

Comments on some early translations of Lorca

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In the early part of the twentieth century, Spain was a country relatively little known in Britain. There was no linguistic tourism to bring Spaniards to Britain, and the flow of refugees in the nineteenth century had more or less dried up by its final quarter. The number of British nationals to be found in Spain was likewise small, so much so that the writers Laurie Lee and Robert Graves were both, as recorded in their books, picked up by British warships sent specifically for them at the start of the Civil War in 1936. If the average jingoistic Englishman of the period held that "the wogs begin at Calais", then "Africa begins at the Pyrenees" would have been a similarly acceptable comment. It is not true that there was no contact between Britain and Spain – for instance, both of the paternal grandparents of the author of this paper visited the country prior to the First World War in the context of seaborne commerce. However, the decanting of jumbo jet loads of tourists that has gone on since the 1960s had no parallel. Whether this has led to any great improvement in British awareness of Spain's rich culture is not so clear. Fish and chips, pints of bitter, and tea made "using real tea, not teabags", are widely available on the Costas, and there is a certain realism in the joke that runs: "Where did you go on your holidays?" - "Benidorm." - "Where's that?" - "I don't know, we flew."

The 1930s were the period in which Spain ceased to be an unknown backwater for the British, because of the advent of the Second Republic and then of the Civil War. Harmer and Norton's well-known grammar of

Spanish, and the Cassells bilingual dictionary, the destruction of materials for which during the Blitz in the end delayed its publication till the 1950s, were in part a response to new interest in the language of a country suddenly prominent in the headlines. Passionate political argument, numerous publications, and even personal involvement in the fighting, as in the case of George Orwell, were such as to mean that most people were well aware of the conflict.

Federico García Lorca has some claim to be if not the best known, then among the best known of Spanish authors in the English speaking world. This, too, can be seen as to some extent the result of the momentous events of the 1930s. He was born, on 5 June 1898 at Fuentevaqueros in the province of Granada, into a wealthy family, but was steeped in folk culture, especially ballads, and sympathetic to the poor. His death in July 1936 was certainly an outcome of this mindset which caused such acts on his part as his association with the Republican-Government-sponsored people's theatre "La Barraca"; his expressed political views, hostile, among others, to the Civil Guard, which in one of his poems destroys the gypsy settlement as it "avanza sembrando hogueras", and of whom he also wrote "Tienen, por eso no lloran / de plomo las calaveras / con el alma de charol."; and his homosexual proclivities. He was seen as a Republican "martyr", and this led quickly to the translation of his works by pro-Republicans and by Republican exiles.

This is the case for one particular poem, which, despite Lorca's own sexual leanings, is heterosexually erotic. Taken from the *Romancero Gitano* that he composed between 1924 and 1927, with publication in the latter year, this is "La casada infiel". Federico's brother Francisco says that during an excursion to the Sierra Nevada the mule driver sang to himself a ballad having the lines "Y yo que me la llevé al río / creyendo que era mozueta / pero tenía marido", which start the poem, but Federico denied ever having heard this. It may well, nevertheless, be an instance of assimilation and re-creation of folklore. The poem consists of 55 lines. It is a standard *romance* of octosyllables with the even lines assonating, but there is a first line of nine syllables (reducible to eight only by the violent synaloepha of "que" with "yo") with the same assonance, in I - O. It has been suggested that there is a symbolism of masculinity in the I and femininity in the O. Line 36 has seven syllables and line 49 nine, but this is in strict accord with the principles of syllable adjustment for lines not having a stressed penult.

There were a number of translations of the poem prior even to the end of the Civil War, but one particular interest that it has is that two of the translations into English exist in double versions, as the translator has revised the original in a subsequent publication, in both cases with well over a decade intervening. This affords a uncommon opportunity to see how a translation has developed, half-way between the classic approach to translation studies exclusively through analysis of the product, and the more recent attempts to study the process by means of protocol work, requiring translators to record their introspections as they translate.

It had seemed possible that there would be a similar chance with regard to paired versions in French of similar dates, as there was a translation by Louis Parrot published (with notes) by Seghers in Belgium in 1954 and (as part of an anthology) by Gallimard in France in 1955, and another by Albert Henry which was originally part of the *Romanica Gandensia* series, and later available in a different form. However, both turned out to have been constricted by their attempts to reproduce the physical constraints of the original verse, metre and rhyme. One version, French 2, has regular octosyllabic lines with full rhymes, 27 lines feminine and 28 masculine, with rhymes in [-e] and in [-i] accounting between them for 22 lines in total, and all the other lines having at least one partner, except for the not quite perfect rhyme of "sable" (line 44) with "sabres" (line 46). The other, French 1, has a regular assonance in [-i] in all the odd-numbered lines, and can be made to have heptasyllables and octosyllables if some latitude in counting syllables with an "e caduc" is allowed. These strong patternings lead to only one change in either of the translations into French, and this is limited to a difference in the order of two adjectives in the translations given for line 51 in French 2. Nevertheless, some references will be made to these French versions for the light they cast on one or two points in the English.

One of the English works was Albert Lancaster Lloyd's "Lament for the Death of a Bullfighter and Other Poems by Federico García Lorca", published by William Heinemann Limited in London in 1937, with a second edition in 1953. In this translation, the same person was solely responsible for both versions. The second work was "Poems –Federico García Lorca– Text with English Translation by Stephen Spender and J. L. Gili, Selection and Introduction by R. M. Nadal", published by The Dolphin in London in 1939. In this case, the second version is not in the very strictest sense comparable, because it is the version offered by J. L. Gili alone in his

1960 Penguin "Lorca - Introduction and edition by J. L. Gili with plain prose translations of each poem". However, the shared authorship makes it justifiable to consider the two versions somewhat similarly to the pair by the single author already mentioned.

In the translation by Lloyd, given in full below as English 1a and English 1b, a total of 30 lines have undergone some change between the first and second versions. Almost all of the alterations can be seen as improvements.

Both versions transpose lines 1 and 2. However, 1a translates "al río" as "by the river" and 1b as the more literal "to the river". This is a clear improvement, because the 1a version, with a preposition of place, not of direction, could lead to reinterpretation of the word "took" as a euphemism for "had sexual intercourse with", rather than simply "led". Later in the poem it becomes clear that this intercourse also occurs, but it is not bluntly introduced in the very first line in the original.

