

Claudia V. Angelelli (ed.)

**The Sociological Turn
in Translation and
Interpreting Studies**

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The Sociological Turn in Translation and Interpreting Studies

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Edited by Claudia V. Angelelli

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INTRODUCTION

The sociological turn in translation and interpreting studies

Claudia V. Angelelli

This volume is a hardback edition of the Fall 2012 special issue of *Translation and Interpreting Studies* (7.2), which I had the privilege of conceptualizing and editing. While the articles assembled here are a direct reproduction of the *TIS* issue, the introduction has been updated.

In 2010 the American Translation and Interpreting Studies Association celebrated its 5th biennial conference at New York University. This interdisciplinary meeting brought together scholars from around the world to address the sociological turn in Translation and Interpreting Studies. Using a sociological lens, the papers presented at the ATISA conference addressed various facets of translation and interpreting theory, research, pedagogy, and technology. After the conference, *TIS* issued a call for papers for the special issue that brought together international scholars from various disciplines. These scholars' contributions afford us yet another exciting opportunity to re-visit and re-conceptualize our field of study.

In the last three decades we have witnessed a “sociological turn” in Translation and Interpreting Studies as increasing attention has been paid to the agency of translators and interpreters, as well as to the social factors that permeate acts of translation and interpreting. This turn is evident in research using micro-perspectives to examine issues related to resistance and activism (Tymoczko 2010) and macro-perspectives to problematize the role played by institutions or society in inter-cultural/linguistic communication (Sela-Sheffy & Shlesinger 2011). In addition, and perhaps more interestingly, agency and social factors are being discussed in more interdisciplinary terms. The focus now is not only on translators or interpreters — i.e., the exploration of their inter/intra-social agency and identity construction (Wolf 2013, Asimakoulas and Rogers, 2011) or on their activities and the consequences thereof (Angelelli 2011, Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger 2011) — but also on other phenomena, such as the displacement of texts and people (Angelelli 2011), and issues of access and linguisticism (Berk-Seligson 2011, Angelelli 2014). The displacement of texts (whether written or oral) across time and space, as

well as the geographic displacement of people, has encouraged researchers in Translation and Interpreting Studies to consider issues related to translation and interpreting through the lens of the Sociology of Language, Sociolinguistics, and Historiography. Studies on access and linguisticism (Angelelli 2014, Wolf 2013) produced as a result of individual behaviors (such as gate keeping or channeling) or broader societal decisions involving the provision or denial of translation/interpreting services, have employed a myriad of theoretical and methodological lenses borrowed from other disciplines in the Humanities and Social Sciences. Therefore, the inter-disciplinarity of Translation and Interpreting Studies, one could say, is more evident now than ever before. This volume is a perfect example of such inter-disciplinarity, reflecting the shift that has occurred in Translation and Interpreting Studies around the world over the last 30 years.

Following this Introduction, Michaela Wolf's contribution, entitled "The Sociology of Translation and its 'Activist Turn,'" frames the rest of the papers in this volume. Wolf illustrates the many ways in which translators and interpreters currently and throughout history have navigated "sociologically-charged" waters. She discusses the conditions underlying the "sociological turn" and examines both its limitations and its potential. With particular attention to the translator's *habitus* as first elaborated in Sociology and then in Translation and Interpreting Studies, Wolf focuses on the political factors that, in recent years, have contributed to molding the *habitus*, especially in the area of "translation and activism." In this area, new codes of reference have been created for the translatorial activity that question Western concepts of translation and their social implications, ultimately triggering what might be called an "activist turn."

Focusing on the notion of activism, Nitsa Ben-Ari reports on the struggles of Socialist and Revisionist factions over the character of the fledgling Israeli culture/nation, against the backdrop of the British Mandatory Rule of Palestine (1917–1948). She explores a correlation between their socio-political ideology and professional behavior and present cases where ex-dissidents found a way into the mainstream. Ben-Ari shows how the dissidents often found themselves not only jobless but also unable to obtain a position in public office. As a result, many Revisionists turned to the private book industry, becoming translators, editors and publishers. This essay describes the conditions that led Revisionists to that choice and analyzes the options left for intellectuals rejected by the mainstream. The various habituses of this diverse socio-political group are described and illustrated through particular examples of participants in the alternative book industry.

Ghada Osman transports us to the "Golden Age" of Islamic history, when the Muslim world was the unrivaled intellectual center for science, philosophy, medicine and education. Centered in the House of Wisdom, an educational institution where both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars sought to gather the world's

knowledge, not only via original writing but also through translation, Osman looks at the translation work of Hunayn ibn Ishaq, who was the most well-known and industrious translator of the era. The author discusses this key figure's methodology toward translation by examining a particular incident in Hunayn's relationship with the Caliph, Hunayn's medical works, a list of Hunayn's main benefactors and book titles, and Hunayn's life history. Osman contextualizes Hunayn's situation within the framework of translatorial *habitus*, and briefly discusses the sociolinguistic situation of the Muslim Empire in the eighth and ninth centuries. She then examines the methodologies of translation adopted by Hunayn, especially as they relate to certain contemporary sociological and sociolinguistic factors, such as the movement of Muslim populations throughout the rapidly growing Muslim-ruled Empire and the consequent expansion of the Arabic language both geographically and lexically. Osman addresses the shift in the purpose of translation and its audience, and of the development of translation as an expanding field.

