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TRANSLATING TERESA: MUERO PORQUE NO MUERO IN 17TH-CENTURY FRANCE

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Introduction

In 1583, the son of a wealthy family of merchants of French and Spanish origins traveled from his home in Rouen (Normandy) to Seville, on family business. While in Spain, he became acquainted with, and captivated by, the spirituality of the Carmelite reformer Teresa of Avila (1515-1582), and dedicated the next fifteen years of his life and a sizeable portion of his personal fortune to the project of establishing Carmelite convents in France that would be modeled on those he had visited in Spain. He worked tirelessly and against numerous obstacles to bring Spanish Carmel to France, but his efforts were to no avail. Despite his considerable diplomatic, logistical and financial investments, the project to establish Teresian convents in France seemed doomed to failure. It was at this point, out of options and likely exhausted after years of fruitless efforts, that Jean de Brétigny Quintanadueñas (1556-1634) abandoned his role as a diplomat, logistician and financier, and became a translator.⁽¹⁾

Perfectly bilingual and bicultural, and extremely well acquainted with Teresian Carmel, Brétigny was ideally suited to translate Teresa's collected works, which had been published in Spanish in 1588, and included her *Vida* (*Book of Her Life*), *Camino de perfección* (*The Way of Perfection*) and *Castillo interior* (*The Interior Castle*).⁽²⁾ As Pierre Sérouet writes, after his years of effort to "import" Spanish Carmel to France, Brétigny "reflected on the reasons for his failure and concluded that only Saint Teresa herself could lift all obstacles, by conquering the hearts of French men and women".⁽³⁾ Through her books, Brétigny hoped, Teresa might win hearts in France where he had failed to make any progress himself. In 1598, Brétigny set about translating Teresa's three main texts (abovementioned) and, dedicating himself almost exclusively to the task, had completed all three translations within two years.

Published in 1601, the translations were a success: both first and second editions of all three texts were published that same year, and all three would be republished in the years that followed.⁽⁴⁾ But the success of Brétigny's translations was just the beginning: in the course of the 17th century, Teresa's multi-volume prose works were translated to French four times, by four different translators, and in the 17th century alone, there were sixty-seven French editions of Teresa's writings, only slightly less than half the number of editions of the wildly popular *Amadis de Gaule* (158), and greater than the number of editions of Cervantes (41) and of Montemayor's *Diana* (22).⁽⁵⁾

Not long after the publication of Brétigny's translations, the project to bring Spanish Carmel to France was finally realized, the first convent being founded in Paris in 1604. But by then Jean de Brétigny Quintanadueñas had already succeeded via literary channels where he had failed diplomatically, bringing Teresa of Avila to France and laying the foundation of what was to become a significant spiritual and literary presence in 17th-century France.

Muero porque no muero

In addition to translating Teresa's own writings, Brétigny, with the help of the prior of the Chartreux of Bourfontaine, Guillaume du Chèvre, also translated Francisco de Ribera's biography of Teresa, *La Vida de la Madre Teresa de Jesús* (Spanish original 1590).⁽⁶⁾ In the 1607 edition of Brétigny/du Chèvre's French translation (the original was published in 1601), there is something of a literary "stowaway": included in the front matter of the volume, but absent from Ribera's Spanish original, are five stanzas of Teresa of Avila's most famous poem, *Muero porque no muero*. The poem is introduced as "*Chanson de la Bienheureuse Vierge Terese de Jesus, composée par elle-meme avec un tres-ardent desir d'esprit*" ("*Song of the Blessed Virgin Teresa of Jesus, composed by her with a most ardent desire of spirit*"), and it is left untranslated. It begins with the famous refrain:

Vivo sin vivir in [sic] mi,
Y tan alta vida espero
Que muero porque no muero.

and continues in Spanish for four more stanzas.(7)

It is not clear who added the poem to this French translation of Ribera's text. One can easily imagine that Brétigny, after his years of intimate contact with Spanish Carmel, might have known the poem and decided to include it along with the biography. It may also have been Guillaume du Chèvre who added the poem: Pierre Sérouet postulates that Chèvre may have done most of the work on the Ribera translation; if this is the case, it was perhaps the Chartreux who saw fit to give Teresa's verses such a prominent (if untranslated) presentation.(8) Alternatively, it may be that someone other than Brétigny or du Chèvre added the poem: the 1607 edition was published in Antwerp (the earlier editions had been published in Paris), and it is possible that the two translators exercised less supervision over this edition than they did over the earlier ones.(9)

In any case, this was not the first time that part of Teresa's poem had appeared untranslated, in something of a symbolic fashion: in the 1599 Italian translation of Teresa's *Vida*, in an engraving that is one of the earliest images of Teresa in a writerly pose, with an open book before her and a pen in hand, the open book in front of Teresa contains the words: *Vivo sin vivir en mi y muero porque no muero*, in Spanish.(10) In the years after Teresa's death in 1582, the poem would "accompany" her in various other forms and (non)translations: the full poem had appeared in print at least as early as 1606 (perhaps 1587), in Diego de Yepes' *Vida, virtudes y milagros de la Bienaventurada Virgen Teresa de Jesus*,(11) and although it was only in the 19th century that her poems were published together, as part of her collected works,(12) it would seem that this particular poem was, from an early date, clearly associated with Teresa the spiritual figure and Teresa the writer.

