

*Spanish Bawds and Quixotic Libraries*  
Adventures and Misadventures in Early English Hispanism  
and World Literature.<sup>1</sup>

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Miguel de Cervantes famously proclaimed in *Don Quixote* (1605) that Fernando de Rojas' *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea*—better known as *La Celestina*—would be a divine work if it could have managed to conceal its all-too-human aspects. The reference is casually embedded in one of the prefatory poems fabricated by Cervantes for his novel. Attributed to a host of fictional characters of chivalric romance, these poems set a parodic tone through a rich cluster of direct and indirect references to common editorial practices, popular literary heroes and bestselling authors—they poked fun, for instance, at the preliminary texts that featured in Lope de Vega's successful pastoral novel *La Arcadia* (1598).<sup>2</sup> Like the rest of the novel, these paratexts both encapsulated and engaged with the discursive conventions and the literary standards that circulated throughout the publishing markets. The poem in question appears thus within a general context of literary rivalry as it also flaunts a series of intertextual remarks whose registers range from Tacitism and *raison d'état* to popular set phrases and proverbs. It is playfully composed in truncated lines that occlude their final rhyming syllables and is attributed to one 'Donoso', who dedicates it to Sancho and Rocinante:

Soy Sancho Panza, escude- [ro]  
del manchego don Quijo- [te];  
puse pies en polvo- [sa],  
por vivir a lo discre-[to];  
que el tácito Villadie-[go]  
toda su razón de esta- [do]  
cifró en una retira- [da]  
según siente *Celesti*-[na],  
libro en mi opinión divi- [no]  
si encubriera más lo huma-[no]

I am Sancho Panza, squire  
to don Quijote, from la Mancha,  
I took to my heels  
only to be discreet,  
for tacitly taking to one's heels  
brings *raison d'état*  
into a timely retreat,  
as *Celestina* would confirm,

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<sup>1</sup> This is the author's version of an article which has been accepted for publication in the journal *Comparative Literature* (ca. March 2017). I wish to express my gratitude to the editor of the journal, and to its publisher Duke University Press, for their permission to publish this previous version at the University of Granada institutional repository.

<sup>2</sup> Cervantes, *Don Quijote*, ed. Alberto Blecua, 2007, p. 21, n. 1.

a book divine in my view  
had it better the human concealed<sup>3</sup>

*La Celestina* (1499) became a domestic and an international bestseller during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, and its current position in the standard Spanish canon is only second to *Don Quijote* itself. Besides numerous editions in Spanish, it went through several translations into Italian, French, German, Dutch, and Latin, to which we must add a lost Hebrew version. It made its presence felt in England three decades after its publication in the form of an interlude (*Calisto and Melebea*) adapted by John Rastell (c. 1475-1536) and his circles around 1530. A full translation by James Mabbe (1571/2 – 1642?) went to press in 1631. The shift from the courtly circles of Tudor interludes onto Rastell's presses first, and then the thriving editorial markets of early seventeenth-century London define the reception of *La Celestina* in England. There are also hints that Rojas' character may have strutted her own hour upon the Elizabethan stage later in the sixteenth century. But besides print and the varieties of drama that evolved over the course of the English sixteenth century, a different manuscript format mediated between the domestic stage of John Rastell and the public diffusion of Mabbe's translation in print. All of them can provide some important insights into the editorial worlds of Cervantes and Lope's Madrid, on the one hand, and Rastell and Mabbe's London on the other—and by extension, about the heterogeneous and dynamic republic of letters on a European scale.

*Don Diego Puede-Ser*, as Mabbe used to translate his own name, was described by P.E. Russell as the first English Hispanist.<sup>4</sup> He was a diplomat and a linguist with relevant connections in the literary and scholarly circles of London and Oxford: Mabbe contributed with a poem to John Florio's English-Italian dictionary *Queen Anna's World of Words* in 1611, and with another one to Shakespeare's *First Folio* of 1623. But Mabbe was above all a prolific translator with an excellent eye for works of prose fiction that would become central in the Spanish canon. He rendered into English some of Cervantes's *Novelas Ejemplares*<sup>5</sup> and Mateo Alemán's picaresque novel *Guzmán de Alfarache*.<sup>6</sup> Mabbe's translation of *La Celestina*, which saw print in 1631 as *The Spanish Bawd*, was preceded by a manuscript version titled *Celestine or the Tragick-Comedie of Calisto and Melibea*.<sup>7</sup> The latter can be dated around 1602-1603 and is thus Mabbe's first known translation. The

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<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.* pp. 31-2. 'Tomar las de Villadiego' is a popular expression equivalent to the English 'take to one's heels'. The (somewhat free) English translation is mine.

<sup>4</sup> Russell 1953: 80.

<sup>5</sup> *Exemplarie nouells: in sixe books. The two damosels. The Ladie Cornelia. The liberall lover. The force of blood. The Spanish ladie. The jealous husband. Full of various accidents both delightfull and profitable. By Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra; one of the prime wits of Spaine, for his rare fancies, and wittie inventions. Turned into English by Don Diego Puede-Ser.* London: Printed by Iohn Dawson, for R[alph] M[abbe] and are to be sold by Laurence Blacklocke: at his shop at the Sugar-loafe next Temple Barre in Fleetstreet, 1640. STC: STC (2nd ed.) 4914

<sup>6</sup> *The rogue: or The life of Guzman de Alfarache. VVritten in Spanish by Matheo Aleman, seruant to his Catholike Maiestie, and borne in Seuill.* London: Printed [by Eliot's Court Press and George Eld] for Edward Blount, 1623. STC: STC (2nd ed.) 289.

<sup>7</sup> *The Spanish bavvd, represented in Celestina: or, The tragicke-comedy of Calisto and Melibea: Wherein is contained, besides the pleasantnesse and sweetnesse of the stile, many philosophicall sentences, and profitable instructions necessary for the younger sort: shewing the deceits and subtilties housed in the bosomes of false seruants, and cunny-catching bawds.* London: Printed by I[ohn] B[eale] and are to be sold by Robert Allot at the signe of the Beare in Pauls Church-yard, 1631. STC: STC (2nd ed.) 4911. The interlude *Calisto and Melibea*, included close translations into English of some original passages, but it is more an adaptation than a faithful rendering. For further details on Rastell's version see Pérez Fernández's 'Introduction' to the digital online edition in EEBO

<<http://eebo.chadwyck.com/intros/htxview?template=basic.htx&content=calisto.htm>>, accessed on 18 October 2014.

first official record of this manuscript, however, only appeared almost three hundred years later in an *Appendix to the Third Report of the Historic Manuscript Commission* published in 1872.<sup>8</sup> The only surviving copy is now under custody at the archives of the Duke of Northumberland in Alnwick Castle.<sup>9</sup>

Although we still lack detailed information on the path that led the manuscript from Mabbe's hands to the archives of the Duke of Northumberland, this article will prove that its presence in this library definitely relates Mabbe, the early modern English Hispanist, with Thomas Percy (1729-1811), another Hispanist who was employed as chaplain for Northumberland and tutor to his son Algernon between 1765 and 1782. In this capacity Percy moved frequently between Northumberland House in London and Alnwick Castle, the ancient Northern seat of the Dukes of Northumberland. Percy was an antiquarian, book collector, translator, and pioneering historian of comparative literature who had matriculated at Christ Church in Oxford in 1746. He first undertook studies in the Classics and Hebrew, and after obtaining his BA in 1750 he took up Italian and French as he proceeded to complete his MA in 1753. In his first extant letter two years later we find him seriously involved in the study of Spanish: on 21 September 1755 Percy reported that he had just received three Spanish books and had also finished his examination of several editions of *Don Quixote* which he had on loan.<sup>10</sup> His continued interest in Spanish literature over the course of the following years and his activities as a translator are well documented in his letters.<sup>11</sup> In his edition of their correspondence, Daniel Eisenberg claims that with Thomas Percy and his friend John Bowle (1725–1788) 'we are witness to the birth of the study of *Don Quixote*, central to the beginning of Hispanism.'<sup>12</sup> But whereas Bowle's Hispanism and his important role in the establishment of Cervantean criticism have been well known, Percy's interest in Spanish literature remained in the dark until the first half of the twentieth century when some unpublished material was unearthed—and so did, until now, his connection with James Mabbe.<sup>13</sup> The Alnwick manuscript traces one of the common threads that bring together two important agents and two founding moments not just in English Hispanism but also in World Literature.

