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FACING THE WALL OF BABYLON: A CONTRASTIVE ANALYSIS OF THE TRANSFER OF BIBLICAL ALLUSIONS IN TWO SPANISH TRANSLATIONS OF *STRANGE CASE OF DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE*[1]

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Abstract: This paper investigates the translation of biblical quotations and intertextual allusions in Robert Louis Stevenson's *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* in two Spanish versions published in the early 1960s by Amando Lázaro Ros and Fernando Gutiérrez. Drawing on Mendoza's framework of the reading intertext and Canetti's distinction between explicit and implicit quotations, the study examines how fidelity to the 1960 Reina-Valera Bible is affected by translator ideology, literary competence, and the contextual constraints of Francoist censorship. Each fragment is evaluated in terms of the translators' ability to preserve theological meaning, allegorical nuance, and narrative function. The findings indicate that Gutiérrez's solid Judeo-Christian background facilitated accurate and nuanced renderings of biblical allusions, while Ros, conditioned by his atheism and self-censorship, frequently simplified or neutralized biblical references. These results reveal the intersection of ideological orientation and encyclopedic competence with translational choices, influencing textual fidelity and reception. The study highlights the broader significance of intertextual and theological awareness in literary translation, suggesting that translator background plays a critical role in the transfer of religious and culturally loaded content. This research contributes to Translation Studies and Stevenson scholarship by offering insights into complex dynamics between source text, translator, and socio-historical context.
Keywords: intertextuality; biblical allusions; Translation Studies; Robert Louis Stevenson; Jekyll and Hyde; Francoist censorship

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FRENTE A LAS MURALLAS DE BABILONIA: ANÁLISIS CONTRASTIVO DE LA TRADUCCIÓN DE ALUSIONES BÍBLICAS EN DOS VERSIONES ESPAÑOLAS DE *STRANGE CASE OF DR JEKYLL AND MR HYDE*

Resumen: Este trabajo analiza la traducción de citas bíblicas y alusiones intertextuales en *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, de Robert Louis Stevenson, en dos traducciones publicadas a principios de 1960 por Amando Lázaro Ros y Fernando Gutiérrez. A partir del marco del "intertexto lector" de Mendoza y de la distinción entre citas explícitas e implícitas de Canetti, se examina cómo la fidelidad a la Biblia de Reina-Valera de 1960 está condicionada por la ideología del traductor, la competencia literaria y las restricciones contextuales de la censura franquista. Cada fragmento es evaluado según la capacidad de ambos traductores para preservar el significado teológico, los matices alegóricos y la función narrativa. Los resultados indican que el sólido bagaje judeocristiano de Gutiérrez posibilitó traducciones precisas y matizadas de las alusiones bíblicas, mientras que Ros, lastrado por su ateísmo y autocensura, tendió a simplificarlas o neutralizarlas. Estos resultados evidencian la intersección entre la orientación ideológica y la competencia enciclopédica en las decisiones traslaticias, influyendo en la fidelidad y recepción textual. El estudio destaca la relevancia de la conciencia intertextual y teológica en la traducción literaria, señalando el papel fundamental del bagaje del traductor en la transferencia de contenidos religiosos y culturales. Esta investigación contribuye a los Estudios de Traducción y sobre Stevenson aportando perspectivas novedosas sobre la compleja dinámica entre texto fuente, traductor y contexto sociohistórico.
Palabras clave: intertextualidad; alusiones bíblicas; Estudios de Traducción; Robert Louis Stevenson; Jekyll y Hyde; censura franquista

1. INTRODUCTION

Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde has long been recognised as a text in which religious and intertextual elements play a significant role in shaping both its narrative and thematic structure. Among these, biblical discourse—despite its pervasive presence—has often remained relatively underexplored in scholarship, particularly with regard to its implications for translation into Spanish.

This study examines the presence and translation of biblical allusions in two Spanish versions of Stevenson's novella, produced within the sociocultural context of

Francoist Spain, a period marked by strict state censorship and ideological regulation of publishing. The analysis focuses on how these intertextual references are rendered in translation and how they interact with the translators' cultural and ideological positioning.

The study is guided by three main objectives: first (O1), to analyse how biblical allusions are translated in two Spanish versions of the novella produced by translators with contrasting ideological and professional backgrounds working under Francoist censorship; second (O2), to examine whether these references introduce additional narrative or thematic layers and how these are conveyed in translation; and third (O3), to explore the relationship between Mendoza's (2001; 2022) concept of the "reading intertext" and the translation strategies adopted by the two translators.

1.1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is grounded in the work of Jenny (1976), Ponzio (1996), Mendoza (2001; 2022), and Canetti (2002), among others. According to Jenny's notion of intertextuality (1976: 266), it introduces a mode of reading that disrupts textual linearity by activating references that may either be integrated into the syntagmatic flow of the text or prompt a return to a prior textual source through paradigmatic association. This dual process expands the semantic dimension of the text through what Jenny describes as intertextual "bifurcations".

