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SOURCE TRADITIONS AND TARGET POETICS:  
TRANSLATION AND LEXICAL ISSUES REGARDING THE  
WORKS OF BERNAT METGE AND AUSIÀS MARCH<sup>1</sup>

*TRADICIONES DE ORIGEN Y POÉTICAS DE DESTINO:  
CUESTIONES DE TRADUCCIÓN Y LÉXICO EN LAS OBRAS DE  
BERNAT METGE Y AUSIÀS MARCH*

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*Abstract:* This article studies two opposing tendencies in the lexical choices of translators. While at times the selection of vocabulary unfolds the literary traditions of source texts, on other occasions translators deploy target poetic registers that are absent from the source text. The authors illustrate these strategies with attention to two medieval Catalan authors: Bernat Metge (ca. 1348-1413) and Ausiàs March (1400-1459). Metge wrote his *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència* (ca. 1381) in a Romance genre of considerable Occitan ascent. Latin works, however, were the actual source of inspiration for key components of his work, including vocabulary and idiomatic expressions. The translation of March's poetry during the early-modern period offers a complementary perspective. March's Renaissance translators and imitators carefully selected certain words for their renditions of March's verses in view of the significance of those terms for the poetic culture of their own time.

*Resumen:* En este artículo se estudian dos tendencias opuestas en las decisiones que toman los traductores con respecto a la selección del léxico. Así como en algunos casos el vocabulario seleccionado por parte del traductor desarrolla tradiciones literarias ya presentes en el original, en otros despliega registros poéticos propios solamente de la tradición en la que se pretende inscribir la obra traducida. Ambas estrategias se ilustran con respecto a la obra de dos autores catalanes medievales: Bernat Metge (ca. 1348-1413) y Ausiàs March (1400-1459). En el caso de Bernat Metge, particularmente en el *Llibre de Fortuna i Prudència* (ca. 1381), se puede observar que tanto la selección léxica como el uso de modismos responden al trasfondo de obras latinas, aunque se adapten al marco de un género literario románico con presencia del occitano. Los versos de Ausiàs March (1400-1459), imitados y traducidos por escritores del Renacimiento hispánico, permiten completar el análisis del fenómeno. La selección léxica de los traductores de March responde a sus

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*Keywords:* Bernat Metge; Ausiàs March; translation; lexicon; linguistic register; poetic register.

respectivos sistemas poéticos y lingüísticos, no a los del autor, cuya obra pasa a incorporarse tanto al petrarquismo como al Clasicismo contemporáneos.

*Palabras clave:* Bernat Metge; Ausiàs March; traducción; léxico; registro lingüístico; registro poético.

#### SUMMARY

1. Bernat Metge's *Book of Fortune and Prudence*.– 2. Ausiàs March's Poetry in the Renaissance.– 3. Bibliography.

In 1985 E. H. Gombrich argued for the need to learn classical and modern languages at a propaedeutic stage in the humanities curriculum:

I am not merely advocating language skills because of the access they give to students to a greater range of literature: languages are the most important depositories of culture. In acquiring their vocabulary we are also forced to reflect on their modes of thought, their dominant ideas and their distance from our mental habits. They make us see our own language in stereo<sup>2</sup>.

In this quote Gombrich does not approach languages as transmitters of a *Volkgeist*. He is equally far from merely equating languages with formalized systems of communication (grammars). Gombrich rather suggests that the long learning process involved in the cultivation of arts, letters, science, and thought requires linguistic reflection. His words will probably sound familiar to those who labor to command a foreign language. The process of learning a new language makes students aware of the distance between their own intellectual medium and that of the language they are acquiring. Language learners constantly compare the language they know with their new target language, listening to both in stereo in their own mind.

Gombrich's psychological insight also makes us think of literary translators. Having learnt at least two languages, literary translators need to be aware of each of those languages' literary systems and cultures. Insofar as any good translation may be defined as an equivalent –not a calque– of an original text, translators need to develop that *stereo* awareness of one's own language and culture in order to produce textual renditions that are justly elicited by the

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<sup>2</sup> Gombrich [1985] 1991, p. 32.

texts' own circumstances. By the same token, students of translations should take into account Gombrich's remarks and explore the translators' duality of mind, that is to say, the shaping of translations by the action of both the literary traditions of source texts and the translator's own. Lexical choices, in consequence, need to be judged not only as more or less felicitous equivalents to their source text, but rather as reflections of the translator's position with respect to all literary systems involved.

It goes without saying that medieval translations of classical texts contain numberless examples of cultural *translatio*. Virgil's Aeneas becomes a chivalric hero in the twelfth-century *Roman d'Enéas*, and wears a medieval armor in the celebrated fourteenth-century tapestries of the Nine Worthies or Neuf Preux, now in New York City's Metropolitan Museum of Art. Words related to Roman religion and warfare were also often translated into medieval Christian and chivalric terms, even when the translator had a good grasp of Classical Latin<sup>3</sup>. Medieval translators considered Latin a superior, richer language. They admitted that much in the prefaces to their translations, while Latin words were frequently translated by coupling (*hendiadys*) a Latinate cognate (for the *signum*) and a vernacular equivalent (for the *res*)<sup>4</sup>. We may therefore conclude that although medieval translators often lacked a historical perspective, they were compelled to accommodate texts to their own time and native lexis.

More complex issues unfold when we subject texts to close readings. The lexicons of source and target texts may belong to different literary systems that can be far apart from each other. As it can be best observed in poetic works, translators of all times deal with differences in linguistic register, genre, and style, and are thus forced to bridge over them to create a new work, one that does not appear to have been written in a foreign literary tradition. In this article we first appraise the extent to which lexical choices in Bernat Metge's *Book of Fortune and Prudence* may be determined by the poetic register of its main source texts. We then move our focus to examine stylistic keywords and themes in early-modern renditions of Ausiàs March's Catalan poetry to illustrate a specular phenomenon: how lexical choices facilitated the accommodation of medieval texts to the literary culture of their Renaissance translators and emulators.

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<sup>3</sup> Textbook examples of these lexical choices can be found in Francesc Alegre's Catalan translation of Leonardo Bruni's *De bello punico* via an Italian version. Alegre, though, had a humanist teacher. See Bescós 2013, pp. 26-30.

<sup>4</sup> For the origin of *hendiadys* see Thomson 1988, p. 676. Later on, doublets became a common rhetorical device; for a list of doublets in Catalan translations see Wittlin 1991.

1. BERNAT METGE'S *BOOK OF FORTUNE AND PRUDENCE*

Bernat Metge (ca. 1348-1413) was born in Barcelona, the son of a spice merchant who provided services for Queen Elionor of Sicily, third wife of Peter the Ceremonious, king of Aragon (r. 1336-1387). Metge's father died in 1359. Five years later, his mother married Ferrer Saiol, a scribe who would soon be promoted to the post of Queen's prothonotary (1365). In all likelihood Saiol provided his stepson with a training in grammar and rhetoric that would allow him to become a royal notary in December 1370 and four months later enter royal service as *escrivà de registre*<sup>5</sup>. In 1381 or right after, Metge penned his verse allegory *Libre de Fortuna i Prudència* (*Book of Fortune and Prudence*, henceforth *Book of Fortune*). In years to come he would climb up the ranks of the Royal Chancery. He would soon produce his *Història de Valter e Griselda* (1388) –the first translation of Petrarch's *Seniles* (XVII, 3-4) in the Iberian Peninsula– and his prose masterpiece *Lo somni* (*The Dream*, 1399), a fine dialogue partly modelled on Petrarch's *Secretum* and Cicero's *Tusculan Disputations*<sup>6</sup>. Yet around 1381, his Latin sources –as can be gleaned from those he used in the *Book of Fortune*– were just school texts; namely, Henry of Settimello's *Elegy*, Alan of Lille's *Anticlaudianus*, and Boethius's *Consolation of Philosophy* in a manuscript probably glossed with Nicholas Trivet's commentary. He also had on his desk Jean de Meun's *Roman de la Rose*, a work that had recently reached the court of Metge's lords, Crown Prince John of Aragon and his wife Yolande of Bar, the niece of King of France Charles V the Wise<sup>7</sup>.