Discussing issues related to translation and cultural capital, Zhongwei Song revisits the translation of classical texts. Song argues that without the use of sociological concepts, the stakes and functions of various retranslated versions of a given classical text, the specific social contexts in which that text is embedded, and the motivations of its translators may not be fully understood. Song revisits Bourdieu's concept of competition over cultural capital as it relates to cultural reproduction. In Bourdieu's view cultural reproducers compete over cultural capital because whoever possesses more of it has higher social status and greater power to control texts and attribute meaning to them. For Bourdieu, the struggles appear to be about defending ideas and satisfying tastes, but they are also about how to control cultural capital and how to eventually convert it into economic capital. Using as her example the classical Chinese text *The Art of War*, the author shows how using sociological methods allows us to situate the act of retranslation not in a simple linguistic framework for the assessment of errors through inter-textual comparison but in a more complex and dynamic sociological milieu where the act can be viewed as a social practice. In this article Song analyzes why this classic text is frequently chosen for retranslation, how a challenging translator qualifies himself as someone more capable than his predecessors of doing full justice to this authoritative text, and, more importantly, what strategies are used to compete with already established translators.

In her article entitled "Italy's Other Mafia: a Journey into Cross-Cultural Translation," Giuditta Caliendo transports us to Italy to show us "Italy's Other Mafia." Through a contrastive analysis of the Italian and English versions of the best-selling work *Gomorra*, Caliendo explores the strategies employed in translating the voices and deeds of Naples' mobsters, as well as the socio-economic setting of Naples' largest criminal syndicate, the Camorra. By discussing types of

non-equivalence between the two language versions, the author sheds light on the impact and consequences of translations as she unveils to what extent the English translation supports the identity of the Camorra as a separate and far more deadly criminal organization than the Sicilian Mafia.

The sociological turn in translation and interpreting studies has been accompanied by growing attention to translation and interpreting as professions and translators/interpreters as a social and professional group. (In 2009/2010 *TIS* published a special double issue focusing on the professional status of these occupational groups.) Focusing specifically on the occupational status of translators in international organizations, Helle V. Dam and Karen Korning Zethsen present an empirical study comparing the job status of Danish staff translators working in the European Union and that of Danish staff translators working on the national market. The study is based on data from questionnaires completed by 63 EU translators and 113 national-market translators (n 176). The translators' perceptions of their occupational status were studied and compared through their responses to questions revolving around four parameters of occupational prestige: (1) remuneration, (2) education/expertise, (3) power/influence, and (4) visibility. Based on the literature, the authors hypothesized that the EU translators would enjoy a higher status than the national-market translators — a hypothesis which the study failed to confirm.

Moving to oral text and to interpreting as a communicative activity, Ian Mason and Wen Ren address the notion of agency and activism by looking at interpreters' behaviors. Drawing from examples taken from real-life interpreting events, the authors empirically analyze interpreters' *power-at-work*, focusing on their verbal and non-verbal behaviors, in particular, their positioning and gaze. Mason and Ren problematize the traditional view of professional interpreters portrayed as transparent, invisible, passive, neutral and detached, not entitled to intervene in the communicative process. The authors also deconstruct the notion of an idealized interpreter who strives to make people unaware of his/her presence. Mason and Ren show how such an idealized role construct is, from time to time, challenged in real-life face-to-face interpreting events.

This article defines face-to-face interpreting as a communicative event in which the two primary parties and interpreters from different linguistic systems and with unique cultural identities interact with one another and jointly contribute to the process and outcome of the communication. The interpreter as a co-constructor of the interaction is a powerful figure within the exchange. At the theoretical level, this paper proceeds from Michel Foucault's concept of power, defining it not as in the traditional sense as a dominating force seeking to monopolize, control or rule, but as a kind of strategy, disposition, maneuver, tactic or technique, functioning "in a network of relations," and emphasizing "the overall effect of its strategic

positions” (Foucault 1977). Although interpreters often lack institutional power, they may be equipped with power within the exchange as a result of their bilingual and bicultural expertise. They may exercise this power by adopting various verbal and non-verbal strategies to negotiate, coordinate, check and balance power relations. As Mason and Ren’s analysis shows, this can be specifically manifested in the interpreters’ role as a co-interlocutor, a figure of empowerment, and in their occasional adoption of a non-neutral stance.

The collection of papers in this volume illustrates the fact that translators and interpreters are indeed social agents. As unequivocally demonstrated by these essays, agency in translation and interpreting has been exercised throughout time and space. The articles highlight the notion that agency is exercised by constructing and re-constructing other’s written and oral words, pauses, silences, and gazes.

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The sociology of translation and its “activist turn”

Michaela Wolf

The last few years have seen a great increase in works on what has been labeled a “sociological turn” in translation studies. This turn has particularly taught us to sharpen our “sociological eye” on the various agencies and agents involved in any translation procedure, and more specifically in the textual factors operating in the translation process. In this paper I will discuss the conditions underlying the “sociological turn” and examine both its limitations and its potential, with particular attention to the translator’s *habitus* as elaborated in sociology and in translation studies. My focus will be on the political factors which in recent years have contributed to molding the *habitus*, not least in the domain of “translation and activism,” where new codes of reference have been created for translatorial activity that also pose searching questions for Western concepts of translation and their social implications, ultimately triggering what might be called an “activist turn.”