This article is the account of *Muero porque no muero* in 17th-century France and its treatment by a series of French translators, or more properly, some translators and some non-translators, as will be explained. It will be shown that while it was clearly Teresa's prose that most captured the attention of 17th-century French readers, at least one of her poems was also seen as an important part of her literary output. It will also be shown that the poem and its translations were a source of pride, ridicule and contention as it was rendered in French, and finally it will be shown that the poem was assimilated into a broader corpus of French religious poetry at the end of the century.

The First French Translations

In Jean de Brétigny and Guillaume du Chèvre's 1607 edition of Ribera's *Vida*, *Muero porque no muero* had appeared untranslated, in somewhat the same way that the refrain of the poem was incorporated into the engraving of Teresa and the open book in the 1599 Italian edition of the *Vida*. Not long after, though, between the years 1630 and 1653, the full poem would be translated into French at least twice, sometimes clearly attributed to Teresa and in one case published under the name of another religious poet.

In 1630, the Carmelite friar and translator Elisée de Saint Bernard (1598-1669) published the first translation of Teresa's collected works since Brétigny's 1601 edition.(13) Elisée's *Oeuvres de sainte Thérèse de Jésus* (Teresa had been canonized in 1622) was expanded over Brétigny's edition, and now contained *La vie de Sainte Thérèse*, *Le chemin de la perfection*, *Le château de l'âme* (these three had been translated by Brétigny) and also *Les fondations* (an account of Teresa's founding of Carmelite convents in Spain), *Les conceptions de l'amour de Dieu* (Teresa's commentary on the Song of Songs), *Le traité des visites* (an explanation of how the convents were to be "visited", or supervised) and *Les méditations sur le Pater Noster* (meditations on the Lord's Prayer). Also included was a sixteen-stanza French translation of *Muero porque no muero*, inserted between the *Conceptions de l'amour de Dieu* and the *Traité des visites*.(14) In addition to being translated into French, in a few other ways Elisée's treatment of the poem is noteworthy. Whereas Brétigny and Chèvre had included the poem as part of Francisco Ribera's biography of Teresa, Elisée now incorporated the poem in a volume of Teresa's own writings; where the poem had a liminal status as part of the front matter in the Ribera translation, in Elisée's edition the poem is integrated among Teresa's other texts, fully a part of her collected works; finally, where Brétigny and Chèvre had given a partial version of the poem, Elisée translates and presents the poem in full. Clearly, the poem now had a different status and appeared to belong more fully to Teresa's *Oeuvres*.

In 1643 and again in 1644, another Carmelite friar, Cyprien de la Nativité de la Vierge (1605-1680), also published full French translations of Teresa's poem. In his 1643 French translation of Diego Yepes' *Vida, virtudes y milagros de la Bienaventurada Virgen Teresa de Jesus* (*La vie de la sainte Mère Térèse de Jésus*, in Cyprien's translation), the poem appears in both French and Spanish, in double columns, the French version on the left and the Spanish original on the right (Elisée de Saint Bernard had given only the French).(15) Here, Cyprien was following suit, so to speak: Yepes' original *Vida, virtudes y milagros* already included Teresa's poem, and so Cyprien was not adding anything new, save for the fact that the poem now appeared in French. But in fact, even Cyprien's French version was not "new": with the exception of two stanzas that Cyprien neglected to reproduce, the translation that appears is nearly identical to the one found in Elisée de Saint Bernard's 1630 edition of Teresa's works.(16) Cyprien would also apparently borrow the same version of the poem again in 1644, in his own translation of Teresa's works; here, Cyprien does add one extra stanza apparently of his own translation, but otherwise the poem is Elisée's version.(17) This repetition of what seems to be Elisée de Saint Bernard's translation of *Muero porque no muero* is noteworthy, first because it again demonstrates that

the poem now "belonged" to Teresa's collected works, but also because of a small question of accuracy: the translation that appears in both Elisée's 1630 edition and Cyprien's 1643 and 1644 editions is typically attributed to Cyprien, rather than Elisée, when by all appearances it is more likely Elisée's work. This is perhaps understandable, as Cyprien is the better known of the two translators: in the 20th century, his French translation (presumably his own!) of the *Cántico espiritual* of John of the Cross (also a Carmelite and close friend of Teresa of Avila) caught the attention of the poet Paul Valéry who, based on the translation, declared Cyprien to be "one of the most perfect poets of France", and Cyprien's translation of John's *Cántico* is now frequently included in anthologies of French poetry.(18) In the case of *Muero porque no muero*, however, Cyprien seems to have simply borrowed from his Carmelite brother and predecessor in translation. Regardless, for Cyprien and Elisée, Teresa's poem had a place integrated among her other writings.

