

# From Don Quixote to Doña Marina: Inter-Imperial Translation in Early Modern Europe

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France and Spain went to war some sixteen times between 1500 and 1700, and they only fought on the same side once (Parrot 83). In French translations of Spanish texts from this same period, translators restaged Franco-Iberian political conflicts as aesthetic rivalries. Seventeenth-century francophone translators often resorted to images of military and linguistic conversion to excite their readers' interest. For example, when César Oudin translated the first part of *Don Quixote* into French 1614, he introduced his text to Louis XIII by encouraging the monarch to “donner a ce Cheualier une place entre vos moindres soldats, où il sera la faction du mieux qu'il luy sera possible, si ce n'est a combattre ce sera a l'entretenir & luy faire passer quelques heures ennuyeses” (Oudin). Oudin asked the king of France and his other readers to imagine Cervantes's famous knight-errant as a neophyte in a French army.

Several decades later, Nicolas Amelot de la Houssaye dramatized Franco-Iberian imperial rivalries with another fantasy of linguistic dominance in his *L'homme de cour* (1684), a translation of Spanish baroque author Baltazar Gracián's *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* (1647). In the introductory epistle to Louis XIV, Amelot wrote “j'ai crû, que vous prendriés quelque sorte de plaisir à entendre parler à un si celebre

Espagnol une langue, que vos conquêtes font maintenant parler à tant de Villes, & de Provinces, qui ont change de Maitre”. Amelot observed that imperial conquest begot linguistic dominance, and he went on to fantasize that “si GRACIÁN eût vécu encore une vintaine d’années, il eût sans doute cessé d’appeler sa langue naturelle la Langue Universelle, & la Clef du Monde” (Amelot). Amelot resurrected the deceased Spanish author only to have him forced to speak French and to recognize it as the new universal language.

Seventeenth-century French translations of Spanish imperial histories staged imaginary linguistic and military conversions on an even larger scale. While real French and Spanish armies disputed land claims across Europe and the Americas, French translators turned Spanish imperial armies and their iconic leaders into *francophones* in the pages of their histories.<sup>1</sup> Samuel de Broë’s *Histoire de la conquete du Mexique* (1691), a translation of Antonio de Solís’s *Historia de la conquista de México* (1684), is one of the most commercially successful examples of such works. Between 1691 and 1714, eleven different publishers in Paris and The Hague produced thirteen different editions of Broë’s history, more than twice the number of Spanish language editions published during the same time span (Arocena 366–379). This spike in publications coincided with the War of the Spanish Succession and with

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1. For more on Franco-Spanish military conflicts between 1500 and 1700, see Parrot 83. For more on conflicts between France and Spain over land claims in the Americas during the 17th and early 18th centuries, see Weber 147–171.

French aspirations to increase territorial claims and economic reach across Europe and the Americas.<sup>2</sup>

The author of this bestselling translation left the best clues about his biography in his bibliography. According to the 1843 edition of the *Biographie universelle ancienne et moderne*, Samuel de Broë, also known as “CITRI DE LA GUETTE (S.)”, was an “auteur du 17<sup>e</sup> et du 18<sup>e</sup> siècle, dont on ne connaît ni la patrie, ni les dates de naissance et de mort, ni les diverses circonstances de la vie. Il ne méritait pas cet oubli, qu’ou ne peut attribuer qu’au voile de l’anonyme don’t il s’est toujours couvert” (Michaud 316). In spite of this veil of anonymity, the progression of Broë’s published works reveals that he began as an author of ancient Roman histories but ended as a translator of modern ones.<sup>3</sup> One explanation of this transition might point to Broë’s interest in commercial success in a changing market. While his *Histoire du premier et du second triumvirat depuis la mort de Catalina jusqu’à celle d’Antoine* (1681–83) was not reprinted until 1720 and his *Histoire de la conquête du royaume de Jérusalem* (1679) and *Histoire d’Auguste* (1686) were only printed once, his translations of Spanish imperial histories were much more popular with readers and

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2. See Roosen 152–164 for details about French ambitions to gain trade relationships and territories in the Americas at the turn to the 18th century.

3. In addition to the translation of Solís’s history, Broë published *Histoire de la conquête du royaume de Jérusalem sur les Chrestiens par Saladin, traduite d’un ancien manuscrit* (1679), *Histoire du premier et du second triumvirat depuis la mort de Catalina jusqu’à celle d’Antoine* (1681–83), *Histoire d’Auguste avec les particularitez de la vie de Jules César* (1686), *Histoire de la Conquête de la Floride, par les Espagnols, sous Ferdinand de Soto. Ecrite en Portugais par un Gentil-homme de la ville d’Elvas.* (1689), and *Histoire de la Découverte et de la Conquête du Pérou Traduite de l’Espagnol D’Augustin de Zarate* (1700). For more on the first work listed here, see Jubb 39–49.

publishers. *Histoire de la conquête du Mexique* was printed by four different publishing houses between 1691 and 1692 alone, and his *Histoire de la conquête de la Floride* (1685) was reprinted just four years after the first edition.