The social/sociological turn

Turns — or “shifting viewpoints” (Snell-Hornby 2006) — are a constitutive feature of any discipline. In its short history, the discipline of translation has witnessed a variety of such turns, from the “pragmatic turn” in linguistics in the 1960s — when many still viewed translation studies as an offshoot of contrastive linguistics — and the “cultural turn” in the 1990s, to the “sociological turn” and the “power turn” in the 2000s, just to name a few. Finally, in 2009, a plea was formulated in favor of establishing what was labeled “Translator Studies.” A thematic issue of *Hermes* — “Translation Studies: Focus on the Translator” — included a contribution by Andrew Chesterman who claims that the growing number of recent research tendencies which in one way or another focus on the figure of the translator rather than on translations as texts would justify the establishment of “Translator Studies” (Chesterman 2009: 13, emphasis in the original). Chesterman takes James Holmes’ “map of translation studies” (1988, further discussed and “canonized” by Toury in

1995) as a foundation of his remarks and proposes to re-map it by including the various agents involved in the translation process with their own history, interests, and perspectives on their professions. According to Chesterman, the relevant branches of this subfield of translation studies are cultural (dealing with values, ideologies, traditions, etc.), cognitive (tackling mental processes, decision-making, attitudes toward norms, etc.), and sociological (covering the agents' observable behavior, their social networks, status and working processes, etc.) (ibid.:19). While Chesterman's proposal merits a thorough discussion on the enduring lack of coherent research on the involvement of agents in the translation process, this article will not go into detail regarding Chesterman's claims and will therefore not discuss the conceptualization of a subfield of Translator Studies. Such a discussion would both need to examine the potentially excessive subjectivization of the translation process and foreground its potential for the elaboration of viewpoints on translation which go quite beyond those dealt with in the last decades.

The "sociological turn" marks paradigmatic changes in reflection on the reasons conditioning a translation process. In order to shed light on the intricate mechanisms underlying the translation activity in its societal context, it seems first necessary to reveal the reasons and conditions responsible for the appearance and forging of a "turn." How does a "paradigmatic" turn come about, and what are the factors that keep a turn going? Placing the discussion of a scientific discipline's shifts of paradigm on a research agenda might be seen both as a sign of its establishment within the scientific community and a stage in the scientific branch's "evolution" which allows for the questioning of its results and conquests also from outside. In recent years we have witnessed an ongoing debate on these questions, beginning with Mary Snell-Hornby's *The Turns of Translation Studies. New Paradigms or Shifting Viewpoints?* (2006), and continuing with the special issue of *Translation Studies* in 2009 on "The Translational Turn." A paradigm or "turn" without a doubt reveals a break with traditional views on a certain subject — in the case in question on translation concepts in their widest sense — and the introduction of new perspectives. Such perspectives do not necessarily discard longstanding perceptions but take established approaches as a starting point for sketching new horizons and for further developments in a specific area.

One of the books which recently have discussed paradigmatic shifts is Doris Bachmann-Medick's *Cultural Turns: Neuorientierungen in den Kulturwissenschaften* (2006). Bachmann-Medick asks how "turns" generally come about in the humanities. Her initial point is that disciplines which in one way or another have to do with culture or which can be considered part of the cluster of domains within Cultural Studies are not involved in the "impassioned discussion of scientific 'revolutions'" (ibid.:18, my translation). She thus rejects the application of Thomas S. Kuhn's claims in his *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*

(1970) to the domain of Cultural Studies and insists on distinguishing between “paradigms” and “turns.”¹ In doing so, she draws on George Marcus and Michael Fischer, according to whom turns are “relatively ephemeral and transitional between periods of more settled, paradigm-dominated styles of research” (1986, qtd. in *ibid.*:18). In more detail, Bachmann-Medick argues that

[i]n disciplines concerned with culture, theory does not advance via the massive ruptures of “paradigms”. Theoretical attention shifts less comprehensively, in a delicate feedback loop with the problems and processes of theoretical constellation. (Bachmann-Medick 2009: 4)

Accordingly, Bachmann-Medick sees three stages that characterize “turns” in general. The first stage is the extension of the object or thematic field: this implies a shift from the level of object of new fields of research to the level of analytic categories and concepts. Second, the dynamics of turns is characterized by the formation of metaphors, such as “culture as translation.” Metaphorization is transcended once its potential for insights moves across disciplines as a new means of knowledge and into theoretical conceptualization. The third stage is that of methodological refinement, provoking a conceptual leap and transdisciplinary application (Bachmann-Medick 2006: 26–27, 2009: 4).

The discipline of translation studies seems thus particularly inclined toward paradigmatic shifts, or “turns.” The reasons for this inclination are obvious: first, the discipline’s subject is — by nature — located in the contact zones between the various cultures involved in a translation process. Consequently, it is continuously exposed to different contextualizations and arrangements of communication. The second reason can be found in the constitution or structure of the discipline itself. The various shapes of communication which mold the issues dealt with in the realm of translation studies, from the very beginning of the discipline’s establishment process, call for us to go beyond disciplinary boundaries.