This said, it is not completely clear whether or not Teresa's poem was always recognized as her own: another full translation of *Muero porque no muero* appears in the *Oeuvres poétiques et saintes du R. P. Martial de Brive*, published in 1653.(19) In this collection of poems compiled and published by a friend of the capuchin friar Martial de Brive (1600-1653), the version of Teresa's poem that appears is not attributed to her. The introduction to the poem simply reads: *Les soupirs d'une âme exilée sur ces paroles de Saint Paul; Cupio dissolve et esse cum Christo* (*The sighs of a soul in exile on these words of Saint Paul; Cupio dissolve et esse cum Christo*). In her 2000 edition of this same collection, Anne Mantero suggests that the translation of "a famous poem by Saint Teresa" indicates that Martial was close to the "Carmelite family". Here Mantero seems to imply that the poem was known to be Teresa's and that Martial's translation indicates that he was familiar with both the "Carmelite family" and its most famous poem.(20) This interpretation seems plausible; while a first look at Martial's collection of poems might suggest that he "copied" Teresa's poem and passed it off as his own, Mantero's suggestion that as a religious poet himself, Martial might have known some Carmelites, learned Teresa's poem, and simply "credited" her without using her name (calling her just *une âme exilée*) appears more likely.

In spite, then, of somewhat different treatments and presentation – one appearance of the poem in the translation of Ribera's *Vida*, two appearances in Teresa's *Oeuvres complètes* and one less clearly "credited" version – it remains that by the mid-17th century, *Muero porque no muero* had become a standard part of Teresa's collected writings. This was to change, however, when the most famous and respected of Teresa's translators would take up the task.

Robert d'Andilly

In the years following the translations of Elisée de Saint Bernard, Cyprien de la Vierge and Martial de Brive, the importance of *Muero porque no muero* as a sort of Teresian "anthem" remained: in his 1657 panegyric to Teresa of Avila, given at the request of Queen Maria Theresa of France, the bishop Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet exhorted his congregation:

Chrétiens, si vous voulez voir jusqu'où la sainte espérance a élevé l'âme de Thérèse, méditez ce sacré cantique que l'amour divin lui a mis dans la bouche: "Je vis, dit-elle, sans vivre en moi; et j'espère une vie si haute, que je meurs de mourir pas".(21)

Christians, if you wish to see how far saintly hope has elevated the soul of Teresa, meditate upon this sacred cantique that divine love placed in her mouth: "I live, she says, without living in myself; and I hope to have so high a life, that I die because I do not die". (22)

The citation of *Muero porque no muero* from the pulpit by no lesser a figure than Bossuet is some indication of the extent to which the Teresian slogan had "stuck" to its author in 17th-century France; it was perhaps surprising, then, that when Robert d'Andilly (1589-1674), the well-known *solitaire* of Port-Royal and respected translator and poet, took up the task of translating Teresa's collected works, he effectively removed *Muero porque no muero* from Teresa's *Oeuvres*. In the preface to his 1670 *Les oeuvres de Sainte Thérèse*, d'Andilly wrote:

Et je n'ai rien omis à traduire des trois premiers volumes que des vers dont la reprise est: *Que muero porque no muero: c'est-à-dire, Car je meurs de ne mourir pas.*(23)

And I have not neglected to translate anything from the first three volumes except the verses whose refrain is: *Que muero porque no muero*, that is to say, *Because I die because I do not die*.

Here d'Andilly seems to at once acknowledge that the poem has become an accepted part of Teresa's collected works, and to remove it from those works. He continues, explaining that he has omitted the poem

... parce que la Sainte ayant expressément déclaré en la page 83 de sa vie que ces vers étaient une production de son amour et non pas de son esprit, j'avoue n'avoir été assez hardi pour entreprendre d'expliquer des pensées que le Saint Esprit lui a inspirées & fait exprimer d'une manière si élevée & si pénétrante, que quand on pourrait douter de la vérité des paroles de cette admirable Sainte ce que personne n'oserait faire, il serait facile de juger par le style qu'elle n'y a point eu de part.(24)

... because the Saint having expressly declared on page 83 of her life [Vida] that these

verses were the product of her love and not of her intellect, I admit that I have not been brave enough to undertake to explain thoughts that the Holy Spirit inspired in her and made her express in such an elevated and penetrating way, that when one might doubt the truth of the words of this admirable Saint which no one would dare to do, it would be easy to judge by the style that she had no hand in their composition.