Line 4 has "was almost as if" in 1b replacing "happened as if" in 1a, which is marginally more literal, not involving a minor padding which is not really needed. The translator also tries both 1a "pledge" and the slightly better 1b "agreement" for "compromiso", which is one of the general problems of translation.

Lines 6 and 7 become the much more literal, but likewise perhaps more acceptable "The street-lamps went out / and the crickets lit up." (despite the secondary sense of lighting a cigarette that this contains). The previous version "Only the crickets glowed / now that the lamps were out." is less specific as to the type of light. ("Faroles" is one of the general problems.) Version 1a has a less appropriate word for "se encendieron", which anyway probably should really be seen in its electrical device sense of "go / (be) turn(ed) on", all the more so in that "se apagaron" is the natural opposite, "go out / (be) turn(ed) off", in the same context. The image is of the noise of the insects starting fairly suddenly, like the sound from a valve radio, rather than of their being luminous.

Line 8 changes yet again in a way which makes the translation more literal, but also more suitable. The image of the original is of passing through the last few street intersections at the edge of a town, and 1b "On the very last corner", though putting singular for plural, is closer to this than 1a "In the furthest confines of the town".

Lines 10 and 11 have the change from 1a "branches" to 1b "bouquets". This seems more than justified, since hyacinths are not usually tree-sized. (The word "ramos" is one of the general problem words discussed below.) The change from 1a "they opened at once" to 1b "they suddenly opened" is an improvement in coping with "de pronto". The retention of "to my caress" as a minor addition or perhaps simply an explicitation of the "me" in "se me abrieron" is a wise move, as this works well.

Lines 16 and 17 show another move towards literalness, "The trees by the roadside / spread their unlit tops" becoming "Without light on the tree-tops / the trees have grown huge". The present tense of 1a becomes a present perfect in 1b, and the verb to which it applies is the more literal "grow". This better gives the idea of the apparent change in size in different lighting conditions that is in the original. Even 1b, however, fails to note the colour of the light as silvery (it is moonlight).

Line 19 sees 1b restoring to the present the verb "bark" which 1a had in the past form, not in accordance with the original. It is noteworthy that both versions retain the article "an" before "horizon", as happens with a words where the "H" is silent. However, unlike, say, "honour", this word is not one with an always silent "H", nor is it in the category of "herb", "hotel", or "historic", where there is variation between native speakers as to the value of the "H", with silent form being generally more old-fashioned in British English.

In line 20, the change from 1a "bramble-bushes" to 1b "brambles" is neutral in its effect. Line 21's change from 1a "thorns" to 1b "reeds" for "juncos" is exactly what should be done. The retention of "furze" for "espinos" is unfortunate. The Spanish for "furze", the spiny yellow-flowered plant also known as "gorse" or "whin" would be "tojós" or "aliagas" / "aulagas", while "espinó" is really the whitethorn or hawthorn. In fact the "thorns" of 1a are a suitable translation for this, but are wrongly associated with "juncos". The choice of "furze" is all the more surprising in that this plant is rare in much of Spain, which is why it is often known by the term adapted from Galician, "tojós", since Galicia is one of the few areas where it is widespread.

Lines 22 and 23 show a major correction from 1a "With the back of her head / she made a hollow in the earth.", giving rise to visions of someone head-butting the floor. The version in 1b "Beneath the bun of her hair / I made a hollow in the earth." corrects the person of the verb, and also is

closer to the original's description of the woman's long, thick hair. (For "limo" and "mata", see the general comments on the difficulties of the original which follow these more specific comparisons.)

Line 25 has 1a "and" omitted in 1b, bringing it in line with the abrupt contrast of the original's two parallel sentences. This greater succinctness is also respected in lines 26 and 27, where 1b omits the explicitation in the form of a verbal "threw off" that had been introduced in 1a, and similarly drops the added conjunction "and", ending up with two parallel subject-and-object only elliptic sentences like the original.

Lines 28 and 29 have minor adjustments, changing 1a "Neither" to 1b "Not", less literal, and less standard English. On the other hand, 1a "ever had" is more literally rendered 1b "have a", with the same tense of the verb as the original, and removal of the addition "ever". Whether this constitutes an improvement is unclear. The use of "spikenard" and of "snail" in both versions will be commented upon later.

Yet again, in line 30, the second version is more literal than the first, changing the number of the subject and the tense of the verb to correspond exactly with the original. The "nor did any crystal shine" of 1a becomes 1b "nor do any crystals shine".

Line 33 in both versions gives "trout" as the translation for "peces". Terms used in hunting and fishing are regularly left without a marked plural form, and the inclusion of the number "two", an addition to the original, makes clear that this is plural, besides being a logical explicitation, as people have two thighs. The oddity of specification of the species with no indication of this in the original is surprising, but the occurrence of "truites" in one of the French translations might suggest the use of an original with "truchas". For reasons of assonance, this would only work if the text ran "como truchas, sorprendidos," where the participle agrees with the word "muslos" in the previous line, but the French version has "comme des truites effrayées", with the participle linked to "truites", making this explanation somewhat dubious. It could also be simply that the explicitation to this kind of fish was inspired by the idea of trout "tickling" as a method of catching this species by gentle hand contact. Trout are commoner in cooler Northern areas than in the South of Spain where this incident is set, but they may be found in mountain streams.

The pair of lines 34 and 35 become more literal in 1b, as in so many cases. The 1a version "one half of them cold, / and the other full of light."

yields to 1b "half full of cold / and half full of light.", but both reverse the order of appearance of the two nouns, "lumbre" and "frío", and both choose "light" rather than the more likely sense of "fire" for "lumbre", which is favoured by the other English translators and both the French versions considered.

In line 36 there is a change from "the finest of roads" with a very minor explicitation, to "the best of all roads", with a very minor addition. Neither is exactly literal, but both are completely acceptable, on the basis of having only a tiny semantic increment to the original. It is not clear that there is a structural reason (metre, for instance) to explain this change.