Against this background, the “cultural turn” is without a doubt the most decisive turning point the discipline has taken since its rise in the 1960s. This becomes clear once we realize that the “cultural turn” resulted in an enduring expansion of the frames of research and the elaboration of broader questions which enabled the inclusion of historical perspectives and contextual information in the discussion of translation procedures and translation as cultural products, thus foregrounding the macro-context of translation. The major approaches developed previously in translation studies had taken into consideration cultural implications in translation, be they linguistic (see Eugene Nida), functional (see Hans Vermeer), or

1. For a critical assessment of Bachmann-Medick’s usage of “turns” inside and outside of the discipline of Kulturwissenschaften, see Böhme 2008.

descriptive (see Gideon Toury). These approaches, however, have not extensively focused on the repercussions the text's surroundings on text production, and the "outside" factors which mold the translation's deeper impact were hardly discussed. With their seminal book *Translation, History and Culture*, Susan Bassnett and André Lefevere took a decisive move when they claimed:

There is always a context in which the translation takes place, always a history from which a text emerges and into which a text is transposed. [...] [T]ranslation as an activity is always doubly contextualized, since the text has a place in two cultures. (Bassnett and Lefevere 1990: 11)

Although today we would hesitate to limit translation to a doubly contextualized activity and would foreground the dynamic surroundings which shape the translation procedure, it remains true that translations always reflect the historical and cultural conditions under which they have been produced. This also means that the object of study since then has been redefined: what is studied is basically the "text embedded within its network of both source and target cultural signs" (ibid.:12). This broadened perspective opened up new methodologies which were developed to shed light on the translation process revealing the power relations underlying any translation activity and therefore pointing to the fact that translation can never be neutral (Bassnett 1998: 136). Additionally, new approaches to translation studies were given a boost, often in a common interdisciplinary effort to widen the discipline's horizon. As a consequence, the years that followed saw an enormous increase and refinement in publications on feminist translation, postcolonial, or ethnographic approaches.

About a decade and a half later, the insights gained from this newly developed perspective led to a view of translation as a social practice which, among other things, foregrounded the role of the agents involved in the translation process. Gradually, the conviction took shape that any translation is necessarily bound up within social contexts: on the one hand, the act of translating, in all its various stages is undeniably carried out by individuals who belong to a social system; on the other, the translation phenomenon is inevitably implicated in social institutions, which greatly determine the selection, production, and distribution of translation, and, as a result, the strategies adopted in the translation itself. At this point, the question arises whether we can talk about a "sociological turn" (Wolf 2007). Snell-Hornby expresses her doubts as follows:

As the topic [of social implications on translation] has been around for so long, it is debatable whether it is now creating a new paradigm in the discipline: at all events translation sociology is a welcome alternative to the purely linguistic approach, and it is an issue of immense importance with a wealth of material for future studies. (Snell-Hornby 2006: 172)

Yet, in terms of Bachmann-Medick’s criteria for the existence of a “turn” in the humanities, the stages outlined above seem to have already been taken by the so-called “sociological turn”: the categories developed, partly drawing on approaches elaborated in sociology, testify to refined methodological tools enabling the conceptualization of the social settings underlying the translation procedure. This is proven by a series of works which have contributed to the emergence of a “translation sociology” and have brought about important insights into the construction of a public discourse on translation and the self-image of translators and especially into the translation process itself, among other central issues (see Gouanvic 1999, Inghilleri 2003, Wolf and Fukari 2007, Pym, Shlesinger, and Simeoni 2008).

Sociological insights

The milestones which marked the development of a “sociology of translation” are characterized by the insight that translation is an activity deeply affected by social configurations. Once translation was viewed as a social practice, the understanding of the mechanisms underlying translation needed the development of analytical tools. These tools were intended to help shed light on the various constituents accounting for the involvement of translation in larger social contexts in general and the social nature of translation in particular. The conceptualization of new approaches implied a shift of focus to a variety of research fields which so far have been under-researched, such as institutions of translators’ training, professional institutions and their impact on translation practices, working conditions, questions of ethics in translation, political aspects of translation, and many more. Against this background, the question arises: what are the consequences of a sociological perspective on translation? What can we gain when adopting a sociological perspective? Which could be the insights of applying methodological tools with a sociological orientation to the translation procedure?

It seems as if we can expect a broad array of insights from a “sociology of translation.” First and foremost, the relations of power underlying any process of translation in its various stages have been foregrounded already by culturally oriented approaches, but now they can be connected to the translation’s and the translator’s situatedness in society. In addition, a sociologically-oriented research delivers valuable results in terms of methodology. Drawing for the most part on analytical tools from social sciences has deepened, on the one hand, our understanding of the mechanisms that underlie the manifestations of translatorial invisibility. On the other, these tools have helped us identify the interactional relations that exist between the external conditions of a text’s creation and the adoption of various translation strategies during the translation process in the narrower sense.

Ultimately, these procedures contribute to challenging the various types of methodological approaches that unilaterally emphasize the comprehension of text and others that support a reduction to external factors of translation. Additionally, a sharpened eye on the process-driven character of translation and its various social features has paved the way for a range of research fields which bring to light the urgent need to foster inter- and transdisciplinary work. In such a context, what proved particularly challenging in the last few years has been the need to conceptualize the agencies and agents involved in an open system that depends on the negotiation of symbolic forms in a world of global societal changes. One of the categories which seems central to the methodological requirements of such circumstances is the translatorial *habitus*.