In this sense, intertextuality produces an interpretive duality in which textual elements may be read either as part of the immediate discourse or as references to external sources. Building on this distinction, intertextuality has been associated with a continuum between visibility and concealment, depending on the degree to which the source text is recognisable within the new textual context. Authors may therefore appropriate preexisting texts either through implicit transformation or overt citation, a process that may conceal or emphasise the intertextual source. Some scholars argue that only references that are both clearly attributable and recognisable should be considered intertextual (Henke, 2024: 972), a condition that, in Stevenson's novella, appears to be met, considering the pervasive presence of biblical quotations.

In terms of reader reception, Mendoza (2001: 95) introduces the notion of the "reading intertext" (*intertexto lector*), conceived as the cognitive mechanism that enables readers to activate culturally and linguistically acquired knowledge in order to recognise and interpret intertextual references. This capacity depends on varying degrees of literary and encyclopedic competence.

These concepts provide the theoretical basis for the analysis of biblical allusions in the novel. Biblical references are treated following Canetti's (2002: 158) distinction between explicit and implicit quotations, the latter identifiable through a range of linguistic and stylistic markers. Once identified, Canetti proposes translation strategies aimed at enhancing recognisability, including typographical marking, explicitation, and paratextual guidance.

Other scholars, such as El-Ouafi (2025: 83), extend this framework by distinguishing between overt allusions and more subtle intertextual references, highlighting their differing implications for translation practice. From a complementary perspective, Ponzio emphasises that intertextual allusions function not only as semantic units but also as ideologically charged elements or "ideologemes" embedded within discourse (94). In line with this, Nolte and Jordaan (2011: 8) show that intertextual allusions may reinforce ideological structures within the text, suggesting that reader interpretation is shaped by both cognitive intertextuality and cultural knowledge.

1.2. STATE OF THE ART AND RESEARCH GAP

Despite extensive reediting and scholarly attention since 1886, Ross Goodman's (2022) study offers one of the most sustained examinations of the theological reading of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, arguing that Stevenson's religious references underpin his "theopoetical project" (154) and heighten its psychological force. As Goodman contends, the text "is permeated with religious rhetoric" because Stevenson was "acutely attuned to the unsettling interconnection between the holy and the horrible" (140).

However, existing research on biblical allusions in the novella remains limited, and no prior study has systematically examined their role in Spanish translations of the text (notably lacking the definite article in the original title). Moreover, Goodman's analysis primarily focuses on isolated lexical items such as adjectives rather than on structured nominal groups functioning as coherent intertextual units.

This study addresses this gap by adopting the framework of intertextual theory, cognitive reception models, and translation strategies in order to examine how biblical allusions are identified and rendered in two contemporary Spanish translations of Stevenson's novella.

1.3. RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS, CORPUS SELECTION AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Building on Jenny's distinction between visible and invisible intertextuality, this study advances the hypothesis that translators with a strong Judeo-Christian background are more likely to identify and render biblical quotations with greater fidelity than those without such a background, reflecting differences in both literary and encyclopedic competence. This hypothesis aligns with Mendoza's (2001: 101) reading intertext, with adequate comprehension of the ST as the first step in the translation process. The analysis focuses on literary competence, defined by Rienda (2014: 773) as the sociocultural acquisition of the reading intertext and the ability to produce and assess literary texts, contingent on active learning engagement; and encyclopedic competence, defined as the capacity to activate sociocultural knowledge of history, religion, politics, and literary trends, proportional to reading experience and strategies.

In contrast to Ross Goodman's analysis, the present study shifts attention away from micro-references scattered throughout the text in the form of isolated adjectives (e.g., "divine," "devilish") and instead focuses on complete nominal groups identifiable as coherent semantic units. It argues that Stevenson's deliberatedly crafted allusions generate a complementary interpretive layer, with characters incorporating traits associated with Judeo-Christian figures such as Cain and Abel or the golem, thereby deepening the novella's allegorical resonance.

A selection of fragments is analyzed to examine the correlation between Mendoza's reading intertext and the strategies of the two Spanish translators. These strategies are then compared with Canetti's proposed methods for handling implicit quotations to assess whether translators differ in identification and rendering of such elements. This innovative methodology emphasizes cognitive factors in translation approach selection rather than merely mapping diachronic patterns. Findings aim to illustrate to what extent a strong Judeo-Christian background may shape a translator's handling of both explicit and implicit biblical quotations.

The next section outlines the contextual framework, i.e., the context surrounding the conception of the work, including a brief biographical profile of the author and a concise summary of the plot. It further examines the biographical profiles of the two translators within the historical context of censorship during the Francoist period and provides an overview of the reception of the two Spanish translations.

2. CONTEXTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1. SOURCE TEXT

2.1.1. AUTHOR AND CONCEPTION

Robert Louis Stevenson was born to Margaret Balfour and Thomas Stevenson, a lighthouse builder and engineer, whose Calvinist beliefs strongly shaped the domestic environment in which Stevenson was raised. Due to Robert's fragile health, his father employed a nurse, Alison Cunningham ("Cummie"), to care for him and his equally delicate mother. His early illnesses fostered a literary sensibility, further nurtured by Cummie's bedtime readings of stories and pious texts, particularly the Bible (Balfour, 1901: 34–36).