Broë presented his translations of stories of Spanish conquest in the Americas as entertaining novelties and as practical guides for French imperial expansion. In his preface to the *Histoire de la Conquête de la Floride*, he asserted that “il faut tomber d’accord qu’il ne peut y avoir trop d’Histoires de ces sortes d’expéditions” because such works “nous [donnent] le plaisir tout pur que l’on goûte dans la découverte des choses qui flattent agréablement l’imagination, tant par leur nouveauté, que par leur éclat”. However, he averred that histories of Spanish imperial expeditions were also “meslé de beaucoup d’instruction puisque c’est sur ces modeles que l’on doit se régler pour des pareilles entreprises” (Broë). In appealing to readers to embark on imaginary as well as actual imperial expeditions, Broë aimed to increase the commercial value of his work in a market where more people published, purchased, and read books than ever before (Ladborough 85). His preface indicates that he anticipated a range of readers and booksellers invested in Franco-Iberian imperial rivalries and interested in appropriating and adapting knowledge about the “indes occidentales” for a French universal library.<sup>4</sup> As such, his translations are efforts to conquer the Spanish imperial archive.

But Broë’s translations of Spanish imperial histories did more than just reproduce and circulate information in the service of French imperial projects. His translations restaged imperial and cultural rivalries on a more intimate scale as

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4. For more on efforts to construct a French universal library during the early modern period, see Chartier 72.

a battle for intellectual authority between himself and the contemporary Spanish authors he translated. According to Peter Burke, early modern translators approached texts differently based on genre. “The higher the status of the text, the greater was the pressure on the translator to follow the original wording closely” (“Cultures of translation” 28). In general, religious texts required the most careful fidelity, and Greek and Latin classics were next in order of importance. When Broë chose to translate contemporary history written in a vernacular language, he gave himself more more space to experiment and innovate than his classicist counterparts.<sup>5</sup>

Broë followed the work of contemporary translation theorists who sought to define an alternative space between two extremes: translation as copying and translation as imitation. The translator-copyist reproduced the source language text in the target language as closely as possible, whereas the translator-imitator modified the text he translated according to his own aesthetic preferences and to such an extent that he changed the meaning it conveyed.<sup>6</sup> Translators who defined a middle space between these models asserted that they were subservient neither to the author nor to their own creative passions. John Dryden, for example, described three sorts of translation: “the strict word-for-word ‘metaphrase’, the loose ‘imitation’, and the intermediate ‘paraphrase’, his own course” (Hayes 106).

Charles Sorel, who theorized historiographic translation

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5. Peter Burke describes the distinction between early modern European translations of ancient histories and modern histories and between European histories and of “histories from places outside Europe” in more detail in “Translating Histories” 128.

6. For more detailed descriptions of the translator-copyist and the translator-imitator, see the discussion of Gaspar de Tende and Nicolas Perrot d’Ablancourt in Ladborough 86–91.

in his *La bibliothèque française* (1667), described a translator capable of following the rules of the copyist but also of deciding when to break those rules according to his own critical reading of the texts he translated. Sorel justified the translator's necessary modifications to the text by pointing out that vernacular languages were constantly evolving. He stipulated that "On n'y doit employer que des mots qui soient de l'usage ordinaire; & si la grâce naturelle d'une Langue estrangère ne peut estre imitée quelque part, en traduisant parole pour parole, il faut remplir cet endroit de quelque chose qui vaille autant en notre Langue" (233). Sorel's translator identified spaces in text where the source language differed aesthetically from the target language. He redefined those spaces places of absence waiting to be filled with words from the target language. Sorel's translator was neither completely a copyist nor an imitator. Rather, he consciously chose when and how to switch between reproducing the text word for word and modifying the text, and he justified his choices on aesthetic grounds.

Broë's own evaluation of his role as translator in his "Préface" to the *Histoire de la découverte et de la conquete du Perou* (1700) contains remarkable similarities to the kind of translator Sorel described. Broë discussed the "regles qu'on s'est proposé de suivre dans cette version". He confessed that despite taking the utmost care to "rendre par tout exactement le sens de l'original," he had to take liberties with the language since

Il arrive nécessairement de là qu'il y a des beautez & des agrémens dans un original qu'on ne sauroit égaler dans une version : mais il se rencontre aussi quelques fois que la langue du Traducteur a des avantages à cet égard sur celle de son auteur, & qu'on y peut

exprimer plus nettement & avec plus de force & de naïveté certaines pensées qu'elles ne peuvent l'être dans une autre langue. (Broë)

Broë asserted here that he was capable both of reproducing meaning exactly and also of improving ideas in the source language text. He presented himself as an expert in language and in ideas with the authority to modify the text he translated.

For Sorel and for Broë, the translator of histories had more intellectual authority than the historian in part because of his temporal distance from the author. Because they saw the French language as constantly evolving toward a more perfect state, Sorel and for Broë believed the French translator of another vernacular language in a position to “corriger les fautes qui y ont esté faites, & de les purger de plusieurs mauvais mots, ou de mots anciens qui n'ont plus de crédit” (Sorel 234). The translator benefitted from a cultural secondarity common to early modern French intellectual culture, in which francophone thinkers strove to redefine themselves as superior rather than subservient to their Greek and Roman predecessors. In the words of Sara Melzer, “By virtue of coming second, the work of culture and art could harness, control and improve upon the deficiencies inherent in the primitive impulses of a first nature” (200). Assigning a positive connotation to cultural secondarity allowed the translator of modern, vernacular histories to argue that he improved the text he translated.

