New Verse Translations of Old English Poetry into Spanish.
A Critical Review of

Bernardo Santano Moreno, ed. and trans. and Fernando Cid Lucas, ed. 2019. *Beowulf*. Madrid: Cátedra. 228 pp. ISBN: 978-84-376-3949-9.

Miguel Ángel Gomes Gargamala, ed. and trans. 2019. *Elegías anglosajonas*. Madrid: La Oficina de Arte y Ediciones. 125 pp. ISBN: 978-84-949714-4-0.

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1. INTRODUCTION: *BEOWULF* AND THE OLD ENGLISH ELEGIES IN TRANSLATION

It is inevitable that this critical review starts with a couple of truisms. The first bears on the canonical status of both *Beowulf* and the elegies in the history of (Old) English literature. The second, however, extends to their popularisation at the turn of the millennium—particularly that of *Beowulf*—mainly as a side effect of the success achieved by the films based on J. R. R. Tolkien's *The Lord of the Rings* (1954-1955) and *The Hobbit* (1937) and some movie adaptations of *Beowulf*, of varying success. This vogue has certainly increased the circulation of old and new translations of the poems both in the English-speaking world and elsewhere.[1] In the case of Spain, the history of *Beowulf*'s translations has been recounted by Eugenio Olivares Merino (2009) and María José Gómez-Calderón (2012). The first recorded translations are those by the Catalan poet Marià Manent, who included some extracts in his 1947 anthology *La poesía inglesa*, and the Chilean Orestes Vera Pérez, who rendered the complete poem into prose with accompanying genealogical tables, footnotes, an index of names and an introduction (1959).[2] In 1974 Luis Lerate de Castro's *Beowulf y otros poemas épicos antiguos germánicos*

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[1]   On the history of translations and adaptations of *Beowulf* see, among others, Marijane Osborn (1997, 341-71; 2003), Andreas Haarder and Thomas Shippey (1998) and Roy M. Liuzza (2002). See also Hugh Magennis (2011) for a review of English verse translations of the poem since the Second World War.

[2]   Adaptations of *Beowulf* into Spanish as well as literary texts inspired by the poem are also numerous; a complete list up to 2019 is appended to Bernardo Santano Moreno's introduction (69-71). See also Fernando Galván Reula (1992, 83-93), Olivares Merino (2009) and Gómez-Calderón (2012, 120, 131).

was published by Seix Barral; a new edition including a selection of other poems from the Old English corpus, translated in collaboration with Jesús Lerate de Castro, was distributed by Alianza in 1986 under the title *Beowulf y otros poemas anglosajones. Siglos VII-X*. Since then, it has become the Spanish translation of *Beowulf* enjoying the greatest diffusion, with the latest reprint coming out in 2017.[3] This poetic rendition of the complete poem was the work of scholars experienced and trained in Old English and the result is a translation based on the original—although the edition used is not mentioned—with an introduction and footnotes on various textual and cultural issues.

In the 1980s, two prose translations by Spanish university scholars were published at the universities of Oviedo and Málaga: *Beowulf. Estudio y traducción* by Antonio Bravo (1981) and Ángel Cañete's *Beowulf* (1991), respectively. Despite the philological background of both authors, which is substantiated by their well-informed introductions, the works differ considerably. Bravo's translation is based on the original text in the editions by Frederick Klaeber ([1922] 1950), Elliott Van Kirk Dobbie (1953) and Charles Leslie Wrenn (1953), while Cañete's is a kind of compendium, based on a range of "versiones actuales […] autorizadas, tanto en inglés como en otras lenguas" (1991, 15). Incidentally, Bravo adapted some sections into free verse for the anthology *Literatura anglosajona y antología bilingüe del antiguo inglés* (1982), with translations of several Old English texts in prose and verse, including the four elegies "El errante," "El navegante," "El lamento de Deor" and "El mensaje del marido." A brief critical commentary precedes all the translations. This is also the context of Juan Camilo Conde-Silvestre's *Crítica literaria y poesía elegíaca anglosajona. Las ruinas*, *El exiliado errante y El navegante* (1992), which, after a critical introduction to Old English poetry, the elegiac genre and the three selected texts, offers their translation in prose, with the parallel original sources edited from the available editions.