Lines 44 and 45 are altered from "Soiled with sand and with kisses, / I carried her from the river." to "I took her from the river / soiled with kisses and sand." Here there is an improvement in clarity, because the ambiguity in English, having as it does no gender marking in adjectives and participles, of to which pronoun the participial phrase is attached is resolved by moving this phrase, so it is clear that the woman, and not the narrator, is described. The dropping of the repetition of the preposition and reordering of the words "sand" and "kisses" brings the newer version closer to the original. There is also a more cautious approach, in the second version, to the verb "llevé", which can, indeed, mean "carried" as in 1a, but is perhaps safer translated with the more neutral "took" as in 1b. On the other hand, "took from" could be understood as "removed from", "took out of", with the idea of "rescued from the water", and might be usefully expanded to "took her away from the river".

Lines 46 and 47 show a change from 1a "In the night-wind, the swords / of the irises shivered." to 1b "The swords of the lilies / fought with the wind.", with an abandonment of the attempt to keep sentence element order close to the original. This is paralleled by a disagreement between 2a and 2b commented on later. There is a widespread tendency in colloquial Spanish to use "aire" as a synonym for "viento", so "wind" seems an acceptable potential translation. The first version's addition of "night" is correct from the context, and may be intended to give more syllables in an otherwise short line. The version "shivered" in 1a is only conceivable as a very loose translation of an interpretation of "batirse" as "struck one another", rather than the more usual "combatir, pelear" sense. On "irises" versus "lilies", see the comments on general difficulties.

Line 52 sees a change from 1a "But" to 1b "And", which is more literal, but perhaps not quite as good as the first version, which gives more of a sense of the contrast between giving a gift and falling in love, that may be felt to be a justifiable addition to the original. Of course, neither is in accord with the source, which does not split the sentence here before a conjunction. The most stringent standards of conservative English literary style would still in any case discourage use of a co-ordinating conjunction to introduce a sentence. The use in both versions of the archaic negation pattern "wished not" is probably a nod in the direction of "poetic" diction.

Finally, line 54 has a change from 1a "she told me she was single" to 1b "she said she was a maiden". This moves from the plain but unambiguous "single" to a more "poetic" but less clear "maiden". (This is affected by one of the terms causing a general translation problem, "mozuela".) On another point, it is arguable that the first version copes with the presence of "me" rather better by choosing "told" over "said".

The versions associated with J. L. Gili are given in full below as English 2a and 2b. Adjustments occur in 26 lines, as detailed below. The changes are often like Lloyd's in moving towards a more literal version.

Line 2 has 2a "thinking she was a maiden" become 2b "believing her a maid". The change from "thinking" to "believing" is a marginal improvement as capturing the slight overtones of difference which exist between the really used "creer" and the potentially usable, but not used, "pensar". The change from a subordinate clause, as in 2a, to a direct object plus complement, as in 2b, is a move away from literalness. There is no imperative reason for this, but there is equally no real objection to it.

In line 5, 2a "and almost as if prearranged", which may perhaps not be perfect, but conveys the sense pretty well, becomes "and almost as if in duty bound", which is definitely less good. The word "compromiso" is a general problem, as mentioned before.

Line 6 has a similar variation, of "lanterns" (2a) and "street-lights" (2b), to what was noted for 1a and 1b. See the general problems section for comments on "farol".

Line 7 shows 2a "lighted up" and 2b "flared up" for "se encendieron". The added idea in the second of these would be justified to avoid the ambiguity that might suggest lighting a cigarette, as mentioned above. However, as already noted under 1a and 1b, there is a parallelism of terms here which

s missed in this version also. "Lighted" as a tense formation is unusual, as the past forms of the verb with its first sense of "brighten" or "give light" are normally the irregular (strong) "lit" in English. However, there is confusion with the same verb in its second senses akin to "alight", which normally has the regular (weak) form, but can have the strong form also, especially in North American varieties. (For instance "She lighted upon the answer."; "They lit out for home.") This is a reason for regularisation to a weak form becoming established for the first senses also.

Line 8 shows 2a "In the farthest corners" becoming 2b "By the last street corners". The explicitation "street" is justified and indeed even required by the rather odd choice of the preposition "by" instead of "on", and 2b is thus a definite improvement over 2a. "Esquina" is something of a general problem, as explained below.

In line 13, 2a has "ears", where 2b has "ear". This singular is more literal than the plural. However, the distinction between the outer ear, which is the most central sense of "oreja", and the more global and abstract concept of the whole auditory apparatus and the sense of hearing it supports, which is the prime concept of "oído", is not in English neatly conveyed by two separate words as is the case for Spanish, so the plural might be justified on this basis.

Line 15 shows a change from 2a "torn" to 2b "rent" for "rasgada". This is a more archaic and thus, perhaps, a more "poetic" word. The definition of "rasgar" given by the Spanish Academy indicates that it is the breaking into pieces of items such as paper or cloth, without any instrument, by using force, and the suggestions in definitions of "rend" also include force and use of the hands, and mention clothing.

Lines 16 and 17 show a re-ordering in 2b, which moves away from the exact coincidence with the original's word-order of 2a. This leads to a rather clumsy structure in which the subject is separated from its verb by what is effectively treated as an elliptic non-defining relative clause, although it is arguably an elliptic adverbial clause of reason in the original. There is also a change in the tense of the verb from 2a "had" to the more literal 2b "have", and an improvement from 2a "foliage" to 2b "tops", which may be a more down-to-earth word, but is more accurate, in that "foliage" is the whole of the leaves, but "copa" is the branches, with or without leaves, of the top part of a tree.

Line 23 has a change from 2a "earth" to 2b "fine sand". The problem words "mata" and "limo" are involved here, and so comments will be found below.

Line 28 shows two changes, since 2a offers "Nor nard nor conch", while 2b reads "Nor tuberoso nor shell". Both "nardo" and "caracola" are in the problem word category, and will be given more extensive coverage below.

The next difference occurs in lines 30 and 31. The minor shift of "this" to "such" for "ese" is away from absolute literalness, but in no way unacceptable. In line 30, however, 2a has changed the tense from the original present to a past, "did", while 2b has not, using "do". On the other hand, the tricky expression "cristales con luna" is more likely to be correctly interpreted by 2a, where "luna" is taken to be moonlight, than 2b, where it is assigned the sense of mirror which is, indeed, one of the possible ideas conveyed by "luna", but seems improbable here. After all, the definitions of "luna" in this sense almost all have the word "cristal" or "vidrio cristalino" included in them, and they are far lower in the order of appearance than the sense of "light", which in most Spanish dictionaries comes second after the sense of satellite of a planet.