James Mabbe is an early example of the English appropriation of the Spanish literary canon through translation amidst the contentious relations between England and Spain during the course of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, when England disputed the global dominance of the Hispanic Monarchy. As Barbara Fuchs has recently demonstrated with her *Poetics of Piracy* (2013) the appropriation of Hispanic literary and cultural capital started at an early stage in this period, and it would continue to do so in the peculiar ways that she has described in her book. This included friendly cultural and literary exchange, running parallel with other political developments when diplomatic relations were fluent and abundant, but also with revealing exchanges that took place during periods of intense military confrontation, when translation became an act of war and pillage. In that respect, Anglo-Spanish literary relations, as they were established when England disputed Hispanic hegemony in the seas and in continental Europe, are very illustrative of the general dynamics involved in cultural competition, and of the ways in which this competition would continue to unfold during the following decades.

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<sup>8</sup> Papers of the Historic Manuscript Commission (collection) – *Catalogue for the sixth Duke of Northumberland*, 1867 (published as the *Appendix to the Third Report of the Historic Manuscript Commission* in 1872).

<sup>9</sup> The Alnwick manuscript was edited by Guadalupe Martínez-Lacalle in 1972. For further details about the dates of the manuscript, and the differences between the printed version and the original manuscript see Pérez Fernández, ed. 2013: 13-17, *et passim*.

<sup>10</sup> Smith, ed. 1932: vii-viii.

<sup>11</sup> See for instance the samples provided by Smith, ed. 1932: viii-ix.

<sup>12</sup> Eisenberg, ed., 1987: vi. For more recent material on Bowle, see Eisenberg 2006.

<sup>13</sup> See Eisenberg, ed. 1987: vii; for further details, see also Watkin-Jones, 1937 and Beutler, 1957.

If Mabbe sought to appropriate an important part of the Hispanic canon for English readers through his translations, one of Percy's most cherished projects was his *Bibliotheca Quixotiana*, the actual collection of all the books that came into the making of *Don Quijote*—in other words, the scholarly reproduction of the texts that were in circulation at the time of its publication and which Percy thought were indispensable for an accurate historicist understanding of its author's intentions. This essay will use the Alnwick manuscript and its author as touchstones to outline the continuities and discontinuities that exist between James Mabbe's milieu in the early seventeenth century and Percy's circles during the second half of the eighteenth century. A comparative analysis of their respective networks will demonstrate first the critical relevance of these two important moments in the origins and evolution of Hispanism in England. It will then bring to light some of the strategies that lead to the establishment of transnational literary canons. The cultural policies and translational processes that defined the profile of bilateral relations between England and Spain during these two moments mirror in many ways other parallel developments within a wider framework which was bent on the establishment of a multilingual canon founded upon the imperial ambitions of European powers first and then by the Universalist aspirations of the Enlightenment. Translational and literary relations between England and Spain in the period that goes from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century were frequently conducted through the mediation of Italian and French renderings of originally Spanish texts: Mabbe used an early Italian version as an aid for his own translation of *La Celestina*, and in the eighteenth century Tobias Smollet, translator of *Don Quijote*, came under the influence of the Spanish picaresque through his English translation of Alain-René Lesage's *L'Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane* (1715-1735), which had in turn been produced under the influence of a previous French translation of Mateo Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache*. This comparative approach will examine the role played by cultural translation in combination with the emergence of a thriving book market within a public sphere whose activities included the manufacturing of common opinions on aesthetic and literary judgment with a view to the establishment of critical and literary hierarchies.

As it does so, the essay will explore the use of the tropes of empire, war and diplomacy, finance and trade, of community and language as common currency, all of them mustered for the appropriation of the political and cultural capital that went into the erection of national identities and their accompanying literary canons. It will show how these concepts interacted with each other in the shifts that took place as market forces replaced patronage as the infrastructure for both domestic and international versions of the republic of letters, and for the emergence of academic disciplines like Hispanism and World Literature. The fact that *La Celestina*—which as we have seen was a European bestseller during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries and has since become one of the central works in the Spanish canon—was first rendered into English in manuscript for a coterie audience and subsequently in print for a larger readership is illustrative of the evolution of the networks within which these texts circulated. Symptomatically, other varieties of these shifts involving the transition from manuscript to print through translation were also ingrained within the literary imagination of the period. As is well known, Cervantes construed the opening chapters of his *Don Quijote* as the printed Castilian translation of an original manuscript in Arabic with the adventures of the famous knight—which was in turn a Cervantine parody of a common narrative device in chivalric romance. In fiction and in reality translation and print unlocked the treasures hidden in manuscripts and distributed them among common readers.

If the Alnwick manuscript, which preceded by about three decades the printed text of 1631, exemplifies the shifts and discontinuities between these two periods, it can also be viewed as an emblem of the shared interests of these three editors and translators—James

Mabbe, Thomas Percy, John Bowle—and of their respective periods. As a singular manuscript copy it also evinces the symptoms and features of this format for the production and distribution of literary texts, confined to small circles of scholars, authors, translators, and their aristocratic patrons. Its current custody in the archives of Alnwick Castle provides a significant contrast with the public distribution that its printed version enjoyed among the circuits of the publishing market. One of the preconditions for the conversion of a manuscript into an academic national fetish is its massive reproduction and subsequent distribution in critical printed formats as the original object is preserved—and sometimes ostentatiously displayed—in institutional archives, libraries, or museums. As a manuscript artefact it thus lies at the end of a continuum which on its other extreme flaunts a sophisticated discursive and institutional architecture built upon heavily annotated critical texts and editions generated by a host of professional academics.

As Neil Rhodes has demonstrated with his recent anthology of English Renaissance translation theory, the recourse to the trope of financial exchange in order to conceptualize the processes involved in literary translation frequently cropped up in English texts during the sixteenth century.<sup>14</sup> But there were significant precedents in other linguistic traditions too, before the revolution of print, the expansion of financial markets and currency exchange exacerbated the tropes used to describe textual production, distribution and translation. Lorenzo Valla's dedicatory epistle to Pope Nicholas V of his Latin translation of Thucydides claims that, just as Roman governors, officers and generals did at the behest of their emperors, Valla himself and other translators had followed Nicholas' orders, and with their own linguistic incursions into Greek texts had successfully brought their own war booty into the Pope's Roman treasure:

‘What Aeneas says in Virgil, Nicholas V, highest Pope, I can now say and, since it is verse, even sing: “*What joy to have escaped so many Greek cities, taking my path through the midst of the enemy.*” For I seem to myself to have escaped Greek cities and the midst of enemies, and to *have performed the soldiery that you commanded of me.* For just as once the Roman emperors such as Augustus, Antoninus, many others (for your dignity invites this comparison!) presided at Rome and by themselves handled the city's business, but in foreign wars relied on their officers, *so you*, since by yourself you care for holy religion, divine and human laws, and the peace, greatness, safety of the Latin world, *have commanded both others and me, who are, as it were, your governors, officers, generals—men skilled in both languages—to bring the Greek world into submission to you; that is, that we translate Greek books into Latin*’<sup>15</sup>

In the following paragraph, Valla moves from comparing translation with imperial conquest to equating it with profitable mercantile exchange:

For what more useful, more fruitful, more, indeed, necessary, thing is there than translating books? To me it seems *a kind of commerce of the arts.* *When I compare it with commerce I compare it with a great thing.* For what in all human activities is more useful than this, which brings us all that pertains to food, to clothing, to defense, to adornment, and to the very joys of life? So that nothing is lacking, but

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<sup>14</sup> Rhodes, ed. 2013, pp. 43-45.