Broë admitted to modifying the text he translated to improve the strength and clarity of its ideas, but he also assured readers that he reproduced its meaning “par tout exactement” whenever possible. While his modifications are significant, so are his even more frequent decisions to closely reproduce the language of his Spanish authors' texts. As Barbara Fuchs

remarks in her work on Anglo-Spanish literary and cultural exchange during the early modern period, while *imitatio* is “a historically situated practice, coterminous with imperial competition and national self-definition,” overemphasizing political rivalry between two nations can incur the “risk of occluding the significant literary and cultural contacts” between them (4–5). Broë’s movement between closely reproducing Solís’s texts and adding to it are testaments to Franco-Iberian imperial cultural affinities as well as rivalries.

In choosing when to reproduce *Historia de la conquista de México* as exactly as possible and when to modify it, Broë constructed what Julie Hayes has called an “historically innovative form of subjectivity” for early modern translators. Hayes asserts that Dryden and other translators “might actually be rejecting oppositions between literalness and license, master and slave, original and copy, self and other, past and present, to fashion a ‘translational,’ rather than authorial, self-consciousness, overcoming the dichotomy between translators as abject and dependent and authors as independent and original” (112–113). Like the translators that Hayes describes, Broë used translation to test the boundaries of his own subjectivity as a translator and as a critic of modern history. As I will argue, Broë crafted a veiled critique of the Spanish author’s work and inserted his own interpretation of the events the Spanish text describes between the lines of his French text. Below, I outline the author and translator’s shared approach to historiography, and I define the role of the translator as an historian and a critic in his own right. I then compare the strategies Broë used to critique his author in his preface with the ones he used in the body of his translation. Finally, I explain how Broë defended his role as self-conscious creator and critic through his transformation of the figure of Doña Marina, Hernán Cortés’s interpreter.

## Franco-Iberian Political and Intellectual Affinities

Antonio de Solís was the official chronicler of the Indies under Phillip II, Mariana of Austria, and Charles II. His *Historia de la conquista de México* (1684) constructed an heroic account of a tremendously violent episode in Spanish imperial history. With his history, Solís attempted to counteract reports of the atrocities committed by the Spanish in the Americas circulated by the authors of the black legend (Arocena 252). He followed a classic historiographic model and presented his conquest narrative as “an example—‘magister vitae’—to learn from” (Chang-Rodríguez 24). He placed Hernán Cortés—the Spanish conquistador whose armies captured the Aztec capital Tenochtitlán and the self-proclaimed ruler of Mexico from 1521 to 1524—at the center of the action he narrated and painted him as a model of machiavellian political virtue. In the words of Luis Arocena, “Solís descubre en Cortés una artificiosa habilidad para ocultar el juego en que se empeña, disfrazar sentimientos, velar el sentido de sus acciones [. . .] disimular el fin que se propone alcanzar, y sobre todo, una capacidad casi histriónica para representar el papel que mejor convenga a la circunstancia” (Arocena 192). Solís, the Spanish historian, created an idealized conquistador according to a repertoire of political and rhetorical practices he shared with Broë, the French translator.

Solís crafted a heroic protagonist able to single-handedly control vast armies and skillfully manipulate his adversaries to gain political advantages. Some of the Spanish historian’s most striking examples of Cortés’s mastery of political skill appear in descriptions of the subtle workings of his facial muscles. For example, shortly after the conquistador reaches Cozumel, he asks a group of “indios” to renounce their “idols” and follow his religion. When they protest his demand, he

orders his soldiers to respond without pronouncing a single word. Solís recounts that “Irritóse Cortés de oír semejante amenaza, y los soldados, hechos a observar su semblante, conocieron su determinación y embistieron con el ídolo, arrojándole del altar hecho pedazos” (46). Here, Cortés’s actions resemble those of the classical model military leader who “incorporates in the instruments of persuasion nonverbal elements, such as gesture” (Cox 177). The conquistador controls his facial expression so skillfully that he can give his subordinates orders without moving or speaking. On the diegetic level, Cortés demonstrates his ability to curb his passions, to govern his subordinates, and to orchestrate imperial victories. His carefully calibrated facial expression sets off a chain of events that culminates with the celebration of a Catholic mass at the altar where the “idol” once stood. On the rhetorical level, Solís shows homage to his hero’s exemplary self-control.

The translator also scrutinized Cortés’s face when he rewrote this episode in French. In his translation, Broë expanded upon Solís’s description of Cortés’s face to provide more nuanced details. In this side-by-side transcription of the Spanish passage next to its French counterpart and in all subsequent citations of the French translation, Broë’s additions are underlined.

“Irritóse Cortés de oír semejante amenaza, y los soldados, hechos a observar su semblante, conocieron su determinación y embistieron con el ídolo, arrojándole del altar hecho pedazos” (46).

“Leurs menaces ne firent qu’irriter Cortés ; & les Soldats accoutumés à *interpréter les mouvemens qui paroissoient sur son visage*, comprirent *aussi-tôt* son intention, & se jetterent sur l’Idole *avec tant d’ardeur*, qu’elle fut mise en pièces *en un moment*” (54).