In line 32 "se me escapaban" is rendered 2a "escaped me", while 2b has "slipped from me". Here the more literal 2a is rather more pedestrian than the slightly enhanced version of 2b.

In lines 33 and 34, 2a "half" becomes 2b "one half" in each case, perhaps influenced by the presence of the article "la" in the original, which, nevertheless, just like the English numeral, is not grammatically essential. In the English, however, especially as it is specifically described as a "plain prose" translation, there is no metrical requirement to add a syllable.

In line 36, 2b "galloped" makes more explicit 2a "ran", without this being a reflection of a more specific original, but this seems more than justified by the content of line 38, "montado en potra de nácar". In line 37, 2b drops the unnecessary and rather odd article use of 2a, so that "the best of the roads" becomes "the best of roads". This is an improvement.

In line 38, 2b uses the more day-to-day term "mother-of-pearl" rather than "nacre" as in 2a. It may be that the less technical version helps convey the image of smooth skin more vividly to the reader. The word

"mare" used here in both translations is commented upon in the general problems section.

Line 45 shows a minor amplification in the 2b version "away from" replacing 2a "from". This is perhaps marginally more usual in a non-formal context. It is also more explicit, in that it precludes the interpretation as "fished out of" or similar which was mentioned in respect of the 1a and 1b versions of this line. Both versions, like 1a but unlike 1b, remain close to the syntax of the original, with resultant ambiguity as to who is affected by sand and kisses, because there is no gender-marking in the English participle, unlike the Spanish adjective. In one of the French versions (French 1) the gender-marking of the past participle is relied upon for this, despite the form being phonologically unmarked. In the other, where an adjective with no marking for gender is used, although there is not a complete re-ordering, there is a separation of subject from the adjectival phrase that may help to keep the circumstances clear. Both English versions 2a and 2b invert the "besos y arena" to "sand and kisses", as did 1a.

In lines 46 and 47, version 2a keeps close to the original's ordering of prepositional object + verb + subject, with a resultant tension relative to normal English syntax that is avoided in 2b by using the much plainer subject + verb + prepositional object order. "Lirios" is a problem word, with commentary in the general difficulties section.

Line 48 sees a change from 2a "as" to 2b "like" for "como". At least from the point of view of conservative grammar, this is an improvement, because in theory "as" is a conjunction and "like" a preposition, and here a preposition is apparently needed. Things may have been confused by the fact that the preposition's object is qualified by an adjectival clause, or by hypercorrection, since use of "like" as a conjunction is a shibboleth of some prescriptivist grammarians. There is also an alternative explanation. There is some suggestion in the original, because of the inclusion of the word "un", that the narrator is acting in the way a Gypsy would, although he himself is not a Gypsy. This would accord with his possession of a revolver, rather than the traditional Gypsy weapon, a knife. It might also tie in with trout tickling in the mountains, as mentioned in the comments on line 33 of versions 1a and 1b, which could provide food for a *bandolero*. In this case the distinction between "as" and "like" would parallel the presence or absence of an article in Spanish - "Lo hizo como una española" (= she did it as a Spanish woman would) versus "Lo hizo como española" (= she did it like the Spanish woman she is). (The two French translations differ

on this point, French 1 using "En tant que", which can only convey the second of the two concepts.) Not wishing to repeat the same term in two lines, and having to use "like" in the second of them, the translator in 2a may have preferred "as" to "like" for variety's sake.

Lines 50 and 51 see 2a staying closer to the original word order in rendering "a sewing basket, large," rather than 2b "a large sewing basket". This could be seen as an over-pedantic failure to break away from the source, or as a clever way of capturing the afterthought-like effect of the source, or as reflecting the line-break. This third possibility is the least plausible, as the word "large" is not relegated to the new line.

In line 52 version 2b expands rather more than is necessary "to let myself fall in love" for "enamorarne". It might be that adding "with her" to 2a "to fall in love" would have served as a useful explicitation, as does the "her" of 1a and 1b, though this may be seen as compensation for a loss, since they give simply "to love" for the original verb.

In line 53, the more explicit 2b "though she had" is not absolutely required, since the simple participle can have adversative force, and 2a uses this: "having".

Finally, in line 55, the change from 2a "took" to 2b "was taking" makes much plainer the aspectual difference that is obligatory in Spanish past tense indicatives. In English "took" is by preference punctual or habitual, and "was taking" continuous in aspect. The Spanish "llevaba" is continuous or habitual, but it is clear that the incident described in the poem is not a habitual one. The use by 2b of "as", rather than "when", for "cuando" is neither literal nor required by any specific need, but could be seen as enhancing the continuous aspect.

General problems

Certain items seem to be particularly difficult for all the translators. One of these, strange to say, is the title. The word "infiel" has two obvious renderings into English, "faithless" and "unfaithful", and all choose the first of these. However, there is arguably a slight difference between them, with the second suggesting a marginally less permanent and continuous lack of faith than the first. In particular, dictionaries of English specifically mention

"not faithful in wedlock" as the sense of "unfaithful", but suggest that "faithless" is to be seen as wicked or perfidious. The French versions differ in their handling of "casada", with French 2 giving only "femme", which needs an appropriate context to ensure its interpretation as "wife", and so leads to the use of the more specific "adultère". French 1, having chosen "épouse", is not forced to do this, and retains the vaguer "infidèle", which is not exclusively "unfaithful in marriage". Both wisely avoid a literal "mariée", as this would have had a similar effect to the use of "bride" in the English versions.

The odd syntax of the first line in Spanish, having both "y" and "que", is a good reflection of colloquialism, but is not captured by the use of a highly conversational phrasing such as "And there I was, I took her...". There is some compensation for this, for instance, in the universal use of the contraction "won't" in line 40. However, this is not consistent, in not being applied to the "did not" sequence in line 52 by the translators of English 2a and 2b. French 1 uses an exclamatory syntax for lines 1 to 3 which works well to give a colloquial feel corresponding to that of the Spanish original at this point.