<sup>15</sup> The text was composed *ca.* 1448, see Chambers, ed. 2008, p. XI. The English translation of Valla's poem is by Karl Maurer, whose digital edition—with the Latin original—is available online at the University of Dallas, Department of Classics website, <[http://www.udallasclassics.org/maurer\\_files/Vallas-Pref.htm](http://www.udallasclassics.org/maurer_files/Vallas-Pref.htm)>, accessed on 16/10/2014. Italics are mine.

all things everywhere abound, and, as is said to have happened in the Golden Age, *all things are common to all people*. In the translating of languages, the same happens—except that that is still more glorious, insofar as *the goods of the mind* excel those of the body.<sup>16</sup>

Valla lies at the foundations of philological humanism, and contributed to develop its textual techniques for the critical analysis of primary documents with a view to establishing their authenticity (or lack thereof), and consequently their relevance for contemporary and modern reading communities and their political structures.<sup>17</sup> In his address to Pope Nicholas V he construes this process of recovery, classification and appropriation through translation under the species of trade and empire. My essay shall pursue these tropes as they crop up in the chronological arc described by the transition from manuscript to print in Mabbe's translation of *La Celestina* and what the eventual fate of the manuscript can tell us about the emergence of Hispanism in England, the creation of academic disciplines such as World Literature, and the notion of common sense as the new benchmark for the erection of a literary pantheon in the domestic and international versions of the republic of letters.

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In 1866 two large black boxes survived the fire that had just destroyed part of the London residence of the Duke of Northumberland. They had been deposited at Northumberland House for a long but unspecified amount of time, and were not opened until a year later, in 1867, just a few years before the building was demolished to make way for a new street—the current Northumberland Avenue. The contents of these boxes were catalogued with other papers belonging to the Duke and published as part of the reports of the *Historic Manuscripts Commission*. Among the documents found in them was a manuscript penned by Francis Bacon titled *A Conference of Pleasure, composed for some festive occasion about the year 1592*, which was published and edited by James Spedding in 1870 (London: Whittingham and Wilkins). In his introduction Spedding provides circumstantial evidence about the black boxes and some of the documents found in them. He also reported that:

Upon some of them were found notes in reference to their contents, written by the hand of Bishop Percy, the editor of the *Reliques*.... He occupied apartments in the House, and gave considerable attention to the old papers belonging to the family. It is probable that he looked through all the papers now under consideration, and that it was under his direction that they were placed in the boxes alluded to.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* Italics are mine.

<sup>17</sup> Lorenzo Valla famously—and controversially—proved that the manuscript known as *The Donation of Constantine* was a forgery. The *Donation* was a document that formalized the *translatio imperii* from Emperor Constantine to Pope Sylvester. The Vatican had used this manuscript for centuries as the legal cornerstone for its claims to political legitimacy vis à vis secular rulers.

<sup>18</sup> Spedding, ed. 1870: xxv-xxvi.

Spedding also mentions a previous fire that had affected the building on 18 March 1780 and adds that, according to a contemporary report in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, Thomas Percy's 'invaluable library'—also housed in Northumberland House during those years—'was fortunately preserved.'<sup>19</sup> Christopher Hunwick, the current archivist at Alnwick castle, suggests that the most likely provenance of the manuscript with Mabbe's first version of his *Spanish Bawd* was one of these two large black boxes found in Northumberland House in 1866.<sup>20</sup>

In a letter sent by Percy from Northumberland House on 2 April 1767 to a friend in Emmanuel College, Cambridge, he claims that 'I have made considerable Additions to my *Bibliotheca Quixotiana*: I shall soon send you a New Catalogue of it, as it now stands; begging you will inform me of any Article that falls in your way, necessary to compleat it and assist me in securing it.'<sup>21</sup> About a month before, on 12 March 1767, he had already sent Bowle a partial account of his work in progress, with another request for help: 'Inclosed I send a very full Catalogue of *Don Quixote's Library*: You will at once see what I have; and what I *want*... I must also implore your Assistance as I do that of every Man of Letters, towards completing my *Quixotic Library*...'<sup>22</sup> James Boswell, who was also a member of Percy's literary circles, reported that during one of their encounters: 'Percy shewed me... a collection of all the Spanish Authours mentioned in *Don Quixote*; and he told me that a Clergyman [i.e. John Bowle] down in the country, who has probably more Spanish learning than any Spaniard, was assisting him in finding out the various passages mentioned or alluded to, that he may make a kind of key to *Don Quijote*.'<sup>23</sup> Percy emerges from his own correspondence and these other testimonies as a scholarly book collector with a keen interest in tracing even the more obscure works which went into the making of Cervantes' novel. Since Rojas was one of the 'Spanish Authours mentioned in *Don Quixote*', Mabbe's manuscript must have belonged in either Northumberland's collection or Percy's own 'invaluable library'.

Percy's *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* constitutes the most accomplished product of his literary antiquarianism. This anthology has also earned him a significant place in English literary history: it went through four editions during Percy's lifetime and was acknowledged as a source of inspiration by early Romantics like Wordsworth, Blake or Scott.<sup>24</sup> Percy was an avid collector and editor of books and manuscripts, both domestic and foreign. His unfinished projects also included an edition of Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey's poetry—whose printed sheets were destroyed by fire in 1808—and a critical edition of *Tottel's Miscellany*, the foundational sixteenth-century anthology where the poetry of Surrey, Sir Thomas Wyatt, and Nicholas Grimald first saw print.<sup>25</sup>

Percy's keen interest in the classical and the international canon involved him in James Grainger's *Poetical Translation of the Elegies of Tibullus, and of the Poems of Sulpicia* (London: A. Millar 1759). In turn, Grainger translated two pieces for Percy's projected English version of Ovid's *Epistles*.<sup>26</sup> With Grainger and others, Percy also embarked in

<sup>19</sup> For a detailed account see Spedding, ed. 1870: viii, also xxv-xxix.

<sup>20</sup> I remain indebted to Mr Hunwick for this information.

<sup>21</sup> Brooks, ed. 1946: 136.

<sup>22</sup> Quoted by Brooks, 1979: 252.

<sup>23</sup> *Boswell Papers*, IX, 37 (quoted by Brooks, ed. 1946: 136, n. 14). On Percy and Bowle's plans for a *Quixotic Library* and a new English translation, see Eisenberg, ed. 1987: vii-viii.

<sup>24</sup> *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry: consisting of Old Heroic Ballads, Songs, and other Pieces of our earlier Poets, (Chiefly of the lyric kind.) Together with some few of later date*. London: Printed for J. Dodsley in Pall-Mall, 1765. See also Roy Palmer's article on Thomas Percy in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

<sup>25</sup> *Songes and sonettes, written by the right honorable Lorde Henry Haward late Earle of Surrey, and other*. [London]: Apud Richardum Tottel. Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum, 1557. STC (2nd ed.) 13861.