When Broë replaced the Spanish phrase “observar su semblante” with “interpréter les mouvemens qui paroissoient sur son visage” he created a record of his own critical intervention in the text. In Broë’s version, the soldiers don’t just observe Cortés’s face; they exercise their intellects to interpret the movements that appear there. The translator also intensifies the tone of this passage and accelerates the action when he clarifies that the soldiers understood their general’s intention immediately (“aussi-tôt”) and when he adds a description of their ardor (“avec tant d’ardeur”).

The changes in the French version are subtle but significant. Like the *francophone* soldiers who scrutinize the subtle movements of Cortés’s face, Broë used his intellect to actively interpret Solís’s history. Solís consistently praises Cortés’s talent for hiding his inner thoughts and for strategically displaying certain emotions. In the French translation, Broë consistently adds details to descriptions Cortés’s face to signal that he understands and values the skills Solís highlighted in his protagonist. For example, when Cortés appears in Moctezuma’s palace to take him prisoner, Solís tells us that he speaks to the Aztec monarch “dejando al enojo todo el semblante” (216). In the French version, the general levels his accusations “en laissant *paraître* sur son visage tout le chagrin *dont il étoit rempli*” (316). Broë amplified the action in this passage by replacing Solís’s one verb “dejar” with three verbs: “laisser”, “paraître”, and “remplir”. When Broë expanded upon the soldiers’ actions and added words to Solís’s history, he created a record of his own process of critically reading the text and adding to the knowledge he perceived there. He wrote evidence of his labor as a reader and a critic into his translation.

As Broë translated, he probed past the text’s surface to search for hidden truths in an intellectual process he and

his contemporaries likely referred to as “pénétration”. The verb “pénétrer” is a French iteration of a critical practice discussed across early modern Spain and France. When Antoine Furetière’s French dictionary was first published in its entirety in 1690, one year before *Histoire de la conquête du Mexique* was published, it included nine variations on the verb “pénétrer”. Furetière explained that “Pénétrer, signifie encore, approfondir une affaire, une science, la connoistre parfaitement. Ce Rapporteur a voulu *pénétrer* le fonds de ce procès, il en a voulu voir la source & l’origine. Ce Philosophe a *penetré* bien avant dans les secrets de la nature, dans la plus fine Geometrie” (75). Broë translated through a process similar to the one Furetière’s philosophe used to discern the secrets of nature. He read critically to understand the source and origin of Solís’s ideas and he added details to the text in translation to develop those ideas further.

An earlier example of a discussion of penetration as a critical practice is rooted in Franco-Iberian intellectual exchange. In his *Oráculo manual y arte de prudencia* (1647), at the end of a section on “el hombre juizioso y notante”, Gracián remarked that the prudent man “todo lo descubre, advierte, alcanza, y comprehende” (40). In his French translation published in 1684, Amelot replaced the adjective “notante” with “pénétrant” when he changed the introduction to the maxim to read “l’homme judicieux et pénétrant.” He also added a footnote where he further explained that “L’homme judicieux découvre tout, devine tout, & pénétre tout: Il discerne d’abord l’apparence d’avec la réalité. Il regarde au dedans, sans s’arrêter à la superficie vulgaire. Il déchifre les intentions & les fins. Car il porte avec soi le contre-chiffre de la critique” (50). Here, Amelot described the talents of a man who can discern and interpret what is hidden beneath

the surface of both people and texts. And in the very act of translating this section of Gracián's manual, Amelot acted out these virtues. He updated the lexicon and added a footnote to give a more detailed explanation of the author's maxim.<sup>7</sup> The translator also underscored the value of the "contre-chiffre de la critique", or the counter-code of criticism here. Amelot and Broë acted out a model for translation in which the translator was an "homme judicieux et pénétrant" who used criticism to decode and interpret his author's ideas.

When Broë left evidence of his critical reading and rewriting in the French translation, he asserted both his cultural affinity with the Spanish author and his own superior intellectual authority. Of course this evidence would not have been visible to a monolingual reader. But Broë suggests that he translates with multi-lingual, comparative readers in mind in his "Préface" to the *Histoire de la découverte et de la conquête du Perou* (1700). He expresses his hope that his modifications improved the text "en quelques endroits de cet ouvrage & qu'on a rendu le sens plus clair & plus net en François qu'il ne l'étoit dans l'Espagnol". Then he describes his ideal reader when he asserts that "comme ceux qui voudront se donner la peine de lire l'un & l'autre, le pourront aisement remarquer" (Broë). By inviting multilingual readers to examine both texts and verify his claim that he improved the Spanish author's work, Broë indicates that he modified the histories he translated thoughtfully and self-consciously. Broë did not act solely as a translator-copyist, but also as a critical, "penetrating" reader and re-writer.

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7. Jacob Soll discusses the material rhetoric of prudence as it was employed by Amelot and other early modern French intellectuals to produce encoded political criticism in *Publishing the Prince*. See Soll 8–21.

## Amplification as Criticism

Broë left evidence in his translation that he was an expert reader of Solís, able to recognize and reproduce the cultural nuances of the Spanish text. But he also used a range of strategies to write evidence of his critical reading of Solís into his translation. In the preface to his *Histoire de la conquête du Mexique*, he defined his role as a critic of Solís and as a rival historian. In the body of his text, he amplified and modified the Spanish history to create a record of his own interpretations of the events Solís described.