Following family tradition, Stevenson enrolled at the University of Edinburgh to study Engineering, but after a few years he informed his father of his desire to pursue letters and switched to Law. This heterodox intellectual stance, along with his declared atheism (Tait, 2005), created a growing tension with his father, further exacerbating his health issues. Eventually, however, his father consented to a temporary retreat at his cousin's house in Suffolk, where Stevenson met his lifelong friend and literary advisor, Sydney Colvin (Stevenson, 2002).

While many Stevenson stories are set in exotic locations such as Hawaii or at sea, *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* –notably without the definite article in the original title (British Library, 2012)– is set in his contemporary socio-historical context, lateVictorian London. He wrote it on the brink of domestic bankruptcy, during a period of illness. According to legend, a dream inspired the first transformation scene, though he was awakened by his wife (Balfour, 1901: 12–13). Upon reviewing the draft, she remarked that he had "missed the allegory," prompting Stevenson to rewrite it over three "feverish" days (Campbell, 2008). As Balfour observes, "[the novella's] success was immediate with all readers" (1901: 17–18). Biblical literacy among Victorians likely rendered most references readily accessible, highlighting the difficulty of conveying biblical resonances to contemporary audiences. Stevenson's "conspicuously Bibleminded society" (Linehan, 2006: 24), in which Scripture was regularly read and cited, would have been both willing and naturally prepared to engage in this mode of intertextual exchange.

2.1.2. PLOT SUMMARY AND THEMATIC FRAMING

The novella's significance lies in its multiple interpretive layers. Despite the brevity of its composition, it presents morally conflicted characters and integrates classical,

biblical, and cabalistic references (see Analysis). The narrative opens with Mr. Utterson walking with his relative Mr. Enfield, who recounts witnessing a man, Hyde, trample a little girl in an act of unmotivated brutality. The girl's family coerces Hyde into compensation of £100, which he delivers via a cheque signed by Dr. Jekyll, immediately suggesting a troubling moral and personal entanglement. Utterson, Jekyll's lawyer and friend, seeks out Hyde and is repelled by his disturbing and almost inhuman, ungodly presence. Suspecting Jekyll's involvement in some form of hidden transgression, he interrogates him but receives no clear explanation.

A year later, Hyde brutally murders a Member of Parliament and then disappears, dramatically escalating the sense of moral degeneration associated with his presence. Dr. Lanyon, another of Jekyll and Utterson's friends, falls fatally ill after a profound disagreement with the doctor concerning matters that remain initially concealed, leaving cryptic documents to Utterson, to be opened only after Jekyll's eventual passing. The doctor, meanwhile, retreats into increasing isolation and secrecy.

One evening, after an unusually long absence and under suspicion of foul play, Jekyll's butler assists the lawyer in breaking into the laboratory, where Hyde's body is found, but not Jekyll's. Utterson then reads both Lanyon's narrative and Jekyll's confession, which finally discloses the truth behind Hyde's existence, revealing the moral and existential divide at the heart of Jekyll's fractured psyche.

2.2. TRANSLATORS AND TARGET CONTEXT

2.2.1. AMANDO LÁZARO ROS (1886–1962)

Amando Lázaro Ros worked as a journalist in San Sebastián and Madrid, eventually serving as vice-president of the Spanish Professional Journalists' Association (ABC, 1937:7). He also published essays and novels, including *Guerrilleros* and *Dios es corazón*, the latter depicting a Republican character in the context of the anti-Franco resistance who, facing execution, expresses inner conflict and loss of religious faith.

During the Spanish Civil War, he edited the Socialist-Marxist newsletter *Claridad* and was imprisoned under Francoist authorities, who subsequently banned him from publishing. Within this context of ideological repression, translation became his main professional and literary activity, through which he rendered numerous British authors into Spanish and co-translated works by Nobel laureates Henry Sienkiewicz and Pearl S. Buck.

His translations of Jane Austen, Mark Twain, Stevenson, and Conan Doyle remain in print (Cornejo, 2011). In particular, his engagement with Stevenson is relevant in light of the psychological and religious tensions embedded *in Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, which demand careful treatment of moral and biblical undertones in translation. Ros's translation appeared in a 1960 Aguilar anthology of Stevenson's "horror tales," including *The Suicide Club*, *Olalla*, and *Markheim* (Stevenson 2004) targeting the popular market.

2.2.2. FERNANDO GUTIERREZ GONZALEZ (1911–1984)

Fernando Gutiérrez began his publishing career after the Spanish Civil War in collaboration with the Luis Miracle publishing house. He also collaborated with Catholic publishing houses such as Propaganda Popular Católica (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2017) and Editorial Católica in Seville (Mengual Català, 2013). He served as a state censor at the National Delegation of Press and Propaganda in Barcelona, thereby operating within the mechanisms of Francoist cultural regulation. This privileged position would have, allegedly, enabled him to advise publishers such as Josep Pedreira and Josep Janés on navigating censorship constraints (Mengual Català, 2017).

