TOPICS IN TRANSLATION

CONTEMPORARY TRANSLATION THEORIES

Revised 2nd Edition

Edwin Gentzler

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Series Editors: Susan Bassnett, *University of Warwick* and
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Contemporary Translation Theories

Second Revised Edition

Edwin Gentzler

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In memory of Paul Engle

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Series Editor's Preface

The decision to publish a new, heavily revised and updated edition of Edwin Gentzler's ground-breaking book, *Contemporary Translation Theories* is a timely one. As research in Translation Studies continues to expand, there is more need than ever for a book that sets out clearly and concisely what is happening in different strands within the discipline. Gentzler's broad-ranging perspective traces the development of literary Translation Studies from the American translation workshop programme, through the polysystems research of the 1970s and 1980s to deconstruction, the cultural turn, postcolonial translation theory and beyond.

Gentzler's skills in translation are not confined to theorizing. This book is effectively also a translation, for the author transforms a whole range of complex theoretical material into accessible language, so that anyone with no prior knowledge of the field could pick up this book and gain insights. Nor is this accidental: as Translation Studies extends its horizons, borrowing from other disciplines and in turn cross-fertilizing some of the disciplines, it is important for there always to be terminological accessibility. In this book, Gentzler takes the reader into areas of great theoretical sophistication, yet always discussing terms and concepts in ways that are enabling.

Translation Studies has grown beyond all expectations in the last twenty-five years. Gentzler maps some of the processes of the changes that the subject has undergone in its struggle to gain academic respectability and establish itself in distinctive terrain of its own. He also points to ways in which Translation Studies seems to be developing for the future, enthusiastically advocating the closer relations between related disciplines such as literary studies, linguistics, history, ethnography, anthropology and sociology. The future of Translation Studies looks bright: Gentzler's book offers a shrewd analysis of what has been achieved so far and insights into what the next phase of development is likely to show. This exciting new book will be welcomed by anyone with an interest in studying translation in the twenty-first century.

Susan Bassnett

Preface to First Edition

The formulation of this project began in the early 1980s at the International Writing Program (IWP) at the University of Iowa, where I worked on translations of poems and short stories and helped arrange panel discussions on the literary situation in various countries around the world. Because the University of Iowa houses not only outstanding English and foreign language departments, but also the famed Writers' Workshop, the IWP members were seldom at a loss for an audience. Fiction and poetry readings at local bookstores as well as the panel discussions at the school were invariably crowded. Yet while creative writers, graduate students, and faculty respectfully attended and listened to the IWP presentations, the international writers' work remained a curiosity rather than an integral part of the literary community, often referred to by students and professors alike as "minor" or "secondary" - separate and to a large degree unequal.

The reception of the foreign writers' work, in turn, did affect the nature of the International Writing Program's translation work. The desire of many international writers to be translated, published, and valued in English was enormous. While some measure of acceptability was gained in Iowa City and at certain university campuses in the United States, it was almost impossible to place translations in mainstream literary journals. The visiting writers reacted differently to such cultural disinterest. Some members, who had arrived in the United States eager to read, to talk, to exchange ideas and texts, withdrew because their work did not conform to the norms governing current literary taste in this country. Generally, these IWP participants returned to their home countries, wrote an essay about their stay in the USA, and continued with writing projects intended for native audiences, perhaps to return at a later date when conditions were more favorable. Other visiting writers recognized the problem and redirected their energies to conform to thematics and styles that might meet a more favorable reception - but at certain costs. By rewriting texts to "appeal" to Western audiences, certain themes, styles, modes of reference, and referents themselves were elided from the texts translated. Those "silences" in the text, often known only to the translator, were often not only the most interesting in terms of creativity, but also the most revealing with regard to cultural differences.

No matter how "good" our translations were, they would never conform to certain "literary" expectations of the audience, a "problem" that may be operative regardless of the originating and receiving cultures. After all, professors, editors, and creative writers make their living from perpetuating one set of literary values over another; as "objective" or as "open" as any literary establishment tries to be, tastes are conditioned, and certain economies predominate. Though language and cultural constraints in North America seem enormous, the possibility of challenging norms and creating new forms of expression is always present. At those rare moments when cultural barriers disappear and an international writer meets with success, the "double constitution" of the act of translation becomes visible. Such a "theory" motivated the translation work at Iowa and led to my investigation of other "theories" of translation for this book.

Paul and Hualing Nieh Engle, Co-Founders and Directors of the International Writing Program, knew well the socio-political restrictions governing the context in which translations occur, and devoted their lives to breaking down such barriers. With their influence in mind, I attempt in this book to focus not just on various translation theories, but also on the "political realities" that surround the practice of literary translation, and include them in respective discussions. One of the goals of the book is to raise questions concerning the way literary translations are studied in the West and to help readers rethink conceptually how translations are defined and categorized. I thank the Engles, Peter and Mary Nazareth, Daniel Weissbort, the IWP staff, all the visiting writers, and the University of Iowa for their unswaying commitment to promoting translation and for their ongoing efforts to effect international communication.

Sincere thanks go to Hans-Joachim Shulz, Director of the Comparative Literature Program at Vanderbilt University, not only for allowing me to a large degree to create my own curriculum in pursuit of a fairly wide range of literary and theoretical interests, many of which form the basis for sections of the book, but also for his friendship and trust. Eugene Van Erven, a colleague in the Comparative Literature Program at Vanderbilt and former Director of McTyeire International House, shared my belief in the relevance of international creative writing, especially that of popular political poetry, to academic pursuits. His involvement in and support of many of my "extra-curricular" projects was invaluable. Much of the pleasure I had in the writing of this book was derived from the discussions I had with fellow students during

the formative stages of each section; particular thanks go to those students in Charles Scott's seminars on continental philosophy at Vanderbilt, especially Gene DiMagno, and to those students in Donald Davie's Pound seminar. Professors Alice Harris and František Galan, from the Linguistics Department and Comparative Literature Program at Vanderbilt, provided valuable comments on the manuscript. English professors Jack Prostko, Phyllis Frus, and Mark Jarman, also at Vanderbilt, not only read and responded positively to the text, but also included me in their circle of friends, making Nashville a warmer place to work.

Special thanks go to Maria Tymoczko at the University of Massachusetts/Amherst for her meticulous reading of the original manuscript and for encouragement and intellectual companionship during revisions. Conversations with the staff and participants in the 1991 CERA Summer Seminar for Translation, Communication, and Cultures at the Catholic University in Leuven, Belgium, were also very helpful during the final stage. The lectures given by Susan Bassnett, 1991 CERA Professor and this series' co-editor, proved very thought-provoking; she also gave me valuable feedback on some of the more controversial sections which follow. Series co-editor Andrè Lefevere's unique interest in translation theory and his incisive suggestions made the entire publication process pleasurable. Publisher Janice Price supported the project from its earliest stage through to its final form.

Most importantly, Janet Gentzler Studer and Marianne Gentzler provided love and affection throughout the writing process. Megan Gentzler's love, creativity, and companionship renewed my energy during critical phases. And finally, my gratitude for Jenny Spencer's love, intellectual engagement, and unwavering confidence, extends beyond words.

Preface to the Revised Edition

As I write this preface to the second edition of *Contemporary Translation Theories*, first published in 1993, I ask myself who would have thought eight years ago that the field would have grown in such a manner? Then few scholars were thinking about translation phenomena other than in the fairly traditional source-text, translated-text binary approach. In the last few years, new theories have exploded in the field of translation - cultural studies theories, feminist theories, new linguistic theories, postcolonial theories, and deconstructive theories abound. In fact, there are now so many theories that no one theorist, or one book, can possibly keep up with them all. St. Jerome Press founded a new series appropriately titled "Translation Theories Explained" to help scholars and students in the field.

Ironically, when it was first published, this book was initially criticized for including too many theories; many scholars in the field felt that this proliferation in theory was a passing phenomenon. Today, the book may appear to be theoretically limited, covering, as it does, a mere five approaches. As the field continues to grow with new scholars from different countries and different linguistic and cultural traditions conducting research, additional theories will begin to emerge, further complicating the map. With the collapse of the Soviet empire, the opening of China, the emergence of the developing world, and the increased empowerment of ethnic communities within larger countries, translation activity is on the rise everywhere. Yet the cultural conditions surrounding those communities are so varied, and the economic and social situations so diverse, that the strategies for translation are correspondingly divergent. If we have learned anything in translation studies over the past eight years, it is that the old theories and models do not necessarily apply. The translator of Viking sagas has different goals and different audiences in mind from those of the translator of Latin American women poets. The Cambodian refugee groups adjusting to life in the West have different needs and priorities than the North American businessmen trying to reach buyers in the European Union. Perhaps we should not be surprised that the methods and the strategies for translation are so different.

How could we have predicted this explosion? In the late 1980s, when I first began studying translation, the field was trying to set itself free from the dominance of the source-text oriented theories. Having traced the

primary theories that gave the first heave breaking that stranglehold i.e., the North American translation workshop, the "science" of translation, early translation studies, polysystem theory, and deconstruction even I could not envision the explosion to follow. Indeed, when I wrote the book, many of my colleagues felt that I would never find a publisher for a book that only dealt with translation theory. Instead, the book immediately sold out, and interest has steadily grown. I am deeply gratified that developments in the field have more than borne out the ideas presented in *Contemporary Translation Theories* better than I could have possible argued at the time.

Indeed, in rereading the book today, I feel as if it has held up rather well. Despite the huge movements in the field, *Contemporary Translation Theories* still offers a valuable historical and critical overview of the events that were primarily responsible for opening up the field. It is not that the ideas presented did not create their own sets of controversies. In fact, each chapter generated its own set of critics. Scholars who were part of the early translation studies group claimed I had mischaracterized many events in my overview in Chapter 4. When I asked them for documentation pointing out my errors, they claimed that while few published articles exist, private conversations had taken place during the early years that were important to the field's development and upon which I had not commented. Polysystem theorists perhaps took the most issue regarding my claims of the limitations of their approach, but in general, over the years, an increasing number of scholars tend to share my dissatisfaction with the hierarchical nature of their theory and their propensity to generalize based upon little data. In fact, the least controversial chapter in terms of the book's reception, the one on deconstruction, was the one that I had assumed would be the most controversial. Yet many scholars, especially younger ones, were clearly interested in the deconstruction's possibilities and seemed to welcome this contribution.

In addition to creating controversies in the respective branches of the field, many scholars wrote me to say that the biggest failure of the book was that it did not include their theory scholars from Finland felt ignored; scholars from Germany felt short-shrifted; and scholars from China felt excluded. This book, however, was never intended to provide a quantitative overview; to do so would have required a much bigger book and a much more superficial treatment of each theory covered. Translation theory is not easy; rather, it involves complex theories of meaning and complex social forces creating numerous barriers, in

addition to the already prohibitive linguistic ones. For me as a theorist to adequately represent and then critically assess the theories chosen necessitated limiting the number of theories included. I chose to discuss five of the most important ones at the time; and I still think that those five do reflect innovations crucial to the young field's development.

For a second edition, questions remain whether I should revise my arguments in light of the respective critiques, or add new chapters to reflect those not included in the first edition. It is true that in the last decade the study of translation has changed dramatically, with new methods, theories, case studies, and interdisciplinary connections. We have seen new journals, new books series, new academic programs, and a plethora of conference activity all over the globe. This conference, publishing, and training activity reflects the dynamic and evolving nature of the field, and it would be impossible to capture this sheer breadth in any one volume, even more difficult today than eight years ago. There are several encyclopedias now available or in press, including the *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies* (1998), *The Encyclopedia of Literary Translation into English* (2000), and *Übersetzung, Translation, Traduction: Ein internationales Handbuch zur Übersetzungsforschung* (forthcoming), which provide a fine overview of the myriad of approaches now available.

Rather, I have decided to not over-react to the vast changes in the field and instead to leave the book largely intact. If I were to rewrite the book today, I might change the style slightly; some of the arguments presented are articulated in a more antagonistic tone than perhaps necessary. Yet I have decided to leave in my original voice, for I feel that it reflected the tenor of the times. In the early days of translation theory, multiple theories simply did not exist. The goal at the time, and which, despite the prevailing evidence, continues to be the goal of some scholars today, was to establish one general theory of translation that would hold across cultures and languages. My confrontational voice, be it generational or political, also reflected the urgency of the period, and is reflected and often shared by other authors who participated in the field's growth. That voice is also, I would like to think, a part of a chorus of new voices that continue to push the margins of translation theory today.

This second edition has allowed me to correct typos and errors of fact, and to update sections to reflect new developments within the specific areas. Occasionally, I moderated my voice when I felt it led to a distortion of the ideas presented by any individual scholar those changes have been surprisingly few. The end of each chapter has been updated to

reflect new publications by the scholars being discussed in the respective chapters. Lawrence Venuti's critique of North American literary translation from *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995) has been added to Chapter 2; the discussion of functionalist approaches has been expanded in Chapter 3; Theo Herman's reflections on early translation studies from *Translation in Systems* (1999) have been added to Chapter 4; Gideon Toury's revised theory in *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995) has been incorporated in Chapter 5; postcolonial theories by Tejaswini Niranjani and Gayatri Spivak have been included in Chapter 6. And, as might be expected, I have revised the final chapter on the "Future of Translation Studies," for the future contains a host of possibilities that could not have been foreseen at the time. I have also updated the bibliography correspondingly to reflect new developments in the field.

The second edition thus stands both as a continuing critical engagement with some of the most important theories in the field and as a historical record of the changes that led to the proliferation of theory of recent. For those students of translation, the analysis and the historical record should prove equally valuable. The most gratifying letters and email messages that I have received from over the years have been from translation teachers and their students who have used the book successfully and who have benefited from gaining a larger overview of the multiple developments in the field. The book has been translated admirably into Italian as *Teorie della traduzione: Tendenze contemporanee* (1998) by Maria Teresa Musacchio, a version in Persian is in press, and there are discussions for additional translations of this second edition. The book has been surprisingly popular among young scholars, and it is to you this second edition is primarily dedicated. For scholars from other fields who are just turning to translation theory for the first time, this book will review several significant theories of the past three decades and offer a critical assessment of how translation theory might contribute to ongoing discussions of the philosophy of language, of how meaning travels and is received, and of how extra-linguistic factor such as churches, nation-states, schools, and publishing firms are involved in shaping cross-cultural communication. I hope you enjoy it.

Before closing, I wish to extend my sincere thanks to my hosts at the schools to which I have been invited to make presentations, during which many of the ideas for the new sections of the second edition were initially formulated, especially Susan Bassnett at the University of

Warwick, Theo Hermans at the University College London, Christina Schaefner at Aston University, John Milton at the University of São Paulo, Neusa da Silva Matte at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Rosemary Arrojo at Campinas University, Else Vieira and Adriana Pagano at the Federal University of Minas Gerais, Sherry Simon at Concordia University, and Marilyn Gaddis Rose at the State University of New York Binghamton, for their hospitality and for the engagement with the ideas. Special thanks go to Lee Edwards, Dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, for her vision of translation studies within the academy and my colleagues in the Comparative Literature Department at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, in particular Maria Tymoczko, for their commitment to translation and for feedback on many of the ideas that follow. I wish to thank my staff at the Translation Center at the University of Massachusetts, especially Shawn Lindholm, for assuming many of my duties to enable me to write. Finally, for the love and support of my daughter Megan and my wife Jenny, my continued gratitude.

Edwin Gentzler
Amherst, Massachusetts
February 2001

Chapter 1
Introduction

"Translation Theory" is and is not a new field; though it has existed only since 1983 as a separate entry in the *Modern Language Association International Bibliography*, it is as old as the tower of Babel. Some literary scholars claim never to have heard of it as a subject in and of itself; others, who may themselves translate, claim to know all that they need to know. Anyone working "monolinguistically" may purport no need for translation theory; yet translation inheres in every language by its relationships to other signifying systems both past and present. Although considered a marginal discipline in academia, translation theory is central to anyone interpreting literature; in an historical period characterized by the proliferation of literary theories, translation theory is becoming increasingly relevant to them all.

What is "contemporary translation theory"? Roman Jakobson breaks the field down into three areas: *intralingual* translation, a rewording of signs in one language with signs from the same language; *interlingual* translation, or the interpretation of signs in one language with signs from another language (translation "proper"); and *intersemiotic* translation, or the transfer ("transmutation") of the signs in one language to non-verbal sign systems (from language into art or music). All of Jakobson's fields mutually reinforce each other, and, accepting this definition, one can easily see how translation theory can quickly enmesh the student in the entire intersemiotic network of language and culture, one touching on all disciplines and discourses. I will be concerned mostly with the second aspect of Jakobson's definition – *interlingual* translation – but I hope to demonstrate as well that such isolation is impossible, and that even translation "proper" entails multiple linguistic, literary, and cultural aspects.

In recent years, translation theory has exploded with new developments. George Steiner characterized the history of translation theory until Jakobson as a continual rehashing of the same formal (consistent with the form of the original) versus free (using innovative forms to simulate the original's intent) theoretical distinction. "Modern" translation theory, like current literary theory, begins with structuralism and reflects the proliferation of the age. The following chapters focus on just five different approaches to translation that began in the mid-sixties

and continue to be influential today: (1) the North American translation workshop; (2) the "science" of translation; (3) early translation studies; (4) polysystem theory; and (5) deconstruction.

Given the marginal status of translation theory within literary studies, I have assumed that the reader has had little previous exposure to the theories presented here. The investigations themselves differ greatly, a fact reflected in the terminology specific to each field as well as in the ideas themselves. Literary translators, for example, distance themselves from the "jargon" of linguistic approaches; deconstructionists subvert the very "scientific" terminology demanded by semioticians; and the aggressive rhetoric of the deconstructionists alienates scholars from many of the other fields. Of necessity, each of the following chapters conforms in a gradual way to the preferred terminology within the branch of study, for certain ideas are dependent upon the terms used to describe them.

In addition to terminological differences, however, other barriers have impeded the exchange of ideas among scholars of various approaches. Despite the fact that proponents of "new" approaches such as translation studies have been developing their ideas and publishing their data for over two decades, their ideas remain foreign to more traditionally based approaches. Euro-American translators, for example, generally resist the suggestion that institutional manipulation influences translation. Translation studies scholars do not relish the idea that their meticulously collected data may be interpreted by deconstructionists to reveal multiple gaps and literary repression rather than systematic literary evolution. Interdisciplinary translation conferences have been held, but many incompatabilities remain; one of the purposes of this study is to show how such problems in communication and exchange are grounded in the differing theoretical assumptions of each approach.

An attempt has also been made to read symptomatically, to look at the "discourse" of the given text, and to point out what can and cannot be said given the philosophical premises of the scholar. For example, after reviewing Eugene Nida's religious presuppositions and missionary goals, I find that his adoption of a deep structure/surface structure model derived from "modern" linguistics as a base upon which to found his "science" highly suspect. What he means by "deep" structure – something vague and related to the Word of God – and what Noam Chomsky intended – again, something vague, but related to innate structures of the human brain – are two different concepts. Often the theoretical assumptions are less overt than those of Nida, but still can be

discerned by the terminology, rhetoric, and style chosen by a particular scholar. Thus when early translation studies scholars adopt concepts such as "literariness," "estrangement," "primary," and "secondary," I find the terms themselves reveal assumptions about the hierarchical nature of a culture. While such terms may help the translation scholar articulate the way translations function in a society, they may also serve to inhibit the nature of the investigation.

Given this methodology, original sources have proven more valuable than the secondary literature, most of which comes from "outside" a translation-oriented or even a comparative discipline, or, in other words, from within the particular discipline – be it literary theory, linguistics, or philosophy. Instead, by returning to the "original" source, I can analyze not just what the text explicitly says, but also what it does *not* say or says only by implication. For example, when Jonas Zdanys, Translation Workshop Director at Yale, says that he avoids "predetermined aesthetic theories" and then later talks about his commitment to "creative solitude," or, even more revealingly, talks about his hoping to convert a linguistics student to his beliefs, I suggest that he has his own predetermined yet unspoken agenda. Or when I. A. Richards first argues in *Practical Criticism* that he is looking for a new theory allowing individuals to discover themselves and to discover new methods, and then turns around, dismisses the varied responses of his students as errors, and argues that the goal also is to achieve "perfect understanding" and a unified and correct response, I suggest his argument is less than consistent.

Some of the "precursors"' work may or may not have been intended for translation. Richards, for example, was clearly teaching students techniques for learning the English canon, yet translation workshops in the United States use New Critical methods to interpret and evaluate translations. Richards's approach – whether consciously or unconsciously – remains at the heart of classroom. Chomsky did not intend his model to be used for translation, but Nida and Wolfram Wilss – director of a translation institute in Saarbrücken – incorporated, correctly or incorrectly, aspects of Chomsky's model in their work, and thus the translation scholar must ask those hard questions regarding the suitability of a particular model for translation theory. Others have spoken directly to issues of translation. Late Russian Formalists such as Jurij Tynjanov and Roman Jakobson allowed for translation as well as other cultural phenomena in their theory of art, but infrequently expanded upon specifics. Questions regarding the nature of translation

are always underlying the movement of the thought driving Heidegger's and Derrida's work, and thus color a subsequent generation of "scholars." Yet in many ways some of Derrida's terminology seems dated in light of recent translation theory – such as his reference to the "impossibility" of translation – and the translation studies scholar must point out the progress which has been made.

In general, I am greatly encouraged by developments in the field of "modern" translation theory. The focus in translation investigation is shifting from the abstract to the specific, from the deep underlying hypothetical forms to the surface of texts with all their gaps, errors, ambiguities, multiple referents, and "foreign" disorder. These are being analyzed – and not by standards of equivalent/inequivalent, right/wrong, good/bad, and correct/incorrect. Such standards imply notions of substantialism that limit other possibilities of translation practice, marginalize unorthodox translation, and impinge upon real intercultural exchange. As is true in literary theory in general, a revaluation of our standards is well underway, and within the field of translation theory substantialist notions are already beginning to dissipate (though no doubt they will die slowly). For literary history, translation case studies are already proving a valuable resource showing how cultural ideology directly influences specific literary decisions. For literary theory, this may very well be an exciting time of renewed study of *actual* texts from a new discipline, which can only help us gain increased insight into not only the nature of translation, but the nature of language and (international) communication as well. Yet, my optimism is tempered by the feeling that all the translation theories discussed in this text reflect certain values and aesthetic assumptions about literature as understood by Western critics. As the translation theories outlined in this book become more and more complex, they seem to gain more and more support from academia, which, in turn, also enhances their power to exclude.

Chapter 2
The North American Translation Workshop

In many academic circles in North America, literary translation is still considered secondary activity, mechanical rather than creative, neither worthy of serious critical attention nor of general interest to the public. Translators, too, frequently lament the fact that there is no market for their work and that what does get published is immediately relegated to the margins of academic investigation. Yet a closer analysis of the developments over the last four decades reveals that in some circles literary translation has been drawing increasing public and academic interest.

In the early sixties, there were no translation workshops at institutions of higher learning in the United States. Translation was a marginal activity at best, not considered by academia as a proper field of study in the university system. In his essay "The State of Translation," Edmund Keeley, director of translation workshops first at Iowa and later at Princeton, wrote, "In 1963 there was no established and continuing public forum for the purpose: no translation centres, no associations of literary translators as far as I know, no publications devoted primarily to translations, translators, and their continuing problems" (Keeley, 1981:11; qtd. by Weissbort, 1983: 7). In this environment, Paul Engle, Director of the Writers' Workshop at the University of Iowa, gave the first heave; arguing that creative writing knows no national boundaries, he expanded the Creative Writing Program to include international writers. In 1964 Engle hired a full-time director for what was the first translation workshop in the United States and began offering academic credit for literary translations. The following year the Ford Foundation conferred a $150,000 grant on the University of Texas at Austin toward the establishment of the National Translation Center. Also in 1965, the first issue of *Modern Poetry in Translation*, edited by Ted Hughes and Daniel Weissbort, was published, providing literary translators a place for their creative work. In 1968, the National Translation Center published the first issue of *Delos*, a journal devoted to the history as well as the aesthetics of translation. Literary translation had established a place, albeit a small one, in the production of American culture.

The process of growth and acceptance continued in the seventies. Soon translation courses and workshops were being offered at several

universities – Yale, Princeton, Columbia, Iowa, Texas, and State University of New York, Binghamton among them. Advanced degrees were conferred upon students for creative, historical, and theoretical work in the field of literary translation. This, in turn, led to the establishment of the professional organization American Literary Translators Association (ALTA) in the late seventies as well as the founding of the journal *Translation* for that organization. By 1977, the United States government lent its authority to this process with the establishment of the National Endowment of the Humanities grants specifically for literary translations. For a while in the late seventies and early eighties, it looked as if the translation workshop would follow the path of creative writing, also considered at one time a non-academic field, and soon be offered at as many schools as had writing workshops.

But despite the increase in translation activity and its gaining of limited institutional support in the sixties and seventies, the process of growth plateaued. Many assumptions about the secondary status of the field remained. Today, while many universities offer advanced degrees in creative writing, comparatively few offer academic credit for literary translation. One reason is surely the monolinguistic nature of the culture. However, such typecasting is also due to socio-economic motives: labeling translations as derivative serves to reinforce an existing status quo, one that places primary emphasis not on the process but on the pursuit and consumption of "original" meaning. The activity of translation represents a process antithetical to certain reigning literary beliefs, hence its relegation to marginal status within educational and economic institutions and its position in this society as part of a counter-cultural movement.

Indeed, during the sixties and early seventies, the practice of literary translation became heavily involved in representations of alternate value systems and views of reality. While not taken seriously by academics, sales of translated literary texts enjoyed unprecedented highs on the open market. Perhaps no one articulated the political urgency and popular attraction of literary translations during this period better than Ted Hughes:

> That boom in the popular sales of translated modern poetry was without precedent. Though it reflected only one aspect of the wave of mingled energies that galvanized those years with such extremes, it was fed by almost all of them – Buddhism, the mass craze of Hippie ideology, the revolt of the young, the Pop music of the

> Beatles and their generation … That historical moment might well be seen as … an unfolding from inwards, a millennial change in the Industrial West's view of reality. (Hughes, 1983: 9)

For Hughes, the translation boom of the sixties was simply one aspect of a generational movement that articulated itself in a variety of media. While his view of translation as anti-establishment may not have been true of all translation during this period, it did hold true for a large and influential group of contemporary American poets actively translating at the time: Robert Lowell, Robert Bly, W.S. Merwin, Gary Snyder, Denise Levertov, Galway Kinnell, Elizabeth Bishop, W.D. Snodgrass, and Lawrence Ferlinghetti, among the most important. These poets not only rebelled against traditional literary institutions, but also against the national and international policies of their government and Western society in general. A decade later, in the Foreword to *Writing from the World II* (1985), an anthology of literary translations from the late seventies and early eighties, Paul Engle summed up the socially active, politically urgent cause of translation in the contemporary world as follows:

> As this world shrinks together like an aging orange and all peoples in all cultures move closer together (however reluctantly and suspiciously) it may be that the crucial sentence for our remaining years on earth may be very simply:
>
> TRANSLATE OR DIE.
>
> The lives of every creature on the earth may one day depend on the instant and accurate translation of one word. (Engle & Engle, 1985: 2)

The translation workshop premise

Despite the surge of popular interest in literary translation and the raising of important questions regarding the theoretical nature of language by North American literary critics during the past several decades, few have paused to make connections between the two practices. One explanation for this lack of critical attention may be attributed to the "atheoretical" premises of those practicing and teaching translation as revealed in the numerous prefaces and introductions to texts containing translations. An essay by Jonas Zdanys of the Yale translation workshop illustrates the problem. In "Teaching Translation:

Some Notes Toward a Course Structure" (1987), Zdanys talks about his initial ambivalence about teaching literary translation because he feels this creative process cannot be taught. He then overcomes his reluctance and agrees to do so, hoping to attract literature students interested in "exploring the theoretical and the practical aspects of poetic translation" (Zdanys, 1987: 10). Zdanys proceeds to review the course, the books taught, the structure of the seminar, and its successes, emphasizing especially the enjoyment of the poems and the students' translations. The article concludes with Zdanys changing his mind about the inappropriateness of teaching translation, arguing instead that the art of translation not only can be taught, but also can make the student more aware of aspects of poetry, language, aesthetics, and interpretation.

Zdynas's notes seem characteristic of prevailing assumptions regarding the teaching of translation in the United States. He shares the assumption that creative writing cannot be taught, that creative talent is something one is born with. Such a belief plagued creative writing for years before it was accepted as an university discipline. Secondly, Zdanys reveals a prejudice for teaching students how to enjoy the original poem, one that is in keeping with New Critical tenets. His conclusion is not altogether surprising – although he argues against conventional wisdom that translation can be taught at the university, he does it not for reasons Ted Hughes suggested – that it may lead to a change in the way the West views reality – but because it reinforces a fairly conservative humanistic ideology. This is nowhere better revealed than in a contradiction within the essay regarding the theoretical basis of the course. On the one hand, Zdynas hopes the course will attract students interested in theoretical questions; on the other hand, he argues that he himself opposes the restraints of "predetermined aesthetic theories." In addition, without telling us why, Zdanys says that "this essay unfortunately cannot consider" the contribution of deconstruction to the field, although, ironically, Yale itself houses numerous such critics who are in fact part of the same department (a special interdepartmental program) in which the course was offered. Despite claims to the contrary, Zdanys reveals the aesthetic predispositions that underlie his approach:

> Although I am not yet ready to surrender my commitment to creative solitude, I do believe that discussions of the various theoretical essays, the careful readings of original poems, first drafts, and finished translations, and the consideration of the various aspects of translation made workshop participants more fully aware of the

> dynamic process that is literature. By the end of the course, students certainly had a richer understanding of literary complexity. (Zdanys, 1987: 11)

Zdanys clearly finds translation a subjective activity, subsuming translation under the larger goal of interpreting literature. His argument that the study of translation can lead to a qualitative "richer" understanding reveals the humanistic agenda. His goal is more clearly disclosed in a section of the same essay in which he talks about the presence of a female linguistics student who, despite Zdanys's "initial misgivings" about what she might contribute to the seminar, actually brought a "valuable and intriguing" perspective to the aesthetic process he was teaching. Zdanys contradicts his stated premise – a rejection of predetermined aesthetic theories – when he concludes that although her approach was a "refreshing" addition to the course, he "secretly hopes" that he "converted" her during the course. The lingering question is "converted her to what?"

That unarticulated "what" is the topic I wish to address in this chapter. Scholars associated with the North American translation workshop premise tend to claim that their approach is not theoretically preconditioned; this chapter attempts to formulate the *non-dit* present in their works, to analyze those underlying assumptions, and to show how they either reinforce the existing literary edifices or offer a counterclaim that deserves further consideration. Through this approach, I hope to show that the translation workshop approach actually does both, i.e., simultaneously reinforces and subverts, and that this dual activity, necessarily operative because of the methodology, is in itself a contribution to the ongoing investigation of not only translation phenomena, but of language in general.

I.A. Richards: New Criticism and translation

If there is one text which best exemplifies the theory of the practice-oriented workshop approach to translation, it is I.A. Richards's *Practical Criticism* (1929). The precursor to both the creative writing workshop and the translation workshop, I.A. Richards's first reading workshop took place at Harvard in the late 1920s. Richards's famous experiment was to give his best Harvard undergraduates thirteen poems from authors ranging from Shakespeare to Ella Wheeler Wilcox. The students received poems with no further information (no title, author's name, or biographical information) and had one week to respond, after which

Richards collected the "protocols." Richards's aims were threefold: (1) to introduce a new kind of documentation into contemporary American culture; (2) to provide a new technique for individuals to discover for themselves what they think about poetry; and (3) to discover new educational methods. With an approach that cut both the student and the text off from society, Richards hoped to introduce new documentation supporting his aesthetic beliefs: that a unified "meaning" exists and can be discerned and that a unified evaluative system exists by which the reader can judge the value of that "meaning."

How does Richards's reading workshop of the twenties relate to today's translation workshop? First, both introduce new documentation into the culture, often the responses of the not yet fully formed literary critic. As Zdanys's article above indicates, subsequent translation workshops followed Richards's precedent, taking pride in the fact that their students did not yet have any predetermined methodology. While this freedom from constraint may seem to allow a "truer" investigation of the process of translation, in practice, for Richards's and subsequent translation projects in institutions of higher education, the effect is simply that students conform to the existing tastes and prejudices of those in control of the literary institutions. Secondly, although Richards's emphasis on the individuals' "discovering themselves" may seem magnanimous as well as democratic, it was not without a hidden humanist agenda. Richards's approach *appeared* open to multiple interpretations, to readings that were liberating, individual, and potentially anti-establishment as well as to those reinforcing traditional interpretation. In fact, the aim of his project was exactly the opposite: to establish new educational techniques that would lead to "perfect understanding" of the text and result in a unified and correct response. In his actual workshop, Richards did not seek variable responses, but rather unified solutions to communication problems, generating rules and principles by which individual interpretations could be made and properly judged:

> The whole apparatus of critical rules and principles is a means to the attainment of finer, more precise, more discriminating communication … When we have solved, completely, the communication problem, when we have got, perfectly, the experience, *the mental condition* relevant to the poem, we still have to judge it, still to decide upon its worth. (Richards, 1929: 11)

Such a model presumed a primary poetic experience that can be exactly and completely communicated to another person, if one were properly educated. The evaluation of the poem was similarly determined, again by the consensus of those whose trained abilities allowed them to see the light and judge accordingly. Evaluative power settled into the hands of the elite, revealing Richards's didactic goals only too clearly: Richards's Harvard students learned to think and judge exactly the way he did. At one point, Richards argued that the deficiencies in the protocol writers were not "defects" in the human mind, but "mistakes" that could have been avoided with better training (Richards, 1929: 309).

Structurally, the translation workshop methodology has adopted certain aspects of Richards's reading workshop. First, the attempt to discover rules and principles that help attain a finer, "more discriminating" communication is followed, the only difference being that translation workshop participants try to generate reading *and* writing rules. Secondly, the same goal – that of achieving primary experience and rearticulating it – exists, the only difference being the media in which that experience is expressed. Literary translation in America is often viewed as a form of close reading – some argue the closest form. Perfect rearticulation of the experience in a perfect interpretation/translation is the goal. Richards's summary of the aim of his reading workshop might equally hold true for the translation workshop: "A perfect understanding would involve not only an accurate direction of thought, a correct evocation of feeling, an exact apprehension of tone and a precise recognition of intention, but further it would get these contributory meanings in their right order" (Richards, 1929: 332).

Thus far from being new, i.e., something unique and different that individuals, given their different backgrounds and ideological presuppositions, can bring to a text, Richards's reading model posits a unified "meaning" right where it was traditionally assumed to be, in a "precise recognition of [the author's] intention." Richards assumed *a fortiori* that readers can understand precisely what the author said, and that via interpretation they can recover that same meaning. It should come as no surprise that in *Practical Criticism*, Richards advocated a very stringent educational regime – increasing homework, improving maturity, controlling stock responses, and safeguarding readers from their own preconceptions – through which reading problems could be solved and consensus attained. The argument that initially appeared so democratic – teaching students to think for themselves–turned into a

condemnation of the American educational system. René Wellek, writing in *A History of Modern Criticism: 1750–1950*, argues that Richards's solution failed because of its "highly concealed dogmas" and that his conclusions, based upon the "anarchic" variety of readers' responses, are "absurd" (Wellek, 1986: 229). Richards believed that the reader of good poetry was more valuable to society than one who did not read, and his political values got confused with his literary practice, resulting in a theory that posited the possibility of a perfect reader who could recover the author's original meaning. Far from offering anything new, Richards's approach actually reinforced conservative literary institutions and political structures.

In addition to his well-known contribution to American criticism of this century, Richards also made a foray into the field of translation theory. In "Toward a Theory of Translating," published in 1953, Richards refined his theory of meaning while discussing how one should compare translations to original texts. His initial project, attempting to resolve problems inhibiting perfect understanding, had been made increasingly problematic in light of three decades of theoretical inquiry, influenced largely by the theories of relativity and referentiality. Richards was not untouched by evolving critical theory:

> How can one compare a sentence in English poetry with one (however like it) in English prose? Or indeed any two sentences, or the same sentence, in different settings? What is synonymy?* A proliferous literature of critical and interpretive theory witnesses to the difficulty. It seems to have been felt more and more in recent decades. (Richards, 1953: 249, footnote in original)
>
> *See, e.g., Willard V.O. Quine, "Two Dogmas of Empiricism," *Philosophical Review*, 60 (1951).

Richards noted Quine after "synonymy" because meaning and its translation within one language or across two languages had become increasingly problematic for literary critics. For Quine and the Anglo-American philosophical tradition, the problem of synonymy – equating identity with semantic exactness – extended beyond the laws of logic.

A few years later in *Word and Object* (1960), Quine would use translation to demonstrate the complexity and indeterminacy of language. In the preface he wrote, "Language is a social art. In acquiring it we have to depend entirely on intersubjectively available cues as to what to say and when. Hence there is no justification for collating linguistic meanings" (Quine, 1960: ix). In the chapter "Translation and

Meaning," Quine switched to translation to make "more realistically" what was often an abstract point when viewing languages monolinguistically. He introduced the "scope" for "empirically unconditioned variation" by citing the example, "two men could be just alike in all their dispositions to verbal behavior under all possible sensory stimulations, and yet the meanings or ideas expressed in their identically triggered and identically sounded utterances could diverge radically" (Quine, 1960: 26). Quine's conclusion directly contradicted any theory of translation based upon notions of equivalence:

> Manuals for translating one language into another can be set up in divergent ways, all compatible with the totality of speech dispositions, yet incompatible with one another. In countless places they will diverge in giving, as their respective translations of a sentence of the one language, sentences of the other language which stand to each other in no plausible sort of equivalence however loose. (Quine, 1960: 27)

The problems of referentiality and indeterminacy have historically troubled translation theory, making positions calling for a one-to-one transfer approach and methods revolving around a decoding and recoding process increasingly difficult to hold. Richards, who had hoped to discover the laws revealing literary meaning, found late in life that the quantity of different interpretations and different translations had actually undermined his project. Decades after *Practical Criticism*, Richards decided that the reason his initial project did not succeed was that the fields of comparison within the process of translation were too broad and permitted unlimited speculation. His solution in "Toward a Theory of Translating" became one of narrowing the field and choosing the right methodology for the relevant purpose. He believed that if translators were to agree on their purpose (as practicing literary translators ought to), then the appropriate methodology would not be difficult to determine:

> In the concrete, in the minute particulars of practice, these comparison-fields are familiar enough … All we have to do is to arrange, in a schema as parsimonious as adequacy will allow, a body of experience so common that if the purposing of our arrangement could be agreed on, there might be little we would then differ about. (Richards, 1953: 252–3)

Despite revision, Richards's initial premises remain intact: he still believed that the field consists of texts containing a primary "body of experience" that (an elite few) readers could discern; with the proper training, a consensus could be reached regarding what that experience might be. He could not rid himself of the urge to reduce all differences of interpretation to a single response.

Such a premise allowed Richards to sketch an encoder/decoder communication model similar to those used by communication theorists. Richards's diagram was slightly more complex, dividing the original message into seven components, all of which carry meaning and require decoding. Richards argued that the translator should not only be aware that a sign (I) indicates some thing; but that it also (II) characterizes (says the same thing or something new about things); (III) realizes (presents with varying degrees of vividness); (IV) values; (V) influences (desires change); (VI) connects; and (VII) purposes (attempts to persuade) (Richards, 1953: 252–3). Swearing, as an example of his component IV, places value on something in addition to indicating something. Thus "meaning" for Richards had grown to be something very complex, having both implicit and explicit aspects. For example, under "realizing" he allowed "what is highly realized may be distinct, explicitly structured, detailed, definite in most of the senses of this strategic word. But it may equally well be very indefinite." In addition, the converse may be true: "On the other hand, many devices – from headlines to the routines of the dispatch editor and commentator – reduce the reality of what is presented" (Richards, 1953: 257). Richards was fully aware that signs are never devoid of attempts to persuade.

Yet, despite Richards's revisions and his understanding of complex categories of meaning inherent in every message, his theoretical premises remained largely the same. Richards's 1953 model was specifically tailored for the translator who aimed to arrive at the "proper" translation. Richards was aware that the idea of achieving a unified reading was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain, given the fact that theories of relativity had been introduced into the theoretical framework of twentieth-century literary investigation. While the question motivated this particular essay on translation, in the end it remains unresolved. On the one hand, Richards admitted in the essay that the translation process "may very probably be the most complex type of event yet produced in the evolution of the cosmos" (Richards, 1953: 250). On the other hand, he argued that translators, with proper education and practice, can come to know the proper methodology to achieve the

correct understanding of the primary text. Despite allowances made for complexity, the model was still one that suggested that the original message could be properly decoded and then recoded into another language. Richards still maintained that the literary scholar could develop rules as a means of solving a communication problem, arrive at perfect understanding, and correctly reformulate that particular message.

Had Richards presented such a complex model in the thirties, it would have been a *tour deforce* in the field; presented when it was, the essay read as a desperate play to retain power within the institution in light of new theoretical developments, and indicates that the time was ripe for new insights. The closing argument was most revealing:

> We are guardians, IV [valuers], and subject therefore to the paradox of government: that we must derive our powers, in one way or another, from the very forces which we have to do our best to control. Translation theory has not only to work for better mutual comprehension between users of diverse tongues; more central still in its purposing is a more complete viewing of itself and of the Comprehending which it should serve. (Richards, 1953: 261)

Aware that he derived his power from controlling the criticism of literature, Richards attempted to make translation theory subservient to the larger goal of "Comprehending" in the New Critical sense. And he was successful at accomplishing this goal. With the dissemination of the Harvard project students throughout the American university system, New Criticism became the most prevalent approach for decades.

Language, however, did not yield to such controlling forces, a fact especially apparent in the field of translation. Instead of establishing a set of rules that subjugated the text to a limited and unified interpretation and "complete viewing," the actual translations tended to open up new ways of seeing and subverted fixed ways of seeing. Despite all the education and proper training in the right methodologies, research has shown that if one gives two workshop translators the same text, what evolves are two different translations. New texts are constantly emerging that are neither identical to the original nor to other translations. Although Richards derived his power from language, he seems not to have understood the very entity from which his power came. If the North American translation workshop has shown anything, it is that the translated text seems to have a life of its own, responding not to the interpreter's set of rules, but to laws that are unique to the mode of translation itself.

Ezra Pound: Theory of luminous details

Unlike Richards's theory of proper translation, Ezra Pound's theory of translation focused upon the precise rendering of details, of individual words, and of single or even fragmented images. Rather than assuming the single, unified meaning of the whole work, Pound's "theory" was based upon a concept of energy in language; the words on the page, the specific details, were seen not simply as black and white typed marks on a page representing something else, but as sculpted images – words engraved in stone. Such an approach allowed for more latitude for an individual translator's response; the translator was seen as an artist, an engraver, or a calligrapher, one who molds words. While still one of the most influential, Pound is perhaps also the least understood translator and critic read by the current generation of translators in America. Pound's theoretical writings fall into two periods: an early imagist phase that, while departing from traditional forms of logic, still occasionally contained abstract concepts and impressions; and a second late imagist or vorticist phase that was based entirely on words in action and "luminous" details, in which the importance of the thing being represented recedes and the energy or the form language takes in the process of representing becomes more important.

The distinction between the two periods of Pound's theory was not created by Pound himself, who saw no such division, but by the critical reception of his work. Because Pound's earlier writings appeared romantic, his initial work on an imagist theory seemed metaphysical. However, as Amy Lowell and others began to appropriate his ideas and to turn imagism into something metaphysical – as a form of poetry symbolizing ideas – Pound felt the need to distance himself from the imagist movement. During this period, post-symbolism took on many forms; Pound felt that even Eliot, for example, never quite escaped symbolism. In his own poetry, Pound moved on to more and more direct speech, to capturing exact, even if miniature, details. His words referred to real objects – a painting, the pigment, a stone, a cut in the stone – and not to abstract concepts. To more precisely express his theory he moved on to "vorticism" and more radical articulations, many of which remain uncollected, still located in unanthologized articles in *New Age, BLAST*, and other now defunct magazines.

In his evolution from imagism to vorticism, Pound's thoughts about translation played a central role. Hugh Kenner in *The Pound Era* (1971) notes that in 1911 Pound began to think "of translation as a model for the

poetic art: blood brought to ghosts" (Kenner, 1971:150). Pound's theory of translation first appeared in a book on Arnaut Daniel, which unfortunately was never published and survives only in a series of twelve articles published in A.R. Orage's weekly *New Age* under the title of "I Gather the Limbs of Osiris." Osiris, when his scattered limbs are regathered, becomes not only the God of the Dead, but also the source of renewed life, the limbs' reunited energies reasserting themselves. A subheading to the articles told how Pound would use translations to illustrate the "New Method in Scholarship," which, according to Kenner, turns out to be a method of recapturing patterned energy and of articulating the "luminous detail," capable of giving sudden insight (Kenner, 1971:150–52). The first article of the "Osiris" series was called "A Translation from the Early Anglo-Saxon Text," Pound's translation of *The Seafarer*, and implicitly marked the beginning of vorticism (Pound, 1911–12:107). Pound's emphasis was less on the "meaning" of the translated text or even on the meaning of specific words. Instead, he emphasized the rhythm, diction, and movement of words. Unconscious associations, reverberations of sounds within words, and patterns of energies were used to re-energize in twentieth-century English the "original," or at least the earliest English poem. (The same technique would be used in the first Canto, Pound's translation of the beginning of Homer's *Odyssey.)* The ninth installment of the "Osiris" series was titled "On Technique" and contained the first reference to vortex. In it Pound talked about *words* as "electrified cones," words charged with "the power of tradition, of centuries of race consciousness, of agreement, of association" (Pound, 1911–12: 297; qtd. by Kenner, 1971: 238).

BLAST, an art magazine with reproductions of drawings, paintings, and sculpture, founded in the spring of 1914 by Wyndham Lewis, continued this line of thinking, and the vortex, a cone, and a wire, became the emblem for the journal. Vortex was understood as a form – or as an evolving system of forms or a system of energies – which revolved around a center (a person or a place) and which drew in whatever came near. Vortex was understood as a cluster of words, a network of words, brought together in a radiant node. In the first issue of *BLAST*, Pound defined the new approach by contrasting it with impressionism:

> The vortex is the point of maximum energy.… All experience rushes into this vortex. All the energized past, all the past that is living. … Impressionism, Futurism, which is only an accelerated sort of

> impressionism, DENY the vortex. … The vorticist relies not upon similarity or analogy, not upon likeness or mimicry.… An Image is that which presents an intellectual and emotional complex in an instant of time… Picasso, Kandinski, father and mother, classicism and romanticism of the movement. (Pound: 1914: 153–4)

In Pound's *Gaudier-Brzeska: A Memoir*, he tried to clarify the problems of the interpretation of what he meant by imagism. By "image" he meant "not an equation of mathematics, not something about *a, b*, and *c*, having to do with form, but about *sea, cliffs, night*, having something to do with mood." He continued, "The image is not an idea. It is a radiant node or cluster; it is what I can, and must perforce, call a VORTEX, from which, and through which, and into which, ideas are constantly rushing" (Pound, 1970a: 92).

The movement from early imagism to a theory about the energy of language is also much influenced by Pound's "reading" of Chinese ideograms. Pound received the Fenollosa manuscripts in 1913 and began his first translations of Li Po a year later. While it is true that at this time Pound could not read Chinese – Pound did not begin seriously studying Chinese characters until 1936 (Kenner, 1971:447) – he was well immersed in theoretical questions at the time and in the *culture* of the language he would translate. He had already read Giles's *History of Chinese Literature* and had rewritten some of Giles's translations (Kenner, 1971:194–5). His wife had found and purchased a set of Morrison's seven volume *Chinese–English Dictionary* (Kenner, 1971: 250). During this same 1913–14 period, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska was sculpting a bust of Pound, and the two were meeting regularly, not only discussing sculpture and theories of art, but also interpreting individual Chinese characters. After reading, for example, the 187th radical from Morrison's dictionary, which he read at Pound's apartment in London, Gaudier-Brzeska is quoted as saying, "Can't they see it's a horse?" (Kenner, 1971:250). The connection between Pound's articles in the vociferous, now defunct journals on sculpture and the plastic arts and the development of an ideogrammic method of translation was very close. Given his interest in sculpting as a means for releasing contours and energy in the raw material and his interest in poetry as a means of focusing on the energy of individual, concrete details, it should come as no surprise that he embraced the Chinese ideogram.

Theoretically for Pound, Chinese characters represented not meanings, not structures, but things, or more importantly, *things in action*, in

process, things with energy, their form. Words, according to Pound, were always seen in a network of relations; Anglo-American words were signs similar to Chinese characters –always capable of being compounded and capable of being metamorphosized. Just as Fenollosa was reacting to the tyranny of medieval logic (Kenner, 1971: 225), arguing that there is no verb "to be" in Chinese, so too was Pound *using* the Chinese in a cultural struggle to assail subject/object relations and static metaphysical distinctions that had paralyzed literary and academic discourse in the West. Compounding Pound's alienation was the fact that, at this time, all of Europe was at war and artists were serving on front lines, enough to shake anyone's belief in the rationality of Western modes of thinking. By 1915, Pound was writing his memoir of Gaudier-Brzeska, killed in the trenches in France.

Impressionism was a static, mimetic theory of art; imagism, while not intended as such, was being used similarly, much against Pound's conception. The essays on painting and sculpture, the essays on the ideogrammic methods, no less revealing of Pound's literary theory, were deliberately excluded from T.S. Eliot's anthology of Pound's *Literary Essays*. The wealth of criticism generated on Pound's literary theory is invariably based upon the early and easily accessible work, is influenced by Lowell's and Eliot's reception, and fits in better with prevailing aesthetic norms within the literary centers *(Poetry* magazine being just one) of the culture. Perhaps influenced by current trends in literary criticism, more recent scholarship has begun to recognize the breadth of Pound's work and is making connections to post-structuralist theories of language (Korn, 1983; Rabate, 1986).

For Pound, the precision and accuracy of the reference to material reality in art remained fundamental in both periods, but in the later theory the object being presented was substantially different. Pound's writing on translation and the translations themselves, often self-reflexive, best reveal his later theory on the energy of language. During the writing of *The Cantos*, Pound's languages ceased to be clearly distinguishable; English for him was merely part of an evolving Greek-Roman-Latin-Italian-French-Spanish-English language in which all meanings were interrelated. In *The Cantos*, Pound's theory of translation is as visible as his theory of art. He thinks not in terms of separable languages, but of a mesh or interweaving of words that bind people regardless of nationalities. The threads of language run back in time, and as one traces them back, variable connections can be made. Peoples are joined by varying continuities of speech. What was stable, in Pound's

mind, was not any unified meaning of any given word or theme across history, but the form *(forma)* in which language and object combine. Pound's ideas were not aimed at fixed things, but at things that can change. Material objects, accordingly, became viewed as charged with energies or strengths and existing in relation to or in opposition to other objects. Donald Davie in *Pound* (1975) cites images of wrestlers who tremble when they lock, of the rose pattern formed by the magnet from dead-iron filings, or of the waterspout or whirlpool swirling downwards as key "images" that express Pound's view of the beat or energy inherent in all material things (Davie, 1975: 66–7).

Given such a dynamic conception of ideas, the "meaning" of a work of art can also never be fixed; it changes as language changes. The range of associations of the words within an older work of art differ with its new reinscription in a different age or culture. Something happens to the entire repertoire preceding a translation in the process of its genesis. Language, according to such a view, seems to have a life of its own; a power to adapt, mutate, and survive that extends beyond theories such as Richards's, which attempt to capture it and explain its intricacies. In the section titled "language" of his essay "HOW TO READ" collected in *Polite Essays* (1937), Pound laid out the various ways in which "language is charged or energized." These were *melopoeia*, or the musical property, *phanopoeia*, or the visual property, and *logopoeia*, by far the most complex property, one that includes both the "direct meaning" and the "play" of the word in its context. Pound wrote:

> LOGOPOEIA, "the dance of the intellect among words", that is to say, it employs words not only for their direct meaning, but it takes count in a special way of habits of usage, of the context we *expect* to find with the word, its usual concomitants, of its known acceptances, and of ironical play. It holds the aesthetic content which is peculiarly the domain of verbal manifestation, and cannot possibly be contained in plastic or in music. It is the latest come, and perhaps most tricky and undependable mode. (Pound, 1937: 170)

This remarkable poststructuralist statement – foregrounding ironical play and the domain of verbal manifestation – not only gives rise to associations with Nietzsche's dancing star (Nietzsche, 1954:129) but also to resonances a word calls into play by its intertextual associations with a paradigm of meanings, habitual and otherwise. Pound further explicated this difficult concept by talking about translation: *melopoeia* is difficult to translate except a "half a line at a time"; *phanopoeia* can be translated

"almost, or wholly, intact"; and *logopoeia* "does not translate." Pound elaborated:

> *Logopoeia* does not translate; though the attitude of mind it expresses may pass through a paraphrase. Or one might say, you can *not* translate it "locally", but having determined the original author's state of mind, you may or may not be able to find a derivative or an equivalent. (Pound, 1937: 170–71)

The trouble in interpreting Pound's aesthetic begins here: was he talking about intuition, guessing the author's original intention, or something else? Pound may have been trying to determine and translate how a given word was used in a given historical situation, especially if the word was being used in a new or unconventional way. This quality of "making it new," of constructing new relations to other words at any particular place *and* time lends language its energy. Pound did not say intuit, but "determine" by studying the language, the time, the biography of the author, other texts by the same author and others during the period, the logic of categories of thought in another time and context, and by giving yourself over to that state of "mind." Then, he suggested, one needs to return to the present and try to create new relations, derived from the old, which reveal the logic of the other.

Thus Pound's theory of translation involves being both inside a tradition and outside any institutionalized logic. In order to understand the *logopoeia* of a text, the translator must understand the time, place, and ideological restrictions of the text being translated. Pound asks translators to allow themselves to be subjected by the mood, atmosphere, and thought processes of the text in time. Simultaneously, the mood and sensibility in time and place is to be transported to the present culture for the translation to become a contemporary text. The only way for this to happen without falling into "translatorese" is to create new connections in the present, to draw attention to the translator as a living and creating subject.