In his preface to *Histoire de la conquête du Mexique*, Broë established criteria for judging an historian's work and evaluated Solís accordingly. He explained that Solís knew how to “employer adroitement les talens d'un habile Ecrivain”, and claimed that the historian used these talents to create an idealised vision of Cortés. Broë remarked that “[ce] qui merite le plus d'attention, est qu'il [Solís] donne par tout un si beau jour aux actions de Fernand Cortés, qu'il s'en faut peu qu'il n'en fasse un Heros” (Broë). Here, Broë acted as a critic by pointing out that the Spanish historian create a biased vision of his protagonist.

Broë also used his preface to assert himself as an historian in his own right. He remarked that the Spanish author selected only the attractive and correct (“de belles & de justes”) events in his version of the conquest of Mexico. He reasoned that Solís ended his account when Cortés and his army took Tenochtitlán to avoid finding himself in a “fâcheux démêlé, entre le respect qu'on doit à la verité, & l'inclination qu'il avoit pour son Heros. Il sçavoit que la prise de Mexique eut quelques cironstances peu favorables à la gloire de Cortés, dont il ne vouloit point ternir le lustre” (Broë). After pointing out the flaws in Solís's work—the Spanish author willfully

manipulated details and omitted key events in order to create an shining portrait of his protagonist—Broë announced his intent to crack open the “luster” Solís painted around his subject (“[en] donner quelque atteinte”) and then to “instruire en même tems le Lecteur du reste de la Vie de ce Conquerant” (Broë). Broë proceeded to use the remaining pages of his preface to outline the violent acts the Spanish committed in the Americas and to narrate several conspiracies that Spanish soldiers plotted against Cortés to prove that the conquistador was not the exemplary figure Solís described.

Broë didn’t stop at positioning himself as a rival historian. He even implied that he was a less biased historian than the Spanish author thanks to his temporal and spatial distance from the events in Solís’s history. In his preface, Broë suggested that Solís was not an historian but a flatterer, one of such authors who “ne débitent que des éloges, chargez de lâches flatteries, ou des Satyres noircies d’impostures, & des traits d’une passion intéressée” (Broë). Broë overtly claimed that Solís neglected the truth in order to avoid tarnishing a heroic image of Cortés, and he implicitly cast himself as a less biased historian when he narrated the atrocities Cortés committed and the opposition he faced. In so doing, Broë suggested that his position as a translator enabled him to correct the “passion intéressée” that motivated the Spanish historian and that his translation was less biased than the original.

While in his preface Broë overtly challenged Solís’s representation of Cortés, in the body of his translation, he reproduced Solís’s position very closely and even exaggerated it at times. For example, Solís defended Cortés against foreign critics when he remarked that “Notablemente se fatigan los extranjeros para desacreditar los aciertos de Cortés en esta empresa” (289). Broë used his preface precisely to discredit Cortés’s actions during the Spanish conquest of Mexico, but

in the body of his translation, Broë reproduced Solís's phrase very closely as "Les Etrangers ont pris le soin de décrier la conduite de Cortés en toute cette entreprise" (433). However, when read against Broë's previous accusation that Solís gave a biased account of Cortés's character, this praise of Cortés in French becomes tinged with irony.

Broë amplified the Spanish author's praise in other passages that can be read as similarly ironic and critical. I understand amplification as the renaissance textual practice Peter Burke describes as follows. "It was not uncommon for translators to render one word in the original by two, perhaps out of insecurity, though possibly because conjoint phrases pleased the ears of readers of this period. . . . Amplifications might introduce new messages as well as reinforcing existing ones" (Burke 32). Broë employs amplification in a broader sense. He renders words and phrases in the original by two or more and inserts additional clauses into sentences, and these modifications to the text reinforce existing messages to such an extent that they exaggerate them.

In the following example, while Broë appears to reinforce Solís's defense of Cortés's noble character, his amplifications can be read as a coded critique of what he understood as Solís's personal bias. Thus Broë exaggerates the Spanish text's defense of Cortés against foreign authors in order to criticize Solís.

Defiéndale su entendimiento de semejante absurdo, si no le defendiere la nobleza de su ánimo de tan horrible maldad (289).

mais *les preuves qu'il a données de sa prudence & de son bon esprit*, dévoient bien le garantir *du soupçon d'une si haute extravagance*, quand l'élévation de son ame & *sa haute générosité* ne le défendroient pas de la *malignité* d'une si cruelle action (433).

Here, Broë used 44 words to reproduce what the Spanish author expressed in 19. Broë amplified the author's defense of the conquistador by praising him for virtues the source text never mentioned ("prudence", "bon esprit", "haute générosité") and by intensifying the language used to describe the accusations against Cortés. The translator also added the word "haute" twice as if signal his own intentional exaggeration. While in his preface Broë argued that Solís was driven by a "passion intéressée" to inflate the virtues of his protagonist, in the body of his translation, Broë further inflated Solís's defense of Cortés. It is possible to read this excess of words, adjectives, and praise as a coded critique of Solís's history. Broë worked between the lines of the text and mocked Solís's exaggerations with more exaggerations.