Within this institutional framework, Gutiérrez developed an extensive translation activity, producing versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* and contributing to numerous poetic anthologies. During the 1950s, he also prepared prologues and translations for collected editions of major European and international authors, including Nobel and Goncourt laureates, as well as writers such as Hemingway, Pasternak, and Proust.

Gutiérrez's translation of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* appeared in 1965 in the seventh volume of *Obras maestras de la literatura universal*, a collection published by the Credsa publishing house alongside Stevenson's *Treasure Island* and *The Black Arrow*. Positioned within this canonising editorial framework, the translation reflects the mid-20th-century Spanish understanding of Victorian moral and psychological narratives under Francoist cultural restrictions.

2.2.3. FRANCOIST RECEPTION AND CENSORSHIP

The 1960s marked the beginning of the economic opening of Francoist Spain, which gradually fostered a limited sociocultural opening. The arrival of international tourism introduced not only a major source of income, but also more liberal social attitudes, foreign cultural products, and new lifestyles. The expansion of multinational companies, imported consumer goods, television, and modern advertising techniques

progressively transformed the Spanish market and exposed Spanish society to external cultural influences (MUVAP, 2017).

Despite this process of modernisation, Francoist Spain remained politically authoritarian and ideologically grounded in National Catholicism, which positioned Catholic morality as a central organising principle of public and cultural life. Religion played a decisive role not only in education and social behaviour, but also in literary production, censorship, and translation. Through institutions such as the censorship apparatus and the National Delegation of Press and Propaganda, the regime exercised strong control over published material, particularly regarding sexuality, morality, religion, and ideological orthodoxy.

Against this ideological backdrop, horror fiction occupied an ambiguous position. Although censorship remained strict, the 1960s witnessed a significant boom in the horror genre, with numerous unsettling and violent narratives being published and translated with official approval. According to Lázaro Lafuente (2009: 228), censors preferred to avoid the contradiction of broadcasting sensationalist crime programmes such as *El Caso* on public television while simultaneously prohibiting similarly disturbing literary works, which contributed to a relative relaxation of restrictions surrounding horror fiction.

The publication of Stevenson's novella must therefore be understood within this context of state-controlled cultural opening. Significantly, Ros' translation appeared within a compilation of horror tales seemingly directed at a more popular readership, whereas Gutiérrez's version was incorporated into a canonising collection of literary masterpieces. The latter's institutional proximity to the censorship apparatus, together with his literary prestige, may help explain this difference in editorial positioning.

The methodology and the structure chosen for the analysis will now be presented, including the justification of the corpus under study, the selection of the research design, and the types of quotations examined in accordance with the theoretical framework outlined above.

3. METHODOLOGY

Owing to spatial limitations and in view of their structural significance to the novella's central themes, this study adopts a qualitative case study approach rather than a quantitative design, analysing a representative third of the eighteen significant biblical quotations and allusions identified in the text; the remaining twelve are listed in the Appendix.

The analysis distinguishes between explicit and implicit quotations, following Canetti's framework (2002: 158) as a classification tool for examining translational decisions. Translation strategies for rendering implicit quotations are examined, including explicitation and paratextual solutions.

Subsequently, Mendoza's concept of the "reading intertext" (2001: 101) is used as an interpretive framework to assess how intertextual elements are recognised and rendered in translation depending on their degree of recognisability, allowing for the evaluation of translation choices in relation to differing levels of literary and encyclopaedic competence. This framework further allows for the evaluation of translation choices in relation to differing levels of literary and encyclopaedic competence.

To ensure clarity and analytical coherence, each fragment is examined in a structured manner. First, its significance within Judeo-Christian contexts and its narrative placement in the novella are briefly outlined. A comparative table then presents the source text alongside both translations. Finally, each translator's strategies are analyzed in relation to the frameworks proposed by Mendoza (2001: 101) and Canetti (2002: 158).

4. ANALYSIS

4.1. EXPLICIT BIBLICAL QUOTATIONS

In section 5 of the Book of Daniel, pagan King Belshazzar blasphemes against God during a feast, drinking from sacred vessels stolen from Solomon's Temple. A hand then appears and writes four words on the wall, announcing the king's impending downfall. This quotation gains special significance in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* as it marks the first premonitory sign of Jekyll's doom, when Hyde starts to irreversibly dominate their shared consciousness. Stevenson makes the parallel explicit:

"This inexplicable incident (…) seemed, like the Babylonian finger on the wall, to be spelling out the letters of my judgment" (56).

Ros (TT1) integrates the biblical allusion into the text as a vague simile ("me daban la impresión de…"), reducing its referential force (see Table 1). Gutiérrez (TT2) preserves the allegorical image, maintaining the reference to the "Babylonian finger(s)" ("dedo sobre el muro de Babilonia") and translating "spelling out the letters of my judgment" faithfully as "trazando las letras de mi sentencia", whereas Ros uses the more graphic "dibujaba (…) las palabras de mi propia condenación".