The passage of Teresa's *Vida* to which d'Andilly refers, in which Teresa "expressly declared" that her poems were a product of her love and not her intellect is this one:

Yo sé persona que, con no ser poeta, que le acaecía hacer de presto coplas muy sentidas declarando su pena bien, no hechas de su entendimiento...(25)

I know a person who though not a poet suddenly composed some deeply-felt verses well expressing her pain. They were not composed by the use of her intellect...(26)

The "person" to whom Teresa refers is, of course, herself; in what is typical Teresian fashion, she deflects and distances herself from any "intellectual" role in the composition of her poems, suggesting (as d'Andilly reiterates) that they are the product of emotion.(27) Given that the poems are the product of her love for God, d'Andilly reasons that they are in turn the work of the Holy Spirit, which has inspired her, and that he could not "explain" (through translation) verses that are the result of divine inspiration. He seems to confirm this when he concludes that "judging by the style" of *Muero porque no muero* Teresa had "no hand in it", suggesting that God guided her in its composition.

One may take d'Andilly's statements at face value and simply conclude that he was indeed daunted by the idea of translating Teresa's poem. On the other hand, one might also wonder why a poet and translator as accomplished as d'Andilly, who had translated the *Confessions* of Saint Augustine and was soon to publish a translation of *On Contempt for the World* by Saint Eucherius, would shy away from translating a few verses of Teresa's poetry, even if God had inspired them. If we entertain the idea that d'Andilly was not actually afraid to translate the poem, at least one alternate explanation does present itself.

As a younger man, d'Andilly had been active as a poet and published a number of his poems: at age thirty-nine his *Stances pour Jésus-Christ* (1628),(28) at age forty-five his *Poème sur la vie de Jésus-Christ* (1634) (29) and at age fifty-three his *Stances sur diverses vérités chrétiennes* (1642).(30) But in 1670, the year of publication of his translation of Teresa's works, d'Andilly was eighty-one years old, and a different man. In *Le chant de la grâce: Port-Royal et la poésie d'Arnauld d'Andilly à Racine*, Tony Gheeraert traces the evolution of Robert d'Andilly from a prolific younger poet to an older religious thinker and writer whose beliefs left increasingly little room for ornate, poetic language in the expression of the spiritual. As Gheeraert writes, it was a "réalisation du décalage entre les impératifs de sa foi et les fleurs de son style" ("realization of the incompatibility between the imperatives of his faith and the flowers of his style") that moved him to take an early retirement from poetry.(31) One might conjecture based on this that d'Andilly perhaps had less trouble with the divine source of Teresa's poem than with the fact that it was a poem, period. For a translator who had left poetry behind as something of a youthful pursuit, d'Andilly perhaps had difficulty approving of the presence of a poem among the writings of Teresa of Avila and chose, unlike his predecessors who had given *Muero porque no muero* a place in her collected works, to leave the poem out, simply because it was a poem.(32)

Whatever the explanation may be for its absence in d'Andilly's translation of Teresa's writings, after its inclusion in two editions of her *Oeuvres complètes* and its presence in the consciousness of France's religious elite (remembering Bossuet's sermon on Teresa), *Muero porque no muero* was a Teresian text whose absence was noticeable and needed to be justified. And if Robert d'Andilly forwent the opportunity to leave his mark with a new translation of Teresa's poem, at least one other 17th-century translator would be eager to fill the space left by d'Andilly's omission of the poem.

Bernard de la Monnoye

Je vous parlais... d'une pièce très difficile qu'un homme de considération de cette ville m'a obligé d'entreprendre. C'est la traduction de ce cantique fameux de Sainte Thérèse qu'elle a intitulé Glose. M. Arnauld d'Andilly qui a mis en français ses autres œuvres n'a osé toucher à ce morceau, comme s'il avait appréhendé de ne pouvoir représenter qu'imparfaitement ces divins élans qu'il est impossible, ce semble, de bien exprimer à moins qu'on ne les sente aussi vivement qu'à fait la Sainte.(33)

I was talking to you... about a most difficult piece that a man of consideration of this city has obliged me to undertake. It is the translation of that famous cantique of Saint Teresa that she entitled Glose. M. Arnauld d'Andilly who put her other works in French did not dare touch this piece, as if he had realized that he could but imperfectly represent those divine transports that it is impossible, it seems, to express correctly unless one feels them as strongly as did the Saint.

In the above letter from December 4, 1687, seventeen years after the publication of Robert d'Andilly's translation of Teresa's collected works, the philologist and poet Bernard de la Monnoye (1641-1728), writing to his friend the abbott

Claude Nicaise, seems to sense an opportunity. Deferent to the esteemed (and now deceased) d'Andilly, Monnoye continues his letter with praise for d'Andilly and says how fit he was for the translation he never wrote:

S'il y a pourtant jamais eu un homme capable de réussir dans ce dessein, ç'a été véritablement M. d'Andilly. Sa piété, son habitude à traduire de saintes méditations, et le talent particulier qu'il avait pour la Poésie Chrétienne, lui donnaient toutes les qualités nécessaires pour s'acquitter dignement d'un ouvrage de cette nature.(34)

If ever there were a man capable of succeeding in this task, though, truly it was M. d'Andilly. His piety, his practice at translating holy meditations, and the particular talent he had for Christian Poetry, gave him all of the necessary qualities to acquit himself well in a work of this nature.