In another example of Broë's use of amplification, the translator commented ironically on Solís's representation of his protagonist's heroic qualities. In the following excerpt, he lengthened Solís's description of an episode where the conquistador removes the shackles he used to imprison Moctezuma, the tlatoani of the Mexica at the time of Cortés's arrival, in his own palace. In his French translation of this passage, Broë exaggerates Solís's praise of Cortés and adds details to Moctezuma's response.

y se puede creer de su advertencia, que procuraría dar con semejante cortesanía mayor recomendación al deagravio. Recibió Moctezuma con grande alborozo este alivio de su libertad, abrazó dos veces a Cortés, y no acababa de cumplir con su agradecimiento (222).

*La presence d'esprit que brilloit en toutes les actions du General, donne lieu de croire en effet, qu'il voulut par cette galanterie, réparer avec plus de grace, la honte que Moctezuma avoit reçue : ☞ ce Prince applaudit à ce faux retour de sa liberté, par des transports de joie*

*difficiles à exprimer*. Il embrassa le General ; & il ne pouvoit finir les complimens qu'il luy fit *sur ce sujet* (327).

Here, Broë adds thirty words to this passage, including a description of the “esprit que brilloit en toutes les actions du General”. This phrase is not a comment on Cortés’s actions, but rather on the way Solís represents them. Thus Broë uses amplification to assert that Solís created an overly heroic Cortés. He also adds phrases not present in the source text to underscore the artificiality of the exchange between Cortés and Moctezuma.

The translator comments particularly on the falsity of Moctezuma’s liberty (“ce faux retour de sa liberté”) and on the monarch’s difficulty expressing his feelings (“transports de joie difficiles à exprimer”). When Broë exaggerates the political game Cortés and his captive play to hide their true thoughts and intentions from each other, his translation points to a parallel movement in his interaction with Solís’s text. Broë’s comments on Moctezuma’s false liberty and artificial displays of affect are indirect comments on his own position as a translator. Broë uses translation to explicitly and implicitly point out Solís’s excesses of passion and to correct them. But as a translator, Broë is caught in a difficult position. He modifies Solís’s text enough so that his own work would be visible enough to a careful, multi-lingual reader but not so much that he would risk compromising his pledge to accurately reproduce part of the Spanish imperial archive. Thus he must manipulate the appearance of his work just as Moctezuma must manipulate the appearance of his emotions in an attempt to gain political advantage.

In the final example of amplification considered here, the author and the translator both work to interpret and correct

a contested episode in the history of the conquest of Mexico. After defeating the armies of Pánfilo de Narváez, Cortés's army returns to the palace where Moctezuma is imprisoned. Solís explains that Bernal Díaz del Castillo and Antonio de Herrera both alleged that Cortés responded rudely when Moctezuma welcomed him back to the palace. But Solís defends the conquistador against these allegations. First, Solís explains that neither Francisco López de Gómara nor Cortés himself in his relations describes the encounter in this way. Then he reasons that "Acción parece indigna de Cortés el despreciarle, cuando podía llegar el caso de haberle menester; y no era de su genio la destemplanza que se le atribuye, como efecto de la prosperidad" (273). Solís offers a critical reading of his predecessors' work and reasons that their depictions of Cortés's rude behavior are inconsistent with the conquistador's character.

Both the author and the translator go on to attempt to decode the messages of other authors and produce a more authoritative account of history. Their authority depends, in part, on their ability to make this decoding process visible and legible to their readers. In the following passage, Solís continues his criticism of rival historians. He explains that Antonio de Herrera had a hidden motive for contradicting other sources on Cortés's behavior and for sullyng the conquistador's character. Solís argues that Herrera twisted history to justify including a *sentencia* from Tacitus. While Solís's reader is left to recall the *sentencia* from memory, Broë provides it for his reader and thus demonstrates his own familiarity with the Roman historian's work. The translator explains that "le sens [of the *sentencia*] est, *Que les heureux succez rendent insolens les grands Capitaines*" (408). Here is a critique of Herrera as articulated by Solís and Broë.

Puédese creer, o sospechar a los menos, que Antonio de Herrera entró con poco fundamento en esta noticia, reincidiendo en los manuscritos de Bernal Díaz, apasionado intérprete de Cortés, y pudo ser que se inclinase a seguir su opinion por lograr la sentencia de Tácito: ambición peligrosa en los historiadores, porque suele torcerse o ladearse la narración, para que vengan a propósito las márgenes; y no es de todos entenderse a un tiempo con la verdad y con la erudición (273).

On peut donc croire, ou au moins soupçonner, que Herrera avoit donné, sur un foible fondement, dans cette opinion, en tombant sur le Manuscrit de Bernard Diaz, interprete *trop* passionné des actions de Cortez; & il se peut faire qu'il a adopté ce sentiment, *afin de faire une vaine parade d'érudition sur la maxime de Tacite*: dangereuse ambition des Historiens, qui estropient la *verité*, pour l'appliquer selon leur sens, *aux remarques qui leur plaisent; ignorant que c'est un secret de l'art tres-difficile, d'accorder la verité avec l'érudition* (408).