An example of a translation that creates new relations in contemporary culture is Pound's "Homage to Sextus Propertius," which has provoked strong emotional responses among Western scholars. Its reception has been dominated by those who favor "faithful" translation, who argue that Pound was incompetent and who document their position by the number of errors in the translation (Peachy & Lattimore, 1919; Graves, 1955), and by those who advocate "free" translation, arguing that Pound planted "howlers" on purpose and that he was translating something other than

the literal sense (Sullivan, 1964). In the case of "Homage to Sextus Propertius," however, what becomes clear is that neither position is remotely close to what Pound himself tried to articulate. Pound's text actually parodied the kind of flat, boring, awkward English which had become characteristic of the scholar's literal translation; according to Donald Davie, one of the meanings of the poem is how *not* to translate (Davie, 1975: 58). At the same time, Pound was not arguing for poetic license or freedom of interpretation; in fact, he vehemently opposed freedom from the form and meter of the source text. Pound *used* the classical text for his own purposes, i.e., to create new relations in the present. Certainly in "Homage" he accomplished that, ridiculing reigning translation theories of the educational and literary establishment and opening new avenues for appropriation of the classics.

While Pound's personal voice as found in "Homage" was interjected into other translations such as "The River Merchant's Wife," "The Seafarer," or the beginning of *The Odyssey* as it appears in Canto I, he was not necessarily being "unfaithful" to the original. Pound's indignation with Western scholars' cloudy conceptual notions, and his emphasis on concrete historical particulars within his theory of translation, can best be illustrated by his letters to W.H.D. Rouse, who was translating *The Odyssey* at the time of the correspondence. The letters reveal Pound's belief that not intuition, but knowledge of the language, history, and economics enables one to understand the classics: "Along with direct teaching of the language, is there any attempt to teach real history? 'Roman mortgages 6%, in Bithinya 12%'" (Pound, 1950: 262). He continues, "Until Latin teaching faces the economic fact in Latin history, it may as well leave out history." Pound believed that the real history had been covered up by the Western scholar. The "parroting" by the teachers, the "tushery" provided by "adorned" translations, obscured the classics and made them inaccessible by creating an elite class which had access to the ideas and whose job it became to pass on that knowledge. Pound was very aware of the socio-economic motives of the creation of this class of interpreters: "Granted the bulk of the sabotage and obstruction is economic and nothing else" (Pound, 1950:263). Rouse told the story that when he read his translations to small boys they understood every word, but when he adorned them, the children were bored. The adventure, the narration of Homer, was sacrificed at the expense of higher truths and beautified language. Rouse, with Pound's support, aimed at plain language, personal modesty, and narrative drive. Pound realized the difficulty Rouse had holding to his

principles, given the mythical status of Homer's story and the political implications for literary institutions if the classics were accessible to the entire population.

When Rouse deviated from his stated aims, Pound continually advised him to return to basics:

> Let's list the aims:
> 1. Real speech *in* the English version.
> 2. Fidelity to the original
>   a. meaning
>   b. atmosphere.
>
> (Pound, 1950: 263)

Although Pound used the term "fidelity" in a humanist/idealistic fashion, he broadened the concept to include "atmosphere" as well as original meaning. His term "atmosphere" referred to both contextual and intertextual associations. Pound clarified the importance of contextual relations in his vehement criticism of Rouse whenever he ceased to locate the words in history: "This first page of book two is *bad*. I mean it is just translation of words, without your imagining the scene and event *enough"* (Pound, 1950:271). Because words never exist out of context, the translator must at all times keep present in the imagination the context ("scene") and the expression in that context ("event"). According to Pound's translation theory, meaning is not something abstract and part of a universal language, but something that is always already located in historical flux – the "atmosphere" in which that meaning occurs. To unpack that meaning, one has to know the history and reconstruct the atmosphere/milieu in which that meaning occurred.

In the same letter, Pound underscored the importance he gives to intertextual relations, the *logopoeia*, the play of the word in time: "Tain't what a man sez, but wot he *means* that the traducer has got to bring over. The *implication* of the word" (Pound, 1950: 271). The implication of the word entangles the translator in the web of intertextual relations and interrelated meanings. Pound's theory of translation requires the translator to keep the historical atmosphere in which the words occur in view at all times so that the translation process reveals not just what the words mean but the various implications of the word in its "verbal manifestation." All words invoke both a paradigm of expected and habitual associations and play against that very paradigm. Pound's theory suggests that the free play of the word and its distancing itself from what

it means may be just as important as its one-to-one correspondence. *Logopoeia* provides a theoretical construct more interested in preserving the irony, the implicit, over literal meaning. For the energy of language – the object in the medium, always changing and newly creating – can be seen only within the irony and play of the word in historical context.

In *The Pound Era*, Hugh Kenner underscores Pound's emphasis upon seizing the "real," citing Pound's sensitivity to detailed sculpted forms as a primary reason (Kenner, 1971: 67). Pound was not interested in abstract concepts at all; instead, he preferred to focus on form, fragments, and specific details, for only in moments, in glimpses, can one "seize the real." Kenner cites the example of Pound's outrage over J.L. Edmonds's translation of Sappho, wherein over 50% of the words of the final text were additions by Edmonds. Only fragments remain of much of Sappho's work, and Edmonds felt sufficiently qualified to fill in the gaps and fill out the ideas. Instead, Pound much preferred Richard Aldington's translations, although Aldington was nineteen at the time and had no classical training. Although his interpretation raises questions, Aldington at least did not engage in "tushery" or pure guesswork, nor did he add lines when the original lines were lost. Pound advocated concision, clarity, and the presentation of images of concrete *things*, the very reason he prized Sappho's own poems (Pound, 1915: 55; 1975:17–18).

For Pound, avoiding abstract concepts did not mean strict adherence to linguistic aspects of the text, either. Pound did not focus on syntactical connections, and, according to Kenner, Pound even suggested that "a preoccupation with syntax may get in the translator's way" (Kenner, 1971: 68). Pound's writing on translation emphasized focusing on specific images, individual words, fragments, and luminous details. His method was modern [not postmodern] insofar as it emphasized juxtaposition and combination, hoping that the new configurations would react chemically, combining into a new compound, and thereby give off energy. Rhythm and diction were more important than syntax. The translator and/or poet was viewed as the catalyst working with specific, individual words. Each word with its etymology, its way of combining, gave insight into new possibilities. Lost in this day and age is Pound's graphic style – the drafts of the poems he sent to publishers contained double spaces between words. In "In a Station of the Metro," for example, he wanted the images set off, but subsequent editors have merged the images and closed up the spaces so the text "reads" more syntactically correct (Kenner, 1971: 197). Words, for Pound, can cut

other directions than linear; they can cut backward, historically, and sideways, juxtapositionally, as well as forward. “Syn”-tax gets merged with “syn”-thesize, or some sort of putting information into a logical order or a coherent whole, one which by its very definition obscures the precision, the details, and the specific images Pound so desperately wished to preserve.

This tendency to generalize, categorize, and draw abstractions was prevalent in the academic and literary institutions in the West, and in part explains Pound’s rebellion and his turning to the Chinese ideograms with their single, distinct monosyllables and their own semantic boundaries. Pound, thus, successfully used translation to challenge and change the prevailing literary norms. Working from within the tradition, as with “Homage,” and importing texts foreign to the tradition, as with Li Po, Pound relentlessly attacked the prevailing Victorian/Edwardian literary tastes. As Pound used translations as a tool in his cultural struggle, so too have Euro-American translators of the sixties and seventies used translation to challenge prevailing tastes and cultural conceptions in Western (North American) society as well as to lend energy to the counter-culture movement.

Frederic Will: The paradox of translation

While Richards’s work in translation might be characterized as an extension of his literary criticism, Frederic Will’s literary theory – initially not unlike Richards’s – has changed much because of his involvement in translation. Will’s work in translation theory is symptomatic of that of many adherents of the American workshop approach. Will first taught Classics at the University of Texas, where he founded the journal *Arion* with William Arrowsmith. He then moved to the forefront in translation by accepting the directorship of the translation workshop at the University of Iowa in 1964. In 1965 he founded *Micromegas*, a journal devoted to literary translation, each issue focused on the poetry of a different country. His first theoretical text *Literature Inside Out*, published in 1966, raised questions about naming and meaning and indirectly suggests that translation can be viewed as a form of naming, fiction-making, and knowing (Will, 1966: 15). His next book, *The Knife in the Stone*, published in 1973, dealt directly with the practice of translation; and parts of it rearticulated his workshop experience at Iowa.

Although Will's early text did not specifically address translation problems, certain relevant theoretical assumptions are visible. Will's project picks up where Richards's left off: he uses New Critical beliefs to try to reconcile recent critical theories. Will's first essay "From Naming to Fiction Making" in *Literature Inside Out* appears to agree with a theory of cultural relativism. Holding that different languages construct separate realities and that what any particular word refers to cannot be determined precisely, Will calls into question translation theories based on reference to a universal objective reality. Reality can only be learned, he argues, through the names we give it, and so, to a certain degree, language is the creator of reality. Will also distances himself from theories that posit a notion of universal themes or motifs, theories which do not view symbol-making as part of a human activity. At the same time, however, Will argues that knowledge of essence is possible: "The core of the self, the theme of its efforts, is love," which is a power unto itself and can bring the outer reality "into the focus of consciousness" (Will, 1966: 9). Naming, for Will, is the fundamental activity of man – without the power to name we would have remained savages. Language, thus, he argues, takes on our character, our rhythm, our desires, and reveals our true inner selves. Will continues to say that

> the self's effort, in naming, is not mere verbal play but is part of its overall effort to translate the outer into the human. This situation follows from the unity of the self. In such unity the expressions of a core-movement, the self, all bear the character of that movement. Each expression bears the core's character. (Will, 1966: 13)

As opposed to an objective outer reality that can be translated across cultures, Will posits a central common core of human experience and emotions that can overcome the indeterminate nature of language and bring that "outer reality" into focus. We translate our selves into language; naming does not necessarily give us any insight regarding outside reality (that to which language refers), but it does help us to better know our inner selves.

The power of this inner understanding and knowledge is further elaborated in the second essay, "Literature and Knowledge," in which the influence of Richards is everywhere to be seen. Literature, according to Will, also "embodies truth and knowledge" (1966:17). The New Critical tenet of the unity of the original text is also adopted; Will argues that a work of literature "is a deeply unified verbal event occurring in a self." The words that compose a work of literature, so important to Pound, are

merged with the whole for Will, and "are, in some sense, literally one." In the literary work, "most or all" of the levels of meaning of words, and Will lists five – dictionary, contextual, symbolic, interpretative, and inner aural and visual overtones – "are made one" (Will, 1966:18). Will's agenda, like Richards's, is fundamentally didactic, not just in terms of developing competent literary critics, but also in terms of a larger, humanistic goal. Literature, according to Will not only "gives us the power to understand," but also serves as a means to understand a higher metaphysical power. Will clearly believes that "the power to understand something is 'knowledge' of something." Yet we have seen that Will is skeptical about our ability to know objective reality. He concludes with the rhetorical question, "What else can knowledge be, even about the natural world or about God, except the power to understand them?" (Will, 1966: 24). Literary works present us with models by which we can "clarify" the real, irrational world that we experience as a "confusion of intermingled space, action, and character." Literature thus deepens and enriches our lives as well as gives us a better understanding of our own true selves.

Will then reexamines his own theory after his experience in the translation workshop at the University of Iowa and after having read Pound. Although his next theoretical text, *The Knife in the Stone*, retains metaphysical concepts, many of his romantic notions of love and humanistic beliefs in the power of the heart dissipate. His concept of text becomes less of a unified and coherent whole; instead it is seen as being interwoven with reality, subject to use, change, and variable interpretations. In *The Knife in the Stone*, Will uses translation as the "testing ground" for his theory, and clearly the goal is to substantiate the metaphysical beliefs he brings to the project:

> The inter-translatibility of languages is the firmest testing ground, and demonstration ground, for the existence of a single ideal body of literature. If there is any meaning, to the idea of such a body, it will show itself through as effort to equate literature in one language with literature in another. (Will, 1973: 42)

Again, the opposition includes those who are skeptical about the possibility of translation, those who question concepts of literariness, and those who find the concept of referentiality problematic. Will names Sartre and Mead, whose theories posit inner "selves" who are not aware of the universal core of human experience, but are, in Will's terminology, "groundless" and "socially constructed" respectively. Through the test of

translation, Will intends to disprove the "relativity" thesis and to show that one universal common ground – that of the single ideal body of literature – does, in fact, enjoy "inter-translatibility." However, Will's argument, when put to the test, does not confirm his initial presuppositions, but causes him to alter his conception of translation in a manner that may be of interest to contemporary theory.

His first test, reported in the essay "The Oneness of Literature," involves a personal experience that occurred during a trip to Hungary where he worked with another poet on the translation of a group of poems by Gyula Illyes. Although Will admits in the article that his knowledge of Hungarian literature is virtually non-existent, he already knows that the text in hand, translations of Gyula Illyes's poems by another writer, are "poor translations." How? Because there is little that "feels" like English poetry (Will, 1973: 42–3). We see that Will's approach is very subjective and ultimately determined by his transcendental view of the power of poetry. He is able to "feel behind" the translation and the original to some ideal form of the poem as part of that ideal body of literature. Because he belongs to that privileged class of poet and translator, because he enjoys the power of "love," he believes he can overcome his specific ignorance of the language in question as well as its indeterminate normal use, and gain access to that "essence" behind the poem. Robert Frost has argued that poetry is what gets lost in translation (Frost, 1973:159). Will believes exactly the opposite; in fact, given his lack of knowledge of the Hungarian language, the essence may be the only thing he could possibly translate. Will believes that poetry can be made "intelligible," by which he means it can achieve "a kind of 'transcendence' and a kind of becoming-salient" (Will, 1973:50). Symptomatic of a tendency in North American literary translation, Will's methodology actually avoids all theory and returns to the practical "common sense" approach that trusts his intuition ("love" or "ecstasy") of the meaning of these poems. Far from offering new theoretical insights, Will's theory at this stage merely reflects traditional metaphysical theories of the power of poetry. He may think that his translation "success" reconfirms his theory, but for those not yet converted it "proves" little. A shift in Will's theory of translation first occurs in "Translation and the Limits of Inter-cultural Understanding," from *The Knife in the Stone*. In contrast to many Anglo-American translators, Will focuses on the key period in Pound's development – the 1912–14 period in which Pound began thinking in terms of vorticism, the

period in which he became more interested in the plastic and visual arts. Will quotes Pound from "How I began" (1913):

> I resolved … that I would know the dynamic content from the shell… what part of poetry was "indestructible," what part could *not be lost* by translation, and – scarcely less important – what effects were obtainable in *one* language only and utterly incapable of being translated. (Pound, 1913; qtd. by Will, 1973: 59)

Will's presuppositions continue to affect his reading of Pound. For example, citing Pound's Chinese translations, Will argues that Pound is able to leap beyond the words on the page for the "feeling-sense of the original." When Pound literally says that "words" are like cones of steel, Will instead says that Pound is referring to the "core" or the "dynamic content."

Aesthetic presuppositions notwithstanding, Will also uses Pound in the same essay to raise an important epistemological question – the translator's paradox – of how is it possible to know anything we do not already know, and what follows marks a change in Will's theoretical approach. To resolve this epistemological problem, Will first looks at the linguists Noam Chomsky and Norbert Weiner, who argue that the deep structure they posit across languages is only obliquely related to surface structure, and that there exists a "considerable chance for error" if one reaches through the surface structure for the "real argument" (Will, 1973: 69–72). Will then refers to the communication theorist Donald MacKay, who posits the notion that "each individual is a goal-directed system" and that communication acquires meaning when one person sees how others try to influence behavior from within their own system of beliefs. The social unit formed by such interaction of individual systems becomes a goal-seeking system in its own right (Will, 1973: 74–5). Will then reinterprets his early assessment of Pound. If Li Po's poem is seen as one activity taking place within Po's own entire goal-complex, i.e., that Li Po oriented himself to his surrounding culture and tried to change or influence that same society, then Pound, by extension, is both trying to stand inside Li Po's world and trying to influence contemporary events himself. Because he is working on a translation, Pound must account for Li Po's goals; and by placing himself and his own notion of literary relations in this differing historical situation, he thereby must form a new social unit – a new set of relations in MacKay's sense. Will concludes, "the notions of 'oneself' and 'other' are not that unitary or solid. They are intermeshing notions, concerning intermeshing entities (or

abstractionentities). The paradox remains, but itself translated; self, meaning among other things what one becomes through others, returns from the other which it partly is" (Will, 1973: 76).

The change in the logic of Will's argument is most apparent in the final essay of *The Knife in the Stone*, called paradoxically "Faithful Traitors," a play on the Italian aphorism *tradutore, traditore*. Briefly, the article reviews his experience teaching at Iowa. In the course of the activity of actual translation, it became clear to Will that what he was translating had less to do with the meaning of the text and more with the energy of the expression, how meaning was expressed in language. He found himself using a kind of Poundian theory. The cultural relativity thesis that once was so problematical is adopted by turning it back in on itself, not to oppose his practice, but to contribute as an equally always present part. Since language is indeterminate, since we never have access to the meaning behind specific language, all the more reason to be free and trust not what language says but what the language does. The traditional notion of translation as "carrying over" is too restrictive, and has caused translation to fall into categories of "faulty equivalences" and of "versions" of the original. What Will advocates instead is an approach that translates not what a work means, but the energy or "thrust" of a work, for which there is no "correct" way of translating. He writes:

> Translation is *par excellence* the process by which the thrust behind the verbal works of man … can be directly transferred, carried on, allowed to continue. … Works of literature are highly organized instances of such thrust … these blocks force themselves on, through time, from culture to culture. (Will, 1973: 155)

This "thrust" is a new concept in the argument, and is not something represented by language *per se*, but a term coined by Will and derived directly from Pound's Osiris essays. In addition to being Dionysian, Osiris also refers to the male productive principle in nature. Translation is less seen as a "carrying over" of content, but as a "carrying on" of the content *in* language. In translation, texts are reborn, given new life, stimulated with new energy. The paradox present in the title of the essay is resolved in the idea that the translator can be most faithful to the true meaning of the text by being unfaithful to the specific meaning ("indicative" meaning in Richards's theory) of the language of the text.

Will enters dangerous ground here by allowing the translator a "poetic" license to make the necessary changes in order to retain something originally arrived at intuitively. Such a methodology offends

most contemporary translation theorists, especially scholars and linguists, because it is antithetical to their very definition of translation as a transfer of a message from one code to another. Whatever else may be said about Will, I should like to note the complexity of this particular thought and consider this redefinition of the process. Meaning is redefined by Will not as something behind the words or text, not as an "essence" in a traditional metaphysical sense, but as something different, as thrust or energy, something which is at the same time indeterminate and groundless (as in Sartre) *and* universal and originary (as in Descartes). Translation is possible both because dynamic universals constantly and continually thrust and because language is impenetrable. In translation Will seems to find a possible/impossible paradox of language which not only defines the translation process, but defines how we come to know ourselves through language.

The contradiction in Will's later position is thus different from that in Richards's argument. Whereas Richards found himself fighting against contradiction and trying to solve the problem by narrowing the focus of what is being investigated and by clarifying the rules of the investigation, Will expands the parameters to include the contradiction and turn it in on itself. The difficulty in understanding Will's text is due to the fact that he is trying to say something obscured by his own metaphysical conceptions. The end of the essay on the Iowa translation workshop is determined by Will's need for closure and his almost romantic notions about poetry as well as by his new hypothesis about language. He says that at the workshop there was "a communal working toward the single language which lies between, or among – spatial metaphors collapse here – all the national languages" (1973: 158). But then he continues in the different vein:

> Of course we were not, literally, considering a middle or pure or perfect language, but always languages x and y, from one of which we were trying to translate into the other. However the theoretical horizon, which made possible this notion of crossing linguistic areas, was the conviction of a single repository of meaning, a *tertium quid*, from which both x and y drew, from which they were both equally nourished, which somehow guaranteed them both in their relationship to each other. (Will, 1973: 158)

The activity of translation, according to Will, somehow reveals to the translator that language is simultaneously unstable and stable, that texts are interwoven in reality and in a tradition of fiction, and that man, as a

complex system, is both subjected by language or systems of discourse and is capable of creating language or new relations in the present. Language always refers to something (other), be that reality or some metaphysical concept. At the same time, human language is necessarily always innovative, additive, and continually being relocated in different contexts, with different referents. That which makes translation possible for Will (universals/deep structures) also makes it impossible (the specific moment/surface structures). Thus language always refers backward and forward, trapped in an intertextual network. Will's multiple conservative ideological preconceptions merely serve to obscure a provocative (and perhaps progressive) hypothesis on the subject of translation theory, arrived at, to a large degree, through reading Pound and working in the American translation workshop.

The process of literary translation

Although workshop practitioners invoke Pound as someone who has freed translation from the restraints of literalism, they rarely confront Pound's or any other aesthetic theory directly. Such an atheoretical position allows them to appropriate Pound's theory – freeing them from methodologies that privilege literal correspondence – and grants them license to promote whatever aspect of the original text they please. For example, the interpretation of Pound's theory by poet and translator Ronnie Apter, author of a book called *Digging for the Treasure: Translation After Pound* (1984), illustrates the point. Apter still thinks in terms of "faithful" (called "Victorian") and "free" (called "modern"). Apter then uses Pound to support a defense of the free approach, concluding:

> Pound's innovations have freed modern translators from slavish adherence to sense for sense, rhyme for rhyme, and meter for meter. Instead, they turn to a battery of *ad hoc* strategies (often strategies suggested by Pound) on the original poem in an attempt to give critical insight into why the original poem has importance for them. (Apter, 1984: 75)

Certainly Pound's strategies were not *ad hoc;* whenever Rouse strayed from the primary strategy, Pound harshly admonished him. True, he was not advocating sense for sense, but this does not imply opening up the field for any intuited or divinely inspired insight either. The problem with Apter's and others' appropriation of Pound's theory of translation is

that they derive it from Pound's early Provençal translations, his early literary essays, and his imagist writings, which were in fact based on aesthetic intuition and leaps of poetic imagination. Apter, however, does not consult Pound's essays on vorticism, any of his criticism on painting and the plastic arts, nor *The Cantos*, referred to only in an occasional footnote. As a result, Apter's conclusion seems more influenced by the vague and *ad hoc* strategies supported by contemporary taste in America regarding poetry and translation than the specific and well defined strategy demanded by Pound.

If Pound's translation theory is not taken seriously by creative writers and translators today, what are the theoretical premises of the workshop methodology? First, what has been adopted from Pound's theory primarily is his taste – lack of adornments, plain speech, and poetry that is as well written as prose. While I, too, may prefer this tendency, little theoretical basis exists for such a preference, and the prevailing taste could just as well be something different. Although the "plain speech" phenomenon seems intrinsically American and more overtly "democratic," the danger of elevating a nationalistic position is that it reinforces literary institutions. In terms of taste, what was revolutionary and innovative in Pound's era has now become mainstream. License has been given to allow translators to intuit good poems from another language without knowledge of the original language or the culture, and, as long as they have some poetic sensibility and good taste, now governed by plain speech and lack of adornment, their translations are accepted. The journal *Micromegas* was just one journal which reflected this tendency; while many of the issues contained selections and translations by very knowledgeable translators, others contained translations by writers with limited language skills. Foreign language facility does not seem to be a requirement for entrance to a workshop; poetic sensibility and an ability to write well in English are the most important criteria.

Because of the breadth of Pound's language skills, it appears perhaps that he was intuiting some universal language, and the assumption that such a universal language exists is widespread among American literary translators. In fact, Pound had learned the languages of the Greco-Roman Western tradition. He knew some Greek, more Latin, was fluent in Provençal and Italian, his French and Spanish were excellent, and his English/American legendary. His mind ranged freely over the history of the development of Western culture, and he could think in different languages and thought systems of specific historical periods. Much of his

life was spent trying to demythologize a tradition elevated and reified by Western scholars, and to rewrite literary history to make it more widely accessible. Unfortunately, many translators seem to feel they can intuit a particular language and tradition and have access to the mythology without knowledge of the language, let alone the historical/cultural context Pound had. In an article in the *New York Times Book Review*, Milan Kundera writes about this phenomenon in the West:

> In 1968 and 1969, "The Joke" was translated into all the Western languages. But what surprises! In France, the translator rewrote the novel by ornamenting my style. In England, the publisher cut out all the reflective passages, eliminated the musicological chapters, changed the order of the parts, recomposed the novel. Another country: I meet my translator, a man who knows not a word of Czech. "Then how did you translate it?" "With my heart." And he pulls a photo of me from his wallet. (Kundera, 1988: 1)

The theoretical premise that such translation is possible is clearly Platonic, not Poundian; it allows translators without the facility in a given language to translate, using literal versions as cribs, from which they intuit the "essence," all the while invoking Pound to lend a modernist authority to their approach.

With the workshop method of using only a crib and a creative writer – in most cases the translator is or purports to be the creative writer – almost anything is possible. One example of the American translation workshop practice of translating from languages one does not know has been published by Angela Elston in her 1980 article "The Golden Crane Anthology of Translation." A crib containing information similar to that Pound had available when he translated T'sui Hao's "Yellow Crane Pavilion" was sent to over twenty creative writers, most of whom are well established as poet/translators in America or England, who were then asked to "translate" the poem. The crib contained the original poem, a word-for-word translation, a line translation, and notes on the form, the language, and the legend. The results varied enormously – semantic differences, syntax changes, linear changes, images altered, multiple formal innovations, metaphoric discrepancies, even the typeface and word pattern on the page varied. The diversity of the individual versions certainly calls into question any model of translation prescribing how one should translate a literary text, be it Richards's or any other. Although the exercise used a crib similar to the one Pound had from Fenollosa, Pound would have shuddered at the results. While some of the

poems are very creative in their own right, they have little to do with the "theory" Pound called for.

In an essay accompanying the translations, Elston argues that meaning may be expressed in a number of different ways; the crib, she argues, gives us the content through which we may see the meaning. She goes so far as to suggest that it may be *easier* to work from a crib because it has already done some of the work of separating some of what is translatable from that which is not. If one knew the original, one would surely imitate some of its formal features – style, tone, music, repetition of sound; but if one worked from a crib, since that person would not know the formal features, the translator would not thereby be constrained (Elston, 1980:16). Elston thus inadvertently reverses Pound's theory of translation; the style, the tone, the music, the repetition of sound were in fact precisely those features Pound valued most. Writing about the process behind her own translation of "The Brown Crane Blues," Elston states that she did consult an Asian languages scholar, but found that most of the information he gave her was not the sort that could survive in translation, again contradicting Pound's theory, which stressed the importance of cultural information in determining implication, the play of the word, in context.

Occasionally glimpses of a more accurate understanding of Pound's theory of translation can be discerned from the prefaces and introductions to translated texts published in America. Generally such essays focus on the problems of translating from one language into another, but W.S. Merwin, for example, who more often than not has immersed himself in the source language and culture, gives us such an insight in the introduction to *Selected Translations, 1968–1978:*

> But if we take a single word of any language and try to find an exact equivalent in another … we have to admit it cannot be done. A single primary denotation may be shared; but the constellation of secondary meanings, the movement of rings of associations, the etymological echoes, the sound and its own levels of association, do not have an equivalent because they cannot…. Yet if we continue, we reach a point where some sequence of the first language conveys a dynamic unit, a rudiment of form. Some energy of the first language begins to be manifest, not only in single words but in the charge of their relationship. (Merwin, 1979: viii)

Traces of a theory drawn from Richards, Pound, and Will can be seen. Merwin is not so naive to even suggest a unified reading is possible; he

is too acutely aware of the differences that defy translation, nuances which escape, and connotations lost. Yet at the same time, he is also aware that in the process of translation, that which manifests itself is less what the language says and more what it does, i.e., words take on an energy in their contextual, intertextual life.

What emerges, thus, from the North American contribution to contemporary literary translation theory is less an articulated, coherent, rational theory and more a whole new set of questions. The contribution views translations less in terms of identities and equivalents, and more in terms of language associations, etymologies and resonances that would not be normally seen or heard if it were not for their translation. The process generally advocated involves giving in to some kind of "other" voice, hearing the energy of the language, and allowing secondary, marginalized, and forgotten associations to resurface, which are then used to lend depth and resonance to the translated versions. Documenting a concept of energy in language, of words in action, is difficult if not impossible. Yet a genre is emerging in the United States, beginning perhaps with John Felsteiner's *Translating Neruda: The Way to Macchu Picchu* (1980), continuing through Robert Bly's "Eight Stages of Translation" (1984) and Edwin Honig's *The Poet's Other Voice: Conversations on Literary Translation* (1985), which attempt to give us insight into the process of translating. Daniel Weissbort, who co-directs the translation workshop at Iowa, continues this line of investigation in *Translating Poetry: The Double Labyrinth* (1989), a collection of essays by translators, some closely associated with the American translation workshop approach, in which they reveal certain insights as well as dead ends encountered during the process of translation. The text includes several drafts of the translated text as the translators play with various forms of language possibilities before the final version, as well as commentary on some of the more difficult choices.

It is too early to draw conclusions from such documents, and many more are needed. In America, however, the beginning of a unique contribution by the American workshop approach is visible: a first look into the black box of the human mind as it works and reworks during the activity of translating. As many decisions are clearly subjective and often unconscious, the analysis of this process of translation has been the most neglected branch of translation theory. Translation in this country historically seems to subvert itself, disappearing in the process as the translated text emerges as a literary work in its own right in the receiving language. In fact, in American circles, because of the emphasis placed on

the finished work functioning as a literary work in the receiving culture, translations more often than not appear self-referential, drawing attention to themselves or to the translator, not because of their accuracy or cohesion, but because of their differences and deviations. There is a kind of cannibalistic activity involved, and those who do not cannibalize are the minority.

With such texts as are collected in the Weissbort edition, a slight opening into a new avenue of thought is emerging, and we are left with more questions than answers. The most obvious question has to do with the very definition of the term translation. The Jakobson term "creative transposition," with the emphasis on creative, seems more operative (Jakobson, 1959:238). The second question still involves the epistemological problem. When one assumes a Poundian approach to literary translation, what are the referents? Meaning? Things? Energy in language seems too vague of a concept for any sort of rational investigation. Are the criteria totally subjective? Can we call Pound's theory a material theory? To what is the translator bound, the original written text or something heard or intuited? Has translation anything to do with identity? More questions arise when one tries to generalize about methodology. Are there any rules for governing the generation of the translated text? What are the minimum requirements for a translator in terms of knowledge of the source culture and language? Finally, the North American translation workshop approach raises many questions regarding the nature of the evaluative standards. Are they totally dependent upon the prevailing taste of the receiving culture? Many books, anthologies, articles exist which address one or more of the above questions, often with a great deal of insight. Yet these texts tend toward the prescriptive rather than the analytical, and focus more on techniques of problem solving and the craft of translation rather than the theory.

Ironically, perhaps because of their lack of an already articulated institutionalized theory, because of their focus on the process of translation, and because of their questions emerging from such a perspective, the North American translation workshop proponents may actually find themselves in an advantageous position to contribute to discussions regarding recent developments in translation theory. While an aesthetic of New Criticism still loosely forms the foundation of the North American contribution, one must also recognize that many traditional forms of genre and representation seem to be subverted in some fashion or other by these American translator/poets. The very limits and constraints of the activity of translating seem to help in

making possible new verbal constructions, and thus the attraction of translation as a mode in itself for this generation of North American poets. Will points out that in such a situation, spatial metaphors collapse and new theoretical horizons emerge. A comprehensive theory of translation need also address this double movement – one which perpetuates given aesthetic beliefs and simultaneously subverts those very conceptions.

Lawrence Venuti: Rethinking translation

In this chapter, I have attempted to articulate the theoretical premises that stand behind the atheoretical critical stance assumed by many literary translators and teachers in the United States. I have tried to analyze those underlying assumptions, which I see as couched in humanistic and New Critical traditions, showing how they either reinforce prevailing literary assumptions or provide new insights. I view literary translation in the United States as often simultaneously both reinforcing and subverting reigning forms for literary texts in general, and therefore providing a contribution to the ongoing investigations of linguistic, literary, and cultural evolution.

I am not alone in rethinking translation along such lines. Perhaps the most influential translation studies scholar of the last decade in North America has been Lawrence Venuti, editor of the pioneering anthology *Rethinking Translation: Discourse, Subjectivity, Ideology* (1992); author of two major books on translation – *The Translator's Invisibility: A History of Translation* (1995) and *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Difference* (1998); and compiler of *The Translation Studies Reader* (2000). Venuti's contributions to translation studies are multiple. First, and perhaps most importantly, he criticizes the humanistic underpinnings of much literary translation in the United States and shows how it reinforces prevailing domestic beliefs and ideologies. Secondly, he provides a new set of terms and methods for analyzing translations. And finally, he offers a set of alternative strategies he would like translators to try.

Venuti's main thesis is that translation tends to be an invisible practice in the United States. By invisible, he means that the translators tend to be self-effacing in their work, denying their own voice in favor of that of the author and/or the prevailing styles in the receiving culture, and that in translation criticism, scholars tend to ignore the decisions and mediations of the translators, commenting instead as if they have direct access to the

original author. Translations are judged to be successful when they read "fluently," giving the appearance that they have not been translated. As Frederic Will indicated above, the prevailing cultural belief is that the best translators have access to some sort of universal sense of the meaning and can transparently reflect that essence in the translated text. This belief, shared by a network of professionals within the translation industry, including publishers, editors, reviewers, readers, and even the translators themselves, reinforces fairly traditional quasi-romantic notions of authorship and neo-Platonic conceptions of constructing an image that reproduces the original (Venuti, 1992: 3–5).

The problems with such a situation, according to Venuti, are twofold: first, it marginalizes practicing translators, making them subservient to the author and defining their practice as derivative and secondary, ranking far below high quality creative writing and in depth literary analysis; and secondly, and perhaps more importantly, it erases the linguistic and cultural differences of the foreign text that the very act of translation purports to carry over into the receiving culture. By rewriting the text according to the prevailing styles of the receiving culture, and by adapting images and metaphors of the foreign text to the target culture's preferred systems of beliefs, translators are not only severely constrained in terms of their options to carry out their task, but also forced to alter the foreign text to conform to the receiving culture's forms and ideas.

The repercussions of such a network in the publication industry sharing this view of translation are far-reaching. This kind of translation performs an act of domestication, making the foreign familiar, providing readers with the experience of recognizing their own culture in the foreign, and enacting, according to Venuti, a kind a cultural imperialism, one which preserves social hierarchies, maintains political and religious conceptions, and assists in economic commodification and consumption. Venuti's rethinking of translation tries to access the inarticulated *non-dit* that lies behind most literary translation in the United States. Yet Venuti's project goes further, for it is also political; he engages questions of language, discourse, and subjectivity in terms of their ideologies and their relation to social constructions, and he has very definite notions of what is conservative and what is progressive. He questions concepts of originality and authorship that subordinate translation to the source text, believing instead that both are derivative and heterogeneous (see Chapter 6 on deconstruction below). He also questions easy notions of equivalence, assuming that the multiple discourses that comprise any text preclude notions of simple correspondence. Instead, Venuti finds every

act of translation transformative and creative, seldom transparent, invariably interpretive. Translations are complex texts full of multiple intertextual connotations and allusions, containing multiple discourses and linguistic materials, giving translators various choices to support or resist predominant literary and ideological views.

Venuti provides more that a theory, however. In what I find his most significant contribution to translation studies, Venuti also provides a model for analyzing translations, explaining how they participate in cultural evolution. He does this not by referring to translator prefaces, interviews, and lectures, which he finds to be belletristic; rather, he offers a method of comparative study and symptomatic analysis. Humanistic analysis of translation tends to cover up the multiple discourses and allusions by positing a semantic unity at the heart of the text and by emphasizing the clear and transparent communication of that core. Symptomatic analysis, reading not that which is immediately visible, but that which is opaque or invisible, reveals the conflicting discourses and contradictions of the translated text. Venuti often refers to this process as an analysis of the "remainder," a term derived from Jean-Jacque Lecercle's *The Violence of Language* (1990:182) that refers to exposing that which exceeds transparent use of language (Venuti, 1995: 216; 1998: 10).

In *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995), Venuti gives an example of such a method of symptomatic analysis by looking at translations of Sigmund Freud's texts for the *Standard Edition*. The cultural norm for psychoanalytical texts at the time was one that emphasized scientific discourse and tended stylistically to be abstract, impersonal, and quite erudite. The problem for the translators, however, was that Freud's texts were often simple and colloquial, using common everyday rather than highly learned and theoretical language. Thus a word such as "parapraxis" for the rather simple German word *Fehlleistung*, which means something like 'faulty function,' jumps out at the reader as inconsistent with the rest of the text. By reading such stylistic inconsistencies symptomatically, words such as "cathexis" for "energy" and "libidinal" for "sexual," Venuti, drawing upon Bruno Bettelheim's critique of Freud's translators in *Freud and Man's Soul* (1983), exposes the translation process, showing how translators consciously and unconsciously reveal their allegiances through their stylistic choices (1995: 25–9). Yet while Bettleheim was quick to call such translation choices a "distortion" and a "betrayal" of the essential Freud, Venuti prefers to see the translators' decisions as part of larger cultural forces at

work, less due to any individual translator's betrayal and more to the desire to see Freud accepted within the framework of standard medical discourse. Indeed, the translators, by means of such choices, helped constitute this discourse, participating in the articulation of the emerging definition of psychoanalysis in the United States. Thus, Venuti's method sees interpretative choices as largely determined by a wide range of social and cultural institutions, many of which the translators themselves may not be aware. The fact that critics, too, have taken so long to notice such inconsistencies, reveals the extent of the cultural collusion. Yet by showing where a translation has gaps or contradictions, where translators depend too heavily upon dominant styles and values in the receiving culture and where they depart from them, Venuti makes the translation process more visible, demystifying the illusion of transparency and equivalence, and showing how translators are deeply involved in the construction of culture.

In addition to providing a new method for analyzing translations, Venuti also makes recommendations for the practicing translator, which have grown to be the most controversial part of Venuti's theory. Venuti advocates what he calls at different times "foreignizing translation" and/or "abusive fidelity." By foreignizing he means any translation strategy that resists domestication, fluency, and transparency (Venuti, 1995:148ff.). By abusive fidelity he means much the same thing: the translator seeks to reproduce those very features of the foreign text that "abuse" or resist the prevailing forms and values in the receiving culture, thereby allowing the translator to be faithful to aspects of the source text, but still participate in effecting cultural change in the target language (Venuti, 1992: 12–13; 1995: 182–83).

What features does Venuti suggest that the practicing translator reproduce? Precisely those that signal linguistic and cultural difference. He is attracted to poststructural strategies that foreground the play of the signifier, puns, neologisms, archaisms, dialects, satire, fragmented syntax, and experimental forms, all of which result in discontinuous, fragmented, and less than unified final texts. Such translation techniques expose the illusion of transparency by making the translator's work visible, and thereby encouraging a rethinking of the secondary, derivative status of the translator. They also, ironically, preserve important elements of the source text that frequently are smoothed over, elided, and/or adapted to the point that they are no longer recognizable. As such, these strategies are diametrically opposed to strategies preferred by the North American translation workshop, which favors unity,

cohesion, similarity, fluency, and acceptability. Despite the success of Venuti's ideas internationally, in translation workshops and literary translation circles in the United States, Venuti's ideas have been largely dismissed or ignored; practicing translators have a hard time deviating from the traditional strategies and fidelities.

Much of the impetus behind Venuti's developing such a theory comes from his own work as a translator and critic of Iginio Ugo Tarchetti (1839–69), a Milanese writer of the nineteenth century who employed foreignizing strategies in his own creative writing. Venuti is attracted to Tarchetti for his dissident status: he was part of a group of writers called the *scapigliatura* ('dishevelled') who contested bourgeois values in their lifestyles and writings. The reigning literary norm for fiction during the period was a kind of highly conservative bourgeois realism; Tarchetti favored more Gothic, fantastic, phantasmagoric tales, such as those by E.T.A. Hoffmann, Edgar Allan Poe, Gérald Nerval, and Théophile Gautier. What makes Tarchetti a fascinating subject for study is that he blended translation and adaptation into his creative work, blurring the boundaries between the two genres, and incorporated many fantastic, ironic, and estranging devices (Venuti, 1992: 196ff.; 1995: 159ff.).

Venuti's analysis of Tarchetti's translation of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley's "The Immortal Mortal" is particularly insightful. Tarchetti actually published the text as his own work (1995:162), not giving Shelley's name as the author, noting instead that the tale was "from the English" (1995: 162). Tarchetti only changed minor elements, such as the names of two of the characters and a date. Venuti suggests that this "plagiarism" via translation exemplified the *scapigliatura's* nonconformist tendencies, flouting bourgeois propriety and property. It also expanded the boundaries of acceptable Italian fictional discourse by posing as an original Italian Gothic tale. Further elements highlighted by Tarchetti's translation include the use of a standard dialect to challenge the prevailing Tuscan dialect, the emphasis of fantastic elements, and the retention of Shelley's feminist critique of patriarchal gender representation. Venuti calls these elements "abusive," enacting a critique of Italian culture and the preferred form of realistic fiction. Ironically, Tarchetti's translation abuses mostly because of its *fidelity* to the English original, its use of the *standard* Italian dialect, its *repetition* of the original's fantastic discourse, and its *retention* of the feminist views.

Venuti's critique of translation practices in Italy during the nineteenth century applies well to the situation in the United States today. His proposals for rethinking translation offer alternatives that are being

considered by practicing translators such as Suzanne Jill Levine and Carol Maier, and are slowly are being integrated into the classroom in places such as Kent State, SUNY Binghamton, and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. His proposals for symptomatically studying translations have been less influential, though sorely needed. Translation studies as such do not exist in the United States. Although an American Translation Studies Association (ATSA) does exist, having an Internet discussion group and having held one meeting at a recent American Translators Association (ATA) annual conference, it exists primarily in cyberspace, and very little of the hard work carrying out case studies has been done. Venuti is particularly adept at showing how literature professors, especially those teaching world literature in English and language departments, repress issues of translation when teaching translated texts, making ideas appear free-floating, transcending national boundaries and cultural differences (Venuti, 1998: 92–3). His proposals, soundly based in a tradition of Althusserian literary criticism, reveal how different forms of reception in different cultures shape translation and could catch favor at anytime. His method provides a refreshing alternative to the quasi-scientific, empirical case studies favored by the translation studies scholars in Belgium and Holland or polysystem theory used by Israeli scholars (see Chapters 4 and 5 below).

Theoretically, however, questions remain regarding Venuti's approach. While he clearly likes poststructuralist theories, and scatters references to Derrida, Cixous, de Man, Deleuze and Guattari throughout his texts, the poststructuralist vocabulary can be deceiving. Venuti's theory may be more modernist than postmodern, and his "alternative" is still couched in the same "faithful" vs. "free" debate that has characterized translation for thousands of years. In his history of translation in North America sketched out in *The Translator's Invisibility*, Venuti clearly favors translators such as Pound (see above), Dudley Fitts (translator of classical texts), Celia and Louis Zukovsky (translators of Catullus's poetry), Paul Blackburn (translator of Provençal poets and later of Julio Cortázar), who are all praised by Venuti for their foreignizing strategies. Yet he also claims that these translators are "marginal" translators. The term "controversial" might be more appropriate, for these translators linguistic, sexual, and political translation choices have challenged and offended, and many academic reviewers have criticized their linguistic and cultural choices. But in terms of creative writers and practicing translators in the United States, their translations are well known and influential. The strategies employed – an emphasis on vitality and

energy; the absence of aesthetic references in favor of material; the sexual frankness; the use of varied lexicons, dialects, colloquialisms, and vernaculars; the attention to the music and tone; and the use of archaisms and foreign terms – all reflect conventions well known in modernist texts.

Moreover, Venuti sets up two paradigms for translation: one he calls fluent and the other foreignizing; one opts for acceptable uses of linguistic and cultural terms and images and the other ab-uses or chooses alternatives. For Venuti, there seems no middle ground. With regard to the history of translation in the United States, not all the translators he wishes to categorize as producing fluent translations would agree; many, including Felsteiner, Kunitz, Merwin, Bly, Weissbort, Auster, and Wilbur – translators who do not subscribe to Venuti's preferred strategies –are in their own ways quite successful in importing foreign ideas and concepts. Additionally, many of the translators he claims are marginal and abusive, are drawing upon long traditions of using translation to challenge cultural norms of the receiving society. Many of Venuti's proposals for practicing translators remind scholars of Brechtian alienation effects, or Russian formalist *ostranenie* elements, rather than the poststructuralist devices to which he alludes.

Politically, however, the contribution of Venuti's is quite remarkable, for what he has accomplished is a reversal of the terms of the debate. In the United States, those advocating fluency, which include not only New Critics and Poundian disciples, but also followers of Nida and functional translators (see Chapter 3 below) all have claimed accuracy and fidelity as part of their arsenal of defense. Translators such as Pound, Fitts, the Zukovskys, and Venuti, all have been criticized for being linguistically unfaithful, as transgressing boundaries and distorting some sort of essential truth or invariable meaning. In fact, what Venuti's theory shows is that the manipulations of translation in terms of faithfulness to some sort of essential core have resulted in vast distortions – foreign syntax and styles sublated to appear the same as English, metaphors and images altered to fit our conceptual system, cultural values either omitted or adapted to fit our ways of thinking, and, especially, innovative forms made to appear as forms commonly practiced in the United States. In many ways Venuti's ideas were anticipated by translation studies scholars of the 1970s and 80s (see Chapters 4 and 5 below).

Once the controversy regarding Venuti's rethinking translation dies down, many of his ideas will find their way into the North American workshop. The translators he respects are also well respected in creative

writing programs; some well-known translators are beginning to experiment with his ideas. In addition, Venuti's international following is quite strong, particularly in Europe and Latin America. The publishing industry in the United States, which currently is increasingly open to finding new ways to introduce cultural difference into Anglo-American society, will soon follow. They are already experimenting with new forms of presenting translations, including using additional supplementary material such as prefaces, introductions, interviews, footnotes, to help the readers adjust to the foreign ideas and structures. Venuti's approach outlines the first step in rethinking translation, exposing certain assumptions held by those in institutions governing translation and opening the way for alternative approaches, Venuti's and others'.

Chapter 3
The "Science" of Translation

While opening up new perspectives, the general approach as practiced in North American translation workshops might best be characterized by a theoretical *naïveté* and subjective methodologies that tend to reinforce whatever theoretical values individual translators hold. Joseph Graham summarizes the theoretical contributions of the workshop approach as follows:

> Much that has been written on the subject of translation yields very little when sifted for theoretical substance because it has always been written as if spoken in the workshop. The personal anecdotes and pieces of advice may well provide some help, but certainly not the coherent and consistent theory required for translation. (Graham, 1981: 23)

The problem is not just a contemporary phenomenon in North America, but one that has troubled translation theory historically. People *practiced* translation, but they were never quite sure what they were practicing. During the sixties and seventies in the United States, the translation workshop perpetuated the same practice. Clearly, a more systematic approach to translation was needed, and the discipline that appeared to have the theoretical and linguistic tools necessary to address the problem was linguistics.

Up until the early sixties linguistics had been characterized by largely descriptive research in which individual grammars were detailed but not compared, and thus of little theoretical value to translators. The simultaneous development of two theories of grammar significantly altered the course of translation theory, and these theories remain very influential today. The culmination of the evolving theories may be represented by Noam Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* (1957), Eugene Nida's *Message and Mission* (1960), Nida's *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964), and Chomsky's *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (1965). Generative transformational grammar, along with its legitimacy within the field of linguistics, lent credence and influence to Nida's "science" of translation. Nida's theory was based on his experience translating the Bible; his early theoretical assumptions were visible in articles written in the fifties and in his book *Message and Mission*

(1960). Although Chomsky published a tentative version of his theory called *Syntactic Structures* in the Netherlands in 1957, Nida claimed that his theory of translation was already well developed before Chomsky's formulation. In an article called "A Framework for the Analysis and Evaluation of Theories of Translation," Nida argued:

> Before the formulation of generative-transformation grammar by Chomsky Nida had already adopted an essentially deep-structure approach to certain problems of exegesis. In an article entitled "A New Methodology in Biblical Exegesis" (1952) he advocated the back-transformation of complex surface structures onto an underlying level, in which the fundamental elements are objects, events, abstracts, and relations. (Nida, 1976: 71)

Despite claims to the contrary, Nida's theory crystallized with the addition of Chomsky's transformational component – Nida read Chomsky's *Syntactic Structures* in mimeograph form two years before it was published. With the adoption of Chomsky's theoretical premise, his transformational rules, and his terminology, Nida's theory solidified, and the result – *Toward a Science of Translating* – has become the "Bible" not just for Bible translation, but for translation theory in general.

Nida's work in the field of Bible translating was initially practice-oriented rather than theoretical. The historical paradigm he drew on for his strategies was fairly narrow, dominated by translations of the Bible. Nida's development of a translation science was motivated by a personal dislike for what he saw as a classical revival in the nineteenth century, an emphasis on technical accuracy, an adherence to form, and a literal rendering of meaning. The principal exponent in English of this movement, according to Nida, was Matthew Arnold, whose approach was clearly too scholarly and pedantic for Nida's taste, placing too many demands upon the reader to become informed about the original culture. Arnold's literalism, according to Nida, negatively affected Bible translation in the early twentieth century. He cited as one example the American Standard Version, which, although popular with theology students, never caught on with the general public. Nida wrote that, "the words [of the American Standard Version of the Bible] may be English, but the grammar is not; and the sense is quite lacking" (Nida, 1964:20–1). I argue that Nida's arguments against Arnold's approach are governed by his taste, general public opinion, and the economics of his project (converting people to Christianity). Implicit in his approach is a populist

evangelical Christian belief (and an anti-intellectual stance) that the word should be accessible to all.

Despite being relegated to a "practical handbook" status within the branch of the field of theology called "missiology," because of its vast number of examples, *Toward a Science of Translating* has enjoyed a particularly influential status in another field, that of translation. Bible translating has generated more data in more languages than any other translation practice: it enjoys a longer history, has reached more people in more diverse cultures, and has involved more translators from different backgrounds than any other translation practice. In generic terms as well, Bible translating has touched all fields, for within the text one finds passages of poetry and prose, narrative and dialogue, parables and laws. The sheer quantity of examples and breadth of scope have made Bible translation a necessary part of any study on the theory of translation. However, in terms of its theoretical contribution, it too can be viewed in terms similar to the practical, anecdotal approach characteristic of North American literary translation theory.

Nida, aware of the unsystematic nature of a practice-oriented approach, attempted to scientifically validate his methodology and apply it to translation as a whole. Nevertheless, his religious beliefs and missionary goals – attempts to unite people around a common belief in the inviolable word of God – although not explicitly stated, remain embedded within the scientific framework. Because of the magnitude of theoretical importance the original message receives in any translation of the Bible, the fundamental governing principle of Nida's theory was correspondingly predetermined: the communication across cultures of the spirit of the original message is primary throughout. The particular form in which that message appears is superficial as long as the meaning of that message is clear. Chomsky was literally a Godsend for Nida, for with the incorporation of Chomsky's theoretical framework, Nida's project ceased to be directed merely at fellow missionaries, but attempted to lay the groundwork for a larger audience. His work became the basis upon which a new field of investigation in the twentieth century – the "science" of translation – was founded.

Noam Chomsky's theory of syntax and generative grammar was not, nor was it intended to be, a theory of translation. In fact, Chomsky cautioned against its appropriation in such a fashion. The universal forms that fascinated Chomsky have more to do with the rules that structure grammars, rules that precede any concept of specific deep structure to any given sentence of any specific language. Chomsky's theory involves

three levels of conceptualization: (1) a base component made up of "phrase structure rules" that generate (2) a deep structure, which in turn is changed, via transformational rules into (3) a surface structure. Nida simplifies Chomsky's model and adopts only the latter two parts of the model in order to validate his science. At the same time, Chomsky's model lends itself to such a misappropriation by translation theorists; had Nida not formalized it, someone else would have. It is interesting to note that Frederic Will also embraced Chomsky's work as one more instance that promised the possibility of the "mutual interpenetrability of all languages" and rendered the limits of translatability "transcendable" (Will, 1984: 86). Transformational grammarians work in various languages and continually point out structural similarities across languages. Such similarities fascinated Chomsky, too, although again he cautioned against drawing conclusions, knowing that the number of languages is vast compared to the similarities found, and that deep structures need not be like any existing surface structure.

Although the two theories evolved for different reasons, they both assume that there exists a deep, coherent, and unified entity behind whatever manifestation language takes: the "core," the "kernel," the "deep structure," the "essence," the "spirit" are all terms used by Nida, many of which derive from Chomsky. While Chomsky later distanced himself from terms such as "kernel" (it is still present in *Aspects*, but plays an increasingly diminishing role), he still used concepts such as "base component" and "formal universals" which are "innate" in humans and cut across cultures. Both Chomsky and Nida made metaphysical claims about the object of investigation for their respective theories. Chomsky's linguistics probed structures of the mind and changed the focus of linguistics in the modern age; Nida's translation theory probed deep structures common to all languages and found ways to transform those entities in differing languages. The two approaches attempt to demonstrate different kinds of objects at the center – one arguing the existence of universal rules of grammar and universal lexical forms; the other making metaphysical claims about an original divine message. Both linguistics and translation theory are revitalized by their respective theories. Chomsky's deep-structure/surface-structure model, his transformational rules, although monolinguistically derived, lend themselves to justifying a theory of translation. Whether one accepts Chomsky's beliefs on how the human mind is structured or not, his deep structures, postulated to contain all the necessary syntactic as well as semantic information for a correct transformation into surface structure

and interpretation, lend themselves well to the translation practitioner trying to represent an "underlying" message in a second language.