Another problem is the word "mozuela" (1.2), which has as its prime equivalents words such as "lass", "wench", or "girl". The first of these captures, and perhaps overdoes, the slightly regional nature of the word in Spanish, the second overstates its slightly old-fashioned nature in Spanish by being in English an archaism, and the third is a colourless and really an insufficient translation. None of these, in any case, brings in clearly the implication of "young and marriageable, but unwed", which is there in "mozuela", thanks to its etymological link with "mocedad". The translators try "maid" and "maiden", both of which have some component of "virgin" in them, but this component is overlaid by others, except in the collocation "maiden aunt". "Maid", in particular, initially suggests "domestic servant". Version 1a tries to clarify by using the term "single" in the second instance of use of this word. It is hard to see that some other term would be any better than this, for the reasons already mentioned, and because "virgin" would be too specific, except on the assumption that the unmarried must be totally celibate.

The English translators uniformly, and correctly, use "Saint James's night" for "la noche de Santiago", and the French "la Saint-Jacques". However, it might be contended that the literal translation into English is, for once, insufficient, because of the heavy implicational load of the term.

This day is a summer holiday in Spain (25 July), because this Saint is Spain's patron. In the largely Protestant tradition of most countries in the English-speaking world, dating by saints' days has not been normal for centuries. Even in Ireland, only Saint John (Midsummer) and Saint Stephen (the day after Christmas, Boxing Day) are widely used. Furthermore, it is the case that Saint James has no major link as a patron with any English-speaking country. Some explication might here be justified. In France, also, apart from "la Saint-Jean" for Midsummer's Day and "la Saint-Sylvestre" for New Year's Eve, and perhaps "la Saint-Michel" and "la Saint-Martin", dating by saints is a relatively antiquated and marginal custom, more used with the humorous "la Sainte-Touche" for pay-day, or "la Saint-Lundi" for an unauthorised failure to return to work after the weekend, and even "la Saint-Glinglin" as an equivalent to "when the cows come home" or "cuando la rana críe pelo". In both of the target languages, the important implications of a day in summer, when it would not be dark until very late, would be missed without some indication to this effect, which the translators have not provided.

"Compromiso" (1.5) is a difficult word, which is not properly matched by any of "in duty bound", "by pledge", "by agreement", and "prearranged", though the latter two are better than the former. The closest one-word equivalents for the context are probably "appointment" and "arrangement". However, the collocation "by appointment to X" makes one of these literal versions harder to use, and the musical and ordering senses of "arrangement" render this less than ideal as well. In any case, both lack the stronger connotation of obligation that is present in the Spanish, and which must have led to the "duty bound" choice.

"Faroles" (1.6) is not a great problem, but it does provide a spread of alternatives, with 1a "lamps", 1b "street-lamps", 2a "lanterns", and 2b "street-lights". The terms "farol" and "farola" differ in that "farol", apart from irrelevant senses such as "bluff", "boast" and "wrapping paper for tobacco", is indeterminate as to being a lantern, a lamp, or a street-light, or even a sconce for torches, while "farola" is a street-light only. As there are no reasons of assonance or metre to prevent the use of "las farolas" in the original instead of "los faroles", maybe the choice of the less specific words is the more reasonable in the translations.

It may be surprising that "esquina" (1.8) should be a problem, but it is for both 1a and 2a. The distinction in Spanish between an inside ("rincón") and an outside ("esquina") corner is only maintainable in English by the

appropriate choice of preposition, "in a corner" versus "on a corner", or by the explicitation, correctly chosen by Gili, "street corner".

Another difficulty arises with the word "ramos" (l.11). Rather like "farol"/"farola" the pair "ramo"/"rama" have overlapping senses. "Ramo" is branch or bough and bunch or bouquet, while "rama" covers only the first pair. The change from 1a "branches" to 1b "bouquets" is definitely an improvement, indeed a correction. It could be that 1a was based on an erroneous reading as "ramas" of what is correctly "ramos". It is noteworthy that the French 2 version has "branches". An alternative explanation would be uncertainty on the part of the translator about the maximum size of the plant. There are, after all, tulip trees. Both versions of 2 stick to a rendering as "spike" which seems to hanker after the "branch" concept.

The names of several plants are the next to cause some problems, these being "zarzamora", "junco", and "espino" (ll.20-21). There is no real difference in meaning between 1a "bramble-bushes" and 1b "brambles". Nevertheless, the Spanish original has the longer "zarzamoras", stressing that these are the blackberry producing plant, rather than the shorter "zarzas". The use of "blackberries", which is only the term for the fruit in English, by both 2a and 2b, has probably been influenced by the fact that "zarzamora" is both plant and fruit, but "zarza" only the plant. As "junco" and "espino" have already been remarked upon in connexion with versions 1a and 1b, no further comment is needed here.

The term "mata de pelo" (l.22) is difficult, not because of the possible interaction with "mata" in the sense of "bush", but because its meaning "conjunto o gran porción del cabello suelto de la mujer" has no appropriate single-word equivalent. "Mop", "crop", and "head" of hair all suggest more or less abundant hair, but not necessarily long hair. "Crop" in particular has connotations of *short* abundant hair, because of the morphological link with "cropped". "Bun" is acceptable as to probable length and abundance, but implies the hair is definitely not loose. Both the French versions use "chignon" with the same disadvantages. "Cluster" similarly stresses gathering more than looseness. Since the poem is concerned with the *topos* of a lovers' tryst by a river, it could well be that the reference to long hair is part of another *topos*, which associates long hair with virginity, or, more prosaically, the nineteenth-century idea of the hair of any chaste adult woman being kept pinned up or otherwise constrained or covered, which is reflected in the English idiom "to let your hair down" to indicate very informal behaviour or even misbehaviour.

