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Bio-gate: Some Further Developments

by Christopher A. Ferrara
August 24, 2015

I have written [a series of columns](#) on the explosive revelation in a new biography of Sister Lucia, published by the Convent in Coimbra, in which she recounts in one of her unpublished diaries that when Our Lady told her she could write down the Third Secret on January 4, 1944, She also cautioned: "but not, however, that which has been given to you to understand [of] its meaning" (*não porém o que te é dado entender do seu significado*).

In two of those columns, found [here](#) and [here](#), I reported that in an English translation of the biography by the World Apostolate of Fatima (WAF) the key phrase "that which has been *given to you* to understand [of] its meaning" had been mistranslated as simply "your [Sister's Lucia's] opinion of its meaning," as if to suggest that Our Lady had not given Lucia any understanding of what the vision means but was referring only to Lucia's personal opinion on the matter.

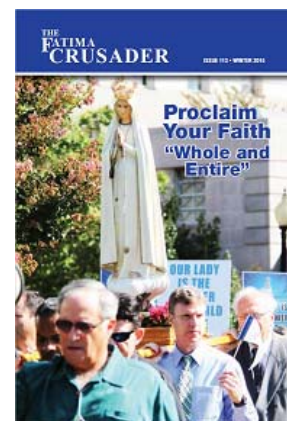
In a piece written as a defense of WAF against my suggestion of a cover-up, [Kevin Symonds](#) reveals that he brought this mistranslation to WAF's attention *before the English version went to press* but that WAF *elected not to correct it*, advising him in essence that it was too late:

[T]he answer that I received was that it was now very late in the editorial process; *it was too late to make any changes*. According to a [notice](#) by the Carmelite Sisters, the publishing date was slated for March 22, but this ended up being delayed until April 13. Those familiar with the publishing world know that a printing company needs a final copy in order to print. *Once the final seal of approval is given, any further changes incur a fee*.

Based on the above, *WAF-USA was going to go with the translation "as is" but with the caveat that there was going to be a second edition*. Moreover, if I understood correctly what I was told, there were already plans for a second edition even before *I pointed out the error on March 12*.

Now I know from experience as a published author that it is easy enough to correct a final proof copy when a mistake of this magnitude is discovered before the presses roll, provided one is willing to pay a charge for the correction of that particular page. But, even though informed of the error by Mr. Symonds a month before the final publication date, WAF was apparently not willing to pay the correction charge and decided to "go with" what it knew was a mistranslation of the words of the Mother of God, waiting until a second edition to correct its error.

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In Loving Memory of Fa...  



I don't know when this second edition will appear, and my request for confirmation that it would be published went unanswered. Make of it what you will. At this point, based on what Mr. Symonds was told, however, I am willing to presume that the mistake was made in good faith and that it will be corrected in a second edition. But if the corrected second edition never appears, that presumption would no longer be warranted.

UPDATE: After this column was sent to the publisher, Mr. Carollo did reply to my request for confirmation by email as follows:

....After consulting with the Sisters' and their translator about the phrase that has caused such concern, they agreed to change the wording to avoid any further charges of conspiracy, but stand by their explanation of said phrase contained in the paragraphs following. We respect Mr. Symonds' views and concerns, and we consider him a friend of our apostolate. He is however a freelance writer who is free to pursue whatever he wishes to write in his blog. He does not represent the World Apostolate of Fatima in these writings. Our second edition is due out soon and we stand by the wishes of the Sisters of Coimbra who authored the book, and their choice of translations. Thank you for your correspondence. We wish you all the best.

In any case, what is important now is that all parties admit that the translation was erroneous and that, as Mr. Symonds rightly notes:

The new "revelation in the biography is an indication that the third part of the secret of Fátima was comprised of what I will here call 'visual' and 'interpretative' components. The "visual" component was a supernatural vision and the 'interpretative' one *appears to be an as yet unknown explanation of the vision* (it is presumed to have been given by Our Lady)... She told Lúcia to write down what she saw, i.e. the "vision," *but not what she was given to understand of its meaning.*

I also agree with Mr. Symond's conclusion:

This was truly a revelation because for years it was debated whether or not there were words of Our Lady that explained the vision (which was [published](#) in the year 2000). Having the confirmation in Sr. Lúcia's own handwriting that *an interpretation did, in fact, exist* — but which was not intended by Our Lady in 1944 for public consumption — was as valuable as it was remarkable. *As remarkable as it is, the effort from two-text theorists has been rejuvenated.*

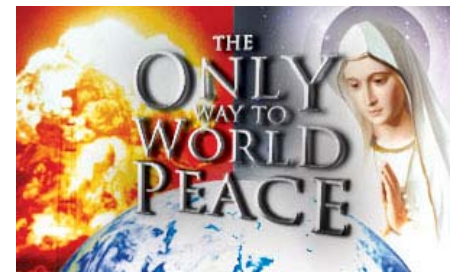
I certainly do not share, however, Mr. Symond's view that "Unless the Will of God ordained it [the interpretation] to be communicated at a later time — *and irrefutable evidence of this fact is provided to the public* — one might just be arguing the Will of God and this can only displease the Almighty."

It simply doesn't make sense that Our Lady would provide Lucia with an interpretation of the vision's meaning and then forbid her ever to make it known, leaving Catholics to this day in a state of confusion and division over what the Third Secret signifies and allowing a corrupt Vatican bureaucrat — Cardinal Sodano, who hid the Father Maciel scandal for decades — to provide a patently ridiculous interpretation of his own, passing it off as the Church's "official" reading of the Secret.

No, the only sensible explanation is that Our Lady had Sister Lucia write down the explosive explanation of the vision's meaning on a different date in a different text — precisely as the "the two-text theorists" have maintained all along. And now WAF confirms, through Mr. Symonds, that the revelation in the new biography is just what I contended, and that WAF's mistranslation of that revelation will be corrected to reflect what Our Lady actually said to Lucia on that fateful day in 1944.

In a subsequent column on this subject I will address the claims of another defender of WAF in this controversy, who likewise does not dispute the error in WAF's translation. Stay tuned.

IMPORTANT CORRECTION: In my earlier columns on this subject I rendered Socci's Italian translation of the revelation "scrivi quello ti commandano" — "write what *they* have commanded you" — as "scrivi quello ti comando" — "write what *I* have commanded you." I misread "comandano" as "comando." Obviously, Sister



Lucia was writing down the Third Secret at the command of her superiors. Lucia had requested a written order from the Bishop of Fatima because she did not wish to undertake that responsibility without a clear command from the bishop. But even after the written order was given, she remained unable to commit the Secret to paper until Our Lady appeared to give her assurances that she could do so, as indeed the new biography confirms. We also know, however, that Our Lady imposed the condition that the Secret not be revealed before 1960, as we saw on each of the *two separate, sealed envelopes* Cardinal Bertone [revealed on camera](#) in 2007: “By express order of Our Lady, this envelope can be opened only in 1960 by the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon or by the Bishop of Leiria.”

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