I wish to call into question the very object translation science claims to be investigating. Has it been identified? Nida makes theoretical claims, but is there a *non-dit* operative that affects his theory? What are the underlying assumptions? Can there be a "science" of translation? In terms of its importance in the field, Nida's science cannot be underestimated, for his approach is being disseminated in the classrooms of both Germany and the United States. In Germany in the 1970s and 1980s, the science of translation *(Übersetzungswissenschaft)* became the approach that governed the teaching of translation, both conceptually and in practice. In the United States, the emergence of Nida's science has engendered textbooks, linguistic institutes, and journals now dominate in the academy. The wealth of linguistic data, numerous examples, machines, computers, and mathematical formulas employed seems deliberately to obscure something very fragile about the science: its theoretical premise. I hope to show how the science of translation is itself a dual activity: in the process of discovering new information and solving translation problems, it simultaneously covers up other aspects inherent in the nature of the subject being studied. If translation necessarily subverts its own institutionalization, then attempts to make a science of the field actually reinforce a different theoretical agenda than originally intended.

Noam Chomsky: "Underlying" structures

Chomsky's grammar is more complex than a two-level deep-structure/surface-structure argument. His model has several levels, the bottom of which is a very vague "initial element" (abandoned after his 1957 book *Syntactic Structures*, but conspicuous by its very absence), followed by the "base component," which is composed of two kinds of rewriting rules: "phrase structure rules," which are common to all languages, and "lexical rules," which also derive from universal categories. The phrase structure rules generate the deep structure of a sentence, which, according to Chomsky at the time of the writing of *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax*, contained all the syntactic and semantic information that determine its meaning. Finally, transformational rules modify the deep structure, resulting in the surface structures – all the sentences in a given language. Thus there is a double movement embedded in Chomsky's theory – from the base to the deep structure via

phrase structure rules, and then from the deep structure to the surface via transformational rules. According to Chomsky, the phrase structure rules represent the internalized and unconscious workings of the human mind; deep structure determines meaning underlying sentences; and surface structure determines sound (Chomsky, 1965: 22).

Many have raised philosophic objections regarding Chomsky's assumptions about the human mind and how it "knows" language. Yet in addition to questioning such concepts as "innateness," intuition," and "tacit" knowledge, some critics did not find Chomsky's evidence all that convincing. Ironically, Chomsky's "empirical" evidence of language structure is not based upon living language – how humans actually use language in a social situation – but on sentences found only in an ideal state:

> Linguistic theory is concerned primarily with an ideal speaker-listener, in a completely homogeneous speech-community, who knows its language perfectly and is unaffected by such grammatically irrelevant conditions as memory limitations, distractions, shifts of attention and interest, and errors.… This seems to me to have been the position of the founders of modern general linguistics, and no cogent reason for modifying it has been offered. (Chomsky, 1965: 3–4)

To those reading such a statement now, the terminology is loaded with suppositions – "ideal speaker-listener," "homogeneous speech-community," "know language perfectly," "grammatically irrelevant conditions" – that have all been called into question during the past two decades. Michel Foucault suggests that not only are there philosophical differences regarding assumptions about "human nature" involved, but also a generation gap regarding how the "subject," specifically, the "creative speaking subject" is perceived (Chomsky & Foucault, 1974:164). Chomsky has idealized the speaking subject and has empowered it with unique abilities with regard to its creative ability to use language. Through the process of idealization, however, certain usages involving accidents, errors, and slips of the tongue are not incorporated into Chomsky's model, instances which are just as important as "correct" formulations to Foucault's understanding of the speaking subject and its underlying "nature."

Despite such criticism, largely because of Chomsky's humanistic and Cartesian agenda and because of his deep-structure/surface-structure model, Chomsky has been "used" by translation scientists to substantiate

their claims. While Chomsky himself has argued *against* the appropriation of his work in such a fashion, one cannot ignore this body of material. George Steiner, whose comprehensive 1975 book on translation theory *After Babel* serves as one example, felt it important enough to deal extensively with Chomsky's theory and its relevance to understanding translation. Two translation scientists have adopted a Chomskian model for their theories. Eugene Nida, who argues that his science of translation is based upon a model similar to Chomsky's deep-structure/surface-structure, has perhaps simplified Chomsky's work and misappropriated it for his purposes. Wolfram Wilss, a leading German translation scientist, who argues that his model is *not* based upon Chomsky's work, has perhaps unwittingly adopted more from Chomsky than he is willing to admit.

The main problem revolves around the "depth" of the formal properties and whether the base structure or phrase structure is common property. While arguing in favor of formal universals common to all languages, Chomsky holds that these formal properties go much deeper than the particular deep structure of a sentence in any given language and that they are not specific to any particular language (Chomsky, 1965: 117). Though Nida perhaps thought that the same deep structure could underlie a sentence in two particular languages, Chomsky does not claim that deep structures are universal. The form of a particular language, according to Chomsky, does not necessarily equal the form of another. Chomsky realized the implications of his thesis for translation theory and advised caution:

> The existence of deep-seated formal universals … implies that all languages are cut to the same pattern, but does not imply that there is any point by point correspondence between particular languages. It does not, for example, imply that there must be some reasonable procedure for translating between languages. (Chomsky, 1965: 30)

While Chomsky assumed that generative rules lie at the heart of human language facility and postulated that a formal device may exist behind all languages, he would not jump to conclusions based upon correlations between just two languages, nor assume that a grammar particular to one language would work systematically for another. Surface structures need not be like their underlying deep structures. Nida ignored this caution and derived a translation procedure based upon a very simplified notion of Chomsky's theory, one which focuses primarily upon the deep structure, transformational rules, and surface structures that are similar

across languages rather than on the deeper phrase structure rules that actually allow for real structural diversity as well as surface differences in human languages.

From the perspective of translation practitioners, the problem with the generative transformational model is that it is overly idealistic, divorced from all the *problems* of translation – from contemporary neologisms to archaisms, from proper nouns to metaphors, from high registers to dialects and "mistakes" and all those knotty problems that make translation both impossible and fascinating. Quine's calling into question the very notion of synonymity strikes a resonant chord and is perhaps more relevant to practitioners than a theory of language that posits universal structures. A linguistic methodology that isolates its model from spoken language is both overly idealistic and perhaps too "theoretical" for many a translator's taste. Mathematically, it may be possible to develop a system in which a finite number of rules can generate an infinite number of manifestations, yet language, they would argue, operates differently from mathematics, and no matter how precisely a generative transformational linguist describes the generative rules which produce surface structures, other aspects of language will fall through cracks between generative lines of production. The fact that spoken language contains errors, shifts, ellipses, and gaps begs to tell us something about meaning and something about the structural nature of language. One could hypothetically argue that no sentence is ever divorced entirely from error, that this itself is a condition of language, and that language derives its very energy from this inherent instability. The tendency of generative transformational grammar to ignore all errors or to term them grammatically irrelevant probably obscures as much as it reveals about the structure of language.

Although Chomsky's theory revolutionized the field of linguistics, and many consider his theoretical work one of the major contributions to twentieth-century thought, many creative writers, literary theorists, and translation practitioners have remained strangely aloof. They quibble with his examples, doubt his assumptions, question his claim to be scientific, are troubled by his empirical procedures, and, especially, question whether a generative transformational model is useful to the study of literature. A series of questions raised by Barbara Herrnstein Smith is indicative that Chomsky's arguments have not persuaded everyone:

> Is linguistics a monolithic discipline? Specifically, is it equivalent to transformational-generative grammar? If not, is Chomsky's theory of language and the transformational-generative grammarians' pursuit of its study the only and/or the most suitable model for the theory of literature and the pursuit of its study? And, in any case, are the assumptions, procedures, concepts, and conclusions of linguistics themselves so well established, so free from internal problems or external criticism that the literary theorists are well advised to adopt and apply them unreflectingly? (Smith, 1978: 178)

Despite reservations from creative writers, literary theorists, and literary translators, and despite caution from Chomsky himself, one translation specialist found Chomsky's assumptions and methods very attractive and proceeded to construct a translation science around the model provided by Chomsky. As it turned out, the theory became the most influential approach in the field for subsequent decades.

Eugene Nida: Applying generative grammar to translation

If Chomsky's theoretical base is Platonic, Nida's is Protestant. The religious presuppositions on which Nida's work rests can be amply demonstrated by an analysis of his 1960 text *Message and Mission*, a pre-Chomsky version of *Toward a Science of Translation*. At that time Nida was still writing for missionaries, not translators; thus, while Nida was moving in the direction of a scientific analysis, "breaking new ground with new tools" (Nida, 1960: xvii) in the communication of the Christian faith, the discussion of theological motivations remained overt. The book's general thesis was that biblical translators should not take communication for granted, but should bring it about, employing all the resources of linguistics and communication theory to aid in their task. Nida drew on extensive fieldwork that showed that the religious message often failed to be communicated because of different cultural contexts and world views. Thus Nida came to understand that meaning cannot be divorced from the personal experience and the conceptual framework of the person receiving the message. He concluded that ideas "must be modified" to fit with the conceptual map of experience of the different context (Nida, 1960: 87).

The first difference between Nida's and Chomsky's philosophy is thus readily apparent: Nida's practical experience in introducing new ideas to

a culture remote from his own has underscored the importance of including with his theoretical framework the cultural context in which the communication occurs, an aspect lacking in Chomsky's model. Although Nida supports his arguments for such a model by referring to communication theory and cybernetics, the inclusion of this particular component is more than pragmatically motivated: it is also rooted in Nida's religious presuppositions. For both pragmatic and theological reasons Nida shows a strong interest in the response of the person receiving the communication. According to Nida, the Christian faith has behavioral rather than epistemological objectives, and thus Nida's goal is to effect the appropriate response, one which will *start a dialogue* not between the receiver and a text or symbols, but between the receiver and God. For the Protestant, communication is equated with power, and the focus of biblical communication has less to do with the epistemological problem of the relation of the word to the reality behind it and more to do with the *event* of the transfer of the power of the word (Nida, 1960: 224).

Theoretically, then, Nida does not privilege the sign as do Chomsky and many structural linguists, but the response to the sign. If his translation can solicit the response God intends, then the translation is successful. Words and symbols are mere labels, and the form of the message is thus relegated to secondary status. Theological considerations were edited out of Nida's next publication, *Toward a Science of Translating* (1964), but I argue that they are implicit throughout. Whereas Chomsky discounted the Sapir/Whorf approach to linguistics, which he felt was too culture-specific, Nida incorporates it within a larger model. Chomsky investigates the meaning inherent in the sign cut off from cultural context; Nida's primary concern is not with the meaning any sign carries with it, but with how the sign functions in any given society. Nida claims that this "functional definition of meaning" marks an advance over traditional mentalistic and imagistic definitions of meaning that have been characteristic of traditional philosophic investigations. If one accepts Chomsky's own characterization of his science as mentalistic, by extension, Nida's pragmatic interests appear to be at least a deviation from more traditional notions of deep structure.

Although it may appear that Nida's concept of meaning is substantially different from Chomsky's, Nida's pragmatics are not differentiated from Chomsky's concept of deep structure; they merely add to it. The pragmatic aspect of meaning is factored into the structure not at the surface level, but at the base, with the result that Nida's base

has a dual nature – a core of syntactic structures *and* of universal human experience. In order to accomplish this difficult maneuver, Nida must necessarily expand the nature of the core of his theory in order to include a "universal" experience of receiving the message. To include a reception component in the base component, Nida redefines the original message now as the "function of the message." Nida argues that the deep structure of the language – composed of the sign in context – can be inferred through study of the language and culture and through exegesis of these signs over the years. Only then can the appropriate response to that structure be determined and universalized. Nida builds his theory on the premise that the message of the original text not only can be determined, but also that it can be translated so that its reception will be the *same as that perceived by the original receptors*. In addition, since the source is clearly unitary – being God – the intention of the communication can also be counted upon as being stable. Nida's theory emphasizes not formal correspondence, but functional equivalence; not literal meaning but dynamic equivalence; not "what" language communicates, but "how" it communicates.

Nida's theory has been perceived as being progressive because it factors in the context of the message, but we see here that it is no less abstract than Chomsky's. "The message in context" or the "message and its reception" is pulled out of history, understood as unified and an essence of itself, and made into a timeless concept. The translated text, according to Nida, should produce a response in a reader in today's culture that is "essentially like" the response of the "original" receptors; if it does not, he suggests *making changes in the text* in order to solicit that initial response (Nida & Taber, 1969:202). This move results in a redefinition of equivalence: translations that are merely focused on transferring the message Nida now calls "formal equivalence"; translations focused on the producing the equivalent effect of that message upon the receiver are now called "dynamic equivalence." He writes, "In such a translation one is not so concerned with matching the receptor-language message with the source-language message, but with the dynamic relationship, that the relationship between the receptor and the message should be substantially the same as that which existed between the original receptors and the message." (Nida, 1964: 159).

I argue that such a theory is less derived from scientific principles and is more an outgrowth of the nature of his religious inclinations. The implicit assumption present but elided from his science is strikingly similar to the Protestant credence regarding communication in general,

and translation thus, for Nida, becomes the rearticulation of the power of the word (over people). Contemporary translations are always compared to a timeless *a priori* model in which meaning and response have been completely identified by the translator or, to be more precise, by the theologian. They are then pulled out of history, translated into a new context, and made to work in the *same manner*. The surface manifestation does not really matter to Nida; changes in the text, the words, the metaphors are allowed as long as the target language text functions in the same manner as the source text.

Once Nida has redefined meaning in terms of its function and abstracted the concept to the point where it can assume universal structural status, the appropriation of Chomsky's model with its concept of innate structures of the mind, its "generative" rules of transformation, and its reduction of surface signs to superficial status, follow quite naturally. With the added authority Chomsky's linguistic model lends to his project, Nida can now suggest that his missionary work has yielded to an objective "scientific" analysis of the problem of translation. He goes on to list some of the universals he has been able to determine by "back-transforming," including subject–predicate constructions, formal distinctions between nouns and verbs, and basic structures by which objects tend to be expressed by nouns and events by verb (Nida, 1964:66–8). After cataloguing these similarities, Nida concludes:

> It may be said, therefore, that in comparison with the theoretical possibilities for diversities of structures languages show certain amazing similarities, including especially (1) remarkably similar kernel structures from which all other structures are developed by permutations, replacements, additions, and deletions, and (2) on their simplest structural levels a high degree of parallelism between formal classes of words (e.g. nouns, verbs, adjectives, etc.) and the basic function classes in transforms: objects, events, abstracts, and relationals. (Nida, 1964: 68)

Although Nida's interest and goals differ widely from Chomsky, the two reach similar conclusions about the nature of language, positing the existence of deep structures that underlie all surface structures. The terminology is much the same with the use of "kernels" and "transforms." Although Nida is not quite ready to make Chomsky's claim that these kernel structures are universal, given the terminology he uses at their discovery, i.e., "remarkable" and "amazing," Nida seems to accord them supernatural status within his "scientific" approach.

There are significant differences between Chomsky's and Nida's theories, however, which tend to illustrate that Nida's model is a simplified version of Chomsky's, to a large degree misappropriated in order to apply it to translation. At the heart of Nida's theory is a system of "kernel constructions" from which everything else is derived (Nida, 1964:68). The concept of kernel sentences is one advocated by Harris and adopted by Chomsky in early models of his generative transformational grammar. Chomsky, however, felt the concept was slightly misleading, and it was rapidly disappearing by the time *Aspects* appeared. While the notion of kernel sentences has, according to Chomsky, an "important intuitive significance," it is not one that plays "a distinctive role in the generation or interpretation of sentences" (Chomsky, 1965: 18). Nida seems to conflate the concept of kernel sentences with the base component composed of phrase structures, and one is never clear exactly what he means by such references. Chomsky's base component allowed for an infinite diversity of surface manifestations, a concept he held fundamental to the creativity revealed by the speaking subject.

Methodologically, differences between the two theories are also apparent. Nida prefers to work backwards from the surface of the original text to its deep structure, transfer that deep structure to the deep structure of the new language, and then generate a surface structure in the second language. In other words, he posits a decoding and recoding process in which the original message never changes. Nida summarizes his translation methodology as follows:

> It is both scientifically and practically more efficient (1) to reduce the source text to its structurally simplest and most semantically evident kernels, (2) to transfer the meaning from source language to receptor language on a structurally simple level, and (3) to generate the stylistically and semantically equivalent expression in the receptor language. (Nida, 1964: 68)

Working backwards and reducing texts to simple structural sentences and most evident kernels are not Chomskian procedures, and again suggest a misappropriation of Chomsky's model. Chomsky's structures are hardly simple or evident. Using a concept such as "back-transforming" to reveal universals of syntax and semantics also raises questions about Nida's concept of transformational rules in general. Although Chomsky does suggest that transformational rules are non-linear, to extrapolate a decoding-recoding process misrepresents his theory. Nida, like other

practicing translators, decodes and recodes, and often "proves" his work by translating into a target language and then back into the source language (Nida, 1964: 66–9), but to argue that such a methodology derives from Chomsky, or rephrasing such a practice with Chomskian terminology, distorts a theory of transformational grammar.

How, according to Nida, then is meaning to be determined, if not by accepted linguistic methods? In a section called "Basic Requirements of the Translator" Nida writes:

> He must understand not only the obvious content of the message, but also the subtleties of meaning, the significant emotive values of words and the stylistic features which determine the "flavor and feel" of the message. … In other words, in addition to a knowledge of the two or more languages involved in the translational process, the translator must have a thorough acquaintance with the subject matter concerned. (Nida, 1964: 150–1)

Again, Nida's religious beliefs tend to be very instrumental in the formulation of his scientific approach. Indeed, he seems to be conflating the translator's role with that of the missionary. In fact, the difference between exegesis and translation is beginning to disappear in Nida's theory, since how the message is rendered and what remains of the original formulation seem to be less important than the explanation itself.

In addition to enjoying complete knowledge of the source, Nida requires that the translator have the same "empathetic" spirit of the author and the ability to impersonate the author's demeanor, speech, and ways, with the "utmost verisimilitude" (Nida, 1964: 151). Nida goes on to argue that the translator should admire the author, have the same cultural background, the same talent (not more or less) and present the same joy to the reader that is given by the original. Nida's "empathetic spirit" approaches total devotion to and dependence upon the original author's intent. Unless these requirements are fulfilled, the translator will miss the original message as well as how that message functions. The problem with such a requirement is one literary critics refer to as the intentional fallacy: what a work says and what the author intended it to say are two different things. Such empathy as Nida seems to favor in fact may serve to obscure that which is being translated. Nida's theory of translation seems less scientifically motivated and more a positive reaffirmation of the work. Translation is equated with revelation, making visible that original message which now takes on archetypal status.

I suggest that the relationship between author and text is complex and potentially deceptive, the reduction of a work to "simple structures" invariably distorting, and the transfer of those simple structures from one deep structure to another – across languages and across time – probably impossible. Even in his simplified theory, Nida does not tell us how the deep structure transfer occurs. Given the emphasis "empathy of spirit" receives in the model, intuition must somewhere enter the equation. Certainly faith, devotion, and absolute trust become the major theoretical vehicles. I suggest that the center, the deep structure, the text's meaning, may always be absent. The text, as dense as it may be, and the exegesis, as lucid as it may be, are never complete. There will always be gaps, room for differing interpretation, and variable reception. Therein lies the energy of the text. Nida would deny this as a matter of faith, positing instead the opposite viewpoint, i.e., that the original message can be determined and does not change. However, because he is working with words, even in this case the Word of God, and because of the very fact that he is working with language, there will always be present metaphoric indeterminacy and historical change. No text ever explicates its own reception. Nida's translation theory wants to decipher the text and prepare it for consumption. He wants to explain the text as well as describe it, just as Chomsky's theory wants to explain linguistic structures in addition to describing them. Nida does not trust readers to decode texts for themselves, thus he posits an omnipotent reader, preferably the ideal missionary/translator, who will do the work for the reader. His goal, even with the Bible, is to dispel the mystery, solve the ambiguities, and reduce the complexities for simple consumption.

One of the goals in *Toward a Science of Translating* is to redefine the principles that have been used to govern and judge the accuracy of translation. Traditionally, "faithful" has been reserved for literal translations, those which privileged form, and "free" has been used to designate those translations that privileged content. Nida prefers the latter, and has ironically reversed the historical use of the term "faithful," which he now applies to his dynamic approach. He argues that formal translators, who are primarily concerned with correspondences such as poetry to poetry, sentence to sentence, and concept to concept, are more apt to make mistakes misinterpreting the "intent of the author," more likely to select a "less than appropriate interpretation out of several possible renderings," and more apt to "distort the meaning" (Nida, 1964:191–2). In the course of the argument outlining his preference for dynamic equivalence, a reversal in terminology has taken place. Nida

feels that the dynamic translator is able to be more faithful than the literal translator by somehow perceiving "more fully and satisfactorily the meaning of the original text" (Nida, 1964: 192) and then is more likely to leave that meaning intact while surreptitiously providing explanations through additions, elisions, and transformations. Frederic Will at least saw the paradox involved in translation and confronted the "faithful traitor" problem with new insight. Nida does not see the paradox, and wishes to claim one methodology is better than the other, perpetuating the same old faithful/free problem Steiner felt was characteristic of all pre-structuralist translation theory. Nida's prescriptive translation theory, while intended to elucidate the original message and response, invariably results in a distortion of the very sense he claims to wish to preserve, as his translation as exegesis obscures the original text to such a degree that it becomes unavailable to the contemporary reader.

Nida's attempt to redefine the terminology and offer a prescription for proper translation also serves to reveal his theoretical priorities. We see that he presumes some underlying "meaning of the original text" which is accessible. Because of the importance of retaining this meaning, the form the message takes becomes expendable, reducing the surface manifestation of the message to secondary status. Because it focuses on the underlying structures of the surface structure, Chomsky's theory is similarly constructed, making the "logic" of the two models similar. Both Nida's and Chomsky's theories are self-reflective, the major difference being that Chomsky's universal forms exist at a much deeper, more abstract (and less understood) level than Nida's kernels. Yet there end the similarities. At the time Chomsky was writing, the rules of transformation were so tentative that no real translation procedure other than a point-by-point comparison of limited fields existed, an approach that Nida 's science rejects.

In sum, while Nida's *Toward a Science of Translating* appears to be grounded in modern linguistics, the *non-dit* always present is a Protestant subtext. Nida believes, as he argued in *Message and Mission*, that words are essentially labels (Nida, 1960); if they need to be changed or replaced in order to effect communication, then they should be adjusted accordingly. Verbal symbols are only labels of human origin, and the "message" is from a higher source. Texts are equally pliable, adapting themselves to multiple forms without altering the original intention. "Lamb" has been translated into "seal" and "pig" and many other "forms" or "labels" in order to spread the word of God. Missionary work

depends upon establishing a point of contact, any point of contact, and building from there. The assumption that this higher, originary message not only exists, but that it is eternal and *precedes* language is always already presupposed by Nida, and it affects his science. He "knows" the message from this higher source, and knows how people are supposed to respond. He does not trust the readers to make up their own minds; in order to achieve the intended response, he has license to change, streamline, and simplify. All potential differences – ambiguities, mysteries, Freudian slips – are elided in order to solicit a unified response that transcends history. This methodology may be very useful for those translating propaganda or advertising, and it seems to work well with certain kinds of religion, but its limitations within the framework of a science of translating are obvious. Nida provides an excellent model for translation that involves a manipulation of a text to serve the interests of a religious belief, but he fails to provide the groundwork for what the West in general conceives of as a "science."

Wolfram Wilss: The science of translation in Germany

Although most influential in terms of Bible translating, Nida's work in translation also enjoys surprising academic influence in the fields of linguistics and translation outside a biblical context. The most detailed application of Nida's theory has not occurred in England or America, but in Germany, where the science of translation *(Übersetzungswissenschaft)* dominates the teaching of translation in places such as the University of the Saarland in Saarbrücken. I can best illustrate Nida's influence by analyzing the work of Wolfram Wilss, who teaches at Saarbrücken, and whose text, *Übersetzungswissenschaft. Probleme und Methoden* (1977) *(The Science of Translation: Problems and Methods* (1982)), perhaps best articulates his theory and practice. Wilss's science is still in tentative form – documenting its research with few examples, and those drawn from only two languages (English and German). The studies still contain many unresolved contradictions, and the system as a whole still lacks evaluative standards. Yet enough work has been accomplished in terms of linguistic analysis of specific pair-bound examples – both sentence and text oriented – for Wilss to make fairly large generalizations about appropriate methodological and philosophical approaches for a science of translation. I will focus on his theoretical presuppositions, both explicit and implicit, and show how these largely reflect premises similar

to those of Chomsky and Nida, and then examine his understanding of translation equivalence, which despite claims of being descriptive, also reflects a tendency to universalize.

Wilss's science of translation is divided into three related but separate branches of research: (1) a description of a "general science" of translation which involves translation theory; (2) "descriptive studies" of translation relating empirical phenomena of translation equivalence; and (3) "applied research" in translation pointing out particular translation difficulties and ways of solving specific problems. The "general science" (1) is heavily weighted toward text-linguistic premises that categorize texts both thematically and functionally. Translators must have what Wilss terms text-analytical competence; text types themselves are classified as "more translation oriented" or "less translation oriented." "Descriptive studies" (2) tend to focus on "text-pragmatic equivalence" or examples that evoke the same set of ideas and concepts. Wilss's method involves both intralingual translation – paraphrasing the meaning of an original – and interlingual translation – transferring that meaning into a target language – and places a great deal of emphasis on the psychological response. "Applied research" (3) offers practical insights on particular translation difficulties and attempts to resolve them by a sort of means-to-an-end approach. In addition, this branch of the program tries to develop a frame of reference for analyzing errors, and attempts to provide an explanative and evaluative structure for assessing quality, or at least acceptable variants. Of the three branches of Wilss's project, applied research is the least defined and raises the most questions; he admits that his "science" has yet to recognize many translation difficulties, and it also has problems in terms of finding an objective evaluative framework.

More developed are the theoretical and methodological branches, which I will now proceed to examine more closely. *The Science of Translation* opens, "Modern linguistics is regarded as a primarily communicative discipline; this development can be traced to the time it began to break the stranglehold of the generativists" (Wilss, 1982: 11). Wilss's project thus reacts against two dominating linguistic theories, that of descriptive linguistics and that of generative grammar, despite the fact that the two have very different theoretical foundations. The rejection of linguistic approaches such as taxonomic structuralisms that merely describe the surface structure of specific languages and show little interest in translation is easy to understand. Wilss's reasons for opposing generative grammar, however, are slightly less clear. Wilss

argues that a similar problem is true for generative transformational grammar as for structural linguistics. He argues that the generativists use the same methodological tools available to a "scientistic science" and seek to produce "a mathematically explicit depiction of the mental processes which allows for empirical verification and confirmation" (Wilss, 1982: 67). In addition, Wilss objects to generative transformational grammar because it is syntax dominated; it does not include psycholinguistics; it studies only individual language systems; it provides no inter-lingual language model; it ignores reception problems; and it ignores the function of the message in its original context (Wilss, 1982: 68–70). Wilss sees Chomsky in the same camp as the structuralists and empiricists because he does not see the very idealist, Platonic roots of Chomsky's theory. Wilss at one point argues that Chomsky's linguistic theory is governed by a "quasi-cybernetic automatic control system" and that "the generative component in Noam Chomsky's linguistic theory… is ultimately mechanistic, not mentalistic" (Wilss, 1982: 15). Chomsky has been attacked by so many linguists for his lack of semantic and pragmatic components in the theory, that Wilss, because he analyzes textual units in addition to sentence structures, does not seem to realize that he is adopting a similar deep-structure/surface-structure framework with an equally similar theoretical rationale.

Wilss chooses, ironically, to invoke the "mentalistic" paradigm for his own "science." He writes that the science of translation is not a sealed, "nomological" science, but a "cognitive/hermeneutic/associative" one. Thus it need satisfy only "to a limited degree" the demands for objectivity and "value-free procedural methods" that characterize the research methodology of the natural sciences. This frees Wilss to find historical precedence for his approach in those pre-structuralist language theories that are based upon a humanist/idealist concept of understanding, to adopt the competence/performance distinctions as outlined by Chomsky, and to accept Nida's modification of competence to include a contextual component. Translation for Wilss is guaranteed by the deep-structure existence of universals – syntactic and semantic, universal forms as well as a core of common experience – and his science becomes a simple matter of creating syntactic, semantic, and reception equivalents. Wilss's "science" is much closer to Chomsky's than even he might care to admit:

> The translatability of a text is thus guaranteed by the existence of universal categories in syntax, semantics, and the (natural) logic of

> experience. Should a translation nevertheless fail to measure up to the original in terms of quality, the reason will (normally) be not an insufficiency of syntactic and lexical inventories in that particular TL [target language], but rather the limited ability of the translator in regard to text analysis. (Wilss, 1982: 49)

Thus, with the proper training at his institute, students can learn to expand their inventories of proper equivalents, sharpen their hermeneutic intuition, and produce quality translations. Wilss's didactic position reminds us of I.A. Richards's workshop project since both involve teaching students the proper interpretation of texts.

An examination of Wilss's history of translation theory provides a framework in which to understand his presuppositions better. Wilss moves very quickly through the Romans and Greeks, Cicero, Jerome, and Luther, summarizing each theory in less than a paragraph. He then provides a detailed analysis of two German theorists: Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm von Humboldt. Schleiermacher becomes important for Wilss's science because he makes a qualitative distinction between "true" and "mechanical" translation, legitimating the need for a science that can translate art, and necessitating a translator who is capable of the hermeneutic leap to the primary message and the "proper" (Schleiermacher's term) translation of the meaning. Wilss's didactic project reinforces the linguistic distinction in German that English does not make: the difference between translation *(Übersetzen)* and interpretation *(Dolmetschen)*. Only recently, at the instigation of the Leipzig school, has the term "translation" been introduced to cover *both* the act of translating and of interpreting.

Wilss next emphasizes Humboldt's contribution to translation theory. He is aware of contradictions in Humboldt's arguments regarding translation. Humboldt did not believe in the *a priori* existence of universal conceptual systems that transgress the boundaries of individual languages. Wilss is also aware that such thinking would deny the possibility of ever finding a functional equivalent, the cornerstone of both Nida's science and his own. Yet despite Humboldt's view that languages are essentially dissimilar and translation impossible, Wilss finds him also making claims: "that the natural predisposition to language is a universal one and that *all* [languages] must hold within them *the key* to understanding all languages" (qtd. by Klöpfler, 1967: 55; qtd. by Wilss, 1982: 36). Wilss concludes that translation is possible because the hermeneutic process gives us access to these universals and

the generative potential of the universals enables language to transcend specific social and cultural boundaries. He excitedly concludes that "the 'generative' reserves of this potential are so great as to enable a speech community to adequately cover any and all extralinguistic states of affairs, including those beyond the scope of their own sociocultural experience" (Wilss, 1982:36). Wilss sees a simultaneous, dual argument rather than a contradiction in Humbolt's views, concluding that both positions are true, i.e., that universals exist at a deeper level, while surface structures are mutually exclusive. He argues that a relationship exists – core structures have the capacity to generate surface structures – between the two. Instead of breaking the chains of Chomsky's generative grammar, Wilss actually adopts Chomsky's distinction between competence and performance and between deep structure and surface structure.

Wilss's translation theory is thus rooted in German idealism and based upon the following: (1) the concept of a universal language, consisting of universal forms and a core of shared experience; (2) a belief that deep-structure transfer is possible via a hermeneutic process; (3) a generative component, which translates intralingually from the base to the surface of a given language; and (4) a qualitative ranking of texts, from a high level incorporating art and science texts to a low level including business and pragmatic texts. Wilss's research methodology is based upon reducing the original text to its thematic content and its text type via an "intralingual" back transformation. By paraphrasing meanings, Wilss eliminates differences, specific word plays, and implications of texts as they occur in history; rather, texts are classified archetypically and ahistorically. The research branch of his science clearly reveals such a methodology:

> Translation research must develop a frame of reference which views a text as a communicatively-oriented configuration with a thematic, a functional, a text-pragmatic dimension; these three text dimensions can be derived from the respective text surface structure. (Wilss, 1982: 116)

Texts are categorized according to idealized types and complex relations reduced to "empirically" derived formulas classifying texts according to universal genres and themes. These themes are repackaged in a different language and context, but they are designed to produce the same effect as the original. Wilss's text-typologies fall prey to what literary critics refer to as the empirical fallacy: the "empirically" derived categories are

never seen: they exist only as some ideal construct in someone's imagination, just as Chomsky's competence is never revealed, only derived. The system is designed to identify and describe finished products, and to prepare those products for consumption in a different time and place. Such universalizing approaches tend to omit the things that do not fit into categories, such as the contradictions, ironies, and distancing devices, which are almost always part of every text. Multiple thematic or generic references tend to get streamlined or eliminated altogether. In addition, not surprisingly, Wilss ends his history with the optimistic pronouncement that "everything can be expressed in every language" and that this view is "widespread in modern linguistics" (Wilss, 1982: 48). Unfortunately, that which has been reduced and repressed in order to accomplish this total success may be as important to the text's meaning as its thematized content.

An examination of some of those "modern" linguists whom Wilss argues hold the above widespread view reveals that they are not post-Chomskian at all. Wilss reacts against the Sapir/Whorf school of thought, which denies the *a priori* existence of universal categories of thought and whose followers have a skeptical view of the possibility that two languages might share a common core of experience. To dismiss this line of reasoning, Wilss cites first Chomsky and then Eric H. Lenneberg, whose The *Biological Foundations of Language* (1967) posited biological universals in language. Wilss suggests that the Chomsky/Lenneberg view of language universals "proceeds from the hypothesis, undisputed to date, that there are semantic and syntactic universals, including universal pragmatics; this holds true in many if not all natural languages" (Wilss, 1982: 39). Wilss next cites Erwin Koschmieder, who argued in *Beiträge zur allgemeinen Syntax(1965)* that what is signified does not necessarily equal the meaning of a text (1982: 43). Wilss finally concludes that the Sapir/Whorf relativity thesis is now largely "overdrawn and unsupported (if not unsupportable)" (Wilss, 1982: 43). At one point in his argument, Wilss even implies that the Sapir/Whorf thesis is implicitly "racist" by referring to an Otto Kade article "Ist alles übersetzbar?" (1964) to support this politically provocative argument:

> If I assert that a complete translation is not possible, I am asserting that one language (namely, the language that I am translating into) cannot express what was already expressed in another language … this implies attaching a rating to those who speak it, and we find

> ourselves on the surest road to a reactionary racist ideology. (Kade, 1964:88; qtd. by Wilss, 1982: 47–48)

The move from an examination of theoretical foundations prevalent in the field to such accusations indicates not only Wilss's investment in his "science," but also his fear that the Sapir/Whorf view may be more widespread than he is willing to admit.

In the end, Wilss's argument is based less on scientific argument and more on intuition, as he asserts that anyone who has dealt with the "realities of translations" will intuitively grasp the veracity of his claims. Recalling claims made by translation theorists such as Frederic Will, Wilss argues that the deep structure of language (in which he includes the sign in context) can be determined (via hermeneutic trust) and transformed into "all" languages in any contemporary context. Wilss's deep structure is thus no less abstract than Chomsky's or Nida's. Wilss adopts universals of form from Chomsky's theory and then adds the experiential component found in Nida. Wilss ends his section on modern linguistics by quoting Nida's 1969 article "Science of Translation" in which Nida argued that the impression that interlingual communication is always possible is based upon two "fundamental" factors: (1) that semantic similarities in language are due to "the common core of human experience"; and (2) that fundamental similarities exist in the "syntactic structures of languages, especially at the so-called kernel, or core, level" (Nida, 1969: 483; qtd. by Wilss, 1982: 49).

The "sciences" of translation described so far in this chapter thus tend to be theoretically founded on an assumption about the nature of language that cannot be empirically verified. Methodologically, they tend to proceed by universalizing and generalizing to such a degree that that which is unique, different, and new about ideas as expressed in language becomes obliterated. In terms of positing standards for evaluation, they necessitate that the translator be the authority, and cease to trust the readers to interpret the text on their own. Finally, by investing heavily in the notion of deep structure, whether universal syntactic, semantic, or pragmatic structures, they tend to trivialize their own products, i.e., the works in translation, and the contributions that acts of translation may make to the development and evolution of the original text.

Functionalist theories in German language countries

Wilss's work has evolved over the course of the past two decades, especially his descriptive studies, which works with pair-bound cases and explores the various possibilities for their translation. Given the theoretical foundations of his science, it should come as no surprise that he has begun to explore the mental factors that account for first perception and then efficient translation, for intuiting and the subsequent decision-making process, creative factors not incompatible with what has always been a humanistic approach. He has become interested in cognitive psychology and theories of human behavior largely because the results from descriptive studies have forced modification of the general science branch. What has become clear is the large degree of variability in translated texts, which is viewed by Wilss less as a fault of the well-trained translator, and more as a result of the differing cultural contexts in which translators find themselves and their very subjective, creative decisions. The cultural component was always present in Nida's work, but Wilss expands extraliterary considerations to incorporate cultural factors that not only influence the final product, but also weigh upon the decision-making process. The "subjective" factor was also always part of the Chomskian model, which emphasized the creative potential of the human language. But the subjective factor had been largely absent during the first decade of the Wilss group's "applied research" branch, whose work was directed at the best possible "objective" solution to a pair-bound problem.

Nowhere is Wilss's proximity to Nida more apparent than in his argument against encroaching translation models based upon the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis he objected to years earlier. Although the data accumulated over the past decades indicate that the translation theorist must take into account the variable cultural contexts in which individual translators perform, Wilss calls the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis a radical version of linguo-cultural relativism. He still claims that "nobody in translation research endorses this radical version" (Wilss, 1989: 134). He continues, "Personally, I do not believe that everything is linguo-culturally determined. I do believe that there are many aspects of translation … that transcend cultural boundaries and that are, in fact, universal." To substantiate this position, Wilss again cites Nida, this time from *Translating Meaning* (1982), in which Nida argues that one reason for the possibility of interlingual communication is that "what people of various cultures have in common is far greater than what separates them" and that "even within an individual culture there are usually more radical extremes of behavior and attitude than one finds in a comparison of so-

called normal or standard behavior" (Nida, 1982: 9; qtd. by Wilss, 1989: 135).

Drawing upon modern linguistics and psycholinguistics, Wilss's work in researching and defining human intuition and creativity in translation has perhaps been the theoretically more interesting aspect of his recent work. Half of Wilss's book *Kognition und Übersetzen* (1988) is devoted to the subject, and there is clearly a dissolving of certain rigid notions within the science of translation. He writes that intuition is the opposite of prototypical concepts and that, while translators must systematically orient themselves to a conceptual plan, they must also stand outside the accepted methods and norms of translation and intuit aspects of the text, a behavior he finds "risky" but always part of the process. Wilss concludes that both systematic analysis and intuition need to complement one another. The primary procedure is systematic, i.e., determining the dominant structure of the text from the myriad of details via a mechanism of abstraction. But Wilss allows that such a procedure is not the only imaginable one and that it is often not practiced (Wilss, 1989: 142–43). He also argues that even in a rational, systematic approach to translation, intuition plays a role in how one thinks and formulates solutions. Thus, while holding dear to principles well established in *Übersetzungswissenschaft*, Wilss's recent work is very open-ended, analyzing both cultural components and creative factors in a way that complicates scientific investigation.

While the creative aspects of translation have long been deemed beyond the realm of scientific inquiry, German scholars such as Hans Hönig and Paul Kußmaul have been developing methods to do exactly that. In the essay "Holmes's 'Mapping Theory' and the Landscape of Mental Translation Processes" (1991), Hönig discusses the results from his "talk-aloud protocol" in which translators talk aloud into a tape recorder while they are translating a document, revealing their mental processes at work. He has found that many strategies that are taught to translators actually inhibit the process, often causing them to sacrifice creativity at the expense of more learned behavior. He suggests that often the uncontrolled, unconscious, and intuitive judgements are perhaps more important than the cognitive, controlled, and rational choices. In "Creativity in the Translation Process: Empirical Approaches" (1991) Kußmaul has further developed the model so that two translators talk aloud into a tape recorder while translating the same text, creating a dialogue of the mental processes at work. Whereas the monologue creates an artificial environment – translators talking to themselves – and

is therefore subject to the honesty of the translators themselves, the dialogue model creates a more natural, credible atmosphere. Again, Kußmaul finds that the subconscious associations are often as valuable as the more rational solutions. In the translation process, blockages often occur, and to free themselves from such moments, translators need to fantasize, brainstorm, diverting their attention from the immediate task. Relaxation and freedom from the didactic situation, according to Kußmaul, seems to help translators find more appropriate solutions. He concludes by suggesting that the ability to play freely with the language, to generate lots of associations, options, and possibilities, is integral to the process of producing good translations, a theory elaborated in *Training the Translator* (1995).

Other "schools" in Germany follow a similar empirical approach to the study and teaching of translation. The Leipzig school, which began in the mid-sixties, has also evolved considerably. The early work of Otto Kade, such as *Zufall und Gesetzmässigkeit in der Übersetzung* (1968), a text that may deserve reconsideration today, differs greatly from the current approach. Kade allowed for a rather broad scale of *Textgattungen* (not necessarily types, but categorized generically), which are integrated according to the form and content, perhaps more along the lines of a New Critical concept of the unity of the original text. But Kade's main interest at the time was more focused upon the unit or word level, where he proposed four "types" of correspondence: one-to-one *(totale Äquivalenz);* one-to-many *(fakultative Äquivalenz);* one-to-a-part of one *(approximative Äquivalenz);* and one-to-none *(Null-Äquivalenz)*. After dividing the text up into frames or units, the translator was to pick the "optimal equivalent" from a varying field of equivalents or options; the building of the units then proceeds to the creation of an integrated whole. With its attention to detail and focus on smaller frames of reference, the approach seems to be not all that unlike one Pound may have been suggesting.

As "modern" linguistics became more widespread internationally, the Leipzig school evolved, and the focus shifted from a word-for-word approach to a more transformational model. In the article "Invarianz und Pragmatik," published in 1973, Albrecht Neubert discussed the "central problem" of the science of translation. He posited an "invariant" of comparison for translation, which is based upon the original and called the text type. He wrote that the codes that govern the use of language indicate that in any communication situation one can expect a characteristic text type and that this text type is a source language

invariant (Neubert, 1973: 16). He added that text type invariance, whose parameters are set by pragmatics and semantics, also allows for variables of the specific product, and the translation problem then becomes one of optimal comparison (Neubert, 1973:19). This sounds much like transformational grammar, and when asked how translations are possible, Neubert answered that they are made possible precisely by the unity of their deep structures and that the interpretation process on the surface structure in its grammatical-lexical segments and its pragmatic function are derived from that same deep structure (Neubert, 1973: 20).

This turn to modern linguistics led Neubert to develop what has come to be known as the "top-down model" for translation. In "Translatorische Relativität" he writes that the essential translation unit is the entire text, from which one calculates backwards to arrive at the global proposition, which is then divided up into smaller, single, transportable semantic units (Neubert, 1986: 101; see also Neubert, 1985: 135). The terminology has shifted slightly: the unified text is now understood as having a kind of "mosaic" quality, an elasticity that allows it to be translated into a variety of "relative" target texts. Neubert introduces the term "translatorial relativity" in the reconstruction process, allowing for a "creative" process of transfer from the source text to the target text. Yet this "relativity" is deceptive, for it has nothing to do with the Sapir/Whorf hypothesis. Instead, Neubert argues that relativity derives from an inherent multiplicity of structural possibilities in the original (Neubert, 1986: 97). The model Neubert sketches reminds one of James Holmes's "On Matching and Making Maps (1973–4): once the translator makes a choice for one given word, i.e., one given structure, the rest of the text follows a clearly set pattern, a network of units – words, sentences, and excerpts from the text – that build coherently. However, unlike Holmes, the language in which Neubert presents his model varies from linguistic discourse to often transcendental, visionary notions. On the one hand, he talks about text equivalence in terms of a macroproposition, which corresponds to the semantic content of the source text and which is then broken down into a fabric of words mapped on to syntactic structures (Neubert, 1986: 95). At other times, his argument takes on a less than scientific quality. He conceives of the source text as an "island of invariance" and talks in terms of a spring or a leap coming from the source text. He argues that "true coherence" (as differentiated from surface structure cohesion) is actually the norm for larger sections of the text, and that the choices presented to the translator are "predestined" (Neubert, 1986: 92; see also Neubert, 1985: 81ff.).

With the fall of the wall dividing Germany and the new political regime in the former German Democratic Republic, scholars at Leipzig have scattered widely. Neubert fortunately landed at Kent State University, where a number of fine translation scholars work, including Gregory Shreve, Carol Maier, and others. Shreve and Neubert co-authored *Translation as Text* (1992) in which many of the ideas regarding text-linguistic, sociolinguistic, and psycholinguistic models are discussed. The authors apply cognitive research on the process of translation to text-linguistic models without losing sight of the problem-solving model. While much of the book is focused on grammatical structures and the process of accessing the "ideational content" and restructuring those ideas in a second language, the translator is viewed as a mediator in the process of bi-lingual communication, and concepts such as "situation management" (Neubert & Shreve, 1992: 85–6; cf. Beaugrande and Dressler, 1981: 168) are introduced. The theory is thus very much practice-oriented, trying to both to describe the translation process and to demonstrate how translation scholarship can be of practical assistance to training translators.

Closely related to both the Saarbrücken school and the Leipzig school is what has come to be called the functionalist approach, practiced by many scholars in German language countries, including Katharina Reiss, Hans Vermeer, Mary Snell-Hornby, Christiane Nord, and Justa Holz-Mänttäri. In *Möglichkeiten und Grenzen der Übersetzungskritik* (1971) Katharina Reiss argued that this kind of linear approach by scholars such as Otto Kade hindered rather than helped the development of a "relevant text typology for the translation process" (Reiss, 1971: 28). Reiss's work draws on developments in the pragmatic branch of linguistics, and she bases her types upon *the function* of the language in the text. Using work done by Karl Bühler in *Sprachtheorie* (1965), she divides the language in question into its representational, expressive, and appellative functions. While she allows that a single text seldom represents just one of these functions, she suggests that even in mixed forms one of the functions predominates (Reiss, 1971: 32). She then typecasts texts respectively into *inhaltsbetonte* texts (emphasizing content or information), *formbetonte* texts (emphasizing the form of the language), and *appellbetonte* texts (emphasizing appeal to the reader).

Reiss's work culminated in the co-authored *Grundlegung einer allgemeinen Translationstheorie* (1984), written together with Hans J. Vermeer, which has become the foundational text for the functionalist approach to translation. Pushing the boundaries of Nida's concept of

dynamic equivalence to new levels of flexibility and adaptability, functionalist scholars, the most influential group of theorists in Germany, Austria, and parts of Finland during the past decade, have adapted well to conditions of the new global market. Although most of the work is only available in German, abridged versions of *Grundlegung* exist in Finnish (1985) and Spanish (1996). Vermeer has authored one article in English outlining his theory titled "Skopos and Commission in Translational Action" (1989). More helpful to the English speaking world has been Christiane Nord's summary of the theory in *Translation as a Purposeful Activity; Functionalist Approaches Explained* (1997).

The two most important shifts in theoretical developments in translation theory over the past two decades have been (1) the shift from source-text oriented theories to target-text oriented theories and (2) the shift to include cultural factors as well as linguistic elements in the translation training models. Those advocating functionalist approaches have been pioneers in both areas. Functionalist theorists conceive of translation as an *action* carried out by a person who has a specific communication goal, which Reiss and Vermeer refer to as the text's *Skopos* (Greek for 'the intent, the goal, the function'; Reiss & Vermeer, 1984:96). Because the appropriateness of the form of communication always relates to the accomplishment of the intended goal, the target cultural takes on crucial importance. Vermeer writes "The *Skopos* rule thus reads as follows: translate/interpret/speak/write in a way that enables your text/translation to function in the situation in which it is used and with the people who want to use it and precisely in the way they want it to function" (Vermeer, 1989: 20; qtd. and trans. Nord, 1997: 29). Christiane Nord summarizes the *Skopos* rule as "the ends justify the means" (1997: 29). Without insisting upon one perfect translation as a goal, or on any one particular strategy, functionalists pragmatically ask only that translators strive for optimal solutions within actual existing conditions. Translators may choose to be faithful to the source text's spirit, or they may choose a word-for-word strategy, or they may add, delete, or change information as they see fit, depending upon the cultural conditions and the needs of the audience/consumer. Indeed, functionalist theorists tend to blur the definitional boundaries of translation itself. Vermeer above talks in terms of "translate/interpret/speak/write" as one continuous concept. Justa Holz-Mänttäri, a German functionalist scholar who teaches in Finland, avoids using the term "translator" at all, finding it too restrictive. In *Translatorisches Handeln; Theorie und Methode* (1984), she uses the term *Botschaftsträger* ('message transmitters'),

which she feels includes a variety of genres of cross-cultural communication, including texts combined with other media such as pictures, sounds, and body movements.

The emergence of a functionalist translation theory marks an important moment in the evolution of translation theory by breaking the two thousand year old chain of theory revolving around the faithful vs. free axis. Functionalist approaches can be either one or the other and still be true to the theory, as long as the approach chosen is adequate to the aim of the communication. For example, some texts such as product descriptions might demand a word-for-word description; other texts such as advertisements might suggest a freer approach. The functionalist approach allows the translator the flexibility to decide which approach would work better in the given situation. The translator/cultural worker thus enjoys the license to participate actively in the production of the final text. Indeed, the functionalist approach views the translator as a cross-cultural professional, not as a secondary, mechanical scribe. Holz-Mänttäri views translators as experts in intercultural communication and as responsible partners in communication events. In comparison to other translation theorists cited in this book, the functionalist theorists have done the most to empower translators, elevating them to equal status with authors, editors, and clients, entrusting them to make appropriate, rational decisions that best realize the intended cross-cultural communication.

The only thing that functionalists seem to insist upon is that the received text must be coherent, fluent, and natural, something also stressed by Nida with his concept of dynamic equivalence. According to Reiss and Vermeer, this coherence is dependent upon the translator's concept of the *Skopos* of the text in question (1984: 114). Reiss and Vermeer posit what they call "textual coherence" between the source and target texts. "Right" and "wrong" choices are then judged according to their consistency with the translator's understanding of the text as a unified whole. A traditional concept of fidelity upon which to base the analysis is invoked: if the derivation is consistent with the original *Skopos*, it is called faithful and accepted as a good translation. Much of Reiss's work is aimed less at theory and more at developing standards of evaluation from which she can judge the quality of a translated text.

Herein lies one of the problems of the co-authored *Grundlegung* volume: Vermeer, author of the first half, is more prescriptive and theoretical; Reiss, author of the second half, seems more interested in the product and the evaluation. The two seem to have very different

understandings of the very definition of their key term *Skopos*, which has confused scholars to follow. Vermeer goes so far as to say that the constitutional element of the *Skopos* is always to be found in the *receiving* culture. Reiss in her evaluation component seems dependent upon identifying the *source-text typologies*, including the text's appeal or aim, and reconstructing those elements in the receiving culture. In her section of the book, Reiss talks about the translated text serving the same communicative function or functions as the source text, thus preserving the "invariance of function between the source and target text (Reiss & Vermeer, 1984:140; qtd. and trans. Nord, 1997: 36). Yet questions remain regarding a theory that would claim historical, cultural invariance and/or refer to the same communicative function of both the source and target texts (see Chapters 4 and 5 below). Additionally, theorists such as Venuti, who prefers the incorporation of devices that upset a text's fluency and coherence, also distance themselves from the functionalist approach.

Nord herself seems fairly untroubled by the inconsistencies regarding the source of the *Skopos* of a translated text. In a chapter entitled "Criticism" of her *Translating as a Purposeful Activity* (1997), she writes:

> If I understand him right, Vermeer's view is that the *Skopos* (a static concept) is indeed located in the target culture, defining the situation in which the target text is going to be received. On the other hand, the purpose (a dynamic concept) has its origin in the source situation; it is the "drive" directing the object to be transferred toward its aim. In most cases, this nuance is not of vital importance, which may account for Vermeer's using the terms as synonyms. (Nord, 1997: 115)

Such a statement is indicative of the pragmatic nature of the functionalist theoretical position, fairly untroubled by theoretical and often linguistic contradictions. Vermeer not only treats *Skopos* ('goal') and *Zweck* ('purpose') as synonyms, but also mixes in terms such as *Ziel* ('aim'), *Funktion* ('function'), and *Absicht* ('intention') in an interrelated fashion, all of which is further complicated by their translation for non-German users.

Nevertheless, the pragmatic components incorporated by those advocating a functionalist approach are a welcome addition to translation studies. While many theorists have long suggested that translation theory incorporate extra-linguistic factors in the translation equations, few have

found models adequate to the task. The functionalists, however, add cultural factors easily and well. Some of their additions may seem obvious: a client who hires a translator has specific goals that need consideration; the receiving audience has certain expectations that need to be addressed; translation is a form of action, a communicative interaction. Perhaps the most innovative addition to the model is what functionalists call the "initiator" of the translation process – a person, a group, or an institution whose goals or aims may be very different from the source-text author, the target-text receiver, and the translator. The initiator is largely responsible for defining and often paying for the translation. In almost every model, functionalist theorists include what has become known as the "translation brief" *('Übersetzungsauftrag';* see Nord, 1997: 30; also called variously "assignment", "commission", or "instructions" by different theorists), which is largely determined by the client. The brief gives the translator as many details as possible regarding the purpose, the addressee, the time, the place, the occasion, and the medium for the translation to follow. Thus the initiator often decides upon the translation's goal, not the author, receiver, or translator. Indeed, the concept is closely resembles André Lefevere's concept of "patronage" (see Chapter 5 below).