<sup>26</sup> See Smith, ed. 1932: viii-ix; also Gordon Goodwin and Caroline Overy's article on James Grainger in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

1758 upon the publication of the short-lived but significantly titled journal *The Grand Magazine of Universal Intelligence and Monthly Chronicle of our own Times*. Percy's concern for the exploration and establishment of a universal literary canon bore fruit in a pioneering translation into English of a Chinese novel from a previous Portuguese version: *Hau Kiou Choaan, or, The Pleasing History* was published in 1761 in four volumes with translations from other Chinese texts.<sup>27</sup> The following year he edited two other volumes with more Chinese material, his *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*.<sup>28</sup> In 1763 he published *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry*, rendered from the Icelandic with help from Edward Lye (1694-1767), one of the founders of Anglo-Saxon and Gothic scholarship.<sup>29</sup> Percy also produced translations from Hebrew and French.

Percy's abundant correspondence is witness to his interest in Spanish literature: 'I have not been altogether idle myself', he reports to Even Evans in a letter of 21 July 1761, 'but my attention has been chiefly bestowed on the Languages spoke [*sic*] in the southern Parts of Europe: I have collected some curious pieces of ancient Spanish Poetry, and when I have translated a select collection of them, may perhaps give them to the public.'<sup>30</sup> This project materialized several years later in his *Ancient Songs Chiefly on Moorish Subjects*, a translation of popular Spanish *romances*, or ballads. Although this collection was ready for the press in 1775, it would not be published until 1932. This twentieth-century edition issued only 250 copies and printed the original plates with a new preface by David Nichol Smith. The original 1775 text was a handsomely illustrated edition where some of the poems appeared both in their original Spanish and in Percy's English version with critical apparatus. Thomas Percy's taste for the poetic simplicity of Spanish ballads is of a piece with his own interest in the popular lyrics of the medieval English tradition. One of his purposes was, in the words of his twentieth-century editor, 'to exhibit the resemblance of the ancient Spanish manner to that of the old English bards and minstrels.'<sup>31</sup>

The poems compiled in this brief anthology included one titled 'Rio verde, rio verde', which according to Percy's own footnote was rendered from 'two different originals, both of which are printed in the *Historia de las Guerras Civiles de Granada*, Madrid, 1694'.<sup>32</sup> Pérez de Hita was also the source of another of Percy's translations, a ballad titled 'Alcanzor and Zayda'—although in this case no Spanish original is included in the text (pp. 34-39). Another *romance* included alongside its original Spanish version in Percy's translation is titled 'El marinero de amor'. Percy himself informs the reader about the source in his footnote to p. 48: '*La Cancion del Moço de Mulas, en la Historia de Don Quixote, I Parte, Libro IV. Cap. 43.*'

Percy's interest in early modern Spanish prose fiction and the Moorish romances that were so popular in Spain during Rojas and Cervantes' lifetime was also shared by those fellow translators and early Hispanists who preceded him a couple of centuries before. Both are symptomatic of the way in which Spanish culture was perceived abroad. They also bring to light the categories and tropes upon which different versions of Hispanism and World Literature were erected between the early philological humanism of Valla and his peers and the emerging transnational book markets of sixteenth-century Europe, on the one

<sup>27</sup> *Hau Kiou Choaan or The Pleasing History. A Translation from the Chinese Language. To which are added I. The Argument or Story of a Chinese Play, II. A Collection of Chinese Proverbs, and III. Fragments of Chinese Poetry. With Notes.* London: Printed for R. and J. Dodsley in Pall-Mall, 1761.

<sup>28</sup> *Miscellaneous Pieces Relating to the Chinese*, London: Printed for R. and J. Dodsley in Pall-Mall, 1762.

<sup>29</sup> *Five Pieces of Runic Poetry Translated from the Islandic Language.* London: Printed for R. and J. Dodsley, in Pall-Mall, 1763. For further details on Percy's manifold literary and linguistic interests see Roy Palmer's article in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. See also Davis 1989.

<sup>30</sup> Lewis, ed. 1957: 4.

<sup>31</sup> Smith, ed. 1932: v-vi.

<sup>32</sup> 1932 pp. 26-27.



hand, and on the other the universalist aspirations of the Enlightenment, with its creation of increasingly specialized academic disciplines by scholarly communities and networks such as Percy's.

It is highly symptomatic that Percy combined his interest in the English canon—to the point that his *Reliques* constitutes a foundational text within the discipline—with his translations from other languages and cultures, in particular with his early Orientalism in his translations of Chinese fiction through the mediation of Portuguese versions, and above all with his interest in a much closer variety of Orientalism: the Moorish romances of the Hispanic tradition, many of which were transmitted through the vehicle of early modern Spanish prose fiction, a highly popular genre throughout Europe in general during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries which also enjoyed great diffusion in England thanks to Mabbe and other fellow translators. Percy can thus be viewed as part of the general wave of pre-Romantic views of Spain as a somewhat dislocated East on the margins of Europe, where the weight of its Moorish and anachronistically chivalric past had kept it away from the rationalizing tendencies of the Enlightenment.

Barbara Fuchs refers to the Hispanic 'idealization of Moors in chivalric and romance texts' as *maurophilia*—and naturally, these Moorish ballads (*romances moriscos*), were part of its literary manifestation.<sup>33</sup> As Fuchs has amply demonstrated, this literary *maurophilia* is one of the defining features of the early modern Spanish canon, and it led to the construction and perception—both at home and abroad—of Spanish cultural exceptionalism. Another important variety of literary *maurophilia* is the subgenre of *novela morisca*, the Moorish novella, many of which appear interpolated within larger works of prose fiction. One of them, *Ozmín y Daraxa* was embedded in Mateo Alemán's picaresque novel, *Guzmán de Alfarache*—translated into English, as we saw, by James Mabbe in 1623. Another Moorish novella, *El abencerraje*, first appeared within a historical chronicle—the *Parte de la crónica del ínclito infante don Fernando, que ganó a Antequera* (Toledo, 1561)—and was then included within a new Castilian edition of Jorge de Montemayor's *Diana*, the bestselling pastoral novel that had such a great impact in England after Bartholomew Yong's translation in 1598.<sup>34</sup> Yong's is thus the first English rendering of this important Moorish novella—more than two decades before Mabbe translated *Ozmín y Daraxa* as part of *The Rogue* in 1623. Thus did Hispanic *maurophilia* subreptitiously enter the discursive texture of the early modern English canon, as interpolated narratives in larger works that had just been made available within that reading community thanks to translators like Yong and Mabbe.

This peculiarly Hispanic cultural polyglotism pervaded Peninsular literature during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—as mentioned above, even Cervantes established the imaginary sources for his *Don Quijote* in a manuscript chronicle penned by an Arab in his native language.<sup>35</sup> It was then perpetuated abroad through translations and the accounts of European travellers, followed by nineteenth- and even twentieth-century Hispanists. This early perception of Spain as a mixed nation tinged as much by the ethnic as by the cultural impact of Moorish rule, also circulated by virtue of other types of texts. A case in point is Edward Daunce's anti-Spanish pamphlet, *A briefe discourse of the Spanish state* (London: Richard Field, 1590), which suggests that there is good reason to doubt that, after eight hundred years of Moorish presence, "the Negros sent for women out of Aphrick" (p. 31).

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<sup>33</sup> Fuchs et al. 2014, p. 1.

