sign left of *Francesismo*.<sup>6</sup> (Fonseca “Advertência” 333-334)

This verbalizes both the struggle of the dominated Portuguese against French dominance and Fonseca’s involvement in it, for it is an exhortation to “enrich” the Portuguese language through the reading of its “classics” and to purify it from all French interference, namely the “Gallicisms” that entered through translations.

Similarly, in the introductory essay to Fonseca’s *Portuguese Parnassus*, the Portuguese canonical writer Almeida Garrett explicitly mentions the phenomenon of *Francesismo*. In his essay, Garrett gives an account of the history of the Portuguese language from its origins to the nineteenth century. Garrett considers the existence of a Golden Age of Portuguese language followed by two decadent ages. The Golden Age is situated in the sixteenth century and beginning of the seventeenth century, when Portuguese was used by Portuguese classical writers. The first decadent age took place in the seventeenth century, when Portuguese literature was mainly written in Spanish, as a consequence of the loss of Portugal’s political independence (Garrett 25). The second decadent age of Portuguese is considered to be the nineteenth century, due to the increasing number of Gallicisms incorporated into Portuguese language through bad translations (Garrett 35).

These texts by Fonseca and Garrett we have just mentioned are part of a wider group of works published in Portugal throughout the nineteenth century that combine the Gallophobic refusal of French-language interference with a defense of the originality and richness of Portuguese.

---

<sup>6</sup> “So lendo, e meditando as produções de nossos sábios auctores, é que, o mesmo leitor, poderá conhecer cabalmente a indole, força e riqueza do seu idioma; e não em versões de obras estranhas (...); versões arripiadas de phrases hybridas, de arrastados gallicismos (...).

Studar os clássicos; beber-lhes o stylo; copiar-lhes frases e palavras; e imitar-lhes o tom e contextura do discurso. (...) Tiremos do latim muitas palavras, que nos faltam; e accomodemol-as a boas ideias, que eu lhes prometto que, em breve tempo, será muito abastada e nobre a nossa lingua portugueza; nem lhe ficará resabio algum de francezismo.” (Fonseca 333-334)

These works bring the Portuguese Romantic intellectuals closer to the rest of the European Romantic generations, all being part of “the Herder effect”. Following Herder’s ideal of a literary nation based on the existence of popular literary traditions and a distinct national language, Portuguese intellectuals were attempting to recover what they now considered to be the “Portuguese classics”, the sixteenth-century writers reedited by José da Fonseca and celebrated by Garrett in his essay, as well as to cleanse Portuguese language of Gallicisms.

To summarize, in the first part of this section, by studying the importation of Spanish picaresque novels in non-Portuguese version into Portugal and the way target texts were published and commercialized, we have seen that the French literary system and language dominated the Portuguese literary system and language. In the second part of this section, while studying the works by the Portuguese translator of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, we were able to show that nineteenth-century Portuguese intellectuals like José da Fonseca were engaged in a struggle against the dominance of the French language and for the independence of the Portuguese language. The tasks through which they attempted to weaken French language and empower the Portuguese are not new to the history of the world republic of letters: to claim a long literary tradition and, through linguistic works, to establish a Portuguese norm completely detached from French influence.

## **5. The Role of Translated Spanish Picaresque Novels in Defense of the Portuguese Language**

We believe that both nineteenth-century Portuguese translations of *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache* took part in the defense of the Portuguese language. From our point of view, their role is put forward by an anonymous article published on August 12, 1847 in the *Revista Universal Lisbonense* (*Universal Lisbon Journal*) titled “Linguagem vernácula” (Vernacular Language). The author begins his article by longing for the perfection of the Portuguese language achieved by the sixteenth-century classics. By the end of the seventeenth century, the author argues, Portuguese writers began to imitate the French language, thus leading to the decay and corruption of Portuguese language. In this article, translators

are to blame, because Gallicisms are believed to have entered Portuguese through bad literary translations. The author then provides an extensive list of Gallicisms and Portuguese words that should be used instead of them. The author ends up by declaring Portuguese to be a rich language, justifying this by the fact that it has different “dialects” that can be used in literature: the popular, the noble and the poetic. Regarding the popular dialect, the author says:

[T]he popular, used by the people in their familiar conversations, being unpolished and erratic, is also full of energy, daring and figurative. This dialect, whenever used by a gifted author, can occur in comic plays, satires, heroic-comical poems as well as in those novels that paint the *picaresque* habits [...].<sup>7</sup> (392, emphasis in the original)

Similarly to the Spanish source-texts in defense of Spanish language, our research seems to suggest that the Portuguese target texts took part in the battle against *francesismo* by making a literary use of the “popular dialect”.

The two Portuguese translations under analysis show a common translation shift: a stronger presence of oral markers in the target texts than in their French source texts. This is due, on the one hand, to the overall translation strategy of the French translators, who would reduce oral markers in their translations, and, on the other, to the overall translation strategy of the Portuguese translators, who would fill their translations with oral markers.

Here we analyze the presence of two types of oral markers in the Portuguese translations: idioms in the first chapter of the 1838 translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, and lexical items classified as “vulgar”, “familiar” or “comical and licentious” in a nineteenth-century Portuguese language dictionary, organized by José da Fonseca, in the first chapter of the 1848 translation of *Guzmán de Alfarache*. We have restricted this analysis to the first chapters of these translated novels because previous works on the

---

<sup>7</sup> “[O] popular, que o vulgo emprega no seu tracto familiar, grosseiro sim e irregular, mas energico, atrevido, figurado e que póde ter lugar manejado por mão habil na comedia, na satyra, no poema heroicomico, e nas novellas destinadas a pinturas de costumes *picarescos*.” (397)

recreation of oral markers in translated texts have shown a higher frequency of these markers in the first chapters of a translated book (Ramos Pinto 89).

To analyze the 1838 Portuguese translation of *Lazarillo de Tormes*, we first collected all the idioms from its first chapter; then we looked for these idiomatic expressions in the first chapter of its source text in order to see if the idiom was a translation of a source-text item or an addition by the Portuguese translator. Our findings are shown in Table 1.

Source text phrase	Target text phrase	Idiomatic expression in the source text	Idiomatic expressions in the target text
je m'en accommodais le mieux du monde	<b>fiz a vista grossa</b> [Literally: turn a blind eye; meaning: I made a I-did-not-care look]	No	Yes
et la crainte me fit déclarer	Eu, <b>tremendo como varas verdes</b> , respondi [Literally: shaking like a leaf; meaning: shaking very much]	No	Yes
de ne mettre plus le pied dans l'hôtel	de <b>nunca mais pôr pé no palacio</b> [Literally: to never again set foot in the palace; meaning: to not enter the palace]	Yes	Yes
La pauvre femme ne voulant pas <b>jeter le manche après la coignée</b>	A pobre mulher não queria deixar <b>tudo por mal cozinhado</b> [Literally: to not leave things badly cooked; meaning: to improve things]	Yes	Yes
et se soumit sans murmure	submetteu-se, <b>sem abrir o bico</b> [Literally: to keep one's mouth shut; meaning: to remain silent]	No	Yes
Mais, afin de se tirer de misère, et de s'ôter d'entre les mauvaises langues, elle changea de quartier	Vendo-se porém obrigada a buscar algum modo de vida, <b>para não morrer como o carrapato na lama</b> , foi assitir [Literally: to not die as a tick in the mud; meaning: to not die in misery, poorly]	No	Yes

Table 1: The presence of idioms both in the source and target texts of *Aventuras*

As we can see in Table 1, we found six idioms in the target text, whereas only two were also present in the corresponding French source text. This is clear evidence of a translation strategy that increases the presence of oral markers.