For most practical purposes, then, the *Skopos* is not located in either the source or the target text of culture; rather it is negotiated between the client and the translator, with reference to both the source text and receiving audience. Even when no translation brief is officially articulated, there invariably exists an unspoken brief that professional translators will be able to infer from their experience. Perhaps it should come as no surprise that functionalist theory has enjoyed the success that it has over the last decade. It lends itself particular well to translating business texts – advertisements, brochures, product descriptions, and marketing items. It also lends itself well to politics. Its current advocates like to point out how integral such a form of translation is to cultural formation. Christiane Nord cites the situation in South Africa, where translation played an active role in the creation of the new African nation. Not only did translation play an active role in the successful campaign by the African National Congress (ANC) in the first democratic election – all of their campaign materials were translated into nine African languages – it also played a role in the administration of the new government in fields such as finance, law, insurance, health, education, and welfare. Nord quotes A.K. Walker, Alet Kruger, and I.C.

Andrews, who in "Translation as Transformation: A Process of Linguistic and Cultural Adaptation" (1995) write:

> In order to teach prospective translators to produce accessible translations, we need to be able to draw upon a particular type of framework which is not dependent on rigid definitions of faithfulness, [but instead] which is flexible enough to be used in any translation task that may arise, whether it be conventional translation or reformulation. (Walker *et al*., 1995: 106; qtd. by Nord, 1997: 136–7)

Given the utility of such an approach in the business and political world, the future of the functionalist approach appears assured. The approach already has led to expanding training programs so that translators acquire the cultural and computer tools that allow them to practice such a form of cross-cultural communication action. For those troubled by the widespread and often uncritical acceptance of contemporary corporate values, the functionalist approach may remain somewhat troubling. As Nida has missionary motives behind his dynamic equivalence and his "science" of translation, so too does the functionalist approach seem to have a sales mission behind its functional equivalence. The *non-dit* behind the functionalist approach is very much allied to the economic interests of very powerful social and business institutions. While practicing translators within that framework may enjoy more prestige and increased pay, they may find also themselves sacrificing their independence, becoming more subordinate to the initiators, authors of the brief and brokers in the definition of the text's *Skopos*.

Functionalist models are being continually revised and expanded to better deal with advances in linguistics and other sciences. Mary Snell-Hornby, author of *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach* (1988), finds Reiss's text-typology approach too rigid and prescriptive, and instead suggests a more flexible "prototypology." She offers a very complicated stratification model with multiple vertical and horizontal planes, proceeding from a general level (macrolevel) to more particular levels (microlevels) (Snell-Hornby, 1988). Recalling Wilss's citation of Lenneberg/Chomsky, Snell-Hornby bases her claims on what might be called the Rorsch/Berlin foundation. Rorsch's theory, which has influenced North American semantics, basically "disproves" classical theories of categorization and has led to a theory of "natural" categorization, i.e., in the form of prototypes, a *Gestalt-like* system that

involves a "hard core" with blurred edges (Rorsch, 1973, qtd. by Snell-Hornby, 1988: 27).

While some scholars may have problems with Snell-Hornby's blurring of the certain core concepts, her more flexible approach allows her to consider problems that often extend beyond the range of traditional models for analyzing translations. For example, metaphors, puns, and word-play often challenge the "rules" of established linguistic description and transformational models. Metaphors are often referred to as "deviant language" because they do not adhere to the rules of selection restrictions. Snell-Hornby's model allows the scholar to analyze the creative side of translation and the "tantalizing and unending variety of relationships that exist between rule, norm and the more or less idiosyncratic realization" (1988: 51). Her model also allows her to consider extra-linguistic and cultural factors that traditional scholarship could not include because they are too complicated and too variable for there models. The importance of the individual items – the units of words, phrases, sentences, paragraphs, texts – are only important depending upon their relevance to the larger context of the communication situation and the culture. In fact, Snell-Hornby is one of the pioneers of the "cultural turn" in translation studies, arguing in "Linguistic Transcoding or Cultural Transfer? A Critique of Translation Theory in Germany" (1990) that translation scholars abandon their "scientistic" attitude and move on from text as a translation unit to "culture."

Ironically, the problem with all these "sciences" of translation and functionalist models is that they are directed primarily at teaching translators or evaluating translations, and thus cannot escape their prescriptive nature. They tend also to rely too heavily upon very traditional dichotomies that Steiner suggests have been superseded by modern structuralist approaches to language. If all modern linguistics can be traced back to Chomsky, we are left basically with a Cartesian theory, despite revisions to allow for semantic and pragmatic elements. In other words, the existing "sciences" of translation and functionalist training programs are still largely based upon concepts rooted in religion, German idealism, archetypes, universal language, and, most recently, economic forces. The deep-structure/surface-structure approach seems always to posit some sort of hypothetical invariant, be it the syntax, semantics, or function, which is consistent and unified, and to which competent translators and astute critics are seen as having access. Despite advances over the faithful vs. free debate, these approaches at

some point still tend to be source-oriented in nature and invest the original with some sort of structure and information that can subsequently be encoded in another language, to which the translator must remain faithful. Far from being scientific, these approaches tend to hold a transcendental, utopian conception of translation. They look primarily at what is a non-verifiable space – i.e., the black-box of the human mind – and make large statements not only about translatability but also about how that process *should* occur. This is precisely what Chomsky cautioned against, but which came to pass nevertheless.

One group that is skeptical of such normative and prescriptive approaches is a group of scholars based primarily in Belgium and the Netherlands. They have not yet been convinced by modern linguistics' complex terminology and diagrams, nor by loose definitions of dynamic equivalence or function. Instead of further speculating about mental processes and innate structures, they have decided to look at "reality," i.e., at real texts in the target culture that are called translations by specific cultural groups, and begin their analysis from there. Their aim over the past three decades has been to establish a new, less prescriptive paradigm for the study of translation. Theoretically, they shift the focus of study from hypothetical ideal translations to actual texts, however inexact, which function as translations in any given society. Although translation studies and polysystem theory developed separately in two different parts of the world, the two have become inextricably connected. Thus, the following two chapters will trace the evolution of translation studies from its early formative years in Chapter 4, through its union with polysystem theory in Chapter 5.

Chapter 4
Early Translation Studies

The two dominant modes of research in the field of translation through the seventies were those focused on primarily literary concerns, rejecting theoretical presuppositions, normative rules, and linguistic jargon, and those focused on linguistic matters, claiming a "scientific" approach and rejecting alogical solutions and subjective speculation. Both sides limited the kinds of texts they addressed to show their methodologies to best advantage, viewing each other's work and accomplishments with skepticism: literary translators dismissed any scientific linguistic analysis; linguists dismissed non-scientific literary analysis. Intervening in this confrontational situation were a handful of mostly younger scholars from the Netherlands and Belgium. James Holmes, in "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies" (1972/5), distanced himself from "theories" of translation, which often merely reflect the attitude and approach of the writer, and from "sciences" of translation, which may not be suited for an investigation of literary texts, and coined the term "Translation Studies" for a non-allied and new approach (Holmes, 1972/5: 8).

A few years later, André Lefevere outlined the crux of the theoretical problem. In "Translation: The Focus of the Growth of Literary Knowledge" (1978), he argued that the antagonism between the two opposing factions – which he calls the hermeneutic and the neopositivistic – was based upon "mutual (wilful) misunderstanding" (Lefevere, 1978a: 8). Lefevere claimed that the hermeneutic approach to translation, used primarily by individual thinkers who try to arrive single-handedly at universally valid ideas, truths, and grammatical forms, tended to be non-scientific, basing its system of ideas on epistemological assumptions that were 300 years out of date and that in more recent years, were being contradicted by findings of other disciplines (Lefevere, 1978a: 9). Logical positivism, the dominant strategy employed by translation structuralists, text grammarians, and semioticians, reduced the study of literature to a language intended for physical science, based truths on hard data and correspondence rules, and posited ideals of science that were monistic, reductionistic, and physicalistic (Lefevere, 1978a: 12–13). Lefevere argued that translation theories based on such approaches did not further the growth of literary

knowledge, but tended to have vested interests – ideological as well as corporate – that have impeded the description of an adequate theory of translation. He displayed sentiments characteristic of the Dutch/Belgian intervention in the field:

> Here lies the great scandal of literature in general and meta-literature [translation and commentary] in particular. Instead of exposing and demolishing ideologies that stultify and enslave, those who claim to be professionally interested in literary knowledge are busy constructing their private ideologies within a safely conventional framework and calculating their profits. (Lefevere, 1978a: 22)

The scholars in the Low Countries were interested in both linguistics (scientific) and literary translation (non-scientific) and did not see why the two need be mutually exclusive. In order to escape the idealistic and static concepts characteristic of previous approaches to all translation, Lefevere suggested that translation studies shift the theoretical focus of the investigation and base their research "on an evolutionary concept of metascience, not on the logical positivist concept, not on the hermeneutic concept" (1978a: 7).

Smaller nations with fewer people speaking "minor" languages have come to depend upon translation for their commercial, political, and cultural livelihood; thus it comes as no surprise that scholars from such countries would not only know more about translation but might adapt themselves more readily to situations of conflict. Given the countries' geographical location at the crossroads of European intellectual life, it is also not surprising that a new idea or at least a new perspective on the problems facing a theory of translation might find nourishment among the young, and grow. Translation may have been a marginal field of investigation in countries that have large monolingual populations, but in Belgium and the Netherlands the field of translation may unite, or at least mediate, diverse literary theories. Detached from the ideological investment that characterizes the history of translation theory elsewhere, a fresh approach emerged from the Lowlands.

Translation studies began with a call to suspend temporarily the attempts to define a theory of translation, trying first to learn more about translation procedures. Instead of trying to solve the philosophic problem of the nature of meaning, translation studies scholars became concerned with how meaning travels. Most characteristic about the new field was its insistence on openness to interdisciplinary approaches: having literary scholars work together with logicians, linguists together with

philosophers. Limiting distinctions such as right and wrong, formal and dynamic, literal and free, art and science, theory and practice, receded in importance. Translation as a field was no longer viewed as either literary or non-literary, but as both. New questions were posited regarding the subject of investigation, the nature of the translation process, how mediation occurs, and how the process affects both the original (redefined as source text) and received (redefined as target text) works. Even the distinction between original writer and translator was called into question. The object of study was neither an absent core of "meaning" nor deep "linguistic structure," but rather the translated text itself.

Such an approach is not devoid of theory, and one of the goals of early translation studies was to formulate a theory of translation. Initially, however, this new field was characterized by its hesitancy to impose theoretical presuppositions and its careful testing of all hypotheses against descriptions of actual translations and historical case studies. Again, André Lefevere summarized accurately the theoretical goals of the field:

> The goal of the discipline is to produce a comprehensive theory which can be used as a guideline for the production of translations. The theory would gain by being developed along lines of argument which are neither neopositivistic nor hermeneutic in inspiration. The theory would gain by being elaborated against a background of, and constantly tested by case-histories. The theory would then not be static; it would evolve according to the dynamic consensus of qualified scholars, who constitute a forum of competition. ... It is not inconceivable that a theory elaborated in this way might be of help in the formulation of literary and linguistic theory; just as it is not inconceivable that translations made according to the guidelines tentatively laid down in the theory might influence the development of the receiving culture. (Lefevere, 1978b: 234)

Instead of taking pre-existing theories about literature and linguistics and applying them to translation, Lefevere and his Dutch/Flemish colleagues reversed the order of thought, suggesting that the field first look at what is specific about translation and then apply that knowledge to literary and linguistic theory. As a result, translation studies scholars attempted to avoid preordained, fixed, and immutable prescriptives and to remain open for constant self-evaluation and evolution. The variable approach acknowledged that the object being investigated is not something fixed

in the real world to be scientifically investigated, nor is it the object of higher, transcendental truth to be revealed in a mystical way. Rather, the objects of study are the translations themselves, which are by definition mediations subject to theoretical manipulation and prevailing artistic norms; at the same time, as Lefevere speculated, translations may reciprocally influence those very same norms which determine them. One goal of this chapter is to show how translation studies displaced the epistemological problem of representation by viewing the text as both produced and producing. Its mediatory role is more than a synchronic transfer of meaning across cultures; it mediates diachronically as well, in multiple historical traditions.

Ironically, the process of ignoring existing literary theory and focusing the study on the status of historically marginalized texts actually revealed something not merely tangentially related but of central relevance to literary theory. With their new questions and shift in focus, the intervention by the Flemish and Dutch scholars raised multiple problems for literary theory, including the importance of praxis within theory, the cultural interdependence of literary systems, and the intertextual nature not just of translation, but of all texts. The activity of translation may be marginal, but the theoretical problems raised by the practitioners are crucial to any integrated literary theory.

The establishment of a new field within the domain of literary analysis did not occur overnight. As I argue below, the roots of early translation studies can be found in Russian Formalism, and the precursors to the present generation of Flemish and Dutch scholars included a group of Czech and Slovak scholars well schooled in Russian poetics. Two scholars from the Netherlands – James Holmes and Frans de Haan – attended a conference on "Translation as Art" held in Bratislava in May of 1968 and helped edit (with Anton Popovic) and publish the proceedings in a collection called *The Nature of Translation* (1970). I hope to show how translation studies, despite claims to avoid prescription and refrain from judging, implicitly reflected certain modernistic prejudices. At the same time, however, the epistemological assumptions of translation studies depended on viewing texts as dynamic and productive rather than static and fixed, and thus contributed to the ongoing post-modern re-valuation of the nature of language. In the next two chapters I will trace the evolution of translation studies from the early tentative work by Flemish and Dutch scholars through the positing of a comprehensive system – called polysystem theory – by an Israeli circle. My examination is based on texts by three Czech and Slovak

scholars – Jiří Levý, František Miko, and Anton Popovič – whose work is not only crucial to gaining an understanding of the work by the group of Dutch language scholars, but also effects a transition from Russian Formalism to the present day paradigm of translation investigation.

Jiří Levý and the Czech and Slovak connections

To set the parameters of the following discussion, I will first briefly summarize some of the main tenets of Russian Formalism, basing my analysis primarily on the essay, "The Theory of the Formal Method," by Boris M. Èjxenbaum in *Readings in Russian Poetics* (Èjxenbaum, 1978; see also Bann & Bowlt, 1973; Erlich, 1981; and Jackson & Rudy, 1985), and discuss their relevance for translation studies. First, Russian Formalists attempted to isolate and define what they called "literariness" by focusing solely upon what they viewed to be literary facts, separating literary artifacts from other disciplines such as psychology, sociology, and cultural history. The discipline as well as the texts being studied were viewed as having an autonomy of their own. This notion is important for the current generation of translator scholars interested in what literary translation can contribute to translation theory, for it enables them to focus their investigation on specific determining features of literary texts rather than on metaphysical notions about the nature of literature and meaning. The Russian Formalists avoided deep-structure arguments, looking instead at actual texts and specific features of texts. The move to define literariness led the Formalists to try to determine what makes literary texts different from other texts, what makes them new, creative, innovative.

Translation studies scholars also distance themselves from theories like those of Chomsky and Nida, which were more focused on deep-structure generative components than on actual surface-structure characteristics. Formalism and translation studies privilege specific surface-structural features and analyze them to learn what determines literary status. Indeed, Russian Formalists, while using thematic concepts, relegated them to secondary status, and were more concerned with compositional concepts. They argued that abstract ideas often look much the same over history; what was important to them was *how* the thematic concepts were expressed. Translation studies uses thematic concepts in a similar fashion, shifting them from a primary and determining position to a concept dependent upon the culture and language in which they are embedded.

Perhaps the most important and least understood aspect of Russian Formalism was its historical dimension. Attacks on the school tend to criticize its "decadent" art-for-art's-sake beliefs and its lack of historical parameters. Russian Formalists, however, did not just analyze texts synchronically, but also diachronically, trying to understand how texts related to a determining literary tradition. Their formal analysis thus incorporated intrinsic and extrinsic factors in order to determine a specific text's contribution to and distance from any evolving literary tradition.

Translation studies scholars actually showed the diachronic effect of translated texts on two traditions: that of the source culture and that of the target culture. Borrowing another aspect of Russian Formalism, perhaps its best known and most easily embraced principle – the defamiliarization *(ostranenie)* device – translation studies scholars attempted to measure the text's relation to its tradition. Because they did not inflate the value of the content, meaning, or original idea of a work, Russian Formalists could focus on aspects that did not conform and made the text special, different, and especially strange.

Translation studies scholars similarly refused the tendency toward focusing on meaning, on determining the original content (seen earlier in theories like Nida's), and on preparing the text for easy consumption by readers in the receiving culture. If anything, early translation studies prescribed that a work in translation *retain* defamiliarization devices, and if existing devices could be transposed in the second language, the translator needed to invent new ones. Proper nouns, for example, have always been troublesome for translators, for they always tend to have a special, specific meaning – such as place names that have a special resonance, location, history in the source culture – that invariably gets lost in translation.

Finally, Russian Formalists remained open to new problems; their methodology could be applied to itself; and they insisted that the discipline of literary scholarship need be an evolving one. Èjxenbaum, for example, wrote:

> We possess no theory of such a kind as could be deployed as a rigid, ready-made system. Theory and history have merged for us, not only in what we preach, but also in what we practice. We are too well trained by history itself to imagine that we could do without history. (Èjxenbaum, 1978: 35)

Similarly, such an incorporation of history into their theoretical model has helped translation studies scholars apply theory inwardly as well as externally, enabling them to address problems as raised by their own and other fields of investigation. The spirit of discovery, of evolution, and of multiple applications characterizes early translation studies. Yet they also limit the field of investigation to specific translated texts, which also perhaps explains the hesitancy for members to make the claim that translation studies may have wider relevance for literary theory in general. Its scholars tended to be caught in the bind, on the one hand, of trying to define and limit a field of investigation and, on the other, of being secretly aware that valuable insights and discoveries very relevant to contemporary literary theory happen as one studies actual translated texts.

The Czech and Slovak group of translation scholars, including Jiří Levý, František Miko, and Anton Popovič have evolved from Russian Formalism, simultaneously reflecting and distancing themselves from some of the tenets above. Certainly they have distanced themselves from the concept of literature as autonomous literary works isolated from the rest of the world, a move already underway during the later stages of Formalism. One of the reasons Levý's text *Uměni překladu* (Literary Translation) (1963), translated into German as *Die literarische Übersetzung* (1969), was so instrumental for translation studies was precisely because it took the tenets of Russian Formalism, applied them to the subject of translation, and showed how Formalist structural laws were located in history and interact with at least two literary traditions simultaneously, that of the source culture and that of the receiving culture.

Levý's Formalist roots are revealed by the specific linguistic methodology that characterizes his project. Levý began with the linguistic distinctions of translation that his colleague Roman Jakobson, who left Moscow to help found the Prague school of linguistics, laid out in "On Linguistic Aspects of Translation" (1959). The Prague structuralists viewed texts as incorporated within semiotic networks and viewed language as a code or complex of language elements that combine according to certain rules. Every word thus stands in relation to other segments of the same text (synchronic) and other words in texts in the literary tradition (diachronic). Levý also incorporated the interpretive aspect into his translation theory, basing such deduction upon Willard Quine's hypothesis that translation meaning can be logically interpreted. Quine's theory did not involve a metaphysical leap to the deep and

unified central meaning of a text, but was built slowly and carefully, not necessarily via a word-to-word or sentence-to-sentence correlation – synonyms and analogy always tend to retain a certain indefiniteness – but by the capacity of learning meaning via structural groupings. Beginning with guess and intuition, moving through comparison, deciphering, matching groups of positive and negative stimulus meaning, Quine argued in an essay called "Meaning and Translation" (1959) that the translator can arrive at "analytic hypotheses," which are finally tested against a network of standing sentences as well as against agreed upon synonyms (Quine, 1959; cited by Levý, 1969: 20).

With the establishment of the semiotic horizons that come into play in the course of translation, and with the positing of the interpretive component which enables the translator to grasp the meaning of the text in question, Levý was in a position to present his translation methodology. Of primary importance in Levý's model is that the literary quality of the work of art not be lost. To ensure transfer of "literariness," Levý foregrounded the particular communicative aspect of specific formal features of the original author's style that give the work of art its specific literary character. Levý based this aspect of his translation theory on another of the founding members of the Prague linguistic circle, Vilém Mathesius, who wrote as early as 1913 that the fundamental goal of literary translation was to achieve, whether by the same or by differing devices, the same artistic effect as in the original. The meaningful translation of poetry proves that the correspondence of artistic effect is more important than the equivalent artistic devices. Mathesius added that often the translation of the same or nearly-the-same artistic devices often leads to the translation having different effects on the reader (Mathesius, 1913: 808). Levý, like other Formalists, first viewed language as a semiotic system with synchronic and diachronic aspects. He also elevated the art object to the most privileged position, believing that "literariness" can be logically deduced and defined. His translation theory thus emphasized less the "meaning" or the "object being represented" in the second language, but instead focused upon the style, the specific literary features of the text that make it literary. In his famous essay, published in Czech in 1933–4, "What is Poetry?" Roman Jakobson spelled out the value placed by Formalists upon the specific "poetic" quality of a work:

> The poetic function, *poeticity*, is, as the "formalists" stressed, an element sui generis, one that cannot be mechanically reduced to

> other elements. ...It can be separated out and made independent, like the various devices in, say a cubist painting ... poeticity is only part of a complex structure, but it is a part that necessarily transforms the other elements and determines with them the nature of the whole. (Jakobson, 1976: 174)

The Formalist belief that poeticity was a formal quality, something that could be separated out of a work, is crucial to understanding Levý's translation theory. Levý believed that he could logically determine those aspects that make a text a work of art, divorce them from the content, the world, and the language system, replace them with stylistic elements from a different language, equally divorced from everything else, and arrive at an equally artistic work. He draws the conclusion, based on Mathesius's and Jakobson's comments above, that the theory of substitution of elements of style has been constructed upon an objective foundation (Levý, 1969: 21).

Whereas Chomsky's theory analyzed the deep structure, especially its syntactic elements, Levý's examined surface structure and stylistic elements. Each theory used linguistics and "scientific" methods of interpretation to help isolate that aspect of language that they felt was primary.

In Levý's process of isolating the "poetic" features, an interesting subtheory simultaneously developed. If one privileges structural and stylistic features, the general "content" of the text is thereby demoted, for it is not stable, but temporarily conditioned by the signifying system in which it is expressed. If one is working in a single sign system, however, the formal features and the content can be made to appear to mutually reinforce each other, producing that "unified work" pregnant with "literariness." But by placing a work in multiple signifying systems, at least two in the case of interlingual translation, the instability and ephemeral nature of the thing expressed becomes visible. The translation is not a unified work, but one that is full of tension and contradictions because the content is intertextually constructed, represented as it were by two perspectives simultaneously: from the view of the original signifying system and from that of the second language system.

While recognizing in *Die literarische Übersetzung* that such tensions exist, Levý smoothed over the problem and argued that the better the translation, the better it overcomes the conflicts and contradictory structures (Levý, 1969: 72). The subtext that has been developing throughout the argument, i.e., what happens to the content, becomes

more problematic at this point in his theory. Levý wanted to argue that the translated text must be consistent and unified – contradictions can be resolved and the objective substitution of equivalences is possible. He writes, for example, that the translation as a whole is more fully realized the better it overcomes its own inherent contradictions (Levý, 1969:73). This led to a conclusion that is very much like the one reached by American literary translators: a true or "faithful" method that favors the "exact recreation" of the "aesthetic beauty" of the original in the second language (Levý, 1969: 68).

Ironically, then, instead of just constructing a theory of translation that smoothes over the inherent problem of how this is to be done, given that the translated text is invariably shot full with contradictions, Levý's theory also reinforced a by-product of Formalism: in addition to the awareness of the correspondence of sign to object, there is the necessary opposite function simultaneously in process, namely that the relationship between sign and object is always inadequate. Content is always unstable, always changing, constructed by discourse, in constant flux, merely "appearing" stable temporarily in its fictional aesthetic construction. As translation always has at least two referents, meaning never appears stable. That which is made manifest in the process and product of translation is the very mobility of concepts, the mutability of signs, and the evolution of the relationship between the two. It would seem that Levý's translation theory was asking the impossible, i.e., to develop objective criteria for isolating and cataloguing in multiple languages the particular poetic formal features which transform a normal expression into an artistic one, and then to establish paradigms enabling the substitution of those elements appropriate to translation.

Yet work in precisely that seemingly impossible field has begun, and I turn to the work of František Miko as just one example to illustrate the process. In "La Théorie de l'expression et la traduction" (1970) he reported on his progress, defining what he calls the "expressive categories" (expressive features or qualities) of language that lend it its artistic quality (Miko, 1970; see also Miko, 1969; and Miko & Popovič, 1978). Miko first made a distinction between expression as a whole, the expressive character, and the expressive features. The distinction is important, not just to clarify potential misinterpretation of his work, but for theoretical reasons. He shared the Formalist distinction between form and content, or between form and theme, and posits the primary importance of the linguistic elements. The subject matter is contingent upon and constituted by the linguistic structure of the language. In order

to determine what an expression as a whole means, what determines its poeticity, one has to look at the smallest details that, when structurally built together, determine the work of art's style. The expressive features form together hierarchically, constructing the work's meaning and value. Given the fundamental belief that language thus determines content, Miko asked the question, what happens when one changes the language system? Is all lost? Miko argued against such a conclusion, believing that he could determine and catalogue a system of expressive features independent of any one specific style, features that can be interchanged as necessary in the act of translation. Miko did point out the difficulty and complexity of the problem, especially regarding the translation of literary texts, but argued the necessity of its resolution because the alternative – the substitution of synonyms, of syntactical structures, of similar themes – has historically proven inadequate.

Expressive features of the text, according to Miko, can best be determined by relating those features of style of a specific text to similar characteristics used within the literary tradition. In that place between the text and its tradition, subjective qualities of style – emotional, irrational, expressive – as well as idiosyncrasies of style – irony, abstraction, brevity, joviality – can be determined. Only through such an historical analysis can the function of the original text be understood, and enable eventual adequate translation. For Miko the problem of translation is either purely linguistic or purely stylistic. The problem of achieving correspondence of style is a delicate one because the nuances are fine, but of primary importance: if such elements are omitted from the translation, it loses its "literariness," the very quality Russian Formalism values most. The addition of an historical horizon, albeit a purely literary one, is an important one for the development of translation studies, for it provides not only a basis of comparison but also implies a diachronic evolution of language. Ironically, modern functionalist translation scholars (see section above) often presume that they can access the function of a literary text in its source tradition without such an historical analysis.

How far did Miko progress with his inventory? He progressed far enough to establish certain hierarchies within a system of cataloguing qualities of expression. He also identified certain categories that he claims do not permit further distinction. He admits the impossibility of the task, yet enough research has been completed to enable him to draw certain conclusions (Miko, 1970: 67–70; see also Miko and Popovič, 1978). He has been able to equate certain expressive characteristics with

certain types of speech found in journals, in popular literature, in speeches, and in literary texts. For example, categories of expression characteristic of literary texts include not just aesthetic/emotional ones, but variability, ambiguity, disequilibrium (unrealized resolutions) as well as conventional resolution, and in certain instances even irrationality (e.g., stream of consciousness texts). Miko suggested these elements could be isolated, analyzed, and translated using a methodology that finds functional rather than literal equivalents. All the while, Miko's categories are subject to the flux of history. He was well aware that stylistic features often are open to different interpretations as social conditions change, thus changing the appropriateness of certain expressive characteristics. Detailed research of the specific characteristic in history is necessary, making translation dependent upon the interpretive as well as linguistic and creative ability of the translator. Miko concluded that the conception of style arrived at is a functional one that uses linguistic categories, but not necessarily in the same way as linguistics. It is based upon a "correlative" definition of expressive categories, never losing sight of the importance of paradigmatic and sytagmatic aspects for the analysis of the *system* of expressive features, taking into consideration the evolutionary and social aspect of style (Miko, 1970: 73).

Anton Popovič's project begins where the work of Levý and Miko leaves off: he began the comparative work of locating the conformities and the differences that occur when a work is translated and explains the relationship of the translated work to the original. Instead of prescribing a technique which eliminates losses and smoothes over changes, Popovič accepted the fact that losses, gains, and changes are a necessary part of the process because of inherent differences of intellectual and aesthetic values in the two cultures. In his essay, "The Concept 'Shift of Expression' in Translation Analysis" (1970), he introduced a new term to characterize this process:

> Each individual method of translation is determined by the presence or absence of shifts in the various layers of the translation. All that appears as new with respect to the original, or fails to appear where it might have been expected, may be interpreted as a shift. (Popovič, 1970: 78)

Shifts have been noticed before in terms of translation analysis, but have invariably been attributed to deliberate distortions, incompetence on the part of the translator, or linguistic incompatibility between the two

languages. Popovič extended the theoretical horizon by analyzing shifts in terms of the differing cultural values and literary norms. Instead of accusing translators of ignorance or unfaithfulness, Popovič argued that they resort to shifts precisely because they are attempting to render faithfully the content of the original despite the differences between the languages. Thus shifts reveal not the inadequacy of the translation, but something about the primary aesthetic quality of the original. Levý's project left off with the prescription that if an expressive feature does not work in the receiving culture, then the translator must replace it or even invent a new feature so that the overall literary quality is not lost. Popovi č extrapolated:

> Every conception of translation of any real significance and consistency finds its principal manifestation in the shifts of expression, the choice of aesthetic means, and the semantic aspects of the work. Thus in a translation we can as a rule expect certain changes because the question of identity and difference in relation to the original can never be solved without some residue. Identity cannot be the only feature characterizing the relation. This conclusion is inevitable if we consider the force of historical factors and the impossibility of repeating the act of translation as a creative process. (Popovič, 1970: 81)

Accepting the fact that certain elements will fall through the cracks as one moves from one system of discourse to another, Popovič looked not for what fits, but what does not, and picks up the "residue" to examine it more closely. The last sentence quoted above reveals Popovič's rejection of the idealistic notion that literal or functional equivalences can be found, yet he retained formal features as part of his system in order to demonstrate translation differences and the force of history.

As Miko believed that the minute and subtle nuances of expression were the key to determining a work's overall artistic quality, so too Popovič believed that the key to understanding a translation's chief aesthetic means lay in the analysis of the shifts of those very nuances. In Popovič's theory, in which differences are just as important as equivalences, the faithful/free theoretical concerns collapse into the same horizon; the two are always relative depending upon the aesthetic assumptions of the translator. Popovič explained:

> It is not the translator's only business to "identify" himself with the original: that would merely result in a transparent translation. The translator also has the right to differ organically, to be independent... Between the basic semantic substance of the original and its shift in another linguistic structure a kind of dialectic tension develops along the axis of faithfulness-freedom. (Popovič, 1970: 80)

There are various methods of translating, and while Popovič's own preferences mirror Levý's, his theoretical model lends itself to determining the aesthetic presuppositions of the translator that motivate shifts of expression. His theory reads the shifts symptomatically in order to determine the prevailing literary assumptions governing the translation. With Popovič's theory, the critic can trace the tracks left by the shifts in the translated work to the cultural norms of the receiving culture which govern that text. Instead of proposing stylistic unity with the original as a goal of translation, Popovič accepted the impossibility of achieving an equivalent text and posited a theory to explain rather than criticize its non-identity. Through an analysis of shifts of expression and an analysis of the relationship of the language of the original work to that of the translated work, something about the mediatory, heterogeneous nature of the process of translation could be revealed.

At this point, several observations with regard to the Czech and Slovak contributions to translation studies can be made. First, an aesthetic prejudice is revealed by the kind of translation preferred, i.e., one that functions as an art object in the receiving culture. The demand to preserve literariness determines the preferred methodology. However comprehensive Miko's catalogue of "objective" stylistic features becomes, it will always remain inadequate and to a large degree subjectively organized. The hypothesis that a work's overall artistic merit is determined strictly by structural characteristics may be appropriate for examining modernistic or futuristic texts characteristic of the period during which the theory developed, but questions remain about its appropriateness for texts written during other historical epochs. How well does the theory work with symbolic or allegorical texts, with narratives, poetic or prose, with agit-prop theatre or folktales that require common understanding of the referent? In addition, such a preference may in fact influence which Third World texts get translated into Western languages. Russian Formalism defines what is to be valued in a text – aspects such as form, self-referentiality, and technical juxtaposition – and evaluates translations on the capacity of the target

text to transfer those formal characteristics. Yet different aesthetic approaches as well as different historical moments and cultures may value other aspects of a text. In many ways the translation theory deriving from Russian Formalism reflects precisely those devices – "defamiliarization" devices for example – that are characteristic of the prevailing artistic norms and interpretive theories of a particular time and place, i.e., modern European society.

Secondly, although Popovič expanded the parameters of a theory of modernism to point translation studies in a new direction, translation studies scholars avoided theorizing about the relation of form to content, failing to read symptomatically the implications of their theory for their own methodology. Despite claims to the contrary, the literary text quickly gets divorced from other socio-political factors. Words cease to refer to real life, but to other words used in the same literary tradition, thus creating a system built upon its own self-referentiality and thus reinforcing its own values. Art does become autonomous, as perception of a work's literariness is tied directly to an awareness of form. It is this quality of calling attention to itself that the theory values and asks to be translated; the methodology demands that the receiver perceive those specific formal features that set a work apart from a tradition, again necessitating the incorporation of a "competent" reader into their translation model (I.A. Richards's theory, too, prescribed such an ideal reader). There is an hermetic, self-referential quality in "literary" texts which Formalists perceive, value, and recommend be perpetuated. Because Levý and others tended toward the prescriptive, questions remain regarding the evaluative horizon. Who judges the adequacy of the stylistic substitutions? The demands on the translator are enormous; they include competence as literary critic, historical scholar, linguistic technician, and creative artist. It is little wonder that the evaluative horizon presents problems, for the requirements extend beyond the capacity of any single human's ability.

Despite these reservations about the work by the Czech and Slovak school, the beginnings of a descriptive methodology can be seen. Although the theory might work better with modern and contemporary texts, it is by no means limited to them. The methodology of systematically analyzing shifts can be applied to symbolic, realistic, metrical, literal, and phonetic theories of translation as well, precisely because it begins to include historical and ideological horizons as well as literary ones. Indeed, in order to explain shifts adequately, the methodology cannot restrict itself to the changes of artistic traditions, but

must consider evolving social norms and subjective psychological motivations as well. For these reasons the Flemish and the Dutch became very interested in the work by their central European colleagues.

James Holmes, Raymond van den Broeck, and André Lefevere

Despite its relatively short history, translation studies already can be divided into early and later periods, the early period the subject of the remainder of this chapter, and the latter, after it joined forces with polysystem theory, to be analyzed in Chapter 5. Unable to look at all the members' contributions to the emerging field, I will instead examine texts by three founding members whose work may be representative: James Holmes, who first introduced a new way of discussing translation to Western Europe; Raymond van den Broeck, who addressed the problem of equivalence in translation from the perspective of translation studies; and André Lefevere, whose grasp of the theoretical position of the group was unique. Van den Broeck and Lefevere co-authored the Dutch text *Uitnodiging tot de vertaalwetenschap* (Invitation to Translation Studies) (1979), which represents the culmination of the early period. I intend to show a double movement of the paradigm: while attempting to avoid prescription and focus on pure description, early translation studies favored a translation methodology much determined by its roots in Russian Formalism. In addition, while limiting the field of investigation to concrete, existing translations, early translation studies included the seeds for a comprehensive theory, addressing out of necessity data not only outside of one text, beyond one tradition, but phenomena that have no specific textual realization and had escaped traditional analysis.

James Holmes was a American poet/translator who taught translation studies at the University of Amsterdam until his recent death. His work describing the translation process, while dismissing traditional notions of equivalence, was perhaps most responsible for the formation of the new field. While his early essays were scattered in minor publications and difficult to find, most have been collected in anthology *Translated! Papers on Literary Translation and Translation Studies* (1988). In "Forms of Verse Translation and the Translation of Verse Form" (1970; 1988), we can see the introduction of new terminology and methodology with which to approach the subject. The most visible change in Holmes's approach was his alteration of the nature of the referent: Holmes argued

that the translation does not refer to the same object in the real world to which the source text refers, but rather to a linguistic formulation. The language of translation is different from the language of primary literature, and to designate this distinction, Holmes adopted the term "meta-language," borrowed in this case from Roland Barthes, who divided literature into two classes: the class of poetry, fiction, and drama that "speak about objects and phenomena which, whether imaginary or not, are external and anterior to language," and the class of literature that "deals not with 'the world,' but with the linguistic formulations made by others; it is a comment on a comment" (Barthes, 1964:126; qtd. by Holmes, 1970: 91; 1988:23). Holmes broadened the definition of Barthes's term, originally limited to merely critical commentary about literature, to include a variety of metaliterary forms, verse translation being merely one.

In addition, Holmes argued that verse translation is different from other forms of commentary or metalanguage because it uses the medium of verse to aspire to be a poem in its own right. While verse translation is a kind of metaliterature because it comments upon and interprets another text, it also generates a new corpus of metaliterature about its own literariness. Thus, the thing to which translation refers not only is different from other kinds of creative writing, but the kind of literature written about translation also differs from other kinds of critical writing, placing it in a unique position in terms of the realm of literary criticism. Referring and producing simultaneously, verse translation is critical commentary on a source text, and yet yields critical interpretation as if it were a primary text. About translation's dual nature Holmes wrote:

> All translation is an act of critical interpretation, but there are some translations of poetry which differ from all other interpretive forms in that they also have the aim of being acts of poetry ...it might be helpful if for this specific literary form, with its double purpose as meta-literature and as primary literature, we introduced the designation "metapoem." (Holmes, 1970: 93; 1988: 24)

Given this redefinition of verse translation, the theory about translation must be similarly redefined. Thus, translation studies became less concerned with identity and the old problem of reference, and more concerned with analyzing (a) the relationship of the translated text (as a secondary text) to the source text within a framework of the signifying practices inherent in that particular literary tradition, and (b) the

relationship of the translated text (as a primary text) to the signifying practices within the framework of the tradition of the target culture.

Because Holmes was less interested in identity and more concerned with the relationship of the translation to other signifying systems, another shift in Holmes's approach becomes visible: he begins a description of translated texts not by making universal claims about the validity (or invalidity) of specific proposed translation solutions, but by describing various translation methodologies and how they have been used historically. The goal was not to perpetuate some metaphysical claim about the nature of language or conceptual knowledge, but to understand better the various kinds of translation, of "metapoems," as a unique kind of signifying practice. Holmes defined four types of translations each relating differently to the original text and belonging to different theoretical traditions. The first type retains the form of the original; Holmes suggested that identical form is impossible, but patterns can be made to closely resemble each other, and fundamental formal verse structures can be matched, such as Richmond Lattimore's mimetic hexameters of Homer's Greek. The second type attempts to discern the function of the text in the receiving culture and seeks a parallel function within the target language tradition, creating analogous forms that create similar effects, such as Robert Fitzgerald's blank verse translation of Homer. The third type is content-derivative, taking the original meaning of the primary text and allowing it to develop into its own unique shape in the target language, such as Ezra Pound's organic free verse translation of Homer in the first Canto. The fourth type includes what Holmes calls "deviant forms" not deriving from the original poem at all, but deliberately retaining minimal similarity for other purposes, for which Holmes gave no example, but Robert Lowell's "The Killing of Lykaon" of books one and twenty-one of the *Iliad* may serve as an example. Holmes refrained from favoring any one of the four types of translation, saying that each approach, "by its nature opens up certain possibilities for the translator who chooses it, and at the same time closes others" (Holmes, 1970:97). Recognizing the type of translation and grasping its corresponding theory, whether conscious or unconscious on the part of the translator, allows the reader to understand what the translated text comes to mean in the receiving culture.

Holmes's early work culminated in "The Name and Nature of Translation Studies" (1972/5; 1988), generally accepted as the founding statement for the field. In the essay he laid out the scope and structure for the new discipline. Most importantly, Holmes conceived of the approach

as an empirical practice, one which looks at actual translated texts as they appear in a given culture. As a field of study, he breaks translation studies down into three areas of focus: (1) the descriptive branch: to describe phenomena of translations as they manifest themselves in the world; (2) the theory branch: to establish principles by which these phenomena can be explained; and (3) the applied branch: to "use" information gained from (1) and (2) in the practice of translation and training of translators (Holmes, 1972/5:9–10; 1988:71–2). Thus, the theoretical branch was subordinated to the descriptive branch; as case studies were described and empirical data collected, the theory would evolve. The ultimate goal of translation studies was to develop a full and all-encompasing translation theory, one which is "above" and can look down upon existing partial theories, which Holmes felt were often specific in scope and dealt with only one or a few aspects of the larger concern. Holmes realized that in reality, the development of theory would not be unidirectional, but more of a "dialectical" one, with each of the three branches supplying information for the other two (Holmes, 1972/5: 20; 1988: 78–9).

It is important to note that in this founding statement, Holmes called for several levels of focus within each branch. His descriptive branch, for example, was divided to include product-oriented, function-oriented, and process-oriented descriptions (Holmes, 1972/5: 12–14; 1988: 72–3). The product-oriented branch, which became the approach most identified with later translation studies, called for a "text-focused" empirical description of translations, and then a survey of larger corpuses of translations in a specific period, language, or discourse type. The function-oriented branch, which introduced a cultural component effecting a translated text's reception, and the process-oriented approach, which looked at the problem of the "black box," or what was going on in the translator's mind, became less important as the field developed.

André Lefevere, in his text *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint* (1975), revealed a similar approach. Lefevere, attempting a more empirical, objective approach, takes one source text – that of Catullus's sixty-fourth poem – and describes seven different types of translation based on correspondingly distinct methodologies that tend to govern the translation process. Each opens up certain possibilities and closes others: (1) phonemic translation works well in recovering etymologically related words and reproducing onomatopoeia, but shatters meaning; (2) literal translation may transfer a sense of the semantic content, but often by smuggling in explanation and sacrificing

"literary" value; (3) metrical translation may preserve the meter but distorts sense and syntax; (4) prose versions avoid sense distortions, but the very form robs the text of poetic resonance; (5) rhyming translations are governed by so many restraints that words end up meaning what they do not mean, and the end result often is boring, prudish, and pedantic; (6) blank verse achieves greater accuracy and a high degree of literalness, but imposed meter forces contortions, expansion, and contractions, often making translated versions verbose and clumsy; and (7) interpretation, including versions and imitations, which interpret the theme to make the text easier for reception may do so at the expense of the structure and texture.

While Lefevere was attempting greater objectivity and historical accuracy in his description of Catullus translations, he did not refrain from revealing his preferences. He found the last category covers up the least in translating a text's content. Lefevere himself preferred Holmes's second version, one that privileges the function of the text on the original readers. The terminology of Lefevere's "new" prescription, however, recalled the earlier work of Nida and Wilss:

> The translator's task is precisely to render the source text, the original author's interpretation of a given theme expressed in a number of variations, accessible to readers not familiar with these variations, by replacing the original author's variation with their equivalents in a different language, time, place and tradition. Particular emphasis must be given to the fact that the translator has to replace *all* the variations contained in the source text by their equivalents. (Lefevere, 1975: 99)

Like Nida, Lefevere wanted to thematize the text, but like Levý, to do so without smoothing over its "literariness." He talked of "preserving distortions," but what he meant was preserving the *ostranenie* devices that seem strange in the original and set it off from the existing tradition of a particular time and place. His recommendation of a particular historical method (his own), undermined a project that is otherwise historically sensitive.

The contradiction characteristic of this early period in translation studies was that it attempted to be both objectively descriptive and subjectively prescriptive. If we contrast Holmes's concept of translation equivalence as revealed in his essay "On Matching and Making Maps: From a Translator's Notebook" (1973–4; 1988) and that of Raymond van den Broeck in his essay "The Concept of Equivalence in Translation

Theory: Some Critical Reflections" (1978), the problem is most apparent. Traditional translation theory was based upon premises of original meaning, training translators to interpret that meaning correctly in order to reproduce it properly, and resulted in rules and laws about the procedure whereby products could "objectively" be compared and evaluated. Whereas Richards, Nida, and Wilss were intent upon educating translators to produce unified, coherent, single reproductions of the original, or at least to reach a consensus regarding what the ideal single reproduction should be, Holmes argued that to begin with such a premise misses something essential about the nature of translation. Holmes argued that no translation of a poem is ever "the same as" or "equivalent" to its original (Holmes, 1973–4: 67; 1988: 53). He suggested that asking for equivalence extended beyond the pragmatic limitations encompassing the situation:

> Put five translators onto rendering even a syntactically straightforward, metrically unbound, imagically simple poem like Carl Sandberg's "Fog" into, say Dutch. The chances that any two of the five translations will be identical are very slight indeed. Then set twenty-five other translators into turning the five Dutch versions back into English, five translators to a version. Again, the result will almost certainly be as many renderings as there are translators. To call this equivalence is perverse. (Holmes, 1973–4: 68; 1988: 53)

Holmes insisted that the focus of translation studies should be the process of translation, analyzing the choices from a myriad of possibilities that a translator makes. Once initial choices are made, the translation begins to generate rules of its own, determining further choices. Holmes introduced two elements that translation theory had historically avoided: subjective decisions and accidents. Of the latter Holmes wrote:

> Two languages can chance to "interlock" at specific points, quite accidentally, in such a fashion that the translation appears to come through more or less all of a piece. This happens all too rarely, but when it does, the translation seems almost to write itself. (Holmes, 1973–4:78; 1988:59)

Holmes noted that, more often than not, the translation process involved initial decisions that determine later decisions. No choice is made without certain costs; changes will have to be made over the course of the translation which will be deliberate departures from the original. Much influenced by Jiří Levý's article, "Translation as a Decision Process" (1967), Holmes argued that translation establishes a hierarchy of correspondences, dependent upon certain initial choices, which in turn predetermine subsequent moves. For example, if the translator favors expressive qualities over original message, rhyme and meter over free verse, or appellative function over semantic content, these choices will ultimately restrict and determine the kind of correspondences available during the course of the translation of the rest of the text. Such decisions are neither right nor wrong, but both, always limiting and opening up, closing off certain avenues and possibilities, but simultaneously creating new relations and possible alternatives.

Van den Broeck, who wrote a moving introduction to Holmes's *Translated!* (1988), began his essay "The Concept of Equivalence in Translation Theory" in agreement with Holmes; he avoided much of the same theoretical terminology that characterized translation traditionally. He even quoted Holmes's experiment yielding twenty-five renderings of the same text, concluding that "we must by all means reject the idea that the equivalence relation applies to translation" (Broeck, 1978: 33). He realized that all the speculation on defining equivalence by linguists, translation theorists, scholars, philosophers, and philologists contain many different and contradictory equations, especially when applied to phenomena as complex as poetry in translation. Van den Broeck clearly opposes the terminology – including terms such as similarity, analogy, adequacy, invariance, and congruence – and the theoretical implications they carry. Yet he then went on to redefine and recuperate "equivalence" for his own concept of "true understanding" of how one should regard literary translation (Broeck, 1978: 29).

Van den Broeck's redefinition of equivalence was based upon the semiotics of Charles Sanders Peirce, the philosophy of Charles Stevenson, and the linguistics of J.C. Catford. Briefly, Van den Broeck began with a revaluation of the conception of "correspondence," drawing on Peirce's distinction between "types" and "tokens" whereby multiple tokens can refer to one type, as in several versions ("additional instances") of the original poem ("prime instance"), shifting the focus of translation studies from a "one-to-one" to a "many-to-one" notion of correspondence (Broeck, 1978: 34). Van den Broeck expanded upon

Peirce's notion of "type" by borrowing the concept of a universal "megatype" from philosophy, reaching the conclusion that two translations, if they have "approximately the same" meaning, can be identified as representing the "same megatype" (1978:34–5). Like Holmes, Van den Broeck located translation in a network of various instances of one "megatype" or "prime instance"; meaning was reduced to approximations of something somehow identifiable yet always textualized in "tokens" or "additional instances." Yet he retained a formal concept of meaning, as did the Russian Formalists, in which meaning was seen as a property of language and not as something extrinsic. Megatype thus was determined by a network of tokens and yet also transcended those types, thereby also transcending language. Quoting J.C. Catford, Van den Broeck arrived at a definition of meaning as "the total network of relations entered into by any linguistic form" and adopted Catford's definition of translation equivalence: "translation equivalence occurs when an SL [Source Language] and a TL [Target Language] text or item are relatable to (at least some of) the same relevant features of situation substance" (Broeck, 1978:38). For Van den Broeck, those relevant features had nothing to do with semantic reference, and everything to do with textual reference.

He again referred to Catford, arguing that "both texts must be relatable only to the *functionally relevant* features of the communicative situation" (Broeck, 1978: 38). In contrast to Van den Broeck, however, Catford regarded the functionally relevant features as relatively indeterminate and largely a matter of opinion:

> We can distinguish, then, between situational features which are *linguistically relevant*, and those which are *functionally relevant* in that they are relevant to the communicative function of the text in that situation. For translation equivalence to occur, then, both SL and TL text must be relatable to the *functionally* relevant features of the situation. A decision, in any particular case, as to what is functionally relevant in this sense must in our present state of knowledge remain to some extent a matter of opinion. (Catford, 1969: 94, emphasis in original)

Van den Broeck, on the other hand, felt that those functionally relevant features could be precisely determined, standardized, and evaluated. Van den Broeck concluded in agreement with Lefevere that the original author's intent and the original text's function can be determined and translated via a method of typologizing and topicalizing so that it will

"possess a literary value" equivalent to the source text and function accordingly. Van den Broeck concluded, "It is therefore right to say with Lefevere that a translation can only be complete, 'if and when both the communicative value and the time-place-tradition elements of the source text have been replaced by their nearest possible equivalents in the target text"' (Broeck, 1978: 39, see Lefevere, 1975: 102).

The demand to preserve literariness at all costs, thus, influences not only methodology, but also evaluative standards. The problem with the early translation studies approach of Holmes, Lefevere, and Van den Broeck was that they foregrounded the internal organization of the text and its inherent framework to such a degree that the referent totally vanished. Much of the problem centers around the inconsistent use of the term "function." When Miko, for example, refers to the word "function" he is talking about a very subtle linguistic feature of the text that gives it its "literariness." He isolates distinct structural elements in language and describes them, hoping to determine a paradigm of universal elements true for all languages. He has in mind specific ahistorical universals of form which are independent from any specific cultures. Translation studies uses the term "function" to refer to both the way Nida used the word – in terms of communication theory and reducing the information load so that the message "functions" similarly in the receiving culture – and the way Miko used the term – very subtle linguistic features that only the most informed linguistic scholars and literary critics may discern. Miko's reference to "function" presumes an absolutely pristine message channel with an ideal reader who knows an author's original intent, is fluent in numerous languages, can distinguish minute and complex linguistic features, and has creative poetic ability. Few such readers exist; Miko's model presumes not merely a competent reader, but an ideal one. His translation studies model, thus, is based upon a non-existent receptor as well as a non-existent referent. Not fully tied to thought or communication, it resembles the modernistic/futuristic texts of the twenties that referred to nothing but themselves and were totally autonomous and "meaningless."

The reason why Van den Broeck wanted to reclaim the terminology of traditional metaphysical philosophy for translation studies was that the new approach, despite attempts to free itself, retained the same form versus content dichotomy that characterized traditional philosophical dualism. According to Lefevere and Van den Broeck, the problem with translations that privilege formal aspects – rhyme, meter, phonetics, syntax – was not that they did not transfer the content, but that they did

not adequately translate even the formal properties of the original text. They did not focus *enough* on the "total" form, the proper theme in relation to literary tradition, and the specific "literary" features. While translation studies scholars deny its validity, the charge that the group concerns itself only with literary translation is to a large degree justifiable. Their emphasis upon the purely formal characteristics presumes the same form/content dualism without theorizing about the relation of the two. If the *effectiveness* of the formal representation of the object gets translated, then presumably the object itself will be translated as well. Early translation studies claimed a position that was theoretically new and mediatory as opposed to hermeneutic, yet it found itself embedded in and often perpetuating many of the dichotomies of that same metaphysical tradition.

Ostranenie as the evaluative standard

In order to demonstrate the reception of this early phase of translation studies, I turn to the text *Translation Studies* (1980) written by Susan Bassnett, whose book grew out of work with post-graduate students at the University of Warwick in England in close consultation with the Leuven/Amsterdam group. The text was one of the first publications abroad about the Flemish/Dutch project and was intended to serve as an introduction to the field. It has become perhaps the largest selling book on translation studies to date, being reissued by Routledge in 1991.

Because she was trying to appeal to a larger audience, Bassnett was deliberately didactic and provocative in order to stimulate interest, promote discussion, and clarify differences. She subscribed to the two fundamental yet contradictory tenets of early translation studies: that there is no right way to translate a literary text, and that the interpretation of the translation be based on the comparison of the text's "function" as original and as translation. In an analysis of a translation history of various versions of Catullus's thirteenth poem, for example, she uses a very broad definition of the term "function" to "objectively" describe the differing versions. In fact, however, she seems to distance herself from a translation by Sir Walter Marris, who "has fallen into the pitfalls awaiting the translator who decides to tie himself to a very formal rhyme scheme," and seems to prefer a version full of hip jargon and rock and roll lyrics by Frank Copley, which she finds "closer to the Latin poem than the more literal version by Marris." Finally, when talking about a version by Ben Jonson, who translated the sonnet into a forty-one line

poem, she suggests that it "comes nearer in mood, tone and language to Catullus than either of the other versions" (Bassnett, 1980: 88–91). Clearly Bassnett is rhetorically trying to break down the readers' narrow concept of what literary translation should be and get us to view translational phenomena in a broader sense. Yet she seems to favor including *ostranenie* effects, empowering translators to add remarks and passages in keeping with the effects of the original to make the text relevant to the contemporary reader. Her broad use of the term function and her liberal application of the concept of shift blur boundaries between traditional definitions of translation and adaptation.

Despite the radical appearance of her methodology, her poetics actually echo modernist and Russian Formalist conventions. She presented the theoretical issues raised by the Flemish and Dutch scholars as part of "translation problems" that have characterized translation theory throughout its history, and are very characteristic of Anglo-American approaches today. In fact, Bassnett was in large measure justified in her application of translation studies to her intersemiotic approach, based on many years of theater studies, to translation; certainly theoretical support for her priorities can be found in the work of Levý, Popovič, Lefevere, and Van den Broeck. Her understanding of translation studies was partially determined by terminological confusion within the field, its inscription in traditional philosophical dualism, and its privileging an aesthetic that lends itself to appropriation by referenceless and subjective stratagems.