The *Book of Fortune* could be described as a creative translation of a discrete series of fragments from these sources, deftly adapted by Metge to his courtly readership, and interspersed with entirely original passages<sup>8</sup>. In some six hundred octosyllabic couplets, Metge's verse narrative tells the story of an otherworldly journey. The author-narrator introduces himself as a weary, disgraced man (very much like Boethius in his *Consolation of Philosophy*) whose fate should serve as a warning to those seeking worldly goods. At the break of dawn, on May 1, 1381 Bernat feels a strange chest pain and strolls down to the Barcelona harbor to alleviate it. There he finds an anonymous old

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<sup>5</sup> For a comprehensive account of Metge's life and works see Riquer 1959. For an introductory profile and an overview of his reception see *In Memoriam Bernat Metge*: <http://www.narpan.net/bibliotecadigital/bernat-metge-2013.html> [accessed: 01/08/2014].

<sup>6</sup> See respectively Riquer 1959, pp. 117-153 (with facing translation into Spanish), Metge 2002; 2006. For recent scholarship on Metge's prose works see Cabré, Coroleu, Kraye 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Metge 2010, pp. 15, 24-41; 2011, pp. 20-25.

<sup>8</sup> Barnett, Cabré 2013.

beggar (in all probability philosopher Diogenes the Cynic), who believes that happiness is only to be found in poverty. The beggar tricks Bernat into boarding a magical boat that takes him to the Island of Fortune. The narrator describes the hazardous voyage and, after landing, the wonders of such a contradictory place, including the grotesque two-faced Fortune goddess (pictured after Alan of Lille's *Anticlaudianus* and Jean de Meun's rendition of the same Latin passage). Bernat confronts Fortune with his laments on his unjust misfortune (mostly drawn from Settimello's *Elegy*), but the encounter ends abruptly. He then contends with Lady Prudence and the Seven Liberal Arts (as in Boethius's work, with the addition of some elements from Settimello's). The ensuing dialogue (based on the *Consolation*) eventually convinces Bernat that he should not have gone into despair. Prudence persuades him to believe and rest in divine Providence. Bernat returns to Barcelona, admittedly cured from his moral illness and able to teach Prudence's lesson to those who do not believe in God's providential plan. He arrives in the harbor at dawn, as if no time has elapsed since his departure, and swiftly walks home to avoid being the subject of gossip. The satiric mode dominates the first half of the work, through Bernat's encounters with Diogenes and Fortune, and resurfaces in the author's descriptions of earthly injustice in the dialogue with Prudence. It may as well be argued that a satiric tone remains in the protagonist's attitude at the end of the work<sup>9</sup>.

Although three of the main sources of the *Book of Fortune* are Latin (and the fourth, Jean de Meun's *Roman de la Rose*, is only used because it contains a version of a fragment of the *Anticlaudianus*), the work's narrative frame is fundamentally indebted to a cluster of vernacular stimuli. First and foremost, Metge's voyage from the port of Barcelona to the Island of Fortune is reminiscent of Guillem de Torroella's *Faula* (*A Tale*; 1374 or a little earlier). The *Faula* is a verse narrative that tells the story of a noble squire, Guillem, who travels on the back of a whale from his native Majorca to an Enchanted Island, where he meets King Arthur. The young squire learns from the old king the morals of chivalry, which he is commissioned to disseminate upon his return home<sup>10</sup>. Like Torroella's chivalric adventure and many other courtly tales, the *Book of Fortune* is written in octosyllabic couplets. Accordingly, Metge's work was copied in the *Cançoner Vega-Aguiló* (a songbook mostly devoted to courtly lyric poetry) alongside Torroella's *Faula* and Vicenç Comes's allegory *Una ventura* (*A Tale of Wonder*), which also features among Metge's minor sources<sup>11</sup>.

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<sup>9</sup> Metge 2010, pp. 42-48.

<sup>10</sup> Badia 1993, pp. 93-108.

<sup>11</sup> Cabré, Torró 2010.

Insofar as the actual text of the *Book of Fortune* can be attributed to Metge with absolute certainty and not to the scribe of *Vega-Aguiló*, who just copied it about forty-five years later, one can easily argue that a courtly, vernacular milieu left a mark on the language of Metge's verse narrative. Either in the rhyme words or elsewhere in the lines (prompted by the demands of verse-length), the language of the *Book of Fortune* features a number of Occitan forms. In the late fourteenth century, Catalan authors did blend the Catalan language with the language of the troubadours in order to compose stanzaic poetry and write verse narratives in *noves rimades* (octosyllabic couplets)<sup>12</sup>. Nonetheless, within the extant corpus of *noves rimades*, the *Book of Fortune* is noted for its Catalan lexis, which includes a score of idiomatic phrases and everyday vocabulary. It is to this aspect of the work's language that we will now turn our attention.

Given the duality of its sources, it is hard to classify the *Book of Fortune* in terms of genre. On the one hand, the dialogue between the characters of Fortune and Prudence relies on Latin models. This alone should allow us to conceive of the work as a learned moral allegory. Since such a genre lacked a formalized tradition, it would not be surprising if Metge had simply written his piece in his native Catalan while employing a Latinate style and abundant Classical references. On the other hand, the work's narrative frame, its particular verse form, historical circumstances, and audience unequivocally pertain to a courtly setting. Neither the marvelous journey overseas nor the *noves rimades* can in any way be linked to a learned, Latinate literary tradition. Moreover, Metge, a member of the Royal Chancery, mentions the banking crisis of 1381, which harmed his lord's own finances. Metge also does away with the Classical references of his Latin sources, thereby adapting a learned allegorical genre to his courtly social context.<sup>13</sup> His choice of verse is transparent in this regard. Courtly authors like Guillem de Torroella or Vicenç Comes, who wrote verse narratives in *noves rimades*, had their pieces copied in a section of a codex that, for the most part, contains courtly poetry. Metge's inclusion in the *Vega-Aguiló* manuscript shows that his choice of verse had to determine the genre of his work<sup>14</sup>. Precisely in this context is where the lexical

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<sup>12</sup> The copy of the *Book of Fortune* in *Cançoner Vega-Aguiló* (Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, ms. 8) contains a large number of Occitan forms. The other witness, probably a later copy (Barcelona, Biblioteca de Catalunya, ms. 831), rewrites in strict Catalan many lines of the work. For a comparative analysis of both manuscripts see Metge 2010, pp. 48-78.