This passage is significant because while Solís decodes the intentions of Herrera, Broë had to simultaneously reproduce Solís's argument and to modify the text so as to leave traces of his own interpretative work. Broë does not conform completely to the Spanish author's interpretation. Rather, he adds to Solís's diagnosis to remark that Bernal Díaz is excessively passionate ("*trop passioné*"). He also adds that Bernal Díaz twisted history not only to justify the *sentencia* but also to make a vain show of erudition and to subjugate the truth to his own preferences. At the end of the excerpt, Solís attests that some historians are incapable of expressing truth and erudition simultaneously. If the historian's task is to conjugate truth and erudition, it is a task that is not for everyone ("no es

de todos”). But Broë modifies this observation on historiography when he qualifies the historian’s work as “un secret de l’art tres-difficile”. Rather than claim that writing history was not for everyone, Broë chose to describe it as an art with difficult secrets, an art from which he refused to exclude himself.

Broë’s approach to translation differed in theory and in practice. While he explicitly justified his modifications to his author’s text on aesthetic grounds (he claimed to find “des beautez & des agrémens” in French that didn’t exist in Spanish), in practice he chose to modify moments in the text that allowed him prove himself the intellectual equal or superior to his Spanish author. Broë amplified sections of the text as a means to defend his own ability to shape history. He created spaces in the text to insist upon his work not just as a translator and an historian but also as a critic of historiography.

### **A Translator Transformed**

Broë’s comments on and modifications to the source text show that he viewed himself both as Solís’s ideal reader and as his rival. Broë’s interventions in the history he rewrites are particularly visible when he describes Malinche, a figure often understood as Cortés’s most famous interpreter. Malinche—also called Malinalli, Malintzin, Marina, and Doña Marina—is renamed “Marine” by Broë. Malinche spoke náhuatl and maya, and she became Cortés’s interpreter after she was given to him with 20 other enslaved indigenous women by the cacique of Tabasco.<sup>8</sup>

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8. For more on Malintzin and critical approaches to her role as a translator or interpreter, see Flores Farfán 117–137 and Glantz 167–182.

In Solís's history, Marina is an astute figure who does more than just rearticulate a series of words in one language with a series of words in another. For example, at one point she uses a "breve oración" to convince Moctezuma to turn himself over to the Spanish conquistador. In Solís's history, she also uses her intelligence and powers of dissimulation to inform Cortés and his army of a plot against them by rival armies in Cholula. While the Spanish author alludes to Marina's political aptitudes, the French translation goes a step further. Broë consistently adds to his translation to describe Marine as a more intelligent and politically self-aware figure than she is in the Spanish text. When he gives her more power in his translation, Broë also crafts a veiled commentary on his own power to shape history.

When the historian and the translator introduce Malinche to their readers, they reveal that Cortés took advantage of her "por términos menos decentes que debiera" or, as Broë puts it, "par des manieres que la pureté ne permet pas" and that the two had a child together. But each writer interprets their union in different ways.

reprehensible medio de asegurarla en su fidelidad, que dicen algunos tuvo parte de política; pero nosotros creeríamos antes que fue desacierto de una pasión mal corregida, y que no es nuevo en el mundo el llamarse razón de estado flaqueza de la razón (69).

*Les Politiques ont beau chercher des pretextes pour déguiser le vice de Cortés, en disant que c'étoit pour s'assurer d'autant plus de la fidélité d'une personne dont il dépendoit nécessairement. Bien loin de recevoir ces excuses, on reconnoît en cette action l'emportement d'une passion dérégulée, quoiqu'on soit accoutumé dans le monde à voir donner le titre spécieux de raison d'Etat, à ce qui n'est en effet qu'une foiblesse de raison (82).*

In these excerpts, Solís criticizes Cortés for allowing his passion to overtake his reason. But Broë nearly doubles the source text to add a more emphatic condemnation of the sexual union between Malinche and Cortés. The French translator turns the unspecified “algunos” who condemn the conquistador in Spanish to “Les Politiques,” and these politicians don’t just say things (“dicen que”) about Cortés and Malinche, but rather they generate “pretexts” and “excuses” to “disguise the vice” of Cortés. Furthermore, while Solís and Broë both mention reason of state, Broë goes as far as to qualify this doctrine as “specious” (“spécieux”), thus criticizing Solís’s political alignment with the idea of “the state as its own moral system” (Najemy 8).

Perhaps the most noteworthy modification the translator makes to this passage is his description of the relationship of dependency between Malinche and Cortés. Broë adds his own words to explain that Marine is “une personne dont il [Cortés] dépendoit nécessairement”. With this amplification, Broë inserts his own interpretation of their relationship into his translation and, at the same time, he reveals his understanding of his role as a translator. Broë, like Malinche, appears at first glance to be Cortés’s subordinate because he too transmits other peoples’ messages from one language to another. But Broë adds a description of Cortés’s dependency on an interpreter to suggest that just as Cortés depends on Malinche, so does Solís depend on him to transmit his history to a wider audience.

I argue that Broë made these changes consciously because in addition to rewriting Malinche as a more powerful figure, he adds explanations of her consciousness of her own power. In the example below, where Solís gives a straightforward account of her faithfulness to Cortés, Broë adds information to this description to reveal the depth of her self-awareness.

Fue siempre doña Marina fidelísima intérprete de Hernán Cortés (69).