Whereas Bassnett used translation studies to support her own translation strategy, one which implicitly retained evaluative standards based upon the prevailing norms characteristic of modernism, James Holmes proceeded in a different fashion, one less functionally and more "materially" oriented. He wanted to reveal first the process of translation in order to understand why certain decisions were made, before judging the result as good/bad, true/untrue, or understood/misunderstood. Referring again to Levý's "Translation as a Decision Making Process" (1967), Holmes argued that translation involves decision-making, and one decision affects each other decision (Holmes, 1973–4:79–80;see Levý, 1967:1171–4).Yet at a certain point, the translation begins to generate its own set of rules, precluding certain choices and opening up insights that perhaps were not visible before. However the translation turns out, other translations are always possible, not better or worse, but different, depending upon the poetics of the translator, the initial choices and the points when the languages interlock and begin to develop not in

the source or target language, but in that grey area in between. The difference between Holmes's and Bassnett's approach was that Holmes tries to preserve the sound, the sense, the rhythm, the textual "material" of the thing in language and recreate those specific sensations – sound, sense, and association – despite inherent limitations in the target language, whereas Bassnett focuses to the central theme and meaning, derives the "original function," and allows the replacement of much of the text, with all its particular resonance and associations, with something new and often quite different, but which theoretically affects the reader the same way. In both instances, in keeping with the definition of the theory of translation studies, one can see just how the methods for training translators and/or the actual practice of translators inform any discussion of theory.

Translation studies' place in literary history

Whereas James Holmes tried very hard to avoid making theoretical generalizations about what the object (the translated text) should look like before the source text has been confronted, the language incompatibilities analyzed, and options weighed which will dictate methodology, Raymond van den Broeck, André Lefevere, and Susan Bassnett confronted the descriptive problem with evaluative standards already in place. The theoretical differences between them, however, did not preclude their co-operation in terms of translation scholarship. In fact, what is most characteristic of this period is the very exciting collaboration process that went on despite certain theoretical differences. For example, translation studies scholars agreed that the scholar must analyze the system of *both* the correspondences *and* deviations constructed by the translator. In his essay, "Describing Literary Translations: Models and Methods" (1978; 1988), Holmes elaborated:

> The task of the scholar who wishes to describe the relationship between the translated text and its original would seem to be obvious. He must attempt to determine the features of the translator's two maps and to discover his system of rules, those of deviation, projection, and above all, correspondence – in other words, the translator's poetic. (Holmes, 1978: 77; 1988: 87)

However obvious the relationship may appear, such a description is not easy, for two reasons. First, almost invariably, no material for analysis exists except the two texts, the original and the translation, and the

scholar has no access to what went on in the translator's mind in terms of the decision-making process. Secondly, even if the translator explicitly elaborates in an introduction or preface the main criteria and poetic system governing the translated text, that description may not correspond to the original intention. Thus, the scholar must trace the relationship between translation and original along an imaginary path, for texts documenting the path are virtually non-existent. Up until the days of early translation studies, none of the disciplines of literary criticism has presented a methodology sufficient to explain objectively the translation process; previous attempts have made comparisons on an arbitrary basis, characterized by intuition and the method of influence studies, and have been glaringly incomplete. Translation studies scholars proposed a more rigorous approach by trying to reach an agreement on a repertory of specific features to be compared (such as the one Miko outlined above), then establishing where the determining shifts occur (as defined by Popovič above), and finally analyzing those shifts systematically, incorporating both synchronic, structural textual analysis as well as diachronic literary intertextual and socio-cultural analysis, in order to determine the meaning and function of any specific translated text. Van den Broeck concurred, suggesting that limited invariance (approximate meaning) goes hand in hand with translation shifts (functional equivalents) (Broeck, 1978:41). In order to relate the original and the translation in terms of their stable core and their determining shifts, Van den Broeck also pointed to Miko and his system of expressive properties (Broeck, 1978:44–5). Lefevere, using slightly different terminology, made a similar point, arguing that literature evolves both as new and independent units arise from a basic unit and as progressive changes take place over time. The task of the scholar, he argued, was to codify this evolution as well as the institutions through which that evolution takes place. Only then can the "meaning" of a work be established (Lefevere, 1978a: 25). Holmes, aware of the magnitude of such a task, argued that working out such a system of codification and undertaking the process of describing literature in the above fashion is the next necessary step for the field. He concluded his essay "Describing Literary Translations" as follows:

> The task of working out such a repertory would be enormous. But if scholars were to arrive at a consensus regarding it, in the way, for instance, that botanists since Linnaeus have arrived at a consensus regarding systematic methods for the description of plants, it would then become possible, for the first time, to provide descriptions of

> original and translated texts, of their respective maps, and of correspondence networks, rules, and hierarchies that would be mutually comparable. And only on the basis of mutually comparable descriptions can we go on to produce well-founded studies of a larger scope: comparative studies of the translations of one author or one translator, or – a greater leap – period, genre, one-language (or one-culture), or general translation histories. (Holmes, 1978: 81; 1988: 90)

Translation studies, which began with a fairly modest proposal, that of focusing on the translations themselves and better describing the process of translation, has discovered that the task will be much more complex than initially conceived. The job is certainly beyond the scope of any particular scholar, no matter how knowledgeable of linguistic, literary, and socio-cultural theory – hence the proposal that literary scholars from a variety of fields agree upon a working methodology and unite the efforts around this enormous goal.

One of the pioneers leading the effort to develop a model for better describing translations in a comprehensive fashion has been José Lambert, whose approach differs from early translation studies. Lambert suggested that Van den Broeck's and Lefevere's 1979 book *Uitnodiging tot de vertaalwetenschap* was symptomatic of the problem. While Lefevere and Van den Broeck stressed the need for more descriptive studies, Lambert argued, they did not specify how they should be carried out (Lambert & Gorp, 1985:42) and that the general methods used during the first period, i.e., the early seventies, were largely "intuitive" rather than systematic. Lambert and others were aided in their attempts to describe a more systematic methodology for the field by the contribution of two Israeli scholars. "polysystem theory," as defined by Itamar Even-Zohar and developed by Gideon Toury, to be considered in further detail in the following chapter, became so identified as the theory underlying contemporary translation studies during the eighties and nineties, that for many the two were indistinguishable.

Yet before leaving this chapter on early translation studies, it is important to reflect upon the pioneering nature of those early scholars and their contribution to literary studies and theories of cross-cultural communication. Unfortuntunately several of the key participants in the formative years have passed away. Levý died in 1969; Popovič in 1984; Holmes in 1986; and Lefevere in 1996. Recent scholarship has added little to the historical record of the period. However, many of the

important articles, which were originally published in obscure places, have now been collected and are readily available. The essays of James Holmes, as mentioned above, have been collected in *Translated!* (1988). Retrospectives have been held, such as the conference dedicated to James Holmes in Amsterdam in 1990, presentations at which were published in the subsequent anthology *Translation Studies: The State of the Art* (1991), which contains important essays by many of Holmes's admirers.

That is not to say that no new scholarship has added to the record of early translation studies. In *Translation in Systems: Descriptive and System-oriented Approaches Explained* (1999), Theo Hermans, himself a pioneer of the period (see section on translation studies in the eighties below), cites the work of John McFarlane, who in 1953 published an essay "Modes of Translation" in *The Durham University Journal*. Holmes recognized the importance of McFarlane's ideas and had invited him to the 1976 Leuven conference. McFarlane began his essay with fairly traditional concepts of what translators attempt to do, i.e., render accurately the meaning of one text in one language in another text in another language, but then proceeded to point out the complexities involved in that very process. He was especially aware of the instability of meaning and the incompatibilities between languages, arguing that there is no way to produce total accuracy because there is no way of determining of what total accuracy would consist. What was needed, then, was not another new theory of translation, but rather an approach that accepted translation in all its inaccuracies and inadequacies, one "concerned not with unreal ideals and fictional absolutes but actualities" and one that would "not so much attempt to impose a rigid pattern on the facts as we at present see them but rather serve as a device for the better understanding of them" (1953:92–3; see Hermans, 1999:17–21). He concluded his essay with a call to explore the procedures of translation, of what actual translations do: "Before we can begin to make value judgements about translation, we must know more about its nature, and it is suggested that an analysis of *procedure* – in the belief that translation is as translation does – is the approach that promises best" (1953:93). One can see the importance of McFarlane's ideas, especially claims such as "translation is as translation does," on the early translation studies scholars.

More important than collecting the early essays in anthologies and fleshing out the historical record has been the attempt to recover the spirit of the times. Younger scholars coming to this material at a later

date have only the historical record with which to begin research. According to participants of the period, however, what is missing from historical revues of the period are the conversations, late-night dialogues, and unpublished ideas initially so important to the movement. Fortunately, Theo Hermans has addressed this spirit of discovery in a section called "An Invisible College" in *Translation in Systems* (1999). Relying on Thomas Kuhn's *The Structure of Scientific Revolution* (1962) and Diana Crane's *Invisible Colleges: Diffusion of Knowledge in Scientific Communities* (1972) for a vocabulary to articulate the energy of this period, Hermans reflects on how the field chrystalized from disparate ideas floating around in different parts of the globe to a semi-coherent "disciplinary matrix," a kind of a "meeting of the minds" of scholars in the Americas, Holland, Belgium, Israel, and central Europe. Interests in literary history, structuralism, stylistics, translation, and, especially, dissatisfaction with existing scholarship overlapped and led to a creative process of cross-fertilization. Ideas tried out by small groups infected others, leading to exponential growth. Contacts established by Holmes and Popovič spread to Holland and Belgium where scholars such as José Lambert, André Lefevere, and Raymond van den Broeck picked up the momentum, which in turn spread to scholars such as Even-Zohar and Gideon Toury in Israel, Susan Bassnett in England, and Maria Tymoczko in the United States. These highly productive individuals then developed a theoretical apparatus and a research methodology, organized a series of conferences, recruited collaborators, and began to train students. The expansion was underway.

During the early years, the development of a personal network and the exchange of ideas was crucial to the emergence of the new field. Hermans refers to this network as the "invisible college" which, despite its international dispersion, provided a home for the participants. The appearance of the early articles in obscure journals, maintains Hermans, actually added to the combative and innovative spirit of the group. Many interests were shared, such as the early group's joint interest in Russian Formalism; yet the individual participants also brought their own expertise and interests, including systems theory, empirical studies, literary history, and philosophy of science. In short, the chemistry worked, and a new paradigm was established. We now turn to the central years of translation studies in which its most important ideas were elaborated and tested: the period in which translation studies was wedded, for better or worse, to polysystem theory.

Chapter 5
Polysystem Theory

In a series of papers written from 1970 to 1977 and collected in 1978 as *Papers in Historical Poetics*, Itamar Even-Zohar first introduced the term "polysystem" for the aggregate of literary systems (including everything from "high" or "canonized" forms (e.g., innovative verse) such as poetry to "low" or "non-canonized" forms (e.g., children's literature and popular fiction) in a given culture. Even-Zohar recognized both the "primary" (creating new items and models) as well as "secondary" (reinforcing existing items and models) importance of translated literature in literary history (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 7–8). Gideon Toury, a younger colleague, adopted the polysystem concept, isolated and defined certain translation "norms" that influence translation decisions, and incorporated these factors in the larger framework of a comprehensive theory of translation, published in *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (1980). These ideas were not new, but based upon work done by late Russian Formalists and evolved from a decade of work by scholars at Tel Aviv University who had undertaken the ambitious project of describing the entire "History of Literary Translation into Hebrew."

Early in the 1970s, Even-Zohar developed the polysystem hypothesis while working on a model for Israeli Hebrew literature; he had published his findings in French as "Aperçu de la litérature israélienne" as early as 1972, though the English version of his theory did not appear until his *Papers in Historical Poetics* (1978). Gideon Toury was one of several scholars at Tel Aviv University who participated in various field studies "testing" Even-Zohar's hypotheses during the seventies and had extensive data upon which to base his theoretical conclusions (Yahalom, 1981; Shavit, 1981; Toury, 1980). Even-Zohar first introduced his ideas to the Dutch/Belgian group at what has now become known as the "historic" 1976 Translation Studies Colloquium in Leuven, Belgium, whose proceedings were published in a collection called *Literature and Translation: New Perspectives in Literary Studies* (1976). The papers presented at two translation studies conferences following the 1976 colloquium – the first in 1978 in Tel Aviv, whose proceedings appeared in a special issue of *Poetics Today* (Summer–Autumn, 1981), and the second in 1980 in Antwerp, whose proceedings were published in a

special translation issue of *Dispositio* (1982) – illustrate the merging of the polysystem theory with translation studies to the point where, at least during the 1980s, the two were almost indistinguishable.

Why did this union of work going on by scholars in the Low Countries and in Israel occur at this moment in time? One reason certainly had to do with the parallel developments in their social and historical situations: the Flemish and Dutch scholars enjoyed intellectual contacts with the German and Czech literary and linguistic circles, while the Israelis interacted with German, Russian, and later Anglo-American scholars. A similar perspective on translation also existed in both regions: their countries might be characterized as having few people speaking in "minor" languages, both "national" literatures are very much influenced by "major" literatures around them, the Dutch by German, French, and Anglo-American, and the Israelis by German, Russian, and Anglo-American. The situation in Israel was more extreme than in the Low Countries, which had their own indigenous literary tradition, for Hebrew lacked a canon of literary works and was totally dependent upon foreign language texts to provide both diversity and depth. More importantly, however, was the dependence of the culture as a whole upon translation for commercial and political purposes. In the case of the Dutch/Flemish situation, economic, intellectual, and social opportunities were certainly enhanced by multilingual interaction; in the case of Israel, the survival of the nation became dependent on translation. If the Dutch and Belgian scholars found themselves at an intellectual crossroads of Europe, the Israeli scholars found themselves at a crossroads not only between the Soviet Union and the West, but between Western and "Third World" cultures.

In Chapter 1, I noted that Paul Engle asserted that the future of the world may depend upon the accurate translation of one word; nowhere is this assertion more apparent than in the fragile diplomatic and political situation in the Middle East. There Russian culture does meet Anglo-American; Moslem meets Jewish; social and historical forces from the past influence the present; multilingualism is more prevalent than monolingualism; exiles are as common as "local" nationals. To understand one's past, one's identity, an understanding of translation in and of itself is crucial; translation ceases to be an elite intellectual "game," a footnote to literary scholarship, but becomes fundamental to the lives and livelihood of everyone in the entire region (and maybe the world).

Another reason for combining a consideration of polysystem theory with translation studies is their similarity: a logical connection exists between what was being suggested in the Low Countries and what was being postulated in Israel. The Israeli scholars did not contradict the early translation studies work, but expanded upon it, incorporating earlier theoretical notions of translation equivalence and literary function into a larger structure which enabled them to historicize actual translated texts and see the temporal nature of certain aesthetic presuppositions that influence the process of translation. The important theoretical difference between their work and early translation studies scholars is that the direction of thought about translation becomes reversed. Translation studies disciples, like several translation theorists before them, tended to look at one-to-one relationships and functional notions of equivalence; they believed in the subjective ability of the translator to derive an equivalent text that in turn influenced the literary and cultural conventions in a particular society. Polysystem theorists presume the opposite: that the social norms and literary conventions in the receiving culture ("target" system) govern the aesthetic presuppositions of the translator and thus influence ensuing translation decisions.

Yet in many ways polysystem theory was a logical extension of the demands made by early translation studies theorists; the Israeli scholars have expanded the parameters of what Lefevere, Holmes, and Van den Broeck intended, to the point where translation theory seems to transcend "legitimate" linguistic and literary borders. In the introduction to *Translation Theory and Intercultural Relations*, the proceedings of the 1978 Tel Aviv conference, the editors Even-Zohar and Toury wrote:

> Having once adopted a functional(istic) approach, whereby the object is theory dependent, modern translation theory cannot escape transcending "borders." Just as the linguistic "borders" have been transcended, so must the literary ones be transcended. For there are occurrences of a translational nature which call for a semiotics of culture. (Even-Zohar & Toury, 1981: x)

With the incorporation of the historical horizon, polysystem theorists changed the perspective that had governed traditional translation theory and began to address a whole new series of questions. Not only are translations and interliterary connections between cultures more adequately described, but intraliterary relations within the structure of a given cultural system and actual literary and linguistic evolution are also made visible by means of the study of translated texts.

The problem with early translation studies, according to polysystem theorists, was that it attempted both to theorize the process of translation and to evaluate the success of individual texts synchronically (texts in terms of their pure "literariness"). It purported to have a diachronic component, for it did consider the historical context as well as the target culture (in terms of the text's function in the receiving culture), yet this component tended toward the ahistorical: the theory hypothesized the possibility of a direct importation of an isolated function (the author's original intended function) across centuries. A synchronic evaluation, like Van den Broeck's attempt to recuperate the concept of "translation equivalence" for translation studies, was in direct contradiction to a comprehensive diachronic description, which would relativize rather than universalize any concept of equivalence. Any attempt to prescribe one aesthetic over another in terms of approaches to translation was doomed to be undermined by the necessary extension of the parameters of the historical analysis. Because early translation theory was very much bound up with metaphysical distinctions separating form from content and dualistic theories of representation, it failed to adequately describe the historical situation conditioning specific systems of representation. The Israeli contribution abandoned attempts at prescription, incorporated descriptions of multiple translation processes, and analyzed the various historical products. Instead of basing itself on deep-structured grammar/thematic types or linguistic features that have similar functions, "modern" translation theory incorporated the idea of systemic change which undermines such static, mechanistic concepts.

The process translation theorists now wished to describe was not the process of the transfer of a single text, but the process of translation production and change within the entire literary system. To do so, Even-Zohar and Toury borrowed heavily from the ideas of some of the later Russian Formalists, especially those of Jurij Tynjanov, whose project in many ways paralleled the development of translation studies. Locating his concept of polysystem theory in the tradition of Russian Formalism, Even-Zohar wrote:

> The importance for literary history of the correlations between central and peripheral literature as well as between "high" and "low" types was raised by Russian Formalists as soon as they abandoned their partially ahistorical attitude, early in their history. The nature of these correlations became one of their major hypotheses in

> explaining the mechanisms of change in literary history. (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 11)

As early translation studies tended to call for an investigation into the historical process but often failed to elaborate, so too did many Russian Formalists fail to interpret their results in terms of literary history. Such a process began only later with Jurij Tynjanov, Boris Èjxenbaum, and their students.

Jurij Tynjanov: On literary evolution

The Russian Formalists did not form a totally homogeneous group, and the disagreement within the group over the concept of "form," i.e., whether language was primarily directed toward the sign itself or the external world, was perhaps responsible for the internal division. One of the Russian Formalists who argued for the branching out from autonomous literary works and into history was Boris Èjxenbaum, who in "Theory of the Formal Method" described the moment of the break as follows:

> The fact of the matter is that the Formalists' original endeavor to pin down some particular constructional device and trace its unity through voluminous material had given way to an endeavor to qualify further the generalized idea, to grasp the concrete *function* of the device in each given instance. This concept of functional value gradually moved out to the forefront and overshadowed our original concept of the device. (Èjxenbaum, 1978: 29)

The split in Russian Formalism was not merely directed against early Formalist tendencies, but also against the reigning literary history and symbolist scholarship in Russia. Such a change in conceptual thinking forced the later Formalists to consider historical factors, and again they came into conflict with the traditions of literary historicism, then dominated by biological accounts and studies of the influence of canonical authors on other authors. According to Èjxenbaum, literary historians at the time relied on generalities" such as concepts of "romanticism" or "realism" when talking historically, and progress was measured on an individual basis – similar, for example, to the way a father passes something on to his son and a mother to her daughter. Literature was seen as playing no role in social evolution. The symbolist literary theorists, against whom Russian Formalists initially reacted, removed literary scholarship even further from cultural conditions,

developing a whole series of “impressionistic sketches” and “silhouettes” that modernized writers by turning them into “eternal companions."

This branching out of Russian Formalism was a natural consequence of the Formalist approach: in the analysis of a particular literary issue, the critic would soon find the literary problem not only enmeshed in history, but also influencing the history in which it finds itself, opening up the complex problem of literary evolution. According to Tynjanov, any new literary work must necessarily deconstruct existing unities, or by definition it ceases to be literary. Literary tradition was no longer conceived of as a continuing straight line, but rather as a struggle involving destruction and reconstruction out of elements (Tynjanov, 1921; Èjxenbaum, 1978: 31). In terms of the development of Russian Formalism and its relevance to translation studies, this insight by Tynjanov marks the critical break. In his 1927 article “On Literary Evolution” and then a year later, together with Roman Jakobson, in “Problems in the Study of Literature and Language” (both articles collected in Matejka & Pomorska, 1978), Tynjanov officially repudiated his Formalist colleagues. The Formalist project, he argued, was just one more instance of a traditional “historic” approach, which isolated “literary” elements and equated them with elements from a system of a different time period and place:

> Tradition, the basic concept of the established history of literature, has proved to be an unjustifiable abstraction of one or more of the literary elements of a given system within which they occupy the same plane and play the same role. They are equated with the like elements of another system in which they are on a different plane, thus they are brought into a seemingly unified, fictitiously integrated system. (Tynjanov, 1978b: 67)

Tynjanov rejected his colleagues’ investigations as superficial and mechanical and their results as illusory and abstract. Instead, he argued that synchronic features depend upon past and future structures, which caused him to reformulate the Formalist concept of diachrony and the function of literature in history. Always in a dialectical relationship with other systems, works could no longer be studied in isolation, for that which was innovative was dependent upon that which was normal. Formal elements took on value not when they could be abstracted and correlated to some concept of the similar or identical form, but when they were different, distancing themselves from a standard form. “Literariness” became equated with difference, and phrases such as

"innovation" within works and "mutation" of systems were used to illustrate his argument: "The main concept for literary evolution is the *mutation* of systems, and thus the problem of 'traditions' is transferred onto another plane" (Tynjanov, 1978b: 67).

Two changes in Tynjanov's thinking became apparent: first, "literariness" could not be defined outside of history – its existence depended upon its interrelatedness; and, second, formal unities receded in importance as the systemic laws which govern literary relations were elevated. Tynjanov might at this point be characterized as a structuralist rather than a formalist, for the goal of his project was to discover the "specific structural laws" that govern all systems, including literary texts. He proposed a study of the relationship of the function of formal literary elements to other intratextual literary elements, to intertextual literary elements, and to extraliterary orders. The formal abstraction of separate elements of a work – such as composition, rhythm, style, syntax, or parody – had been useful but limited, for at a certain point such work was bound to reveal that the role of a given element varied in different systems. The revelation that formal elements were capable of taking on different functions in different cultures (as in translation, for example) suggested to Tynjanov that the parameters governing literary scholarship needed to be expanded to include the extraliterary. He rejected the non-systemic "origin" of new elements, ideas, and/or genres, whether generated from literary texts ("literary influences") or extraliterary institutions. Instead, Tynjanov and Jakobson posited the thesis that structural evolution determines every specific change: "The history of literature (art), being simultaneous with other historical series, is characterized, as is each of these series, by an involved complex of specific structural laws" (Tynjanov & Jakobson, 1978: 79).

To understand better the relationship of the innovative formal element to the specific text and to the existing literary order, Tynjanov introduced the concept of "system." Elements, he argued, do not exist in isolation, but always in an interrelationship with other elements of other systems. For Tynjanov, the entire literary and extraliterary world could be divided into multiple structural systems. Literary traditions composed different systems, literary genres formed systems, a literary work itself was also a unique system, and the entire social order comprised another system, all of which were interrelated, "dialectically" interacting with each other, and conditioning how any specific formal element could function. Without a concept of sameness, of system, of norms, of conforming, it was impossible to determine that which was new, different, or "mutant."

Formalism posited the thesis that it could distinguish "literariness" through a concept of defamiliarization. Yet that thesis was dependent upon the assumption that it could also define that which was familiar, for the formal element's function could be viewed as defamiliarizing only in that specific intertextual moment when the norm and the new came in contact. Thus Tynjanov's major contribution to literary theory was to extend, in a logical fashion, the parameters of Formalism to include literary and social norms.

The social order in Tynjanov's model was everything that had become normalized, automatized, regularized – ordinary, everyday, banal life: he argued that the verse found in newspapers, for example, used mainly effaced, banal metrical systems that had long since been rejected by poetry. Thus, the extraliterary in Tynjanov's model was not something that influenced literary works; the literary work influenced the extraliterary. Literary texts introduced change in the way people perceived things in the real world. To illuminate this set of relations, Tynjanov introduced the concept "complex of norms":

> The principles involved in relating these two categories (i.e., the existing norm and the individual utterances) as applied to literature must now be elaborated. In the latter case, the individual utterance cannot be considered without reference to the existing complex of norms. (The investigator, in isolating the former from the latter, inescapably deforms the system of artistic values under consideration, thus losing the possibility of establishing its immanent laws.) (Tynjanov & Jakobson, 1978: 80)

Thus the individual utterance was first related to the pre-existing literary norm to measure its "value" and thus determine the immanent laws of its production. At a third level existed the real, material world, the world of "social convention," i.e., that which existed when literary texts were literally "worn out" and transferred on to other forms of "real life." The social norms, thus, were viewed to a large degree as stagnant, static, dead; literary innovation was what moved society. Real life's function in Tynjanov's model was merely to be the receptor for the tired, worn out phrases which have lost their life.

While Tynjanov was very much committed to a theory of systems over Formalism, his Formalist roots remained visible, for the formal structure of a text was still privileged and the content reduced to marginal importance. The hierarchy of his model proceeded from an analysis of the relation of structural elements within a literary text ("constructional

function") to the analysis of the relation of the literary text to literary order ("literary function") and finally to the analysis of the relation of literary system to social conventions ("verbal function"). The hierarchy was compartmentalized so that a single literary work could not be related to the social order; only a literary order to the extraliterary (Tynjanov, 1978b: 74). Tynjanov's concept of how literature evolves was based upon the very same defamiliarization device so highly valued by the early Formalists. Despite apparent claims to the contrary, even in late Formalism, literature was still perceived as cut off from the rest of the boring, banal, automatized world; literature was viewed as developing autonomously, adjacent to the real world.

As advanced as Tynjanov's model was, the purported diachronic, evolutionary model still was primarily determined by his synchronic conceptual predisposition. A contradiction within Tynjanov's work characteristic of his project was his attempt to broaden the perspective of Russian Formalism by introducing historical perspective and social realities into his model, yet at the same time retaining synchronic conceptual categories – a text's "constructional" function – which traditionally governed Formalism. What had value was that which defamiliarized (poetic verse); and what had no value was that which conformed (journalism, popular literature). His call for a value-proof "science" of literary evolution privileged signs referring to other signs – the innovation of form was the determining factor – and not to the material world. Literature thus evolved autonomously according to literary laws of evolution, independent of external factors. Literature remained above the normal, humdrum world, evolving on its own. Literature did not mediate, it only influenced, via some sort of "trickle down" effect. The concept that different cultural milieu, economic conditions, or literary institutions (like the press) might have an effect upon the evolution of a literary system was inconceivable within Tynjanov's framework of analysis. In Tynjanov's model, the material world, the content of the work of art, its historical referent, and its meaning were all relegated to a subsidiary status.

Itamar Even-Zohar: Exploring intrasystemic literary relations

Itamar Even-Zohar is not specifically a translation theorist, but a cultural theorist. He has not published on translation for over a decade, but his pioneering work continues to exert considerable influence,

particularly when studying translation in emerging cultures or cultures in crisis. Even-Zohar adopted Tynjanov's concept of a hierarchical literary system and then incorporated the data collected from his observations on how translations function in various societies. He coined the term "polysystem" to refer to the entire network of correlated systems – literary and extraliterary – within society, and developed an approach called polysystem theory to attempt to explain the function of *all* kinds of writing within a given culture – from the central canonical texts to the most marginal non-canonical texts. Concepts borrowed from Tynjanov – such as "system," literary "norms," and the notion of "evolution" as an ongoing struggle between various literary systems – are used to frame his research: the analysis of the intrasystemic relations between conflicting literary structures. Although the analysis of translated literature was just one aspect of his investigation, it proved more than marginal, for his data showed that translated literature functions differently depending upon the age, strength, and stability of the particular literary "polysystem." In fact, his thinking about translation, especially in relation to the unique situation of Hebrew literature, with its general lack of texts and the unique role translated Russian and Yiddish literature play in its literary system, led Even-Zohar to some of his most provocative hypotheses about literary systems.

Even-Zohar adopted Tynjanov's concept of system, his hierarchical structure of differing literary systems, his concept of defamiliarization as the measuring device for historical literary significance, and finally his concept of literary mutation and evolution. Even-Zohar's definition of polysystem is the same as Tynjanov's concept of system, including the literary, semi-literary and extraliterary structures. The term "polysystem" is thus a global term covering all of the literary systems, both major and minor, existing in a given culture. The substance of Even-Zohar's research involves his exploration of the complex interrelations among the various systems, especially those among the major systems and the minor subsystems. In a more controversial move, aware of the ideological implications of Tynjanov's hierarchically structured system, Even-Zohar nevertheless adopted the same set of structural relations with their correspondingly varying "value" within the structure as a whole:

> According to what is presumed about the nature of systems in general and the nature of literary phenomena in particular, there can obviously be no equality between the various literary systems and types. These systems maintain *hierarchical* relations, which means

> some maintain a more central position than others, or that some are *primary* while others are *secondary*. (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 16)

The third concept borrowed from Tynjanov was that of "defamiliarization" or, in the late Formalist terminology, "deautomatization." As the above passage indicates, Even-Zohar's model again presumes the privileged status of the "high" literary elements of "primary" importance to the polysystem, and of "low" automatized elements at the bottom of the cultural hierarchy, of "secondary" importance. At the lower levels, the elements, although "materially" unchanged, lose their "original function" and become "petrified" (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 16). Even-Zohar reversed our notion of canon as an unvarying and generally accepted body of literature that operates as a standard norm in a given culture and used it to help define that which is innovative, new, and different:

> While canonized literature tries to create new models of reality and attempts to illuminate the information it bears in a way which at least brings about *deautomatization*, as the Prague Structuralists put it, non-canonized literature has to keep within the conventionalized models which are highly automatized. Hence the impression of stereotype one gets from the non-canonized works. (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 16).

The historical horizon was introduced along the lines of Russian Futurism as well: the shock caused by the appearance of new and innovative elements in the existing codified system is what causes a literary system to evolve. Throughout history, competing literary subsystems are thus constantly challenging and infiltrating higher orders, and then resolving, so the entire system evolves in a systematically "unsystematic" fashion: a sort of boiling caldron, manifest within a text as an interplay of intersecting and competing paradigms of formal elements, indicative of the conflicting heterogeneous systems struggling within the "polysystem" as a whole.

Such a theory rearticulates the system theory proposed by the late Formalists; Even-Zohar resurrected them after a period of silence partially imposed by political conditions in the former Soviet Union. His work incorporating translation into his model, however, marked a further development within the field of historical poetics:

> It is necessary to include *translated literature* in the polysystem. This is rarely done, but no observer of the history of any literature can

> avoid recognizing as an important fact the impact of translations and their role in the synchrony and diachrony of a certain literature. (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 15)

Not all polysystems are the same, and through the analysis of the relationship of translated to original literary works, Even-Zohar arrived at a better understanding of the nature of polysystems. In all previous systems models, translations were invariably classified as secondary systems; Even-Zohar's data showed that such classification may be inaccurate. The polysystems of larger, older cultures, such as Anglo-American or French, for example, differ from the polysystems of younger or smaller nations, such as Israel or the Low Countries. The former, because of the length and self-sufficiency of their traditions, according to Even-Zohar, tend to relegate translated literature to the margins of society (except in periods of crisis), whereas within the latter systems, for opposite reasons, translations play a more central role. In his essay "The Position of Translated Literature Within the Literary Polysystem," Even-Zohar suggested that the relationship between translated works and the literary polysystem cannot be categorized as either primary or secondary, but as variable, depending upon the specific circumstance operating within the literary system.

Even-Zohar outlined three social circumstances enabling a situation in which translation would maintain a primary position: when a literature is "young," or in the process of being established; when a literature is "peripheral" or "weak" or both; and when a literature is experiencing a "crisis" or turning point (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 24). In the first case, as is characteristic of the Israeli situation, and as seems to be characteristic of nineteenth-century Czech culture (Macura, 1990), translation fulfills the need of a young literature to use its new language for as many different kinds of writing as possible. Since it cannot create all forms and genres, translated texts may serve as the most important for a certain amount of time (though not limited to just this role in the hierarchy). The same principle holds true, according to Even-Zohar, in the second situation, when a weak literature, often of a smaller nation, like Israel, cannot produce all the kinds of writing a stronger, larger system can – thus its inability to produce innovations and subsequent dependency upon translation to introduce precedent-setting texts. In such circumstances, translated texts serve not only as a medium through which new ideas can be imported, but also as the form of writing most frequently imitated by "creative" writers in the native language. In the third situation, perhaps

analogous to the cultural situation in North America in the sixties, established literary models no longer stimulate the new generation of writers, who turn elsewhere for ideas and forms. Under such historical circumstances, or combination of circumstances, both established and avant-garde writers produce translations, and through the translated text new elements are introduced into a literary system that would otherwise fail to appear.

The opposite social conditions, according to Even-Zohar, govern the situations in which translation is of secondary importance to the polysystem. In strong systems such as the French or Anglo-American, with well-developed literary traditions and many different kinds of writing, original writing produces innovations in ideas and forms independent of translation, relegating translations to a marginal position in the overall functioning of the dynamic system. In this historical situation, translation often (but not necessarily always) assumes forms already established as a dominant type within a particular genre, and the translated literature tends to remain fairly conservative, adhering to norms which the "higher" forms have already rejected. Despite playing a secondary role, translations produced under these circumstances may paradoxically introduce new *ideas* into a culture while at the same time preserving traditional forms.

Having observed the position of translation within varying cultural systems, Even-Zohar next explored the relationship between the translated texts and the literary polysystem along two lines: (1) how texts to be translated are selected by the receiving culture and (2) how translated texts adopt certain norms and functions as a result of their relation to other target language systems (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 22). In his early work on polysystem theory, Even-Zohar's debt to the Tynjanov and the Russian Formalists was very clear, and the conspicuous absence of extraliterary factors can be noted. Selection, according to Even-Zohar's research, appears to be governed by conditions within the receiving polysystem. Texts to be translated are chosen because of their compatibility with the new forms needed by a polysystem to achieve a complete, dynamic, homogeneous identity. Thus, the socio-literary conditions of the receiving culture in part determine those texts that get translated in the first place. If features such as techniques, forms, or even genres are missing – Even-Zohar talks in terms of "vacuums" within a literary culture – in all likelihood texts providing such functional elements will be imported in order for the system to achieve full dynamic diversity. If not, the receiving polysystem remains "defective." If indeed

a system begins to stagnate, again translation will tend toward the innovative, move to the canonic center and provide the system with the impetus to move on.

With regard to the way translated literature influences the translation norms of a given culture, Even-Zohar suggested that when translated literature assumes a primary position, the borders between translated texts and original texts "diffuse" and definitions of translation become liberalized, expanding to include versions, imitations, and adaptations as well. Governed by a situation where their function is to introduce new work into the receiving culture and change existing relations, translated texts necessarily tend to more closely reproduce the original text's forms and textual relations (adequate to the source language). If the form of the foreign text is too radical, too estranging, the translated text runs the risk of not being incorporated into the literary system of the receiving culture; however, if the new text is "victorious," it tends to function as primary literature, and the codes of both the receiving culture's original literature and the translated literature become "enriched." If translation tends to be a secondary activity within a given polysystem, the situation is reversed: the translators" attempts to find ready-made models for translation result in translations that conform to preestablished aesthetic norms in the target culture at the expense of the text's "original" form. For example, according to polysystem theory, nineteenth-century Anglo-American translations (by Rossetti, Longfellow, FitzGerald) based on approaches (such as Matthew Arnold's) that emphasize "faithfulness" to the original form and textual relations, functioned as primary. Certain modern translations (contemporary Bible translation or theatre adaptations) using approaches (such as Bassnett's or Nida's) that prefer finding existing forms that function as equivalents in the target literature, would be secondary systems, reinforcing the current dominant aesthetic (modernism) rather than importing new ideas and techniques.

Even-Zohar revised the polysystem hypothesis in 1977 to better allow for the relationship between a literary system and socio-economic forces within a society. In an essay called "Polysystem Hypothesis Revisited" he wrote:

> One only need assume the center-and-periphery relation in order to be able to reconciliate heterogeneity with functionality. Thus, the notion of hierarchy, of strata, is not only unavoidable but useful as well. To augment this with the notion of a system of systems, a multiple system, i.e., a system whose intersections are more

> complex, is but a logical step necessitated by the need to elaborate a model "closer" to "the real world." (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 29; see Even-Zohar, 1990: 20–1)

The advantage of polysystem theory is that it allows for its own augmentation and integrates the study of literature with the study of social and economic forces of history. Even-Zohar used the term "poly" just to allow for such elaboration and complexity without having to limit the number of relations and interconnections. The principles that he used to describe relations within the literary system are also applicable to its relations with the extraliterary (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 29–30). Even-Zohar's early work is important to translation theory because of the attention and thought given to the role of translation within a literary system, a role traditionally ignored by literary theorists in general. Yet, by his own admission, the hierarchy described, the means by which translations were chosen, and the way they functioned within the literary system was too simplistic, and the theory needed revision. As it evolves, polysystem theory is entering a new phase in which extraliterary factors such as patronage, social conditions, economics, and institutional manipulation are being correlated to the way translations are chosen and function in a literary system. Despite the fact that his theory allows for expansion, Even-Zohar's own work and hypothesizing tended to focus primarily upon the literary, as demonstrated by his more recent work formulating "universals" based upon his findings.

Since the goal of structural theories is to establish the rules and laws that govern any given system, to find the patterns of the surface manifestation being investigated, Even-Zohar's approach, despite its apparent focus upon heterogeneity and difference, still, because of certain theoretical presuppositions, posits such universals. Even-Zohar reads the text of the cultural fabric and tries to discover those rules that regulate the system of cultural heterogeneity, the "polysystem." In doing so, he raises the Formalist approach to a higher degree: his theory becomes a formalism of forms. Although he assumes that literary systems are composed of multiple differing systems and constantly undergo change, at the core of his theory is a concept of a totally integrated and meaningful "whole." Though the competing subsystems are in a constant state of flux, they also variously (cor)relate with other elements and systems forming a complex but unified structure. Even-Zohar does not analyze single texts and classify them; instead, he analyzes multiple texts and the complex intra- and interrelations they

enter into as they form a highly stratified but unified whole. For Even-Zohar, culture is the highest organized human structure.

The tendency to overgeneralize and establish universal laws is one of the more controversial parts of Even-Zohar's theory. In his essay "Universals of Literary Contacts" Even-Zohar listed thirteen such universals derived from his new data, the first of which – *"all literary systems strive to become polysystemic"* (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 43, emphasis in original) – serves to illustrate his approach. Upon first observing the data, translation in particular, it seemed to him that certain polysystems were unstratified or lacked certain elements or subsystems. But further analysis revealed that this was not the case, that indeed stratification was "always" present, and that no literature ever functioned as a non-stratified whole, leading him to the formulation of the first "universal" of cultural history. Such conclusions not only veer perilously close to traditional theoretical terminology – which is based on sameness, eternal verities, and homologous systems, but they also tend to reinforce many traditional notions of the definition of "literary" and reify the literary systems of the "strong" systems. Even-Zohar's work is perhaps the most important to date in the field of translation theory; he uses notions of translation equivalence and literary function, yet does not pull them out of history and prescribe a translation model that transcends time. His work is highly innovative, making manifest the temporal nature of aesthetic presuppositions by looking at actual translations within the larger sociological context. His work makes a significant contribution not only to the field of translation theory, but to literary theory as well, as it demonstrates the importance of translation within the larger context of literary studies specifically and in the evolution of culture in general.

Despite the advances Even-Zohar made, several minor problems with polysystem theory can be noted. The first problem, which he recognized, is his tendency to propose universals based on very little evidence. A more extensive analysis of textual and cultural relations must take place before "universals" can be persuasively posited. The contradictions in his own data demonstrate the ephemeral nature of many of his hypotheses and tend to distort the theoretical importance of what he is trying to articulate. For example, Even-Zohar says in his characteristically definitive fashion that "no literary structures on any level were ever adopted by the non-canonized system before they had become common stock of the canonized one" (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 17). Yet, for example, in his analysis of late-nineteenth-century French literature, the data seem to indicate otherwise: pornographic literature was widespread in the non-

canonized literature before traces of it were adopted by the canon. Even-Zohar perhaps too uncritically adopted the late Russian Formalist model, positing a hierarchy of relations in which the innovative ideas trickle down to reside eventually in the stagnant forms of popular literature. His own evidence suggests that at least a more dialectical relationship of mutual interaction is often the case, or that in some instances the opposite movement – i.e., that the popular influences the canonical – is to a large degree true.

This leads to the related problem of Even-Zohar's uncritical adoption of the Formalist framework, perpetuating concepts such as "literariness" that underlie, yet seem inappropriate to, Even-Zohar's complex model of cultural systems. Despite his historically based model, Even-Zohar retained a concept of "literary facts," based on a Formalist value system of defamiliarization, perhaps in contradiction to his own thesis of literary texts being culturally dependent. This presupposition influenced his concept of hierarchical relations within a society, his definitions of "primary" and "secondary," which still retain ideological residues of an ahistorical system of judging literature, despite defensive claims to the contrary. If translated literature seems to function as both primary and secondary, might not the same be true for children's literature, detective novels, folktales? Within the theoretical framework of Even-Zohar's model, folktales will always be relegated to secondary status, for they do not develop the form or genre. Although the plots and characters may change, the tales do not change structurally, and thus can never occupy a "primary" position within the hierarchy. Yet certainly enough evidence exists documenting literary systems in which oral tales are highly valued.

In addition, the problem of locating the referent applies to Even-Zohar's polysystem theory as it does to Formalism. Despite allowing for such a possibility, Even-Zohar seldom relates texts to the "real conditions" of their production, only to hypothetical structural models and abstract generalizations. The extraliterary continues to be significantly absent from his analysis. The *thing* signified – the content, the meaning, however arbitrary – shared by the author and the reader is all but absent in Even-Zohar's model; his analysis focuses primarily on the signifier and how it formally interacts with other literary/cultural systems of signification. A theory that addresses only form and systemic function misses something. In terms of translation theory, the problem of reference, of how one translates the signs without further concealing or distorting the thing to which the signs refer, still remains. In a system with different signs having different cultural associations, how can one

minimize the losses of reference? Do ideas develop independently of the literature? Even-Zohar seems to share Èjxenbaum's and Tynjanov's belief that literature develops autonomously according to rules of its own, for, despite his allowing for augmentation of his theory, he also holds that the literary system is, to a large degree, autonomous – a "self-regulating system" – and that the stratification is carried out by "interrelations within the system" (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 30). Even-Zohar thus tends to read the multiple texts of the cultural life of a society with similar formalist presuppositions that the Russian Formalists brought to individual texts.

Finally, Even-Zohar's own methodology and discourse limit the scope of his investigation. He purports to observe "objectively" the interplay of systems, to eliminate all bias, and to "rationally" describe and order literary phenomena. He suggests that a "non-elitist" and "non-evaluative" approach can "eliminate *all* sorts of biases" (Even-Zohar, 1978a: 28, emphasis in original). Somehow he locates his theory above other translation theories, giving him an independent perspective on translational phenomena. Such total objectivity is of course impossible, especially given the nature of the subject matter. His methodology of making rules, developing hypotheses, testing them, arriving at a consensus of the "qualified" literary historical scholars (those who agree upon the same scientific method) may, in fact, eventually close down avenues of investigation. While the content of Even-Zohar's theory is "dialectical" and challenging to theories which universalize and homogenize, his methodology also leads him to generally agreed upon and thus "proven" theses that serve as literary "facts."

Although his argument is convincing and well supported, Even-Zohar's formulation of principles occasionally contradicts that which he is trying to prove. He has accumulated new data that tend to disprove old theories and require new interpretation, yet he retains a conceptual framework and scientific approach that force him to make such universal statements. Such a tendency to generalize, especially with so little data on which to base conclusions, most of which are drawn from a very unique and specific culture, runs the risk that elements for analysis will only enter into his model when they find a place in the structural whole of the polysystem. With unity postulated from the beginning, and a scientific method aimed at eliminating contradictions, the methodology may eventually limit and obscure that which it purports to be opening up. Systems that do not conform to the rules and laws of the structural polysystem are thus viewed as "defective." Non-conforming models

have “vacuums” that need to be filled to achieve completeness. The whole system is based on order and regularity, and the ability of the investigator to satisfactorily explain all the phenomena. The implicit subtext to Even-Zohar’s theory calls to mind Platonic forms and classical aesthetics, by smoothing out contradictions and eliminating that which does not fit. Just what is that complete, dynamic, homogeneous system against which all other systems are compared? Contradictions in reality and problems of literary creation are “solved” by his methodology; variations are regulated; and texts are viewed as “more” or “less” innovative, and classified accordingly.

Despite these reservations, Even-Zohar’s polysystem theory demonstrates an advance in the development of translation studies specifically and translation theory in general. Unlike earlier models, Even-Zohar’s system is not text-specific and does not analyze individual texts isolated from their cultural context. According to Even-Zohar, a text does not reach the highest hierarchical level within a given culture because of some inherent eternal beauty or verity, but (1) because of the nature of the polysystem of the receiving culture and its social/literary historical circumstances, and (2) because of the difference between certain elements of the text and cultural norms. A text is never totally autonomous (although the entire literary system is postulated to be); the text is always already involved in a multitude of relationships with other elements of other systems at both the center and margins of a cultural whole. The theoretical advance of polysystem theory for translation studies should be readily apparent: instead of having a static conception of what a translation should be, Even-Zohar varies his definition of “equivalence” and “adequacy” according to the historical situation, freeing the discipline from the constraint that has traditionally limited its previous theories. By expanding the theoretical boundaries of traditional translation theory, based all too frequently on linguistic models or undeveloped literary theories, and embedding translated literature into a larger cultural context, Even-Zohar opened the way for translation theory to advance beyond prescriptive aesthetics. This opening was seized upon by Even-Zohar’s colleague Gideon Toury, who focused specifically upon the translation component of Even-Zohar’s model, and began the search for a new theory of translation.

Gideon Toury: Toward a target-text theory of translation

Gideon Toury's work may be divided into two periods: the first from 1972–1976 and reported in 1977 in *Normot šel tirgum ve-ha tirgum ha sifruti le-ivrit ba šanim 1930–1945* [Translation Norms and Literary Translation into Hebrew 1930–45], involved a comprehensive sociological study of the cultural conditions affecting the translation of foreign language novels into Hebrew during the period 1930–45 (later expanded to include children's literature); the second, from 1975 to 1980 and summarized in a series of papers collected in 1980 as *In Search of a Theory of Translation*, involved an attempt to develop a more comprehensive theory of translation based on findings from his field study. The first project was begun with Itamar Even-Zohar and used the polysystem theory framework; the second study, although still based on polysystem theory, posits theoretical hypotheses which distinguish Toury's model from that of his predecessor.

Toury's initial field study was set up within the scope of a larger project called "The History of Literary Translation into Hebrew" being undertaken at the University of Tel Aviv at the time (Toury, 1980:123). His study catalogued the prose fiction translations from English, Russian, German, French, and Yiddish into Hebrew during a fifteen-year span and generated quantitative data on, for example, the number of writers translated, number of books by each writer translated, and the number of translators and publishers involved in the process. One of the goals of the field study was to discover the actual decisions made during the translation process, through which he hoped to discover a system of rules governing translation in this particular polysystem. As Popovič postulated, the aesthetically determined rationale for certain translation decisions were most visible in the "shifts" between the source and target texts. The analysis of the shifts showed that there were very few linguistic changes in operation during the period, and those few omissions and fewer additions tended to be irrelevant to the identity of the text. More changes were noted with regard to word choices and style, resulting in the discovery of "textual" norms such as a tendency to "elevate" the text by choosing words to reflect the "highest" style from the possible alternatives.

Ironically, according to Toury's field study, linguistics and aesthetics played a very small role in the translation process; in fact, Toury found that most texts were selected for ideological reasons. Preferences for social and even "socialist" works, for certain subjects and topics, and of course for Jewish writers and subjects were demonstrated, but few choices based on aesthetic criteria were identified. Toury, in accordance

with Even-Zohar, did find that the texts which were selected for literary reasons and for which equivalent literary formal models were found did tend to occupy and shape the center of the system of translation within the Hebrew polysystem. Yet, in addition to the formal innovativeness of the central texts, other elements in common with all central texts were also noted: for example, their "didactic" attitude and their general agreement with (and almost rigid application of) the translation norms. Accidents also played a large role in terms of texts selected and texts published as well as in terms of linguistic equivalents found and not found. Yet despite the changes in the texts and lack of conformity with predetermined linguistic and literary theories of translation, the translated texts, according to Toury, still functioned as translations in the Hebrew polysystem. The texts entering the Hebrew system as translations tended to be only *partially* linguistically and functionally equivalent to the source text; nevertheless, they were accepted in the target culture as translations and occupied all positions from the center to the periphery. Despite this general lack of conformity with hypothetical models of translation equivalence, examples of "mistranslations," translations considered "inadequate" in the target culture were generally rare. On the other hand, examples of complete linguistic equivalence to the source text were even rarer, and the instances of near-adequacy to the source text, when they did occur, were usually "accidental" (Toury, 1980: 137). The reason for this general lack of concern for "faithfulness" to the source text, Toury concluded, was not that the translators were indifferent to the textual relations within the source text, but that their main goal was to achieve acceptable translations in the target culture. The operational decisions were thus a natural outcome of a preference for the translators' initial teleological goal; the changes were dictated by the cultural conditions of the receiving system.

It thus should come as no surprise that when Toury turned his attention to developing a theory of translation he found fault with existing source-oriented theoretical models of translation. Following Even-Zohar's use of translation to discover rules about the literary system in general, Toury attempted to better detect and describe all those laws – linguistic, literary, and sociological – which govern translation. His field study results caused him to be skeptical of abstract theories involving ideal authors, translators, and readers. By avoiding a predefinition of what a translation "should" be, and looking at actual translations in a real cultural context, it became clear that aesthetic theories of literary transfer and even pair-bound "objective" descriptions of linguistic possibilities

do not account for various factors which clearly influence the translation product.

The theoretical context against which Toury located his project is one dominated by translation models that posit a definition of equivalence as functional-dynamic. Toury suggested that, despite their advance over linguistic definitions of translation equivalence, such theories were still source-oriented and invariably "directive" and "normative" because they recognized only "correct instances" and "types" (Toury, 1980:39–40; 1981: 14). The correctness of translation, the adequacy of the equivalent second language text, is, according to these theories, always measured against the degree of correspondence with the source text, by trying to reconstruct all the "relevant" functional features – be they linguistic or literary elements – of the source text. Requirements for translation traditionally have been conceived as being determined by the source text, and as a result, have necessarily been idealized. Toury's theory opposes theories that are based upon a single unified and abstract identity or a proper interpretation of "equal" performance. His model is based on difference and assumes structural differences between languages: "every linguistic system and/or textual tradition *differs* from any other in terms of structure, repertory, norms of usage, etc." (Toury, 1980:94, emphasis in original). Positing hypothetical poles of total acceptability in the target culture at the one extreme and total adequacy to the source text at the other, Toury locates translation as always in the middle: no translation is ever entirely "acceptable" to the target culture because it will always introduce new information and forms defamiliarizing to that system, nor is any translation entirely "adequate" to the original version, because the cultural norms cause shifts from the source text structures. Historically, translation criticism has been characterized by its tendency to find fault with the translator because the actual text can never meet the ideal standards of the two abstract poles: from a linguistic point of view, errors can always be pointed out and better solutions proposed; from a literary point of view, the functional elements can invariably be judged as less dynamic or innovative than the source text's features.

By considering translation from the point of view of the target culture, however, Toury argued that translation equivalence is not a hypothetical ideal, but an empirical matter. The actual relationship between a source text and a target text may or may not reflect the postulated abstract relationship; nevertheless, the translated text exists as a cultural artifact for the replacement of a source text by an acceptable version in the receiving culture. Content to identify the causes for deviation from the

standard, Toury's theoretical project is unified by the acceptance of translated texts without a judgment of their solutions as correct or incorrect. Only by analyzing translated texts from within their cultural-linguistic context can one understand the translation process. Toury argues that translations themselves have no "fixed" identity; because they are always subject to different socio-literary contextual factors, they thus must be viewed as having multiple identities, dependent upon the forces that govern the decision process at a particular time. Distancing himself from models which posit single conceptions of translation equivalence, Toury suggests a different theoretical framework in which to conceptualize phenomena regarded as translation. Borrowing from Ludwig Wittgenstein the concept of family of resemblances, Toury now views "original" texts as containing clusters of properties, meanings, possibilities. All translations privilege certain properties/meanings at the expense of others, and the concept of a "correct" translation ceases to be a real possibility (Toury, 1980:18). Toury successfully pushes the concept of a theory of translation beyond the margins of a model restricted to faithfulness to the original, or of single, unified relationships between the source and target texts. Translation becomes a relative term, dependent upon the forces of history and the semiotic web called culture. The role of translation theory is correspondingly altered, ceasing its search for a system from which to judge the product and now focusing on the development of a model to help explain the process that determines the final version.

