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Theory and practice of medieval Portuguese translation: Translation Studies and Comparatism in the approach of the cultural semiotic universe

The study of the *Establishment of the Monasteries*, the medieval Portuguese translation¹ of the *Institutiones* by John Cassian, provided a very broad work covering important issues: the theory and practice of medieval Portuguese translation, the textual reception and the role of translation in the evolution of Portuguese literary language².

In chapter 99 of *The Loyal Counsellor*, Prince Duarte systematizes the basic procedures for a good translation in five norms («avysamentos»³), giving, as an example, a passage (Petschenig/6,7,1-2/)⁴ from the *Establishment of the Monasteries*.

Due to this intertextual relation, the confrontation of Prince Duarte's norms against those defended by his contemporaries Alfonso

¹ João Cassiano, *Institutos, ou Estabelecimento dos Mosteiros* (Ms., Lisboa, BN, Alc. 384).

² Toscano Rico, "Recepção de João Cassiano e reflexos na formação da linguagem literária portuguesa. Edição crítica do *Estabelecimento dos Mosteiros* de João Cassiano (ms., Lisboa, BN, Alc. 384)", vol. I, Lisboa: [s.n.], 2011.

³ Dom Duarte, *Leal Conselheiro*, Joseph M. Piel (ed.), Lisboa: Livraria Bertrand, 1942, pp. 372-374: «Capitulo LRLX Da maneira pera bem tornar algũa leitura em nossa lynguagem. Por que muytos que som leterados nom sabem trelladar bem de latym em lynguagem, penssey escrever estes avysamentos, pera ello necessarios. (...)».

⁴ Iohannes Cassianus, *Opera*, Michael Petschenig (ed.), CSEL, vol. 17, pars 1, Pragae, Vindobonae: Tempsky; Lipsiae: Freytag, 1888.

of Cartagena⁵ and Leonardo Bruni⁶, during the controversy surrounding the Bruni's translation of the *Nicomachean Ethics* by Aristotle⁷, provided the theoretical horizon for the assessment of the practice of medieval Portuguese translation, by allowing the connection of these norms to the humanist tradition, which was established in the convergence of the rhetorical and the patristic traditions.

In fact, the norms belong to the rhetoric tradition, related to the composition of text at the level of word order and sentence structure, as well as the content, style, clarity, conciseness, punctuation and paragraphing⁸, the concern with the addressee and its moral and social

⁵ As for the introduction to the translation of the *Libro de la Rhetorica de M. T.*, see T. González Rolán, "Proyección Política y Pedagógica del Prólogo a la *Rethórica* de Cicerón dedicado por Alfonso de Cartagena al infante D. Duarte", *Homo eloquens homo politicvs': A retórica e a construção da cidade na Idade Média e no Renascimento*, (coord.) Nair Castro Soares, Margarida Miranda, Carlota Miranda Urbano, Coimbra: Centro de Estudos Clássicos e Humanísticos, 2011, pp. 83-86 (fls. 1^r- 5^r do manuscrito do El Escorial T.II.12). As for the *Declamationes super translatione Ethicorum Aristotelis* (1431-1432), see T. González Rolán, A. Moreno Hernández, P. Saquero Suárez-Somonte (ed.), *Humanismo y teoría de la traducción en España e Italia en la primera mitad del siglo XV*, edición y estudio de la contorversia Alphonsiana Alfonso Cartagena, L. Bruni y P. Candido Decembrio, Madrid: Ediciones Clásicas, 2000, pp. 194-265.

⁶ As for the *De interpretatione recta*, see Maurilio Pérez González, "Leonardo Bruni y su tratado *De interpretatione recta*", *Cuadernos de Filología Clásica, Estudios Latinos* 8, Madrid: Facultad de Filología, 1995, pp. 204-233.

⁷ In 1416-1417, Leonardo Bruni translated in its entirety from Greek into Latin the *Ethica Nicomachea* by Aristotles, and, in order to replace the official texts of the European Universities, he offered the translation to Pope Martin V, presenting, in the *prologus*, three fundamental criticisms to the medieval translator: the lack of linguistic competence in Greek and Latin, the scarce knowledge of philosophical matter and the lack of elegance in style. Alonso of Santa Maria Cartagena produces a treaty, (*Declamationes*) in defence of the medieval translator, attributing the controversy to philosophical issues and, following an epistolary exchange, Bruni composes a meticulous theoretical and practical treaty (*De interpretatione recta*), where we see reflected the refinement of the technical language and of the translation problems' perception.