Yes, d'Andilly would have been the ideal translator of Teresa's famous poem, but having declined the opportunity, he left a space that needed filling because, Monnoye explains:

Celle que j'ai appris qui parut environ l'an 1620, d'un certain Carme déchaussé nommé le Père Cyprien... est toute autre chose qu'une traduction, c'est une copie où l'original est méconnaissable.(35)

The one that I've learned appeared around 1620, by a certain disclated Carmelite called father Cyprien... is anything but a translation, it is a copy in which the original is unrecognizable.

Having established the lacuna left by the capable but reluctant d'Andilly, and the mediocrity of the version published by Cyprien de la Vierge (again, likely Elisée de Saint Bernard's translation), Monnoye proposes his own translation, which he expects will be well received, and even included in the next edition of Teresa's collected works:

J'ai donné à ma traduction un air assez naturel et assez original. J'ose croire qu'elle ne sera point mal reçue des personnes dévotes, des Carmélites surtout, et qu'on l'insérera volontiers parmi les œuvres de Sainte Thérèse lorsqu'on en fera une nouvelle édition... (36)

I have given my translation a rather natural and original air. I dare to believe that it will not be badly received at all by devout persons, by Carmelites especially, and that one will gladly insert it among the works of Saint Teresa at such time as a new edition of them will be made...

If Bernard de la Monnoye sounds like a man confident in his literary abilities and in his criticism of others' lack of such ability, it is perhaps with some reason: in 1671, at the age of thirty, Monnoye had won the first ever poetry prize given by the Académie française, and in subsequent years he won the prize again multiple times. Not only a skilled poet, Monnoye was, as John Fox described him, "one of the most learned French scholars of the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, renowned in his day for his poetic skill, his command of several languages and his knowledge of the literary history of France".(37) Indeed, in 1713, Monnoye himself became an *immortel*, when he was elected to the same body that had honored him with its first poetry prize, the Académie française.

But Monnoye's correspondence with his friend the Abbé Nicaise is revealing about his relationship with that "most difficult piece", Teresa's *Muero porque no muero*, and these letters indicate the extent to which Monnoye seems to have invested time, energy and a certain amount of ego in its translation, ego which may have been a bit bruised in the process. In late 1687 or early 1688, Monnoye had finished his translation of the poem and, satisfied with the result, he decided to offer to dedicate the translation to Louise de la Vallière (1644-1710), the former mistress of Louis XIV turned Carmelite nun, now known as Louise de la Miséricorde, herself a recognized author and likely the most high-profile French Carmelite of the time.(38) In his letter to Louise asking for her approval of the dedication, Monnoye seems to want to add his translation of Teresa's poem to the legacy of the now-famous saint, and compares Louise to Teresa, describing her as a sort of embodiment of the "mother" of the Carmelites:

Madame: Vous me trouverez bien hardi de toute manière, et d'avoir osé entreprendre cette traduction, et d'avoir osé vous la dédier...on m'avouera en effet que, pour savoir si j'ai fidèlement représenté les pensées de Sainte Thérèse, je ne pouvais mieux m'adresser qu'à vous, Madame, qui représentez parfaitement ses vertus, et qui êtes animée de son esprit.(39)

Madam: You will find me quite bold in any case, both for having dared to undertake this translation, and for having dared to dedicate it to you...one will say in fact that, in order to know whether I have faithfully represented the thoughts of Saint Teresa, I could do no better than to address myself to you, Madam, who represent her virtues, and who are animated by her spirit.

Monnoye also makes sure to let Louise know that where Robert d'Andilly "avec toutes ses forces" ("with all his strengths") had been unable to translate the poem, he had succeeded:

Vous savez, Madame, que cet habile traducteur [d'Andilly], désespérant de pouvoir copier les manières vives et sublimes de la pièce espagnole, n'a pas même voulu la traduire en prose.(40)

You know, Madam, that that skilled translator [d'Andilly], despairing of ever being able to copy the lively and sublime manners of the Spanish piece, declined to even translate it in prose.

In this case, though, Monnoye's literary (and perhaps emotional) investment in the translation of Teresa's poem was not to be rewarded: Louise de la Miséricorde refused the dedication. At first, Monnoye appears not to be discouraged by the news; in a letter to Abbé Nicaise of January 22, 1688, he writes:

Peu de personnes, monsieur, sauraient accepter d'aussi bonne grâce que Madame de la Vallière sait refuser... on la rejette [la dédicace] mais c'est comme Platon a fait Homère, en la couronnant de fleurs.(41)

Few people, sir, would know how to accept something with as much grace as Madame de la Vallière knows how to refuse... it [the dedication] is rejected but it is as Plato did to Homer, in crowning it with flowers.

