

# “The Vile Gallicisms, which Today Make Ugly Many Translations”: The Influence of the French Language on Iberian Translations from the Turn of the Eighteenth to the Nineteenth Century

*“Os torpes Gallicismos, que hoje a feyão muitas traducções”: a influência da língua francesa nas traduções ibéricas da virada do século XVIII para o XIX*

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## ABSTRACT

From the final decades of the Eighteenth century, in the speeches of Iberian literate elites, we can notice a systematic effort to diminish or avoid the influence of the French language on texts written in Portuguese and Spanish, originals or translations from French, particularly what is defined as “Gallicism”. Considering the enormous editorial volume of written, printed or translated books into French in the second half of the century, Iberian censors, translators, editors and commentators point to the presence of “French” words and constructions in the Portuguese and Castilian printed word. This study tries to see this issue in the light of the use of Gallicisms as part of the neologisms necessary to understand the advances in science and the arts in the Iberian Peninsula of the period.

Keywords: Gallicism; Neologism; Cultural history; History of science; History of the Portuguese Empire; 18th century.

## RESUMO

A partir das décadas finais do século XVIII percebe-se, nos discursos das elites letradas ibéricas, um esforço sistemático para diminuir ou evitar a influência da língua francesa sobre os textos escritos em português e espanhol, originais ou traduções do francês, particularmente o que é definido como “galicismo”. Face ao enorme volume editorial de livros escritos, impressos ou traduzidos para o francês na segunda metade do século, censores, tradutores, editores e comentaristas ibéricos apontam a constante presença de palavras e construções “afrancesadas” na palavra impressa lusitana e castelhana. Este estudo tenta ver esta questão à luz do uso de galicismos como parte dos neologismos necessários para compreender os avanços da ciência e das artes na península ibérica do período.

Palavras-chave: Galicismo; neologismo; História cultural; história da ciência; história do Império Português; Século XVIII.

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A danger hovered over the Iberian Peninsula for almost the entire 18th century – the possibility of a French invasion. Not a military invasion (this danger had always been there, and it did happen, eventually), but a linguistic one. The perception of the threat was so marked that it took on its own name and generated constant speeches perceived as a reaction to the concrete and constant danger: Gallicism. Defined today as a “word, locution or construction peculiar to the French language” (Dicio, 2020), the term provoked anxiety in Portuguese and Spanish translators, censors, and 18th century authors, to the point of being considered one of the main banners of Francisco José Freire’s (Candido Lusitano) neoclassicism, who was looking for:

the struggle for the restitution of vernacularity and rigor to the language, through the recovery of forms derived from Latin, which meant the rescue of textual memory in the vernacular, and, on the other hand, the fight against frenchness, that is, everything resulting from French influence, an aspect all the more paradoxical as it is known that, in the 18th century, France, a civilized nation illuminated by antonomasia, was the radiating center of the Enlightenment of reason. The first issue is related to the discussion of uses and synonyms, and the second, the issue of Gallicism [...] (Gonçalves, 2015, p. 181).

The debate is part of the search for vernacular norms in Portugal and Spain, more frequent in the 18th century, in the context of valuing national languages over Latin and against French (DeNipoti, 2018). By no means restricted to the Iberian peninsula, the debate sought to respond to a transitory situation, in which monarchs did not identify themselves or were concerned about which languages their scholars spoke, towards the process of creating a “national consciousness” in Western Europe (Andresen; Carter, 2016, pp. 142, 148), connected to the idea of “nation” and to the linguistic identity of the “people”, as thought by Herder (Andresen; Carter, 2016, p. 151). It was about emphasizing a “purist norm” aimed at “preserving the ‘ancient and good use’, attending to the ‘genius of the language’, freeing the language from the ‘refused Frenchism’, defending ‘the natural beauty of our language’” (Vilela, 1981, p. 49). The same happened in Spain, where the debate on illustration was marked by games of positions and criticisms centered on the concepts of “*castiço*”, “purist”, “Frenched” and “encyclopedist” (Polzin-Haumann, 2006, p. 199).

These positions are consistent with the erudite tradition that saw in Latin the source of the purity of the Portuguese language, and a potential matrix for any linguistic inclusions, as can be seen in the debate around the spelling books by the censors of the Real Mesa Censória, in 1771 (Denipoti, 2022, pp. 185 ss).