Early translation studies scholars, who attempted to be objective and to study actual translated texts in the target culture, were no less implicated in the paradigm of static, source-oriented translation theories that Toury rejects. Behind early translation studies' definition of translation, argues Toury, is James Holmes's concept of "metatext," and although it has been elaborated by Anton Popovič (and others) and revised by Van den Broeck (and others), translated texts were still viewed by translation studies theorists as one kind of metatext, measured and evaluated in comparison with the source text or some idealized interpretation of that initial version (Toury, 1980: 39). Toury wanted to expand the boundaries of even that which early translation studies scholars had already augmented, getting further away from hypothetical constructs that tend to study translated texts in isolation. As opposed to another source text (ST) determined theory, Toury posited a target text (TT) theory for translation, focusing not on some notion of equivalence as postulated requirements, but on the "actual relationships" constructed between the source text and its "factual replacement" (Toury, 1980: 39). He does not reject the work of contrastive linguistics or semiotic-functional approaches; linguistic/literary limitations of course operate and condition the nature of the translation product. He does argue, however, that such rules and laws are merely one set of factors operating on the translation process; his project introduces a new set of factors that may be more powerful than other factors. The eventual goal of Toury's theory was to establish a hierarchy of interrelated factors (constraints) that determine (govern) the translation product. In short, Toury demanded that translation theory include cultural-historical "facts," a set of laws that he calls "translation norms."

Occupying the center of Toury's theory and operative at every stage of the translation process, these translation norms mediate between systems of potential equivalence. In his paper "The Nature and Role of Norms in Literary Translation," Toury outlines his definition of translation norms and describes his methodology. A given society always has multiple and conflicting norms, all interconnected with other functioning systems, but if situations recur regularly, certain behavioral patterns can be established. Thus, in terms of translation, in order to distinguish regular tendencies, it is necessary to study not just single texts, but rather multiple translations of the same original text as they occur in one receiving culture at different times in history. Toury distinguishes between three kinds of translation norms: preliminary, initial, and operational norms. "Preliminary norms" involve factors such as those

which govern the choice of the work and the overall translation strategy within a polysystem. Because the definition of translation varies historically, certain preliminary questions need to be answered in order to establish the cultural context that frames the translation process. What is the translation "policy" of the target culture? What is the difference between translation, imitation, and adaptation for the specific period? What authors, periods, genres, schools are preferred by the target culture? Is intermediate or second-hand translation permitted? What are the permitted mediating languages? The "initial norms" categorize the individual translator's choice to subject oneself either to the original text with its textual relations and norms, or the target culture's linguistic and literary norms, or some combination thereof. The initial norms are placed at the top of the hierarchy of operational norms for, if consistent, they subsequently influence all other translation decisions. "Operational norms" are the actual decisions made during the translation process, some of which were discussed in Toury's field study of translated prose fiction in Hebrew: "matricial" norms determining location, additions, and deletions, and "textual" norms revealing linguistic and stylistic preferences. Polysystem theory informs Toury's model: in terms of initial norms, the translator's attitude toward the source text is affected by the text's position in the source culture's literary polysystem; in terms of operational norms, all decisions are influenced by the position – central or peripheral – held by translated literature in the target culture polysystem.

In the course of discussing translation norms and the methodology for determining them, Toury also posits a new set of theoretical premises that seem to contradict his original intent. Similar to Lefevere's methodology in *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint*, Toury arrives at translation norms by *comparatively* examining several translations of one original text carried out in different periods by various translators. The comparison reveals the different definitions of translation, the priorities of the translators, and the often subconscious rules influencing the decision process. Ironically, Toury's comparison technique does not involve actual texts. In order to carry out a series of comparisons and to measure the shifts revealing the norms which determine them, Toury invokes an ideal invariant third text that is the "adequate translation," not based on a comparison to the original and various historically bound texts, but on abstract linguistic and literary theory (Toury, 1978:93; 1980:58). Toury has already posited the hypothesis that no translation is ever entirely acceptable to the target

culture because of its estranging structural and verbal elements, nor can it be adequate to the source text because of the new cultural context in which it finds itself. Yet in order to determine the position of the translated text between the poles of source and target text extremes, Toury *also* posits the necessity of an ideal "invariant of comparison" which underlies the text in question and his entire theory in general:

> Thus, the transformed concept of adequacy finds its main use in the methodology of TT–ST comparison. In the methodological framework it is conceived of as a *hypothetical entity* constructable on the basis of a systemic (textemic) analysis of ST, and it is used as *the invariant of the comparison* (i.e., as a *tertium comparationis)*. (Toury, 1980: 49, emphasis in original)

Contradicting everything his theory seemed previously to explicate, this hypothetical invariant is not conceived of as something which is subjectively determined or historically conditioned, but as something which exists in another realm, as a universal literary/linguistic form, which all (bilingual) humans have the ability to intuit. Surprisingly, Toury appeals to Chomsky's concept of competency and of formal universals:

> I would claim that the occurrence of interlanguage forms in translation follows from the very definition of this type of activity/product, thus being a formal "translation universal." [For the difference between the substantive and formal types of universals, cf. Chomsky *(Aspects of the Theory of Syntax)*, 1965: 28–9.] Moreover, there are situations where interlanguage as a whole, or at least certain types/degrees of it, is not simply *present* in translation as living evidence of the universal, but even *preferred* to "pure" TL forms. (Toury, 1980: 72, emphasis and parenthetical comment in original)

The appeal to formal universals in an otherwise performance-oriented and material theory is an unexpected move. Toury's entire project has been to deconstruct source-oriented, static theoretical models of translation. Yet this hypothetical construct seems based on that very same source-text oriented theory, completely static and unconditioned by literary evolution, exactly that which his evolutionary theory opposes. On the one hand, Toury posits the premise that every literary system is *different* from every other in terms of its structure and norms of usage; on the other hand, he suggests that the *same* structural universal form underlies two different language systems. This is the crux of the

theoretical debate within current translation theory, and Toury adopts both positions. How is this possible?

Toury's work is based on polysystem theory, which in turn is based on Russian Formalist conceptual thinking. His use of formal universals, of invariants of comparisons, although surprising, has an implicit foundation in the theory. Despite efforts to include differing socio-historical conditions, there is the underlying tendency throughout this "historically determined" theory toward "pure" formalism. Toury's theory evolves from his formalist and structuralist predecessors, and as such carries certain absolute notions that limit the conceptual framework. Toury's historical model includes numerous other static concepts as well: translated texts are viewed as empirical facts, cultural norms are defined as static, non-contradictory rules influencing the generation of actual texts, and multiple tendencies within historical epochs are reduced to unified behavioral laws. One has the sense, for example, from reading his conclusions of the study of translated prose fiction into Hebrew that his five or six "norms" apply to *all* the texts included in the study. His analysis documents the conformity, not the exceptions; perhaps of more interest, and more revealing about the nature of translation, would be a list of all the exceptions to the rules. In addition, both Even-Zohar and Toury still confine their analyses to entities called "literary" and tend, despite claims to the contrary, to divorce the evolving literary polysystem from other signifying systems in a culture. Toury, as Even-Zohar before him, tends toward structuralism; and although on the surface he accepts the "fact" that all languages are different, he suggests that underlying that difference is a unified and universal structural form. Because of our linguistic differences and cultural norms, we cannot articulate this form, but as "competent" bilingual speakers, we can still "know" it.

Fortunately, Toury's theory does not depend upon the existence of the *tertium comparationis* to function. Translation studies scholars during the 1980s and 1990s found themselves effectively using Toury's model in spite of the theoretical contradictions. In a review of Toury's book *In Search of a Theory of Translation*, Ria Vanderauwera found that even Toury himself ignored his own formalist tendencies when applying his theory:

> Information about these norms can also be derived from extra-textual material (statements of translators, editors, publishers, critics) but first and foremost through a comparative study of source and target

> texts. Toury insists that this should happen via a *tertium comparationis*, a hypothetical third text and invariant of the comparison. I consider this an unnecessary complication and a relic of the formalisation urge that swept through linguistics and semiotics. Ironically enough, in his own two valuable case studies which conclude the book, Toury makes no use of this *tertium comparationis*. (Vanderauwera, 1982: 52)

The part of Toury's translation theory translation studies has adopted focuses on the socio-literary norms that govern the target culture and directly influence the process of translation. Several aspects of Toury's theory have contributed to development within the field: (1) the abandonment of one-to-one notions of correspondence as well as the possibility of literary/linguistic equivalence (unless by accident); (2) the involvement of literary tendencies within the target cultural system in the production of any translated text; (3) the destabilization of the notion of an original message with a fixed identity; (4) the integration of both the original text and the translated text in the semiotic web of intersecting cultural systems. Theoretically, translation studies adopts the performance aspect of Toury's theory, viewing translation as a process by which subjects of a given culture communicate in translated messages primarily determined by local cultural constraints. Inescapable infidelity is presumed as a condition of the process; translators do not work in ideal and abstract situations nor desire to be innocent, but have vested literary and cultural interests of their own, and *want* their work to be accepted within another culture. Thus they manipulate the source text to inform as well as conform with the existing cultural constraints.

Translation studies in the eighties

Since Toury's 1980 book, the focus of translation studies shifted from theory to descriptive work. A fairly well-defined group with similar interests met regularly (usually at meetings of the International Comparative Literature Association). Most of the discussions centered around improving methods for describing literary translation and determining cultural and translational normative behavior. Only then, they argued, could one return to theory. Unfortunately, many of the discussions were lost or went unpublished, making the 1985 collection edited by Theo Hermans titled *The Manipulation of Literature* a valuable record. In the introduction, Hermans, summarizing the basic assumptions of the group, argued that "the work of Itamar Even-Zohar in particular is

directly associated with the new approach" and suggested that participating scholars share "a view of literature as a complex and dynamic system; a conviction that there should be a continual interplay between theoretical models and practical case studies; an approach to literary translation that is descriptive, target-oriented, functional, and systemic; and an interest in the norms and constraints that govern the production and reception of translation" (Hermans, 1985: 10–11; see Hermans 1999: 31–45).

Such a target-oriented empirical approach depended upon and was derived from case studies, which is why the methodological concerns for describing translations became increasingly important. José Lambert and Hendrik van Gorp offered a report on their efforts, sketching a very complex model in "On Describing Translations" in *The Manipulation of Literature*. Briefly, they suggested that all functionally relevant aspects of translation activity in its historical context needed to be carefully observed. Thus, the author, text, reader, and literary norms in one literary system were to be juxtaposed to an author, text, reader, and literary norms in another literary system. The link or relationship between the two systems was an open one, and Lambert and Van Gorp argued that predictions about the relationships initially should be kept to a minimum. Only after careful study and the analysis of the dominant norms of the target system could the nature of the relation be determined. Lambert and Van Gorp called for not only a study of the relation between authors, texts, readers, and norms in the two differing systems, but also for relations between authors' and the translators' intentions, between pragmatics and reception in source and target systems, between authors and other writers in the source and target systems, between the differing literary systems, and even between differing sociological aspects including publishing and distribution (Lambert and Van Gorp, 1985: 43–5). While admitting that the process is "utopian" – it is impossible to summarize all the relationships generated – Lambert and Van Gorp suggested that the scholar, by establishing priorities, can find a means of being systematic instead of intuitive.

The advantage of the systemic approach over previous approaches is perhaps best demonstrated by its application. A school has grown up in Leuven, Belgium, centered around such case studies and descriptive work. Lambert, Lieven D'Hulst, Katrin van Bragt, and graduate students at the University of Leuven, for example, have been researching *Littérature et traduction en France, 1800–1850* (D'Hulst, Lambert & Bragt, 1979; see also D'Hulst, 1982; Lambert, 1982; Bragt, 1982).

Several other students have written master's theses based upon such descriptive models. Lefevere, Hermans, and Van den Broeck were researching the translations into Dutch during a similar period as the French study. Still others focused intracultural relationships of the *literatures* within Belgium. Yet virtually nothing has been published, and the silence is itself problematic. Two promised books on the research at Leuven: one is a comprehensive summary of the research project on "Literature and Translation in France 1800–1850 and another by Van Bragt on her case study of *The Vicar of Wakefield* translations, never materialized.

Articles exist, however, indicating where this research is headed. Lambert talked about insights gained from the research of translations into French during the nineteenth century in a 1986 article entitled "Les Relations littéraires internationales comme problème de réception" and in his 1988 article "Twenty Years of Research on Literary Translation at the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven." In the development of the French literary system, Lambert argued that the motivation behind text selection and translational policy was directly related to the genre system in the target culture (Lambert, 1988:131). Genre rules and genre policy clearly played a central role in literary policy at the time, in which translated literature played a role as literary imports, and thereby influenced the complex relationships of imports and exports within the literary tradition. Lambert then compared such literary "interferences" with a different situation in Belgian-French literature in search of regularities in systemic behavior. He sees the possibility of further checking such hypotheses by studying the situation in other European countries. By focusing on "norms" and "models," he argues, scholars may find the "ground for comparison" they are seeking (Lambert, 1988: 132). Norms determine what kind of translational relations ensue; every instant of the translation process is governed by norms. Only when the researchers/scholars know the preliminary and operational norms can they see the principles that shape the subsequent text. The theoretical contribution during the eighties by the polysystem theory and translation studies scholars may be the discovery of the importance of first establishing what norms govern translation behavior before analyzing specific translations (cf. Hermans, 1991). For Lambert and the Belgian/Dutch group, norms determine the way foreign material is "imported" and "domesticated." Thus, the very definition of translation becomes dependent upon norms and how they work in any given system/society.

Kitty Van Leuven-Zwart, former Head of the Translation Studies Department at the University of Amsterdam, also began with Toury's argument that the descriptive branch must focus upon investigating norms and strategies, but argued that the systematic comparison of translations and source texts was neglected by Toury's followers in Leuven. She felt that many researchers lacked a system of description, which made their claims about norms and strategies unverifiable. Instead, she devised a system for the comparison and description of translations that traces shifts on a microstructural level (words, clauses, and sentences), relates the consequences of the microlevel shifts on the macrostructural level (characters, events, time, and other "meaningful" components), and categorizes them (Van Leuven-Zwart, 1984; 1989: 154–55). In contrast to much of the "top-down" work going on in Germany, Van Leuven-Zwart's approach might be characterized as a "bottom-up" approach. Beginning with Popovič's neutral concept of "shift," and extending Miko's inventory for categorizing devices to include not just stylistic shifts, but syntactic, semantic, and pragmatic shifts as well, she developed a very complex and difficult model with great numbers of categories and subcategories that her students – some seventy were involved (most working on translations of twentieth-century Spanish prose into Dutch) during the late eighties – used to describe translation. Her method in fact not only showed that every word contains shifts, but that frequently the words or clauses translated show multiple shifts. Shifts were seen not as mistranslations or violations of rules of equivalence, but as the rule itself. According to the Amsterdam study, 70% of the translations *averaged* a 100% number of shifts (Van Leuven-Zwart, 1990: 88). These shifts, she argues, cannot help but impact the text at the macrostructural level. Designed primarily to help practicing translators better understand the process of translation and contribute to descriptive studies, her research also documented certain unseen complexities of the cultural transfer process, giving valuable insights not only into the nature of translation, but the nature of language itself. Unfortunately, the research was short-lived, as Kitty Van Leuven Zwart became ill and had to retire. Additionally, her methodology was so complex that students at other universities were unable to learn and implement it.

One can see, however, how the descriptive branch in translation studies of the eighties in turn influenced the theory. By looking for regularities in translational phenomena in real cultural situations, the very definitions of the phenomena being investigated changed;

traditional concepts were undermined; and the theory evolved. Much discussion took place revaluating the very definition of a translated text. The Dutch/Flemish group found that translations sometimes "hide" within the foreign model. In daily use, for example, people occasionally find themselves using a translation without being aware of it. Borderline cases such as pseudo-translations (translations when no original exists; Toury, 1984; 1995) and translations via an intervening language (secondary translations; Toury, 1988) were investigated. Translations not identified as such by a culture, including extreme cases of translational activity such as film adaptations, versions, imitations, or false translations, were included in research efforts (Lambert, 1989a). Non-translation within a translation (proper names, etc.) seemed to be much more prevalent than initially anticipated.

As the research expanded to incorporate new phenomena, so too were larger frames of reference needed in order to carry out further investigation. Data seemed to indicate that translations were much harder to identify than initially apparent. As a result, translations could not be investigated without recourse to an investigation of other kinds of discourse. Definitions of what a society is and the links between society and language were also being discussed. Questions were raised as to whether one should study translations as texts, as concepts, or as systems (Toury, 1986). The translational relationships between the source and target text were replaced by networks of relationships and concepts of intertextuality (Toury, 1986; Lambert, 1989a). If anything was agreed upon regarding the theory of translation studies, it was that the field requires an "open" theory, less involved in *a priori* definitions, and more involved in raising questions. If at any given time the theory being used did not prove productive, excluding certain translational phenomena, or limiting certain insights, translation studies scholars tended to reject or revise it. Questions raised in theory, in turn, influenced research projects for the accumulation of more data. Holmes's call in *The Name and Nature of Translation Studies* (1972/5) for a dialectically evolving theory interacting with descriptive research had indeed been realized.

Even-Zohar's and Toury's system theory work helped translation studies break down certain conceptual barriers and find a method for better describing translations. The data from the descriptive research informs further theoretical speculation. Even-Zohar not only furthered our understanding of the translation process; he also was the only system theorist to recognize the importance of translation within the study of any individual literature. Yet, in many ways, he seemed almost

dogmatically committed to polysystem theory, which, as another kind of structuralism, limits that which it can conceptualize. The empirical claim upon which polysystem theory was founded, i.e., that it looks at actual texts in a target system, seems to be dissolving in light of recent investigations. Even-Zohar's claim for "objective" analysis of "literary" facts seems even less tenable. He remained surprisingly silent during the eighties and his theoretical contributions were missed. Despite the usefulness of his method for studying translated texts, Van Bragt, Lambert, Van Leuven-Zwart, and others seem open to other theoretical interpretations of the data and other theoretical possibilities regarding the nature of translation. Toury and Even-Zohar seem to always embed systemic features and norms into ever broadening systems, which seem hierarchically conceived from their initial presuppositions. Lambert and Hermans, on the other hand, while beginning from a similar position within systems theory, seem more inclined to observe the data and to see how it fits without presuppositions, acknowledging that the observed facts may or may not fit within the hierarchical structure. While retaining a systemic approach and reasoning inductively, Lambert seems to be suggesting that the system as conceived may not function as the investigating scholar initially thought, and is open to the study of "other" patterned behavior which may help explain translational phenomena. While being one of polysystem theory's strongest advocates during the eighties, Lambert and his Leuven colleagues have simultaneously been revaluating the terminology, hierarchical structures, and fixed notions of what a translation is.

Translation scholars in England and America like Bassnett, Lefevere (who moved to America in the early eighties), David Lloyd, and Maria Tymoczko seem to be distancing themselves even further from Even-Zohar's polysystem model, which they find too formalistic and restrictive. Adopting more of a cultural studies model, they focus both on institutions of prestige and power within any given culture and patterns in literary translation. While the polysystem theory hypothesis is being "used" by this Anglo-American branch of translation studies, they also suggest further considerations need to be included. In a series of articles over the past two decades, all written since his move to the United States, Lefevere, for example, dropped the inductive and scientific approach in favor of a more deductive and less formalistic method. While distancing himself from polysystem vocabulary, he introduced a new set of terms to better analyze the influence of the extraliterary upon the literary.

In 1981 in "Beyond the Process: Literary Translation in Literature and Literary Theory," Lefevere argued that literary systems do not occur in a vacuum and to his list of predecessors he adds the name of Pavel Medvedev, who located the literary system within the "ideological" milieu of an era (Lefevere, 1981a: 56). Medvedev's 1928 book *The Formal Method in Literary Scholarship*, which became a model for the "science" of ideology may actually have been written by Mikhail Bakhtin. Lefevere begins in the article to not just look at lexical shifts and the introduction of literary devices via translation, but to also ask questions about the ideological pressures on the translator and strategies that the translator has for influencing the intellectual milieu. By "ideology" Lefevere understands, "a set of discourses which wrestle over interests which are in some way relevant to the maintenance or interrogation of power structures central to a whole form of social and historical life" (Eagleton, 1985: 116; qtd. by Lefevere, 1988–9: 59). The dominant set of discourses can be overtly manifest, as was the case in Eastern Europe for many years, but more frequently function covertly, as is perhaps true in many Western countries. While various subsystems – the literary included – wrestle over often competing interests, they are all subject to, either consciously or subconsciously, a prevailing ideology characteristic of the society at a given point in history.

In another 1981 article, "Translated Literature: Towards an Integrated Theory," Lefevere talked less in terms of polysystem theory, and more in terms of studying existing translations and constructing "historical grammars in order to describe translational phenomena. In order to show how the ideological component limits literary discourse, he introduced the concept of the "refracted text," by which he means "texts that have been processed for a certain audience (children, for example), or adapted to a certain poetics or a certain ideology" (Lefevere, 1981b: 72). Abridged and edited versions of classics for children or for television might be characterized as the most obvious forms of refractions. In Germany, both during the Nazi period and subsequently in what was East Germany, many texts by writers such as Heine and Schiller were often refracted to conform to a specific poetics and ideology. Yet refractions are often less obvious. Lefevere, for example, has written an article called "Mother Courage's Cucumbers: Text, System and Refraction in a Theory of Literature" (1982b) that shows how Brecht's work has been refracted in the West to better conform to prevailing artistic norms and ideology in the Anglo-American world. Another good example of how ideological constraints influence the production of literary texts can be

found in David Lloyd's "Translator as Refractor; Towards a Re-reading of James Clarence Mangan as Translator" (1982), in which he applied Lefevere's concept of refraction not only to much of the writing of Mangan, but also to the broader field of Irish literature in general in the nineteenth century. The questions the Anglo-American branch raise at this point do not ignore the fact that translated texts introduce new literary devices into another literary system, but also suggest that refractions are much involved in larger sociological phenomena as well. In 1984, in "That Structure in the Dialect of Man Interpreted," Lefevere defined and added the concept of "patronage" to his model in order to better investigate such ideological pressures. By "patronage" he means "any kind of force that can be influential in encouraging and propagating, but also in discouraging, censoring and destroying works of literature" (Lefevere, 1984:92). Patrons, he argued, can be individuals, such as the Medicis or Louis XIV; groups, such as a religious body or a political party; or institutions, such as publishing firms or school systems.

By the time of his article "Why Waste our Time on Rewrites" in Hermans's 1985 collection *The Manipulation of Literature*, Lefevere's tone was very reader friendly, and he avoided the scientific vocabulary characteristic of polysystem theory discourse. He also stopped trying to be purely objective in his investigations, arguing that nobody can escape one's own ideology, suggesting that those disciplines which claim objectivity are "dishonest." He raised questions about distinctions between literary and non-literary, especially when made by those governing literary discourse in a given society. He distanced himself from any theory that sees literature as deterministic and that makes predictions about its evolution. Instead, he introduces the term "stochastic," a Greek word that recalls both proceeding by guesswork and, literally, proceeding by "skillful aiming," to describe a system whose evolution involves probability *and* random variables. He also felt that the study of literary systems could not be divorced from studying other systems of power, such as the educational system. And most importantly, for the first time within the translation studies perspective, he acknowledged that the study of literary systems cannot be isolated to its Euro-American development.

The best example of a scholar using Lefevere's methodology and new terminology was Maria Tymoczko's 1986 article "Translation as a Force for Literary Revolution in the Twelfth-Century Shift from Epic to Romance" (Tymoczko, 1986). Tymoczko looked not only at new literary

devices introduced into the French culture via translation, but also used concepts such as patronage and socio-economic forces at play during the era to explain systemic evolution. She used the polysystem hypothesis to look at shifts in the literary system as introduced by translation, and recognized changes in genre, meter, and rhyming strategies. But she also saw additional changes that could not be explained using a formalist methodology: innovations during the twelfth century included new value structures, changes in the role for women, and the introduction of romantic love. Using Lefevere's terminology, she traced the evolution of the patronage system, showing how, by the end of the twelfth century, the position of epic singers had gone down and the patrons favored instead lettered translators, adaptors, and authors. She explained these shifts by contextualizing the literary system within the socio-economic system, including factors such as the increasing power of the clerical class, the emerging universities, and the importance of translation for facilitating communication between French, English, Scandinavian, Irish, Welsh, and other specific regions of French culture (Tymoczko, 1986: 18–19). Translation thus played a crucial role formally and ideologically in the emerging written system. Upper-class society became more secure during this period, and translations served both to provide employment for underemployed clerks as well as satisfy the aristocratic classes' demand for new ideas. Translators, she argued, were not disinterested parties, but tried to secure advantage within the patronage system, and thus conformed to as well as participated in the changing ideology of the age. By using both inductive and deductive reasoning, Tymoczko showed how the written literature was responsive to and reflective of ideological as well as poetological forces.

Gideon Toury: Descriptive translation studies and beyond

Since the publication of *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (1980), the updated versions of polysystem theory have arrived with Even-Zohar's *Polysystem Studies* (1990) and Gideon Toury's *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995). Scholars eagerly anticipated the "beyond" portion of descriptive studies, for during the eighties many projects were long on enumeration of details such as similarities, differences, and shifts, but short on explanation of why such features occurred in translations. Polysystem theory, which purported to describe and generate a theory that could explain and predict, promised to supply

some answers. Unfortunately, Even-Zohar's and Toury's new books rearticulate rather than develop important ideas from the seventies. In *Translation in Systems* (1999), Theo Hermans, lamenting this loss of innovation, writes, "Both books revised, refined and redefined earlier positions, but contained disappointingly little that was new in theoretical or methodological terms, and scarcely any engagement with competing ideas and views" (1999:14). In Toury's book, many chapters, for example, "The Nature and Role of Norms in Translation," remain largely intact, and the "beyond" section comprises only twenty of the book's 300 pages.

While not offering much new, Toury's book has been productively revised, especially along the lines of method. A meticulous scholar and incisive thinker, Toury makes a persuasive case for his target-text approach to studying translation, arguing that because translations are invariably initiated by the target culture, this is where observations must start. He also offers strategies for systematically rather that eclectically mapping target text segments to source text segments. Toury pinpoints the weaknesses in other scholars' attempts at description, and is quick to point out variables not considered. For example, in an illustration that is threaded throughout the book, Toury discusses how traditional descriptive scholars such as Dagut (1976) and Newmark (1981) have classified metaphors in three categories: (1) metaphor into the "same" metaphor; (2) metaphor into "different" metaphor; and (3) metaphor into non-metaphor (Toury, 1995: 82–3). Yet Toury finds such a classification system incomplete, biased by scholars whose analysis proceeds from the source text. Even using the source text as the beginning point, he adds a fourth possibility: (4) the omission of the metaphor entirely. And when one considers the target culture, two more possibilities emerge: (5) non-metaphor into metaphor; and (6) the new addition of metaphor where none was before. The target-text approach thus extends the scope of observation, and bases it firmly upon the analysis of real translated texts. Studies carried out using such a systematic methodology cannot help but improve scholarship in the field and enhance our understanding of translation phenomena.

However, such comparative work invariably involves comparison to a standard, using some postulation of equivalence, a problem that Toury has yet to solve. In his revised theory, Toury's notion of the invariant of comparison is not only present, but has been pushed further to the center of the model. Although Toury has changed the terminology of the discussion slightly, now calling it a "functional-relational postulate of

equivalence," it is still referred to in places as "invariable," and it is still very much a hypothetical construct. Most scholars use the source text as a measuring device, but Toury does not. Instead, he asks that scholars map the entire range of translation possibilities to derive, using the proper methodology, what he now calls the "underlying concept of translation." He writes:

> Having been established for a series of paired segments, and grouped together on the basis of the results of the comparisons themselves, translation relationships would then be referred to the concept of translation underlying the text as a whole. This will be done through the mediation of a notion of translation equivalence; namely the one which would have emerged as constituting the norm for the pair of texts in question. (Toury, 1995: 37)

Thus the measuring device for comparative work is one derived by the translators and scholars themselves as they produce translations deemed to be more or less "acceptable," "adequate," "optimal," and "appropriate." Despite the questioning of notions of equivalence across the entire field of translation studies, and the historical paradigms invoked by Toury himself for studying cultural evolution, the book remains strangely oblivious to the subjective and potentially incestuous derivation of the key concept within Toury's theory. Certainly, marginalized groups will immediately grasp the difficulty of getting any group of scholars and translators to budge once consensus has been established around such an underlying concept.

All the more disturbing is Toury's desire to establish a set of coherent "laws" that can be used to explain and predict translation behavior. Toury's terminology and formulations rely heavily upon Itamar Even-Zohar's *Polysystem Studies* (1990), in which the "Laws of Literary Interference" (1990: 53–72) were first elaborated. These laws, presumptuously called "universals" in Even-Zohar's earlier work, and now even more presumptously called "laws," are theoretically generated from descriptive findings and constitute the goal the polysystem theory. Toury writes:

> The cumulative findings of descriptive studies should make it possible to formulate a series of coherent *laws* which would state the inherent relations between all the variables found to be relevant to translation. (Toury, 1995: 16)

Recalling James Holmes's tripartite description of translation studies (see section on Holmes above), which involved mutual interaction among the applied, descriptive, and theoretical branches, Toury's model places descriptive studies in the central, or in his terms, "pivotal," position. From the descriptions scholars derive the theory, or generalizations, or "laws" that govern translational activity. Reciprocally then, the laws effect future descriptions and extend to the applied branch as well, influencing both translation practice and training. Thus, Toury's conception of theory derives from the sciences, especially the hard sciences such as physics and chemistry, and is quite different from theory as defined in the fields of philosophy, literature, and cultural studies. We can see the formulaic nature of Toury's laws. He writes, "Each relational law, when uncovered and properly formulated, will have an unmistakably **conditional** form of the following type: **if X then the greater/the lesser the likelihood that Y"** (1995: 265, emphasis in original).

Toury's "Beyond" chapter cites only two laws that "decades of text-based research" have been able to derive, and these are highly controversial. The first reads: "in translation, source-text textemes tend to be converted into target-language (or target-culture) reportemes" (268). Since the language of this law is particularly dense, Toury rephrases it as: "in translation, textual relations obtaining in the original are often modified, sometimes to the point of being totally ignored, in favour of [more] habitual options offered by a target repertoire" (268). While this formulation is clearer, practicing translators may not believe their eyes. Some translators may "modify" the original out of necessity, but most do not "totally ignore" aspects of the original text. Because the language is still cryptic – "textual relations obtaining" – Toury rephrases it one more time: "in translation, items tend to be selected on a level which is lower than the one where textual relations have been established in the source text" (268). This version gives a better idea of what Toury is talking about: translators, when searching for equivalents, often tend to generalize when they cannot find the specific term, drawing from options available in the target culture. Though far more acceptable, exceptions certainly exist. Translators do not necessarily ignore aspects of the source text, but sometimes particular terms are simply unavailable, so they make do the best they can. Still the hierarchical assumptions implied by the word "lower" remain troubling. With Toury's final formulation, we can see how the system operates, ensuring marginal status to translation: "the more peripheral this status, the more the

translation will accommodate itself to established models and repertoires" (271). While such a statement may be true with regard to many Western European cultures in the twentieth century, few translation studies scholars are willing to make such generalizations across all cultures at this time.

The second law offered by Toury initially reads, "In translation, phenomena pertaining to the make-up of the source text tend to be transferred to the target text" (275). This seems to be quite accurate and indeed might even serve as a definition of the very activity of translation; yet the generality of this formulation may not offer new insight for scholars. When reformulated, we better see Toury's intent: "the more the make-up of a text is taken as a factor in the formulation of its translation, the more the target text can be expected to show traces of interference" (276). Toury is discussing translation interference, or in Venuti's terms, how "foreign" elements enter the target text. This law was first posited as a hypothesis by Itamar Even-Zohar in *Papers in Historical Poetics* (1978a) and reformulated as a series of ten laws in *Polysystem Studies* (1990: 53–72). The more the translators take into consideration the source text, the more elements they are able to transfer, a notion most translators would find both logical and valid. A later formulation, however, reads, "Even when taking the source text as a crucial factor in the formulation of its translation, accomplished translators would be less affected by its make-up" (277). Ironically, it seems as if Toury considers taking the source text into consideration a bad thing, for it can lead to increased interference. In the background. some of the best translators may be cringing: "accomplished" translators are those *less* affected by the original text's make-up? Isn't something out of kilter here? And how does one identify an accomplished translator? A strong translation tradition exists, including many accomplished translators who work hard to bring aspects of the original across. Toury's laws seem more appropriate to functionalist translators in the German-speaking world. In fact, in *Descriptive Translation Studies and Beyond* (1995), the greater part of the added material reflects Toury's engagement with German translation scholars, primarily of the functionalist school.

Toury ends the section discussing his second law with his final formulation: "tolerance of interference – and hence the endurance of its manifestations – tends to increase when translation is carried out from a 'major' or highly prestigious language/culture, especially if the target language/culture is 'minor,' or 'weak' in any other sense" (278). Here we see Toury's principle of interference embedded in the systems theory

framework as he attempts to generalize across cultures. My earlier objections to the hierarchies implied by the terminology of higher/lower, major/minor, prestigious/non-prestigious remain. The problem is that Toury is formulating "laws" based upon hypotheses posed in the early seventies, and those hypotheses have changed little over the years. Although Toury's data appears to support his claims, recent data emerging from the United States is much different. For example, publishers in the United States, hardly a "weak" or "minor" culture, are much more likely to publish a Mayan/Guatemalan or North African/Berber text that is open to interference, which contains "foreignizing" elements and is different than the status quo than a translation that smoothes over cultural differences and adapts texts to acceptable genres and styles. And this is not just a recent phenomenon. As I argued in "Translation, Counter-culture and *The Fifties* in the USA" (1996), the fifties in the United States were a period of great stability and conservatism. Eisenhower was president, suburban America was growing, the country was at peace, economic prosperity was rising, and unemployment was low. The United States was one of the two world super-powers militarily and enjoyed a rich spectrum of literary genres. Yet a great deal of resistance translation activity was going on, from the importation of surrealist and experimental writers from Europe and Latin American, including Pablo Neruda, Antonio Machado, Cesar Vallejo, Federico Garcia Lorca, Gunnar Ekelöf, Georg Trakl, Herni Michaux, and René Char. These writers were being translated by prestigious creative writers and translators such as Robert Bly, James Wright, Gary Snyder, Rolfe Humphries, Langston Hughes, W.D. Snodgrass, W.S. Merwin, and Willis Barnstone, who consciously avoided the mainstream poetic and literary conventions of the period. Translation during the period served not as a conservative factor reflecting cultural and literary norms during the period, but as a progressive factor, challenging and attempting to change those very norms by importing new forms and ideas. If the upheaval of the subsequent sixties is any indication, translation was one of the most important tools leading to cultural change. Such data contradicts Toury's findings, and clearly more studies need to be done before such generalizations can be made.

Toury's laws based upon "decades" of research also do not seriously consider ongoing research by Canadian, Latin American, or scholars from developing countries, nor is there consideration of Marxist, feminist, postcolonial, or poststructural scholarship. As fields such as anthropology and ethnology are discovering, traditional "scientific" and

"objective" approaches and methodologies can only observe what their methods allow them to observe, greatly impoverishing their "science." What is revealed by Toury's theory is less about translation phenomena and more about the culture of the researchers using his methods. While Toury strives not to be prescriptive in his translation analysis, his preference for functional translations, for target-text oriented translation, is easily visible in his conclusions.

In the following chapter, we will see how scholars more versed in deconstruction and postcolonial theories expose the limitations of polysystem theory and offer new alternatives. Despite Toury's attempt to show that scholars are arriving at a consensus of opinion, most translation studies scholars' findings during the eighties seemed to be diverging from his own. Despite Toury's claims to the contrary, translation scholars tended to view translations less as an empirical fact – a concrete text as defined by the target culture – and more as a complex set of translational relations in any given situation. The translated text was increasingly viewed as simultaneously drawing upon families of resemblances as well as writing itself into other families of resemblances. Descriptive translation studies research during the eighties showed how the translated text is inscribed in the shifting web of intertextuality and how translation "facts" seem to be more constructed than material. Just as translation studies was defining itself as an institutional science in order to increase support from government, academia, and even private sectors, the research by both the Belgian/Dutch group and the tangential Anglo-American branch seemed to be preparing the ground for poststructuralist analysis. As a phenomenon, translation seems to subvert any systematic approach to its own study, and may indeed subvert itself, continually evolving as claims categorizing it are articulated. The next chapter will deal with one such possibility for further thought, that of deconstruction, which offers ways of viewing translational phenomena that translation studies scholars have until recently systematically avoided.

Chapter 6
Deconstruction

The translation theories examined thus far all depend upon some notion of equivalence: the same aesthetic experience (Chapter 2), linguistic structural/dynamic equivalence (Chapter 3), corresponding literary function (Chapter 4), or similar formal correlation governed by social acceptability in the target culture (Chapter 5). Despite differing approaches, each theory is unified by a conceptual framework that assumes original presence and a representation of it in the receiving society. Even-Zohar and Toury tried to escape the epistemological strait-jacket that the power of the original text retains over the translation by reviewing the problem of translation in terms of the actual product rather than the ideal of a "faithful" version, but in the end they found it difficult to escape limitations imposed by their Formalist roots, scientific approach, and dualistic epistemological assumptions. The question remains whether it is possible to think about translational phenomena in other than traditional terms. To date, all translation theories have made rigid distinctions between original texts and their translations, distinctions that determine subsequent claims about the nature of translation. Yet deconstructionists are undertaking a radical redrawing of the questions upon which translation theory is founded. While certain practitioners distance themselves from the term "deconstruction" in favor of "affirmative productivity" (Vance, 1985: 135–6), for the sake of clarity I will use the term deconstruction.

Questions being posed by deconstructionists include the following: What if one theoretically reversed the direction of thought and posited the hypothesis that the original text is dependent upon the translation? What if one suggested that, without translation, the original text ceased to exist, that the very survival of the original depends not on any particular quality it contains, but upon those qualities that its translation contains? What if the very definition of a text's meaning was determined not by the original, but by the translation? What if the "original" has no fixed identity that can be aesthetically or scientifically determined but rather changes each time it passes into translation? What exists *before* the original? An idea? A form? A thing? Nothing? Can we think in terms of pre-original, pre-ontological conditions? Deconstructionists not only raise questions challenging fundamental notions prevalent in all the

theories discussed above but also question the very nature of the act of raising such questions. Foucault, as we shall see later, calls into question the questioner, suggesting that this particular age is characterized less as one in which man poses the questions and more as one in which questions arise from something inherent in language itself. Deconstructionists go so far as to suggest that perhaps the *translated text writes us* and not we the translated text.

Deconstruction challenges limits of language, writing, and reading by pointing out how the definitions of the very terms used to discuss concepts set boundaries for the specific theories they describe. While not offering a specific "translation theory" of its own, deconstruction, however, does "use" translation often both to raise questions regarding the nature of language and "being-in-language" as well as to suggest that in the process of translating texts, one can come as close as is possible to that elusive notion or experience of *différance*, which "underlies" their approach. Such thinking about the nature of translation and the nature of language, thus, becomes important to translation theorists, not because it necessarily defines another approach, but because it deepens and broadens the conceptual framework by which we define the very field itself. I suggest that the shift to a more philosophic stance from which the entire problematic of translation can be better viewed may not only be beneficial for translation theory, but that after such a confrontation, the discourse which has limited the development of translation theory will invariably undergo a transformation, allowing new insights and fresh interdisciplinary approaches, breaking, if you will, a logjam of stagnated terms and notions.

In Anglo-American circles, deconstruction is not an approach normally associated with translation theory, either by literary translators or linguists; in Belgium and the Netherlands, few of the researchers mention its existence, let alone deem it appropriate for their discussions. I would like to suggest, however, that the deconstructionists' entire project is intricately relevant to questions of translation theory, and that their thinking is seminal to any understanding of the theoretical problems of the translation process. Jacques Derrida, for example, suggests that deconstruction and translation are inexorably interconnected, intimating that in the process of translation, that elusive impossible presence he refers to as *différance* may, to the highest degree possible, be visible: "In the limits to which it is possible or at least *appears* possible, translation practices the difference between signified and signifier" (Derrida, 1981: 21). All of Derrida's writing, regardless of the "subject matter" or text in

question, continually revolves around problems pertaining to the possibility or impossibility of translation. According to Derrida, *all* of philosophy is centrally concerned with the notion of translation: "the origin of philosophy is translation or the thesis of translatability" (Derrida, 1985b: 120). He challenges the reader (and especially the translator) to think and rethink every moment a translation solution is posed, an item named, an identity fixed, or a sentence inscribed. With each naming gesture, Derrida suggests a footnote, a note in the margin, or a preface also is in order to retrieve those subtle differing supplementary meanings and tangential notions lost in the process of transcription. With the focus of philosophical investigation redirected from identity to difference, from presence to supplement, from text to preface, translation assumes a central rather than secondary place; for it is here that Derrida creates tension, casts doubts, and offers alternatives. The process of translation offers, as near as may be approached, a mode of differing/deferring that subverts modes of traditional metaphysical thinking that have historically dominated assumptions about translation specifically as well as philosophy in general.

In contrast to all the theories discussed in this study, at the foundation of Derrida's thought is the assumption that there is *no* kernel or deep structure or invariant of comparison, nothing that we may ever discern – let alone represent, translate, or found a theory on. Rather, Derrida "bases" his "theory" of deconstruction on non-identity, on non-presence, on unrepresentability. What does exist, according to Derrida, are different chains of signification – including the "original" and its translations in a symbiotic relationship – mutually supplementing each other, defining and redefining a phantasm of sameness, which never has existed nor will exist as something fixed, graspable, known, or understood. This phantasm, produced by a desire for some essence or unity, represses the possibility that whatever may be there is always in motion, in flux, "at play," escaping in the very process of trying to define it, talk about it, or make it present. The subject of translation theory has traditionally involved some concept of determinable meaning that can be transferred to another system of signification. Deconstruction questions such a definition of translation and uses the practice of translation to demonstrate the instability of its own theoretical framework. Deconstruction resists systems of categorization that separate "source" text from "target" text or "language" from "meaning," denies the existence of underlying forms independent of language, and questions theoretical assumptions that presume originary beings, in whatever shape

or form. In translation, what is visible is language referring not to things, but to language itself. Thus the chain of signification is one of infinite regress – the translated text becomes a translation of another earlier translation and translated words, although viewed by deconstructionists as "material" signifiers, represent nothing but other words representing nothing but still other words representing.

The deconstructionist alternative arose primarily in France in the late 1960s during a time of social and political upheaval. At the same time that the events of May 1968 were threatening to topple de Gaulle's regime, a group of formalists joined a group of leftists and began collectively publishing their work in the Parisian journal *Tel Quel*, the name that became associated with the group (see Sollers & Hayman, 1981; Kristeva, 1983; Bann, 1984). *Tel Quel* in the late sixties was composed of publications by central members Philippe Sollers, Julia Kristeva, Marcelin Pleynet, Jean Pierre Faye, Jacqueline Risset, and Jean Ricardou as well as by more temporary members such as Roland Barthes, Tzvetan Todorov, Pierre Boulez, Jean-Louis Houdebine, Guy Scarpetta, and Derrida. Todorov, who had joined the group from Bulgaria, and Barthes were decidedly Formalist, and Kristeva, also from Bulgaria, was well versed in the study of Russian Formalism. From another direction, Louis Althusser, although not considered a member of the group, practiced a form of deconstruction while retaining a Marxist dialectic and a scientific methodology, and exerted enormous influence. The members of *Tel Quel* read both Jakobson and Marx at the same time, neither rejecting nor identifying with either, deliberately refusing to resolve the contradiction of such a stance in order to open up new avenues of thought.

That its evolution reflected the political and social turmoil in France during the late sixties was more than coincidence. In his book *Readings and Writings: Semiotic Counter-Strategies*, Peter Wollen suggests that May 1968 "brought *Tel Quel* in its wake" (Wollen, 1982: 210), but clearly the alternative mode of thinking by the young radicals served to bring about the events of May as well. In 1965 Tzvetan Todorov published *Théorie de la littérature*, the first translation of a selection of Russian Formalist essays to appear in France, and it had enormous impact on the group. Julia Kristeva, who joined the *Tel Quel* editorial board in 1970, was well versed in both Chomskian and Prague school linguistics. She greatly admired the work of Bakhtin, for example, but suggested in her essay "The Ruin of a Poetics" (1973) that although his work was substantially correct, it did not go far enough, especially when

it began to introduce sociological and ideological aspects into the structuralist framework (Kristeva, 1973). Derrida, too, admits the necessary stage of structuralism for the activity of deconstruction. In *Of Grammatology* he suggests that Saussure did not see his project through to its ultimate conclusions, that what was "chased off" by its attempt to limit and contain has come back "to haunt language" (Derrida, 1974: 43–4).

Deconstructionists, like translation studies scholars, analyze the differences, slips, changes, and elisions that are part of every text. Indeed, it is within such a notion of comparison that social and subjective factors can be seen to operate as constraints. Just as Formalist roots have helped translation studies focus on actual texts rather than on hypothetical ones, so too is deconstruction tied to the text that it reads. As both "fields" move toward a position that attempts to avoid independent, preconceived concepts from which to categorize, interpret, and evaluate texts, the value of deconstruction for a post-structuralist theory of translation may now be apparent. Yet Russian Formalism, as Saussurian linguistics, is based upon form/content distinctions, on the signified/signifier distinctions that ground traditional metaphysical philosophy, and still troubles translation studies. This dichotomized thinking and the hierarchies generated by such distinctions (privileging literary over non-literary, the metaphysical over the referential, or pure thought over surface structure) are the same distinctions that deconstruction finds limiting and against which it operates. In terms of translation theory, which invariably posits some determinable meaning as that which must be reconstituted in another language, the very separation of language from an identifiable meaning or deep structure becomes the target of deconstruction's questions and thus a fruitful place to begin re-examination of translation theory in general. Derrida frequently refers to "something which is never spoken" – something unthought or, as I will argue, language itself speaking, a notion traditionally viewed as beyond the scope of translation theory. In this chapter I suggest that translation theory can no longer avoid such questions.

Foucault: De-structuring the original

In the epigraph to *Language, Counter-memory, Practice* (1977), Michel Foucault cites Jorge Luis Borges as saying, "The fact is that every writer *creates* his own precursors. His work modifies our

conception of the past, as it will modify the future" (Foucault, 1977:5). The notion that the translator creates the original is one that is introduced by deconstructionists and serves to undermine the notion of authorship and with it the authority on which to base a comparison of subsequent translated versions of a text. Deconstructionists argue that original texts are constantly being rewritten in the present and each reading/translation reconstructs the source text. In his essay "What is an Author?" in *Language, Counter-memory, Practice*, Foucault addresses these problems, noting that traditional notions of original authorship, of original acts of creation, of the unity of an original text, of translation equivalence or similitude, and systems of valorization are at the foundation of our understanding of literature and translation. He suggests that by granting primordial status to writing, we reinscribe in transcendental terms an affirmation of the text's sacred origin. Traditional translation theory holds dear such notions of both the author and the primordial status of an original text. Any translation of an original into a second language involves a violation of the original, thus the impossibility of ever creating "pure" equivalents. Foucault attempts to break down the traditional notion of the author, and instead suggests we think in terms of "author-function" (Foucault, 1977: 130–1). Instead of a fixed originary identity, Foucault recommends focusing on the relationships of texts with other texts and viewing the specific discourse of a particular text within its historical situation. According to Foucault, the author's work is not the result of spontaneous inspiration, but is tied to the institutional systems of the time and place over which the individual author has little control or awareness. Thus the "act of creation" is in reality a series of complex processes that the designation "author" serves to simplify. Foucault prefers not to think of the author as an actual individual, but as a series of subjective positions, determined not by any single harmony of effects, but by gaps, discontinuities, and breakages. The discourse of the text will show how these discontinuities destructure the notion of a unified, ahistorical, and transcendental original text. With such an historical approach, Foucault argues, critics will learn to laugh at the "solemnities" of truth and instead focus on the interplay of forces, of subjectivities, of positions and possibilities. Gaps, reversals, differences, contradictions, and silences are just as important in determining "meaning" as that which is coherent, unified, and explicitly articulated.

A definition and conception of what Foucault calls the Modern versus the Classical Age is central to his argument in "What is an Author?"

Traditional translation theory, based on conceptions of harmony, unified texts, an original idea that can be captured by an analogous text, can be thought of as grounded in what Foucault calls a "classical" conception of representation. During the eighteenth century, according to Foucault, language established relations to identity – language was perceived as a form of knowing and knowing was already discourse. Just as scientists such as Linnaeus researched the natural sciences during this period, so too can the "theory" of the world be seen as interwoven in a theory of words. Natural history, for example, always attempted to reveal the true order, the true foundations behind the scene of everyday life, by using names to give things their true denomination. In the chapter "Classifying" from *The Order of Things* (1973), Foucault suggests that, during the eighteenth century, to "know" nature was to "build" upon the basis of language a "true" language, one which revealed the conditions in which all language was possible (Foucault, 1973:161–2). Patterns of reality were discovered, taxonomies begun, abstract characteristics defined, and essences described; orders and genres were established that continue into today's age, including some of the translation theories discussed in this book. For this enterprise, language required the similarity of impressions, and thus the presupposition of an arrangement of reality to conform to the discourse of the period – one that posited universals of being, the primacy of the knowing subject, and a language capable of describing those universals.

This harmonious view of the world was shattered at the end of the eighteenth century. In the chapter entitled "Labor, Life and Language" of *The Order of Things*, Foucault elaborates, suggesting that in the nineteenth century discourse becomes the subject of discourse. The author no longer uses language and then stands outside of it, but the language is conceived as also "inside" the creating subject and as having its own producing effect. Humboldt, Bopp, Grimm, and others begin their investigations and comparisons of languages; philology makes its appearance, and grammatical structures are described. Foucault suggests that a double break occurred during this period: languages broke with their ties to the represented thing and broke their link with the general continuity of the natural order, thus gaining a life of their own. As the "discontinuity" of subsystems revealed "organic" structures in all their diversity, so too were languages detached from a broad, unified system and the heterogeneity of various grammatical systems emerged (Foucault, 1973: 292–3). According to Foucault, while language becomes divorced from the thing represented, it also paradoxically

remains the only medium through which the thing can be known. Language thus becomes simultaneously elevated and demoted during this period, and grammatical structures are seen as an *a priori* of what can be expressed. Philosophical truths are thus trapped in the web of discourse, and analysis must work backwards from the opinions, truths, and even sciences to the *words* that make them possible. Production of anything – from commodities to literary texts – is no longer conceived as structured around individual consciousness, but rather around the age, or, according to Foucault, the discourse of the age, which actually *creates* the individual. Language, especially "literary" language, therefore, takes on a whole new mode of existence; it ceases to play the role of the metaphysical revealer/mediator of philosophical truths and becomes more and more self-referential, merely a manifestation of its own "precipitous" existence. Foucault argues that it breaks with the whole definition of genres and becomes merely a manifestation of language that has "no other law than that of affirming" (Foucault, 1973: 300). During this period, then, forms of authority cease to impose laws; genres and forms cease to be viewed as eternal; and the structure of any notion of originality breaks down.

In the "Modern Age," language has become an authority unto itself. Even the author becomes a "function" of discourse, dissolving into the text writing itself. In "What is an Author?" Foucault quotes Samuel Beckett as posing the Nietzschean question "What matter who's speaking?" Man as well as God has disappeared into the evolution of language writing itself. The fundamental question of the Modern Age, according to Foucault, is no longer how one accumulates knowledge to become an authority and pass judgment on the world, but one of how we can think that which we cannot think. In "Man and his Doubles" from *The Order of Things*, he argues that that which is unthought, that which escapes as language writes itself, but nevertheless forms us, our speech, and thought patterns, has become the object of the deconstructionist inquiry:

> The question is no longer: How can experience of nature give rise to necessary judgments? But rather: How can man think what he does not think, inhabit as though by a mute occupation something that eludes him, animate with a kind of frozen movement that figure of himself that takes the form of a stubborn exteriority? How can man *be* that life whose web, pulsations, and buried energy constantly

> exceed the experience that he is immediately given of them? (Foucault, 1973: 323)

Although Foucault makes no predictions as to what the answers to his own questions are, he does point us in a direction: toward a reflection on that which is silent, an illumination of that which is dark, and a restoration to language of that which has been mute. This "Other" has not been, nor can it be, illuminated in the sense of a positive knowledge, but rather as a blind spot or dark region which accompanies conscious thought. He conceives of the "Other" as man's double because it has, "like a shadow," accompanied man "mutely and uninterruptedly" since the nineteenth century (Foucault, 1973: 326–7). Deconstruction thus shifts the nature of the questions being asked about a literary work and its meaning from the audible to the mute. The author's creative role is reduced and new questions are raised about where the discourse of any particular text comes from, if not the author. The originality of the initial text is thus also called into question, and other determining factors emerge with regard to what can and cannot be thought within a particular discourse. Most importantly, the "meaning" of a text is reconsidered, and silent elements are returned to the language of a text, visible in contradictions, gaps, and omissions. In addition (im)possible meanings are returned to words, meanings that always accompanied them, but were covered up by the nature of the evolution of the discourse in Western culture in general, and in the eighteenth century in particular. Thus, in practice, deconstructionists tend to exhibit a great indifference to authors and explicit meanings, and instead tune into the language speaking itself, listening for the unheard, the ungraspable – that which is there and yet is not there, lost in that space between signified and the signifier.

Deconstructionists are attracted to translated texts, in which they claim the affirmative play of words in and of themselves can be seen and repressed meanings can and do return, often implicitly, to the present. By means of their practice of writing – even their most "philosophical" texts, with all their footnotes, prefaces, supplements, *double entendres*, and notes in the margins, can be viewed as a kind of translation – deconstructionists are challenging traditional translation theory to expand its borders, encouraging it to consider its own limitations, psychology, unconscious restraints, and the implications of its rhetoric. In translation, the possibility that *nothing* exists behind language except its own pattern of infinite regression can be confronted, and the mere play of language in and of itself can be revealed. This openness to

absolute nothingness, to death, to finitude is characteristic of the thought of Martin Heidegger, who has destructured metaphysical theories of translation and opened the way to thinking about that which language denies.