⁸ Dom Duarte, *op. cit.*, p. 373: «O quinto, que guarde aquella ordem que igualmente deve guardar em qual quer outra cousa que se screver deva, scilicet que screva(m) cousas de boa sustancia, claramente, pera se bem poder entender, e fremoso o mais que elle poder, e curtamente quanto for necessario. E pera esto aproveita muyto

conventions⁹, as well as the choice of a shared vocabulary required for effective communication¹⁰. The concept of “fidelity” (*fidelitas*¹¹) belongs to the patristic tradition, whereby it is possible to understand the value attributed to the knowledge of languages in the caution with vocabulary property¹². Finally, the value attributed to the vernacular¹³ and the bookish culture¹⁴, the methodological reflection of the translator’s work (*officium interpretis*¹⁵) and the growing awareness that the text’s specificity imposes different methodological options to the translator¹⁶ reflect the civic and philological aspects of the humanistic tradition.

This analysis has also allowed for a review of the interpretation given to the terminology used by Prince Duarte («scripto ao pee da letera, que chamam os leterados «a contexto»»), generally understood as a synonym of literal translation («*ad uerbum*»), and to start

parragrafar e apontar bem. Se hũu razoar, torna[n]do de latym em lynguagem, e outro screver, achará melhora de todo juntamente per hũu seer feito».

⁹ *Ibidem*, p. 373 nosso: «O quarto, que nom ponha pallavras que segundo o nosso custume de fallar sejam avydas por desonestas».

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, p. 373: «mas todo seja [em] nosso lynguagem scripto, mais achegadamente ao gereal boo custume de fallar que se poder fazer».

¹¹ *Ibidem*, p. 372: «Prymeiro, conhecer bem a ssentença do que ha de tornar, e poëlla enteiramente, nom mudando, acrescentando, nem mynguando algũa cousa do que esta scripto».

¹² *Ibidem*, p. 373: «O terceiro, que sempre se ponham pallavras que sejam dereita lynguagem, respondentes ao latym, nom mudando hũas por outras, assy que onde el disser per latym «scorregar», nom ponha «afastar», e assy em outras semelhantes, entend[endo] que tanto monta hũa como a outra; por que grande deferença faz, pera se bem entender, seerem estas pallavras propriamente scriptas».

¹³ *Ibidem*, pp. 372-373: «O ssegundo, que nom ponha pallavras latinadas, nem doutra lynguagem».

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 348: «Capitulo LRIII De que guisa se deve leer per os livros dos avangelhos, e outros semelhantes, pera os leerem proveitosamente».

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 372: «Capitulo LRIX Da maneira pera bem tornar algũa leitura em nossa lynguagem. Por que muytos que som leterados nom sabem trelladar bem de latym em lynguagem, penssey escrever estes avysamentos, pera ello necessarios».

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, pp. 373-374: «E por que per vosso requerimento torney em lynguagem simprezmente rimada de sseis pees de hũu consoante a oraçom de «justo juiz Jesu Cristo», volla fiz aquy screver, a qual, por a fazer consoar, nom pude compridamente dar seu lynguagem, nem a fiz em outra mylhor forma por concordar com a maneira e teençom que era feita em latym».

considering it as an expression of the translation method «*ad sensum*» that professes absolute “fidelity” to the text¹⁷. In fact, the technique of the translation method «*ad sensum*» was taught by the Byzantine teacher Manuel Crisoras (1350-1415), brought to Florence by the humanistic chancellor Coluccio Salutati (1331-1406), on February 2nd 1397, to teach Greek to a group of students, amongst whom were Leonardo Bruni, Niccolò Niccoli, Uberto Decembrio, Guarino Guarini and Cencio de Rustici. This terminology was known by Cartagena, who, during his diplomatic missions in Portugal, socialized with Portuguese scholars coming from Italian Universities.

