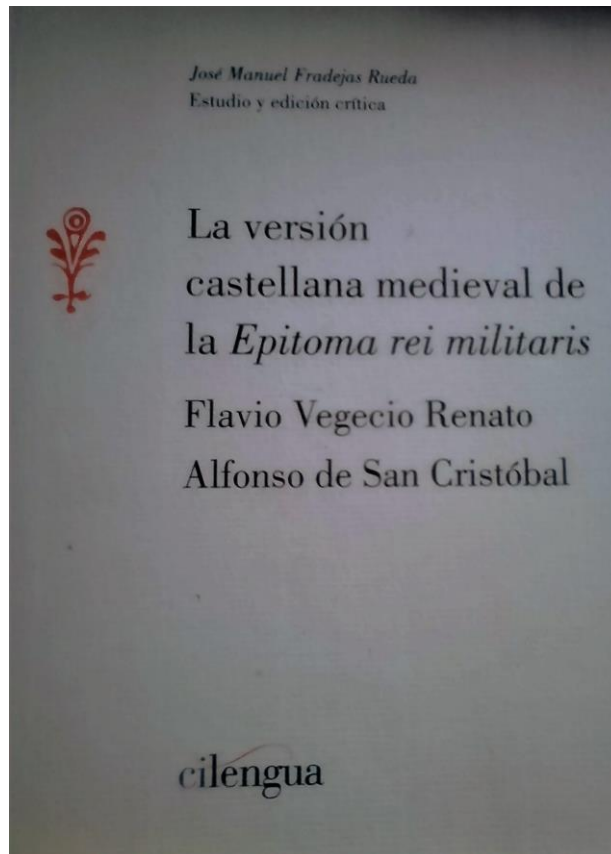


San Cristóbal, Alfonso de. *La versión castellana medieval de la Epitoma rei militaris de Flavio Vegecio Renato*. Ed. José Manuel Fradejas Rueda. San Millán de la Cogolla: Cilengua, 2014. ISBN: 978-84-942088-4-3. 653 pp.

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The prestigious series on Medieval Texts promoted at San Millán de la Cogolla around the fruitful Cilengua Institute turns to be the perfect place to publish this paramount example of textual criticism. Although a discipline sadly diminished by the Academia during the last years, new editions of texts are still indispensable for the good health of medieval Philology. Thus, the first hit to underscore in this sense is that the editor has dedicated a great deal of philological effort to publicise amongst the Academia a barely-known translation of the most successful war treaty of the Western Middle Ages.

According to the common principle that makes desirable to ‘sharpen your tools’ before beginning any sort of task, the editor has dedicated a considerable amount of time to setting both the philological and codicological background of his edition. For instance, we must consider his 2011 article on the same subject,<sup>1</sup> in which he accurately established the run-up of the work currently reviewed. After retaking these ideas in a brief preamble, the editor describes in the first chapter (13-16) the barely-known vital path of *Epitoma*’s author, Publius –later changed in

<sup>1</sup> José Manuel Fradejas Rueda, “Prolegómenos a una edición crítica de la versión medieval castellana de Alfonso de san Cristóbal de la *Epitoma rei militaris* de Vegecio.” *Revista de Literatura Medieval* 23 (2011): 153-77.

favour of the honorific ‘Flavius’– Vegetius Renatus, a high clerk of the Roman empire who flourished between 380-450 a.C. Fradejas Rueda first establishes clearly that Vegetius was not a member of the army, but also underscores the absolute importance of his treaty in medieval European literature: “una de las obras de las Antigüedad más copiadas, solo superada por Cicerón, Ovidio y Virgilio” (16).