Table 1. *Alternative Translations of "Babylonian Finger"*

ST	TT1	TT2
p. 56 "This inexplicable incident, this reversal of my previous experience, seemed, **like the Babylonian finger on the wall, to be spelling out the letters of my judgment**"	p. 114 "Aquel percance inexplicable, aquel invertirse de mis anteriores experimentos, **me daban la impresión de la mano babilónica que dibujaba en la pared las palabras de mi propia condenación**."	p. 705 "El inexplicable incidente, el trastrueque de mis experiencias anteriores, parecía, como **el dedo sobre el muro de Babilonia**, que estaba **trazando las letras de mi sentencia**."

A second biblical phrase, "bowels of mercy" or "bowels of mercies" from Colossians 3:12, serves to contrast biblical virtues with Mr. Hyde's unholy nature. About to encounter his faceless nemesis, Utterson feels both apprehension and curiosity: "At least it would be a face worth seeing: the face of a man who was without bowels of mercy." Ros translates "bowels" literally as "entrañas" ("entrails" or "guts"), losing the biblical resonance (see Table 2). Gutiérrez renders the phrase as "misericordia", matching the wording of Colossians 3:12 in the 1960 RVB, thereby preserving its allegorical meaning.

Table 2. *Alternative Translations of "Bowels of Mercy"*

ST	TT1	TT2

p. 9 “At least it would be a face worth seeing: the face of a man who was **without bowels of mercy** (…)”	p. 28 “En todo caso, era una cara que merecía verse: la cara de **un hombre sin entrañas** (…)”	p. 636 “Cuando menos, sería una cara que valdría la pena ver: la cara de un hombre cuyo corazón no albergaba la **misericordia**.”

In biblical tradition, “good pleasure” is typically used to allude directly to God’s will (Luke 12:32; Philippians 2:13). Seeing as Hyde is chemically extracted from Jekyll’s psyche and set free to act as he pleases as a way for the doctor to indulge his longrepressed impulses while safely disguised, by using this phrase to describe Hyde's indulgence in base desires Jekyll is blasphemously placing him (and, by extension, himself) on an equal footing with God (see Table 3). Ros, again, misses the biblical connotation though, translating “to do his good pleasure” as “para que se buscase sus placeres” (suggesting sensual gratification). Gutiérrez opts for “para que hiciera su gusto”, slightly old-fashionedly but accurately conveying the sense of acting on one's impulses while retaining the biblical undertone.

Table 3. *Alternative Translations of “To Do His Good Pleasure”*

ST	TT1	TT2
p. 54 “This familiar that I called out of my own soul, and sent forth alone **to do his good pleasure**, was a being inherently malign and villainous (…)”	p. 111 “Aquel ser interior que yo había sacado al exterior desde mi propia alma, dejándolo en libertad **para que se buscase sus placeres**, era un ser malvado por naturaleza y ruin (…)”	p. 702 “Este familiar a quien había evocado en mi propia alma, y a quien enviaba **para que hiciera su gusto**, era un ser fundamentalmente perverso y villano.”

By the end of the story, in his “Final Statement of the Case,” Jekyll likens the severance of his consciousness to Jesus’ last breath on the cross, when the veil of the Jerusalem Temple was rent in two (Matthew 27:51). This comparison can be read either

as a martyr's confession or as irrefutable evidence of Jekyll's fall, with Hyde's takeover viewed through the lens of a hypocritical, self-serving distortion of Scripture (see Table 4). Surprisingly enough, Ros substitutes God with a vague reference to "cielo" (heaven) and treats the veil as a generic element, thereby losing the biblical resonance. Gutiérrez preserves the reference to God ("Dios") and closely follows the Reina-Valera Bible: "el velo del templo se rasgó en dos, de arriba abajo" (Matthew 27:51).

Table 4. *Alternative Translations of "Veil of the Temple Rent from Head to Foot"*

ST	TT1	TT2
p. 58 "The pangs of transformation had not done tearing him, before Henry Jekyll, with streaming tears of gratitude and remorse, had fallen upon his knees and lifted his clasped hands to **God**. The **veil of self-indulgence was rent from head to foot**."	p. 118 "Aún no habían acabado de desgarrarlo las angustias de la transformación y ya Henry Jekyll caía de rodillas y alzaba las manos juntas al **cielo**, entre raudales de lágrimas de gratitud y de arrepentimiento. **Se rasgó de la cabeza a los pies el velo del egoísmo complaciente** (…)"	p. 708 "Todavía no habían cesado de torturarle los sufrimientos de la transformación, cuando Henry Jekyll, llenos los ojos de lágrimas de gratitud y remordimiento, caía de rodillas y levantaba a **Dios** las manos suplicantes. **El velo** de la propia indulgencia **se había rasgado de arriba abajo** (…)"