This way, the intertextual relation with the *Establishment of the Monasteries* and the affiliation with the humanistic tradition convert Prince Duarte’s norms («avysamentos») into criteria that estimated the ‘adequacy’¹⁸ of the translation, a role attributed to *skopos* in Hans Vermeer’s¹⁹ functionalist approach.

Drawing on the theory of the intent of human action by Von Wright²⁰, Vermeer constitutes a general translation theory (*Skopostheorie*), characterizing translation as a ‘*purposeful activity*’ based on a ‘source text’ and mediated by a qualified agent (translator), responsible for the configuration of the ‘target text’/ ‘translatum’ in conformity with the *skopos* provided by the client and with the culture, expectations and communicative needs of the receiver. This perspective therefore implies an appreciation of the receiver’s role as decisive in determining the communicative function of the ‘target text’ in the recipient culture and

¹⁷ Toscano Rico, “Recepção ...”, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

¹⁸ Christiane Nord, *Translating as a purposeful activity: functionalist approaches explained*, (Translation theories explained), Manchester: St. Jerome, 2001, p. 35: «Within the framework of *Skopostheorie*, ‘adequacy’ refers to the qualities of a target text with regard to the translation brief: the translation should be ‘adequate to’ the requirements of the brief. It is a dynamic concept related to the process of translational action and referring to the “goal-oriented selection of signs that are considered appropriate for the communicative purpose defined in the translation assignment” (Reiss [1983] 1989: 163)».

¹⁹ Christina Schäffner, “*Skopos theory*”, Mona Baker (ed.), *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*, London: Routledge, 2006, p. 235.

²⁰ Georg Henrik von Wright, *Norm and Action*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1977, p. 35 e ss.

the characterization of the ‘translatum’ as autonomous ‘text’, endowed with textuality (*coherence rule*), even if in intertextual relation with the ‘source text’ (*fidelity rule*).

In order to analyze the reception of Cassian’s *Institutiones* in Portugal, in the beginning of the 15th century, it was necessary to understand the process of textual transmission and the dissemination of this work in the Iberian Peninsula, to determine the Latin source of the vernacular text, through the comparison to the critical edition by Petschenig and the medieval Portuguese testimonies from the monasteries of Alcobaça (Alc. 363) and Santa Cruz of Coimbra (S.C.C. 43), to deepen its importance within the monastic tradition and the historical and cultural circumstances that motivated its translation, as well as to analyse the translation, at the extratextual and intratextual levels, in terms of content and language.

Using the *translation-oriented text analysis* model conceived by Christiane Nord, the analysis of the ‘translatum’, as a ‘communicative act’, has allowed for the characterization of the respective communicative situations and the evaluation of the translator’s choices regarding the “fidelity” to the ‘source text’, the ‘adequacy’ of the ‘target text’ to the receiver’s cultural context and the consistency of the ‘translatum’s’ textuality, according to the criteria formulated by Beaugrande and Dressler²¹, clarifying the mechanisms used by the translator and bringing together significant indexes of textual appropriation of Cassian’s work in the ‘target culture’.

Following the analysis of the extratextual factors in the respective communicative situations, it is possible to highlight the enlargement of the reading public to a community beyond the cloister. In the source culture, Cassian (**author**) wrote (**medium**) *De institutis coenobiorum et de octo principalium uitiorum remediis* (**source text**), in Marseille (**place**), in the first half of the 5th century (**time**) as a proposal for regulation of the monastic life (**function**) and dedicated the work to

²¹ Intentionality, acceptability, situationality, informativity, intertextuality, coherence and cohesion. Cf. Robert-Alain de Beaugrande y Wolfgang Ulrich Dressler, *Introducción a la Lingüística*, Barcelona: Ariel Lingüística, 2005.

Castor (**addressee**), bishop of Apt (*ca.* 419), who had commissioned it (**motive**) in order to establish the Monastery of Menerbes.

In the Books I-IV, Cassian builds a framework of monastic organization that could be used as a guideline for the institutionalization of the monasteries in Gaul and, consequently, in the West, covering the monk's habit and its spiritual significance, the religious office for day and night as well as the initiation of novices. In the Books V-XII, Cassian presents a pragmatic plan for spiritual perfection through the progression in virtue, explaining the nature, the causes and remedies for each vice, according to the traditions of the elder monks, and by revealing the dispositions of mind²² and the tactics used for fighting vices²³, essential for the monk to attain the purity of heart and the indispensable virtue for contemplating God.