Nevertheless, the influence of the French language on the peninsular dialects was a recurring theme in the literature of the time, which urged study as a way of accessing civility and education, as Pina and Proença (1734) did in their *Apontamentos* (Araújo, 2003, p. 49). Antonio de Moraes e Silva echoed the “generalized Lusitanian posture inimical to the post-revolutionary French influence” (Cavaliere, 2006, p. 540), as well as the generalized opposition to the misuse of French terms in Portuguese, in 1806, when warning his readers:

[...] if a year's study is enough to know a foreign language at least, when you want to know the native language perfectly and elegantly, you must study the classic authors all your life and with great perfection, noting especially the peculiar analogies to the genius of our language.

[...]

And in this way you will be able to imitate them [the classic authors], not repeating [...] their words and phrases [...], but saying new things without barbarism, without Gallicisms, Italianisms and Anglicisms, as they are very commonly read (Silva, 1806, p. v).

Let us note, at the outset, that the plurality of voices – not always agreeing – collected for this analysis originate from various agents of the written word throughout the late 18th and early 19th centuries in the Iberian world, from authors such as Francisco José Freire, representing the linguistic purity mentioned above, passing through editors, literary critics, liberal “journalists” and, particularly, censors, who, in the Portuguese case, gave themselves attempts to control the definition of the Lusitanian vernacular (Denipoti, 2022, p. 190) and were often identified with a Pombaline project of empire (Tavares, 2014; see also Martins, 2005). It is worth noting, with regard to this last specific group of agents, that the analyzed texts were not produced for public consumption, as they were secret debates between the censors (Denipoti, 2022, p. 201). However, the ideas expressed in those documents found an echo in other sources, whose

original intention was the “common reader”, such as editorial paratexts or journalistic reviews, for example.

Considering the debate on Gallicism, the fact that the relationship between the two languages was considered, during the 18th century, “linguistic interference, lexical borrowing or even neology” (Gonçalves, 2015, p. 182) contributed enormously to the concern with the “Portuguese-French binomial”. This last item is particularly relevant when we remember, once again, the large number of translations from French editions into Portuguese and Spanish in developing scientific areas, or in the knowledge of enlightenment in general (Silvestre, 2007; Garcia Hurtado, 2007).

In this regard, it is worth noting, in order to prepare the ground for the analysis, that this was also a period of creation of words, or of “re-signification” of existing terms, in several languages. The term “neologism”, for example, was created in the 18th century (Siqueira, 2015, pp. 11-22), and the term “invention” was used by John Adams to describe the roles of a political committee in articulating the new American nation, based on a comparison with Benjamin Franklin’s lightning rod (Warner, 2010, p. 107). The vocabulary – which also served to redefine the role of the “man of letters” as someone at the “vanguard of humanity, in touch with the people for whom he spoke and wrote, be he an essayist or an itinerant scientific lecturer” (Porter, 2001, p. xc-viii) – helped to create a watchword: the novelty:

[...] new words were coined and old ones acquiring new meanings: intellectual, autobiography, rationalism, humanitarian, utilitarian, public opinion, romanticism ideology, primitive, decade [...]. Predictably, neologism was itself a neologism, and “radical” as a political noun a 1790s minting (Porter, 2001, p. xcvi).

Although they indicate fundamentally different ideas in linguistic and grammatical terms, there is frequent documentary reference (in the opinions of the Portuguese censors of the 18th century, for example) to French terms in literal translation, both as neologisms and as Gallicisms, indicating that the second term dominated the horizon of new words incorporated into the vernacular (or, at least, the versions used by the translators) in the context of the translation effort mentioned above.

Eighteenth century dictionaries unanimously do not have definitions for these terms in Portuguese (Bluteau, 1713; Silva; Bluteau, 1789; Novo Dicionario, 1806) or Spanish (Real Academia, 1780; Real Academia, 1803). In Portuguese, the first definitions of “neologism” are found only in the 19th century, in the 1813 edition of the *Diccionario* of Antonio de Moraes e Silva (p. 340), as “s.m; the frequent use of new words”, and in Francisco Solano Constâncio’s dictionary (1836, p. 716) who defines “neologism” as innovation of words and phrases. Neither of the two included definitions of “Gallicism” in their works, while the Castilian dictionary produced by the *Academia Española* is silent on both terms in its 1832 edition (Academia Española, 1832).

However, when resorting to other sources – the editorial paratexts of Portuguese and Spanish translators, supported by the opinions of Portuguese censors<sup>1</sup> – we realize that both terms are used almost as synonyms, raising the question that perhaps, due to the editorial profusion in French in the various fields of knowledge, *Gallicisms* functioned as *neologisms*, creating the (only apparent) fundamental paradox that the fight against Gallicisms contradicted the accompaniment of knowledge innovation.