Monnoye goes on to say how well-received his translation has been, and how widely circulated:

Je n'ai jamais fait de pièce plus universellement applaudie... je ne saurais faire un pas sans que je ne reçoive un compliment sur ces vers, les copies s'en répandent de tous côtés...(42)

I have never composed a piece so universally praised... I cannot even take a single step without receiving a compliment on these verses, copies of them are spreading everywhere...

Here Monnoye is still upbeat, despite the rejection of his dedication. His tone is somewhat different, though, in another letter to Abbé Nicaise written some two weeks later, on February 9, 1688. Apparently still continuing to refine his translation, he includes a newly revised stanza of *Muero porque no muero* for Nicaise's appraisal. He then writes about Teresa's poem in a way that suggests a frustration or weariness with the piece:

... entre nous, je préfère le moindre de mes petits contes à la glose si universellement applaudie, mais que je trouve dans le fond puérile et froide.(43)

... just between us, I prefer the least of my little stories to the glose that is so universally praised, but which I find essentially childish and cold.

Monnoye's unflattering assessment of Teresa's poem then extends beyond the text itself, to the manner in which she was said to have composed it:

Quelle apparence, je vous prie, que dans un transport de l'amour divin on s'avise de ne s'exprimer que par compas et que par mesure, qu'on s'impose des bornes si étroites, et qu'on assujettisse l'enthousiasme à des rimes et à des chutes rimées!(44)

How is it, I ask you, that in a transport of divine love one decides to express oneself in such an exact and measured fashion, imposing such tight limits, and subjecting one's enthusiasm to rhymes and rhyming endings!

Having criticized both the poem and Teresa for having supposedly composed it in a state of ecstasy, Monnoye concludes: "Je ne vous dis rien du pieux galimatias qui règne dans tout l'ouvrage " ("I will not even mention the pious nonsense that pervades the entire piece"), ridiculing the religious sentiment of the text.(45)

Whether Monnoye's seeming change of heart about (or at least more negative assessment of) Teresa's poem came as a result of his failure to win the approval of Louise de la Miséricorde/Vallière cannot be known from these letters. One may wonder, however, whether this last letter, coming just weeks after the rejection, might somehow be colored by that letdown. Whatever the case, Teresa's poem is, as the 17th century nears its end, important enough to be an object of pride and also contention for at least one translator who saw, in the space left by Robert d'Andilly, an opportunity, and in the work of Cyprien de la Vierge (Elisée de Saint Bernard, in fact) the mediocre and "unrecognizable" distortion of Teresa's true intention.

Conclusion

In 1692, a volume of *Cantiques spirituels de l'amour divin, pour l'instruction et la consolation des âmes dévotes, composés par le R. P. Surin* (*Spiritual canticles of divine love, for the instruction and consolation of devout souls, composed by Reverend Father Surin*) was published, "revu, corrigé et augmenté de plusieurs beaux cantiques, choisis dans divers auteurs bien approuvés" ("revised, corrected and augmented with several fine canticles, chosen from among different well-approved authors").⁽⁴⁶⁾ Jean-Joseph Surin (1600-1665) is perhaps best known today for his role in the exorcisms that took place in Loudun, France in 1634, but he was also a prolific composer of spiritual poems. His *Cantiques spirituels* were published in multiple editions, each time "revised, corrected and augmented" with poems by other writers, and the 1692 edition was no exception to this: at the end of the *Avis au lecteur* (*Note to the Reader*), the editor/compiler of the volume writes:

J'ai ajouté à la fin un autre Recueil de cantiques... des trois états de la vie spirituelle... et les cantiques qui sont propres à chacun d'eux.⁽⁴⁷⁾

I have added at the end another Collection of canticles...on the three states of spiritual life... and the canticles that are suited to each of them.

Included in this "extra" collection of poems is *Cantique XXXII, composé par Sainte Thérèse de Jésus, où se voient les pressants souhaits d'une âme languissante du divin amour* (*Canticle XXXII, composed by Saint Teresa of Jesus, in which the pressing wishes of a soul languishing from divine love can be seen*), which begins this way:

Le trait d'union d'amour,
Qui me conserve la vie,
Rend Dieu captif à son tour,
Et ma pauvre âme affranchie.
Mais voir sa bonté captive,
M'est une douleur si vive,
Que je meurs de déplaisir
De ne pouvoir pas mourir.⁽⁴⁸⁾

As it appears as part of the newly added section in the 1692 edition of the *Cantiques spirituels*, nearly thirty years after Surin's death, it seems most likely that this translation of *Muero porque no muero* is not Surin's, but rather the work of some other poet (perhaps the editor himself), and its appearance as part of an "anthology" is significant. Here *Muero porque no muero* appears not as part of Teresa's collected works, or some other book about her, but rather as part of a more general collection of poems on religious life, "chosen from different well-approved authors". Further, the poem has lost almost all trace of being a translation; a reader familiar with Teresa of Avila might know that she composed her poems in Spanish, but nothing else about the presentation of the poem here differentiates it from the other poems in the collection. Its is now a poem in French, included alongside other French poems intended for the general spiritual betterment of a devout French readership.