This way, Cassian's doctrine defined the spiritual component of Western monasticism in the ecclesiological and eschatological levels, by means of the institutionalized proposal of a model of sanctity integrated in the monastic condition. Adapting the Eastern monastic doctrine to the Western context, Cassian conferred historical and spiritual continuity to the primitive Church.

In the target culture²⁴, Prince Duarte (**initiator**) requested from the Abbot of Alcobaça²⁵ the translation of the *Establishment of the*

²² Such as discretion, humility and circumspection of mind.

²³ Such as renunciation, poverty, work, abstinence, vigils, continence, reading and meditation of Scriptures, and practice of virtues.

²⁴ The medieval Portuguese translation of the *Institutiones* by John Cassian constitutes an isolated case in the Iberian Peninsula, with two complete textual tradition's testimonies (Alc. 384, Alc. 212), two excerpts (VI, 7,1-2 e IX, 9-13) in *The Loyal Counsellor* by Prince Duarte, and a parchment fragment (Petschenig II, 6-15,1) that remains as a cover for a notarial book (Lisboa: ANTT/ Arquivo Distrital de Lisboa, Cartório Notarial de Torres Vedras, Livro de Notas nº 70, cx. 17 [antigo 56]), which take us back to a common source. Cf. Toscano Rico, "A projecção da obra de João Cassiano na Península Ibérica: elenco de testemunhos e edição de textos inéditos", *Euphrosyne* 40, CEC, Faculdade de Letras de Lisboa, 2012, pp. 123-148.

²⁵ The codex Alc. 384 is presented as a copy of an existing model and with a translation based on text common to two Portuguese manuscripts of the same textual branch (Alc. 363 e S.C.C. 43, both from XII *ex.* century), even though there is greater textual and material proximity to the one from Alcobaça.

Monasteries (target text), ca. 1421-1433 (**time**) because of his interest in the theme of vices and virtues addressed in Cassian's work. The Abbot (**commissioner**) indicated to the translator the proceedings to take into account, identifying as the **addressee** and **receptor** of the translation the monastic context and the Prince's circle.

Following the analysis of the intratextual factors, it is possible to highlight that «the translator's action is the result of a controlled act, motivated by the need to ensure the fidelity to the original (*fidelity rule*) and the transmissibility of the text (*coherence rule*) to a textual community»²⁶.

Guided by criteria of "fidelity" (*fidelitas*) and transmissibility, the translator establishes, at the level of literal reading, a relatively spontaneous semantic correspondence, but creates, at the level of deep reading, deviations resulting from difficulties in interpretation or cultural readjustments that act as indicators of textual appropriation and of the ability to overcome the difficulties by reformulating the discourse.

In Ancient Classical tradition, the literary creation was seen as a creative process within a cultural and linguistic realm that was singular and syntagmatic, since it was built upon the imitation of a model and it would spread in a cultural *continuum*, following the steps of the composition of rhetorical discourse (*inuentio, dispositio, elocutio*).

Translation, on the contrary, is the product of a paradigmatic situation of cultural and linguistic confrontation, as a literary activity that is partially creative, by delegating on the translator the responsibility when faced with the *elocutio*, i.e., the task of reformulating discourse according to the grammatical norms (*constructio*) and the rhetoric (*compositio*) of the 'target language', in the sense of ensuring, through the clarity in discourse and variety, the text's understanding and the community's interest (*delectare*).

In fact, the translator's intervention is, many times, recognised at the level of *inuentio* and *dispositio*, by the use of various strategies (omission, synthesis, commentary, explanation...) that are either

²⁶ Toscano Rico, "Recepção...", *op. cit.*, p. 110: «a acção do tradutor resulta de um acto controlado e motivado pela necessidade de garantir a fidelidade ao original (*fidelity rule*) e a transmissibilidade do texto (*coherence rule*) a uma comunidade textual».

intended to eliminate information that is considered to be redundant or inappropriate, or to value the fundamental contents related to the religious practice, doctrine and spirituality. Furthermore, the adjustment of the ‘translatum’ to the universe of the ‘target culture’ favours the appearance of traits in the translation that brings it closer to a creative literary activity, making that the ‘adequacy’ of the ‘target text’ to the recipient’s cultural context becomes visible in the field of textuality.