In the 2000s, another two prose translations of *Beowulf* into Spanish have been published by Armando Roa Vial (2006) and Gerardo Franco (2007), while Juan M. Camacho Ramos has authored a translation of the elegies into Spanish (2009). His selection includes "Deor," "El mensaje del marido," "Las ruinas," "El navegante," "El vagabundo solitario"—all of them in prose—as well as poetic renderings of "El lamento de la esposa" and "Wulf y Eadwacer." The volume also includes a brief introduction and some erratic commentaries on the texts.[4]

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[3]   Five of the elegies are included: "El lamento de Deor," "El viajero errante," "El navegante," "El lamento de la esposa" and "Wulf y Eadwacer."

[4]   The first translation of *Beowulf* into Catalan appeared in 1998: *Beowulf. Traducció en prosa d'un poema èpic de l'anglés antic*, by Xavier Campos Vilanova. This prose version relies on a selection of translations into modern English, to such an extent that the author defines his own text as an exercise in "metaliteratura" (1998, 11; see also Gómez-Calderón 2012, 128). A new Catalan version by Joan Kowalski, with a brief introduction, was published in electronic format in 2016.

2. Santano Moreno's *Beowulf* and Gomes Gargamala's *Elegías Anglosajonas*
In the late 1990s and 2000s, English studies were already well established in Spain and research on Old English language and literature had consolidated (Conde-Silvestre and Salvador 2006; Bueno Alonso 2011). A cautious note, however, is necessary, particularly in view of the curtailment of medieval English studies in the curriculum of many Spanish universities after the academic reforms of 2007-2010, comparable to the retrenchment affecting the teaching of Old English in many educational institutions worldwide. At the same time, though, Spain has also participated, and continues to do so, in the international "revival and even fascination with all things medieval" (Gómez-Calderón 2012, 129), including adaptations in all popular formats—novels, films, comic books, and role-playing and video games. This means that there is also a Spanish audience for the original texts on which the new medievalism is founded and for the appearance of new translations.

The context of the two translations under review, then, is characterised by "the stabilization of the curriculum of English studies within the Spanish academy and the rising interest in English literature in the context of [...] [the] new medievalism" (Gómez-Calderón 2012, 129). To some extent, this may also explain the presence of the new translations in the catalogue of two very different publishing houses, rather than in a university press. *Beowulf* is published by Cátedra—a branch of the big group Anaya—in the collection "Letras Universales," well known for its publication of literary classics from different international traditions that are translated and edited, with introductions and notes, by renowned specialists. *Elegías anglosajonas* is published by La Oficina de Arte y Ediciones, a younger independent publishing house with a smaller catalogue of selected, carefully edited texts in a range of fields in the humanities—the history of ideas, philosophy, literature and visual arts—"en la estela de una hermenéutica integral que aúna el texto y la imagen con la vocación de crear libros que perduren como objetos de la cultura" (La Oficina de Arte y Ediciones 2015). The profile of each publishing company seems to fit the perceived status of the translated texts—the canonical *Beowulf* in the major player Cátedra and the elegies in the smaller, more selective La Oficina. Moreover, as noted above, one cannot avoid thinking that the vogue of "all things medieval" may somehow account for the opportunity of their publication. That said, the authors of both translations are active members of academia involved in teaching and researching Old English—Bernardo Santano Moreno, from Universidad de Extremadura; Fernando Cid Lucas, a specialist in comparative literature from Universidad Autónoma de Madrid; and Miguel Ángel Gomes Gargamala, from the University of Sunderland. This is reflected in the well-informed introductions and annotations that accompany their texts.