4.2. IMPLICIT BIBLICAL ALLUSIONS

The Collins English Dictionary defines a golem as "(in Jewish legend) an artificially created human being brought to life by supernatural means," while Merriam-Webster traces the word to Hebrew *gōlem*, meaning "shapeless mass." Implicit references to the biblical figure of the golem are also present in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. At least two passages unmistakably identify Hyde as a living golem. The first is when Hyde's utter lack of empathy for a little girl he tramples is shown at the beginning

of the story, and he is described as a "relentless (…) man of stone" (54). The second appears in the "Final Statement of the Case," Jekyll's alter ego is described as "the amorphous dust [that] gesticulated and sinned; that what was dead, and had no shape" (62), usurping "the offices of life." Both comparisons support a biblical reading, especially when Hyde's genesis in Jekyll's "paper book", as mentioned in "Dr Lanyon's Narrative" (42, 44), parallels the golem's creation from a "book" where "all [its] members are written" (Psalm 139:16).

As pointed out by Canetti (2002: 158), implicit intertextuality is signaled by references to elements outside the cotext and anomalous vocabulary such as "amorphous dust" or "slime of the pit." Ros, however, disregards these indicators, translating neutrally: "slime of the pit" → "cieno del pozo"; "that what was dead and had no shape" → "materia muerta, sin forma" (see Table 5). In contrast, Gutiérrez uses more poetic equivalents that evoke hellish imagery: "slime of the pit" → "barro del abismo" and "that what was dead and had no shape" → "lo que estaba muerto y carecía de forma.".

In the second quotation, Ros renders "man of stone" as "hombre sin corazón," overlooking biblical resonance, while Gutiérrez translates literally as "hombre de piedra," unmistakably invoking the golem allegory.

Table 5. *Alternative Translations of the Golem Figure*

ST	TT1	TT2
p. 62 "This was the shocking thing; that **the slime** of the pit seemed to **utter cries and voices**; that the **amorphous dust gesticulated and sinned**; that that what was dead,	p. 126. "Eso era lo más desagradable: que el **cieno del pozo** parecía lanzar gritos y voces; que el **polvo amorfo** gesticulaba y pecaba; que lo que era **materia muerta**, sin forma,	p. 715. "Esto era lo intolerable: que el **barro** del abismo pareciese articular voces y gritos, que el **polvo sin forma** accionara y pecase, que lo que estaba muerto y **carecía de forma**

and **had no shape**, should usurp the offices of life."	usurpase las funciones de la vida."	usurpase los atributos de la vida"
p. 54 "drinking pleasure with bestial avidity from any degree of torture to another; relentless like **a man of stone**."	p. 111 "(…) bebía el placer con avidez bestial en cualquier clase de tortura que podía inferir a otro; era **implacable como un hombre sin corazón**."	p. 702 "Saboreaba con bestial avidez el deleite que le inspiraba la tortura infligida al prójimo. Era **inexorable como un hombre de piedra**."

In Genesis 4:15, God puts his mark on Cain to prevent his murder in retaliation after Abel's death. Similarly, in *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*, Hyde is described as giving "an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation" (11–12). Jekyll notes that "none could come near to [Hyde] at first without a visible misgiving of the flesh" (52), reinforcing Hyde as a biblically marked representative of evil. Moreover, Stevenson states that Hyde "had borne himself to the lawyer with a sort of *murderous* mixture of timidity and boldness" (12), further linking him to Cain's violent tendencies.

In the first example, no explicit intertextual markers appear; identification depends entirely on the translators' literary and encyclopaedic competence. Ros renders "murderous" descriptively as "intenciones asesinas," whereas Gutiérrez's "homicida" directly evokes Cain (see Table 6). For the "visible misgiving of the flesh," Ros uses "una visible turbación," a euphemism, while Gutiérrez's "un recelo físico de la carne" preserves the original sense of instinctive repulsion.

Table 6. *Alternative Translations of the Mark of Cain*

ST	TT1	TT2
p. 11-12 "Mr. Hyde (…) gave an impression of deformity without any nameable malformation	p. 32 "Mr. Hyde (…) producía una impresión de persona deforme, sin que pudiese señalársele	p. 639 "Míster Hyde (…) daba la impresión de deformidad, sin que, no obstante, se pudiera

(…), he had borne himself to the lawyer with a sort of **murderous mixture of timidity and boldness**" p. 52 "none could come near to [Mr. Hyde] at first without a **visible misgiving of the flesh** (…) because all human beings (…) are commingled out of good and evil: and Edward Hyde, alone in the ranks of mankind, was pure evil."	una deformación concreta (…); se había conducido con el abogado con una mezcla de timidez y de audacia que **transparentaba intenciones asesinas** (…)" p. 107 "todos los que se (…) acercaban por vez primera [a Mr. Hyde] sentían **una visible turbación** (…) porque todos los seres humanos (…) son una mezcla de bondad y de maldad y sólo Edward Hyde, entre todos los hombres, era maldad pura."	precisar ningún defecto de conformación. (…) se había comportado con el abogado con una **extraña mezcla homicida de cobardía y audacia**." p. 699 "nadie podía acercarse a [Mr. Hyde] sin experimentar por primera vez **un recelo físico de la carne** (…) porque todos los seres humanos son un compuesto del bien y del mal, y solamente Edward Hyde, entre todos los humanos, era puro mal."