In the intercultural communicative situation, the underlying intention of the translator manifests itself in how one manages informativity, by eliminating information or valuing contents, and also by using certain means that accentuate the relevance and illocutionary force of the text. This aims to promote acceptability in the community, since textual reception takes place at different times and in different products as, while the translator’s reception is processed over the ‘source text’, the one taken by the community presupposes the ‘target text’ produced by the translator with his ‘interferences’.

Intertextuality is manifest in the formal and conceptual relationship with the model, in the reference to Cartagena’s translation²⁷, in Prince Duarte’s spiritual²⁸ and topical²⁹ language, as well as in the use of expository terms of a legal nature³⁰. Acceptability is also manifest in the reading marks left in the codex by the readers, as well as in the translation excerpts inserted in *The Loyal Counsellor*. Situationality is manifest in the clarification or also in the integration of the cultural alterities, as well as in the observance of the community’s social norms. Connectivity is ensured, in principle, by elements manifesting in the ‘source text’ and, when compromised by comprehension difficulties, it is re-established through the strengthening of the conceptual and

²⁷ In the *Establishment of the Monasteries*, there is a reference to the *Libro de la Rhetorica de M. T.*, the translation of the *De inuentione* by Cicero made by Cartagena ca. 1424-1431.

²⁸ For example, «saude», «boo proveito», «virtuoso prazer», «guarda nas virtudes», «secreta camara do coraçom», «estrada real», «fisico spiritual», «doblada pena», «sol da justiça», «sem entrepoymento», «lume da descliçom».

²⁹ For example, ‘abelha’, ‘cavalo sem freio’, ‘cidade’ / ‘castelo’ (alma), ‘porto seguro’, ‘soldado de Cristo’.

³⁰ The mark «a.b.c.» and the judicial term *Verbi gratia* (‘por exemplo’ [for example]), signalling the beginning of the exemplification.

sequential relationships, by marking ideas, adjusting cultural features or densifying links in the textual surface.

This work by Cassian was disseminated in the Iberian Peninsula by Martin of Braga and Paschasius of Dumio in the 6th century and, in the following century, by Fructuosus of Braga and Isidore of Seville. The codex donated by Sisnandus, bishop of Santiago de Compostela, and his father Hermegildus to the Monastery of Sobrado (955), the witness given by the testament of the Countess Mumadona (959) and also the 12th-century codices from the Monasteries of Santa Cruz of Coimbra (S.C.C. 43) and Alcobaça (Alc. 363) attest to the permanence and dissemination, in the monastic environment, of this work that represents the monastic tradition. In the 15th century, it gained new popularity with its translation, by going beyond the monastic environment to the core of the Portuguese court, dominated by the Prince's circle, becoming then an essential text for the moral and spiritual education of the Christian man and for the ideological basis of a cultural policy that, under the insignia of the model of Christian perfection, aimed to legitimize the power of the incipient Avis dynasty in the national, Peninsular and European space.

The subject concerning the importance of the translation of Latin texts to the development of Portuguese literary language required an evaluation of the autonomy of the Portuguese language and the influence of the Latin model over it. In order to do this, it was necessary to consider, on the one hand, the process of the formation and consolidation of the Portuguese language within the linguistic *continuum* of the 'vulgar Latin', and, on the other hand, the contribution of Latin schooling for the progressive affirmation of Portuguese as a language of communication and culture, at the level of notarial and literary production³¹. This was done bearing in mind that schooling worked as a driving force for vernacular writing and metalinguistic reflection in the

³¹ The use of Portuguese in the notarial domain happened in the reign of King Afonso Henriques and became dominant in relation to the Latin production, at the end of the 13th century. The continuity of this practice encouraged the extension to the literary domain, contributing for the appearance of the first translations, in the Court, in the middle of the 13th century and, in the monastic environment, in the middle of the 14th century.

process of elaboration of a developed Portuguese in proximity with the cultural model conveyed by ‘literary Latin’, even though it gave rise to a cultural ambivalence favourable to the interference of Romance language in Latin and, later, of Latin in Portuguese, an interference made worse by the linguistic kinship of the two languages.