With regard to the 1848 Portuguese translation of *Guzmán de Alfarache*, we began by collecting all the lexical items that we, as Portuguese native speakers, considered to be extra-literary language. Next, we looked up in an 1848 Portuguese dictionary which of these words were classified as “*chul.*”, i.e., comical or licentious, “*fam.*”, i.e., familiar, and “*vulg.*”, i.e., “vulgar”. Before organizing our findings in Table 2, we searched the source-text items in the 1835 *Dictionnaire de l’Académie française* to see if they too were related to colloquial extra-literary language.

Word in the Source-Text	Classified in the 19 <sup>th</sup> -century dictionary as	Word in the Target Text	Classified in the 19 <sup>th</sup> century dictionary as
		Pespegou [to settle something]	Pespegar, <i>v.a. (vulg.)</i>
Persuader		Carapetão [lie]	Carapetão, <i>s.m. (fam.)</i>
Soupçon		Moca [lie]	Moca, <i>s.f. (chul.)</i>
Partie		Chelpa [money]	Chelpa, <i>s.f. (fam.)</i>
Meubla		Trastejou [to deal with minor things]	Trastejar, <i>v.n. (vulg.)</i>
		Pança [big belly]	Pança, <i>s.f. (chul.)</i>
Avisa		Tola [head]	Tóla, <i>s.f. (chul.)</i>
Regalés	Familier	“abarrotados de opípara comezana” [stuffed with a big meal]	Abarrotar (---) <i>v.r. (chul.)</i> Comezana, <i>s.f. (famil.)</i>

Table 2: Lexical items classified as “comical or licentious” (*chul.*), “familiar” (*fam.*),



As we can see in Table 2, whereas in the source text only one word is considered “familiar” according to the 1813 *Dictionnaire de l’Académie*, we found nine target-text words related to a colloquial extra-literary language. Once again, there is undoubtedly a translation strategy of increasing the number of oral markers.

We believe these translation shifts can be related to the battle against *francesismo*. In the same way as Andrade wrote *Macunaíma* in oral Brazilian Portuguese and the European Romantics exhumed oral folklore literary forms, the Portuguese translators were making use of oral Portuguese in literature. It cannot go unnoticed that oral and popular Portuguese was considered the purest, the least corrupted Portuguese language variety.

In other words, nineteenth-century oral popular Portuguese, like sixteenth-century oral popular Spanish and early twentieth-century oral popular Brazilian Portuguese, was more distinct from the dominant language. Consequently, its use as a literary language was a statement of the independence of the Portuguese language from French.

## 6. Conclusion

By working with Casanova’s theory we have been able to recognize and analyze two other struggles between dominated and dominant languages fought in the world republic of letters. The first battle we analyzed was between the dominated Spanish and the dominant Italian and Latin in sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the second battle was fought by nineteenth-century Portuguese intellectuals against *Francesismo*, i.e., French-language dominance. These two moments of instability in Spanish and Portuguese display many similarities with the battles analyzed by Casanova, namely the strategies set in motion by cultural agents working within dominated languages.

However, our case study is different from other battles between languages in one particular point. We have the same literary products, the picaresque novels *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, but used in defense of two different dominated languages, one being the language in which they were written and the other the language into which they were translated, in two different historical contexts.



In our opinion, the adequacy of the picaresque genre to the use of oral language might be related to the fact that it was created in a context of struggle between the dominated Spanish language and the dominant Italian and Latin, in addition to taking an active part in that struggle. On top of that, we hypothesize that the translations of our corpus might have been motivated by the picaresque genre's ability to include oral language in a literary work.

This last concluding consideration could be the starting point for a new article on what appears to be a third use of the picaresque genre in the struggle for the literary independence of a national language. The Brazilian novel *Macunaíma* shows many structural and thematic similarities with the Spanish picaresque genre, as stated by Mário González. We exhort Brazilian literature scholars to update this study on the role of the picaresque novel, either translated or non-translated, in defense of dominated languages.