<sup>34</sup> Jorge de Montemayor. *Diana of George of Montemayor: translated out of Spanish into English by Bartholomew Yong of the Middle Temple Gentleman.* (At London: Printed by Edm. Bollifant, impensis G[eorge] B[ishop], 1598.) [STC (2nd ed.) 18044]

<sup>35</sup> For further details on the cultural polyglotism that underlies *Don Quixote* and other cases of Hispanic early modern prose fiction, see chapter 4 in Bistué 2013 (pp. 129-160)

Penned in the wake of the Armada episode of 1588, Daunce's pamphlet proves that these cultural stereotypes were inextricably embedded in the cultural competition that was inseparable from political, religious and military rivalry between Spain and England as two European powers pitted against each other.<sup>36</sup>

Early English translations of *Don Quixote* (1612) and Alemán's *Guzmán de Alfarache* (1623) contributed to this Orientalist version of Spanish exceptionalism. The role played by a chronicle like Pérez de Hita's *Guerras Civiles de Granada* as a source not just for Moorish ballads (as was the case with Percy's translations) but for plots that were then employed in Moorish novellas, and the way in which they appeared and circulated in their original—shifting with ease from one text to another, fluctuating between genres, and in the particular case of *El abencerraje* ambiguously situated between the status of historical chronicle and fiction—defies the generic hierarchies within which critical posterity sought to fix them.<sup>37</sup>

By contrast with this generic and editorial mobility, Percy's interest in Moorish and other Hispanic popular ballads and romances is more systematizing, analytical and empirical: he samples a few, isolates them from their sources, translates them, and finally fixes them in print with the aid of a modern critical apparatus. Unlike the sort of Orientalism exemplified by Percy's interest in Chinese literature—culturally and linguistically distant from the West—these Hispanic-Moorish romances were a case of domesticated Orientalism which lay closer to home. The foreign perception of this Spanish cultural and literary exceptionalism within early modernity thus started in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and found its continuation in the eighteenth century thanks, *inter alia*, to the early comparatism of Percy.<sup>38</sup> In his particular case this interest in popular Hispanic poetry was of a piece with Percy's expeditions into the Icelandic, Latin, or Italian poetic canons, and with his search for the fountainhead of English poetic expression among Medieval and Early Modern lyrics. Driven by a pre-Romantic variety of the myth of origin, and simultaneously with his quest for the springs of English popular poetics with a view to establishing the foundations of its national literary identity, Percy also engaged in the construction of a universal world canon that encompassed national peculiarities as the linguistic variants of a common poetic core. This transcultural and translinguistic core then found its singular expression in the varieties of popular poetry and lyrics which he sought to collect, translate, and anthologize in his critical editions.

Although it turned out to be one of his unfulfilled projects, around 1759-1762 Percy was already planning a translation of *El Quijote*, alongside a critical edition in its Spanish original that could situate Cervantes's novel within its historical context as a satire of ancient romances.<sup>39</sup> In one of his letters to the English literary historian Thomas Warton (28 February 1762), Percy informed his correspondent that 'among other odd things which I have occasionally picked up, I have made a Collection of most of the old Spanish Romances, so finely ridicul'd in *Don Quixote*: many of them in the original, others in Translations.'<sup>40</sup> The Spanish edition would include the sort of critical apparatus that featured in his *Ancient Songs Chiefly on Moorish Subjects*. If Percy had finally completed

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<sup>36</sup> See Fuchs 2008 for further details on Orientalists views of Spain in early modern England, and Griffin 2009 for the ethnic component in English views of Spain during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (in particular his introduction and chapter one, "The Specter of Spain", pp. 1-26 and "From *ethos* to *ethnos*", pp. 27-48).

<sup>37</sup> See Fuchs et al, ed. and trans. 2014.

<sup>38</sup> For its impact in Italy and France in the seventeenth century, see Munari 2002.

<sup>39</sup> See Brooks 1979: 255. On Percy's plans for a critical edition of *Don Quijote* that could establish Cervantes's novel as a classical work within the universal canon of *Weltliteratur*, see Smith, ed. 1932: ix-x. For further details see William Warburton's letter to Thomas Warton in Robinson & Dennis, 1951: 168-69.

<sup>40</sup> Robinson & Dennis, eds. 1951: pp. 31-32.

his plan, this would have been the first modern critical edition of *Don Quixote*. As fate would have it, however, it eventually fell to *Don Juan Bowle* to fulfil Percy's original plan with his monumental three-volume *Don Quixote* of 1781.<sup>41</sup> Percy's intentions are revealed in the draft of a letter quoted by Smith in the 1932 reprint of the 1775 *Ancient Songs*:

Now the Spanish is a language I have long cultivated and *Don Quixote* has always been my favourite Book: and tho' I seldom look into any Translation of that humorous Work: yet I have observed that they are all defective in one thing, and that is a *Key to the Satire*: None of them contain so much as an attempt (that I could discover) to point out the force of the ridicule.—The Intention of *Cervantes*, the great Design of his Work, was to laugh at & expose the absurdities of the Old favourite Romances of that age: and accordingly in almost every line, there is an allusion to one or other of them.<sup>42</sup>

This idea of *Don Quixote* as a satire on ancient romances was of a piece with the Whig, eighteenth-century reading of Cervantes's novel—see for instance, Tobias Smollet's 1748 introduction to his *Roderick Random*:

... the world actually began to be infected with the spirit of knight-errantry, when Cervantes, by an inimitable piece of ridicule, reformed the taste of mankind, representing chivalry in the right point of view, and converting romance to purposes far more useful and entertaining, by making it assume the sock, and point out the follies of ordinary life.<sup>43</sup>

Seven years after his *Roderick Random* Tobias Smollett would publish his famous translation of *Don Quijote*—first issued in London in 1755 and still in circulation today. It would appear that in his letter (dated before 1764) Percy's reference to pre-existing translations of Cervantes' novel was subtly aiming at one of the scholarly deficiencies that he had detected in Smollett's version: he may have come up with a good translation, but he had nevertheless failed to convey 'the force of the ridicule'. By contrast, Percy the proto-comparatist sought with his *Quixotic Library* and his critical edition to rationalize and put together in a single, systematically classified record, the works whose circulation in early sixteenth century Spain had made it possible for Cervantes to come up with his masterpiece. In other words, to gather editorial proof of public literary taste and standards at the time with a view to laying out before the eyes of the public *Don Quijote* as Cervantes' inherent critique of imperial decadence in early seventeenth century Spain, and as a comic parody of the sort of late medieval superstition and irrationalism that Whigs like Smollet detected in it. Soon afterwards Romanticism would idealize Alonso Quijano as a tragic hero for very different reasons. In this shift Cervantes would first appear as an Enlightened reformer *avant la lettre*, and then as a defender of the sort of universal human values that modernity had obliterated. Before this well-known transit of Alonso Quijano across Enlightenment and Romantic Europe, some of the texts that went into the making of *Don Quixote* were in international circulation already in the sixteenth century. For instance, *Amadís*, *Diana*, and *Lazarillo* were among those that had already been translated into English by the time

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<sup>41</sup> Eisenberg, ed. 1987: viii. *Historia del famoso cavallero Don Quixote de la Mancha: por Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra. Con Anotaciones, índices y varias lecciones: por el reverendo D. Juan Bowle, A.M.S.S.A.L. En seis tomos.* Londres: B. White, P. Elmsley, T. y T. Payne, y J. Robson, 1781. See also Bowle 1777.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted by Smith, ed. 1932: x-xi, who dates the letter at some point before 1764. Percy also read Chaucer's Sir Thopas as a satire on chivalric fiction. See also Brooks 1979: 247-61 and Eisenberg, 1987: vii-viii.

<sup>43</sup> Tobias Smollet, 'Preface' to *The Adventures of Roderick Random* (1748) in Smollett 2008: xxxiv.

Mabbe set about his rendering of *La Celestina*, *Guzmán* or Cervantes' own *Novelas Ejemplares*.

