

Exchanged Languages and Anachronistic Translations

The Case of *Descripción del virreinato del Perú, en particular de Lima*

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Abstract *Descripción del virreinato del Perú, en particular de Lima* was written in Spanish during the first half of the 17th century by an unknown author. The manuscript was found in Paris and presented by Riva Agüero in 1914. Underlying the 2009 and 2013 editions is the thesis that the anonymous author would have been a Portuguese New Christian who travelled through the Spanish empire during the period of union between the Iberian thrones in parallel with the established legal separation. Just as Pratt used the Andean manuscript of Guaman Poma de Ayala in applying the concepts of “contact zone”, this article utilises her theories to try to understand why this supposed Portuguese individual used the Spanish language in his description of the territory of ancient Peru.

Keywords Contact zone. Translation. Identity. Language. Iberian Peninsula. Latin America. Peru.

Summary 1 Introduction. – 2 Reflections Based on the Theoretical Concepts of Mary Louise Pratt. – 3 Issues of Identity. – 4 A Literary Text too. – 5 Some Comments on Translations. – 6 Final Remarks.



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1 Introduction

Descripción del virreinato del Perú, en particular de Lima was written in Spanish during the first half of the 17th century by an unknown author, probably Portuguese. The manuscript (or most probably a copy of the manuscript) was found in the National Library of Paris and presented at the Hispano-American History and Geography Conference (*Congreso de Historia y Geografía Hispano-Americana*) by José de la Riva Agüero in Seville in 1914. Years later, Rubén Vargas Ugarte published a few fragments of the document. In 1958, a transcript was published in its entirety by Boleslao Lewin, from the Universidad Nacional del Litoral de Rosario (Argentina). In 2009, the Universidad Ricardo Palma (Peru) published a full edition, based on Lewin's text, accompanied by a translation into Portuguese (Huarag Álvarez 2009). Finally, in 2013, a new Portuguese translation was published using the same source, edited by three academic projects from Portuguese university research centre, namely CHAM - Centre for Overseas History (*Centro de História de Além-Mar* - Universidade Nova de Lisboa), the Spanish and Ibero-American Studies Nucleus (*Núcleo de Estudos Ibéricos e Ibero-Americanos* - Universidade Nova de Lisboa) and the Centre for Comparative Studies (*Centro de Estudos Comparatistas* - Universidade de Lisboa) (Branco, Rodríguez García Lacerda 2013). These centres have sought to deepen the historical, cultural and social knowledge obtained over time between Portugal and Spain. Just as Mary Louise Pratt used another Andean manuscript, by Guaman Poma de Ayala, in applying her theory of "contact zone", in this article I wish to adopt this concept to try to understand why a Portuguese individual used the Spanish language in his description of the territory of ancient Peru, its geography, agriculture, military fortifications, urbanism and commercial practices. I will also make a brief reference to the translations of this text into Portuguese published in 2009 and 2013. As we will see later, Pratt (1991, 34) defines contact zone as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power".

Underlying the two editions is the thesis, which has practically been proven, that the anonymous author of these two texts would have been the Portuguese Pedro de León Portocarrero, a New Christian, who, like many other Portuguese, travelled through the Spanish empire, more specifically through Andean areas, during the period of union between the Iberian thrones, establishing relations between

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the subdued Iberian subjects in parallel with the established legal separation. This would therefore be a 'return' to the mother tongue of the author made known to a Portuguese-speaking audience, whether academic or not. As explained by Margarita Rodríguez in the presentation of the 2013 intra-university project, this is also one of the aims of the project:

In order to disseminate the text among a Portuguese-speaking public, we have now opted to publish the Portuguese translation of the manuscript. [...] We intend with this edition to reach not only an academic public but also all those who are interested in travel literature or are curious about the history of Latin America and Peru in particular. The Portuguese translation work is aimed at facilitating the reading of this by a non-specialized audience, but also presenting a translation proposal that invites reflection on the subject. (Rodríguez García 2013, 11-12)

The footnotes presented in this edition are also intended to meet the needs of this general target public. There are historical comments with the purpose of clarifying terms and concepts specific to Peruvian and Hispano-American colonial history; and comments on the translation, which are intended to draw attention to linguistic peculiarities. The volume also includes an index aimed at researchers interested in topics such as commerce, the nature of the Peruvian territory, its geography and agriculture.