As it appears in the 1692 *Cantiques spirituels*, Teresa's *Muero porque no muero* has traveled a significant distance in the course of just under a century. Imported in "rough" form, untranslated and only partially complete as part of Jean de Brétigny Quintanadueñas' and Guillaume du Chèvre's 1607 translation of Ribera's biography of Teresa, then more culturally adapted, polished and "official", rendered in French in the *Oeuvres* published in 1630 and 1644 by Elisée de Saint Bernard and Cyprien de la Vierge, then later seemingly disputed as a legitimate part of Teresa's works when Robert d'Andilly left it out of his 1670 *Oeuvres*, then reworked but also ridiculed by Bernard de la Monnoye, *Muero porque no muero* is, at the close of the century, a poem that has found a place among other French spiritual poems, no longer labeled as an "import", but rather an apparently integrated part of a domestic corpus. As such, by the end of the 17th century in France, Teresa of Avila is, not only for her prose, but also for her most famous poem, as the title of the 1692 *Cantiques spirituels* indicates, an *auteur(e) bien approuvé(e)*.

NOTES

(1) For a full account of Jean de Brétigny de Quintanadueñas' relationship with Spanish and French Carmel, see Pierre Sérouet, *Jean de Brétigny (1556-1634): Aux origines du Carmel de France, de Belgique et du Congo* (Louvain: Revue d'histoire ecclésiastique : Publications universitaires de Louvain, 1974).

(2) *Los libros de la madre Teresa de Iesus, fundadora de los monesterios de monjas y frayles Carmelitas descalços de la primera regla* (Salamanca: Guillermo Foquel, 1588).

(3) Sérouet, *Jean de Brétigny*, 129.

(4) Alphonse Vermeulen, *Sainte Thérèse en France au XVIIe Siècle, 1600-1660* (Louvain: Publications universitaires, 1958), 43.

(5) *Ibid.*, 72.

(6) Alphonse Vermeulen, *Sainte Thérèse en France au XVIIe Siècle, 1600-1660* (Louvain: Publications universitaires, 1958), 43.

(7) Ribera, *La Vie de la Mère Térése de Jésus*, n. p. (front matter).

(8) Sérouet, *Jean de Brétigny*, 134.

(9) It is the 1607 edition of Brétigny/du Chèvre's translation, published in Antwerp, that contains Teresa's poem in the front matter. It appears

that the earlier editions, from 1601 and 1602 and published in Paris, do not contain the poem. Exactly who decided to include the poem in the 1607 edition, and why, is not certain.

(10) Teresa of Avila, *Vita della M. Teresa Di Giesu : fondatrice delli monasteri della monache e frati Carmeliti Scalzi della prima Regola*, trans. Monsig. Gio. Francesco Bordini (Roma: Appresso Guglielmo Facciotto, 1599). For a discussion of this and other Teresian images, see Maria Berbara, "'Esta pena tan sabrosa': Teresa of Avila and the Figurative Arts," in *The Sense of Suffering: Constructions of Physical Pain in Early Modern Culture*, ed. Jan Frans van Dijkhuizen and Karl A. E. Enenkel (Leiden: Brill, 2009), 267-97.

(11) References can be found to a 1587 edition of Diego de Yepes' *Vida, virtudes y milagros de la Bienaventurada Virgen Teresa de Jesus*, but some sources cite the publication date as 1606, which coincides with what can be found in most library databases (the earliest edition in the Biblioteca Nacional de España, for example, is from 1606).

(12) Alphonse Vermeylen cites Vicente de la Fuente's 1861-62 edition of the *Escritos de Santa Teresa* as the first publication of Teresa's collected poems (Vermeylen 40); other 19th-century publications also featured compilations of Teresa's poems, for example the 1854 *Todas las poesías de San Juan de la Cruz y Santa Teresa de Avila* (Monasterio: Theissing, 1854).

(13) Teresa of Avila, *Les Oeuvres de sainte Thérèse de Jésus*, trans. Elisée de Saint-Bernard (Paris: M. Sonnius, 1630).

(14) The "complete" version of *Muero porque no muero* was, in the 17th century (and as late as the 19th century), difficult to establish with precision. What was typically published as the full poem (and what Elisée de Saint-Bernard translated) was in fact a composite poem, containing some stanzas now attributed to Teresa of Avila, and other stanzas now attributed to John of the Cross, all with the same refrain, *que muero porque no muero*. Modern editions of Teresa and John's complete works contain the respective stanzas of the poem that "belong" to each writer. For Elisée's translation of the poem, see his 1630 edition of the *Oeuvres*, 494-98.