The translator's *habitus*

The story of the *habitus* concept dates back to Aristotle. For him, *habitus* is created on the basis of experience and the memorization of various actions through physical processes. In addition, memory is a factor for structuring future action: *hexis* is, contrary to images based on memory, the non-intellectual capacity for the creation of action. On this basis, *hexis* can produce values and has the potential to create knowledge (Krais and Gebauer 2002: 29). In his *Summa Theologica*, St. Thomas Aquinas draws on Aristotle's concept of *hexis* to refer to the four intellectual virtues — art, science, understanding, and philosophical wisdom — which are necessary for participation in society. He sees *habitus* as a mediating force between *potentia pura* — potentiality — and the execution of an action, *purus actus*. Accordingly, St. Thomas distinguishes between various forms of *habitus*, such as *habitus activus*, *habitus corporis*, or *habitus animae* (Malikail 2003). In modern thinking, the *habitus* concept gained momentum in particular through Norbert Elias. He focused on the explicitly social side of the *habitus*, which he saw as the societal basis for the personal characteristics which represent a distinctive feature for the individual (Elias 1987: 244). For him, *habitus* basically means “second nature” or “embodied social learning” (Dunning and Mennell 1996: ix). As such, a *habitus* is the result of learned affective controls — of fears and joys and their consideration in action-chains of varying length and varying degrees of rational planning.

Pierre Bourdieu's concept of *habitus* remains the most highly elaborated today. He stresses that social life cannot be understood as the aggregate of individual behavior, nor can social practice be seen as determined by supra-individual “structures.” Therefore, human action is not deterministically trapped between mechanistic and finalistic interpretations. Rather, the concept of *habitus* helps

bridge the gap between these various extremes by referring to socially-acquired, embodied systems of dispositions and predispositions (see Scahill 1993, 2004). Hence, it refers not to character, morality, or socialization per se, but to “deep structural” classificatory propensities, generating the tastes, preferences, body language, prejudices etc. of a given class or class fraction, across all different fields of practice. One of the most quoted definitions of *habitus* is the following: *habitus* is

[a] system of lasting, transposable dispositions which, integrating past experiences, functions at every moment as a matrix of *perceptions, appreciations, and actions* and makes possible the achievement of infinitely diversified tasks, thanks to analogical transfers of schemes permitting the solution of similarly shaped problems. (Bourdieu 1968: xx, original emphasis)

In the context of translation, the *habitus* can be understood as secondary *habitus* and is significantly marked by the profession of translators. The postulate that the *habitus* of an individual or a collective can be reconstructed through his or her various activities (see Kraiss and Gebauer 2002: 26) is of paramount interest for the understanding of the translation process because it helps trace the interaction between (translation) text analysis and social analysis. This means that, for instance, the conditions underlying certain translation decisions can be correlated with the *habitus* of the translator(s) involved in specific historical moments, or *habitus* can explain why certain translation strategies were adopted and others not, and can perhaps disclose the translation product as the result of an intensive process of “negotiation.” Thus, it can help isolate which prerequisites enable translatorial “negotiation” and which do not. This, on the other hand, reveals that the translatorial *habitus* not only results from social practice but can also create values and produce knowledge related to action. In such a way, its constructing aspect is uncovered, and the potential for the manipulative component of translation is disclosed.

As mentioned above, the last few years have witnessed in translation studies a conspicuous sharpening of the “sociological eye” (Simeoni 2005: 12), not least through the adoption of *habitus* in various translation domains.

Daniel Simeoni contends that over the centuries the translatorial *habitus* has contributed to the internalization of a submissive behavior, thus generating a low social status for translators. He argues that, as a result of the continuous, historically-conditioned acceptance of norms by translators, the translators’ willingness to accept these norms has had a decisive effect on the secondariness of translatorial activity as such (Simeoni 1998: 6). This alleged subservience is also discussed by Moira Inghilleri. Within the realm of community interpreting, she conceptualizes a model for the analysis of the norms governing this branch of interpreting and brings in the interplay of the distinctive and conflictual *habitus* of the agents involved in the process of community interpreting, which have the potential to

change existing social relationships. Rakefet Sela-Sheffy, too, takes a critical look at Simeoni's arguments on the relatedness of *habitus* and norms. She claims that the translation field is a space of stratified positions, regulated by its own internal repertoires and competitions and equipped with an exclusive symbolic capital. The dynamics of this field are revealed in the "potential for perceiving the tension between the predictability and versatility of translators' preferences and choices, as determined by their group affiliation" (Sela-Sheffy 2005: 19).

These contributions give rise to some crucial questions which can enhance our understanding of the social conditions underlying the translation process: What is the contribution of the *habitus* to the creation of certain sections of — let us say — literary fields through translation? Can the (supposedly) subservient and normative character of the translator's *habitus* — as postulated by Daniel Simeoni and apparently proven by the translator's wide invisibility in society — be universally claimed? Or does it rather seem that it has not yet been established sufficiently? Wouldn't such a claim imply a quite linear development of the *habitus* over the time? And, more particularly, what is the potential of change inherent in the concept in the translatorial context as already indicated in Inghilleri's discussion of the notion in the community interpreting situation? In what follows, I will take up some of these questions with the aim to prove that the concept of *habitus* is far from being obsolete and still needs to be conceptually refined. The domain of the recently developed research field of "translation and activism" offers a forum for this claim.