Despite its relevance for the description of the ‘units of translation’, Jean-Paul Vinay and Jean Darbelne’s taxonomy³² was abandoned for not taking into account the kinship relation between the ‘source language’ and the ‘target language’, a value element that was indispensable to the continuation of the intended study.

One other classification proposal for the ‘units of translation’ was developed in order to evaluate the ‘translatum’ in terms of the level of correspondence (‘functional constancy’) or alteration (‘change of functions’) between the ‘source text’ and the ‘target text’, according to the process (translator’s activity), the procedure (method) and the product attained (result).

In the validation process, the ‘unit of translation’ presents a direct form (product) resulting from the forms that are part of the linguistic *continuum* (continuity) and neologisms (integration). In the adjustment process of the ‘source language’ to the ‘target language’, the ‘unit of translation’ presents a parallel form (product) resulting from a correspondent form (correspondence) and a paradigmatic form (equivalence), due to distancing suffered by Romance language in relation to Latin. In the alteration process, the ‘unit of translation’ presents a modified form (product) resulting from a grammatical change (transmutation), a discursive change (modulation), an enlargement (amplification), a contraction (reduction) and a referencing of the Latin

³² These authors distinguish two translation methods (direct and oblique) and three levels of language (lexicon, grammatical structures and message): the direct translation, possible because of the structural parallelism (grammatical categories) and metalinguistic (concepts), includes borrowing, calque and literal translation. In turn, the oblique translation makes it possible to solve translation problems originated by structural and conceptual differences between the ‘source language’ and the ‘target language’ that prevent the occurrence of a direct translation, and includes transposition, modulation, equivalence and adaptation. Cf. Basil Hatim and Jeremy Munday, *Translation: An advanced resource book*, New York / London: Routledge, 2006, p. 29.

term (explicitation), with the intent of providing clarity, correction and elegance (*ornatus*) to the text, according to the demands and expectations of its audience. In the intervention process, the ‘unit of translation’ presents an unauthorized form (product) resulting from an intensification (valorization), an accommodation (adaptation), a modification (corruption) or an elimination (omission) of the message, due to the communicative intentionality or the linguistic conditioning³³.

Data has shown that ‘translatum’ presents autonomous grammatical structures of the ‘target language’, but also signs of interference from the ‘source language / text’. Linguistic interference can occur due to the knowledge that the translator has of both language systems, but also because of his motivation for integrating the ‘translatum’ in the recipient culture, granting it a privileged status caused by the closeness to the prestige language. This way, the interference by the ‘source language / text’ is manifest, in the ‘translatum’, at the rhetorical and linguistic levels, being characterized by the deviation of the norm toward greater Latinization.

In this sense, ‘translatum’ can present four types of interference, even if moderated and conditioned by the criteria of intelligibility and acceptability imposed by the community: interference of transposition, with production of elements from Latin; interference of convergence, with production of elements shared by Latin and Romance language; interference of divergence, with a choice of elements from the exclusive zone of Portuguese and ‘negative production’ of elements shared by Latin and Romance language; and hypercorrection, with production of elements which are non-existent in Portuguese, leading to error³⁴.

The synchronic analysis of the levels of interference by the ‘source language / text’ in the ‘translatum’ had its temporal milestone in the period during which the translation took place (1421-1433) and started from the survey and dating of the lexicon, as well as from the selection of innovation indexes (neologisms) and of closeness to the Latin model (*latinitatis imitatio*), e.g., the production of forms and structures familiar to the Latin system, within the boundaries imposed by the

³³ Toscano Rico, “Recepção ..., *op. cit.*, pp. 174-175.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 187.

system of the ‘target language’, in order to ensure the intelligibility and the acceptability of the discourse.

The data collected attest to the permanence of a cultural tradition of Latin expression, in which Latin plays a new role as a language for common expression, oral and written, in the political, religious and cultural European space. At the same time, they confirm that the Portuguese language shows autonomy, be it in the production of forms within the morphological paradigms inherited from Latin or in the transposition and integration of loans in the system of the ‘target language’. At the same time, we see that its process of affirmation and valuation is found in the dependence to the prestige model, at the level of lexical enrichment, concept structuring, discourse organisation and internalization of rhetorical and literary models.