Let us consider the question of the authorship of this anonymous text. Due to the various Lusitanian individuals present, José de la Riva-Agüero, Rubén Vargas Ugarte and Boleslao Lewin suggest that this is a Portuguese New Christian, with the final recipient being the Dutch authorities in order for them to militarily attack the territory or destabilize the trading monopoly of Castile in the West Indies. The identification of the author as being Pedro de León Portocarrero was made by Guillermo Lohman Villena, from the description of the location of his own house and official certificates. Let us look at the summary presented by Margarita Rodríguez:

Although in the marriage certificate, Portocarrero is stated as coming from Viana del Bollo, a Castilian territory near Portugal, the inquisitorial documents located by Lohman Villena locate his birth to have been in Vinhais, in Trás-os-Montes, and identify him as a descendant of a family imprisoned by the Inquisitorial Tribunal of Coimbra after its members were accused of being Judaizers and his father sentenced to death at the stake while his mother died in prison. After Portocarrero moved to Castilian territory, certainly still as a child and with the help of family or friends, in 1600 he participated in an act of reconciliation in Toledo, accused

of the same crimes that years before had put his parents in prison. (Rodríguez García 2013, 13)

The historian says that most probably his going to America was due to the opportunity to make his fortune and to try to relieve the pressure on his family. However, he ended up being accused of proselytizing by the colonial authorities, and so then returned to the peninsula, around 1616. In Seville, he was arrested and was the target of two new accusations, of which he was later declared innocent. There is no certainty about what would have happened next, but there are indications in the document that he established himself in Holland, collaborating with Dutch authorities or the Dutch West India Company, which was founded in 1621.

Margarita Rodríguez, in noting that this biography seems quite likely, prefers to adopt a more open attitude and argues that these hypotheses should be seen as points of departure, not arrival, within a broader perspective of the Iberian empires, in which both Portuguese and Spaniards circulated, despite the legal separation between kingdoms and the restrictions on entering and residing in the overseas territories for foreigners and other non-Castilian subjects of the Hispanic monarchy. In the case of the Viceroyalty of Peru, Maria da Graça Ventura lists an inventory of 1,400 Portuguese individuals resident or present between 1580 and 1640, involved in trade, agriculture and works considered minor.

2 Reflections Based on the Theoretical Concepts of Mary Louise Pratt

In order to understand the description and its translation, we adopted the concepts of ‘contact zone’ and ‘autoethnographic text’, introduced by Mary Louise Pratt in 1991 in her article “Arts of the Contact Zone”. There, Pratt defines contact zone as:

social spaces where cultures meet, clash and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today. (1991, 34)

In turn, autoethnographic texts are text in which “people undertake to describe themselves in ways that engage with representations others have made of them” (Pratt 1991, 35). There is thus a dialogue with the initial ethnographic text. Normally, they are written by marginalized groups (often using more than one language) and involve the collaboration of those who provided historical and territorial information, since the authors do not discover all the data transmitted alone.

In applying her ‘contact zone’ theory, Mary Louise Pratt used another Andean manuscript by Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala or Felipe Huaman Poma de Ayala, a chronicler of Inca descent who wrote *Primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno*, possibly around 1615. The work, addressed to King Filipe III of Spain (II of Portugal), consists of 1,180 pages and 397 engravings, addressing the Spanish conquest and the society which emerged from that process. Guaman Poma presents an alternative version of the official story told by the winners, but, as Pratt points out, the text and images are interpreted differently by people in different positions in the contact zone, in particular by Spaniards and by the Andean people.