In the second chapter (17-34), Fradejas Rueda undertakes a meritorious and profound account of all 18 vernacular translations of the *Epitoma* in medieval Europe. In his survey the editor considers equally anonymous translations and those made by reputed translators, such as the French Master Richard and the three Jean (de Meun, Priorat de Besançon and de Vignay); the Italians Bono Giamboni and Venanzio da Bruschino; and the translation made by Adam Loutfut to English. However, translations to Catalan, Portuguese, and medieval Castilian are precisely those treated more in depth, especially the latter, whose witnesses are described thoroughly in the third and separated chapter (35-63), in which these are named by a letter corresponding to each one of the manuscript sources (E, F, M, O, R, P, and S). Once disregarded one of them for being incomplete, these seven pieces confirm the existence of two families,  $\beta$  and  $\gamma$ , with E, O and S included in the first family and P, R, and F in the second one. Later on, in chapter five (89-111), the transmission of these three families is conveniently explained by a group of impeccable *stemmata* based on pristine philological reasons beyond any dispute, which constitutes one of the most remarkable outcomes of this edition.

The third and fourth chapters are dedicated to explain who is the “rey Enrique” who acted as a patron for this translation (63-74), as well as shedding light on the process of marginal text glosses that provide further information to the topics narrated (75-88). Fradejas Rueda attempts to solve the identification of “Rey Enrique” by connecting it to the biographical data of the translator, fray Alfonso de San Cristóbal, narrowing thus the writing of the translation to the period 1396-1406 because there is no doubt that the patron es Enrique III de Trastámara (66). Furthermore, in regard to the system of glosses, Fradejas Rueda underscores that

Es un hito importante y muy interesante en la historia de la transmisión y recepción de la *Epitoma rei militaris* de Vegecio porque la enriqueció con dos juegos de glosas -unas, las más, explicativas y otras, las menos, espirituales-, lo que es un rasgo único en toda la tradición (75).

After making a brief *excursum* on the *Libro de la guerra*, a sort of partial summary of one of the books translated by San Cristóbal (111-120), the editor introduces the text in which this edition is based on, which turns to be the manuscript held in El Escorial (P.I.23), explaining afterwards the criteria followed in this edition. It is easy to read the text following the different structures, for the editor makes clear when the main text ends up, introducing the markers ‘Glosa’ and ‘Glosa espiritual’ in bold letter when the information coming from the marginal glosses is added. The paragraphs are numbered according to the same divisions made by San Cristóbal, and the end of each one of them some end notes by the editor are incorporated in order to clarify textual references. Footnotes are primarily used to provide philological information on textual variants. It is highly recommended therefore reading end notes after each partial chapter, because sometimes the alphabetical order difficults locating notes due to the small size and format (size 12 suprascript) chosen, as it happens, for instance, when the editor rapidly provides information to identify the *Decreto* (165), this is, Gratian’s *Decretum*, whose importance is underscored and explained in a posterior end note (166).

On other occasions, end notes are providing additional informations on the decisions taken by Fradejas Rueda towards the text. To pointing out just a couple of samples, let us underscore the right consideration of *romanos* as *lectio facilior* instead of *iovianos*, due to the confusion between the epithets of two Roman emperors, Diocletian and Maximian (232-233); similarly, an end note explains conveniently a disastrous translation of a certain text passage (326), transforming thus obscure portions of the text into intellegible readings. It goes without saying that these clarifications are more than necessary in order to understand the text in its entirety, editor's target absolutely fulfilled.

Bibliography (127-132) and two indexes on anthroponymic, toponymic, and nobility titles mentioned (645-650), together with the index of manuscript sources utilised by the editor, they all put the scientific cherry of this masterpiece philological cake. San Cristóbal's translation of *Epitoma* must be celebrated from now on as the chief cornerstone of king Enrique III's cultural momentum, which has been so far barely considered as a valuable period in terms of culture. Thanks to Fradejas Rueda's efforts crystalised for good in this critical edition, now we have the necessary strands to reconsider the historical evolution of the early fifteenth-century-Castile, whilst at the same time enjoying of what was the main reading of quite a few medieval noblemen, those lives and facts of Roman models they were so keen to imitate within the territorial boundaries of the Iberian Peninsula.