First, it is worth emphasizing the role played in this process by translators, grammarians, and “literates” in general (Santos, 2021), who had, in French, most of their reading and working material, and sought to bring other readers closer to works that they considered relevant in their specific fields of activity. José Amaro da Silva wrote a testimony about that in his “translator’s preface” to the 1761 poem *The death of Abel* (Gessner, 1785), in which he admitted the omnipresence of the French language “now so widespread and known in almost all parts of the world”, while defining its limits in the Portuguese reading public, “especially those who have not been versed in Letters”, to whom he directs his effort. Antonio de Capmany (1776, p. XI) reproduced this view of the relevance of the French language in his *Arte de traducir el idioma francés al castellano*, emphasizing how well this language was suited to the scientific discourse of the 18th century:

However, since the French language has become in this century the interpreter of human knowledge, that is, of ancient and modern truths and errors, we must confess that France has made her language wise by consecrating it to the language-

ge of science. The Geometer, the Astronomer, the Physician, the Critic, the Philosopher no longer spoke the language of the vulgar, with which everything was explained a hundred years ago. They have another vocabulary, as distant from the usual as Newton's is from Ptolemy's.

Manoel Jacinto Nogueira da Gama presented an explanation for this Gallic predominance in his “Translator's Discourse” to *Reflections on the metaphysics of the infinitesimal calculus* (Carnot, 1798, n.p.). According to him, by overcoming Latin as the language of the sciences, the “vulgar” translations allowed “that shameful monopoly [of Latin] to be abolished, and to open the doors of the Sciences to all individuals [...] to men of genius, who, due to the particular circumstances of their lives, could not enter the career of Letters”. For this Brazilian translator, France stood out among other nations, for its “large size and population [...], its comfortable situation dealing with other Foreign Nations; the considerable number of wise and learned men who were in their midst”. According to him, the language itself facilitated the communication that the French in general (“people in all states, and spirits of all kinds”) maintained with letters and sciences, which also justified the large number of translations into the French language of works from all over Europe:

The great advantage of beginning in this way to popularize the French language, made it already considered by the National Writers as appropriate to communicate their ideas and discoveries to Foreign Nations, at the same time that they poured them into their own. On the other hand, the Nation having more right to the enlightenment, and discoveries of their natives, than the foreign ones, the French Language also had more right to its writings than the Latin. These considerations, together with the greater facility of writing in language, soon led the French to abandon the language of the Sages, writing in their own; and this was the time when the decadence of the Latin language began (Carnot, 1798, n.p.).

Writing a few decades earlier, the Catalan philosopher Antonio de Capmany (1776, p. xii) endorsed this view, verifying that there are new voices in French aimed at the necessary understanding of the prodigious multiplication of “objects and branches of the natural sciences, literature and of philosophy”.

## THE VILE GALICISMS!

Considering, then, the importance assumed by the French language, to the point of an almost hegemony in relation to the sciences, announced in dozens of contemporary texts, of which those cited here are mere examples, how and why did Gallicism become a problem?

Although the answers are always partial, we realize that representations of Gallicism as an aesthetically objectionable element were recurrent in the late 18th century and early 19th century. We can see that there is a discursive continuity on the subject when the anonymous translator of *Les Égaremens de la raison* (Valmont, 1787) sought to please his readers and “the critics of good taste” through a translation without “those ugly Gallicisms, and other defects, which completely disfigure our language”, and made an effort “not to deviate from that, so to speak, truly Portuguese thinking”. In the same discursive note, the also anonymous translator of the *General History of Portugal* by Le Clede (1781) spoke of the difficulty of avoiding them, since “the Original, from which I translated, was often dragging me to fall into Gallicisms, which perhaps happened sometimes, despite the care [I took]”.

In reviewing the Spanish translation of the *Historia de la administracion del Lord North*, published in 1806, the anonymous editor of *Minerva ó, El revisor general* (1806, pp. 105-6) adopted a similar position, casting doubt on the translator’s intention to have made an “almost literal” translation aimed at people who did not profess the letters. For the reviewer:

[...] we can tell you that anyone who has worked on it deserved to be spoken to in clear Spanish and at least somewhat correct; and that to be literal its translation need not remain half French, nor be sloppy and incorrect in order to be simple.