<sup>13</sup> Metge 2010, pp. 9-16. Debts with the troubadour lyric and references to the *ars nova* also evince the courtly character of the work; see Metge 2010, pp. 95 and 118.

<sup>14</sup> Metge's own vernacular adaptation of the learned allegorical genre must have been in fact triggered by the example set by the *Roman de la Rose*, a work Yolande de Bar had introduced in the court; see Metge 2010, pp. 15-16.

choices of the *Book of Fortune* stand out, since its vocabulary betrays Metge's Latinate education. We will now analyze a few examples.

The first instance is from a fragment inspired by the *Roman de la Rose*. Referring to goddess Fortune, the author-narrator states:

Crei que ella em cuidava decebre  
metent-me garsa per colom,  
car no dava parvén que un plom  
presàs tot quant ella vesia,  
que dels continents que fasia  
no en pogra far mais l'empeiraire (ll. 346-51)<sup>15</sup>.

We first must note the Occitan *empeiraire* instead of the Catalan *emperador* (which would not have rhymed with *gaire*, l. 352), and other Occitan forms such as *dava parvén* and *vesialfasia* (probably introduced to keep the octosyllabic measure). An Occitan imprint is also present in words such as *crei*, *presàs*, *far i mais* (in Catalan, *crec*, *pre(u)às*, *fer*, and *mas/mes*), which may or may not be attributed to the author. Nonetheless, equal attention must be paid to Catalan idioms such as *metent-me garsa per colom* and *que un plom presàs*, which no doubt correspond to Jean de Meun's French text: *Ainsinc Fortune se desguise, / mes bien te di qu'ele ne prise / tretouz cels du monde un festu (Roman de la Rose, ll. 6103-6105)*<sup>16</sup>. In Metge's time, both idiomatic expressions belonged to a colloquial register. The second one matches the French text by replacing *plom* (a worthless coin) with *festu* (a worthless nut). The first phrase, however, does not translate any expression from the original; it rather appears out of solidarity with the linguistic register of the French text: *se desguise* ("she disguises herself/she dresses up") is rendered as *decebre* ("to deceive"), but then, as if Jean de Meun's satiric mode had triggered the use of colloquial Catalan, Metge goes on to supplement the deceitful nature of Fortune with the idiom *metre garsa per colom* ("to give a heron for a dove"; in modern Catalan, *donar gat per llebre*, "to give a cat for a hare", equivalent to the English "to offer a pig in a poke"). Likewise, the vanity of Fortune's attire in de Meun's description (ll. 6106-6114) suggested Metge the idea of her empress-like behavior –a burlesque turn of phrase that is partly his own creation. We may safely conclude that Metge does not just translate but re-

<sup>15</sup> "I think that she was trying to trick me by offering me a pig in a poke because she did not care a straw for anything that she saw; she put on more airs and graces than an emperor". All quotations of the Catalan text are from Metge 2010. All translations into English are taken from Metge 2011.

<sup>16</sup> "Thus Fortune disguises herself, but I tell you that she does not give a straw [lit. a nut] for anyone in the world". The *Roman de la Rose* contains a first part by Guillaume de Lorris and a long continuation by Jean de Meun. Quotations are from Lorris, Meun 1970-1973.

imagines his source text. By doing so, he recasts it in a different literary tone altogether and so moves it away from other verse narrative examples written in the hybrid language of courtly poetry.

Additional examples will further back these preliminary observations. On several occasions Metge drew from idiomatic Catalan in order to adapt Settimello's *Elegia*. For instance, in one passage Settimello complains about his insufferable pain by resorting to a Biblical commonplace of remote Hebrew origin (*Tot mala, tot penas patior quod, si quis arenam / conferat in numero, cedet arena meis. / Pagina sit celum, sint frondes scriba, sit unda / incaustrum, mala non nostra referre queant*. ll. I.233-236)<sup>17</sup>. Metge adapts those lines as follows: Bernat says to be enduring adversities that *tots cells qui Déu adoren / no porien imaginar / ne escriure*, posat que la mar / fos tinta e lo cel paper, ll. 526-529; our emphasis)<sup>18</sup>. The expression appears verbatim in Joanot Martorell's *Tirant lo Blanc* (1460-1464) –to mention another medieval work– and survives in present-day folklore (*enc que la mar tornàs tinta / i el cel que de paper fos*)<sup>19</sup>. It is not, of course, that widespread familiarity with the *Book of Fortune* ended up popularizing the saying. On the contrary, Metge looked for adequate idiomatic expressions already in existence to match Settimello's. He followed this same strategy to come up with insults and crude expressions that measured up to Settimello's coarse debate with Fortune<sup>20</sup> (e.g. *Bèstia sots* / “You're an idiot”, l. 542; *Na vella pudent, embriaga* / “You foul-smelling, drunken old woman”, l. 590). Finally, Metge also drew on everyday Catalan to translate a series of maledictory expressions that are reminiscent of the Book of Job, including Settimello's wishes to have died as a newborn, while being milkfed: *Maleit sia qui m'enconà, / com no m'hi mesclà rialgar* (ll. 534-535)<sup>21</sup>. It is worth highlighting that the verb *enconar* (“to entice with milk a newborn baby”) is prompted by Settimello's phrase *Cum dabat ubera mater* (l. I.245) and has not been documented in other medieval poetic texts, whether in Occitan or Catalan<sup>22</sup>.

Metge's lexical choices are no doubt rooted in popular Catalan. The following example encapsulates the author's down-to-earth practice of translation. The lines *Despullada m'havets l'escorça; / no hi resta sinó la*

<sup>17</sup> “So many evils, so many pains do I suffer, that they number more than all the grains of sand. If the sky were parchment, every branch a scribe, and the sea ink, they would not be sufficient to record all our woes”.

<sup>18</sup> “no Christian could either imagine or describe, even if the sea were turned to ink and the sky to paper”.

<sup>19</sup> Metge 2010, pp. 111-112n.

<sup>20</sup> Fleming 1982.

<sup>21</sup> “A curse on the one who first gave me pap, for not mixing it with poison”.

<sup>22</sup> It does not appear in Levy 1923, but it does appear in Alcover, Moll 1930-1962, s. v. “enconar”, 2, for later texts to the present day.



*rabassa* (ll. 594-595)<sup>23</sup> feature a highly creative version of Settimello's *Deveni ad nichilum: restans michi spiritus ossa / non habet* (ll. II.79-80)<sup>24</sup>. With no trace of Occitan, Metge reacts to his source text by inventing a metaphor that conveys the duality *spiritus/ossa* through idiomatic equivalents in his native language (*rabassa*, trunk / *escorça*, bark). He could not have done otherwise. Unlike Torroella or Comes, both crafters of tales with no Latinate background, Metge dwelled on sources from his school days that were far removed from the formulaic courtly-verse tradition. In doing so, he was breaking new ground.