(15) Diego Yepes, *La vie de la sainte Mère Térése de Jésus*, trans. Cyprien de la Nativité de la Vierge (Paris: D. de la Noüe, 1643), 259-262.

(16) There are some words changed and a few orthographic variations, including corrections to the Spanish version to errors that are in the 1643 text (and corrected in 1644).

(17) Teresa of Avila, *Les Oeuvres de la sainte Mère Thérèse de Jésus*, trans. Cyprien de la Nativité de la Vierge (Paris: D. de la Noüe, 1644), 655-58.

(18) In his preface to the 1941 edition of Cyprien's translation of *Les Cantiques spirituels de Saint Jean de la Croix*, Valéry wrote: "Je propose aux amateurs des beautés de notre langage de considérer désormais l'un des plus parfaits poètes de France dans le R.P. Cyprien de la Nativité de la Vierge" (Paris: Louis Rouart et Fils, 1941). Cyprien's translations of John's poems regularly appear in anthologies of 17th-century French poetry, and even in general anthologies of French poetry.

(19) Martial de Brive, *Les Oeuvres poétiques et saintes du R. P. Martial de Brive* (Lyon: F. la Bottière, 1653), 84-89.

(20) Martial de Brive and Anne Mantero, *Les oeuvres poétiques et saintes : 1653* (Grenoble: J. Millon, 2000), 22.

(21) Jacques-Bénigne Bossuet, *Oeuvres complètes de Bossuet*, Sermons, Volume V (Paris: Louis Vivès, 1863), 394.

(22) Except where otherwise indicated, all translations to English are my own.

(23) Teresa of Avila, *Les oeuvres de sainte Thérèse*, trans. Robert Arnauld d'Andilly (Paris: P. Le Petit, 1671), *Avertissement*.

(24) Ibid.

(25) Teresa of Avila, *Obras completas*, ed. Efrén de la Madre de Dios and Otger Steggink (Madrid: Biblioteca de autores cristianos, 2003), 94.

(26) Teresa of Avila, *The Collected Works of St. Teresa of Avila*, trans. Otilio Rodriguez and Kieran Kavanaugh, 3 vols (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, 1980-1987), Vol 1, 149.

(27) In *Teresa of Avila and the Rhetoric of Femininity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), Alison Weber outlines the rhetorical strategies used by Teresa of Avila in her prose, including her method of distancing herself from the intellectual charge of her own writing.

(28) Robert Arnauld d'Andilly, *Stances pour Jésus-Christ* (Paris: E. Martin, 1628).

(29) Robert Arnauld d'Andilly, *Poème sur la vie de Jésus-Christ* (Paris: J. Camusat, 1634).

(30) Robert Arnauld d'Andilly, *Stances sur diverses vérités chrétiennes* (Paris: Vve. J. Camusat, 1642).

(31) Tony Gheeraert, *Le chant de la grâce: Port-Royal et la poésie d'Arnauld d'Andilly à Racine* (Paris: H. Champion, 2003), 404.

(32) D'Andilly's apparent wish to exclude *Muero porque no muero* from his translation of Teresa's collected works seems to have been respected in later editions, including those published after d'Andilly's death. An edition of d'Andilly's translation published fourteen years after his passing, though augmented with Teresa's letters, still does not contain the poem (*Les oeuvres de sainte Thérèse*, Antwerp: H. Van Dunewalt, 1688).

(33) Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Fonds Français, Ms. 9359, *Correspondance de l'abbé Nicaise*, fol. 280, letter from Bernard de La Monnoye to Claude Nicaise, Dijon, December 4, 1687.

(34) Ibid.

(35) Ibid.

(36) Ibid., fol. 281.

(37) John Fox, "An Eighteenth-Century Student of Medieval Literature: Bernard de La Monnoye," in *Studies in Eighteenth-Century French Literature* (Exeter: Univ. of Exeter Press, 1975), 67.

(38) In 1671, Louise de la Miséricorde/la Vallière composed *Réflexions sur la miséricorde de Dieu* (*Reflections on the Mercy of God*), which appeared in print in 1680 and was republished multiple times in subsequent years.

(39) *Correspondance de l'abbé Nicaise*, fol. 315.

(40) Ibid.

(41) Ibid., fol. 320.

(42) Ibid.

(43) Ibid., fol. 294.

(44) Ibid.

(45) Ibid.

(46) *Cantiques spirituels de l'amour divin, pour l'instruction et la consolation des âmes dévotes, composez par le R. P. Surin* (Paris: R. Pepie, 1692).

(47) Ibid., "Avis au lecteur".

(48) Ibid., 314.

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