From the beginning to the end everything is Frenchified, the construction, the phrases and many words, there are passages that no one can understand; and so it is that although the work has seemed pleasant to us, we have not been able to continue reading it unsettled and uncomfortable with so many Gallicisms.

In the more than two decades that separated these representations, the examples of condemnation of Gallicism remained constant, as was the case of

the poet Manoel Maria de Barbosa du Bocage when presenting his translation of *Eufemia, or the triumph of religion*, by François D'Arnaud, who endeavored "to avoid the Gallicisms, of which a large part of our translations abounds, and that defile us with the fertile and majestic Language, only indigent and uneducated in the opinion of the People, who will study it poorly" (D'Arnaud, 1793, n.p.), or even the editor of the translation (by Antonio de Araujo de Azevedo, Count of Barca) of Gray's *Elegy written in the churchyard of a village church* in his "Warning" when mentioning the "rarity of good modern translations; in many, the even greater error of carelessness of our language, addicted to Gallicisms, and phrases alien to its nature" (Gray, 1799, n.p.). A final example, which gives the title to this text, was given by Antonio de Moraes e Silva (author of the *Dictionary of the Portuguese Language* – Silva; Bluteau, 1789) in the preface to his translation of the *History of Portugal composed in English by a scholarly society* (1788):

In it is summarized the most substantial; and I took great care to ensure that his phrase was pure, and free from unintelligible antiquities, at least such as the vile Gallicisms, that today turn many translations ugly: which, in the end, I write to be understood by those who live at the present, and of those who in the future, if this version arrives there, will read their homeland histories. The public will judge of our work; and we don't want to preoccupy your wits with early applauses.

Behind these representations there was a desire for linguistic "purity" that the authors themselves perceived as something unattainable, but which should, nevertheless, guide the translation effort, since "[...] Presenting a translation so pure and smooth, that does not have a transition or a word, that flows into the womb in which it was engendered, is an effort that many have tried, and very few have achieved". What the author of these lines could see in his time were only "mercenary [t]ranslators who, boasting of possessing the French language, have corrupted the purity and majesty of Castilian" (Montesa, 1780, pp. 1-2). Similarly, Friar Francisco de Sá, a member of the Portuguese *Real Mesa Censória*, praised the translator Miguel de Freitas for his work on the book *Art of preaching or true manner of preaching*: "The translation is pure,



expeditious, and current, without tainting it with foreign words, or old-fashioned ones [...]” (Sá, 1776).

This brings us to the ways of understanding Gallicism made by the Portuguese censors (even though we have not yet had contact with the Spanish censors at this stage of the research). Protected by the anonymity of secret opinions, the censors were more forceful in their criticism. Defenders “of a providentialist absolutist theory and practice” (Villalta, 1999, p. 203), the Portuguese censors also “played several roles, beyond the prohibitory rage that the contemporary eye sees retrospectively. That is, [...] the Portuguese censors of the R[eal] M[esa] C[ensória] can be seen from a positive perspective” (DeNipoti, 2018, p. 3; see also, DeNipoti, 2017), in this case, advocating standards that aimed to establish an orthodox “norm” of the written vernacular.

When giving an opinion on the translation (made by Custodio da Silva Barbosa) of the work *Analysis of the Holy Gospel according to the historical order of concordance*, Antonio Pereira de Figueiredo, wishing that “a work of this size and of this utility would fall into more polished hands than those of this translator”, he lamented the spelling errors and the use of Gallicisms (or Frenchisms) “which to the Translator will escape, as usually happens to those who do not shed a great warning on the genius and propriety of the two languages. [...]”, calling attention to the use of the term “entertainment”, used “by the Spaniards” and derived from the French *entretetien* “that I do not know if among us there will be any use or Author [...]” (Figueiredo, 1772). Friar Francisco de São Bento also criticized, in 1773, the improper use of words and expressions of French origin in the translation of *Judicious, Serious and Critical Moral Discourses* by Charles de Saint-Évremond, as the translator “always put: subject in place of matter; Errands instead of business, use thinking instead of considering [...]” (São Bento, 1773). Similarly, Friar José Mayne (1786) didactically corrected the French terms in the collection of various texts on blood-letting, childbirth, anatomy, and surgery that Manoel Jozé Leitão submitted to censorship in 1786 for “better intelligence of the lesson and perhaps of our language”:

List of words mistranslated or less well understood in the Portuguese language that are uncertain in the *Treatises on Bloodletting, Parturition and Anatomy and Surgery* by Manoel José Leitão, with the version that seems more appropriate:

Anatomista . . . . .	Anatomico
Bendages e [ileg] . . . . .	Atadura, Ligadura, Faxas
Beantes . . . . .	Abestos
Calota . . . . .	Barrete, Capacete, solidéo
Cloportes . . . . .	Millepedes
Flanges . . . . .	Falanges, fileiras
Fornecer e Fornece, et . . . . .	Dar, dá
Frotação e Frotando-se, etc . . . . .	Fricção, esfregandolhe, etc.
Furnir . . . . .	Dar
[...] (Mayne, 1786).	