As he did with his edition of the English ballads, Percy's intention was the detailed reconstruction and preservation, through this *Quixotic Library*, of a textual legacy that might have otherwise been lost. This library would also function as an essential heuristic backdrop without which Cervantes's *original plan* for *Don Quijote* could not have been properly understood in what he construed as its original historical context—a critical and historiographical artefact that Percy was himself contributing to erect by systematically collecting the texts used by Cervantes. It would finally contribute to Percy and Bowle's scheme to conduct their own particular reading of Cervantes, and to raise this novel to the status of a classic on a par with Shakespeare—a task that had been undertaken by their common acquaintance, Thomas Warton: 'I shall apply to my own intentions', Bowle told Percy in 1777, 'what your friend Mr. Warton has said of Shakespeare: If Cervantes is worth reading, he is worth explaining'.<sup>44</sup> With their attempt at the reconstruction of the library which had provoked Alonso Quijano's literary malady, their recreation of the textual and discursive quarry that provided the materials for its narrative fabric, Percy and Bowle engaged in the historicist reproduction of an important section of the Spanish book market and of the reading communities that could make sense of this satire on the reading habits and the literary obsessions of Cervantes' own time. This reading, of course, says as much about the Enlightenment project of a world canon, and about the onset of comparative literature as a discipline, as it does about the actual historical circumstances that surrounded the literary production of Miguel de Cervantes.

Cleanth Brooks underlined the importance of Thomas Percy and John Bowle for the establishment of a modern international canon.<sup>45</sup> Their activities, the texts they handled, and the plans they devised all constitute proof of the pan-European multilingual infrastructure of the universal project of *Weltliteratur*. Percy and Bowle were in search of texts in their original editions, but they also worked with translations, and in particular with the insights of the translators who rendered these texts into English. They cast their nets far and wide, and their scope included, as we have seen, Latin, English, Spanish, Scandinavian, Hebrew and Chinese texts. After a survey of their scholarly activities, and those of other of their contemporaries—like Thomas Tyrwhitt, who established the foundations of modern Chaucer scholarship, or Richard Farmer, who proclaimed that in order to understand Shakespeare properly we should read the same books that the Bard read—Cleanth Brooks concluded: 'How clearly our scholarly ancestors of two hundred years ago discerned the essential problems, how quickly they devised appropriate methods for dealing with them, and with what zeal and diligence they prosecuted the work.'<sup>46</sup>

Like some other of their contemporaries who were also embarked on the historicist reconstruction of the readership of texts they strove to elevate to the status of classics, Bowle and Percy were aware of the importance of research into the sources that came together in the elaboration of these canonical milestones. Their outlook and methods had fundamentally evolved from the historical and philological approaches of fifteenth- and sixteenth-century humanism inaugurated by Valla and his peers, which had been first applied to the great authors from the Latin and Greek canons through carefully revised and collated manuscripts, and then through their subsequent translation.<sup>47</sup> The same methods had been afterwards mustered for the establishment of national vernacular canons. In this

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<sup>44</sup> Bowle 1777: 47.

<sup>45</sup> Brooks 1979: 247-48.

<sup>46</sup> Brooks 1979: 261.

<sup>47</sup> For further details on the role of translation within the humanist project, see the 'Introduction' in Pérez Fernández and Wilson-Lee, eds. (2014, pp. 1-21).

endeavor, Mabbe and his fellow translators from the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, hand in hand with lexicographers, grammarians, and publishers, were the forerunners of Bowle, Percy and others within their own generation.

Besides the abundance of translations, another parallelism between their respective periods included the establishment of virtual networks of readers and critics facilitated by the publishing business and the book market. In the same way as the publisher Edward Blount constituted a fundamental hub within Mabbe's extended network of authors, translators, diplomats and other agents of exchange in all sorts of tangible and intangible goods, Percy and Bowle were introduced to each other through a common acquaintance: the erudite bookseller Andrew Jackson (1695-1778), who also had his own network of well-informed readers/consumers. As Cleanth Brooks proclaims, 'Many of the Percy-Bowles letters have to do with book-buying.'<sup>48</sup>

The late sixteenth and the early seventeenth centuries saw the gradual emergence of the reading practices, the processes of linguistic homogenization, and the establishment of local and transnational book markets—as well as markets for other types of cultural goods—that generated new paths towards the macro-network that came to be known as the International Republic of Letters. These networks constituted heterogeneous and dynamic reading communities which facilitated the creation and exchange of political, economic, religious and literary information in parallel with critical opinion. In other words, they laid the foundations for the emergence of the public sphere in eighteenth-century Europe. In Britain the likes of Percy and Bowle, Warton and Johnson, were embarked in similar processes of exchange and appropriation—magnified by a thriving market for the consumption of a large variety of goods that included luxury objects, art, printed matter, news, and public spectacles. The ideal rationale that underpinned the construction of these new canons is phrased in a well-known passage by another eminent literary historian, Samuel Johnson. It appears within a work whose aim was to adjudicate and orient public taste as regarded the production of a host of national poets, past and present. In the essay dedicated to Thomas Gray within his *Lives of the Poets* (1781), Johnson crowns his evaluation of Gray's *Elegy* with the following declaration:

In the character of his *Elegy* I rejoice to concur with the common reader; for *by the common sense of readers uncorrupted with literary prejudices*, after all the refinements of subtlety and the dogmatism of learning, must be finally decided all claim to poetical honors.<sup>49</sup>

With his faith in common sense and the common reader Johnson was voicing the spirit of his own age. A similar concern for the judgment of *common* people—in other words the new middle classes who enjoyed the purchasing power to consume all these cultural products—and for standards of taste and behavior that these new aspiring classes could share, circulated among other cultural and political agents during this period. Both Edmund Burke, statesman and political philosopher, and Thomas Paine, his radical adversary, proclaimed themselves apostles of common sense. An expanding mass of consumers, a new reading public, and also a new class of political agents: all called for a new type of language that could provide a sense of community as it homogenized the market to facilitate the widespread production and distribution of cultural goods.

Johnson contributed to the codification of that language with his famous *Dictionary* (1755), which illustrates its definitions with the authoritative consensus of more than

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<sup>48</sup> Brooks 1979: 254; on Andrew Jackson, see Brooks, 1979: 251. For details on Mabbe and his networks, see Pérez Fernández, 2014.

<sup>49</sup> Samuel Johnson, 'Gray', in Johnson 2009: 461.

114,000 quotations from the best English writers. This method erected a literary pantheon as it simultaneously dictated the norms for elegant, proper and polite linguistic usage. Johnson was following in the wake of a well-established tradition of English grammarians, translators, and lexicographers who preceded him in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. These lexicographers were in turn part of James Mabbe's networks: among them we can find, besides the eminent John Florio, the Spanish Protestant exile Antonio Del Corro, John Thorius, Richard Percyvall or John Minsheu. Much of their production was issued by Edward Blount and the publishing maverick John Wolfe. They relied significantly upon the influential grammatical and lexicographical tradition established by the Spanish rhetorician Elio Antonio de Nebrija, who had in turn imported his philological and stylistic principles from Italy, in particular from the work of Lorenzo Valla.<sup>50</sup>

This convergence towards linguistic and stylistic standards, towards the fixation of canons and the establishment of common aesthetic judgment—in other words, towards the creation of a constellation of linguistic and reading communities within and across national boundaries—is part of a general drift whose early symptoms can be detected in sixteenth and seventeenth century Europe, and in particular in the complex and dynamic relations between the domestic and transnational dimensions of its book markets. It was naturally magnified in that golden age of publishing and journalism that was the English eighteenth century. Samuel Johnson's ideal of a common, polite, urbane and polished language went hand in hand with the common morality and social values of the new middle classes promoted by periodicals like *The Tatler* or *The Spectator*.<sup>51</sup> Steele himself laid out the division of labor in his journal by listing its different sections. This array of headings mirrored the diversity of social-discursive exchanges informing the different subsections within the public sphere which the journal was recording—and eventually, regulating—for its readers:

‘All accounts of *Gallantry*, *Pleasure* and *Entertainment*, shall be under the Article of *White's Chocolate-house*; *Poetry*, under that of *Will's Coffee-house*; *Learning* under the Title of *Graecian*; *Foreign* and *Domestik News*, you will have from *St. James's Coffee-house*; and what else I have to offer on any other Subject, shall be dated from my own *Apartment*’<sup>52</sup>

One of the strategies used by cultural and political elites in the construction of a sense of common purpose and identity consists in the appropriation—through merely interlinguistic translation, but also through the processes involved in cultural translation and communicative exchange—of linguistic, political, religious and cultural capital from other communities. The fact that these complex and manifold processes reached a critical point in Britain as its global empire also reached its climax during the eighteenth century is not casual. As we have seen, Thomas Percy was interested in a multilingual variety of literary production that included Chinese fiction, one of whose texts he rendered into

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<sup>50</sup> For further details on the close relation between translation, foreign language instruction, and lexicography within the context of a thriving international book market during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, see the conclusions to Pérez Fernández's introduction to Mabbe's *The Spanish Bawd* (Pérez Fernández, ed. 2013: 52-66).

<sup>51</sup> ‘*The Tatler* and *The Spectator* serve as guides, leading readers through the vast array of moral, cultural, consumer, and social choices that accompanied their relationships with one another and themselves, with the financial and commercial markets of their day, and with contemporary entertainments and pastimes. Mediating between the day-to-day social and material lives of their readers and the more universal and permanent values of good sense, honesty, modesty, decorum, and good taste, the papers attempt to secure a fixed significance for the everyday.’ (Mackie, ed., 1998: 2-3)

<sup>52</sup> Steele, *The Tatler*, no. 1, April 12, 1709.

English thanks to the mediation of a Portuguese translation—in other words, through the intervention of the language of another fading empire. As one of the contributors to the establishment of the English canon in the midst of the global expansion of the British Empire, Percy was indeed busy collecting materials from past empires: Spain, Portugal, or China—as much as British explorers, merchants, and soldiers were busy establishing new trade routes for the circulation of goods and currency to prop up their own political and military empire.

Once these processes of transfer and translation of cultural capital into the target language have taken place, there are other strategies that contribute to consolidate the recently acquired cultural goods. One of the most effective among these is the homogenization of linguistic usage. This regulation of language and literary standards can be viewed as an attempt at the construction of a new sort of consensual universalism based on a combination of mercantile principles and the shared opinion of well-educated readers. The latter in particular acted as both consumers and as ‘men of understanding’, endowed with singular social, linguistic and aesthetic competence—as Smollett brilliantly put it in his translation of *Don Quijote*, they were ‘polite people of sense’.<sup>53</sup> All of which, in turn, enfranchised them as citizens within the International Republic of Letters.

The communicative revolution of print, with the redefinition of disciplines in the arts and sciences that followed in its wake, led to the institutionalization of a Eurocentric encyclopedism of Universalist ambitions during the eighteenth century. The Enlightenment also saw the gradual emergence of comparative literature among these disciplines, and the consolidation of the International Republic of Letters—the latter of which had been in the making over the course of at least the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and probably earlier. These developments in the fields of *literature* and *literary studies* as the products of a common human endeavor which manifested themselves in different ways across the globe were closely tied to the political cosmopolitanism reflected in the ‘Kantian vision of perpetual peace through enlightened common culture’, and to other varieties of universalism and communal arrangements, such as the Goethean concept of *Weltliteratur*.<sup>54</sup>

Percy and Bowle’s project for the recreation of Don Quixote’s library is a symptom of this encyclopedism in the field of literary studies. In chapter six of the first part of *Don Quixote*, Cervantes had already engaged through the characters of the curate and the barber in the attribution of aesthetic and moral values to texts, some sent to the pyre, some others deemed worthy of preservation. Though full of books which were in actual circulation at the time, Don Quixote’s library is among the virtual and fictional libraries that took shape in the pages and imaginations of early modern authors, from the sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries. It is, for example of a piece with the books in Cervantes’ 1614 *Viaje del Parnaso*—a contentious and parodic journey to Mount Parnassus which ends with a battle between good and bad poets wielding their books and verses as weapons. Directly inspired by a previous Italian work (Caesare Caporali’s *Viaggio di Parnaso*, 1582), this is a forerunner of other eighteenth-century battles of books, such as Swift’s (1704). It also shared this virtual public sphere with a large array of early modern libraries, catalogues, and indexes, some fabulous and imaginary, some real, some imperialistically ambitious, some normative, and some others with a merely recreational or parodic purpose. This crowded company included, to name just a few, Hernando Colón’s *Biblioteca Colombina*

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<sup>53</sup> ‘Purity, propriety, elegance and perspicuity [in language] are to be found among polite people of sense, tho’ they be natives of Majalahonda: I say people of sense, because so great a number of people are not so, and sense is the foundation of good language, assisted by custom and use’ (Miguel de Cervantes, *Don Quixote*. Trans. Tobias Smollett (New York: The Modern Library, 2004), Book II, in vol. II, chapter II, (“In which is recounted the adventure of the enamoured shepherd, with other truly diverting incidents”), 710)

<sup>54</sup> Apter 2013, pp. 41-42.

in Sevilla, Rabelais's imaginary library of St Victor in his *Pantagruel*, Juan Luis Vives' censorious reading lists in his *De institutione foeminae christianae*, the Royal Library in *El Escorial*, the Bodleian in Oxford, or John Donne's *Catalogus librorum aulicorum incomparabilium et non vendibilium* (or *The Courtier's Library of Rare Books Not for Sale*, posthumously published in 1650, composed ca. 1603-1611), not to mention the numerous inquisitorial indexes that circulated at the time.

This obsessive cataloguing of books and disciplines, this establishment of normative lists and gathering of reading communities, all spread on the wings of the printing press and the book markets, and eventually flourished in the systematic classification of universal knowledge in all its diversity under the auspices of the different varieties of European imperialism, aided by the academics and scholars involved in the Enlightenment project. The evolution from early modern varieties of historical chronicles, news reports and prose fiction (romance, picaresque, chivalric, pastoral, Moorish), frequently overlapping with each other, towards the generic institutionalization of the eighteenth-century novel within the canon of commercial literature in print is part of this general drift, and contrasts with the presence of Mabbe's manuscript among the circles of Percy, Bowle and their associates—all of them involved in the excavation of manuscript material and its subsequent circulation in print which followed the newly established critical format of scholarly editions.

The vicissitudes of the Alnwick Manuscript between its dedication by Mabbe to John Strangways around 1602-1603 and its re-emergence among the papers at the archives of the Duke of Northumberland in 1867 also involve an important moment in nineteenth-century scholarship, when nation-states all over Europe were busy gathering documents to cement their national identities upon the historical legitimacy furnished by these primary sources. Institutions like the *Historic Manuscript Commission* in Britain were devised to collect and classify original documents. The end result was the turning of these scattered papers into the alphabet and lexicon which would inform a narrative of national identity in different fields and disciplines, including literature.<sup>55</sup>

The transition from the archives of the aristocratic Northumberland family to the open markets of the book business, and above all to the circuits of the academic world is also symptomatic of the social and cultural changes that translation underwent as one of the building blocks of what the eighteenth century came to conceive of as the autonomous field of *literature*. Since he generated both manuscript and printed matter, Mabbe lies at the crossroads between oral-scribal and mechanical means of reproduction. Percy and Bowle's relation to manuscripts is mostly empirical and academic. Like the host of translators and literary scholars that proliferated all over Europe at the time, they engage with these artefacts as textual entomologists of sorts. They act as archaeologists of the manuscripts and rare early editions they were first excavating, then classifying, and finally disseminating through translations and critical editions with a view to pinning them within the hierarchies of the canon as specimens within a showcase.<sup>56</sup> This triad of Mabbe, Percy and Bowle consequently underlines the material and cultural networks that led to the early

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<sup>55</sup> Similar institutions and collections were created all over Europe. Its Spanish counterpart, for instance, was the *CODOIN* series (*Colección de Documentos Inéditos para la Historia de España*), in 113 volumes, which ran between 1842 and 1895. Appointed in 1869, and recently incorporated into an online digital database, the *Historical Manuscript Commission* is described by its current website as having "a long tradition of publishing information on the location and nature of records, highlighting their value in historical research and advising on their care." Historical Manuscripts Commission, at The National Archives website <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/hmc.htm>, accessed on 09/10/2014. The current vogue in academia for lavishly funded projects in the digital humanities is the most recent manifestation of this trend.