Heidegger: The limits of naming

One of the first attempts to break the stranglehold of metaphysical conceptual approaches to translation was Heidegger's *Sein und Zeit* (1927) *(Being and Time*, 1962), wherein one can locate the beginnings of the practice of deconstruction. Ironically, it was not an allusion to any philosophical truths that enabled Heidegger to escape the metaphysical limitations, but writing about questions of language, about poetry, and about translation, which disclosed new avenues of thought. In a return to the most basic and most concrete question upon which all Western philosophy is based, Heidegger refrained from a discussion of the "meaning" of Being and instead asked about the very *conditions* for the possibility of ontological thought. *Being and Time*, thus, is less a philosophical description and more of a pre-ontological inquiry. The language framing such questions, however, is itself paradoxical in that the (thing) being investigated is defined by those very terms that are being cast into doubt. Yet, because of the provisional nature of Heidegger's text – he was not trying to answer the question, but to "stir" it, to provide a place and context for that question to occur – Heidegger avoided traditional conceptual notions and thus was able temporarily to circumvent the paradox. The text does not offer a proof, outline an argument, or reach a conclusion, but rather elaborates a process of de-centering, of beginning over and over again, of asking the questions of the being *(Seiende)* who is asking the question of Being *(Sein)*. The process of really thinking about the question, of experiencing the question existentially (by not escaping into preconceived notions or historical definitions of Being outside of oneself) destructures the history of ontology and of how Being has traditionally been interpreted.

In *Being and Time*, Heidegger suggests that Being does not exist outside anything, certainly not outside of the place where the question occurs. The question happens only in the question, only happens as relations in language, poetry, and thought are formed. Being is not an answer to anything, for it is not an entity, a thing, a concept, an idea which is graspable, but more of a doubt, a lack of presence, an anxiety which signals absolute nothingness, always beyond the grasp. Heidegger

avoids philosophic truths that serve merely to obscure this pre-ontological experience and tries to think in the absence of preconceptions, in the absence of timeless verities. His thought thus turns more and more to language as the essay unfolds, and he continually raises the question of Being, only to see any resemblance of an answer simultaneously disappear as he comes closer to coherently structuring the question. The two become intricately linked and intricately exclusive as Heidegger attempts to think through the discourse in which his own question is framed, and the question *without an answer* becomes the one that primarily guides his subsequent thinking.

Through the attempts to structure a question from where one might begin to locate an answer, Heidegger was able to see that language/thought restraints limited his thinking, and he began to destructure or deconstruct those limits. His method involved more and more play with the language, allowing it to speak for itself through its own variations and windings. In a process very similar to that of translation, and one which has become the governing methodology of deconstruction, Heidegger – by letting language speak itself, letting it take on its own energy and etymological resonance – was able to point to one way metaphysical thinking might be overcome. There is a sense in Heidegger's writing that once the philosophical debris is dismantled, a return to a pre-original moment is possible and that pre-ontological thought can be experienced. In the double movement of deconstruction – as a clearing-away of structures that congest *and* as an entering made possible by leaping over generations of traditional thought – translation enters theory (see Bernasconi, 1985: 15–17; Krell, 1986: 80–94). Translation becomes understood in terms of returning to the pre-originary, of allowing the virginal experience of language to occur. In order to speak original speech, to think the "Other" in Foucauldian terms – i.e., pre-metaphysical thought – one must *do* a translation. Translation is viewed as action, an operation of thought, a translation of our selves into the thought of the other language, and not a linguistic, scientific transfer from something into the present.

The movement of Heidegger's thought in *Being and Time*, thus, becomes important for translation theory. In *Being and Time* Heidegger was discussing questions cardinal to Western metaphysics, dealing with the idea of man as the being who raised the question of Being. Distancing himself from his own idea of the importance of the subject as a knowing being, Heidegger's thought soon turned to the importance of language as the force that destructures the subject, and, thus, in

Foucauldian terminology, man becomes the subject of language. Being, as Heidegger first began thinking about it, disappears in language: the discourse of *Being and Time* points toward a way to transgress the limits of the literary text itself. Heidegger has progressed to the point Foucault suggests is characteristic of a certain kind of twentieth-century thought: rather than any one person speaking, language is speaking itself, and man is listening. If such a listening is possible, what does one hear? Heidegger argues that we do not hear everything, for there is something essential to the nature of language that cannot be heard or read. Something is withheld as language speaks. Words not only reveal what is there – "language is the house of Being" – but language also holds back. If we let language speak for itself, what is revealed is something about the nature of language: words not only show what is there, but also show what is there and at the same time is not *(was es gibt und gleichwohl nicht ist)* (Heidegger, 1971a: 88).

In "The Anaximander Fragment" in *Early Greek Thinking*, Heidegger gives us a glimpse of his theory of translation in his own translations of the Anaximander Fragment, the oldest fragment of Western thinking, the interpretation of which becomes crucial for Heidegger's philosophical claims. Heidegger rereads early Greek thinking primarily to discover an alternate way of viewing the world, of unearthing pre-Platonic and pre-Aristotelian modes of discourse. Heidegger does a little case study, first viewing two definitive translations into German – one by Nietzsche in 1873 and another by Herman Diels in 1903 – and then offers his own translation (Heidegger, 1975: 13–14). Despite the different intentions and methods by the two translators, Heidegger notes the similarity of the two translations, not just in terms of their literal "faithfulness," but also regarding the "conception" of Anaximander underlying both versions. The standard for judging the pre-Platonic or pre-Aristotelian philosophy is much the same and is taken from the very philosophers who set the standard. Heidegger argues that this view has become firmly entrenched in Western philosophy (and Christian theology) as "universal conviction" (Heidegger, 1975: 14).

Heidegger raises the question whether the fragment can speak to us after all these years. Can the translator somehow circumvent the weight of history and the domination of historical explanation? To unearth the fragment's meaning, the translator is not helped by classical philology, historical interpretation, or psychology. Instead, by being in tune with the language, a "bond" which is "broader and stronger, but far less apparent" develops,and in this "thoughtful dialogue," the fragment can be

translated (Heidegger, 1975:19). Heidegger then offers his own version, allowing, he argues, the manifestation of the essence of Being in its withdrawal. Disassociating himself from literal connections and pre-conceived associations, he opens his mind for other possible meanings. For example, he does not translate *adikia* literally as "injustice," but instead hears *a-dikia*, suggesting that *dikia* is absent, that all is not right with things, and that something is out of joint, and offers "disjunction" as another possibility. Clearly, Heidegger is using the translation to achieve a kind of double writing: first, to displace and unsettle preconceived notions which Western readers bring to language in order to let something else occur; second, to raise again the question of Being as in *Being and Time*. Whether we accept his translation or not is less a goal of the essay; what matters is the recovery/return of the silent resonance of the saying. If this activity happens, language and thought yield to some other meaning, not some definitive entity outside of language, but something which dwells in, yet is covered up by, the dominant structures of language.

Despite apparent differences, Heidegger's translation theory is not all unlike early translation studies. He does assume that translations are conditioned by the conceptual categories governing any given epoch, despite attempts to circumvent them. He also believes that with study and historical recontextualizing, one can come to some sort of conclusion as to what the author's intent was and thus uncover layers of obfuscation in order to arrive at some sort of originary intent or presence *before* its distortion. He then chooses words that defamiliarize, which function differently in today's society, to try to achieve the same effect or response that the original version evoked, in the process breaking down the conceptual categories of his reader. In the above essay, he clearly presumes an originary intactness that has been covered over by the Greeks; the poet/translator is able to translate/ transport himself to that original culture and recover that original naming which linguistic naming obscures. The intentional fallacy would apply no less to Heidegger's early Greek translations than it would to any purely functionally oriented theory.

Reservations about residues of originary presence notwithstanding, Heidegger's translation theory marks a significant shift, for he is not uncovering any author's original intention, but recovering a property of language itself. Heidegger comes to terms with that which *language* denies and which no theory outlined in this book remotely approaches. What is revealed to Heidegger by letting language speak for itself is that

"the word implies the relation between the 'is' which is not, and the work which is in the same case of not being a being" (Heidegger, 197la: 59). Heidegger points to a new kind of thinking – not thinking about what is there, what is named, but thinking about what is there and simultaneously not yet named, and can never be named, for it *is* not. One could relate this silent non-entity borne by language to what Foucault calls The Other, the twin of man, which is always carried by man and which has come to define the mode of being for modern (post-modern?) man. Thinking about what can never be named is difficult – Heidegger calls it a "simple ungraspable situation" – but for all its difficulty, theoretically it has become "properly worthy of thought" (Heidegger, 197la: 88) and may force reconsideration by any contemporary theory of translation. The question of how man has disappeared as a speaking subject and how one can illuminate that which is silent in language is not answered, but used by Derrida, as I will attempt to show in the following section, to dismantle previous attempts to arrive at a theory of translation.

Derrida: Translation and *différance*

Derrida's thinking about translation begins with the Heideggerean "concept" of a showing of that which is there and yet "is" not. In his essay "Différance" from *Margins of Philosophy* (1982a), Derrida coins the neologism *"différance"* to refer not to what is there (language), but what is not there, and thus calls into question any ontological approach that attempts to determine a notion of Being based on presence. The term *différance* is derived from the Latin verb *differre* – meaning both to defer, to delay (implying a temporal horizon), and to differ (implying a spatial horizon) – yet with one distinct alteration: Derrida deliberately alters a letter, making a mistake, albeit inaudible: instead of writing *différence* – the substantive derived from the verb according to the rules of grammar – he writes *différance*, which sounds the same, yet graphically forces the reader to think in terms of the unheard – thereby invading the reader's subconscious with a non-existent sound. Yet Derrida is doing more than altering a letter to achieve a mere formalistic alienation effect. The term also calls to mind the gerund derived from the present participle *différant*, which does not exist in present-day French. He thus locates a non-term between a verb and a non-existent noun, suggesting a verb/noun between a subject and object, something that has been lost (or repressed) in the development of language. Derrida likens

the term to something like the middle voice, an operation neither passive nor active, neither temporal nor spatial (Derrida, 1982a: 9; see also Heidegger, 1962:51; Scott, 1987:67), a voice for all intents lost in Western metaphysical discourse.

Recalling Foucault's definition of "The Other" as man's mute twin, Derrida's rhetorical strategy in the essay "Différance" not only uses a term which explicitly refers to scission and division, but also, via its violation of the laws of writing with its inaudible mistake, via its subconsciously recalling a forgotten conceptual mode, uses "mute" irony to create a discourse of graphic and theoretical disorder below the surface of audible and rhetorical conformity. To be frank, his translators into English have not done a very good job in dealing with the neologism; by keeping it in French, it is so blatantly different, that the muted irony and subtle references are all but lost. Derrida's technique works to defer traditional notions of reference and to delay its being subsumed within the discourse in which it occurs – not allowing it to be passed over, subsumed, understood and thus silenced. The method is not unlike certain formalist theories of translation, but Derrida's strategy differs slightly. Whereas formalist approaches are very much bound by the laws of grammar, and are calculated in order to achieve graphic accuracy and precise reference, Derrida's tack is more an empirical wandering, not bound to the responsibility of philosophy, to tradition, to evolution of language or thought systems, foregrounding instead movement along a surface of the written language, play without calculation, wandering without an end or *telos*.

As Heidegger talks about an aspect of language holding back, of withholding, so Derrida suggests the thinking in terms of *différance*, of deferring/differing, of an indeterminate play without an end, a referent, or a specific function. Derrida has also hypothesized that such thinking is impossible in this day and age, but he suggests that we may begin thinking at the margins of metaphysical categorical thinking and speculatively follow the detours of language instead of the agreed upon central path. In terms of translation, he suggests not looking at the original message, nor its codification, but the multiple forms and interconnections through which it must pass in order to speak, to refer at all. Derrida thus speculates, "supposing a play of forms without a determined and invariable substance, and also supposing in the practice of this play a retention and protection of differences, a spacing and temporization, a play of traces" (Derrida, 1982a: 15). By extension, one could also project a translation theory aimed at protecting differences,

reinvigorating language with lost etymological resonances, thereby opening up new avenues of thought.

This is, of course, precisely the "ungraspable situation" Heidegger referred to as being older than writing, older than the pre-ontological questions even he raised, and certainly older than the "truth" of Being as pursued by Greco-Western philosophic investigation. Such an approach is alien to the modern discourse that governs our thought, forces us to make reference to objects, narrows meaning, and closes off alternative possibilities. Derrida's project is one of trying to unveil such a play of covered-up but subconsciously discernible traces without referring to some sort of deep underlying meaning. The problem, according to Derrida, is that the trace (of that particular thing which *is* not) can never be presented as a phenomenon might. (It) is always differing and deferring, erasing itself in the act of disclosure. Despite the difficulty of thinking this "inaudible" thought, Derrida does give us some valuable guidelines as to how one might approach the "concept" of understanding an unheard thought:

> Perhaps we must attempt to think this unheard-of thought, this silent tracing: that the history of Being, whose thought engages the Greco-Western *logos* such as it is produced via the ontological difference, is but an epoch of the *diapherein*.… Since Being has never had a "meaning," has never been thought or said as such, except by dissimulating itself in beings, then *différance*, in a certain and very strange way, (is) "older" than the ontological difference or than the truth of Being. When it has this age it can be called the play of the trace. The play of the trace which no longer belongs to the horizon of Being, but whose play transports and encloses the meaning of Being: the play of the trace, or the *différance*, which has no meaning and is not. Which does not belong. There is no maintaining, and no depth to, this bottomless chessboard on which Being is put into play. (Derrida, 1982a: 22)

Like Heidegger before him, Derrida is suggesting that the entire "history" of Greco-Western thought – wherever metaphysics "normalizes" as within Western discourse – can be thought of as a single epoch produced by *diapherein* interpreted as ontological difference.

Derrida is also suspicious of how Greek texts have been translated and offers another interpretation. Referring to the Heraclitean play of *hen diapheron heautoi* as one differing from itself, on the surface, now, at this moment, *as* it presences, Derrida suggests that frame of reference for

the term “to differ” was lost as the definition as ontological difference came to the fore (Derrida, 1982a: 22). Derrida is interested in both the literal and metaphorical resonance of the Heraclitean expression: the verb *diapherein* is based on the root *diaphero*, which means “to carry from one to another, to carry across, to bear through, to transport.” In addition, the Greeks used the term metaphorically to convey “to put the tongue in motion, to speak” and Derrida relates the phrase to language, especially to oral language (and the inaudible). In addition, Heraclitus used the term to mean “to toss about, to be disrupted;” Aristotle used it to mean “to tear asunder, to disjoin;” and Plutarch used it to convey “to distract” (Liddel & Scott, 1925:417). It is only much later that the term solidifies into its literal meaning of “to make a difference.” Derrida is trying to restore to the term a sense of the early Greek usage, revitalizing the word to convey a sense of movement along the surface, simultaneously bearing meaning as it also eliminates, distracts, and defers meaning. The play of the trace thus “transports” and “encloses,” always revealing and concealing. Derrida is listening to the middle-voice aspect of the verb – resurrecting the sense of something that is disjoined or disrupted from *within* – in language itself – as opposed to something set apart and distinct from others as viewed from the *outside* – with “objective” distance – and trying to reinscribe that voice or lost mode of discourse within the current mode.

In terms of informing translation theory, Derrida’s “play of the trace” belongs not to a translation that carries identifiable meaning across boundaries, but to a movement along an absent road, one that has disseminated or evaporated, of a voice that tells but cannot be captured, an echo disappearing as it is heard. It is a bearing via “a notion of motion” that is more conveyed by the movement of Heidegger’s prose and Derrida’s rhetorical inventions rather than that which they are trying to literally express. Yet, although the techniques are related, they are not the same. For with Heidegger, especially in his translations, there is always the sense that he is searching for some sort of pre-ontological presence, which, if we could break down our closed conceptual framework, we could conceivably understand as (more) meaningful than culturally agreed upon meaning. Derrida, in contrast, seems to suggest that the play of trace can never be presented, for as it is named, as one tries to stop its movement and grasp it, it disseminates, separates, and continues to move on, crossing over to another place.

Translation can also be correspondingly redefined. Instead of being defined merely as a crossing over in order to grasp something, translation

can also provide a place or forum for the practice of a crossing over that disseminates and escapes. Instead of translations fixing the same meaning, translations can also allow further room for play, extend boundaries, and open up new avenues for further difference. Translation can be conceived of as an action in which the movement along the surface of language is made visible, the play without calculation is made manifest. The focus of such a redefinition shifts away from the "meaning" of a text, for, according to Derrida, the *play* has no meaning. There is no *maintaining différance* – it is metaphorically conceived of as "this bottomless chessboard on which Being is put into play."

The differences between Heidegger's and Derrida's views regarding translation can best be seen in Derrida's response to a question posed by Rodolphe Gasché in a roundtable on translation collected in *The Ear of the Other* (1985b). Gasché asks how Derrida situates himself in relation to Heidegger, especially with regard to Heidegger's recognition of a fundamental lack in every mother tongue (in this case, the Greek language, and by extension, every Western language, including French). Derrida responds by suggesting that the difference between his translation theory and Heidegger's is that Heidegger presumes some sort of "archi-originary intactness," an intact "kernel," which although covered over, forgotten, and mistranslated by the Greeks, is nevertheless presumed to exist (Derrida, 1985b: 114). Derrida's response to Gasché's question points out, justifiably, the quasi-religious tone assumed by Heidegger's writing, one from which Derrida must distance himself if the deconstructionist project is to challenge traditional philosophy. Yet his position *vis-à-vis* Heidegger is not as distant as may first appear. In fact, Derrida historicizes the discourse of Heidegger within a Greco-Western paradigm that always has wished for – and theoretically presumed – an intact originary presence, be there one or not. Whether the unified "kernel" is fiction or fact, Derrida does acknowledge that the *desire* for such an entity is very real, and it is precisely *that* upon which every saying, every appeal – including that of literature and philosophy – is based (Derrida, 1985b: 116).

By calling into question that upon which language is founded, Derrida actually goes one step further than Heidegger. Derrida calls into question any definition of translation as transporting, reproducing, representing, or communicating the "meaning" of the original. Instead, he suggests translation might better be viewed as one instance in which language can be seen as always in the process of modifying the original text, of deferring and displacing for ever any possibility of grasping that which

the original text desired to name. In fact, from the deconstructionist position, translation is viewed as an activity that continually conceals presence and thwarts *all* desire. Reinforcing Derrida's position, ironically, is that the very thwarting of desire is a necessary condition for desire itself to unfold, the always already silent twin accompanying the emotion as we define it, and the accordingly impossible presence uncannily manifests/conceals itself within Derrida's argument. In a similar fashion, translation can be viewed as a lively operator of *différance*, as a necessary process that distorts original meaning while simultaneously revealing a network of texts both enabling and prohibiting interlingual communication.

Elaborating upon this redefinition of translation in his 1985 essay "Des Tours de Babel," Derrida adopts Walter Benjamin s concept of *Überleben*, the "survival" of language, to explain how translation modifies or supplements the original. The title of the essay again illustrates the graphic force of Derrida's writing, the strange ring, the overdetermined ambiguity, the semantic overloading that Derrida sees always present in every word. "Des" for him resonates with "some," with "of the," with "from the," with "about" (see "Translator's Note," Derrida, 1985a: 206). More importantly, it carries the connotation of "on" in the sense of "living-on" or "sur-vival" (Derrida, 1979: 76). "Tours" conjures up notions of towers, twists, tricks, and turns. Together, "Des" and "Tour" form *détour*, which recalls the defer/delay connotations important to the neologism *différance*, as well as the tangential, supplemental writing Derrida sees implicit in part of any set or static text. "Babel" is even more complex, containing a reference to "father" *(Ba* in oriental tongues) and "God" *(Bel* in the same), father in this case of Babylonia. Derrida suggests that even proper nouns always resonate polysemantically, for this proper noun already carries with it notions of "confusion" as in "incoherent babel" or a "confusion of tongues" and as in a "confused state of mind" when a permanent structure is interrupted (Derrida, 1985a: 166–7). For Derrida, God is seen as a deconstructionist, for He interrupts the construction of the Tower of Babel (Derrida: 1985b: 102). In this act, God interrupts himself and thereby produces "disschemination," which a translator's note by Joseph Graham tells us refers to dissemination, deschematization, de-Shemitizing, and detouring from a *chemin* (path). Addressing the tribe of Shems, Derrida argues that God is saying, "You will not impose your meaning or your tongue, and I, God therefore oblige you to submit to the

plurality of languages which you will never get out of' (Derrida, 1985b: 103).

Thus, merely by thinking about four words in the title of the essay, we see how Derrida's writing does more than alienate or estrange; it actively intervenes in metaphysical, religious conceptual schemes and offers an alternative. The "task" of the translator, argues Derrida, adopting Benjamin's argument, is no less than to insure the survival of language and, by extension, the survival of life. Derrida argues that Benjamin's preface – for "The Task of the Translator" is a preface to Benjamin's 1923 translations of Baudelaire's *Tableaux parisiens* – is about giving life, transforming the source text so that it "lives on," that it "lives more and better," that it lives "beyond the means of the author" (Derrida, 1985a: 178–9). Derrida quotes and parenthetically explains his reading of Benjamin as follows:

> Just as the manifestations of life are intimately connected with the living, without signifying anything for it, a translation proceeds from the original. Indeed not so much as from its life as from its survival *[Überleben]*. For a translation comes after the original and, for the important works that never find their predestined translator at the time of their birth, it characterizes the stage of their survival *[Fortleben*, this time sur-vival as continuation of life rather than life as post-mortem]. (Derrida, 1985a: 178)

Thus, for Derrida and Benjamin, the "original" always contains another structure or form – a "stage" for future survival – even if the text itself is never translated. That structure is not visible, not something complete and unified; it has more to do with a state of being incomplete in relation to future possibilities, an openness unchanged by any static or definitive version. Psychologically, this unfulfilled entity might be expressed as the text's unending desire for life and a desire for translation. Derrida talks about such a half-completed structure, whose completion one can merely guess at, as related to the "law" governing translation, which Benjamin also sees as a "debt" *(Aufgabe)* constitutive of the translator's "task." The original gives itself *(aufgeben)* in the very modifying of itself; it survives by its mutation, by its transformation. And in its renewal, the original too is thereby modified – it grows, matures. The growth via translation responds to the original, filling in that open structure of the source text (Derrida, 1985a: 188).

In such a process, not only texts but also languages are rejuvenated as well. Translation, for Derrida and Benjamin, marks or "remarks" in the

sense of "expresses" a single text's affinity with other languages. Languages, for Derrida, are not unrelated and abstracted from one another, but are always interrelated and mutually derivative. Translation puts the writer in touch with Benjamin's concept of "pure language" *(reine Sprache)*. By transgressing the limits of the target language, by transforming original texts in the source language, the translator extends, enlarges, or makes languages grow. The enlargement is not a linear, systematic one, but one which is fragmentary, happening only at "infinitely small points," similar to Pound's concept of fragments of language, of sculpture, having "luminous details." The metaphor used by Benjamin and cited by Derrida is the one of enlargement by adjoining along the broken lines of a fragment. Derrida quotes Benjamin as follows:

> For, just as the fragments of the amphora, if one is able to reconstitute the whole, must be contiguous in the smallest details, but not identical to each other, so instead of rendering itself similar to the meaning of the original, the translation should rather, in a movement of love and in full detail, pass into its own language the mode of intention of the original: thus, just as the debris become recognizable as fragments of the same amphora, original and translations become recognizable as fragments of a larger language. (W. Benjamin, 1955; qtd. by Derrida, 1985a: 189–90)

For Derrida, there are no Platonic forms that underlie our conceptual notions. We have no sort of Ur-knowledge of what "life" or "families" are. There is nothing, no pure meaning behind words, behind language. Instead, for Derrida, life – or "living on" *(Überleben)* – is essentially present in the term "translation" *(Übersetzen)* and becomes for him the starting point from which he begins to understand what life and the family mean. Derrida's writing is never devoid of a sense of love of life, love of language, of play of language. In a life-affirming sense, Derrida's writing is quasi-religious, which might explain his attraction to Benjamin and Heidegger. Deconstruction is conceived of as a positive force extending the body of language not just in a symbolic sense, but in a physical sense, too. By a process that physically, materially touches and opens rather than one that abstractly grasps and closes, deconstruction, in reconstituting without representing, allows receiving and giving, allows for love and growth. Translation, more than any other mode or form, complements and reaffirms, enacting survival via a birthing, rebirthing process; hence translation's importance in the deconstructive scheme of

things. Benjamin writes that, in translation, the original becomes larger; Derrida adds that translation behaves like a “child” which is not just a “product” subject to the law of “reproduction,” but has, in addition, “the power of speak on its own” in a new and different fashion, supplementing language, sounding the “Babelian note" (Derrida, 1985a: 191) which causes languages to grow. The translation process ensures the rebirth, the regeneration, the emergence, “the holy growth” of languages in general, and, for Derrida, the means by which we understand ourselves.

Translation, so conceived, puts us in contact not with some sort of original meaning, but with the plurality of languages and meanings. According to Derrida, one never writes in just one language, but is always already writing in multiple languages, composing new meanings while eradicating others. Even “correct” translations conceal, and even exact replication carries different meanings. Originary intactness dissolves as the translator augments and modifies the original. Gray areas between languages – the borderlines – begin to appear. Traces, marks of dissipated meaning, once again become visible – neither intact nor objectified – but still somehow living on, surviving.

Derrida’s translation “theory” is not a theory in a traditional sense – it is not prescriptive nor does it propose a better model of transporting. Instead, it suggests that one thinks less in terms of copying or reproducing and more in terms of how languages relate to each other. Marks, traces, affinities with other languages are present simultaneously with the presentation of whatever the text purports to be about. For in translation languages do touch, in whatever minuscule or tangential way, before they again separate; possibilities present themselves before the act of naming and identifying stops the interactive play. Fleeting moments of what Heidegger refers to as the ungraspable situation perhaps can be uncannily sensed by the translator during the activity of translation. Derrida’s interest in translation is in the process before the naming takes place, while the “thing” still is not. Thus the process of translation deconstructs texts and returns to a point before a thing has been named, thereby making visible a path by which meaning has been rerouted or diverted.

Derrida’s main theoretical point seems to be that there is no pure meaning, no thing to be presented behind language, *nothing* (in an absolute sense) to be represented. Therein lies the radicality of the deconstructionist project. Similar to the formalist position, what does exist, according to deconstructionists, is a continuous chain of

signification comprised of languages in a constant state of interplay, mutually supplementing each other. Yet in addition to such a continuous chain, the Formalists tend to posit unified works of art as a goal within the system, a very fragile assumption, according to Derrida. Moreover, Formalists impute some sort of underlying structure to the linguistic system and some sort of order to the evolution of language, whereas Derrida implies bottomless chessboards and random, accidental development, without an end. Derrida thus demythologizes the forms underlying Formalism.

Translation, accordingly, ceases to be viewed as merely an operation carried out between two separate languages, but instead is seen as a process constantly in operation in single languages as well. Borderlines between languages disappear. In every linguistic system several languages are always already in operation – all languages contain elements from other languages, as well as an instability, an ambiguity, within their own terms. Translation theories historically – both before and after Jakobson – presume differing and distinct systems. According to Derrida, in translation, the impurities manifest themselves, the accidents occur and the deschematization process becomes visible. There are parallels between "translate" and "differ/defer" of which Derrida and practicing translators are well aware. Etymologically, "translate" is derived from the Latin word *translatus*, "carried over." *Translatus* is the past participle of *transferre*. If divided into *trans* and *ferre*, we can see the proximity of the word to *dia* and *pherein*. The Latin term *ferre* means "to carry" or "to transport" as in carrying a shield, and was often used to mean to bear or convey with the notion of motion (Homer), as in ships borne by the forces of wind. It also meant to endure, to suffer, as in to bear a mental burden, and survives in expressions such as "you're not faring well." Significantly for the deconstructionists, translation refers to the sense of roads or ways that lead to a place, as in a door leading to a garden, or a road leading to a city, conveying a sense of stretching or extension toward (Liddel & Scott, 1925: 1922–3; Klein, 1966: 157). By experimenting with possible word choices, what becomes apparent are the minute differences between very similar words, a practice that exposes the limits of languages. That very exposure of limits and impossibilities also gives birth to new alternatives in a very gray area that is neither one language nor another, but a silent differing space not delimited by either one. By putting pen to paper, by choosing one possibility, what occurs is that the silent thought that seemed possible

between the languages is deferred, delayed, erased by the delimiting chosen term.

Derrida's work suggests that translation theory might be the best "field of study" to begin to explore these unheard traces, these possibilities that are covered up as we speak. Translation theory is equipped, as Popovic has demonstrated, to follow the "dirty" play of all the mistakes, problems, accidents, insufficiencies, divergences, and differences. While still not what Derrida is referring to with his term *différance* – which is not to be maintained or grasped – such an analysis may be as close as one can come to revealing this silent property of language. To ignore such possibilities, as translation theory has historically done, only perpetuates its own inadequacy. Derrida prefers the term "regulated transformation" over that of translation, for he argues we will never have the transport of pure signifieds from one language to another:

> Difference is never pure, no more so is translation, and for the notion of translation we would have to substitute a notion of *transformation:* a regulated transformation of one language by another, of one text by another. We will never have, and in fact have never had, to do with some "transport" of pure signifieds from one language to another, or within one and the same language, that the signifying instrument would leave virgin and untouched. (Derrida, 1981: 20)

Certainly such an approach would tend to break down the power of the transcendental signified and free the field from evaluating translations in terms of their proximity to pure equivalence. It would perhaps also free literary scholars from the constrictions of naming in order to listen and think – not in terms of just one language or another, but in that gray area that as yet has no boundaries, that is barely visible, that has no name and is not.

Post-Derrida translation discussions

The repercussions of the deconstructionist alternative to traditional approaches of translation are widespread and accumulating, making them hard to characterize. In this section, I want to touch briefly on four areas in which discussions are being held: first from within *Tel Quel;* second, in translation studies; third, in Anglo-American literary theory; and fourth, in language philosophy.

In French circles, much of the discussion of deconstruction, translation, and the nature of language centers around writing by James Joyce, and strategies preferred by his translators. Perhaps the best example of the practice of "affirmative productivity" as preferred by deconstructionists is James Joyce's own translation of two passages from *Finnegans Wake*. The last thing he worked on before he died, it demonstrates just how a translation illuminates and elaborates upon the original, giving scholars a better sense of the original's transitory nature. Jacqueline Risset, who first published Joyce's translation in the journal *Tel Quel* in 1973, suggests that such a text demonstrates Derrida's thesis that translation transforms the original as it brings it into a second language. She argues that the Italian text of *Finnegans Wake* cannot be called a translation at all, but speaks in terms of it being a "rewriting," an "elaboration," which does not stand in opposition to the original, but as a "work in progress" (Risset, 1984: 3). Clearly the "English" text of *Finnegans Wake* is one example of the multiple linguistic possibilities within (one) language in general, and thereby defies translation as the Western world understands it. In some languages, *Finnegans Wake* has not been translated and is available only in the original, not merely because of the difficulty of translating it, but more because the text is not viewed as being English but plurilingual. Nearly every word in the book is so rich with foreign language reference that it pushes the parameters of monolingualism to the extreme. Theoretically, it already seems to represent an ultimate in terms of degrees of fragmentation of presentation; thus, any translation becomes senseless, or, in other terms, could only serve to telescope the free play of the lexical units into some sense producing and thereby limiting structure. The translation strategy employed by Joyce himself, however, exponentially increases the options for translation again, if that can be imagined, not by retaining the multilinguistic framework by importing foreign language morphemes, but by exploring the limits of language from within. Instead of coining new terms and neologisms, Joyce draws upon multiple levels already existing in the Italian language – various idioms, dialects, and archaisms – in order to achieve the multiple resonances of the original.

In an article called "Joyce Translates Joyce" (1984), Risset argues that Joyce did not seek hypothetical equivalents from the original, but extended the original to a new stage, "a more daring variation on the text in process" (Risset, 1984:6). Not incidentally, Risset is a poet and translator herself, her most recent project being a translation of Dante's *Divine Comedy* into French, the first two volumes of which are complete

and published by Flammarion. Her translation strategy seems to be to "deconstruct" the canonized Dante in France and, in her version, make the playful and colloquial Dante, one which every schoolchild in Italy can read and enjoy, accessible. Joyce, she argues, by resorting to the heterogeneous capabilities within one language, accomplishes similar allusory effects and levels of meaning in the Italian, yet without the obfuscation. Risset suggests that Joyce systematically eliminated all foreign language allusion, substituting instead a monolingual version in which all deformations are rendered in Italian. For example, in the phrase "Annona gebroren aroostokrat Nivia, dochter of Sense and Art, with Spark's pirryphlickathims funkling her fran," Joyce eliminates all reference to Latin, German, and Greek and writes "Annona genata arusticrata Nivea, laureolata in Senso e Arte, il ventaglio costellato di filgettanti" (Risset, 1984: 9). Because the length and depth of the history of Italian culture with all its aristocratic auras and classical airs are so well combined with the regional, uncultured, rural colors and tones, the Italian enjoys a resonance as rich as the foreign-distorted English. Such a strategy of radical Italianization reveals the pluralinguistic qualities inherent in any language somehow even more dramatically than even the original *Wake*. Risset concludes that Joyce's translation strategy reveals something about the nature of language and the "freedom of dialect." The creation of new words is always in process, and the study of dialect, thus, is seminal to better understanding translational phenomena. Joyce's strategy involves more than the use of and quotation of various dialects; instead, in Joyce's translation approach, "language itself" is "treated as dialect." Risset argues that in the "operation" of such a strategy, one becomes aware of "something else," i.e., "language whose field is disturbed, moved in accordance with a forgotten creativity" (Risset, 1984: 13). It is that something else that Risset wishes to "restore" to Dante in her own translations.

Joyce, in the activity of writing and in the activity of translation, has pushed the boundaries of language beyond margins hitherto contemplated. As the English moves outwards, the Italian moves inwards; yet both are always undoing and calling into question stability and definition as they create new terms and open up new avenues for thought. In his translation activity, however, Joyce emphasized more strongly than in the original the sense of something disruptive about the nature of language that arises from within, not as something coming from a foreign source. As Derrida tends to make deliberate mistakes in order to create graphic disorder, so too Joyce deliberately deforms

language within a colloquial and very much spoken context to achieve similar results, thereby delaying/deferring its own subsumation and silencing. This subversive aspect of language and of translation as employed by Joyce is dangerous politically and socially, which, perhaps, explains why the translation of Joyce has become the measuring device for assessing the degree of publishing freedom certain cultures enjoy. When and under what conditions Joyce gets translated is of historic relevance.

The political and institutional threat posed by such an alternative to any theory of translation based upon metaphysical dualism is fairly clear, which might explain why the translation studies scholars have been all but silent in response to the questions posed by deconstructionists. The only serious attempt in translation studies to talk about translation theory in post-Derridean terms has been Raymond Van den Broeck's article "Translation Theory after Deconstruction," published in 1988. Van den Broeck has read the pertinent sections from Derrida which deal with translation, and with the help of Jonathan Culler's 1983 text *On Deconstruction*, acknowledges that in every translation there is a substantial loss of meaning, leading to Derrida's substitution of the term transformation for translation. For Van den Broeck, in agreement with Culler, deconstruction is not an act of destruction, but an act of displacement, an act that challenges traditional oppositions, or even reverses such oppositions (Culler, 1983:150; Broeck, 1988:274). He quotes Derrida as saying that deconstruction must "through a double gesture, a double sentence, a double writing, put into practice a *reversal* of the classical opposition *and* a general *displacement* of the system" (Derrida, 1977:195; Broeck, 1988: 278). This reversal and general displacement can be accomplished, according to Van den Broeck, by transforming the language of the target text through strong, forceful translation that experiments with and tampers with conventional usage. He quotes

Derrida from "Living On" as saying that this sort of transference involves "the simultaneous transgression and reappropriation of a language" because "it forces the translator to transform the language into which he is translating" (Derrida, 1979: 87–9; qtd. by Broeck, 1988: 280–1). He then quotes Derrida from "Des tours de Babel" on ensuring the survival of the original, arguing that Derrida claims the translator should employ an "abusive" translational strategy which "pursues the double move of both violating *and* sustaining the principles of usage (Broeck, 1988: 283).

Van den Broeck then attempts to subsume Derrida under the translation studies approach by arguing that because Derrida subverts source-text oriented theories, he therefore must reinforce the claims of the target-text oriented approaches, i.e., that of translation studies. He sees the translation studies approach, especially the theory of Gideon Toury, developing parallel to and in fact preceding deconstruction theories. Just as deconstruction challenges theories of determinacy, theories which posit meaning as a given property of a text, so too, argues Van den Broeck, does translation studies account for diversity of translation modes and types (Broeck, 1988: 276). Van den Broeck goes so far as to say that Toury's *In Search of a Theory of Translation* (1980), especially his insistence upon uncovering the norms governing translation, can better explain why Derrida's deconstructive approach calling for transgression and deformation has met with relatively small success. He argues that Derrida's theory is less a new theory of language, but merely an older and "highly prescriptive" one. "Deconstruction favours only the norm which in the classical opposition turns out to occupy the inferior position nowadays" (Broeck, 1988: 281). Van den Broeck does not "trust" Derrida's position because it does not provide an "objective basis" or a "point of departure for research" (Broeck, 1988: 281), as the polysystem model does.

Van den Broeck's reading leads him to place Derrida only in the same metaphysical, faithful/free terms that traditionally govern translation theory. He concludes that: "Eventually deconstruction's theory of translation is not a theory the way we would like it. Very probably it is only a theory in the traditional sense of that term, viz, a theory that prescribes what translation *should* be" (Broeck, 1988: 286). To see Derrida as offering merely another prescription for better translation, i.e., one that imports estranging or abusive effects into the target language, is reductive and misleading. Derrida does advocate graphic displacement, but he also uses graphic disorder with care and precision in order to open up categorical thinking and to provide a space for thinking in other terms, as far as it may be possible. Van den Broeck has not attempted to follow Derrida's thinking or the play of the language into such frontiers, which is why he makes the mistake of suggesting that Derrida's calling for a reversal of traditional oppositions can be equated with a target-oriented approach. An empirical approach is an approach that reinforces dualistic conceptual thinking, which reinforces subject/object distinctions and perpetuates abstract/material distinctions that Derrida is constantly trying to break down. Derrida does more than write *différance*

with an *a;* he also recalls a middle-voiced term that is neither subject nor predicate, that has been lost or repressed in the course of history, and that eludes empirical observation. Neither Van den Broeck nor any of the translation studies scholars have, to date, seriously considered the alternative, and such a silence impoverishes their systemic observations.

In Euro-American circles, the post-Derridean discussion about translation centers around an ongoing debate about Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator." In *Resistance to Theory* (1986), Paul de Man goes so far as to say "that you are nobody unless you have written about this text" (Man, 1986:73). The first deconstructionist reading of Benjamin's essay can probably be located in Carol Jacobs' 1975 essay "The Monstrosity of Translation" in which she argues that mimetic theories, approaches which claim objectivity of knowledge, are not much help in reading Benjamin. Benjamin's concept of language, she argues, is based upon difference, and he has abandoned any belief that language refers to any objective reality. Translations, instead, are woven into a textual history that is always transforming terms, translating other translations. Benjamin's text "dislocates definitions" rather than establishing them, and for this reason, his writing is often ironic and deceptive, full of reverberations, but with an unlocatable source. She reads his essay itself less as a preface, less as a critical piece, and more as an act of translation itself – already in the paradigm of translations of translation.

In terms of Benjamin's strategy in such a (re)writing, Jacobs argues that in order to catch a glimpse of the nature of language as formed in the flux of intertextuality, we replace sentence and proposition as the fundamental unit with the word. What will result will not be natural, whole, and unified re-productions; instead the "monstrosity" of translation will rear its head. Heterogeneity emerges which "dismantles" all syntax and "dismembers" conventional, natural forms. Translation is not aimed at the reader – the concept of an ideal reader, according to Benjamin, is actually detrimental in the theoretical consideration of art. Translation "renders radically foreign that language we believe to be ours" (Jacobs, 1975: 756). Word-for-word translations are preferred to those which synthesize and unify. She quotes Benjamin as saying, "Literality thoroughly overthrows all reproduction of meaning with regard to the syntax and threatens directly to lead to incomprehensibility. In the eyes of the nineteenth century, Holderlin's translations of Sophocles were 'monstrous examples of such literality'" (Jacobs, 1975:

761). Jacobs argues that this monstrosity is exactly what Benjamin praises.

Jacobs points out that this emphasis on differentiation rather than sameness, this focusing on words rather than on things or objects, has created problems for Benjamin's English translator Harry Zohn, whose less than literal version often reflected more of his own conception of language than Benjamin's. She offers her own translation of several passages, not as a criticism of Zohn or to establish a more "correct" version, but to offer an alternative reading in the play of the space between her translation and Zohn's. For example, she suggests that Zohn's logical but less than literal rendering of the metaphor about the fragment of an amphora (cited by Derrida above p. 164) may be misleading. Zohn's desire for unity, coherence, and logical connections causes him to suggest that the simile be read as follows: as fragments of a vessel can "be *glued* together must *match* in the smallest details" to form a larger, whole vessel, so too can translations be seen as fragments of a larger language (emphasis mine, Benjamin, trans. Zohn, 1969: 78). Jacobs's alternative suggests that as fragments, as the *"broken* parts" of a vessel "in order to be *articulated* together, must *follow* one another in the smallest detail," so too does translation make recognizable the *broken part* of a greater language (italics mine, Jacobs, 1975: 762). Not tempted by the urge for a consistent, whole "text," Jacobs translates literally, word for word, and thus her rendering leaves the passage incomplete in a Western sense. She does not join the translation and original, and instead offers the translation as a *Bruchstück*, consistent with not just Benjamin's metaphor, but also with what she sees as Benjamin's "strange" or "monstrous" mode of articulation. Jacobs understands but does not judge Zohn's historical conditioned reading; her essay offers an alternative, one which has engendered a plethora of subsequent Benjamin interpretations favorable to her own.

The best example of these is no doubt Paul de Man's essay "Conclusions: Walter Benjamin's 'The Task of the Translator'", collected in *The Resistance to Theory* (1986). De Man clearly has followed Derrida's thinking as far as anyone, and has demonstrated his ability to confront the bottomless chessboard to which Derrida refers and to continue his work under such conditions. Yet whereas Derrida's reading plays affirmatively with the Benjamin text, de Man's deconstructive reading is largely couched in negative terminology and nihilism. Beginning, for example, with Hölderlin's translations from Sophocles praised so much by Benjamin for their radical alternative, de

Man quotes Benjamin as arguing that Hölderlin's translations expanded language so much that they threatened to enclose the translator in silence and that meaning threatened to become lost in the "bottomless depths of language." De Man argues that translation so conceived gets drawn into something "essentially destructive," i.e., language itself. Whereas Derrida's conception of deconstruction is generally life-giving, positive, and regenerative, de Man's conception of the deconstruction project as articulated in the "Conclusion" is largely negative:

> All these activities – critical philosophy, literary theory, history – resemble each other in the fact that they do not resemble that from which they derive. But they are all intralinguistic: they relate to what in the original belongs to language, and not to meaning as an extralinguistic correlate susceptible of paraphrase and imitation. They disarticulate, they undo the original, they reveal that the original was already disarticulated. They reveal that their failure, which seems to be due to the fact that they are secondary in relation to the original, reveals an essential failure, an essential disarticulation which was already there in the original. They kill the original, by discovering that the original was already dead. (Man, 1986: 84)

One could effectively argue that the two conceptions are the same, just as life and death in Heidegger's formulation are so intertwined that they are to all intents and purposes indistinguishable. Yet in terms of the deconstruction project as a whole, the difference is not negligible. For de Man and other Euro-American deconstructionists, deconstruction has been used to attempt to displace an older, more conventional generation of scholars and critics and to establish themselves. Their treatment is occasionally merciless, and such an attitude often gets in the way of their argument. The de Man article, for example, is cruel in its treatment of the translator Harry Zohn. Unlike Jacobs, who historicized Zohn's work and offered alternatives, de Man treats Zohn and Maurice de Gandillac, Benjamin's French translator, like little schoolboys, arguing that they "don't seem to have the slightest idea of what Benjamin is saying" (Man, 1986: 79). De Man talks about the original being "absolutely unambiguous" in places and says that the translators have trouble following Benjamin, that they do not "get it." He cites examples not only of misplaced negatives, but also of "right" and "wrong" choices. "Nachreife," for example, from Benjamin's phrase "Nachreife des fremdes Wortes," an important concept in the argument, is translated by

Zohn reasonably as "maturing process." This disturbs de Man, who feels the word carries connotations of melancholy, the feeling of exhaustion, rotten grapes, and the death of the original, which Zohn misses. Yet de Man's interpretation may have more to do with his own world view than the quality of the translation choice.

Most vivid in de Man's essay is his disparaging treatment of Zohn for his "mistranslation" of the fragments of the vessel metaphor. Comparing Jacobs's version to Zohn's, he argues that Zohn again gets it wrong, and that all you have to do, to see what Benjamin is saying, is "translate correctly, instead of translating like Zohn." De Man wants to demonstrate his understanding of metaphor and metonymy, the difference between "match" and "follow" *(gleichen* and *folgen)*, a distinction which is useful for the preface's interpretation. De Man goes on to argue that fragments that follow one another will never constitute a totality. De Man sees every work as fragmented, and translations as fragments of fragments. Like Derrida, he denies knowledge of wholeness, of an intact vessel, or of any sense of original meaning. "Meaning," he writes, "is always displaced with regard to the meaning it ideally intended – that meaning is never reached" (Man, 1986: 91). While de Man's thinking about metaphor is useful and convincing with regard to the Benjamin essay, his insistence that he understands the "meaning" of Benjamin's piece better than Zohn or de Gandillac or others recalls reading strategies employed by I. A. Richards and the New Critics. The very notion of "getting it" and certainly "getting it better" actually contradicts de Man's main thesis, which suggests that no reader, de Man included, has access to original meaning. De Man's scholarly rhetoric, thus, is inconsistent with his theoretical claims. De Man's dismissive view of other readings, his condescending tone, and the belief that his view is "correct," serve merely to reveal his own ahistorical and subjective views. "Right" and "wrong" have ceased to be productive theoretical terms for translation studies scholars as well as deconstructionists.

In terms of a post-Derrida discussion of translation theory, the contributions of the post-Enlightenment language philosophers have been more productive than those by American literary critics. The most comprehensive text out so far is Andrew Benjamin's *Translation and the Nature of Philosophy* (1989). He, too, discusses Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator," but locates the discussion in a context that ranges from Enlightenment philosophy, residues of which still effect the discourse of this age, through a very thorough discussion of what Heidegger, Freud,

and Derrida have contributed to our understanding of the nature of language in general and translation in particular. Benjamin's treatment of Heidegger, especially Heidegger's later writing about the nature of language and the problem of concealment, is particularly strong, and lays the foundation for his subsequent discussion of Derrida. While not agreeing with Derrida, Andrew Benjamin does very fairly present the possibilities of double readings, of *différance* in all its differing, delaying, and conflictual senses. Translation in a post-Derrida discussion, for Andrew Benjamin, ceases to be understood as any simple, definable single activity, but rather as a plurality of activities with a plurality of significations (A. Benjamin, 1989: 35). Andrew Benjamin's book begins with questions about the "ground" of difference, which he finds in the word "translation" itself, i.e., the term suggests both "ground" of the original and "ungrounded" difference. If there is no origin and there is nothing that is original, plurality is therefore "anoriginal." Andrew Benjamin's subsequent discussion looks at ways such anoriginality can be understood.

Andrew Benjamin does not agree with Derrida, nor with de Man, and instead finds a way out of the labyrinth via Donald Davidson. In a very useful discussion of Davidson's paper "On the Very Idea of a Conceptual Scheme" (1984), which studies translation as a way of focusing on criteria of identity for conceptual schemes, Andrew Benjamin argues that mutual understanding is "almost inescapable." A complex series of interconnected preconditions precedes the process of expressing equivalent "things" in another language. Benjamin quotes Davidson:

> The idea is then that something is a language, and associated with a conceptual scheme, whether we can translate it or not, if it stands in a certain relation predicating, organizing, facing, or fitting experience nature, reality, sensory promptings. The problem is to say what the relation is, and to be clear about the entities related. (Davidson, 1984: 191; qtd. by A. Benjamin, 1989: 65)

Davidson's approach thus mediates between the untouchable original and a movement of language that is intelligible, or at least indicates those "objects" that stand in relation to the source and target text and make communication possible. Davidson reaches back to concepts of Kantian universality that "overcome" the threat of the diversity of human languages and the questions posed by the deconstructionists. A humanistic concept of "nature" is posited that provides the ground that enables universality. "Man's rationality," argues Andrew Benjamin, "is a

consequence of nature's endowment and consequently diversity and difference can be explained and accounted for as a digression and deviation away from the way that is proper to man in virtue of his being human" (A. Benjamin, 1989: 78–9).

At this point, Andrew Benjamin discusses Walter Benjamin s "The Task of the Translator." He agrees with de Man's reading that the fragments of a broken vessel do not presuppose an initial vessel, i.e., that original language is always already displaced language, and that therefore no original language exists. He then asks, however, how are we to understand the (postulated) futural vessel and what are the conditions (the totality) that implicitly causes us to think in terms of the "belonging together" of the fragments, and thereby the "belonging together" of languages. Andrew Benjamin and other post-Enlightenment philosophers think not about the abyss, not about the pre-ontological conditions, but about the theoretical conditions that allow for interpretation and mutual understanding, which Andrew Benjamin calls ontological-temporal conditions. They seek to identify and describe the elements that allow for affirmative thinking about semantic and interpretive potential that are inherent in words; and they argue that one can think about translation without an origin to be or not to be retrieved. Meanings and interpretations emerge out of real conditions – they are actual as well as conflictual – and can be positively and empirically described. Andrew Benjamin argues, "Emergent meaning is the actualization of the potential for meaning and not the emergence out of non-meaning" (A. Benjamin, 1989:180). In contrast to de Man and Derrida, he argues that there is never pure difference, but that difference always has a specificity. Walter Benjamin, argues Andrew Benjamin, locates "after-life," sur-vival, by locating the potential for afterlife within the text itself. Words incorporate a site of conflict, a site of unending after-life, which defers an end or a definitive interpretation. Interpreting Walter Benjamin's text against the grain of fashionable deconstruction readings, Andrew Benjamin argues that in Walter Benjamin, "the possibility of a different understanding of translation and philosophy is beginning to take place" (A. Benjamin, 1989: 108).

Deconstruction and postcolonial translation

Translators experimenting with deconstructuive strategies are also widespread and accumulating (see Chapter 7 below). But nowhere has deconstruction had a larger impact upon practicing translators than in the

area of postcolonial translation. Rather that using translation as a tool to support and extend a conceptual system based upon Western philosophy and religion, postcolonial translators are seeking to reclaim translation and use it as a strategy of resistance, one that disturbs and displaces the construction of images of non-Western cultures rather than reinterpret them using traditional, normalized concepts and language. Two of the most influential scholars advocating such a use of deconstruction are Tejaswini Niranjana and Gayatri Spivak.

In her book *Siting Translation: History, Post-Structuralism, and the Colonial Context* (1992), Niranjana draws on Derrida and Benjamin to render a complex critique of translators, ethnographers, and historians in their treatment of colonial cultures. She names translation as the "site" in which the unequal relations among different cultures and languages have been most dramatically perpetuated. The uncritical and often naïve adoption of traditional concepts of translation, i.e., translation as transparent, objective, and faithful, has enabled colonial politicians and administrators to construct the "exotic" Other as eternal and unchanging. This image of the Other has not only had a dramatic impact upon the West's understanding of so-called "Third World" cultures, but also upon many emerging nations' understanding of their own cultures. Colonial power relations perpetuate and imperial social structures obtain well into the postcolonial period. Niranjana argues that translations cannot just be understood in terms of faithful/free or source-text/target-text models, but that they should instead be viewed as a two-way flow, reciprocally reinforcing and/or transforming established notions of culture and identity.

Niranjana takes issue with traditional translation scholarship, and her first chapter traces a history of translation in the West, most of which tends to be source-text oriented and presumes transparent access to that original source. For example, Niranjana criticizes theorists such as George Steiner, who in *After Babel* (1975) claims that in translation "there is, ideally, exchange without loss" (Steiner, 1975: 302). She takes issue with theorists such as Louis Kelly, who in *The True Interpreter* (1979) claims that translation is one of "dialogue," of achieving a "balance between I and thou" (Kelly, 1979: 214). In the colonial context, the translation exchange is far from balanced, for the power relations between users of different languages are not equal. By positing translation as a transparent, unbiased medium transporting something static and unchanging, such theories reinforce hegemonic versions of the colonized and efface their history.

Significantly, Niranjana's history of translation includes translation studies scholarship, and recent scholars such as Gideon Toury fare no better than the more traditional theorists do. Translation studies scholars, argues Niranjana, presume a target-text model and hold that translation has no impact upon the source text's linguistic or cultural system (Niranjana, 1992: 59–60). Quoting from Toury's essay "A Rationale for Descriptive Translation Studies" in *The Manipulation of Literature* (1985), "from the standpoint of the source text and the source system, translations have hardly any significance at all … they are in no position to affect its linguistic and textual rules and norms, its textual history, or the source text as such" (Toury, 1985:19), a claim that Toury has made in different guises repeatedly throughout his career, Niranjana suggests that the role translations have played in the subjectification of the colonized peoples has been ignored by Toury and polysystem theorists. She also argues that Toury's "empirical" approach represses the asymmetrical relations of power that inform the relations between languages.

Niranjana claims that the images constructed via translation, especially those negative stereotypes of Hindi culture – including images of lazy, less intelligent, passive peoples – have been consciously and subconsciously internalized by the Hindi population. Rather than having no impact on the source culture, Niranjana persuasively argues that the repercussions upon the Hindi psyche and character have been enormous. The intertextuality of translations, the canonical nature of certain translations that participate in the colonial practices such as education, the borrowing of European ideas and values through translations are some of the larger matters that are not included in Toury's and Lambert's models for describing translations. According to Niranjana, any translation theory that ignores such affects can be termed neither empirical nor systematic.