The results discussed here derive not only from the six fragments analyzed above but also from other relevant biblical allusions manifested as nominal groups present in the text (see Table 7).

Table 7. *Nominal-Group Biblical Allusions in* Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde

Biblical Allusions (18)	**TT1**	**TT2**
1. *(a figure to whom) power was given*		
2. *bowels of mercy*		Identified

3. *Amorphous dust* [that] *gesticulated and sinned*		Identified
4. *Babylonian finger*(s)		Identified
5. *Cain's heresy*		Identified
6. *captives of Philippi*		
7. *child of Hell*	Identified	Identified
8. *city of refuge*	Identified	Identified
9. *Day of Judgement*	Identified	Identified
10. *house of bondage*		
11. *like a story that is told*		
12. *original evil*	Identified	
13. *secret sinner*		
14. [*Mark of Cain/ Devil*]		Identified
15. *the chief of sinners/ sufferers*		Identified
16. *to do his good pleasure*		Identified
17. *"vainglorious thought"* [vainglory]	Identified	
18. *veil* [of the temple] *rent from head to foot*		Identified
Identified	**5**	**11**

As can be seen, Gutiérrez identifies and conveys more than twice as many biblical allusions as Ros. The reasons for this imbalance are addressed in the next section, where

consistent patterns across the two translations are examined to determine how differing translating decisions affect the resulting TTs.

The next section will now delve into the interpretation of these results within the theoretical framework and relevant scholarship, with the aim of shedding light on the research hypothesis, paying particular attention to the constraints that influenced the interpretative perspectives of both translators and the transfer of biblical allusions into Spanish.

5. DISCUSSION

The analysis of the selected fragments indicates that the translating strategies employed by the two translators differ consistently and predictably.

In TT1, explicit quotations from the KJB are often integrated into the surrounding text or rendered as more ordinary metaphors, losing their biblical connotations ("man of stone" → "hombre sin corazón," for instance), as noted in the Theoretical Framework and following Canetti (2002). The conveyance of biblical quotations is therefore markedly less effective than in TT2, where most quotations are adapted with reference to the RVB.

Regarding implicit quotations, TT1 renders them plainly, either literally ("slime of the pit" → "cieno del pozo") or by narrowing the metaphors to the point that they appear trite or replaceable ("visible misgiving of the flesh" → "visible turbación"), systematically overlooking biblical resonances.

By contrast, explicit Bible quotations in TT2 are generally well transferred into Spanish in accordance with the RVB ("bowels of mercy" → "misericordia"; "the *veil* of self-indulgence *was rent from head to foot*" → "*el velo* de la propia indulgencia se había *rasgado de arriba abajo*" [my emphasis]). Implicit quotations in TT2 similarly demonstrate greater sensitivity to biblical metaphors. For instance, "slime of the pit [which] usurp the offices of life" is rendered as "barro del abismo [que] usurpase los atributos de la vida," and "man of stone" as "hombre de piedra," collectively evoking the golem figure.

These differences support the central hypothesis of this study: translators with strong Judeo-Christian backgrounds identify and render biblical quotations more faithfully than those without, reflecting differences in literary and encyclopaedic competence. Gutiérrez collaborated with overtly Catholic publishing houses, including

Propaganda Popular Católica (Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte, 2017) and Editorial Católica in Seville (Mengual Català, 2013), and embraced National Catholicism while serving as a state censor in Barcelona. In contrast, Ros, a politically active leftist and declared atheist who had edited the Socialist-Marxist newsletter *Claridad* during the Spanish Civil War, worked under strict surveillance.

Accepting Mendoza's (2001: 101) argument regarding the crucial role of the reading intertext and Canetti's (2002: 158) distinction between explicit and implicit quotations, several conclusions follow. First, Gutiérrez's Judeo-Christian background coincides with a more precise transfer of biblical allusions, likely reflecting his encyclopaedic competence, reinforced by his career as publisher, author, and advisor to fellow publishers. This interpretation aligns with Mendoza's (2022: 279) emphasis on the recursive nature of the reading intertext, since "each new association, recognition, or similar insight becomes a new unit within the reader's intertext and qualitatively enriches their literary competence."

Second, Ros's lack of such a background appears to have limited his ability to identify subtle Judeo-Christian references, such as "bowels of mercy," "to do his good pleasure," or the subtle combination of "slime of the pit," "amorphous dust," and "usurp the offices of life." In this respect, his encyclopaedic competence regarding JudeoChristianity was less developed than Gutiérrez's.

Third, regarding literary competence, both translators produced acceptable texts that preserve the superficial meaning of the ST as a horror story, consistent with their experience as authors and publishers. However, their approaches to Bible-related metaphors differ markedly, providing insight into their interpretive choices.