Friar Luis de Santa Clara Póvoa criticized the same reliance on Gallicisms in Friar Manoel da Ave Maria's translation of *Advents and moral sermons*, by Esprit Fléchier, as the translator "on p. 36, 113 and 136 use the French word *de-tailhe*, and not Portuguese, or of a certain Portuguese Frenchness". However, the censor recognized the dynamics of linguistic innovation:

[I] know that in many serious and familiar conversations this word has been introduced in our Court, and in some lands of this Realm, but I would not use it in the Pulpit, where all our expressions must be clear, significant, proper, and expressive for the common people, the feelings and positions of the speaker (Povoa, 1774).

Translations of this kind often had their request for a printing license denied by the censors because of language correction, and not for issues related to the primary functions of censorship to protect the faith and the crown. The Archbishop of Braga (Gaspar de Bragança) refused the printing license for the translation of Francisco Genet's *Moral Theology* (by Father Antonio Jozé Palma) because the translator expressed "a great desire to deviate from the common way of speaking, and using old-fashioned words made this Fr[iar] fall into faults, which are inexcusable in a beginner. [...]" in addition to wanting to imitate the French "that use a lot of the verb: to have" (Bragança, 1772). This was also the case of the translation that Joaquim Manoel de Siqueira Brandão

made of the “works of Madama Lambert” (Anne-Thérèse de Marguenat de Courcelles), whose license request was denied because “[at] each step uses not only enclosures, and unintelligible and exotic phrases, but also low and strange words, and even the Portuguese ones are applied in a different sense than they have [...]” (Sá, 1776). Friar José da Rocha, in his opinion on the *Art of Pleasing in Conversation*, by Antoine François Prévost, translated by José Antonio da Silva Rego, also denied the requested license mainly because:

The Author’s ineptitude to compose and translate any work into our language is well known at this Tribunal; because ignorant of the Portuguese language, and lacking those principles that serve as the basis for all sciences, he does not write a period in which he does not manifest the poverty of his talents, nor a page where many errors are not found (Rocha, 1774).

Furthermore, the translation has “infinite barbarisms and solecisms [...]; [...] mixture and corruption of foreign words, and [...] the great lack of grammar found in it, which results in the opinion of this Art written in a hitherto unknown language” (Rocha, 11 aug. 1774). Two decades later, João Guilherme Christiano Muller corroborated the general posture of the censors in condemning Gallicisms by denying the license to print the manuscript entitled *Critical and Moral Dialogues*, partially (according to the censor) translated from French because “It is full of Gallicisms”. On each page there are useless repetitions of the relative pronouns I, Him, etc. Who does not see that the Author literally expressed in Portuguese words what he really thought in French? [...]” (Muller, 1792).

Yet, in several cases, the censors found these translation defects insufficient to prohibit the printing of works that they considered useful or, from a religious point of view, innocuous. Manoel de Moraes Soares, reading the Portuguese translation of Dr. Guilherme Buchan’s *Domestic Medicine*, translated by Francisco Pujol de Padrell Filho, approved the requested license, even considering that the translation had “many spelling errors and some solecisms” resulting from the translator’s lack of knowledge of both languages, believing “that their defects can easily fall into the eyes of the proofreaders to correct them before exposing the work to print” (Soares, 1789). Francisco

Xavier de Santana issued a similar opinion in 1772 on the *Method of directing souls along the path of salvation* translated anonymously and with a style that “although it has many Frenchisms, it is nevertheless clear, and therefore worthy of the requested license” (Santa Anna, 1772). This was also the case of *Moral theology*, by Francisco Genet, cited above:

This translation would be more commendable if the Author did not use old-fashioned words and phrases, and some Frenchisms, which make it scabrous, dark and sometimes unintelligible, especially to the common clergy, who ignore French terms, and are not versed in the Lesson from ancient authors; however, as the work presents a solid and secure moral, and which is not easily found in Portuguese, it is good that the work should come to light (Monte Carmelo, 1772).