Another problem arises with the word "limo" (l.23). It is defined by the Spanish Academy or Real Academia (1970 dictionary) as "lodo o légamo" and (1992 dictionary) as "lodo o cieno", and these are in their turn defined as "mezcla de tierra y agua, especialmente la que resulta de las lluvias en el suelo" [lodo], as "1. cieno, lodo o barro pegajoso 2. parte arcillosa de las tierras de labor" [légamo/légano], and as "lodo blando que forma depósito en ríos, y sobre todo en lagunas o en sitios bajos y húmedos" [cieno]. "Barro" is "masa que resulta de la mezcla de tierra y agua". From all this it is clear that the closest English term is "mud", with "clay" as a marginal contender, and "slime" not excluded. The drier climate of the South of Spain means that the Spanish word does not carry the idea of moisture implicit in the English terms. Their suggestion of dampness gives them rather unpleasant connotations, especially the last of the three words. This leads to "earth" being preferred by three of the four English versions, with "fine sand" being used by Gili in his "plain prose" version. One of the French versions follows his logic, using "sable". The other tries "limon", defined (Larousse) as "roche sédimentaire détritique, de granulométrie intermédiaire entre celles des sables et des argiles, constituant des sols légers et fertiles lorsque le teneur en calcaire est suffisant" with a cross-reference to the loess soil type. This word is cognate with "limo", both being derived from Latin "limus", and could at a stretch be seen as equivalent to "(very) fine sand".

Another problem of a botanical nature, similar to what arises in lines 20 and 21, affects "nardos" (l.28). The French versions use "nards" and "nard", both English 1a and 1b use "spikenard", and English 2a uses "nard". All these are erroneous in terms of strict denotation. In Spanish, "nardo" signifies the plant *polianthes tuberosa*, which has creamy white flowers. The terms "espicanardo" and "espicanardi" are used for the plant *nardostachys jatamansi*. "Nard" and "spikenard" in English, and "nard" in French refer to *nardostachys jatamansi*, while "tuberose", as used in English 2b, is the English term for *polianthes tuberosa*, "tubéreuse" in French. There are uses of "nard" in French to signify the mat grass *nardus stricta*, and of "nard" in English to cope with a range of plants seen as a source of perfume, such as lavender and valerian. However, these words never mean the tuberose. It is also noteworthy that *nardostachys jatamansi* has flowers described as purple or pinkish red, and thus seems less appropriate to describe skin, unless bruised or discoloured, which is not the case here. The text is, after all, from a period in which suntans

were unfashionable, so the most highly prized skin colour was pale white. This means that the occasional use of "nardo" as a rough synonym for "espicanardo", recorded in some Spanish dictionaries, does not justify the use of "nard". It is true that an argument based on similarity of sound rather than of sense could be used, and that familiarity with nards is perhaps greater than with tuberose, except among flower-growers.

Somewhat similarly, the exact sense of "caracola" (l.28) seems to give some difficulty. The Spanish Academy (1992 dictionary), other than regional uses to designate a plant, the nut on a bolt, and, in Aragón, a land mollusc, records only one sense, that of "conch" - "concha de un caracol marino de gran tamaño, de forma cónica, que, abierto por el ápice y soplando por ella, produce un sonido como de trompa.". The creamy interior of such a shell links in sense with the reference a little later in the poem to "nácar". Both 1a and 1b and both the French versions misinterpret as "caracol", "snail"/"escargot", this term. Only 2a has "conch", and 2b a vaguer but acceptable "shell".

Both versions 2a and 2b use the word "mare" to render "potra" (l.38), which at first sight is an error, since the mare is the adult, and "potra" the younger animal, defined as "yegua hasta que muda los dientes de leche". However, "filly" in English has a problem attached to it. Its most literal sense is "young female horse", usually less than four years of age, but it has a rather ageing slang sense of "young woman" or "girl". This could lead to an unwanted series of connotations, and justifies a less specific translation. French has less of a problem here. "Pouliche" though not simply "jument non adulte"/"jument qui n'a pas procré et généralement âgée de moins de trois ans", is only rarely used to mean "jeune femme", since both "poule" and "poulette" with very similar sounds are available for this use. Both have a possible hypocoristic use, not usual in "pouliche", and the first additionally offers a pejorative sense.

Another botanical problem is posed by "lirio" (l.47). Both French translators correctly recognise that the sense is *iris germanica*, and translate "iris". The English translators uniformly choose "lily", with the exception of 1a, "iris". The lily is *lilium candidum*, which in Spanish is "azucena", (with "lirio blanco" as a synonym). However, the choice of "iris" is justified not merely by the absence of the adjective, but by the shape of the flower, since iris petals are like a broad bladed sword in shape, while lilies have no such form. Even if the plants as a whole are considered, it is easier to see an iris as sword-shaped than a lily. Here, as in the case of

"nardo", one may suspect that the English translations have been influenced by the shape of the original word.

One final point at which the translators have faced a problem, and not been unanimous in their solution is the word "costurero". This is clearly a receptacle for sewing equipment, but the Spanish definition is so vague and wide-ranging that there is a forced explicitation with no guidance for the translator. From the Spanish Academy's view (1970 dictionary) that this is a "mesita, con cajón y almohadilla, de que se sirven las mujeres para la costura", there are discrepant voices in commercial dictionaries suggesting "pequeño mueble, caja, estuche, etcétera [sic] que sirve para la costura", which have been recognised by the 1992 Dictionary in that it adds a further sense of "caja, canastilla para guardar los útiles de costura". This explains the variation between "panier" and "coffret" and between "work-box" and "sewing-basket". The fact that it is described as "de raso pajizo" might suggest that it is a bag not a basket, but this cloth could perfectly well be the lining. The choice of this as gift has several potential implications. It may be because this is particularly suitable for a married woman with domestic responsibilities. It may be that it is unobtrusive, since it would not be very costly, and could easily be acquired in daily shopping. It may even be that it is particularly common for Gypsies to do basket weaving, although, as mentioned above, the male protagonist may well be a *bandolero* and not a Gypsy, since he is carrying a firearm. All of the implications of the "costurero" are marginally better picked out by the inclusion of references to sewing in English 2a and 2b and in French 2. French 1 is the least specific, and therefore most likely to lose them.

Conclusions

The analysis of translations as a product is a rather limited and tedious operation, sometimes compared to eating soup with a fork, since a great deal of sieving and straining yields only a small number of items. This is because most translators are accurate for most of the time. What has been explained here does not constitute an exception to this tendency. There is perhaps a little more interest than usual in undertaking such a study on a text like the original considered here, since the complexities of translating a poetic text push translators closer to the edge. There is also the possibility of seeing the changes of mind occurring between the two

editions of the English versions. This does not provide as much information as might be obtained from a protocol study of the translation process, but it does go beyond a mono-dimensional product analysis.