***Habitus* and the "activist turn"**

The adoptions of the concept of *habitus* in the ways described above have already hinted at an increasing awareness of translation as a political activity. What are the political factors which mold the *habitus* in a translatorial context? And how are they linked to the translator's sociopolitical responsibilities stemming from a translation situation where the boundaries between the translation activity in the narrower sense and its political environs are blurred?

Insights from the research in translation sociology have foregrounded the self-confident and self-critical attitude of translators in whatever labor setting they are operating. Consequently, their traditional position of supposed neutrality and invisibility would belong to history as soon as they are willing to assume responsibility for their cultural and social practice. Such a responsibility is additionally shaped by sociopolitical factors. Michael Cronin stresses that "[t]ranslation makes us realize that there have been and are other ways of seeing, interpreting, reacting to the world" (Cronin 2003: 70). Upholding such a view would have serious

consequences for the translator’s professional, social, and political position in society. The era of globalization — and, not to forget, the present “financial crisis” with its still unexplored consequences for translation activity — has additionally molded the translator’s role, as Sandra Bermann reminds us:

In a world where individual nation-states are increasingly enmeshed in financial and information networks, where multiple linguistic and national identities can inhabit a single state’s borders or exceed them in vast diasporas, where globalization has its serious — and often violent — discontents, and where terrorism and war transform distrust into destruction, language and translation play central, if often unacknowledged, roles. (Bermann 2005: 1)

As a result, individual translators and translation training institutions or professional associations should be aware that in a situation where political control and its accompanying regulatory mechanisms have been ruling economic, social, and cultural production and exchange, their role is increasingly important to the point that they have to engage with questions relevant for the past, present, and future of humanity.

The translatorial *habitus* has a key function in such an environment. Enhancing the concept with political and, consequently, “activist” components is crucial so that it can better correspond to present needs in the translation field. So far, translation studies scholars have limited their reading of Pierre Bourdieu on his field theory or theory of symbolic goods. Why not turn to his explicitly politically oriented texts and read these texts from a translatorial perspective? What can we gain, for instance, from his claim to establish a “scholarship with commitment,” as he calls it?

If we want to define the political *habitus* in a translation studies perspective, it is paramount to discuss the conditions under which a politically oriented translation activity — which ultimately would imply an activist stance — can take place. According to Bourdieu, it seems to be a tacit premise of any political order that only politicians — professional politicians — have the competence to talk about politics. It is “their affair” to talk about politics; politics is exclusively their business. This is an implicit assumption which is inscribed in the political field (Bourdieu 2001: 45). Laypersons — including scholars — are thus denied the possibility of politicizing their actions, let alone of committing a political act. Consequently, a political *habitus* can only be effective on two premises. First, if one has access to a public space. Bourdieu states that the public space is nearly entirely controlled by journalists and political parties; artists, researchers, authors, etc. are hardly admitted to this space. Second, and more importantly, the *doxa* has to be changed, those taken-for-granted assumptions or orthodoxies of an epoch which are located at a deeper level of consciousness than mere ideologies but are also productive of

conscious struggles and new forms. Bourdieu mostly refers to neoliberal ideology as a contemporary example of *doxa* (ibid.:32). For the translation context, this would imply a louder voice in the public space; a stronger presence in the media; a visibility not only of the translator, but especially of the translation studies scholar; and his or her involvement in political debates. An example that testifies to the translator's intrusion into public space is the 2006 debate in the Turkish newspaper *Radikal*. In a series of articles written by scholars from several translation and interpreting departments, some Islamic publishers were accused of distorting Western classics according to their own ideology (Daldeniz 2010).

Bourdieu's claim to change the *doxa* is enhanced by his call to dismantle the strict separation of "scholarship" from "commitment" of those who devote themselves to scientific work which is performed according to scholarly methods and aimed at other scholars from those who are socially and politically engaged and take their knowledge to the outside world (Bourdieu 2002). This opposition is entirely artificial, yet it corresponds to daily academic life. The dichotomy of "scholarship" and "commitment" eases the scholar's conscience as long as the republic of scholars is applauding: which scholar does not appreciate the ovations he or she receives after giving a talk? Bourdieu claims that on the contrary, scholars have to follow the rules of scholarship in order to be able to configure engaged knowledge — which means that we need "scholarship with commitment." The forum where this request could be put into practice is what he calls an "internationale of intellectuals." In his *Rules of the Art*, Bourdieu states:

I would like writers, artists, philosophers and scientists to be able to make their voices heard directly in all the areas of public life in which they are competent. I think that everyone would have a lot to gain if the logic of intellectual life, that of argument and refutation, were extended to public life. (Bourdieu 1996: 344–45)

The necessity of a political *habitus* which ultimately becomes effective in an activist attitude on behalf of the translators can be detected in the constitution of a range of new fields of research such as translation in war and conflict situations or translation in the context of global terror. Equally, translation has played an increasing role in the production and circulation of global information flows. A brief overview of the main translatorial features of some of these fields will disclose the different ways an enhanced political *habitus* would be shaped.

As is widely known, globalization has caused a gigantic upsurge in translation. In the media domain, most information needs to be tailored to specific publics, and the way in which narratives of global media events are constructed for local audiences is mediated by translation (Bielsa 2009: 16). But the process is more complicated than this:

In translating news, bilingual journalists edit, rewrite, synthesize, add and alter information for specific audiences according to journalistic conventions and the criteria of news relevance and background knowledge of the target readers, thus effectively shaping the news in important ways. (ibid.:17)

As a result, we are, and in fact we are not, watching, listening to and reading about the same events. Thus, there exist a multitude of local versions and narratives of global events. Disclosing these mechanisms and foregrounding the force of translation in the construction of this global media spectacle is a political project — and it needs a political *habitus* on behalf of the researchers involved.