## Works Cited

- [Alemán, Mateo] *Guzman d'Alfarache*. Trans. Alain René-Lesage. Paris: Chez Antoine Augustin Renouard, 1821.
- [Alemán, Mateo.] *Historia de Gusmañ d'Alfarache*. Paris: Pillet Aîné, 1848.
- Aventuras e astucias de Lazarinho de Tormes, escritas por elle-mesmo*. Trans. José da Fonseca. Paris: Pommeret et Jubeau, 1838.
- Alvar, Carlos, José-Carlos Mainer and Rosa Navarro. *Breve historia de la literatura española*. Madrid: Alianza, 2005.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *The Dialogic Imagination. Four Essays*. Ed. Michael Holquist. Trans. Caryl Emerson / Michael Holquist. Austin: University of Texas, 1987.
- Cabo Aseguinolaza, Fernando. *El Concepto de género y la literatura picaresca*. Santiago Compostela: Universidade de Santiago Compostela, 1992.
- Casanova, Pascale. *World Republic of Letters*. Trans. M.B. DeBevoise. Harvard: Harvard University Press, 2004.
- Collard, André, Félix Monge, and Alexander A. Parker. "Conceptismo y culteranismo". *Historia y crítica de la literatura española III*. Ed. Francisco Rico and Bruce W. Wardropper, 1983. 103-112.

- Dictionnaire de l'Académie Française*. Paris: Fermin Didot, 1835.
- Duarte, João Ferreira. "The Politics of Non-Translation: A Case Study in Anglo-Portuguese Relations." *TTR: traduction, terminologie, rédaction* (2000): 95-112.
- Even-Zohar, Itamar. "The Making of Culture Repertoire and the Role of Transfer." *Target* (1997): 373-381. [http://www.tau.ac.il/~itamarez/works/papers/papers/rep\\_trns.htm](http://www.tau.ac.il/~itamarez/works/papers/papers/rep_trns.htm). Tel Aviv University. Web. February 6, 2011.
- Fonseca, José da. "Advertência." *Prosas selectas ou escolha dos melhores logares dos auctores portuguezes antigos e modernos. Ordenada e correcta por José da Fonseca*. Paris: Livraria Europea de Baudry, 1837. 333-334.
- Fonseca, José and J.I. Roquete. *Diccionario da lingua portugueza; feito integralmente de novo e consideravelmente augmentado*. Paris: Casa de Gullard, Aillaud, 1848.
- Garrett, Almeida. "História da poesia e língua portuguesa." *Obras completas de Almeida Garrett* 4. Lisbon: Círculo dos Leitores, 1984. 7-50
- Garrido Ardila, Juan Antonio. *La Novela picaresca en Europa, 1554-1753*. Madrid: Visor, 2010.
- Gatti, Alberta. "Satire of the Spanish Golden Age." *A Companion to Satire Ancient and Modern*, ed. Ruben Quintero. MA, Oxford and Victoria: Blackwell Publishing, 2007. 86-100.
- Guedes, Fernando. *Os Livreiros franceses em Portugal no século XVIII: tentativa de compreensão de um fenómeno migratório e mais alguma história*. Lisbon: Academia Portuguesa de História, 1998.
- Innocencio, Francisco da Silva. *Dicionário bibliográfico português*. Vol. IV. Lisbon: Imprensa Nacional, 1860. 334-335.
- Lázaro Carreter, Fernando. "Para una revisión del concepto del concepto novela picaresca." *Actas del tercer congreso internacional de hispanistas*. Ed. Carlos H. Magis. México: El Colegio de México, 1970. 27-45. [http://cvc.cervantes.es/obref/aih/pdf/03/aih\\_03\\_1\\_007.pdf](http://cvc.cervantes.es/obref/aih/pdf/03/aih_03_1_007.pdf). Centro Virtual Cervantes. Web. March 2, 2011.
- "Linguagem vernácula." *Revista Universal Lisbonense* August 2 (1847): 377-379 and 391-392.