We may then take a step further and argue that, at the core of the *Book of Fortune*, lays a conscious response to Latin rather than just an adherence to the satiric register of the sources we have so far examined<sup>25</sup>. Boethius' *Consolation of Philosophy* could not in the least be considered a satire. Metge knew the ins and outs of Boethius's dialogue and used it in a variety of ways, both in the *Book of Fortune* and in his later prose *The Dream*. Boethius provided him and many others with a model for writing a consolatory dream-vision<sup>26</sup>. In the *Book of Fortune*, Metge borrows from Boethius's *Consolation* to compose the very backbone of Prudence's dialogue on divine Providence – where Lady Prudence served as a Christian replacement of Lady Philosophy. A number of Latinisms is required by the linguistic register of the translation and, every so often, also by Metge's need to create a Scholastic debate on theology in a vernacular language (*sil·logisme*, *proposició*, and the like)<sup>27</sup>. And yet, passages like the following are more apposite to our present argument:

Digats, lo sol dóna clardat  
tostemps al món, ne l'any calor?  
¿Ne la mar ha tan gran amor  
als navegants que après bonança  
no els faça metre el cap en dansa  
portant-los a perill de mort?  
Dels hòmens me meravell fort,  
qui em cuiden mudar ma natura (ll. 606-613)<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>23</sup> "You've stripped the bark off me, and only the trunk remains".

<sup>24</sup> "I have come to nothing: the soul that remains in me has no bones".

<sup>25</sup> The same applies to Metge's adaptation of Alan of Lille's *Anticlaudianus*, another book he read in school. See Barnett, Cabré 2013.

<sup>26</sup> In the *Book of Fortune*, the model of Boethius was coupled with the reading of Jean de Meun's *Roman de la Rose*, which played a similar role for the parallel case of the Middle English tradition. See, for instance, Means 1972.

<sup>27</sup> See Riquer 1959, p. \*29, and compare with the list of Latinisms from Metge's later prose works in pp. \*83, \*162-164.

<sup>28</sup> "Tell me, does the sun shine on the world all the time, or provide it with warmth throughout the year? And is the sea so fond of sailors that after fair weather it never hurls them on,

These lines brilliantly summarize a short fragment of the *Consolation* in which Lady Philosophy voices Fortune's views:

An ego sola meum ius exercere prohibebor? Licet *caelo* proferre *lucidos dies* eosdemque tenebrosis noctibus condere, licet *anno* terrae uultum nunc floribus frugibusque redimire, nunc nimbis frigoribusque confundere, ius est *mari* nunc strato aequore blandiri, nunc procellis ac fluctibus inhorrescere: nos ad constantiam nostris moribus alienam inexpleta *hominum* cupiditas alligabit? (II, pr. 2.8; emphasis on keywords is ours)<sup>29</sup>.

Metge's text does not belong to Bernat's dialogue with Prudence, but rather to his debate with Fortune, which is devoid of Scholastic technicalities<sup>30</sup>. If we standardize the spelling and disregard the odd *merevelh*, we won't be able to find any trace of the Occitan language here. We should also notice that Metge proves well capable of converting Latin sentences into everyday Catalan: *Licet caelo proferre lucidos dies* becomes *lo sol dóna clardat*, and *anno terrae uultum nunc floribus frugibusque redimire, nunc nimbis frigoribusque confundere* is compressed into *ne l'any [dóna tostemps] calor?*. The sentence on sea storms presents Metge with a fearful scenery (cf. *inhorrescere*) for him to render, with yet another idiom, into a vivid portrayal of the effect of a stormy weather on sailors (*metre el cap en dansa*).

These examples suggest that idiomatic expressions in the *Book of Fortune* are not only prompted by the need to accommodate Catalan to the linguistic register of Latin and French satiric writing, even if Metge's inclination towards farce and the grotesque is clear in other works<sup>31</sup>. Idiomatic Catalan was Metge's natural response to the general challenge posed by the dominant sources of the *Book of Fortune*. We have seen that the work was intended for the court, that it was written (to some extent) in the hybrid language of courtly poetry, and that it was framed within, or presented as if

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putting their lives in peril? I'm always amazed by those who think they can change my nature".

<sup>29</sup> "Surely I am not the only one to be denied the exercise of my rights? The heavens are allowed to bring forth the bright daylight and lay it to rest in the darkness of night: the year is allowed alternately to deck the face of the earth with fruit and flowers and to disfigure it with cloud and cold. The sea is allowed either to be calm and inviting or to rage with storm-driven breakers. Shall man's insatiable greed bind me to a constancy which is alien to my ways?" (Boethius 1969, p. 57).

<sup>30</sup> Although the debate between Bernat and Fortune is mostly inspired on Settimello's *Elegy*, on this occasion, Metge went straight to Boethius, the primary source of Settimello, instead of echoing the *Elegia*, II.97-112.

<sup>31</sup> See e. g. Metge's *Ovidi enamorat* in Riquer 1959, pp. 91-115, and the farcical criticism of women (modelled on Boccaccio's *Corbaccio*) and men in *The Dream*, bks. III-IV. See in general Badia 2005.

it belonged to, a Romance literary genre, the marvelous journey –thus taking after Torroella’s *Faula*. Nevertheless, Metge’s main sources were two works in Latin verse (Alan of Lille’s in hexameters, Settimello’s in elegiac couplets) and a philosophical *prosimetrum* (Boethius’s *Consolation*). Not only did he extract doctrine from these texts but also passages of a more literary nature like the ones discussed above<sup>32</sup>. Jean de Meun’s version of a fragment of the *Anticlaudianus* showed Metge how to adapt Latin verse into the vernacular and, in general, de Meun’s *Roman de la Rose* paved the way for the *Book of Fortune*. Ironically, or perhaps tongue-in-cheek, Metge apologizes in his preface for his ignorance of courtly lyric while replacing Latin poetry with Romance models (*And please do not laugh at me if my verse lacks subtlety since I am afraid I am not practised in the Gay science of the troubadours*, ll. 22-25). With these strategies, Metge adapts into the Catalan verse the poetry he learnt by heart in his school days, while idiomatic Catalan resurfaces every time Latin challenges the author’s *inventio*.

Metge’s Latin background –unlike that of most courtly-verse writers– may also explain his lexical choices in passages without immediate sources. It is remarkable, for one, the fragment that describes the narrator’s initial trouble in Barcelona and his trip to the Island of Fortune. This passage goes on for over one hundred lines exhibiting a string of idiomatic rhyme-words such as *gebre, febre, capell, anap, escac, sinestre* and *pinestre* (“frost”, “fever”, “hat”, “cup”, “checkmate”, “ill-fated”, “basket”)<sup>33</sup>. Metge’s command of Catalan shines in many passages of the *Book of Fortune* and in other works, from the early *Sermó* to *The Dream*, so much so that a new compilation of his vocabulary and idiomatic expressions should result in a wealth of additions to our modern dictionaries and specialized glossaries of medieval Catalan.

This aspect of Metge’s language confirms Gombrich’s insight. When composing the *Book of Fortune*, despite its Romance literary genre and Metge’s audience, despite the work’s apparent Occitan coat, the author had Latin in his mind as a literary system that had little in common with the vernacular courtly-verse tradition. As Gombrich wrote, when Metge learnt Latin in his youth he must have listened to Catalan in stereo. He must have realized that he was learning not only grammar, but also the cultural traditions and literary forms attached to the Latin language, all of which were in stark contrast with those current in the Catalan court. Years later, when Metge translated Latin verse for another courtly audience, he had to reflect on his

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<sup>32</sup> However, Metge never drew on Boethius’ meters, just as he dispensed with much Classical references from all of his sources, because he had his courtly audience in mind. See Barnett, Cabré 2013; Cabré 2006.