Niranjana's criticism of translation studies is similar to her critique of ethnography, and the two are include in the same chapter. Like translators, ethnographers and anthropologists have experienced a similar crisis in theory as they encounter similar epistemological problems. How does one write about or represent another culture in one's own language and terms without those very terms and conceptions altering that which is being represented? How does one's conceptual notions color what one sees and reports? How does one interpret certain behaviors without resorting to one's own subjective experiences?

The problem of ethnography is indeed similar to the problem of translation. Both disciplines must translate one system of belief into

another, making coherence of another way of thinking and conceiving. In this regard, Niranjana actually feels that anthropology is making more progress than translation studies. While she favorably cites translation studies scholars such as Susan Bassnett and Roman Jakobson, who clearly are aware of the intersemiotic complexities and cross-cultural factors that translators need to consider, she feels that most translation studies scholars have not gone far enough. In anthropology, however, a critique of the use of translation has begun. Scholars such as James Clifford, Clifford Geertz, Talal Asad, and Steven Tyler critique the purported transparency of translation in anthropological findings and question the tropes of translation that structure ethnographic discourse (Niranjana, 1992: 81–86). Yet for Niranjana, even these new ethnographers who are rethinking the discourse of their profession rely too heavily upon a "troping of politics into poetics" and do not go far enough into relations of power and the far-reaching effects of translations.

Instead, Niranjana turns to Derrida, Foucault, and Benjamin to explain how translations work in a two-way flow, influencing both source and target cultures, and thereby destabilizing notions of origin and telos. Beginning with Derrida, she writes, "the most profound insight Derrida's work has afforded us is the notion that origin is always already heterogeneous, that it is not some pure, unified source of meaning of history" (Niranjana, 1992: 39). With no primordial presence to be re-presented, much of Western philosophy and history, with its stable notions of truth, meaning, presence, logos, and telos, collapses. For Niranjana, Derrida's work is most important because it suggests a critique of traditional notions of translation as well. She quotes Derrida from "Sending: On Representation" (1982b) as saying that translation perhaps escapes "the orbit of representation," making it an "exemplary question" (Derrida, 1982b: 298, qtd. by Niranjana, 1992:41) and a sign of what Derrida calls dissemination. Neither translation studies scholars nor ethnographers have thought extensively about that which cannot be named, the mute twin that accompanies all thought and writing. The deconstructive strategies of double writing, of subversion from within, of puns, twists, and turns, thus become important to postcolonial translators, for in such double writing, the play of the signifier is foregrounded over that of the signified, opening a new theoretical frontier, a new way of revealing a past age or different culture without submitting to norms of representation or traditional conceptions. Derrida's practice of double writing can also help translators challenge

the practices of domination by offering alternative images and identities that are less discriminatory and more open to change and cultural evolution.

As with many Anglo-American literary theorists, Niranjana is well versed in the multiple readings of Walter Benjamin's "The Task of the Translator." Relying primarily on Derrida's interpretation in "Des tours de Babel," she critiques Paul de Man's version, finding that it refuses to engage Benjamin's concept of history, or more specifically, the writing of history. Here she draws heavily upon Benjamin's later writings such as his "Theses on the Philosophy of History" (1940). When Benjamin, for example, talks about translation as a mode of its own and whether its nature lends itself to translation, Niranjana hears his later work, suggesting that the task of the translator is similar to the task of the historian, in particular, the historian who hears the past and connects its relation to the present. While most theorists separate the earlier, Judaic, Messianic themes of Benjamin from his later Marxist writings, Niranjana juxtaposes the ideas and draws connections. For her project of postcolonial translation, in which re-translation involves a re-writing of history, such connections make sense.

For example, Benjamin writes, "It is the task of the translator to release in his own language that pure language which is under the spell of another, to liberate the language imprisoned in a work in his re-creation of the work. For the sake of pure language he breaks through decayed barriers of his own language" (Benjamin, 1969: 80). Rather than dwell on Benjamin's concept of pure language, Niranjana focuses on terms such as "release," "re-creation," "liberate," and "breaks," all of which she also sees in Benjamin's work as a historical materialist. Benjamin's manner reminds her of Derrida's use of various devices to interrupt his text and allow other etymological sources to surface. She highlights Benjamin's reference to the translation style of Rudolf Pannwitz, who advocated allowing the target language to be affected by the foreign language, valuing heterogeneity over homogeneity and the contamination of translation over the purity of the original. For Niranjana, Benjamin is clearly calling for a kind of translation that politically intervenes.

For Niranjana, translation in the postcolonial context thus calls for a kind of "citation" of the past (hence the play on the title of the book), a remembering, or in Homi Bhabha's terms from his foreword to Franz Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), a "re-membering," a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the

present (Bhabha, 1967: xxiii). This is not to say that the past can ever be made whole – the amphora, we recall from above, lies in fragments. However, among those fragments, the translator can find connections, complicities, and contradictions from which to rethink how the past has been reconstructed and begin to imagine alternatives. She writes, "The use of post-structuralism in the decolonizing world, although fraught with the anxieties and desires of representation, brings to legibility areas of contradiction, difference, and resistance" (1992: 173).

In many ways, Niranjana's theory of translation agrees with those of both Toury and Venuti. Like Toury, she argues that translation in the West tends toward the normative, toward finding acceptable solutions that Western readers can understand. Like Venuti, she advocates a "foreignizing" strategy, one that resists convention and is open to transporting difference. More influenced by deconstruction than Venuti is, however, her strategies do not merely estrange, but rather challenge from within and supplement traditional interpretations by offering new modes of re-thinking not only translation, but history, cultural evolution, and identity formation as well. For Niranjana, it is not a question of choosing the fluent or the foreign representation, but of questioning the entire problematic of representation itself. How does one represent difference without privileging the role of the Western intellectual (the translator, the ethnographer, the critic) or even the postcolonial intellectual? How can one extend the possibilities of translation and of representation while at the same time calling them into question? Here again she finds deconstruction helpful. Derrida points out that before we know "how and what to translate by 'representation,' we must interrogate the concept of translation and of language that is so often dominated by the concept of representation" (Derrida, 1982b; 302–3; qtd. by Niranjana, 1992: 169). Niranjana's translation strategy is not just aimed at jarring the reader of the translation into realizing the mediated nature of the text and multiple differences or the original, but also to use translation to illustrate the disunities and constructed nature of the original, whose coherence has been constituted by an operation of history and the colonial project. To deconstruct such essentializing discourse becomes a disruption of history in a late Benjaminian sense, and a disruption of metaphysical philosophical concepts in a Derridean sense.

In discussions of postcolonial translation, scholars have taken issue with Niranjana for a variety of reasons. In *Translation and Empire* (1997b), Douglas Robinson suggests that her translation strategies are

confusing to the practical translator and may, in fact, not disrupt enough. Robinson then retranslates a passage from a twelfth-century South Indian text cited by Niranjana and offers versions utilizing foreignizing strategies even more aggressive than Niranjana's own. In "A.K. Ramanujan's Theory and Practice of Translation" (1999), Vinay Dharwadker regrets Niranjana's unfair critique of the distinguished translator A.K. Ramanunjan, also a translator of the same South Indian text. Dharwadker cites evidence that Ramanujan used a different version of the source text than the one Niranjana suggested, suggesting that Niranjana manipulated the evidence, and that Ramanujan used a different translation strategy than the Benjaminian one advocated by Niranjana. Dharwadker's criticism, articulated by both the tone and content of the essay, is representative of a growing number of Indian scholars who express dissatisfaction with Niranjana's work. The main issue seems to be a resistance to a new kind of Western colonialization, i.e., scholars educated in the West applying complex deconstrutive strategies to translators from India without really understanding the traditions and forms of the source culture, nor the strategies that translators have used to convey those forms and ideas. Dharwadker suggests that while Benjamin's theories of translation may work for European texts, they are largely incompatible with classical Tamil or Kannada. The deconstructionists push the theoretical and ideological factors, Dharwadker argues, to the point that important poetic and cultural elements get lost (1999: 128).

Nevertheless, despite its flaws, Niranjana's theory effectively shows how interconnected the discipline of translation studies is with other disciplines such as history and philosophy. For any systematic theory attempting to show the role translation plays in the evolution of history, and/or the reciprocal influence translated texts exert upon both source and target cultures, Niranjana's work provides many insights. Her main problem, and the problem that has haunted postcolonial theory in general, is that if present versions of translation are inaccurate, i.e., if they erase difference by conforming to images and ideas prevalent in the West, how is the translator to produce a more accurate version? Do deconstructive strategies dis-lodge or dis-turn normative associations in a productive or destructive fashion? To what extent can they be applied? Who decides or with what tools does one evaluate postcolonial translation? How does one recover that which has been erased or covered-up? How does one go about rewriting texts without falling into

the same epistemological binds of truth, presence, and authority that constrain present versions?

Perhaps the scholar who has contributed most to finding a way out of those epistemological binds has been Gayatri Spivak, translator of both Derrida's *Of Grammatology* (1974) and several short stories by the Bengali tribal writer Mahasweta Devi, published as *Imaginary Maps* (1995). Spivak, with most postcolonial critics, is aware that the postcolonial subject already lives in translation, i.e., that the history, politics, art, and literature of indigenous cultures have been so skewed by the language and institutions of the colonizing power that their own identities have been subsumed in another's history. Spivak argues that postcolonial scholarship and translation can combine to undo what she calls a "massive historical metalepsis" (1993: 286) and can re-situate the colonial subject by showing the effect of Western discourse upon their understanding of themselves. Such a project makes heavy use of deconstruction, using Foucault's concept of counter-memory and Derrida's concept of affirmative deconstruction.

Spivak's work continually raises questions regarding whose interests are represented in research and scholarship about the so-called "third world." In her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?" (1988), for example, she asks the question whether or not it is even possible for the subaltern to speak for themselves in light of the colonization processes they have undergone, and especially in light of generations of intellectuals reporting what minorities say, as if they, the intellectuals, were a transparent medium. Nowhere is this more apparent than in translation: the image of the Indian peasant (as well as African tribal, Native American, and so forth) as projected via translation has in turn been reproduced within Indian culture and impacts on identity formation in that country. In her essay, Spivak considers the margins of society – the illiterate peasants, the tribals, the lowest level of urban subproletariate, and the untouchables – and discusses the findings of the subaltern studies group headed by Ranagit Guha in the 1980s in India and their search for the "subaltern consciousness" (Guha, 1983, 1999; Spivak, 1988: 284).

Her answer, while not completely encouraging, is that the Western scholar/translator can partially access the subaltern condition, not through what is specifically said by either the subaltern group or by the intellectuals /translators representing them, but by reading that which is not said – reading the gaps, the silences, and the contradictions symptomatically. Spivak's project is clearly influenced by Foucault's work with counter-memory and Derrida's use of deconstruction to read

the *non-dit*, the silences of and given text, and bears a resemblance to Venuti's concept of reading the "remainder" – that which is left-over or exceeds transparent use of language (Venuti, 1995: 216). Foucault's work on counter-memory suggests that another history exists that accompanies Western versions and versions by dominant indigenous groups, but one which has for all intents and purposes been silenced. Deconstruction, Spivak argues, is useful in order to analyze and measure such silences and to intervene. In order for the subaltern to speak, Spivak suggests that it is necessary to *unlearn* in order to allow the mute to speak. There is also a Marxist impulse underlying her strategy; unlike Derrida's deconstruction, which dismantles texts and opens the way for random connections and unlimited semiosis, Spivak's deconstruction moves toward affirmative production. The attempt is less an uncovering the "true" or "essential" or "original" subaltern consciousness, which she would argue is impossible, and more a coming to an understanding of the *effects* of colonization on the subaltern consciousness in *specific* historical situations, an approach she calls "strategic use of positive essentialism" (Spivak, 1993: 286). Rather than using translation to access some sort of "original" text of subject, translators might aim at access to the developing subject in specific situations; if that subject is "subaltern," then the location of that subject is always already within a textual record, implicated in a web of discursive and linguistic codes of the colonizer.

Spivak's translation of three stories by Mahasweta Devi collected in *Imaginary Maps* (1995) illustrates her translation theory as well as connects translation to her feminist, postcolonial work. Spivak uses her knowledge of Indian and Bengali culture to help Western readers "imagine" (hence the title) not an abstract, politically correct "Other," but real cultural difference in its specific forms. Spivak refuses to make claims for any meta-fictional construction of the indigenous Indian life. She does this by providing, in addition to the translated stories, contextual information in the form of a translator's preface, an interview with the author, and an afterword. The interview not only allows the author to speak, but also positions the translator as involved in the mediation to follow. Marking one's position as a translator, as a mediating subject, is a very important part of postcolonial translation, as noted by Niranjana above regarding the new ethnographic strategies. Spivak's technique of including prefatory material and historical background – supplementary material in a Derridean sense – with the

translated text is increasingly becoming an important technique used by postcolonial translators.

The translations themselves continue the strategies outlined in the preface, relating Devi's stories about tribal situations and calling attention to specific women with distinct problems. In Spivak's translations, there is no exotization of the characters – work, play, rich, poor, love, sexism, family structures, old rituals, and resistance are all depicted as part of their everyday life. The specificity of Spivak's translation strategy thus also participates in her politics, showing how translation studies can and does participate in theoretical debates in other fields such as feminism, ethnic studies, and cultural studies. For example, in an earlier essay, "The Politics of Translation" (1993), Spivak was particularly damning of Western feminist translation and feminist analysis of writing by "Third World" women: according to Western feminists, Spivak claims, all writing by Third World writers sounds the same. Women writers from India end up sounding like men writers from Taipei. It is not enough, she argues, to have a progressive political commitment; attention must also be paid to the forms, the language, and the specific contexts of texts.

Translation, thus, becomes a key component of Spivak's theory, for it lends her project the specificity lacking in many Western discussions of postcolonial texts. The demands made on the translator as mediator are correspondingly high: the translator must be familiar with the "history of the language, the history of the author's moment, the history of the language-in-translation" (1993: 186). Spivak also asks that the translator have graduated into speaking of "intimate matters in the language in the original." (1993: 187). Such requirements are not new for the translation studies scholar; in 1975, for example, André Lefevere in *Translating Poetry: Seven Strategies and a Blueprint* argued that the translator not only has to be fluent in the language, but also must grasp the time, place, and tradition of the source text, rendering all elements in the target culture language, time, place, and tradition (1975: 99ff.; see Chapter 4 above). Many rigorous translation-training programs are equally demanding. But for cultural studies scholars, who have generally not engaged translation studies, many of whom are not fluent in foreign languages, these ideas may seem either new or overwhelming.

While Spivak uses "foreignizing" translation strategies that closely resemble Venuti's in terms of politics and method, Spivak remains far more hesitant to draw conclusions in terms of the politics of her translations. Rather, she suggests that her translations are a *first step* in

what she calls attentive mind-changing (cf. Spivak 1995:197ff.). For example, her heroine Mary in the story "The Hunt" is not representative of the collective, but a single individual in a particular situation who chooses a specific ritual to stage her resistance in her own way. Spivak suggests that the task of the translator is not to re-describe and then re-inscribe again power relations, but instead to measure cultural differences in specific cultural historical situations. She uses poststructuralist strategies selectively to measure (often against what is not represented in the text as well as what is) and stage those differences, the effect of the colonization on the subject within history. The language she prefers is distinctly unliterary, stark, and angular (cf. Simon, 1996: 146), incorporating Brechtian defamiliarization devices. For example, in the title of one story, Spivak chooses "The Breast-Giver" instead of the more familiar "Wet-Nurse" used by previous translators, a strategy met with approval by Devi. Further, Spivak uses North American rather than British English in her translations which serves both to alienate the British-English educated Indian reader and to interrupt the smooth flow of the English.

While some scholars have criticized her choices that have defied convention and in instances added a sense of purpose that may be more Spivak's own than Devi's (Mukherjee, 1991: 30–31), much of Spivak's translation work is in fact *less* abusive to source or target cultures than versions that add softened, exoticized Western literary-like phrases. Spivak uses traditional devices of translation and representation as well as less than traditional devices to operate from the inside as a translator to open up new ways of thinking about translation as well as about Indian tribal women. The choice of the stories, the characterizations presented, the literary devices incorporated all have structural analogies to Western devices, and yet are different. The actions of the characters, while having similarities to Western behavior, cannot be easily subsumed. The style is simultaneously fluent and non-fluent, marking and remarking as it goes. Spivak as translator is self-effacing and ever-present simultaneously. The differences are enough to allow the text to escape its formulaic appropriation. The decostructive devices arrest easy consumption and continually point to the mediated nature of the communication as well as to Spivak's political agenda.

In terms of theory, thus, Spivak accomplishes a kind of double-writing in her translation, critiquing Western metaphysical, humanist thinking and at the same time creating openings to imagine real cultural differences at work. She also unveils the highly polyvalent and

multicultural conditions that characterize the "original" culture. And she is well aware of the impact her translations have upon the source culture; subsequent to Spivak's translations, Devi has moved from being a marginal writer to a well known national as well as international figure. Both Spivak's translation work as well as her theoretical writing are meant to intervene and transform. Her translations of Devi thus supplement her work on Derrida, whose work she perhaps finds insufficient to address specific political situations such as those of the Indian tribal. And her writings about Derrida supplement her translation work, raising questions about representation, meaning, and translatability of "original" cultures and texts. Both are aimed at providing an opening for new ways of conceiving and responding.

The possibility of a different understanding of both the original and the translated text in a post-deconstruction world will be the subject of the final chapter. In contrast to translation studies scholars who have attempted to dismiss deconstruction, I suggest that its incorporation into models for translation in Latin American and other developing cultures merits serious attention by translation studies scholars. And in contrast to those scholars who do engage with the ideas of deconstruction, such as Van den Broeck, I suggest that translation studies not try to subsume post-structural theories of translation under some target-oriented theory. Instead, I argue that translation studies is already equipped to begin a study of writing about the differing and deferring "spaces" – of *différance* in action – and the theory needs to catch up to the possibilities of the methodology. Some scholars in translation studies seem to be on the threshold of making such a move, and the theoretical repercussions may be far-reaching.

Chapter 7
The Future of Translation Studies

If, as Ted Hughes argued, the sixties were a period that experienced a boom in literary translation, the nineties might be characterized as a period that experienced a boom in translation theory. This book has traced five approaches – North American translation workshop, translation science, early translation studies, polysystem theory, and deconstruction – that might be considered pioneering for the field. Today an argument can be made that a variety of academic and socio-political events occurring internationally have made conditions ripe for a "translation turn" in several fields simultaneously, including linguistics, anthropology, psychology, women's studies, cultural studies, and postcolonial studies. Additionally, translation of recent has enjoyed a renaissance in many parts of the world not included in the above chapters, such as Spain, Italy, Canada, Brazil, China, and especially in those nations in which borders have been opened, including countries in central and eastern Europe. In this age of globalization, "lesser known languages" are particularly threatened, and translation and the study of translation become of increasing importance. New studies on translation in smaller countries and new nations continue to inform theory; I suggest that we are just scratching the surface and that in the coming years more studies from a variety of perspectives, cultures, and languages will emerge.

During the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s, as the various approaches covered in this book were developing, there was little dialogue among the representatives of the differing theoretical camps. Scholars worked primarily in isolation, and the "newness" of the respective theories threatened existing models of investigations. The breaches between linguistic and literary investigations of translation are well known, as are the gaps between deconstruction and any scientific approach. James Holmes, for example, who taught in Holland but was born in Iowa, returned frequently to his home and would visit the International Writing Program at the University of Iowa. In 1975, he presented the paper "Describing Literary Translations: Models and Methods" at Iowa, which was well attended but not really understood, because at that time, the discourse and methods Holmes was using to describe translations differed greatly from the language and approaches used in Iowa. Derrida

lectured worldwide during this period, including in Canada, Latin America, and the United States. Often his primary topic was translation; yet his ideas were so threatening to emerging disciplines studying translation, all of which depend minimally upon the possibility of translation and certain definable borders between languages, that his work was largely ignored.

However, a hopeful process for closing internal divides and inviting more dialogue between the differing camps has already begun. In the United States, scholars have been increasingly receptive to considering new theoretical models. Daniel Weissbort, editor of *Modern Poetry in Translation* (renamed *Poetry World)*, a journal traditionally devoted to publishing literary translations and translation problems, added Romy Heylen, author of *Translations, Poetics, and the Stage: Six French Hamlets* (1993), a scholar much influenced by translation studies in the Low Countries, to the editorial board to incorporate a theoretical component into the journal. Rainer Schulte, editor of *Translation Review*, a journal devoted to publishing literary translations and translation reviews, turned to theory in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Schulte and John Biguenet have now edited two important collections: the first, *The Craft of Translation* (1989), focuses on the hermeneutic reading and translation process, and includes contributions by practicing literary translators such as Gregory Rabassa, Edmund Keeley, John Felsteiner, and Christopher Middleton; the second, *Theories of Translation: An Anthology of Essays from Dryden to Derrida* (1992), gives an overview of the history of translation theory and is especially strong on the twentieth century, including essays by Friedrich Nietzsche, Walter Benjamin, Ezra Pound, Vladimir Nabokov, Roman Jakobson, and Octavio Paz.

Marilyn Gaddis Rose, Director of the Center for Research in Translation (CRIT) at the State University of New York at Binghamton, focused on cultural studies and translation in founding the Translation Theory Institute. Two of the first visitors to Binghamton were André Lefevere and Lawrence Venuti. Results of the investigations at SUNY Binghamton have been collected in several volumes of *Translation Perspectives*, which moved from titles such as *Hermeneutics and the Poetic Motion* (1990) to titles such as *Translating Latin America* (1991), *Translation: Religion, Ideology, Politics* (1995), and, most recently, *Beyond the Western Tradition* (2000). Rose has contributed discussions of postmodern translation theory with essays such as “Translation and *Le Différand:* The Relation of Lyotard’s Epistemology to Translations”

(1990) and *"Angoisse, Jouissance*, and *Volupté*: Levinas and Translation Theory" (1995).

Even the position of the "atheoretical" American literary translator has been theorized by scholars such as Douglas Robinson, who in *The Translator's Turn* (1991) argues that the literary translator embodies an integration of feeling and thought, of intuition and systematization. In analyzing the "turn" that the translator takes from the source text to the target text, Robinson offers a "dialogical" model, one that analyzes the translator's dialogical engagement with the source language/original and with the ethics of the target language/receptor. Robinson allows for the translator to intervene, subvert, divert, and even entertain, emphasizing the creative aspect of literary translation. The linguists, translation scientists, and philosophers have had their chance at translation theory; now it is time, he argues, for the literary translators to have their "turn." Robinson has gone on to author several books, expanding upon his dialogical model in *Translation and Taboo* (1996), engaging contemporary theorists in *What is Translation: Centrifugal Theories, Critical Interventions* (1997c), reviewing the history of translation theory in *Western Translation Theory from Herodotus to Nietzsche* (1997d), summarizing postcolonial theories in *Translation and Empire: Postcolonial Theories Explained* (1997b), while never losing sight of how advances in theory can help the practicing translator, as applied in *Becoming a Translator* (1997a). While translation theorists sometimes have difficulty categorizing Robinson's work, his provocative questions push theorists, and his continual checking of theory against practice has made him popular among practicing translators in organizations such as the American Translators Association (ATA).

The investigations of Robinson and other practicing translators are in turn starting to be heard by the translation "scientists." Perhaps the most encouraging dialogue among translation scholars is taking place between those who favor linguistic approaches and those who favor literary approaches. In addition to new developments in text typology and functional linguistics, as covered in Chapter 3 above, new developments in sociolinguistics, pragmatics, psycholinguistics, and discourse theory are being observed carefully by translation theorists for new insights. Sociolinguistic scholars, for example, are increasingly looking at questions of register and dialect, analyzing the relationship of language to social roles and the impact of status and power on the communication situation. Social class, ethnic origin, gender, age, regional origin and professional status are included in variations being observed. As Peter

Fawcett reports in *Translation and Language: Linguistic Theories Explained* (1997), sociolinguistic scholarship includes both the analysis of texts in translation as well as in films (Fawcett, 1997: 119ff). Pragmatic scholars are building upon speech act theory (Austin, 1962; Searle, 1975) by looking at both the information being communicated and the performance of that communication. Questions are being raised as to whether different cultures have the same speech acts to different degrees (politeness, cursing, indirection, judging) and to what degree translators should deviate from the literal in order to communicate the performative (Searle, 1975: 76ff.; Hatim & Mason, 1990: 61ff.).

Psycholinguistic scholars such as Ernst-August Gutt have derived an approach called relevance theory, also called the minimax theory, which is based on the principle that speakers use the minimum amount of effort to communicate the maximum amount of information. In *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context* (1991), Gutt encourages translators to use this principle when translating, allowing the translator to make changes in order to maximize the relevance of the communication for the intended audience (1991: 99ff.). Gutt's theory challenges traditional definitions of translation, especially those based upon the transmission of the same or equivalent message, redefining linguistic definitions of the structure of the original. Scholars of discourse theory (Hatim and Mason, 1990; 1997) have been looking at the institutional-communicative framework within which translations occur and the translators' awareness of the available conventions that facilitate optimal translations. More recent work has focused on political, academic, and industrial discourse in which meaning is shaded in order to comply with target culture socio-political ends. Joyce Crick's (1989) analysis of translations of Freud's work into English, for example, in which translators such as James Strachey replaced a more humanistic perspective with a more clinical-medical way of writing serves as one example, remind the reader of Lawrence Venuti's symptomatic reading of Freud's translators laid out in *The Translator's Invisibility* (1995: 25-9; see Chapter 2 above). These moves by linguistic scholars to consider broader areas of performance and reception is of increasing interest to translation theorists. Mary Snell-Hornby, as mentioned above, no longer defines translation as an activity that takes place between two languages, but views it as an interaction between two cultures. She understands culture as not just the "arts," but in a broader anthropological sense, as referring to all socially conditioned aspects of human life (Snell-Hornby,

1988: 39), a perspective that broadens the parameters normally considered by translation theorists, prescriptive or otherwise.

After a decade focused primarily upon the descriptive branch in translation studies and polysystem theory, theory, too, seems on the return. In 1989, Lambert and Toury established a journal *Target* to provide a platform for discussion of theoretical, methodological, and descriptive ideas, and they have been publishing work by translation theorists and scholars from the Low Countries, Germany, Austria, England, Finland, Israel, Canada, and the United States. While very little from the developing world has appeared in *Target* during the 1990s, the journal's editors have managed to initiate a dialogue between systems theorists and functionalists, between target-text models and transfer-text models. This dialogue has led to breaking down internal barriers in the field. For example, Mary Snell-Hornby, wrote disparagingly of the polysystem approach in *Translation Studies: An Integrated Approach* (1988), dubbing it for better or worse "the Manipulation School" and accusing the group of dogmatism – scholars preoccupied by their own descriptive method and producing merely elitist exercises in literary history (1988:25-6). In her revised edition (1995) of the same book, she omitted the offending paragraph, and in a new conclusion she welcomes the scholarship produced by the group, suggesting the potential foreseen by the group has indeed been fulfilled.

The *Target* editors also exchanged ideas with the short-lived but prolific research group in Göttingen, Germany, who primarily looked at translations from American literature into German, and shared many of the beliefs regarding literary translation with North American scholars and researchers. Directed by Armin Paul Frank, the Göttingen Center for the Cooperative Study of Literary Translation, founded in 1985, published a series of volumes in the *Göttinger Beiträge zur internationalen Übersetzungsforschung*. Although the Göttingen approach is pair-bound and one-directional from America into Germany, as scholars accumulated data and published their findings, they provided translation studies scholars with a wealth of valuable information that is still in need of processing. Theoretically, the Göttingen group started with definitions as laid out in Theo Hermans's *Manipulation of Literature* (1985) and then undertook a revaluation of certain assumptions, especially those regarding the interaction of systems and subsystems, and the hierarchical nature of the polysystem. The German group arrived at a theory of translation that is transfer-oriented rather than target-oriented (Frank, 1990: 54), but not without many exchanges

of ideas with Toury, Lambert, and their colleagues. Perhaps more allied with the North American literary approach, the German group made more allowances for each translator's individual and often creative choices regarding stylistic devices; their findings suggest that the evolution of a literary system may be more irregular than polysystem theorists hypothesized. Epistemological questions are raised by the Göttingen group's claim that the translation of literature means the translation of a literary work's interpretation, one that is subject to the literary traditions in the target culture. Literary translation, according to the German group, is a part of a country's literary language and cultural heritage. Like Snell-Hornby, he too calls for an integrated theory of translation, one that is not derivative or speculative, but one "in the spirit of René Wellek and Austin Warren's *Theory of Literature"* (Frank, 1990: 55).

The dialogue among scholars within translation studies has lead to an increasing exchange of ideas with scholars from other fields of study. Pioneering this effort has been José Lambert, who has been reworking polysystem theory to focus on more global structures, and Susan Bassnett, who has been open to combining translation studies resources with scholars from cultural studies and other fields. During the eighties, José Lambert expanded the field of investigation to include many aspects of translational phenomena not normally associated with interlingual translation and raised many questions about the nature and definitions of generic categories. As noted earlier, Lambert's descriptive research during the eighties made him more aware of the cultural complexities involved in defining and describing translations, which in turn served to re-emphasize the need for systematic research. Yet his observations and initial conclusions are so far-reaching that one cannot classify them any longer as part of an applied or descriptive branch. In a co-authored article called "Translation" (forthcoming) to be published in the encyclopedia *Semiotics: A Handbook on the Sign-Theoretic Foundations of Nature and Culture*, Lambert and Clem Robyns argue that no translation can be treated in isolation. Rather, translations are both the result of and the starting point from which to view semiotic processes at work in the formation of discursive practices. Translations, they argue, take place over a variety of systemic borders, not just between two languages. Closer to a Joycean position than he may dare admit, Lambert now also argues that every text, every word, contains "translated" elements. Translated texts may also contain many discursive elements that are *not* translated, and the category "non-translation" is becoming

increasingly prominent in his descriptive work. Lambert sees the future of translation studies as both a target-oriented empirical science and a transfer-oriented semiotic practice.

Lambert and Robyns thus make the traditional opposition between form and meaning superfluous – any interpretation of the sign via translation becomes itself just another sign in the same evolving chain. Lambert and Robyns invoke Charles Sanders Peirce's concept of "final logical interpretant" to mediate between their target-oriented approach and a semiotic approach. Peirce's process of interpretation can actually halt the semiotic flux at a certain point for the interpretation of a specific sign, i.e., the final logical interpretant, which, in this case, is the translated text (see Gorlée, 1989, 1993). This allows, for pragmatic reasons, not only for a target-text analysis, the cornerstone of Toury's theory, but also causes the source text to dissolve into a variety of sources, codes, and discourses. Lambert and Robyns thus view translation less as an interlinguistic process and more as an intracultural activity. They also cite Umberto Eco, who views translation as identical to culture (Eco, 1976: 71; see also Eco, 1993; 1995), conceived less as a static phenomenon and instead as the endless translation of signs into other signs. Translation gets redefined by Lambert and Robyns as the "migration-through-transformation of discursive elements (signs)" and as the "process during which they are interpreted (re-contextualized) according to different codes" (Lambert and Robyns, forthcoming). Translations thus take place not only between fixed languages and national literatures, but also between any sort of competing or varying discourses. Given such an intersemiotic approach, it should come as no surprise that Lambert's recent research has been in media studies and mass communication (Lambert, 1994; 1995; Lambert & Delabastita, 1996; see also Hermans, 1999: 120-24).

The implications of such a claim for translation studies, comparative literature, or for any single language department are far-reaching. First it tends to explode the concept of national literature as a useful distinction; secondly, it breaks down distinctions between written and other discursive practices; and finally it opens up the possibility of exploring non-Western discursive practices. Susan Bassnett has arrived at a similar cultural studies/intersemiotic approach. Working frequently together with André Lefevere, Bassnett was frustrated that the analysis of "shifts" was becoming so complicated that readers could no longer follow the explanations. Lefevere and Bassnett wanted to explain the shifts not just by the poetics, but by looking at the images and ideology represented as

well. In the "Introduction: Proust's Grandmother and the Thousand and One Nights; the 'Cultural Turn' in Translation Studies" to their co-edited anthology *Translation, History and Culture* (1990), they suggest that scholars use terms such as "patronage," "refraction," and "ideology" in order "to go into the vagaries and vicissitudes of the exercise of power in a society, and what the exercise of power means in terms of the production of culture, of which the production of translations is a part" (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990: 5). Lefevere and Bassnett argue that translation studies scholars have to deal not only with texts and/or repertories of texts in historical paradigms, but also need to look at those institutions that influence their production. They argue that "the student of translation/rewriting is not engaged in an ever-lengthening and ever more complex dance around the 'always already no longer there,'" but that the student "deals with hard, falsifiable cultural data, and the way they affect people's lives" (Bassnett & Lefevere, 1990: 12).

This focus on the issues of power in society and the role translations play in cultural and identity formation will be of increasing importance to the future of translation studies. In the introduction to their co-authored *Constructing Cultures* (1998), Bassnett and Lefevere indicate just how far translation studies has evolved since the 1970s. Translators, they suggest, have always provided a vital link enabling different cultures to interact. The next logical step is to not just to study translation but to study cultural interactions, hence the omission of "translation" from the title of the book. Perhaps the most obvious, comprehensive data for studying cultural interaction are the translated documents themselves. Bassnett and Lefevere also suggest new critical tools with which to study translations, such as the concept of "textual grids" derived from the work of Pierre Bourdieu. A textual grid is understood as the collection of acceptable literary forms and genres in which texts are expressed, causing patterns of expectations in respective audiences which need to be taken into consideration by both practicing translators and theorists. Questions that Lefevere and Bassnett ask include why are certain texts translated and others not? What is the agenda behind translation? How are translators used by those in control of such agendas? Can we predict how a translation might function in a given culture? Areas for future research, according to Bassnett and Lefevere, include the study of history to revitalize the present, the study of postcolonial translation to re-evaluate Eurocentric models, and the study of different kinds of criticism, anthologies, and reference works, as well as translations, to see how images of texts are created and function within any give culture.

In the final essay of the collection "The Translation Turn in Cultural Studies," Susan Bassnett announces a new era of interdisciplinary research. Translation studies scholarship over the last three decades has built up a critical mass of scholarship, data that any cultural studies scholars investigating intercultural movement should consult. Bassnett argues that translations are the performative aspect of intercultural communication. Using models developed by Anthony Easthope in "But what *is* Cultural Studies?" (1997), she traces a parallel development of both cultural studies and translation studies, both going through a culturalist phase (Nida and Newmark), a structuralist phase (Even-Zohar and Toury), a post-structuralist phase (Derrida and Niranjana). As cultural studies enters a new internationalist phase, incorporating sociological and ethnographical methods, Bassnett suggests that the moment has come for the two disciplines to jump off their parallel tracks and join forces. While cultural studies scholars have embraced race, gender, film, and media studies, they have been slow to recognize translation studies research. Translation studies has taken the cultural turn; now cultural studies, Bassnett argues, needs to take the translation turn.

Such a reassessment of boundaries and interdisciplinary investigations can only be positive, not only for Western theorists, but also for writers and translators of non-Western origin. The future of translation studies will no doubt involve an increase in scholarship on postcolonial cultures, a trend that has already started. In addition to work by scholars such as Tejaswini Niranjana and Gayatri Spivak, discussed in the previous chapter, postcolonial scholars such as Samia Mehrez, Vicente Rafael, and Haroldo de Campos have begun rethinking the role of translation in processes of Western imperialism. Translation studies scholars such as Barbara Godard, Sherry Simon, and Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood from Canada have been exploring the double colonization of Quebec women, i.e., by a Western patriarchal discourse as well as by the standard French language. These explorations are the among the most exciting for the field and will have an enormous impact upon future studies.

In "Translation and the Postcolonial Experience: The Francophone North African Text" (1992), Samia Mehrez looks at the plurilingual nature of certain francophone North African texts, and shows how Arabic, French, Berber, and occasionally Spanish continuously interact in a process of rewriting that extends beyond the limits of translation. In her analysis of texts by novelists such as the Assia Djebar, Abdelwahab

Meddeb, Tahar Ben Jelloun, and Abdelkebir Khatibi, she shows that much of the intended meaning, especially the subversive nature of the prose, is only decipherable by the bilingual reader, who automatically translates in the act of reading the French. What was previously considered a constraint of translation has been transformed into a creative opportunity. These North African writers, argues Mehrez, transform plurilingualism and translation into radical elements that defy compartmentalization and pre-existing hierarchies by constantly moving and migrating from one sign system to another. Such a theory of translation shows how translation inheres as much in "original" writing as in its translation, deconstructing notions that the world can be read through any single language, no matter how dominant.

In *Contracting Colonialism: Translation and Christian Conversion in Tagalog Society under Early Spanish Rule* (1988; 1993/6), Vicente Rafael talks about translation in terms of choices that affirm or evade the social order (1988: 210-11). Rafael reconstructs the power networks involved in Philippine culture from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, exposing forces of coercion, complicity, violence, and idealism in the Spanish process of colonization, yet at the same time pointing to elements that "remained eccentric to and excessive of those binary relations" (1988: ix-xi).

In *The Poetics of Imperialism: Translation and Colonization from The Tempest to Tarzan* (1991/1997), Eric Cheyfitz looks at the poetics, the eloquence, and the so-called "superior" languages of the English colonizer in the Americas, embodied in the attitudes of the readers of texts ranging from Shakespeare to Edgar Rice Burroughs. Yet he also illustrates how the colonized groups, primarily native Americans and slaves, through a different kind of eloquence – in their songs and chants in the fields as well as through their ironic use of the colonizer's language – resisted the tropes of the colonizer and created avenues of communication that often escaped the view of the colonizer. Cheyfitz has an extended chapter analyzing the Tupi Indians of Brazil and the their practice of cannibalization, a ritual deemed savage and barbaric by the Portuguese and French colonizers, but one with a noble, heroic, and religious significance to the Tupis.

Brazilian translation scholars have also seized upon this Tupi practice to formulate a theory of translation as a form of "anthropophagy" or "cannibalism" (see Vieira, 1999). Brazilian poets and translators Haroldo and Augusto de Campos, translators of Pound's *Cantos*, Joyce's *Finnegans Wake*, as well as work by e.e. cummings, Stéphane Mallarmé,

and Vladimir Mayakóvski, use Derrida to develop a postmodern, non-Eurocentric approach to translation. The de Campos brothers view translation as a form of transgression and develop a new set of terms, including transcreation, transtextualization, transillumination, transluciferation, and cannibalization, with which to articulate their theory of translation (de Campos, 1981). Cannibalism is to be understood not in the Western sense of capturing, dismembering, mutilating, and devouring, but in a sense which shows respect, a symbolic act of taking back out of love, of absorbing the virtues of a body through a transfusion of blood. Translation as an empowering act, a nourishing act, an act of affirmative play comes very close to the Benjamin/Derrida position, which sees translation as a life-force that ensures a literary text's survival.

For example, the de Campos brothers are great admirers of Ezra Pound, arguing that his invention of Cathay was just such a form of cannibalism, inspired by love and reverence for a foreign culture. As early as 1952, the de Campos brothers founded the Grupo *Noigrandres* with a journal under the same name, leading a Brazilian movement in contemporary French and Anglo-American experimental verse and theory. *"Noigrandres"* is coined from Pound's Canto XX, in which Pound is struggling to decipher one Provencal term, "Noigandres, eh *noi* gandres / Now what the DEFFIL can that mean!" (Pound, 1975:90). By 1953, the two had established a correspondence with Pound, and began meeting with a group of painters and sculptors in São Paulo (de Campos, Pignattari, and de Campos, 1965:177). Ironically, Pound's literary theory and its relation to sculpture and painting was better known in Brazil at the time than it was in America. Translation according to the de Campos, involves not just the translation of the linguistic signs or the semantic meaning, but includes the sign in all its corporeality, including sounds, visual images, and connotations (Vieira, 1999: 105). By avoiding traditional notions of faithful/free, the de Campos brothers' theory of translation does away with a sense of loss to participate in a positive act of affirmation, of pleasure, and of joy.

In a similar vein, a group of feminist translators in Quebec have been using translation to get beyond the traditional dichotomies of source/target, primary/secondary, high/low, writing/rewriting, colonizer/colonized that characterize translation theory historically. Such distinctions, together with past theories of writing, art, and society, have implied the subordination of women. The question becomes how to get beyond the problem of dualistic, either/or thinking, in order to explore

the in between space that includes both the same and the other. For Quebec writers such as Nicole Brossard, author of novels such as *Mauve Desert* (1990) and *Picture Theory* (1991) translation serves as a metaphor for writing that frees, transforms, and multiplies rather than possesses, controls, and defines. The very theme of *Mauve Desert* concerns translation: in the first section, Brossard tells a fairly traditional tale of two women in an Arizona desert, their encounter with an anonymous man, and a murder; the second section then introduces a translator who, having discovered the first story in a bookstore, keeps a notebook on translation tracking her responses to the original; the final section, entitled *Mauve, the Horizon*, is a "translation" – a rewriting of the first section simulating its translation into another language. While the fictional translation is quite literal – the transgressions are done in the second notebook section – Brossard encourages her English translator Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood to intervene and go beyond the original to multiply the ideas contained within. The task might be described as making the Quebec feminine voice visible in a second language. Indeed, the translation activity is not seen as secondary and derivative, but as a primary activity – translation as co-authorship – and important to articulating the Quebec feminist position, one that resists its absorption into, standard (read patriarchal) English and French, and contributes to increasing self-awareness.

According to Susanne de Lotbiniére-Harwood, translation of Quebec feminist texts cannot be done behind the scenes; translation needs to be performed in a fashion that makes visible the out-of-sight space between the source and target texts. In her book *Re-belle et infidèl: La Traduction comme pratique de réécriture au féminine/The body bilingual: translation as a rewriting in the feminine* (1991), Lotbinière-Harwood suggests that the voice of the translator can be seen in the translation, and the act of translation productively works as a supplement to the metaphors of the original. Translators of texts such as Brossard's should be encouraged to be highly inventive in their translation, to run with the language, to play with the typography, to disrupt the syntax, in order to allow that fertile, hybrid, in-between space to surface. The theory is not just one of foreignizing translation, but is an attempt to articulate a new idea regarding translation. Just as Hélène Cixous and other French feminists coined the term *écriture féminine* to refer to a new kind of feminist writing in France, so too have the Québécois women coined a new term *réécriture au féminine* (rewriting in the feminine) to refer to writing/translation that extend beyond the bounds of binary oppositions.

If every feminist is already a translator (translating the feminine into masculine), the activity of translation performs a double translation, or translation squared. Lotbinière-Harwood talks about translation as a quadrophonic site: "you are in a room with four speakers voicing. one in English one in French one in the masculine one *au féminin*. sometimes this room seeps onto the printed page and bleeds. a quadrophonic site" (1991:79). For Quebec women, translation is viewed as a site to enlarge the mute semantic spaces shared by others whose voices have been covered up by the dominant language/discourse/cultural conditions of any given society. As Quebec finds itself trapped between the English and French, in exile in its home country, a nation without a state, and struggling to give voice to its condition, Quebec scholars such as Barbara Godard, author of "Theorizing Feminist Discourse/Translation" (1990), Sherry Simon, author of *Gender in Translation: Cultural Identity and the Politics of Transmission* (1996) and "Translation and Interlingual Creation in the Contact Zone: Border Writing in Quebec" (1999), and Luise van Flotow, author of *Translation and Gender: Translating in the "Era of Feminism"* (1997) are finding that the Quebec condition is perhaps more indicative of the contemporary, postmodern condition than more traditional identity/nation scholars presume.

As the French-Canadian and other women are well aware, a bond exists between feminist theory and postcolonial theory. Perhaps the most exciting turn for the field of translation studies has been its postcolonial interest and its openness to new theories from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, a movement pioneered by mostly women. Sherry Simon and Paul St-Pierre from Canada have edited an anthology entitled *Changing the Terms: Translating in the Postcolonial Era* (2000) which explores the theoretical foundations of postcolonial translation in settings such as Malaysia, Ireland, India, and South Africa. The contributors challenge both traditional notions of translation as well as commonly held views on postcolonial theory, including some outlined in this book. Susan Bassnett and Harish Trevidi have edited the volume *Post-Colonial Translation: Theory and Practice* (1999) in which contributors analyze translation movements in India, Quebec, Brazil, Indonesia, and Africa. In the jointly authored the introduction "Of Colonies, Cannibals and Vernaculars," Bassnett and Trevidi focus on asymmetrical power relations and how translation theory might overcome intercultural as well as intracultural barriers. Maria Tymoczko, a contributor to the Bassnett and Trevidi anthology, has connected the Irish situation to postcolonial theory in *Translation in a Postcolonial Context: Early Irish Literature in English*

Translation (1999). In a kind of double writing, Tymoczko does not just demonstrate the various ways that Irish translators resisted British colonization through their translations of Celtic literature, but also draws parallels to postcolonial movements in Brazil, North Africa, India, and elsewhere. Tymoczko and Edwin Gentzler have edited the anthology *Translation and Power* (forthcoming), with contributors from Ireland, Spain, Canada, Brazil, Argentina, Maori, and China, among others. Arguing that translation is a metonymic activity (a part representing a whole), the contributors show how translation is always a partial, with translators selecting certain elements – literary or ideological – to emphasize, thus demonstrating the partisan nature of their activity. Anuradha Dingwaney and Carol Maier have edited the anthology *Between Languages and Cultures: Translation and Cross-Cultural Texts* (1995), which includes essays on translation in Puerto Rico, Haiti, Martinique, Kashmir, Egypt, India, and Russia. The contributors explore issues of both translation, how to bring "Third World" texts across by doing the minimum of violence, and pedagogy, how to effect the maximum of cultural transfer by mediating and recording difference rather than sacrificing or appropriating it.

These women in their travels, cross-cultural encounters, and collaborations have expanded the boundaries of translation theory, brought new voices into the field, and ushered in a new internationalist phase for the field. All of these essays point to a rethinking of translation less in light of any European definitions and metaphors and more in non-Western terms and concepts, some of which are new and others of which enjoy long histories of their own. While a "cannibalistic" theory of translation and/or *réécriture au féminine* may be disturbing to the Western translation scholar, it is not inconsistent with the approach implicitly advocated throughout this book. Language is never reducible to a formal system, nor to a static concept, be it literary or linguistic, and translations invariably demonstrate the inherent instability of language in their every act – in other words, the all too human desire for unification and closure tends to engender only further mistranslation and misrecognition. Historically, translation criticism has valorized translations that measure up to some ideal by smoothing over contradictions, and has ignored or dismissed those which do not seem to cohere. Such a practice, in turn, affects that which gets produced. While traditionally translation theories make certain metaphysical claims, translations themselves often fail to conform to the claims being made about them. For in the act of reproducing the textual relations (of the

original text), a double constitution becomes quite lucid: the language restraints imposed by the receiving culture are enormous, yet the possibility of creating new relations in the present are also vivid – not just the old relations transported to a new time and place, but also a myriad of signifying practices that both reinforce and alter present signifying practices. In fact, the process of translation and the process of construction of our own identities may be analogous: as translations are subjected to at least two semiotic systems (source and target languages) but are nevertheless capable of changing those very structures, so we, as humans, are the subjects of a variety of discourses but are also free to change those relations that condition our existence.

Walter Benjamin understood this double constitution very well. In "The Task of the Translator," translation is viewed as a "mode" of its own, one that offers a way of "coming to terms with the foreignness of languages" (1969: 75), yet a way frequently unrealized. Benjamin speaks in terms of a "recreation" that "must lovingly and in detail" transform and renew something living – the original text – as it supplements and ensures the survival of the existing language. Benjamin not only breaks down any reified concept of the inviolable original, but also argues that our own language and our own conceptions of what constitutes a text should not be reified. This is why Benjamin, like Pound, translates not by using whole or unified categories, which invariably reinforce existing generic distinctions, but instead proceeds word-by-word or image-by-image. Only then can foreign cultural elements enter the translator's discourse and break down limited cultural conceptions, ensuring growth. Benjamin argues against translations that turn foreign language into German and instead advocates the kind of translation that allows itself to be affected by the foreign language, allows itself, in his words, to pursue "its own course according to the laws of fidelity in the freedom of linguistic flux" (1969:80). The entire essay can be read as an attempt to define the laws specific to translation alone, this "mode" of writing which owes no allegiance to its source, nor to its receiver, but enjoys its own unique kind of freedom. Benjamin's theory is clearly liberating and empowering, allowing one not only to "liberate the language imprisoned in a work," but also to escape from the "spell" of one's own language (1969: 80).

While this process of recreation is active in every act of reading, writing, and communication, it is often performed unconsciously and is therefore difficult to observe. Perhaps the single greatest asset of translation studies – the one most important for the field's survival and

growth – is the increasing awareness by scholars in other fields that, in the analysis of translation, the functioning of the unconscious can be seen. In her essay "Taking Fidelity Philosophically," Barbara Johnson argues, "In the process of translation from one language to another, the scene of linguistic castration – which is nothing other than a scene of impossible but unavoidable translation and normally takes place out of sight – is played on center stage" (Johnson, 1985: 144). Because translation "is played out on center stage," certain misrecognitions and "shifts" from the source text can be identified and analyzed. Because of its unique nature, translation gives us access to those very unconscious and "out of sight" manipulations which result in mistranslation and misrecognition. Derrida suggests that "recovering" that out of sight place may be possible, and as far as it may be possible, translation will be the place where it may become visible.

Certain translation studies scholars seem to be on the verge of doing precisely that. Using translated texts to better understand subjective translation strategies, early translation studies scholars such as Holmes, Popovic, and Lefevere suggested examining precisely those shifts to pursue such an investigation. The field's descriptive methodology, based on actual texts, documents such shifts as they occur in the history of the life of one "original" text. Such translation histories can be "used" to reveal how the literary mind under real historical circumstances interprets the world. By examining actual translated texts instead of hypothetical models, Even-Zohar and Toury have exposed a horizon of real cultural and institutional manipulation affecting the process of literary and cultural evolution. By going beyond interpretation, theorists such as Venuti and Spivak suggest that we can read these case studies symptomatically for the unconscious manipulations that are also a part of every literary text.

In the wake of Heidegger's and Derrida's initiative, the philosophical problem of translation is studied as one of the central problems in philosophy. In the wake of Foucault, the political problem of translation within the academy and within society is becoming increasingly of interest to both literary critics and sociologists. In the future, translation theorists who have worked through the contribution of deconstructionists will be able to analyze both the *dit* and *non-dit* of any given text. In translation, hidden entities become visible, silently marking conditions necessary for particular utterances, and, ironically, dispelling any notion of truth or literal meaning. In such an approach, the very concept of "meaning" is altered. What becomes visible instead is an unstable entity,

cohering in the *relation* between the implicit and the explicit. If in translation the *non-dit* is brought to light, that which is said can be measured against that which cannot be said, unveiling another kind of "meaning" of any given text.

For the scholar who works "monolinguistically," however, such relations tend to remain out of sight and difficult to grasp. Freudian slips and idiosyncrasies may give us clues, but in general there is not much *material* on which to base such readings. As a result, literary criticism is dominated by the "correct" interpretation or rearticulation of that which has already been said. The advantage of working with translated texts thus begins to emerge: with careful study, the shifts, the misrecognitions, and the relations that constitute them become even more visible than the one-to-one correspondences. Traditional translation theory, based upon notions governing traditional monolinguistic criticism, tended to dismiss such shifts as "errors" and "mistakes." As I have suggested, such standards imply notions of substantialism and textual equivalence that limit certain other possibilities of translation practice, marginalize unorthodox translations, and impinge upon real intercultural exchange.

Whether one proceeds inductively, like Lambert, or deductively, like Lefevere and Bassnett, to identify the causes of "shifts" or "mistakes," or comes to translation via cultural studies and critical theory, like Venuti or Niranjana, the results are much the same. What becomes apparent when analyzing the evolution of one text in history are not the eternal verities of the original, but the mechanisms of history that mask any sense of an original at all. By recognizing the limits imposed by the receiving culture, by problematizing those discursive constraints, critics not only open up the discourse of translation theory for its own possible transformation, but help open the receiving culture for possible social change (through the practice of translation). Translation studies scholars no doubt can learn much from scholars of ethnic minorities, women, minor literatures, and popular literatures. Most exciting work in the field today is being produced by scholars from "smaller countries" and cultures in transition – Belgium, the Netherlands, Finland, Israel, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Northern Africa, the Philippines, China, Brazil, and Quebec.

The aim of this book has been to break down misconceptions about competing viewpoints and to open further the door for new, alternative approaches for translation. I feel as if the first edition of this book helped provide openings for some of the work that has emerged in the field in the last decade. The deconstruction of the authorities governing

translation, literary criticism, and culture in general, was merely a first step. Much work still needs to be done. Although contemporary translation theory has evolved a long way since its beginnings, it now stands on the threshold of a very exciting new phase, one which can begin to unpack the relations in which meaning is constituted, and thus better inform our postmodern conception of language, literary discourse, and identity. I began this book by asking what is contemporary translation theory and by turning to Roman Jakobson's definitions of intralingual, interlingual, and intersemiotic translation for a model. I hope I have shown how the student of contemporary translation is enmeshed in the entire network of multiple languages, discourses, sign systems, and cultures, all of which are found in both the source and translated texts and which mutually interact in the process of translation. The number of borders being crossed in one translation are always multiple. Thus I argue in favor of the implementation of multiple theories of translation from a variety of disciplines and discourses to better analyze the variety meanings and functions produced; hence the title of the book. Given how the boundaries of the field have expanded from linguistic and textual analysis to that entire network of complex signs that constitute culture, no one scholar from one discipline can possibly hope to provide all the answers. We are at the verge of an exciting new phase of research for the field, one that is forcing scholars to combine theories and resources from a variety of disciplines and which is leading to multiple new insights. I hope this revised second edition will contribute in some small way to expedite that process.

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