Santano Moreno and Cid Lucas's "Introducción" covers seventy-one pages (9-80). It opens with a brief account of the history and codicology of British Library, Cotton Vitellius A.xv, whose contents, in addition to *Beowulf*, are minutely described. An interesting section refers, on paleographical grounds, to the scribes involved in

copying the manuscript, endorsing the controversial interpretation given by Kevin Kiernan ([1981] 1996, 2015) that scribe B was supervising the copying job of his trainee, scribe A, possibly while both were transcribing from another exemplar, now obviously lost. In the same vein, the authors also accept the early eleventh century for the composition of the poem, without acknowledging the criticism that this theory has received, especially on linguistic and codicological grounds (Fulk, Bjork and Niles 2008; Neidorf 2014). Nevertheless, they do review additional archaeological, historical and literary evidence in support of other views, thus attending to the quest for the dating of *Beowulf*. Other sections are concerned with cultural issues. A brief overview of the Christianisation of Scandinavia in the tenth century—partially unnecessary in so far as this process is neither related to the chronology of the events in the poem (sixth century), nor to the time of its composition—is followed by some pages devoted to Christian references (29-40). However, the heathen substratum is also acknowledged; thus, the authors highlight those well-known sections of the poem connected to the Old Testament and the Apocrypha, together with the appearance of some admonitions aligned with the homiletic tradition, and contrast them with the ubiquitous representation of the pagan world—the lavish descriptions of funerals, celebrations at court and warfare elements as well as pagan ideals, like the concept of *wyrd* (41-44).

Another section of the introduction (44-53) approaches the poem from the perspective of feminism and gender studies. The new interpretations of the role of women—as hostesses, peaceweavers, ritual mourners, counsellors or goaders—are reviewed. Santano Moreno and Cid Lucas also deal with the background of the three monsters, Grendel, his mother and the dragon (54-60). This is a complete exercise in comparative literature, dealing with most possible sources and analogues in Germanic mythology—from Niðhaggr, the world-serpent under Yggdrasill, to the legendary Sigemund, the dragonslayer, and a plethora of giants, trolls and flesh-eaters (*draugr*)—biblical sources—with the lineage of Grendel being traced back to the giants, descendants of Cain that survived the Flood—and the Old English poetic corpus itself, where dragons guarding hoards are often mentioned.

The introduction also includes a review of Anglo-Saxon prosody and metrics as well as a description of stylistic features, especially *variatio* and the use of *kenningar* (61-66). Santano Moreno, as translator, also explains his criteria for rendering the Old English poem into Spanish (66-68), which are discussed below. Finally, some tools useful for the Spanish reader are appended: a) an updated list of Spanish translations and adaptations (69-74); b) a brief summary of the poem (75-80); c) an ethnonimic map (213); and d) indices of the characters and Germanic tribes mentioned (217-25). Finally, a total of 231 footnotes on bibliographical, textual and cultural issues punctuate the text.

Elegías anglosajonas includes a brief prologue by Jorge Luis Bueno Alonso, widely known for his own work on the elegies (2001) as well as recent translations of *Judith* into Spanish (Bueno Alonso and Torrado Mariñas 2012) and *Beowulf* into the Galician

language (Bueno Alonso 2010).[5] Entitled "Una voz necesaria," the prologue (9-13) emphasises the universal message of these poems, even for present-day audiences, who can share "con aquellas voces líricas de hace más de mil años [...] [su] condición de seres humanos enfrentados a [...] humanas emociones" (2001, 9). Bueno Alonso highlights the poetic essence of the texts and the relevance of this new verse translation into Spanish.