A final example is found in the opinion of Friar Matias da Conceição on Luis Antonio Alfeirão’s translation of Fourdupin’s *Sermons*. For the censor, the grammar of the translator combined French and Portuguese elements “very often using impersonal verbs, and with the wrong verb tense which naturally corresponds to them in our language”, and that he (the censor) was “crossing out and amending in order not to embarrass the translator, who seeks a means to subsist in these translations”. For this reason, and because it does not contain “things against the Religion nor against the rights of His Majesty”, Conceição said that once the corrections had been made “which were written in addition to the crossed out grammatical words and sentences”, the license for printing the book could be granted (Conceição, 1777).

In a similar vein, the censors considered those texts without Gallicisms to be good, seeking to maintain the essential elements of the original text. The translation made by Friar Manoel da Ave Maria of the “panegyrics” of the Bishop of Nîmes was praised in these terms by the censor, since the “exact, and Portuguese” translation did not contain “Frenchism in words, and in phrases, of which many others are full” (Sá, 1772). Friar Luiz do Monte Carmelo praised José da Silveira Lara’s translation of the book *Instruction of a father to his daughter* in similar terms, because he “faithfully translated the French into our language in what pertains to the concepts, even if he did not follow the literal

sense in everything; because many Gallicisms cannot be literally reduced to our phrases [...]” (Monte Carmelo, 1779).

## GALLICISM AS A NEOLOGISM?

The examples are multiplied in the opinions, always with the aspect of fighting for a vernacular, if not pure, at least purified from the Gallic influence (DeNipoti, 2018). It is in this regard that the fundamental paradox of the process of disciplinary “invention” that accompanies science in the 18th century appears (Costa; Leitão, 2008, p. 45). In the redefinition of the process of scientific knowledge, new relevant vocabularies are created. Obtaining knowledge gradually abandons confidence in the authority of the Greek-Roman classics that served as a model for aspects of the natural life of Europeans since the 16th century (Hobsbawm, 1988, p. 47), favoring, instead, discovery, novelty or the new result of the experiment carried out according to a method (Carvalho Junior, 2021).

These vocabularies, generally created from French matrices, did not always find equivalence in the translation languages, as seen in the opinion of José Mayne (1786) on the use of words like “anatomista” and “bendages” in a translation of a work of medicine, instead of the existing Portuguese nouns for these definitions (*anatômico* and *atadura*), cited above. The new disciplines were, therefore, accompanied by new terms, new words, which were gradually incorporated into the Portuguese language, albeit in the form of professional jargon, transforming Gallicism into a neologism.

Taking this into account, we can better understand Friar Francisco de São Bento’s criticism of the Portuguese translation of a religious speeches and sermons collection proposed by bookseller João Baptista Reycend. The censor judged that the translation of part of the work was “unworthy of appearing” due to grammatical errors and “the new and exotic words [which] are unbearable and frequent defects in this translation” (São Bento, 1778).

The area of knowledge that makes the confrontation with the new words of French origin more evident is probably medicine (associated with pharmacy, among others). In this field, there was a marked translation profusion in

the final part of the 18th century (DeNipoti, 2017, p. 915), complementing Portuguese production, functioning as a “mechanism for the circulation and transmission of ideas” and as “agents of cultural innovation and communicative practice” (Costa, 2011, p. 4). The censorship of these works constantly points to this fact, indicating the translators’ preference for Gallicisms or neologisms to constitute professional jargon, as we saw above in Friar Mayne’s opinion (1786).

Other opinions emphasize this, around some emblematic works translated in the period. When analyzing the translation made by José Manoel Chaves of *First Lines of the Practice of Physic*, by William Cullen, the doctor and censor Manoel Joaquim Henriques de Paiva lamented that the translator had not met the basic requirements of having, “besides perfect knowledge of the language”, a complete understanding of the discipline “in order to express it with equal clarity, and represent the aforementioned style with the same conciseness”. If this had been the case, the translator would not have made a mistake

sometimes adopting many unnecessary terms, having others available, which correspond well to them, sometimes legitimizing some in Latin and French without observing in them the ending, nor the general character of the analogical alterations or modifications, with which our good authors have adapted into Portuguese other expressions that he could use (Paiva, 1788).