Matthew Restall in his *Los siete mitos de la conquista española* alludes to Guaman Poma and to his description of the “errors committed in the colony of Peru” (Restall 2004, 151), stating that “there was no remedy for the situation and predicted the rapid extinction of the Andean indigenous people” (152). For Restall it is clear that “the lamentation of Huaman Poma was a rhetorical artifice that sought to show the king the demographic decrease and the growing poverty of the Andean indigenous people” (152). Writing on “the myth of indigenous devastation”, Restall underlines the rhetorical style used by Guaman Poma, which underlines the possibility of being interpreted differently by different cultures.¹ “The indigenous responses to the invasion were based on interested judgements, similar to the Spanish decisions, and their reactions were extremely diverse, not homogeneous” (154), he underlines.

Returning to our *Descripción*, throughout the text we can find references to the geography of ancient Peru, its agriculture, military fortifications, urbanism and commercial practices. Also identified are the marks of the pre-Columbian past of the territory and the way it is present in the new Latin America, as well as the transcultural process registered in both indigenous people and Europeans. Let us look at a typical passage:

Si los indios hubieran alcanzado a saber el arte de la arquitectura y arte de fazer puentes y edificios se hubieran aventejado a todas las naciones del mundo conforme vemos que son sus obras,

1 Restall writes about the myth of indigenous devastation: “For centuries Europeans have imagined and invented the cultural and social disintegration of indigenous societies. In its most extensive form, this perspective not only emphasizes destruction and depopulation, but also perceives a deeper form of devastation, which amounts to a state of anomie” (2004, 153). Restall argues that “the indigenous cultures were neither barbaric nor idyllic, but as civilized and imperfect as the European cultures of the time. [...] Indigenous cultures showed great resilience and adaptability, and many indigenous people, especially the elites, found new opportunities in the transition to the period of conquest” (154).

ellos en todo lo que vemos antiguo que ellos fabricaron se echa de ver eran curiosos y de grande ingenio. Mas ahora, con la comunicación de los españoles, y con el mal tratamiento que les hacen, están muy acabados y abatidos, y el diferente gobierno que tienen ahora para el que solían tener antiguamente los ha destruido y arruinado. Y así nunca ellos tienen voluntad buena a los españoles, porque los tienen muy sujetos y abatidos, y cuanto pueden haber y ganar los tristes indios todo se lo cogen. Y lo que más los consume son las minas donde los hacen trabajar. A sus caciques sirven y aman alegre y honorablemente, y los respetan y tienen mucho amor y voluntad, porque por todo el Perú hay muchos caciques. Estos eran los señores antiguamente, que servían a los reyes de generales y maeses de campo y capitanes y en todo el gobierno del reino; y aún ahora todos los más son ricos y profundos, mas siempre los corregidores mandan sobre ellos. (Lewin 1958, 96-7)

If the Indians had created the art of architecture and built bridges and buildings, they had excelled over all the nations of the world, as we see as such in their works. In everything that we can observe that they made in the old days, it can be seen that they were curious and very ingenious. But now, with the communication of the Spaniards and the mistreatment they cause them, they are very much finished and slaughtered; and the difference between the government they now have and the one they used to have in former times has destroyed and ruined them. In this way, they can never feel goodwill to the Spaniards, who have made them their subjects and downcast them, and taken away all that the sad Indians could have and obtain. And what most consumes them are the mines, where they are forced to work. They serve and love their bosses (*caciques*) willingly and honourably, of which there are many throughout Peru, they respect and they have a lot of affection and goodwill to them, because these were the lords who, in the past, served the Inca kings as generals, field masters, captains, throughout the governance of the kingdom; and they are still the richest and most powerful, but the *corregidores* always rule over them.