<sup>33</sup> See Metge 2010, p. 73 and *cf.* p. 78.

own tradition of verse writing, in which the authority and hybrid language of the *Gaia Ciència* still ruled –hence his apology for his lack of subtlety, as we just mentioned. Nonetheless, since Metge could think in stereo, he managed to find in his native tongue the resources he needed to respond to the challenge, thus providing Catalan verse with a brand-new poetic register, one that also encompassed his penchant for satire.

## 2. AUSIÀS MARCH'S POETRY IN THE RENAISSANCE

The poetic stature of Ausiàs March was well acknowledged in the crowns of Aragon and Castile during the author's lifetime (1400-1459) and continued to be so long after his death. While the Marquis of Santillana remembered him as an *hombre de asaz elevado espíritu*, March's contemporaries found inspiration in his verses to create their own.<sup>34</sup> March's pre-modern fame peaked during the Renaissance, when Juan Boscán and Garcilaso de la Vega set an example for future generations of Castilian poets, from Diego Hurtado de Mendoza to Lope de Vega, in their culling from March's works to compose the "new" Italianate poetry.<sup>35</sup> Roughly at the same time, March's verses reached the printing press. Since 1539 his poetic corpus was massively disseminated in a number of printed editions and translations. His original poems were printed in 1539 (Valencia, Juan Navarro), 1543 and 1545 (Barcelona, Carles Amorós), 1555 (Valladolid, Sebastián Martínez) and 1560 (Barcelona, Claudi Bornat). March's poems enjoyed not only two different Spanish translations, by poets Baltasar de Romaní and Jorge de Montemayor, respectively printed in 1539 (rptd. 1553, and 1579) and 1560 (rptd. 1562 and 1579), but also a Latin version by humanist Vicent Mariner (1633).<sup>36</sup>

The appreciation of March's *octaves* and *dècimes* in an age of *sonnets*, *canzoni*, elegies, and epistles, was inevitably mediated by the Italianate and Classicistic preferences of his new readers. March's works were interpreted through the poetic culture of the fifteen –and sixteen–hundreds. We can recognize this cultural mediation in the way his poetry was printed. Clusters of verses originally composed in response to different life situations and social circumstances were re-signified, one poem at a time, in order to sequentially construct a series of episodes and eventually

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<sup>34</sup> For a recent, panoramic view of March's fifteenth-century influence see, *passim*, Torró 2014; Torró, Rodríguez 2014. For Santillana's eulogy, see Cabré 1998.

<sup>35</sup> For an overview, see Pagès 1912, pp. 393-422; McNerney 1982.

<sup>36</sup> For a *recensio* of the editions and translations, Pagès 1912-1914, vol. I, pp. 55-102; for the Spanish translations, see Riquer 1946.

develop a whole life narrative. The Petrarchan *Canzoniere* and the Classical elegiac book of poetry served as main editorial models for March's lyric re-sequencing.<sup>37</sup> Yet the lexical choices of his translators were also instrumental in accommodating his post-troubadour poetry to those early-modern audiences. By studying how a few key terms in March's corpus were translated we now aim to unveil, still following Gombrich's claims, the modes of thought underlying those translations that run parallel to the early-modern editorial forms of March's verses. We will now focus on three ideas that guided March's Renaissance readers, and will consider their bearing on the poetic renditions of his translators.

The first of these ideas is a moral discourse derived from Petrarch's vernacular poetry. In the early-modern editions of March's works, the order of the poems constructs a Petrarchist narrative in which the poetic voice contemplates his life-long love experience with regret.<sup>38</sup> That is Petrarch's own perspective in the first sonnet of the *Rerum vulgarium fragmenta* (*Rvf*), in which he qualifies his secular love as a *giovenile errore* ("mistake of youth"). Retrospectively withdrawn from the ensuing concluded story, Petrarch wrote his poem in the past tense and placed it in the first position of his *Canzoniere*. Having managed to shun lust and resume life with a true belief in the greater, transcendent goods of eternity, the poet looks back at his bygone yearnings and feels overwhelmed by shame. In hindsight, he realizes that all his hopes and pains were vain (*Le vane speranze e'l van dolore*, "the vain hopes and the vain pain"; *et del mio vaneggiar vergogna è 'l frutto*, "and shame is the fruit of my vanity").<sup>39</sup> For the Petrarchist translations of March's poems, *vano* (vain) functions as an instrumental keyword to assimilate the Catalan verses to those of the most imitated Italian poet in the Renaissance. Sometimes *vano* translates an obviously related term, such as *foll* foolish<sup>40</sup>. In other occasions, and more significantly, the translator sought to encapsulate in *vano* the entire palinodial discourse of Petrarchan echoes and force it into March's poetry.

*Axí com cell qui'n lo somni's delita* opens many of the oldest manuscript compilations of March's poetry as well as Juan Navarro's edition. It also goes by Roman numeral I in Ausiàs March studies since Amadeu Pagès's critical edition. The first stanza in Poem I contains several concepts and

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<sup>37</sup> See Lloret 2013.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibidem*, pp. 93-95, 181-188.

<sup>39</sup> Quotations are from Petrarca 1996.

<sup>40</sup> Both terms are obviously related with regards to their traditional moralistic usage, but their etimologies also point towards common notions of "void" and "empty"; see Coromines 1980-1991, s. v. "va" and "foll", and Alcover, Moll 1930-1962.

images that made it particularly fitting for it to become a moralizing prologue to a concluded love story<sup>41</sup>. The very first stanza in Romaní's translation, when compared to the original, makes evident the translator's target poetic language and culture<sup>42</sup>:

Axi com cell/ quen lo somnys *delita*  
 E son delit/ de *folll* pensament ve  
 Ne pren a mi/ quel temps passat me te  
 Limaginar/ que altre be noy habita:  
 Sentint venir/ laguayt de ma dolor  
 Sabent de cert/ quen sens mans he de jaure  
 Temps per venir/ en *ningun bem* pot caure  
 So ques no res/ en mi es lo millor<sup>43</sup>.

Bien como aquel/ quen sueños *deuanea*  
 Y se deleyta/ del *vano* pensamiento  
 Assi me tiene/ el contemplar contento  
 Quen otro bien/ mi alma no recrea:  
 Lo por venir/ siempre me fue peor  
 Y se muy cierto/ que de dar en sus manos  
 Quanto bien tengo/ son *pensamientos vanos*  
 Lo que no es nada/ en mi es lo mejor<sup>44</sup>.

In Romaní's allegedly *verbum verbo* version, *folll* (foolish) is translated as *vano* (vain), but *delita* (to delight) is conveyed as *deuanea* (talk foolishly) and line 7, "the future may bring me nothing good" becomes "all I have now are *vain* thoughts". Therefore, the translator's lexical choice of *vano*,

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<sup>41</sup> See Cabré, Torró 1995, pp. 119-128; and Lloret 2015 for the afterlife of March's poem as a prefatory piece among his early-modern imitators.

<sup>42</sup> The emphasis in this and later quotations is ours. Quotations from March's old editions and translations are provided in palaeographical transcription of the digitized copies available at the *Biblioteca d'autor Ausiàs March* (Alemany 2009): [http://www.lluisvives.com/bib\\_autor/ausiasmarch/](http://www.lluisvives.com/bib_autor/ausiasmarch/) [accessed: 01/08/2014]. The exception is Vicent Mariner's Latin translation, which we quote from Coronel 1997. When the source text of a translation has been identified, we quote from that edition for comparison. To avoid confusion, original slashes marking half-hemistiches have only been kept for longer, indented quotes. Other than that, quotes and all incipits are from March ([1952-1959] 2000), while references to variants are taken from March 1997.