In another almost simultaneous opinion, Manoel de Moraes Soares joined Paiva in saying that the translation of Buchan’s *Domestic medicine*, (from the French translation), quoted above, “Has some solecisms and barbarisms due to mutation or [ilegible] of words that I think is essential to report to Your Majesty with a separate table, together with its amendments [...]” – including in the list, the French words that originated the translator’s errors (Soares, 1788). Years later, Paiva granted the license for the printing of the 8th volume of *Domestic medicine*, despite the fact that the translation was “full of barbaric words [...] that vanity had introduced in dishonor of science, and to which many [ilegible] accept in order to cover up their ignorance” (Paiva, 1793).

Paiva also made a translation of Buchan’s book that was published almost at the same time as Francisco Padrell’s and did not suffer the same type of crit-

icism when the translation was analyzed by the censors: “The translator of this third volume, [...] is also a well-known and well-accredited Doctor in this Court and I believe that in this work he satisfies all the precepts of good Translation. I only notice that I forgot to mark the Appendix [...]” (Soares, 1788). However, in his assessments, Paiva insisted on the inadequacy of adopting neologisms, fighting translations “with endless barbaric words that deprave the meaning of the original” (Paiva, 1790), as in the opinion on *Chemistry Elements* by Vicente Coelho Seabra, which were “almost a literal translation of Dr. Foureroy,” but which could be printed if:

before coming out into the light, he reformed the Language, excluding from it the symbolic and barbaric words of which it is full, such as, for example, *acetitos, arsenicatos, beisoatos, bonbiatos, bombicos* [...] and other infinite ones, which make the language more difficult to understand than the science itself (Paiva, 1789).

Giving his opinion on the translation of *Instituições ou Elementos de Farmacia*, by Antonio Baumé, made by Jozé Francisco Leal, Soares (1788c), while praising the initiative, for the worthiness of the original work and for the exposure to “his compatriots in a language that they better understand a useful work for Portuguese pharmacy”, he claimed to have found “many foreign and inappropriate terms for Portuguese language”. The problem persisted for several decades throughout the Iberian peninsula, since, at the beginning of the following century, the anonymous reviewer of the Literary Memorial (1802, p. 180) analyzed the Castilian translation of *Elements of Practical Medicine founded on Brown’s system, by the Council M. A. Weikard*, stating that the work would be useful “If the translator had stopped to observe the property of the Castilian language [...] and ultimately if in all the work had not conserved exactly the French placement”. In 1806, critics continued to see the problem of the *Frenchization* of the language (Castilian, in this case), including “the construction, the phrases and many words, with whole passages which nobody could understand” (Minerva, 1806, p. 206).

For general purposes, therefore, we have a generally derogatory view of the use of neologisms in general and Gallicisms in particular, present in criticism, censorship and in the translators’ speeches, perceiving “the common

vice of Neologism” (Castro, 1795, p. 141), from which it was openly sought to escape, not always successfully, as Plácido Lopez recalled in his “translator’s warning” in *Almacen de las señoritas adolescentes*:

[...] However, as far as I could, I have tried to avoid the Gallicisms that are imperceptibly incurred in these translations; but that is not why I flatter myself that it will lack these and many other defects, as equally even in the same Spanish language into which it is translated (Leprince de Beaumont, 1787, n.p.).

Notwithstanding – and this is evident in the criticisms – the knowledge exposed by the “arts” and sciences often “created” words (neologisms) or transformed French terms into common words in other languages (Gallicisms), which end up being linked both to the scientific discipline to which they apply and to the language itself (eventually). In this sense, the work of Cardinal Saraiva (1827) in his *Glossary of words and phrases of the French language, which, due to carelessness, ignorance or necessity, has been introduced into modern Portuguese locution*, presented at the Royal Academy of Sciences in 1823 and published five years later by the Academy itself, with re-editions in Rio de Janeiro in 1835 and in Lisbon in 1846, in addition to being included in the collection organized by Norberto de Souza Silva (1877) – which we will talk about later –, is quite symptomatic. The study sought to meet a demand of the Academy’s 1810 “programma”, which provided for a:

Glossary, or catalog of words and phrases, in which it is clearly shown those that are typical of the French language, and that, due to carelessness or ignorance, have been introduced into modern Portuguese expression, against the old and good usage, and mainly those that are against the genius of our language, and as such, unadaptable in it (Saraiva, 1827, p. v).