The introduction by Gomes Gargamala himself, "Encadenados por el pesar. Siete elegías anglosajonas" (15-45), is well informed. A vindication of the universal appeal of these texts and of their canonical status in the Old English corpus, side by side with *Beowulf*, opens this section, where the elegies are intellectually contextualised in the transition from the heroic to the Christian world. The author advances from the more general issues to the particularities of each poem. A brief overview of the cultural history of Anglo-Saxon England and its manuscript tradition opens the account—"La Inglaterra anglosajona, el inglés antiguo y los manuscritos poéticos" (17-21)—which continues with a description of the codex and its mixed literary contents—"El Libro de Exeter. Elegías, adivinanzas y mucho más" (21-24). The third section, "Las elegías anglosajonas" (24-27), contains a survey of the Celtic and Latin sources. The inspiring role of Boethius's *De Consolatione Philosophiae* (ca. 524) and its translation into the vernacular, accomplished in the court of King Alfred (871-899), is also highlighted. The origins of the elegiac designation and the limitations of the label are also addressed. The author does not avoid other topics of interest and also comments on the possible effect of millenarianism—the sense of an impending end of the world at the turn of the first millennium—in their composition. The elegiac corpus translated here consists of seven key texts: "El exiliado errante," "El marinero," "El lamento de la esposa," "Wulf y Eadwacer," "El mensaje del amado," "La ruina" and "Deor."

The seven elegies are gathered into three conceptual groups and their main characteristics as individual poems are discussed. The first group deals with "El exiliado errante" and "El marinero" as "Elegías sobre la soledad, la travesía y el paso del tiempo" (27-31). To start, Gomes Gargamala discusses the critical peculiarities of each of the two poems, touching on the classical debates on their respective structure, the heroic background of the former and its salient references to *wyrd* and the lost *comitatus*, in contrast with the Christian contextualisation of the latter, widely accepted to be inspired by *peregrinatio pro amore dei*. Next, the author accentuates the sapiential quality behind the two poems, "que fácilmente conduce [...] a una reflexión, al autoconocimiento y a un mayor entendimiento del mundo y del valor de lo trascendental" (30). The second group, discussed under "Elegías de tema amoroso. El lamento de la esposa, Wulf y Eadwacer y El mensaje del amado" (32-35), comprises three deeply emotionally loaded texts sharing the expression of misery provoked by the forced separation of the

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[5]   Bueno Alonso's Galician version is mainly based, like Santano Moreno's, on Kiernan's edition ([1981] 1996), although other sources are acknowledged (2010, 23). A critical introduction to the poem precedes his text, which successfully preserves the alliterative effect typical of early Germanic poetry; see also Bueno Alonso (2005).

speaker from his or her lover—two of the texts having a female lyric persona, thus belonging with the Germanic tradition of *Frauenlieder*. These three concise poems also share an allusive technique, as well as, in material terms, the damaged state of the manuscript folios containing them—circumstances which, added to their intense lyric ambiguity, have yielded a variety of interpretations, some of them contradictory, which are accurately summarised. "Deor" and "La ruina" are the two poems included in the third group, "Elegías sobre la caducidad del esplendor y de la fama terrenal" (35-39). Gomes Gargamala focuses on the individuality of their respective literary backgrounds, namely, the *de excidio* and *encomium urbis* traditions in the case of the former, and the *scop-begging* genre in the latter—a poem of consolation intertextually grounded in an array of sad contingencies extracted from Germanic mythology and history.

As in the case of Santano Moreno and Cid Lucas's "Introducción," this presentation also closes with a summary of the main metrical and stylistic features of Old English poetry—alliteration, *variatio*, *kenningar*, formulaic style—adequately contextualised in relation to both the intellectual monastic background and the inherited heroic tradition of Anglo-Saxon England, as well as a consideration of the criteria followed by the author in his Spanish version (42-44), more about which below. No footnotes accompany the introduction, although a selected bibliography including other studies and translations into Spanish closes the volume (123-25). Endnotes, however, are prominent in the sections containing the texts in translation, which are systematically analysed in textual, cultural and critical terms. The Old English originals are also given, although the author does not mention his sources.