The process of conquest by the Spaniards is referred to in a neutral way by the author, as if it were something natural and unavoidable. This reveals its Eurocentric mentality, extendable to most of the Europeans present in America. However, more important than the history of the country is the description of the topography of the cities and towns, their administrative and social structure, the crown monopolies (in particular the trade in mercury) and the drinks and food most produced and consumed. We must also highlight the practical advice relating to transportation, communication and possible commercial exploitation present throughout the text, but especially

evident in the final list of “mercaderías que son necessários para el Perú y sin ellas no pueden passar, porque no se fabrican en la tierra” (Lewin 1958, 124) (merchandise necessary for Peru and which is vital, since such items are not made in the land).

Rafael Valladares considers this text to fit within the category of “imperial literature”, defining it as a political gesture “to capture in writing a neighbouring and legally separate empire although in fact it increasingly appeared less so” (Valladares 2013, 63). In the article “Vasallos que se observan. Opinión y escritura imperial bajo la unión de coronas (1580-1640)”, the historian reports that in this period there are many testimonies of the feelings of admiration, hatred and indifference among the subjects of the three Filipines, within the heart of the intra-Iberian ‘contact zone’ which extended to the imperial territories, recording perspectives regarding the other and assuming a self-affirming position of themselves as someone “sable to maintain the otherness that is described, classifying as objective realities that which was no more than mere subjectivity” (2013, 59-60). And in doing so, “lay waste to the objects, the individuals and traditions which were maintained just to transform them into an account of disturbing authority” (60). These texts, Valladares stresses, had their genesis in a single cycle of imperial impact that began to decline in 1630 and disappeared shortly afterwards.

The *Descripción* has several points in common with the text of Guamán Poma, which facilitates its understanding in the light of Pratt’s theories. Both are addressed to someone outside the Andean region and written using several languages: Spanish and traces of Portuguese in the first; Spanish and Quechua, in the second. The two were contextualised within a territory in which Iberian and American cultures confronted each other – and which were already Latin American, a fruit of the process of transculturation that was taking place in the New World following contact with groups from Europe, Africa and America. Here I have used Fernando Ortiz’s concept (also referred to by Pratt), who recognizes that, in the process of transition from one culture to another, there is the loss of certain characteristics and the emergence of new cultural phenomena that are not present in their “parents”. The Cuban anthropologist points out that “each interconnection of cultures results in a genetic coupling of these individuals: the result always takes on something from both progenitors, but there is always something distinct from each one of them” (Ortiz 2002, 260). Thus, in the case of *Descripción*, we can find three strands in contact: firstly, Portugal, probable country of origin of the author, the authorities of which persecuted him but which maintains the culture and part of the language; secondly, Spain, in the overseas territory of which he is welcomed and where he carries out his professional activity, welcoming him as if he were a contemporary refugee, and whose language he adopts; thirdly, America, a new territo-

ry for the author, the motive of the text itself, an area of freedom and the realization of new opportunities. As such, we have a Portuguese residing and moving in a territory that is legally forbidden to him.

'Marginality' is also a point in common, since the *Primer nueva cónica y buen gobierno* was written by an American of Inca descent and *Descripción* by a Portuguese person who was fleeing his country. Even if it is not really an escape, there is disrespect for the law that forbids his presence in those territories. We also have the collaboration of informants who have provided them with historical and territorial data: the authors, even though they passed through these territories, did not discover everything by themselves.

George Steiner (1975, 14-15) uses the term "extraterritorial" for a writer that is not settled in a territory and can express himself in more than one language. Usually this is a result of a departure from their home territory for political or social reasons. That is the case of our 'anonymous'. But Steiner points out that bilingualism is common in the European elite and the author of *Descripción* is not part of the elite. When he writes, he is also more comfortable in a language that is not his mother tongue. Steiner also stresses the use of Latin in these cases of bilingualism. But, in this example, we don't have Latin, but two romance languages, which makes this and other Iberian cases more particular.