<sup>43</sup> "Like the man who takes pleasure in dreams and his pleasure comes from foolish thoughts, so it happens to me, for time past occupies my imagination and no other good dwells there. Feeling my suffering to lie in wait, knowing for certain that I must fall into his hands, time future cannot turn out well for me; that past is the best (part) of me" (translation by Terry 1976).

<sup>44</sup> "Like the man who talks foolishly in dreams, whose pleasure comes from vain thoughts, that is how my imagination delights me, for no other good dwells in my soul. The future always treated me badly and I know for sure that I will end in its hands. All I have is vain thoughts. What comes to nothing is what is best for me." Unless otherwise noted, English translations of March's texts and their Renaissance versions are ours.

in special when not literally conveying the source text, betrays his Petrarchist reading of March.<sup>45</sup>

Jorge de Montemayor's rendition offers comparable examples. While Romaní translated from an unknown manuscript, Montemayor's source text was Juan de Resa's 1555 edition, which was in many respects similar to Carles Amorós's 1543 volume. In Montemayor's version of Poem I *fol* becomes *vano* (*Bien como aquel quen sueños ha gozado / y lo deleyta vn vano pensamiento*), but the rest of the stanza offers an even more literal version than Romaní's<sup>46</sup>. However, *Axí com cell qui-n lo somni-s delita* is not the first poem of Montemayor's sequence. Following Resa's text, and regardless of its lack of palinodial stance, Poem XXXIX (*Qui no és trist, de mos dictats no cur*) functions as a prologue to the book on account of its prefatory rhetoric. Thus, in the Petrarchist narrative circulated through the Amorós text and its textual offshoots, it is the second poem of the sequence (*Axí com cell qui desija vianda*) the one that conveys Petrarch's palinodial perspective commanding a moralizing account of the poet's secular love – that would be Poem IV in Pagès's canonical numbering and Canto II, *Como el hambriento, que hartar dessea*, in Montemayor's translation. Lexical choices reminiscent of the opening sonnet of the *Rvf* enable this poem to assume the same discursive role. March's Poem IV stages an allegorical disputation between Reason (*Enteniment*) and Body (*Cos*), in which each character claims its precedence over the other to control the poet's will. Reason's reply to the arguments waged by the Body is that the latter's influence on a man's will is transient and thus ontologically inferior: *vanament vols e vans son tos desigs: / car dins vn punt tos delits son fastigs*, (ll. 42-43)<sup>47</sup>. Montemayor did literally translate the *vans desigs* (*tu amor es vano, y tu desseo incierto: / en vn punto es enojo tu alegria*)<sup>48</sup> and, in addition, used the adjective one more time just a few lines below, when the Body goes on with its argument. In this case, Montemayor –like Romaní– departs from the literal meaning of March's verses to attain the Petrarchist tones that would resonate in his target poetic culture:

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<sup>45</sup> Cabré 2002, p. 69.

<sup>46</sup> “Bien como aquel quen sueños ha gozado / y lo deleyta un *vano* pensamiento: / assi me tiene a mi el bien pasado, / pues otro sino aquel jamás lo siento: / venir veo ya mi mal, y mes forçado / en sus manos caer, y en su tormento: / quen cosa por venir no ay bien perfecto, / y assi lo que no es ya, mes mas aceto”. (“Like he who has enjoyed his dreams and takes pleasure in vain thoughts, that is what has occurred to me with good times past, for I cannot recall any but those. I see my ill fate approaching; I will be tormented in its hands; there is no perfect prize in the future; and so I must be content with what is gone by”).

<sup>47</sup> “You wish vainly and your desires are vain for in an instant your pleasures turn to loathing” (trans. by Terry 1976).

<sup>48</sup> “Your love is vain and your desire uncertain; in an instant your happiness turns to anger”.

Si be complit/ lo mon pot retener  
 per mi es l'hom/ en tal sobiran be,  
 e qui sens mi/ esperança soste  
 es foll o pech/ o terrible grosser<sup>49</sup>.

Si el mundo tiene en si vn bien cumplido  
 por mi lo alcança (en fin) el hombre humano,  
 quien algo sin mi espera está tenido  
 por loco, nescio, o del todo *vano*<sup>50</sup>.

Montemayor further utilized *vano* but one last example should suffice to illustrate the extent of this strategy<sup>51</sup>. In Poem XXI (translated as Canto VI) March ponders how Love settled in his soul and expelled any other source of pleasure or value, for Love is all the poet desires<sup>52</sup>. However, the Stoic poetic voice does not prize Love, but lack of desire, as the only possible source of true wealth; and so, he actually feels destitute, much poorer than Job. Note how Montemayor's rendition of March's *desesper* as a defining feature of Love evokes Petrarch's famous *vane speranze*<sup>53</sup>:

Pobre so donchs/ molt pus que Iob no fon  
 puyes es dit rich/ çell qui no a desig:  
 en passions/ yom trob dins en lo mig  
 si desijar/ ab desesper l'hom fon<sup>54</sup>.

Mas pobre soy que Iob, y sin remedio:  
 quien menos desseo, más rico veo:

<sup>49</sup> "If the world can contain perfect good, though the man achieves this supreme good, and whoever hopes (to obtain it) without me is foolish or stupid or monstrously uncouth" (trans. by Terry 1976).

<sup>50</sup> "If the world contains any perfect good, the man eventually achieves it through me; whoever hopes to obtain any of it without me is foolish or stupid or completely vain".

<sup>51</sup> See XVII, 13-16 (Canto XXXV) and LXXXIV, 49-52 (Canto LVI) for two additional examples in which the term finds no literal correspondence with March's verses.

<sup>52</sup> "Tant en Amor ma pens'ha consentit / que sens aquell en als no puch entendre, / ami quem plau que d'als no pusch aprendre / tot altre fer mi entre'n gran despit. / Los grans thesors ne tot l'honor del mon / nom plau hauer ab menys de ser amat / car sens aço nom do ben ahuirat / ço que no es tot mon desig confon" (ll. 1-8; "Love has so much spoilt my mind that without it I cannot grasp anything; and I take pleasure in not learning anything else, for I despise any other business. I would not want to own neither great treasures nor all the gold on earth if I were not loved; for without Love I do not consider myself fortunate. My desire confuses what is missing").

<sup>53</sup> Granted that the collocation "vain hopes" is not intrinsically Petrarchist; see Avalor 1989, pp. 8-9 (qtd. in Petrarca 1996, p. 9). "Esperança vana" is also to be found in March's poetry, cf. XVI, 42; XXII, 15; LI, 27.