<sup>56</sup> See Kernan 1989 p. 5



steps in the establishment of what has come to be called today the international canon of World Literature.<sup>57</sup>

The production and milieus of Percy and Bowle illustrate the next phase in cultural and literary relations between the two countries. Britain had already become a well-established global empire that had left the Hispanic Monarchy behind as a serious competitor, and the English establishment had by now embarked on the appropriation of cultural and literary capital not just from Spain, but also from other non-European traditions, as it was also quite actively pursuing the construction of its own English canon.<sup>58</sup> As Mabbe, Blount and their circles had done early in the seventeenth century, Bowle, Percy and their associates bring together the figures of Cervantes and Shakespeare, each of them in their own respective ways, at this foundational moment of the world canon. They do so as they take up the appropriation and revaluation of texts from other periods within these two linguistic communities. They approached with the methodological tools and the archaeological optimism of enlightened empirical historicism newly rediscovered texts from the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, or reinterpreted others of whose existence only a minority of curious readers was aware. They handled them as artefacts that lay at sufficient cultural, linguistic and chronological distances—which facilitated their refashioning through this historicist lens as objects worthy of empirical examination and aesthetic evaluation within the new discipline of comparative literary studies. This methodological and textual infrastructure came then to sustain and legitimize the appearance of *literature* as an autonomous field—precisely as the Enlightenment first, and then our own age have come to understand it: on the one hand as *de facto* cultural artefacts that circulate within mercantile networks of readers as consumers, and on the other as the idealized aesthetic manifestations of individual—also national—creativity, and therefore as sublime expressions of a common human spirit.

Not only did Percy, Bowle and their circles rewrite the history and reread the newly excavated texts from their Medieval and Renaissance traditions as distant textual specimens that could be approached from an *objective* and *empirical* perspective. They also embarked upon the examination and the cultural appropriation, through translation and editorial redesign, of texts from even more geographically and culturally distant realms, like Chinese literature. The fact that the first critical edition of *El Quijote* was planned and executed in England by an English scholar, and not in Spain by a Hispanic editor, is indicative of the processes of appropriation that took place not only through translation, but also through academic editorial processes that facilitated the fixation of the text in the canon, and the strategies for its *proper* interpretation as a product of what this scholarship construed as its *historical context*. The presence of the Alwick manuscript as a testimony of previous stages in the production and distribution of translated texts, the trace of *La Celestina* in Percy, and the postulation of Cervantes as Shakespeare's equal all constitute a little-known episode in the *longue durée* of the relations between these two pillars of the western canon. They also exemplify in many different ways the cultural policies that went into the making of this canon, and which still dominate the infrastructure—material, cultural, ideological—that sustains the discipline of World Literature.

The coupling among these critical agents, through their editorial strategies, of central icons in the Spanish and English canons like Cervantes and Shakespeare reveals the

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<sup>57</sup> For an account of the origins of World Literature as a new discipline in comparative studies see Apter 2013 pp. 1-5.

<sup>58</sup> A recent examination of the role played by literary translation from the Classics in the formation of the English canon can be found in Stuart Gillespie's *English Translation and Classical Reception: Towards a New Literary History* (2011), who focuses upon the eighteenth century in chapters six and seven (pp. 76-92 and 93-103, respectively).

pathways towards the formation of a global Anglocentric canon that expanded through the appropriation of alien literary capital. Within the fresh reassessment of comparative literature that views translation as a complex phenomenon inextricably related to cultural and academic policies as much as to economic and geostrategic interests, some other recent contributions to the field of Anglo-Spanish relations have demonstrated that the appropriation of Hispanic literary capital—as much during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as during the early years of the twenty-first century—relies on similar strategies of appropriation and occlusion.<sup>59</sup> Mabbe and Percy, their networks and the texts they produced, as well as some of their avatars, constitute case studies that illustrate some of these pathways, their patterns of exchange, and what they can tell us about the policies and strategies that led to the establishment of a world canon under cover of the ideally disinterested auspices of Enlightened universalism—albeit actually driven by self-interested policies of cultural imperialism.

As seen above, in his dedication to Pope Nicholas V of his Latin translation of Thucydides, Lorenzo Valla coupled translation with empire and trade. Few texts could have been more germane to the *zeitgeist* of eighteenth-century British scholars and their milieu. Valla also rehearses in his preface the notion of community and utopia, the role that translation plays among some of the most important principles that should underpin a proper political community, i.e. that of the common good: ‘*sint cunctorum quodammodo cuncta communia*’. In other words: translation makes the *goods of the mind* readily available to all. These ideas of empire, trade, and the common good brought together by translation, with the rich universe of discourse that they jointly evoke, rests on the classical rhetorical tradition of Cicero and Quintilian, and predates its treatment in other Renaissance texts on translation.<sup>60</sup> More relevant to my purposes, it stands as a precedent to its more systematic development among eighteenth century publishers, translators, scholars, and readers—*inter alia* through Johnson’s notion of the common opinion of readers.<sup>61</sup>

Alongside empire, finance, trade and the common good, Barbara Fuchs has proved that the trope of pillaging and pirating was—still is—an important part of the game.<sup>62</sup> Emily Apter and the host of scholarship that she invokes in her recent *Against World Literature*, all testify to the fact that the construction of canons does rely as much on the establishment of cultural hegemony through translation as it does on military occupation and financial power. After all, as Antonio de Nebrija famously proclaimed in the dedicatory prologue of his *Gramática de la lengua castellana* of 1492 to Queen Isabel, ‘*siempre la lengua fue compañera del imperio*’. As Valla, his Roman forebears and his European heirs all demonstrate, translation and scholarship trail not far behind, after language and empire.

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<sup>59</sup> A case in point is Fuch’s account of the Cardenio Project, in her *The Poetics of Piracy* (chapter 5, “*Cardenios* for our time”, Fuchs, 2013, pp. 98-129)

<sup>60</sup> See Rhodes *et al.*, eds. 2013, pp. 26-7

<sup>61</sup> At the current dawn of a post-print, digital age, the internet and global multimedia do provide the material means for consumers of cultural and literary goods to reorient the market and therefore create new canons and complex reading communities. If England competed against Hispanic hegemony in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the common hegemon now is the Anglo-American cultural and academic conglomerate, one of whose manifestations is the planetary dominance of ‘Globish’ (see Apter 2013, pp. 187-88). On the interesting relations between translation, lexicography, community and utopia, see Lezra 2005, and Venuti 2004.

<sup>62</sup> A comprehensive survey of the critical tropes used to describe translation can be found in Reynolds’ *The Poetry of Translation* (2011), particularly in his chapter 6 (pp. 39-45). But the whole volume is an excellent analysis of the different ways in which translation can be construed as both method and process, and also from a theoretical perspective.

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