The author found the work very cumbersome, mainly because “the French terms and expressions are very numerous, with which the natural beauty of our language is disfigured” (Saraiva, 1827, p. vi), since, in general, there were Portuguese terms “of equal significance” that could “in several cases pass through the French word with propriety and energy, and make up for the rejected Gallicism” (Saraiva, 1827, p. vii). He identified a “certain French



thinking”, visible in almost all translations and in many works originally written in Portuguese, and which modified the language, giving it “a foreign color, and alien to its nature” (Saraiva, 1827, p. viii), approaching the opinion of João Guilherme Christiano Muller, mentioned above, on writing in Portuguese what was thought in French (Muller, 1792). Saraiva went on to explain:

This *French thinking*, which is better understood than explained, is not the result of one or another Gallicism, which has been unduly introduced, and which could easily be corrected and avoided, but consists in taking from French a particular way of weaving the discourse, and a certain air, manner, or style of speaking and writing, which is characteristic of that language, and which does not conform to the nature, genius and character of the Portuguese language (Saraiva, 1827, p. viii, in italics in the original).

The catalog also contained some “technical words from the sciences and arts”, considering that a complete inventory would be “a very long work”, as the number of them grew daily. Furthermore, “it was not up to us to judge their worthiness, and their good or bad derivation; but rather to the teachers of these arts and sciences”, considering the particularities of each discipline in formation, but clearly demonstrating the field of creation of neologisms originating from the French language, trivialized – as we have seen – in the books and manuals of the period (Saraiva, 1827, p. vii).

The “fight” against Gallicisms in general can be followed throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries, for example, with the re-editions of the text by Cardinal Saraiva or with the *Diccionario de galicismos*, published by Rafael María Baralt in Madrid in 1855. However, these clashes, although aimed at creating norms for the Portuguese and Spanish vernacular, always collided with the editorial strength in the French language, which, throughout the 18th century, expanded through editorial piracy, both in France and in neighboring countries, in which several publishers took advantage of the profit opportunity provided by editorial expansion to create a positive trend of “democratizing access to culture” (Darnton, 2021, p. 289). This tendency was reflected in the predominance of the French language in the books, represented also in the work of translators and emulated by authors, leading to the widespread condemnation that we could verify in the documentation, and of which evidence

was given by Felinto Elísio's *Epistle on Gallicisms*, written in 1790 and published for the first time in *Parnaso Lusitano* in 1826:

[...]

My Brito loves the Lusitanian language

Pure as he is, energetic, wealthy,

Shudders in bastard frenchism,

[...]

In a language that thickens and enriches

Each day with the rivers of eloquence

That flow large from every mount;

[...]

On the verge of science. New things

New names require. [...]

(Nascimento, 1877, pp. 39-51, free translation)

Synthesizing the ideas, firstly, it is necessary to reinforce the intention of this study to demonstrate that the resistance and criticism made to Gallicisms in particular, and to words of foreign origin in general, go beyond the search or struggle for some kind of linguistic purism, seeking to see, in the analyzed texts, a certain “discomfort” of the century with the pressure exerted by the French language on the “new” knowledge disseminated through an intense and complex publishing market (Darnton, 2021) and – despite this discomfort – the different ways in which this knowledge is “naturalized” in the Iberian vernaculars. A significant part of this process is directly related to the ideas of science in dispute in the period, consolidated in the practices of the elite of the republic of letters, which allowed the (dictionary) notion to depart – in little more than half a century – from science as “to know, doctrine, erudition [...] knowledge, practice, use [and] experience” (Bluteau, 1712, p. 524) to science as “knowledge, news, certain and evident knowledge of things from their causes [...] the knowledge of that in which we were well instructed” (Silva; Bluteau, 1789, p. 380). For a less incomplete understanding of these shifts in meaning, Gallicisms can be seen as necessary neologisms – supplementing or instituting professional (medical, or architectural, for example) “dialects”.

Perhaps this is the reason why the vast majority of criticisms of the use of Gallicisms or neologisms come from literature of a moral nature, and not so much from that related to the disciplines themselves.

Secondly, even though resorting unevenly to Portuguese censorship, which must be understood in its complex context of production and legitimacy of structures of power and knowledge (Tavares, 2014), the set of sources analyzed allows extrapolating the clashes listed to other portions of the Iberian scholars without invalidating the argument. Systematic studies of the creation/adaptation process of vocabulary of French origin for specific fields of knowledge, both in Portugal and Spain and in their overseas empires (DeNipoti, 2022, p. 185 ss), must be carried out to measure the validity of the arguments presented here.

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## NOTE

<sup>1</sup> At this stage of the work, the various Spanish censorship opinions available on the Portal de Archivos Españoles (n.d.) have not yet been analyzed.