This tension between Portuguese and Latin explains some of the existing discrepancies between the theory and practice of translation. In fact, even though the value attributed to the vernacular is a political matter of affirmation of the Kingdom itself, to the extent that Prince Duarte refused latinisms, their integration into Portuguese is nonetheless a practice considered to be a source of enrichment for the language, similar to the position taken by Cartagena in the Castilian context.

The relative discrepancy between theory and practice in translation therefore confirms the dynamism of the vernacular and its new positioning when faced with the Latin literary and rhetorical model, now used as a reference for Portuguese to develop the acquired potentialities and affirm itself as a cultural language.

The diversity and complexity of the problems addressed in this Doctorate thesis here systematised confirm the need for an analysis of the cultural phenomenon integrated in the semiotic dimension called by Iuri Lotman semiosphere³⁵, an abstract space, bounded and irregular,

³⁵ Marcel Danesi, *The Quest for Meaning: A Guide to Semiotic Theory and Practice*, Canada: University of Toronto, 2007, p. 92: «Although they can do little about the biosphere, humans have the ability to reshape the semiosphere any time they want – hence the dynamic that inheres between signs (such as words) and perception. This dynamic is the reason why cultures are both restrictive and liberating. They are restrictive in that they impose on individuals born into them an already fixed system of sign use. This system will largely determine how people come

where relationships between systems of signs are established. In turn, this dialogical process generates codes and languages that lead to the flourishing of new configurations in the landscape of cultural representations, creating a semiotic *continuum*³⁶.

In this sense, the Polysystems Theory³⁷ developed by Even-Zohar allows for a dynamic, relational and functional conception of culture, which contributes to the understanding of the heterogeneity and interdependence of the semiotic mechanisms and functions that establish cultural models. This is done through the conservation of signs and texts that configure memory and cultural tradition, its circulation and transformation resulting from intra and intercultural communication, as well as the production of new signs and texts that,

to understand the world around them in terms of the language, music, myths, rituals, technological systems, and others codes that they learn in social context. But cultures are also liberating because, paradoxically, they provide the signifying resources by which individuals can seek new meanings on their own. The many codes to which individuals are exposed in social contexts stimulate creativity. As a result, human beings tend to become restless for new meanings, new ways to represent the world. For this reason, codes are constantly being modified by new generations of artists, scientists, philosophers, and others to meet new demands, new ideas, new challenges.»

³⁶ Biviana Hernández, “Para una concepción sistémica del texto: las propuestas de Iuri Lotman y Walter Mignolo. Notes for a systemic conception of text: the Iuri Lotman and Walter Mignolo’s proposals”, *ALPHA: revista de Artes, Letras y Filosofía*, 26 (Julio 2008), Osorno: Universidad de Los Lagos, Departamento de Humanidades y Arte, p. 71.

³⁷ Itamar Even-Zohar, “Polysystem Studies”, *Poetics Today* (International Journal for Theory and Analysis of Literature and Communication), vol. 11, n° 1, Durham: Duke University Press, 1990, p. 11: «Secondly, if the idea of structuredness and systemicity need no longer be identified with homogeneity, a semiotic system can be conceived of as a heterogeneous, open structure. It is, therefore, very rarely a uni-system but is, necessarily, a polysystem – a multiple system, a system of various systems which intersect with each other and partly overlap, using concurrently different options, yet functioning as one structured whole, whose members are interdependent.»

despite being connected to the old ones³⁸, introduce innovating and creative contributions³⁹.

The systematic approach to literature allows us to understand the relationships and interdependencies established between the producer and the consumer, the repertoire and the product, the institution and the market⁴⁰, cultural factors that, while being influential in the process of transmission, reception and organization of information in human society, determine the way the literary polysystem works as well as the productive subsystem of the translated literature⁴¹.

The political and cultural turning point produced by the Avis dynasty definitively marked the national literary history through the development of didactic prose, having translated literature played a very influential role in the Portuguese literary production of that time, as documented in *The Loyal Counsellor*.