*Ce fut en cette occasion que Donna Marina commença d'entrer dans la confiance du General ; à quoy elle appliqua toute l'adresse de son esprit, en luy servant de Truchement avec une fidélité tres-rare (81–82)*

Broë used 34 words to Solís's 9. He gave additional dimension to the interpreter's actions by adding verbs that connoted her conscious effort to gain Cortés's trust. In Spanish, she is described with a single adjective, "fidelísima", but in French she possesses "une fidélité tres-rare" and dedicates "toute l'adresse de son esprit" to gaining the general's confidence. She acts out a process that she consciously and deliberately devises.

In the French translation, Marine is consistently more politically astute than in the Spanish text. For example, when Cortés endeavors to convince Moctezuma to voluntarily imprison himself in his own palace, Marine steps in and uses her linguistic skills to persuade the ruler to acquiesce. When Moctezuma hears several soldiers arguing in favor of killing him, he asks Marine to interpret their words. Solís explains that "ella con este motivo y con aquella discreción natural que le daba hechas las razones y hallada la oportunidad le dijo. . . ." (217), but Broë renders this as "Cette femme *trouvant alors une ouverture favorable à luy insinuer adroitement les raisons qui pouvoient le déterminer à ce qu'on souhaitoit, luy dît. . .*" (318). Here, the translator does not add words, but he reconstructs the phrase to make Marine's role a more active one. The Spanish version is full of passive constructions: the reasons have been made and the opportunity has been found. But in French, Marine "finds" an opportunity to "skillfully" influence Moctezuma.

At the end of her speech in the Spanish text to convince Moctezuma to follow Cortés, Malinche tells him “Si vais con ellos seríés tratado con el respeto que se debe a vuestra persona; y si hacéis mayor resistencia peligrá vuestra vida” (217). In French, her words become “Si vous allez avec eux, vous y serez traité avec tout le respect qui est dû à votre personne; mais si vous leur résistez davantage, *je ne répons pas de vôtre vie*” (318). In the Spanish version, the subject of the verb “peligrar” (put in danger) is unclear or implied to be Moctezuma himself, but in the French version Marine grants herself the capacity to answer for the ruler’s life in the first person.

The modifications Broë makes to Solís’s text would seem to anticipate the assertions of twentieth-century critics who insist that Malinche is not just an interpreter of languages but also a cultural intermediary who made conscious decisions about the central role she played in the history of the conquest of Mexico. Margo Glantz, for example, points out that Malinche is neither a slave nor a concubine nor merely an interpreter to Cortés, but rather someone who becomes, by her own will, “secretaria y faraute de Cortés. Lo ha logrado porque es, recuerda Bernal [Díaz del Castillo], de buen parecer, entrometida y desenvuelta” (176). Broë seems to agree that Malinche is a central actor in the history, but more than revealing his interest in how she is represented by Solís, the French translator reveals his understanding of his own centrality in the writing of imperial history. Broë reshapes Malinche into someone who is more intelligent, powerful, and self-conscious because this is the way he sees himself as a translator. Just as the *francophone* Marine strategically selects moments to skillfully influence the people around her, Broë uses Cortés’s interpreter to comment on his own power shape history.

## Conclusion

Samuel de Broë would likely have been familiar with metaphors that likened the translator to the slave of the author. For example, in his 1658 “Discours contre la traduction”, Guillaume Colletet expressed his frustration with the translator-copyist model by calling himself the author’s slave. Colletet, poet and founding member of the Académie française, wrote “Suivre comme un esclave un Auteur pas à pas / Chercher de la raison où l’on n’en trouve pas, / Distiler son Esprit sur chaque periode, / Faire d’un vieux Latin du François à la mode, / . . . / Certes, c’est un travail dont je suis si lassé, / Que j’en ay le corps foible, & l’esprit émoussé” (208). Colletet refuses to be a slave to a classical author who writes in “vieux Latin”. But Broë, who translates from a contemporary imperial archive and in the context of an ongoing competition between Spain and France for material and intellectual resources, can’t reject the translator-copyist model as emphatically as his classicist predecessor. Since Broë charges himself with transmitting useful information for French imperial projects, he must maintain his authority as an expert reader by promising to produce an accurate translation. But Broë can’t pledge his complete subservience to a Spanish author either. Since he is reproducing the text of a rival historian from a rival nation, he has to prove (if only to himself and a small group of readers willing to read the French and Spanish texts together) that he is not a slave to Solís, that he is more than a translator-copyist.

Broë opens up a new space for himself beyond the models of the translator-copyist and the translator-imitator when he uses translation as a platform for historiographic criticism. He positions himself as the intellectual rival of the Spanish

author he translates by overtly criticizing Solís, announcing his intent to add missing information to Solís's version of history, using ironic amplification to criticize Solís's biases, and recreating Cortés's interpreter in his own image. In addition to presenting himself as a rival historian, Broë bases his authority on resources exclusively available to translators: his access to the "des beautez & des agrémens" of the French language, his temporal and rational distance from the events his translation described, and his mastery of the "contre-chiffre de la critique", or the ability to decode and interpret historical texts. Translation from Spanish imperial histories gave Broë the space and the tools to explore Franco-Iberian cultural and political affinities and rivalries, to assert his own power to write history in translation, and to enact a new translational subjectivity as a translator-critic.

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