<sup>54</sup> "I am thus much poorer than Job ever was, since we may only call rich he who has no desire. My emotions have put me in distress, when desire has merged with desperation".



ved como puedo estar estando en medio:  
de la esperança vana, y del desseo?<sup>55</sup>

We will now move on to a second poetic conception that guided March's Renaissance translators: that of the elegiac beloved. The elegiac book of poetry also inspired the editorial arrangement of March's corpus in Carles Amorós's edition. The very first poem of the 1543 printed text (XXXIX) features a rhetoric that can be recognized within that literary tradition<sup>56</sup>. Later in the volume, several poem sequences also owe their form and disposition to elegiac topoi: the lover's fulfillment of his desires, the beloved's betrayal, the lover's cursing his beloved, and their reconciliation<sup>57</sup>. There was no dissonance between Classical and Petrarchist tones, which could be interpreted in the same lyric key. While Petrarch had culled from elegiac authors to compose his own vernacular verses, neo-Latin poets also combined Petrarchist motives with genuinely elegiac references<sup>58</sup>.

Humanist Vicent Mariner, a prolific translator from Greek, Latin, and Spanish, tackled the translation of March's verses from Amorós's 1545 octavo re-edition of the 1543 text. Printed in 1633, Mariner's Latin rendition both benefitted from and contributed to the accommodation of March's corpus to a target Classical cultural framework. Divided into six books (*in sex elegiarum libros diuisa*), almost all of the poems were translated into elegiac couplets. As Pere Ramírez i Molas remarked in his textual study of the translation, in Mariner's hands, *la poesia d'Ausiàs March recula quinze segles, esdevé poesia romana* ("March's poetry goes back in time fifteen centuries to become Roman poetry") for *Déu* becomes *Iupiter*, *infern* becomes *Pluto*, *amor* is often *Venus* or *Cupido*, and *saber* the *Musae*<sup>59</sup>.

Other lexical choices were possibly more fundamental for granting Mariner's version an elegiac tone. Perhaps March's poem XLII, *Vos qui sabeu de la tortra-l costum* translated as Elegy XXI in Book III (*Tu qui pernoscis iam turturis undique moris*), provides the most eloquent example. Poem XLII is a *maldit*, originally composed to slur Na Montbohí, a widow whom March had considered marrying<sup>60</sup>. The piece ends with the poet calling his beloved

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<sup>55</sup> "I am poorer than Job, and there is nothing I can do about that. I realize that whoever desired less is now wealthier. What do you think about my predicament, being between vain hopes and my desire?"

<sup>56</sup> See Lloret 2015 for the afterlife of Poem XXXIX as a prefatory piece among his early-modern imitators.

<sup>57</sup> See Lloret 2013, pp. 181-209.

<sup>58</sup> See Rico 1988; Marcozzi 2001; Tonelli 1998; Ludwig 1976.

<sup>59</sup> See Ramírez 1970, pp. 164-193, esp. pp. 172-175.

<sup>60</sup> See Cabré 2014, p. 355

an *alcavota* (a bawd, line 33), which the Latin version translates into *lena*, the homologous elegiac character. Amorós's macrostructural design of March's poetry blurred or masked the multiplicity of ladies to which the author addressed his poems<sup>61</sup>. Conforming to a conventional Petrarchist pattern, all poems were to be read as if referring to one single beloved, and so does March's *maldit* need to be interpreted in Mariner's version. Just as March employed the term *dona* lady (line 11) to address Na Montboí in the vocative, Mariner refers to this "lady", to be taken as the poetic voice's beloved, as *puella* girlfriend.

E no cuydeu/ dona que bens escaiga [iamque, puella, uide mihi nil  
bene semper inesse]  
que puis hagues/ tastat la carn gentil,  
a mercader/ liuras vostre cos vil (ll. 9-11)<sup>62</sup>.

Distinctively used among elegiac authors, both Classical and neo-Latin, to refer to their lovers, Mariner overwhelmingly prefers *puella* to translate March's *dona* and *dones*<sup>63</sup>. With these terms, March refers to his beloveds as much as, generically, to women<sup>64</sup>. In some cases, Mariner even translates as *puella* the pronoun in the third person singular referring specifically to the poet's beloved<sup>65</sup>. While Mariner's elegiacally inflected word choice is consistent, his also picking *nympha* to translate *dona* proves to be equally telling of the Classical coloring intended for his translation<sup>66</sup>.

<sup>61</sup> See Lloret 2013, pp. 177-181.

<sup>62</sup> "And do not think, lady, that after I had tasted your gentle flesh it may befit us that you give your filthy body to a merchant." Notice that line 9 contains a reading particular of Amorós's editions: beus *NABDEG, HKMde*: bens *bc*.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Poem IV, line 7 (Book I, elegy II); CIX, 42 (I, XIII); XXXIV, 14 (I, XVI); XV, 28 (I, XVIII); LXI, 38 (II, I); XVII, 51 (II, XIX); VI, 45 (III, XIII); XLII, 9 (III, XXI); LXXV, 89 (III, XXVIII); LXXI, 18, 71, 81, 89, 106 (III, XIX); VIII, 39, 44 (III, XXII); XLVIII, 8 (III, XXIV); CII, 69, 87, 215 (IV, IX); CXX, 61 (IV, XII); LXXXVIII, 47 (IV, XVII); LX, 2 (IV, XX); XXX, 16 (IV, XXII); CXVI, 96 (V, III); CXXIIb, 27, 36, 76 (V, VI); LXXXVII, 76 (V, VII); CVIII, 37, 46 (VI, VIII). Note that Mariner prefers "puella" to the also elegiac cognate "domina." In I, 22 (II, X) Mariner translates "dona" into "virgo" (a 'maid'), which is mostly equivalent to "puella" though less characteristic of elegiac poetry. "Mulier" is also used when referring to virgin Mary in CXX, 22 (IV, XII). For other few exceptions, see notes 64 and 66.

<sup>64</sup> Note, for instances, the cases in which March refers in plural to "dones"; cf. Poem LXXI, line 106 (Book III, elegy XIX); VIII, 44 (III, XXII); XXX, 16 (IV, XXII); CVIII, 46 (VI, VIII). On occasion, though, Mariner used "femina" or "fenimeum" instead of puella; cf. LI, 34 (II, I); XI, 33 (II, XIV); LXXI, 16 (III, XIX); LXXXVII, 152 (V, VII); CIV, 185 (VI, III).

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Poem CII, line 133 (Book IV, elegy IX); CXVII, 200 (IV, XVI).

<sup>66</sup> In one instance, "nympha" is used to refer to the poets beloved in the vocative –Poem XXXVI, line 25 (Book II, elegy XXII)– in the other occasions, March alludes to women in general: XXII, 44 (III, II); LXXI, 66 (III, XIX); VIII, 34 (III, XXII); XVI, 14 (IV, III); LXXXVII, 246, 268 (V, VII).

The third case we are now going to discuss is exemplary of an altogether different phenomenon. We have so far seen how translators' lexical choices, coupled with the editorial arrangement of the poems, lead March's poetry to a literary setting only vaguely related to the author's original words. Sixteenth- and seventeenth-century audiences were thus welcoming fifteenth-century verses. On occasion, though, March's interpreters were genuinely confused about the meaning of a given word in its original context. Nonetheless, while failing to re-codify what was poorly understood, authors and translators did intuit the significance of a term in March's corpus, and granted it new resonances.

We encounter twice the word *sobresalt* in March's corpus. A compound of prefix *sobre*, over and noun *alt*, pleasure with it March invoked the notion of an intense satisfaction obtained from his contact with his beloved. It is one of keywords the poet brandished to emphatically defend the uniqueness of his emotional state and thus rise in status above other fellow courtly lovers. The effectivity of the term is contiguous with other words in March's poetry that are formed with the quite productive prefix *sobre-*, such as *sobresamor*, ("overloving") *sobregrat* ("overdelight"), *sobredesitjat* ("overdesired"), *sobresamat* ("overloved") *sobresvolgut* ("overwanted")<sup>67</sup>.