3. Tempering the Domesticating Effect in Spanish Translations from Old English

Defining the art of literary translation in terms of both the personal experience of the translator and his or her specific literary and cultural contexts may be a truism, but it is of particular relevance for arcane texts like *Beowulf* and the elegies, highly alien to present-day Spanish language and culture. These texts were transmitted in a Christian context—probably aristocratic in the case of *Beowulf* and monastic in that of the elegies—but they also engage with a pre-Christian heroic past to differing extents: it is the main imaginary setting of *Beowulf* and features as a recurring leitmotiv in the elegies, often associated with the splendour of a past now lost (and missed). In terms of language and style, both *Beowulf* and the elegies are based on the oral culture of the Anglo-Saxons and, thus, they often rely on formulaic construction; they are also traditional texts—like the rest of the Old English poetic corpus—in terms of their use of metrical (alliteration), rythmical (a four-stressed line) and stylistic features (*variatio*, use of *kenningar*, interlace patterns, etc.), as well as their lofty, often archaic, vocabulary, rich in compounds and quite specific to the poetic register. Last, but not least, they were composed in a historical variety of English whose grammar differs from present-day English and Spanish in being

highly synthetic—relying on case endings, for instance—which results in a compressed expression that is hard to reproduce by means of the expanding analytic devices of the modern languages—prepositions and a relatively fixed word order.

To render these features, unfamiliar to the Spanish audience, translators have to make a number of decisions. Hugh Magennis (2011), following Lawrence Venuti (1998), has categorised translations of *Beowulf* as either *domesticating* or *foreignising*. The former assimilate the original to the forms and presuppositions of the target language, making the resulting text recognisable to the new, contemporary audience. Foreignising translations, on the contrary, attempt to strike the reader out of domestic complacency by retaining a difficult quality that highlights the strangeness of the text. To a certain extent, all translations of medieval texts are domesticating and tend to suppress the linguistic and cultural differences; nevertheless, Magennis believes that this domesticating drive should be resisted by using "defamiliarizing" techniques that suggest "differentness and alienation" (2011, 11). Such an undertaking is most necessary when translating from remote languages and cultures, like Old English, whose metrical constraints and poetic register are artificially distinctive from the Spanish poetic flow.

In order to assess the new Spanish versions by Santano Moreno and Gomes Gargamala, passages from the Old English originals have been analysed. For *Beowulf*, I have selected lines 867b-874a, the well-known section describing the craft of the Anglo-Saxon *scop* within the background of oral tradition and, in a kind of metaliterary exercise, signalling the technique used for the composition of a future poem on the deeds of a hero called Beowulf:

	Hwilum cyninges þegn,
guma gilph-læden,	gidda gemyndig,
se ðe eal fela	eald-gesegena
worn gemunde,	word oþer fand
soðe gebunden;	secg eft ongan
sið Beowulfes	snyttrum styrian
ond on sped wrecan	spel gerade
wordum wrixlan.	(Fulk 2010, 142)

Santano Moreno translates these lines as follows:

	Y un siervo del rey,
un hombre facundo,	gran conocedor
de viejas historias,	que antiguas leyendas
recordaba bien,	compuso un cantar
con cuidada métrica.	Comenzó a entonar
de forma muy hábil	la gesta de Beowulf
cantaba con arte	su esmerada historia
trenzando palabras.	(118-19)

The first striking feature of this translation is the avoidance of the most outstanding characteristic of Old English poetry, alliteration—the repetition of the same sound in the initial position of (at least two or three) of the (normally) full-meaning words receiving primary stress in each line. Santano Moreno is conscious of the complexities that this entails in Spanish and justifies his decision: "las demandas de este recurso harían peligrar la integridad del contenido del texto" (67). In a sense, the prominence of content over form can be intrepreted as a domesticating strategy. Nevertheless, other decisions taken by the translator compensate for this effect. For instance, Santano Moreno systematically uses twelve-line verses (*dodecasílabo blanco*). In my opinion, this is an intelligent choice for two main reasons. Firstly, because it allows for the accumulation of a compressed expression that parallels the effects derived from the synthetic grammar of the original or, at least, conceals the analytical syntax of Spanish. Secondly, twelve-syllable lines help maintain the Old English rhythmical pattern—with four stressed syllables per line—so that each line is arranged into two halves with intermediate caesura—the usual layout in modern editions of Old English poetry—thus defamiliarising the traditional representation on the page of Spanish verse, where gaps between the hemistichs are not expected. Moreover, this fixed metrical and rhythmic structure in Spanish conveys an effect of orality and tradition.