Two conclusions may be offered. One is that the commonest technique, even in this sort of literary translation, remains literal translation. This concurs with Peter Newmark's comments that it is both frequent and not to be despised, since in very many instances it is the best approach in any case. However, the technique is preferred in the versions considered even at some points where relatively minor divergences from it would clarify the sense, as, for instance, lines 44 and 45. The second conclusion would be that, even in a poetic text where denotation is possibly less vital than in more run of the mill writing, it is necessary to beware of false friends and to take care that core senses are fully grasped.

LA CASADA INFIEL

- 1 Y que yo me la llevé al río
creyendo que era mozuela,
pero tenía marido.
Fue la noche de Santiago
- 5 y casi por compromiso.
Se apagaron los faroles
y se encendieron los grillos.
En las últimas esquinas
toqué sus pechos dormidos,
- 10 y se me abrieron de pronto
como ramos de jacintos.
El almidón de su enagua
me sonaba en el oído,
como una pieza de seda
- 15 rasgada por diez cuchillos.
Sin luz de plata en sus copas
los árboles han crecido,
y un horizonte de perros
ladra muy lejos del río.
- 20 Pasadas las zarzadoras,
los juncos y los espinos,
bajo su mata de pelo
hice un hoyo sobre el limo.
Yo me quité la corbata.
- 25 Ella se quitó el vestido.
Yo el cinturón con revólver.
Ella sus cuatro corpiños.
Ni nardos ni caracolas
tienen el cutis tan fino,
- 30 ni los cristales con luna
relumbran con ese brillo.
Sus muslos se me escapaban
como peces sorprendidos,
la mitad llenos de lumbre,
- 35 la mitad llenos de frío.
Aquella noche corrí
el mejor de los caminos,
montado en potra de nácar
sin bridas y sin estribos.
- 40 No quiero decir, por hombre,
las cosas que ella me dijo.
La luz del entendimiento
me hace ser muy comedido.
Sucia de besos y arena,
- 45 yo me la llevé del río.
Con el aire se batían
las espadas de los lirios.
Me porté como quien soy.
Como un gitano legítimo.
- 50 La regalé un costurero
grande de raso pajizo,
y no quise enamorarme
porque teniendo marido
me dijo que era mozuela
- 55 cuando la llevaba al río.

The Faithless Wife

1 And believing she was a maid,
 I took her by the river,
 but already she was married.
 It happened as if by pledge
 5 upon Saint James's night.
 Only the crickets glowed
 now that the lamps were out.
 In the furthest confines of the town
 I touched her sleeping breasts,
 10 and like branches of the hyacinth
 they opened at once to my caress.
 The starch of her petticoat
 was sounding in my ears,
 like a piece of silk
 15 that is rent by ten knives.
 The trees by the roadside
 spread their unlit tops
 and far from the river
 barked an horizon of dogs.
 20 The bramble-bushes were passed,
 the thorns and the furze.
 With the back of her head
 she made a hollow in the earth.
 I took off my tie,
 25 and she took off her dress.
 I threw off my revolver belt,
 and she her four bodices.
 Neither spikenard nor snail
 ever had skin so smooth.
 30 nor did any crystal shine
 so brilliant in the moon.
 Her thighs escaped from me
 like two startled trout.
 one half of them cold
 35 and the other full of light.
 By the finest of roads
 that night I galloped.
 on a mother-of-pearl filly
 without bridle or stirrups.
 40 The things she said to me,
 as a man, I won't repeat.
 The light of understanding
 has made me discreet.
 Soiled with sand and with kisses,
 45 I carried her from the river.
 In the night-wind, the swords
 of the irises shivered.
 A genuine gypsy,
 I behaved as is proper,
 50 and gave her a large work-box
 of straw-coloured satin.
 But I wished not to love her,
 for though she was married,
 she told me she was single
 55 when I took her by the river.

THE FAITHLESS WIFE

And believing she was a maid,
 I took her to the river,
 but already she was married.
 It was almost by agreement
 upon Saint James's night.
 The street-lamps went out
 and the crickets lit up.
 On the very last corner
 I touched her sleeping breasts,
 and like bouquets of the hyacinth
 they suddenly opened to my caress.
 The starch of her petticoat
 was sounding in my ears,
 like a piece of silk
 that is rent by ten knives.
 Without light on the tree-tops
 the trees have grown huge
 and far from the river
 barks an horizon of dogs.
 The brambles were passed,
 the reeds and the furze.
 Beneath the bun of her hair
 I made a hollow in the earth.
 I took off my tie,
 she took off her dress.
 I, my revolver belt,
 she her four bodices.
 Not spikenard nor snail
 have a skin so smooth.
 nor do any crystals shine
 so brilliant in the moon.
 Her thighs escaped from me
 like two startled trout.
 half full of cold
 and half full of light.
 By the best of all roads
 that night I galloped.
 on a mother-of-pearl filly
 without bridle or stirrups.
 The things she said to me,
 as a man, I won't repeat.
 The light of understanding
 has made me discreet.
 I took her from the river
 soiled with kisses and sand.
 The swords of the lilies
 fought with the wind.
 A genuine gypsy,
 I behaved as is proper,
 and gave her a large work-box
 of straw-coloured satin.
 And I wished not to love her,
 for though she was married,
 she said she was a maiden
 when I took her by the river.

THE FAITHLESS WIFE

- 1 And I took her to the river
 thinking she was a maiden,
 but she had a husband.
 It was on Saint James's night
 and almost as if prearranged.
 5 The lanterns went out
 and the crickets lighted up.
 In the farthest corners
 I touched her sleeping breasts.
 10 and they opened to me suddenly
 like spikes of hyacinth.
 The starch of her petticoat
 sounded in my ears
 like a piece of silk
 15 torn by ten knives
 Without silver light on their foliage
 the trees had grown larger
 and a horizon of dogs
 barks very far from the river.
 20 Past the blackberries,
 the reeds and the hawthorn,
 underneath her cluster of hair
 I made a hollow in the earth.
 I took off my tie.
 25 She took off her dress.
 I my belt with the revolver.
 She her four bodices.
 Nor nard nor conch
 have skin so fine,
 30 nor did crystals lit by moon
 shine with this brilliance.
 Her thighs escaped me
 like startled fish,
 half full of fire,
 35 half full of cold.
 That night I ran
 on the best of the roads
 mounted on a mare of nacre
 without bridle or stirrups.
 40 As a man, I won't repeat
 the things she said to me.
 The light of understanding
 has made me most discreet.
 Smear'd with sand and kisses
 45 I took her from the river.
 With the air battled
 the swords of the lilies.
 I behaved as the person I am.
 Like a proper gypsy.
 50 I gave her a sewing-basket, large,
 of straw-coloured satin,
 and I did not want to fall in love
 because having a husband
 she told me she was a maiden,
 55 when I took her to the river.