The translated literature constitutes the product resulting from a literary activity experienced by qualified cultural agents who had access

³⁸ Biviana Hernández, *op. cit.*, p. 75.

³⁹ *Ibidem*, pp. 74-75: «En relación con la cultura, para Lotman el texto se define a partir de su heterogeneidad semiótica como un complejo estructural o como un dispositivo intelectual que condensa información, actuando nemotécnicamente, pues, además de transmitir información, transforma y produce nuevos mensajes, en respuesta a las interpretaciones que, según el tiempo histórico, despliega la memoria cultural. En función de ello, la transformación, transmisión y creación de nuevos mensajes, constituyen el objeto de las tres funciones básicas que desempeña el texto. A saber, una función *mnemónica*, que entiende la cultura como memoria colectiva y síntesis de múltiples textos; una función *comunicativa*, que implica la transmisión de textos a través de los diferentes medios o canales de comunicación, y una función *creativa* del texto y la cultura, que supone la generación de nuevos textos y nuevos mensajes.»

⁴⁰ Itamar Even-Zohar, “Polysystem Studies”, *op. cit.*, p. 34: «It suffices to recognize that it is the interdependencies between these factors which allow them to function in the first place. Thus, a CONSUMER may “consume” a PRODUCT produced by a PRODUCER, but in order for the “product” (such as “text”) to be generated, a common REPERTOIRE must exist, whose usability is determined by some INSTITUTION. A MARKET must exist where such a good can be transmitted. None of the factors enumerated can be described to function in isolation, and the kind of relations that may be detected run across all possible axes of the scheme.»

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, p. 46: «In other words, I conceive of translated literature not only as an integral system within any literary polysystem, but as a most active system within it.»

to a repertoire that the powerful and prestigious social institutions consider to be relevant and appropriate for the market, as it makes available new representations, languages, techniques and composition patterns that can contribute to the development of the repertoire of the recipient culture's literary polysystem.

Even though the Prince's circle represents the dominant group in the Court, responsible for the selection of the *Institutiones* by Cassian for translation, that product was promoted by the Abbot of the Monastery of Alcobaça and offered to the markets directly involved with those institutions, thereby accentuating the interdependency of the cultural relationships in the regulation of production and consumption, as well as the interaction of the cultural agents in the various literary activities that determine the way the polysystem functions.

This translation was motivated by historical and cultural determinants and regulated by ideological and political criteria, taking into account that this product offered the moral and spiritual principles necessary for the construction of a spiritual model for Christian perfection that legitimised the power of the incipient Avis dynasty⁴², but also provided the dissemination of the knowledge shared in a monastic environment to the institution in power, as well as the incorporation of new signs and language in the semiotic universe of Portuguese medieval culture.

Showing a clear distinction between original literature and translated literature, the norms of translation established by Prince Duarte in *The Loyal Counsellor* (chapter 99) attest to the impact of the subsidiary system in the literary polysystem, in terms of behaviours and politics, but also denounce the dependency of the system in relation to the contacts established with cultural agents from foreign literary systems, during their diplomatic missions in Portugal, and with Portuguese scholars who studied in Italy.

In fact, the intercultural relationships between European scholars promoted the reflections on theory and practice of translation by Prince Duarte, Alfonso of Cartagena and Leonardo Bruni, allowing for the emergence of normative considerations (chapter 99 of *The*

⁴² Toscano Rico, "Recepção ..., *op. cit.*, pp. 229-230.

Loyal Counsellor) and critical literary discourses (*Declamationes*⁴³ and *De interpretatione recta*⁴⁴), which led to translation being formally recognised as an art defined by “fidelity” to content and form, according to the translation «*ad sensum*», and structured by a set of requirements that constituted the translator’s work (*officium interpretis*).

These considerations reveal the need for a deeper analysis of the relationships and interdependencies of the factors that allow the semiotic cultural system to work, demonstrating the complementarity between Translation Studies and Comparatism in the study of Cultural Polysystem. For this reason, there is no advantage in fighting for the primacy of one in relation to the other, since the nature of the scientific research in progress will establish the object of study to be analysed and indicate the appropriate methodologies.

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⁴³ González Rolán et alii, *op. cit.*, pp. 194-265.

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