- Machado, Álvaro Manuel. *O “Francesismo” na literatura portuguesa*. Lisbon: Instituto de Cultura e Língua Portuguesa, 1984.
- Martino, Alberto. *Il Lazarillo de Tormes e la sua ricezione in Europa, 1554-1753*. Vol. II. Pisa: Istituti editoriali e poligrafici internazionali, 1999.
- Pym, Anthony. *Method in Translation History*. Manchester: St. Jerome, 1998.
- Queirós, Eça. “O Francezismo.” *Ultimas páginas (manuscriptos inéditos)*. Oporto: Livraria Lello & Irmão Editores and Lisbon: Aillaud & Lellos, Limitada, 1942. 397-425.
- Ramos, Vítor. *A Edição em língua portuguesa em França: 1800-1850*. Paris: Centro Cultural Português, 1972.
- Ramos Pinto, Sara. *Tradução no vazio: a variação linguística nas traduções portuguesas de Pygmalion, de Bernard Shaw, e My Fair Lady de Alan Jay Lerner*. Unpublished PhD Dissertation. Lisbon: Universidade de Lisboa, Faculdade de Letras, 2009.
- Santos, Maria de Lourdes Costa Lima dos. “O público-leitor.” *Dicionário do romantismo literário português*. Ed. Helena Carvalhão Buescu. Lisbon: Editorial Caminho, 1997. 441-445.
- Toury, Gideon. “Culture Planning and Translation.” *Proceedings of the Vigo Conference “Anovadores de nós, anosadores de vós.”* Ed. A. Álvarez. <http://www.tau.ac.il/~toury/works/gt-plan.htm>. 1994. Tel Aviv University. Web. February 6, 2011.
- Valdés, Juan de. *Diálogo de la lengua*. Ed. Juan M. Lope Blanch. Madrid: Castalia, 1988.

### ABSTRACT

This article aims to explore a historical example of how translated works can work in defense of a dominated target language. It first considers the role of literary products in the struggle between dominant and dominated languages in the world republic of letters, as argued by Pascale Casanova (2004). Then, it gives evidence that the Spanish picaresque novels took part in the struggle for the autonomy of the Spanish literary language against the dominant languages in the sixteenth century, Italian and Latin. It thereafter argues that the Spanish picaresque novels in translated version took part in the struggle for the autonomy of Portuguese literary language against *francesismo*, i.e., the dominance of French language and culture over Portuguese language and culture. Emphasis is placed on the fact that the same literary products, *Lazarillo de Tormes* and *Guzmán de Alfarache*, were used in the defense of two different dominated languages: the Spanish language in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the Portuguese language in the nineteenth century.

### KEYWORDS

Picaresque novel, language domination, *francesismo*, oral markers, transfer map.

### RESUMEN

Este artículo explora un ejemplo histórico que muestra cómo los textos literarios pueden participar en la defensa de una lengua dominada. Empezaremos por considerar el papel que ciertos textos traducidos o no traducidos han desempeñado en las batallas que tuvieron lugar en la república mundial de las letras, según Pascale Casanova (2004). En un segundo momento, intentaremos demostrar que las novelas picarescas españolas formaron parte de la lucha por la autonomía del español como lengua literaria, dominada a lo largo del siglo XVI por el italiano y el latín. Después, argumentaremos que las novelas picarescas españolas en versión portuguesa pueden haber tenido un papel activo en la defensa de la lengua

portuguesa contra el *francesismo*, es decir, la dominación lingüística y cultural de Francia sobre Portugal en el siglo XIX. La aportación central de este artículo consiste en el análisis de un caso histórico en el que los mismos textos literarios, el *Lazarillo de Tormes* y el *Guzmán de Alfarache*, en versión original y traducida, parecen haber actuado en defensa de dos lenguas distintas: el español en los siglos XVI y XVII y el portugués en el siglo XIX.

PALABRAS CLAVE

Novela picaresca, dominación lingüística, francesismo, marcas de oralidad, mapa de transferencia.

---