Moreover, book and chapter titles like “Translating Terror” or “Translators on the Frontline” testify to the increasing scholarly interest in the often crucial role translators and interpreters play in conflict situations. They illustrate the involvement of translation and interpreting in the area of mediating conflicts and in circumstances where translators are being instrumentalized in military actions and for the sake of (post)colonialist machinations. Examples abound, especially in eyewitness accounts of military intelligence soldiers in the Iraq war or at Guantánamo Bay (see Saar and Novak 2005). They give evidence of appalling sexual interrogation tactics and other torture strategies. In addition, war situations in most cases lead very rapidly to an acute shortage of interpreters and translators, and consequently non-professionals are recruited. In the case of the Iraq war, for instance, both groups, once selected from among the Iraqi people, come under fire as they are regarded with suspicion from both sides: they are considered traitors by their fellow countrymen and potential enemy spies by their U.S. employers. Such divided loyalties are of course not restricted to the Iraq war; testimonies in history abound on this issue, beginning with interpreters in Julius Caesar’s invasion troops in Gaul and Britain to Spanish colonialist conquests in Latin America and to the Ottoman Empire’s dragomans. Another infamous example is the war in the former Yugoslavia, where interpreters and translators were needed for foreign media reporters, for non-governmental organizations, and especially for the peace-keeping forces (Dragovic-Drouet 2007:30). “Fixers,” or assistant-interpreters, were hired to manage a journalist’s stay in Bosnia, for example, to meet not only the journalist’s language needs but also his or her lack of familiarity with the local situation. The dependence on these “fixers” was of course enormous. Therefore it is no wonder that they were also named “manipulateurs,” as in the case of a French journalist who describes the fixers’ duties (ibid.:35). It goes without saying that the role of translators and interpreters in these labor fields is an explicitly political one, and that a fostered political *habitus* would lead to enhanced engagement in the process of finding solutions.

Another under-researched field of study that requires a particularly honed and refined political *habitus* is translation in human rights. Legalization shapes the human rights ideal and surveys its ethical, political, and practical repercussions. As we know, laws can exert a definitive influence on what we think about rights (see Garre 1999). The translation dimension in the domain of human rights legislation is therefore crucially important to the living practice of human rights. With reference to human rights, the necessity of such a politically-honed *habitus* can eventually be seen in the question of translation technology in conflict situations. Translation technology for military purposes in the Iraq war has shown us the problematic role of translation and interpreting in promoting and legitimating particular discourses. One example that testifies to this role is the adoption of the iPod “Vcommunicator Mobile,” which has been used by soldiers in Iraq and Afghanistan. It produces spoken and written translations of Arabic, Kurdish, and two Afghan languages and also shows animated graphics of accompanying gestures and body language. Phrases such as “May I see your ID?” are spelled out phonetically so that they can be read aloud, or, for the U.S. soldier with an imperfect Arabic accent, the phrase can be played over a mini-speaker to everyone in the immediate vicinity (Vcom3 2010). Here, an awkward (post)colonial gesture is combined with technological arrogance, opening another dismal chapter of the translatorial role in war and conflict.

All these examples — and the list could continue — show that what is needed is a comprehensive methodological and theoretical framework to conceptualize the political field — or, I am tempted to say, battlefield — of the translator in the areas described. A politically-oriented *habitus* as described above could be a first and decisive step in this direction. One domain in which such a specific *habitus* seems to have become already operative — at least in an initial stage — is “translation and activism.” If we talk about the activist agenda of translation, this means emphasizing specific situations where the translator’s intervention is shaped by a specific pattern of beliefs or convictions which follow a certain political program mostly connected with solidarity and social claim. As Sherry Simon has pointed out in the introduction of her *TTR* special issue *Translation and Social Activism*, “Translations are a form of engagement when the necessary partiality of translation becomes *partisan*, when translators adopt advocacy roles in situations of socio-cultural inequalities” (Simon 2005: 11, original emphasis). Within the wider range of cultural politics, translation has been associated with the worldwide struggles for decolonization and for political rights, and translators have been engaged in promoting the emancipation of marginalized and discriminated groups and in creating balance between languages and cultures, as some of the examples above illustrate. So far, the most pronounced activities which engage in putting

into practice such claims can be seen in organizations like *Babels*, *Tlaxcala*, *ECOS*, or *Translators for Peace*, among others.²

The new codes of reference created for translatorial activity in the wake of globalization processes bear a potential for change both in traditional views on the figure of the translator and in still pervasive (Eurocentric) concepts of translation. Without a refined political *habitus* on behalf of the agents involved, and primarily that of translation studies scholars, this goal can hardly be achieved. The to-do list is long, it seems, but formulating requests alone makes no sense. As Slavoj Žižek has taught us, formulating requests implies accepting those who are in power. In the case of translation studies, this means we would accept that there is always an entity or an authority which — tacitly or not — regulates or controls our activities in the form of norms, multinational codes of communication, and others. Following Bourdieu’s call to pursue an “engaged scholarship” inscribes the practice of translation and translation scholarship within a political — and ultimately activist — agenda.