Steiner (1975, 15) refers to Heinrich Heine (1797-1856) as a possible first case of bi- or multi-lingual writer. In fact, our 'anonymous' lived in an earlier time and shares with Heine the double religious tradition and a multigeographic biography that explains the use of the Spanish language. He is not a 'genius' as Heine, but after all he is an interesting writer.

3 Issues of Identity

Being a 'contact zone', it is foreseeable that the very identity of the inhabitant goes beyond watertight categories or combines elements of diverse origins - hence the transculturation. This question leads us to another: the author (supposedly Portuguese)'s choice of writing in Spanish. We currently associate language with country, in a conception inherited mainly from Romanticism and 19th-century liberalism and its concept of the Nation-State, strongly associated with the 'spirit of the people' and their language. For example, in Spain, one of the arguments for the autonomy or independence of certain regions is based on a linguistic question: the use of a language other than Castilian (Galician, Basque, Catalan...) is to assert that it has a different culture and therefore an identity of its own which should not be confused with the Spanish State. However, the association of language and identity was far from commonplace in the 17th and 18th

centuries, when identity issues were more related to other aspects and in which the feelings and ideology of ‘national identity’ were still being constructed. Thus the use of the Spanish language by a Portuguese in this description of the kingdom of Peru would have been much more natural than it seems at first in the 21st century, especially taking into account his long-term experience in European and American territories of Spain where he was therefore able to develop a considerable level of Spanish. As this concerns a pragmatic individual – as reflected by the text itself – it would be normal to opt for the European language spoken in the territories being described, and also to avoid possible translation problems that the 2013 edition could not avoid, such as hierarchical positions or institutions without equivalence in the Portuguese empire. Another possibility is that he has considered Spanish as a kind of *lingua franca*.

The question of Iberian identities came to the fore with greater force from 1640 onwards, that is, after the writing of *Descripción*. As David Martín Marcos, José María Iñurritegui and Pedro Cardim explain, the end of the dual monarchy and the separation of the Portuguese and Spanish empires:

precipitated a rather pluralistic dynamic of identity reconfiguration.

In some contexts, more crystallized, more rigid identities emerged, based on a reworking of history and literature, language and politics. Although a series of common memories continued to exist, the need to rethink historical accounts, going back to the earliest antiquity [...] required a thorough revision of the Iberian space and its identity attributes. (Marcos, Iñurritegui, Cardim 2015, 11)

This situation led to less communication between Portugal and Spain. Cultural exchanges were reduced, which suggests a focus on references outside the Iberian context. The new reality was reflected in the drastic reduction in mixed marriages and the decrease in the number of Spanish works in Portuguese libraries. It should be added that in that period this reduced quantity was also due to the fact that the Portuguese reader usually read in Spanish, which meant that writing in one language or another was less important than in the present day. Nor should we forget that the number of those who were literate was very limited and within this group the number of those who could buy publications was even smaller.

Our 21st century Iberia is the fruit of this more rigid reconfiguration along with much more specified linguistic borders. Hence the need to translate the text of the *Descripción* into Portuguese.

In view of what we have just seen, it is understandable that, regardless of the identity assumed, felt or thought by the author of *Descripción* (linked to culture, geography, religion, biographical ex-

periences etc.), the option of one or another language had a more pragmatic than programmatic basis. Nor can we forget that the proximity between the Portuguese and Spanish languages was greater at the time and that there was therefore not the same degree of 'estrangement' that we now feel and that, in the specific case of the 2013 edition, the need to translate the text into Portuguese was felt, in order to be read by a non-academic Portuguese public. As we have seen, this was indeed one of its aims.