Axí m' à pres, trobant-m' anamorat,  
per *sobresalt* qui-m ve de vós, m' aymia:  
del no amar desalt ne té la via,  
mas hun sol pas meu no y serà trobat (II, 13-16)<sup>68</sup>.

Amor suplich que-m leix donar a-ntendre  
lo *sobresalt* que de vós, dona, ·m ve,  
entenent vós quin·obra fa dins me  
e com, sens mort, yo no me'n puch deffendre (XXXIV, 13-16)<sup>69</sup>.

The term is transparent to us thanks to the commentaries and lexical notes of modern editors since Amadeu Pagès<sup>70</sup>. Although the troubadours employed *azaut* or *adaut* and *alt* was not at all uncommon in medieval

<sup>67</sup> See Alemany 2008, s. v. "sobre-".

<sup>68</sup> "So it has happened to me, being in love, through the boundless pleasure [*sobresalt*] I receive from you, my beloved: displeasure is the way which leads to not-loving, but not a single step of mine will be found there" (trans. by Terry 1976).

<sup>69</sup> "I beg Love allows me to explain that over-pleasure that I receive from you, my beloved, so that you can understand what it does inside of me and how only if I died I could defend myself from it".

<sup>70</sup> Pagès 1925, p. 4.

Catalan<sup>71</sup>, March's compound seems a rare form, idiosyncratic of his poetic language. Note as well the almost identical syntactic structure in both occurrences, which includes a vocative and the collocation *venir un sobresalt*.

The word does not appear in any of the glossaries included in the 1543, 1545, and 1555 editions. Its translators during the Renaissance usually misunderstood the term and took it to be the homophone *sobresalto* (*sobresalto* in Castilian), meaning scare or sudden fright. Romaní got caught in the homophonic trap in Poem XXIV (*Un sobresalto / que no quiere dexarme* "A sudden fright that does not leave me"), although he proved to have a fine intellection of Poem II, 14, possibly thanks to March's original *figura etymologica*:

Yo estoy ansi/ quando en vos me traspasso  
Que vuestro *grado*/ sentra por mi sin tino  
Y para echalle/ *desgrado* es el camino  
Mas yo no pienso/ andar por el un passo<sup>72</sup>.

Montemayor, on the contrary, was off target in both cases (*que en solo amarte, / me sobresalta vn mal trasordinario*<sup>73</sup>, II, 13-14; *querria mostraros quan sobre saltado / me tiene a causa vuestra, vn pensamiento*,<sup>74</sup> XXXIV, 13-14). The same is true for Mariner, who chose *ruo* (in the sense of "rush down" or "fall down") each time (*talis ego, qui solus amans pereoque ruoque*<sup>75</sup>, II, 14; *damna haec quae a te ipsa, pulchra puella, ruunt*<sup>76</sup>, XXXIV, 14).

Juan Boscán (ca. 1490-1542) is among the first imitators of March in the Spanish Renaissance and, along with Garcilaso de la Vega (1501-1536), one of the foremost promoters through his poetic example of March's lyrics as authoritative models for the new Italianate poetry. As was common in Renaissance poetics, in which *imitatio* was prevalent, Boscán composed sonnets that are actual translations and glosses of March. Yet he had an intimate knowledge of March's verses and occasionally borrowed from them with considerable subtlety. That is the case of word *sobresalto* a rarity

<sup>71</sup> Alcover, Moll 1930-1962 offers examples from Lull, Eiximenis, and a translation of the Bible, s. v. "alt", 2.

<sup>72</sup> "So it happens to me when my soul joins yours, for pleasure rashly comes inside of me, and in order to expel it, displeasure is the way I should go, though I won't take one single step in it". MS B (BnF, esp. 479), copied in Barcelona in 1541, carries a *lectio singularis* for II, 14 that reformulates the original "sobresalt" as "sobres grat", reflecting a collation with Navarro's edition, as occurs in other instances, cf. Lloret 2013, pp. 78-80.

<sup>73</sup> "Right when I love you, an exceptional pain scares me out".

<sup>74</sup> "I would like to show you how, because of yourself, an idea has scared me out".

<sup>75</sup> "So it happens to me, the lover alone, who perishes and falls down".

<sup>76</sup> "These sorrows that you, beautiful girl, rush down on me".

in *cancionero* poetry that appears seven times in Boscán Italianate *Libro segundo*. At least two of these occurrences certify a Marchian inspiration<sup>77</sup>.

Atento'stava el biuo pensamiento  
Del alma, imaginando su bien alto,  
Quando entre mi me vino vn *sobresalto*  
Que'l mouer trastorno del sentimiento (ll. 1-4)<sup>78</sup>.

En viendo el bien, a Dios doy por testigo,  
Vn *sobresalto* viene al pensamiento,  
Que'l temor basta a ser mi enterramiento,  
Aunque nunca tuuiesse otro enemigo ("Delgadamente amor trata  
conmigo", ll. 5-8)<sup>79</sup>.

First, note the collocation *venir un sobresalto*, which replicates March's and was not the most usual for the noun in Spanish<sup>80</sup>. An *etymologica figura* pervades one of the examples (*alto*, *sobresalto*), as in March's Poem II, which in *Atento'stava el biuo pensamiento* is highlighted by their rhyme word. Boscán, like March, uses the term to reflect on the psychological phenomenology of his love. *Pensamiento* and *sentimiento* are both key abstract and nouns and rhyme words in Boscán's *En viendo el bien, a Dios doy por testigo*, and also in March's XXXIV (ll. 8-9). *Sobresalto* however, needs to be understood not as in March ("overpleasure") but as its homophone *scare, fright*, which makes Boscán's use veer from the causes to the effects of love –fear, jealousy.

To conclude, Renaissance authors and translators re-codified March's works into a literary system in which Petrarchan palinodial narratives, the beloveds of Classical elegies, and a fascination for March's own phenomenology of Love served as conceptual blueprints for appreciating and making sense of his verses. Our studying key lexical choices of his translators and imitators has unveiled the tenets of the literary culture of later readers of his work, and has allowed us to hear again, in stereo, not only March's language, but also that of his premodern readers.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. also the following lines in these poems "Ya yo biui, y anduue ya entre biuos" l. 49; "¿Quien me dara vn coraçon tan alto", l. 4; "¿Do'stan mis ojos que su luz no viene", l. 12; "Anda en rebueltas el amor comigo", l. 36.

<sup>78</sup> "My subtle Mind was all ready and imagining high spiritual prizes when I was suddenly startled and the movement of my feelings was upset". Quotations from Boscán's verses are paleographic transcriptions of the 1543 Barcelona edition by Carles Amorós in the *Biblioteca Digital Hispánica*: <http://bdh.bne.es> [accessed: 01/08/2014]

<sup>79</sup> "In contemplating the prize, may God be my witness; my mind is so startled that fear –not any other enemy– is enough to kill me".

<sup>80</sup> By way of illustration compare with "dar un sobresalto" or "poner sobresalto" in the *Corpus Diacrónico del Español*: <http://corpus.rae.es/cordenet.html> [accessed: 01/08/14].

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