The Faithless Wife

- And I took her to the river
 believing her a maid,
 but she had a husband.
 It was on Saint James's night,
 and almost as if in duty bound.
 The street-lights went out
 and the crickets flared up.
 By the last street corners
 I touched her sleeping breasts.
 and they opened to me suddenly
 like spikes of hyacinth.
 The starch of her petticoat
 sounded in my ear
 like a piece of silk
 rent by ten knives.
 The trees, without silver light on their tops,
 have grown larger,
 and a horizon of dogs
 barks very far from the river.
 Past the blackberries,
 the reeds, and the hawthorn,
 underneath her cluster of hair
 I made a hollow in the fine sand.
 I took off my tie.
 She took off her dress.
 I, my belt with the revolver.
 She, her four bodices.
 Nor tuberoses nor shell
 have skin so fine,
 nor do glass mirrors
 shine with such brilliance
 Her thighs slipped from me
 like startled fish,
 one half full of fire,
 one half full of cold.
 That night I galloped
 on the best of roads,
 mounted on a mother-of-pearl mare,
 without bridle or stirrups.
 As a man, I won't repeat
 the things she said to me.
 The light of understanding
 has made me most discreet.
 Smear'd with sand and kisses
 I took her away from the river.
 The swords of the lilies
 battled with the air.
 I behaved like the person I am.
 Like a proper gypsy.
 I gave her a large sewing-basket
 of straw-coloured satin,
 and I did not want to let myself fall in love
 because though she had a husband,
 she told me she was a maiden
 as I was taking her to the river.

L'ÉPOUSE INFIDÈLE

- 1 Et moi qui l'emmenai à la rive,
encore fille à ce que je croyais,
alors qu'elle avait un mari!
Ce fut la nuit de la Saint-Jacques,
5 et chose promise pour ainsi dire,
Quand les lanternes furent éteintes,
s'allumèrent tous les cris-cris.
Vers les dernières ruelles
je touchai ses seins endormis,
10 comme des bouquets de jacinthes
pour moi bien vite épanouis.
Et tout l'empois de son jupon
à mes oreilles faisait le bruit
d'une vaste pièce de soie
15 que dix coutelas déchirent.
Sans clarté d'argent sur leurs têtes
les arbres avaient grandi,
et tout un horizon de chiens
aboyaient très loin de la rive.
20 Quand on eut dépassé les ronces
et les ajoncs et les épines,
sous le chignon de ses cheveux
dans le sable je fis un nid.
Moi, j'enlevai ma cravate,
25 et elle enleva ses habits.
Moi, ceinturon et revolver.
Elle, ses quatre corsets gris.
Ni les nards ni l'escargot
n'ont la peau aussi fine,
30 ni les cristaux sous la lune
d'un si bel éclat ne brillent.
Ses cuisses sous moi fuyaient
comme des poissons surpris,
une moitié toute en feu
35 et le reste tout transi.
Cette nuit-là j'ai couru,
par le chemin le plus fleuri,
sur ma pouliche de nacre
sans étriers ni brides.
40 Homme, je ne veux pas répéter
tout ce qu'alors elle me dit.
La lumière de ma raison
met la réserve en mon esprit.
De sable et de baisers souillée,
45 je la ramenai de la rive.
Avec le vent se battaient
alors les épées des iris.
Je fis ce que je devais.
En tant que gitan légitime.
50 Je lui fis don d'un grand coffret,
de satin paille tout garni;
mais je n'ai pas voulu l'aimer,
car tout en ayant un mari
elle se prétendait sans époux,
55 quand je l'entraînais vers la rive.

LA FEMME ADULTÈRE

Je la pris près de la rivière,
Car je la croyais sans mari
Tandis qu'elle était adultère.
Ce fut la Saint-Jacques, la nuit,
Par rendez-vous et compromis,
Quand s'éteignirent les lumières
Et s'allumèrent les cris-cris. [1]
Au coin des dernières enceintes,
Je touchai ses seins endormis;
Sa poitrine pour moi s'ouvrit
Comme des branches de jacinthes.
Et dans mes oreilles l'empois
De ses jupes amidonnées
Crissait comme soie arrachée
Par douze couteaux à la fois.
Les cimes d'arbres sans lumière
Grandissaient au bord des chemins
Et tout un horizon de chiens
Aboyait loin de la rivière.
Quand nous avons franchi les ronces
Les épines et les ajoncs,
Sous elle son chignon s'enfonça
Et fait un trou dans le limon.
Quand ma cravate fut ôtée.
Elle retira ses jupons,
Puis (quand j'étais mon ceinturon)
Quatre corsages d'affilée.
Ni le nard, ni les escargots
N'eurent jamais la peau si fine,
Ni, sous la lune, les cristaux
N'ont de leurs si cristallines.
Ses cuisses s'enfuyaient sous moi
Comme des truites effrayées
Une moitié tout embrasée,
L'autre moitié pleine de froid.
Cette nuit me vit galoper
De ma plus belle chevauchée,
Sur une pouliche nacrée,
Sans brides et sans étriers.
Je suis homme, et ne peux redire
Les choses qu'elle me disait:
Le clair entendement m'inspire
De me montrer fort circonspect.
Sale de baisers et de sable,
Du bord de l'eau je la sortis;
Les iris balançaient leurs sabres
Contre les brises de la nuit.
Pour agir en pleine droiture
Comme fait un loyal Gitan,
Je lui fis don, en la quittant,
D'un beau grand panier à couture, [2]
Mais sans vouloir en être épris:
Parce qu'elle était adultère
Et se prétendait sans mari
Quand nous allions vers la rivière.

[1] Gallimard has "cricris".

[2] Gallimard has "grand beau".