Perhaps more than a national identity, the author of the *Descripción* felt an identity linked to the Iberian Peninsula, his commercial activity and his experience as a traveller. As David Martín Marcos, José María Iñurrítegui and Pedro Cardim mention, there were practical motivations in affirming "identity", seen as a "practice aimed at persuading other people that this was 'identical', an attribution of similarity aimed at achieving certain objectives and justifying a particular collective action" (2015, 13). Thus, feelings of belonging, rather than the issue of identity,

sometimes carried a certain emotional charge. It is precisely this emotional charge that underlies religious-based manifestations of identity, or what is commonly termed 'national feeling' or 'national consciousness'. (2015, 14)

Historians recognize:

the "game" between self-identification and categorization carried out by others. In other words, a relational understanding of attributions of identity is privileged, trying to capture the capacity of the actors, of all of them, to act on these categories, to transform them and to co-produce them. Relational subjectivity is taken into account, that is, the contexts where the various attributions of identity occur, in order to understand people's perception of what they were, their social position and how they should act. Moreover, these self-perceptions are seen in constant interaction with the perceptions of others, as it is recognized that the categorizations, identifications, and representations produced by others were central to the way people conceived of themselves. (2015, 14)

We therefore have a perspective on identity as "a form of differentiation which is historically situated, marked by the circumstances in which such identity attributions occurred and, above all, by the *agency* of the actors themselves" (Marcos 2015, 15).

Ângela Barreto Xavier, rather than identity, speaks of "imaginaries of communities", specifically those that were being constructed in the modern period in Portugal and Spain, where:

the relation (and tension) between mobility and stasis, between residents and outsiders, between locals and foreigners but also between nomadism and urbanization, between nature and culture, was increasingly complex. (Xavier 2015, 45)

Essentially, conflicts and suspicion were based on the failure to establish lasting ties in a stable community, “established on ties of trust between its members” (Xavier 2015, 45), a pressure to establish roots strongly associated with having a job that produced income to support themselves autonomously, which generally excluded vagrants and gypsies. In the particular case of Spain, there was a greater openness “to accepting the other as long as they were Catholic or converting to Catholicism” (2015, 47).

4 A Literary Text too

Although it is essentially a description of American geography, its inhabitants and its practices, this text can still be placed within the literary field. The author often resorts to metaphors and images that particularly enrich the text, especially in the description of the land and its excessive size: Maranhão, seen from above, “parece un pequeño río” (Lewin 1958, 86) (looks like a small river); the mountains are “tan altas que parece que llegan al cielo” (1958, 78-9) (so high that they seem to reach the sky); and there are plains so vast that, “de lejos parecen un hombre tan grande como una torre y un pájaro tan grande como un hombre” (1958, 30) (from afar, they appear like a person as tall as a tower and a bird as large as a person). America impregnates the text, showing how the author’s feelings are deeply moved by what surrounds him, in particular nature and its exuberance. Some metaphors give certain passages a poetic tone: “Daquí se va por tierra a Guayaquil. Hay muchos lugares de indios por el camino, y bosques y mucha soledad” (1958, 21) (From here we go by land to Guayaquil. There are many Indian places on the way as well as woods and considerable solitude); “De esta totora fazen dos haces bien apretados y muy gruesos y largos y quedan estas balsas feitas a modo de grandes pescados” (1958, 26) (this has two tight thick long beams, and are these rafts made as if they were large fish); “aqui se almodean los hombres y sienten las revoluciones que sienten en la mar los que de nuevo entran en él y los pone como borrachos” (1958, 78) (Here [in the hills] men are sick and feel the same revolutions as they feel at sea where they are taken over to be left for drunk).

Comparison is frequent, as often happens in travel literature. It is a common resource of a narrator who wishes to be understood by readers who do not know the lands and the people described by him. One passage, for example, states that the *guanacos* are “muy carneros mayores que los nuestros, más altos y más largos” (1958, 80)

(much larger sheep than ours, taller and longer). As Luís Filipe Barreto explains, “the whole description is limited, not with regard to the extent of the reality ‘portrayed’ (only a single conditioning factor), but to the perceptual angle in which the writing is formulated, to the code of interpretation to which the discursive subject belongs” (Barreto 1982, 59). As the author is European, his vision is naturally Eurocentric - hence comparing a *guanaco* to a sheep.

