

WIESSE REBAGLIATI, Jorge, 2015, *El mago y el brujo. El Exemplo XI de El Conde Lucanor de don Juan Manuel and El brujo postergado de Jorge Luis Borges*, Lima, Instituto Riva-Agüero. 52 pp.

Written six centuries apart, both the work of Don Juan Manuel from Toledo and the Argentine Jorge Luis Borges have captivated scholars and led to a lengthy academic bibliography that is difficult to review comprehensively. In order to decipher the multiple dimensions of some their most famous texts, many studies were forced to transcend literary criticism and turn to diverse disciplines such as philology, history, psychology or philosophy. A superficial overview of this vast critical tradition leaves one with the impression that everything has already been said about both authors and that to produce an original study on the subject is a task that is as difficult as it is futile. Nevertheless, the brief yet thought-provoking book by Jorge Wiese Rebagliati – *El mago y el brujo. El Exemplo XI de El Conde Lucanor de don Juan Manuel y El brujo postergado de Jorge Luis Borges* – makes a real contribution to the understanding of two famous stories by these authors. Originally prepared by Jorge Wiese for a presentation at the University of Fribourg, the essay tackles “Exemplo XI” by Juan Manuel with its contemporary rewriting by Borges, “El brujo postergado.”

The book analyzes, from a literary perspective, the intertextual relationship between both stories in light of Borges' traductology. If Borgean conceptions about translation determine the purpose and guide the argument of this work, they do not restrict its development. Thus, the first part draws on the best critical approaches that explain substantial issues related both to *El conde Lucanor* in general – the genre of exemplum, the structure, the narrative voices; as well as “Exemplo XI” in particular – the narrative spaces, the topics, and the literary strategies. In turn, the second section of the book examines Borges' version. Jorge Wiese maintains that the coincidences and discrepancies between the medieval **hypotext** and contemporary **hypertext** have to do with the Argentine writer's ideas about intertextuality. It is on this proposition that the principal conclusion of this study rests: more than a contemporary adaptation of the “Exemplo XI” of Don Juan Manuel, *El brujo postergado* is an act of rewriting that puts into practice the principle of Borgean traductology.

The study starts with an informative review of the Don Juan Manuel critical tradition, useful for both novices and specialists. In the first pages, Wiese stresses various decisive aspects of *El conde Lucanor*: the structural originality of the exempla – which starts from and moves beyond the medieval genre; the tripartite (exempla, sententia, argumenta) and ascending (from the simple to the complex, from the narrative to the doctrinal, etc.) division of the book; and the notable confluence of three narrative voices – that of the author of the general prologue, that of the narrator of the exempla, and the person that narrates each of the tales. This coherent panorama of the work precedes his proposed interpretation of “Exemplo XI.” Without passing over the folkloric roots of the story, the author emphasizes

the handling of the narrative space, discusses the issues of magic and of sacrifice, and takes an in-depth look at the decisive role of the word as a support of the magical illusion.

The principal contribution is to be found in the last part of the book: an intertextual analysis between "Exemplo XI" and *El brujo postergado* according to the Borgean theory of translation. As Wiese points out, Borges believed that the act of translation was not limited to flipping the text into a different language, but also implied a transformation. For Borges, faithfulness to the text led to a "copy"; meanwhile, literary translation should rather aspire to the creation of a new "version" with significant changes vis à vis the original source. Guided by these ideas, Jorge Wiese explains the similarities and differences using four of the five characteristics of Borgean traductology recognized by Efraín Kristal: the omission of the "filling" or those elements of the story considered to be dispensable, the suppression of "textual distractions," the scorn for some essential themes, and the accentuation of less important ones. This analysis leads him to the conclusion that while Don Juan Manuel considered that one should be faithful to texts and rejected any kind of modification of the original, Borges treated canonical works with an irreverent attitude, modifying them, reordering them, rearranging their emphases, and linking them with false literary sources. *El brujo postergado* should not be read as a mere translation. Through its omissions and emphases, it manages to emancipate itself from its medieval source in order to renew and resemantize it.

Freed from the ideological tendencies of current literary criticism, *El mago y el brujo* seems more related to the ancient Horacian principle of *prodesse et delectare*: it reconciles its pedagogical purpose, reviewing the prestigious exegeses of *El conde Lucanor* and the "Exemplo XI," with an attractive personal interpretation of *El brujo postergado*.

Nevertheless, Wiese's achievement does not lie solely in the description of the characteristics and virtues of these versions and in explaining the alterations in the Borgean story, drawing on Borges' vision of the literary tradition. He is also able to find in this version aspects that were previously unnoticed by those who study the work of Don Juan Manuel. Wiese's essay clarifies the motivations that led the Argentine writer to adapt "Exemplo XI" to the 20th century with erudition and lucidity, and takes advantage of these to suggest and formulate new issues related to both texts. The book starts with the ideas of Borges, but is not limited to these, and proposes a reading that both pays homage to these ideas and goes beyond them.

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