Some of the decisions adopted by Santano Moreno had already been implemented by Lerate and Lerate:

                                A veces un hombre,
un vasallo elocuente   y de rica memoria
que sabía muy bien   incontables leyendas
de tiempos antiguos,   componía un cantar
con su justo trabado.   Hábil entona
la hazaña gloriosa,   canto de Beowulf,
disponiendo la historia   y cambiando palabras
con mucha soltura.   (1986, 51)

In this case, the avoidance of alliteration is also compensated for by a repeated rythmic pattern of four stressed syllables per line and by the organisation of each verse into two halves, with intermediate caesura. However, the lines in Lerate and Lerate's version are longer than the twelve-syllable arrangement in Santano Moreno's, which means that sometimes the compressed expression of the original is not rendered. Moreover, the use of the conjunction *y* (l. 868b, l. 873b) hampers the reproduction of the asyndetic and appositive construction of Old English poetry.

As regards style, both Santano Moreno's and Lerate and Lerate's versions are faithful to Old English *variatio* and highlight the key concepts in the original—the act of a) orally creating (*bindan*, *styrian*, *wrecan*, *wordum wrixlan*, *word findan*); b) a song or lay (*gidd*, *gesegan*, *spel*); c) outstandingly (*soðe*, *snyttrum*, *gerade*)—by using alternative Spanish words, as in Santano Moreno's rendition: a) "conocedor," "compuso," "entonar," "trenzando palabras";

b) "viejas historias," "antiguas leyendas," "cantar," "gesta"; c) "cuidada métrica," "recordaba bien," "de forma muy hábil," "cantaba con arte," "esmerada historia." Finally, the choice of vocabulary is accurate in both, although some terms used by Santano Moreno—"facundo" (l. 868a), "gesta" (l. 873b), "esmerada" (l. 873b) or "trenzando" (l. 874a)—convey the lofty tone of the original better that the everyday vocabulary deployed by Lerate and Lerate—"elocuente" (l. 868a), "canto" (l. 872b), "soltura" (l. 874a) or "cambiando" (l. 873b). All in all, Santano Moreno's is a necessarily domesticating translation, although some of the author's decisions help defamiliarise the Spanish version and convey a sense of tradition that fits the historical context of the original.

Gomes Gargamala's translation can be assessed by looking at lines 99-105 of "The Wanderer":

> Eorlas fornoman   asca þryþe
> wæpan wælgifru,   wyrd seo mære,
> ond þas stanhleoþu   stormas cnyssað,
> hrið hreosende   hrusan bindeð,
> wintres woma.   Þonne won cymeð
> nipeð nihtscua,   norþan onsendeð
> hreo hæglfare   hæleþum on andan.   (Muir 1994, 211)

The passage appears towards the end of the poem, after a section (ll. 92-95a) recounting the disappearance of some realities from a splendorous Germanic heroic past: the steed (*mearg*), the generous lord (*maþþumgyfa*), the banquetting hall (*symbla gesetu*). This imprints an image of decay that is reinforced by the direct reference to the decorated wall of a stronghold—*weal wundrum heah, wyrmlicum fah* (l. 98)—deserted after the death of warriors and subject to the effects of terrible wintry weather conditions. Gomes Gargamala translates these lines as follows:

> Lanzas de fresno quitaron con su fuerza la vida a los hombres,
> armas sedientas de sangre, destino infame;
> y a estos riscos de piedra la embravecida tempestad bate,
> la tierra encadenada por la nieve que la tormenta trae,
> el rugido del invierno. Arriba entonces la oscuridad,
> la sombra de la noche la penumbra propaga y del norte manda
> una feroz pedrisca que el pánico siembra entre los hombres. (73)

And this is how he describes the main tenets underlying his translation:

> por un lado, el mayor respeto posible por el sentido del "original" [...] y, por otro, el objetivo de lograr alcanzar una sonoridad en español que invite a que estos poemas se lean en voz alta. Para ello hemos hecho un uso extenso de la aliteración, tratando de mantener un

esquema prosódico rítmico similar al que encontramos en la lengua de origen, si bien hemos evitado que este principio comprometiese el significado y el sentido de las palabras del poeta anglosajón [...] o que condujese a una artificialidad desagradable en la lengua meta o a un arcaísmo desmesurado en nuestro estilo. (43)

Gomes Gargamala's general purpose, however, is not completely achieved in the lines under examination. They show alliteration, although they differ from the original in so far as the alliterating syllables extend over consecutive lines, sometimes involving more than one sequence of sounds and not necessarily in initial position, as attested by the repetition of <p> and <mbr> in ll. 104-105: "la so*mbr*a de la noche la *p*enu*mbr*a *p*ropaga y del norte manda / una feroz *p*edrisca que el *p*ánico sie*mbr*a entre los ho*mbr*es." Gomes Gargamala conveys the original aesthetic sound effect, which favours his version being suitable to be read aloud, as he intends. Nevertheless, I do not think that the use of alliteration alone contributes to his intention of "maintain[ing] a rythmic and prosodic effect similar to the original." Alliteration is not accompanied by a metrical arrangement based on four stressed syllables per line, which Santano Moreno achieves through his use of *dodecasílabo blanco*. On the contrary, Gomes Gargamala's choice of free verse results in a series of extended lines where the complex, compressed expression allowed by the synthetic grammatical organisation of the original is replaced with longer lines that expose the analytical structures of Spanish, with a superfluous use of prepositions and relative clauses. Obviously, this decision helps him construct an accurate and faithful version, but it necessarily entails a domesticating effect. In contrast, Lerate and Lerate's rendition shows some degree of strangeness. Alliteration is avoided but, again, four stressed syllables per line arranged into two hemistichs are used:

—el poder de las lanzas   ávidas armas
llevóse a los nobles,   ¡glorioso destino!—
y sus rampas de piedra   tormentas baten,
nieves y vientos   la tierra apresan
—horror del invierno—,   cuando vienen tinieblas,
lúgubres noches   y del norte arrasando
granizo furioso,   espanto de gentes. (1986, 158)

Sometimes, condensing the Spanish expression may result in the loss of information from the original. Thus, Lerate and Lerate do not mention the ash material of which the weapons are made—*asca* (l. 99b)—or their "blood-thirsty" disposition—*wælgifru* (l. 100a). In contrast, Gomes Gargamala's expanded text precludes this practice—except possibly when *eorlas* (l. 99a) is rendered as "hombres," with no indication of their inherent nobility—while occassionally leading to the use of surplus vocabulary not present in the Old English text, as when the adjective "embravecida" qualifies

"tempestad" (l. 101). Some decisions by Gomes Gargamala allow him to compensate for the domesticating effect mentioned above: for instance, the Old English word order is often maintained by placing verbs at the end of sentences—"la embravecida tempestad bate" (l. 101), "la tormenta trae" (l. 102), "del norte manda" (l. 104), "que el pánico siembra" (l. 105)—and the choice of some uncommon terms, like the verb "arribar," also creates a defamiliarising effect in Spanish.

4. Conclusion

One can only conclude this review by rejoicing at the publication of these two new translations of Old English poetry into Spanish, not only because they keep interest in early medieval English literature alive, but also, and especially, because, grounded in a well-established tradition in our country, they do so in a highly competent way. Santano Moreno and Gomes Gargamala have both managed to provide readable verse versions and, at the same time, have succeeded in rendering some of the cultural and poetic characteristics of the original, not only through their learned introductions and commentaries, but also as a result of some translation decisions that help defamiliarise their versions, thus circumventing to an extent the domesticating pull and echoing both the intensity and the conventions behind the original texts.

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