In other passages a comic tone reigns. *Criollos* are called “pan y miel” (Lewin 1958, 51) (bread and honey) due to the large amount of these products they consume, and nuns who are locked up in convents can have a comfortable life but “siempre les falta lo mejor” (1958, 59) (they always lack the best). All colonial society is described: Europeans, *Criollos*, Indians and Negroes, with their obvious qualities and defects, almost as typical characters, characteristic, indeed, of some of the literature of the time, particularly theatre. We get to know everyday situations narrated in a fun way (such as amorous betrayals and other family problems), as well as habits, mentalities, food or the world of work. Sometimes a moralizing tone sets in, as when criticizing the ambition of the *Criollos* (there is “ninguno que no se tenga por caballero”, 1958, 39; everybody wishes to be a Knight), the unclear business affairs of employees of the Crown or the attitudes of the friars, those who “mejor se aprovechan en el Perú, o los que mejor saben furta” (1958, 35) (those who make best use of Peru, are those who know best how to steal, like in a good novel). The truth of all this is ensured by the fact that the author lived fifteen years in the Viceroyalty. The testimonial character of the text is underlined by the constant presence of the first person singular form. Authority with regard to the reader is constant, with the text being marked by detailed data and by the strong voice of the “I”:

Por manera que Lima a lo más puede tener de gente blanca cuatro mil y seiscientos hombres, y éstos poco diestros en las armas, porque el mayor ejercicio que en ellas tienen son salir en algunos alardes que hacen por las calles de la ciudad y en la plaza mayor, donde yo me he hallado el año de seiscientos y quince y hubo alarde general donde entraron los ocho capitanes, cada uno con la gente de su compañía, y entró el bisorrey con todos sus caballeros, que caballeros y soldados no llegaron a mil y trescientos hombres. El domingo siguiente vi de la gente de [a] caballo que todos se adornaron más de galas que de valentía, y cuanta gente tenía la ciudad estaba mirando este ensayo desta gente bisoña, que lo más que saben tirar es un arcabuz. Es que mosquete no lo san ni lo disparon. (Lewin 1958, 43)

So that Lima will have four thousand six hundred men who are white people, and these are not very skilled at arms, for the great-

est exercise that comes out of them is a certain amount of boasting that they carry out in the streets of the city and in the main square, where I found myself in the year of sixteen hundred and fifteen, when there was a general show, where eight captains entered, each with his company, and the viceroy, with all his knights, who, knights and soldiers, did not total more than one thousand and three hundred men. The following Sunday, I saw the individuals of the Cavalry, who had all adorned themselves more gallantly than bravely. And how many people in the city were admiring this exercise by this fledgling people, who at most could handle a musket, which they could neither use nor know how to shoot.

5 Some Comments on Translations

The 2009 edition published by the Universidad Ricardo Palma, considers that there is a specific author, Pedro de León Portocarrero, and Eduardo Huarag Álvarez, in the Prologue, states that this author is certain. This paratext, entitled “Portugueses en el Perú del siglo XVII a través del estilo de Don Ricardo Palma y la descripción del virreynato de un judío portugués” (Portuguese in Peru of the 17th century in the style of Don Ricardo Palma and the description of the viceroys of a Portuguese Jew) addresses the historical context, the Inquisition and the Jews, the identity of the author of the story and various aspects of the text, but does not provide a reason for the 21st century publication of the *Descripción* nor the option of publishing a bilingual edition in Spanish and Portuguese.² As it is bilingual, this edition only includes the final list of goods that can be successfully commercialized in the country in Spanish, through the decision of the publisher itself. The same applies to the thematic notes in the margin. The translation, carried out by five translators, underwent a final revision that sought to standardize options, without the support of historians. The punctuation is quite close to the transcript of Boleslao Lewin and retains some of his suggestions. For example, “Ianquin [?Nankin?]” (Lewin 1958, 115) is written as “Nanquim” (Huarag Álvarez 2009, 224). Sometimes a structure is chosen that is closer to the contemporary reader, as in “Las casas del gobernador casi que bate el agua en ellas” (Lewin 1958, 101) / “Quase que a água bate nas casas do governador” (Huarag Álvarez 2009, 212) (The water almost splashes against the governor’s residence).