Gutiérrez, as part of the Francoist repressive apparatus and therefore compelled to apply its established censoring criteria ("Does it attack the dogma of the church? Does it offend against morality? Does it offend the institutions or persons of the Movement?") (Malmkjær & Bush, 1998), held an advantageous position, whereas Ros often homogenized figures of speech, opting for plain, general equivalents to avoid potential censorship. The significance of censorship also emerges in the reception of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*: although an early 1939 adaptation was classified by Francoist censors as "no doubt very entertaining for fans of such stories: they have emotion, interest – sometimes, they even include literature" [my translation] (Lázaro Lafuente, 2009), the story itself remains a religious-philosophical allegory, critiquing moral rigidity as in

Wilde's *The Portrait of Dorian Gray* (1890) and engaging with classical tragedy through symbolic motifs such as Jekyll's house, the backdoor, or the key. Moreover, it explores the tension between science and religion, reminiscent of Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818).

The novella pivots on socially condemned behaviours described as "undignified" or "disreputable," performing a moral vivisection through Jekyll's consciousness: "It was on the moral side, and in my own person, that I learned to recognise the thorough and primitive duality of man" (50). Initially, Jekyll's two selves coexist, but ultimately a confrontation ensues in which the triumph of "good" demands the greatest sacrifice.

Living under Franco, both translators may have felt indirect pressure to widen the good/evil divide in Jekyll/Hyde, simplifying Hyde's "evil" actions and presenting Jekyll as repentant to circumvent censorship. In TT1, this results in a "pre-digested," professionally styled version in which most Bible references are removed or integrated ambiguously. As Canetti (2002: 158) notes, such suppression leaves readers unprepared for "[the] sudden appearance of references to elements not present in the cotext whose recognition is *assumed*" [my emphasis].

For example, Jekyll's allusion to King Belshazzar's "Babylonian finger" in his posthumous "Final Statement of the Case" is rendered by Ros as: "la impresión de la mano babilónica que dibujaba en la pared las palabras de mi (…) condenación", potentially confusing lay readers. Gutiérrez, in contrast, translates it as: "como el dedo sobre el muro de Babilonia, que estaba trazando las letras de mi sentencia," where the nominal group *dedo sobre el muro de Babilonia* integrates the noun Babilonia, effectively evoking biblical echoes recognizable to Spanish readers.

The section below synthesizes the main insights of the study in relation to the research objectives outlined in Section, 1 and presents the conclusions.

6. CONCLUSION

The study was designed primarily to test the hypothesis that translators with strong JudeoChristian backgrounds identify and render biblical allusions more faithfully than those without, reflecting differences in literary and encyclopaedic competence. The resulting conclusions correspond directly to the objectives outlined in the Introduction:

Transfer of biblical elements (O1). The Analysis shows that biblical allusions tend to be systematically and accurately translated by Gutiérrez – an educated Catholic – in

TT2, following the RVB, whereas they are generally overlooked by the atheist Ros in TT1. This finding strongly supports the aforementioned hypothesis.

Thematic dimensions (O2). TT2 reinforces the text's parallel religious dimension. Hyde is depicted as a man "without bowels of mercy" (9), as a distorted parody of Cain (allusion 14), and even as a "child of Hell" (61), while implicit parallels with the golem figure (allusion 3) further highlight biblical resonances. Jekyll, in turn, is compared with Jesus at least twice (allusions 15 and 18), dialectically positioned before the wall of Babylon (56) and transformed into a carnal "city of refuge" for Hyde (59) after the latter murders Lord Carew. Nonetheless, as discussed above, TT2—like TT1—ultimately frames the story primarily as a Christian tragedy, in which Jekyll, now the chaste element of his own psyche rather than the composite from which Hyde emerges, struggles against his "original evil" (51).

Impact of censorship and translator ideology (O3). The same Francoist censorship that permitted Stevenson's novella to be published as a "horror story" also pressured politically dissident translators like Ros to self-censor. This resulted in a loss of literary complexity in TT1 (e.g., simplified metaphors: "man of stone" → "hombre sin corazón:" reduction of ambiguity: "visible misgiving of the flesh" → "visible turbación"), whereas TT2 generally identifies and conveys biblical allusions while preserving the ST's literary intricacy. Gutiérrez's reading intertext clearly correlates with both a higher number of allusions detected and their effective translation.

Overall, this paper demonstrates the significance of a complementary theological reading of *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. Given their extensive allegorical potential, the decision to translate—or omit—biblical allusions clearly shapes the literary value of any Spanish rendition of the novella.

Other parallel readings remain similarly underexplored, including the text's critique of Victorian morality and Jekyll's own hypocrisy, which are often overlooked even in contemporary adaptations (Linehan, 2006). This line of inquiry offers a promising direction for future research in Translation Studies, and it is hoped that these findings will stimulate further scholarly engagement.

APPENDIX
bit.ly/4uWwlK8

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NOTES ON CONTRIBUTOR

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