² The translation was carried out by myself and several undergraduate students of the Translation degree course at the NOVA University of Lisbon, under my coordination and review: Anabela Candeias, André Carvalho, Hugo Infante Torres and Tânia Parracho.

The 2013 edition³ is, on the contrary, and as already stated at the beginning of this work, justified by the need to reach a wider audience, beyond the walls of the academy and across the Atlantic. One of the important aspects of this edition is its translational criteria and its coherence, a task made more difficult by the temporal and spatial distance of the original. This work sought to reflect as much as possible the starting text, relying on a revision by two historians, one Spanish and the other Portuguese, choosing, for example, not to translate positions, concepts, etc. that did not exist in the Portuguese empire and which could function as ‘false friends’. In this case, this meant showing that the author, as he is not a scholar, uses more common words (e.g., *muy* and *mucho* instead of *asaz*, a more common term in contemporary literary texts), but still writing literature. It is necessary, indeed, to respect his metaphors and images that give so much force and plasticity to the text. An important aspect is the existence of Portuguese words or words close to Portuguese words – the so-called *Lusitanisms* – which, in a target text, would disappear if they were not properly marked. Thus, it was necessary to indicate them in footnotes and in this way highlight the use of words such as *bom*, *porto*, *novo*, *feito* and *Santana*, among others, which would precisely indicate the language of origin of the author. On the other hand, it can be difficult to translate vocabulary specific to the local reality simply because there are no corresponding Portuguese words. In these cases, it was decided to keep the original in italics and, if necessary, to add an explanation in a footnote. This is what happened with *chapelón* (a derogatory term applied to the peninsular Spanish), *locro* (type of stew), *lucuma* (a kind of fruit) or *guaruas* (a type of rain that almost does not make things wet, characteristic of Lima). Another essential word is *criollo*, whose translation into Portuguese is *crioulo*, although it has different meanings in the two languages: in Spanish, it indicates people who are descendants of Spanish individuals born in America, whereas in Portuguese it is generally utilized as a synonym for *mestizo* or designates a Portuguese-based lexical language developed in African territories. When reading the word *crioulo*, the Portuguese non-specialist public would only understand the current conception of their language, and it is therefore useful to emphasize the meaning in Spanish. Another pertinent aspect is the option whether to standardize the spelling of words written in two ways in the original, probably because of the copyist’s error. In this Portuguese edition we chose to standardize and linguistically update, except for geographical and historical references.

3 The translation was carried out by myself and Ana Silva.

6 Final Remarks

To conclude, let us look at the title of the article, which refers to exchanged languages and anachronistic translations. Exchanged languages, in so as we are dealing with a Portuguese who writes in Spanish about Peru and a Peruvian university which translated this text into Portuguese in 2009. And why two versions of the *Descripción* published at the beginning of the 21st century, 400 years after the original? The reason is the scientific, academic and historical dissemination of the text itself already referred to, but this also serves to show that circulation within the Iberian (peninsular and imperial) territories was not watertight and that the very structuring and development of these spaces was a construction of all who lived in them, and not only of the monarchs and politicians. Furthermore, they undoubtedly contribute to showing that Portugal and Spain are and always have been closer than is often considered nowadays. As Tamar Herzog points out, thanks to a new generation of historians “it became clear [...] that Spain and Portugal had much more in common than traditionally thought, and that Portugal influenced Spain in a way that, until now, few have imagined” (Herzog 2015, 302-3). Hence Herzog argued for the writing of “an integrated history that presented both countries as protagonists of the same events and processes” (303). To a certain extent, this has been achieved with the publishing of *Descripción del virreinato del Perú, en particular de Lima*.

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