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2. See, for instance, Anderlič 2009, Boéri 2008, and Wolf 2010, especially their discussion of the role played by the translation and interpreting activities in World and European Social Forums.

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Political dissidents as translators, editors, and publishers

Nitsa Ben-Ari

Against the backdrop of the British mandatory rule of Palestine (1917–1948), Socialist and Revisionist factions struggled bitterly over the character of the new Israeli culture/nation in the making. Crucial ideological differences intermingled with violent fights over topical problems such as whether resistance to British rule should be violent or subdued and how to face growing Arab aggression. The struggle intensified during World War II when the Socialist Zionist camp, headed by Ben-Gurion, backed the British in the war against Nazi Germany. This camp eventually won, as we know, and dissidents found themselves not only jobless but unable to obtain employment in public office. As a result, many Revisionists turned to the private book industry, becoming translators, editors, and publishers. This essay will describe the conditions that led to this choice and will analyze the options left for Revisionist intellectuals rejected by the mainstream. It will then describe them as a far from homogenized sociopolitical group, analyze their various habituses, then present particular examples of participants in the alternative book industry. It will try to find a correlation between their sociopolitical ideology and their professional behavior. Cases of ex-dissidents that found a way into the mainstream will also be presented. Using a diachronic approach, this article will attempt to sum up their contribution, as well as the effects of the strife (schism, in fact) on Hebrew culture that this work represents. Finally, this article will attempt to incorporate these findings within the framework of the sociological turn, problematizing the application of Bourdieu's habitus and field theories to the study of translation.¹

1. I would like to humbly note that I was the first to translate Bourdieu into Hebrew. I did so in the 1980s while pursuing my M.A. degree under the supervision of Itamar Even-Zohar, who was, as far as I know, the first to introduce Bourdieu to Israeli academia. Even-Zohar was interested in Bourdieu's theories and started corresponding with him. I translated several articles from *Questions de sociologie*, and I must admit it does not figure in my memory as an easy task.

Introduction and background

The question of *habitus*, Bourdieu's well-known term, has occupied Translation Studies ever since what is known as the sociological turn, although Gideon Toury was preoccupied with the figure of the bilingual, bicultural translator within Descriptive Translation Studies long before that (Toury 1995: 241–258). I would like to problematize the application of Bourdieu's theories to translation phenomena by presenting a case in which people understood the profession of translators to be not a vocation, nor a first-choice profession, but a last resort because those that engaged in it were political dissidents who had spent many of their best years “underground” — in both the metaphorical and literal sense of the word — and had been denied access to other intellectual opportunities.

In and of itself, translation as a last resort is an intriguing topic of research in terms of the habitus theory; complicating the application of Bourdieu's theory, however, is the fact that some of these dissidents eventually became dedicated translators (as well as editors and sometimes publishers) in the peripheral subversive book industry. It would be valuable to analyze their behavior in these professions in light of their habitus, which is so different from that of mainstream agents of translation. Did this trajectory determine their literary taste when they began to translate? (Gouanvic 2005: 159) Did they translate differently? Did they translate different material? Did they regard their status differently? Did they knowingly address a different target public? All these are questions that preoccupied me when investigating the vast domain of translated popular literature, all the more so when I compared this former-dissident group with dissident translators elsewhere.

What, we might ask, was the political situation that led to this state of affairs?

Against the backdrop of the British mandatory rule of Palestine (1917–1948), Socialist and Revisionist camps struggled bitterly over the character of the new Israeli culture/nation in the making. Though the two camps, one led by David Ben-Gurion and the other led by Ze'ev Jabotinsky, were both ardently Zionist in their “Return to Zion” policy, they could not have been more different in the way they envisioned the state-to-be and life therein. Revisionists, who were basically “right-wing,” more “bourgeois,” or, if you wish, more conservative, politically speaking, rejected the socialist ideology adopted by those who eventually became the founding fathers of the state of Israel. They also put much stress on “pomp” or “splendor,” be it formal dress or public ceremonies, to the point that they were accused of fascism. Disagreement over crucial ideological views was not all that separated the two camps in pre-state Israel; there were also fierce fights over topical problems such as how to resist British rule and to face growing Arab aggression.

Moreover, neither of the two camps was especially unified. The Revisionist camp knew inner strife, separated as it was into two factions, EZEL and LEHI, which argued over the degree of violence to use against the common enemy and — tragically enough — against brothers.² LEHI itself was comprised of extreme-left and extreme-right members, with the latter claiming a “big” territory that included Trans-Jordan, as well as Canaanites of the extreme-left who wished to partake of a Middle East devoid of boundaries or nationalities. The factional struggle intensified during World War II, when the Socialist Zionist camp, headed by Ben-Gurion, backed the British in the war against Nazi Germany while the two Revisionist factions did not see any reason to suspend terrorist attacks against the British “oppressors.” In fact they even intensified these attacks, claiming that British involvement in the war made them a more vulnerable target. The Socialist camp repeatedly offered to join forces against the common enemy, be it the British or the hostile Arab population. Toward the mid-1940s, however, facing the danger of two opposing Zionist armies, Ben-Gurion was forced to adopt a series of crucial and painful measures to deal with this factional conflict, measures that contributed to tearing the country and families apart, and often literally set brother against brother.

Ben-Gurion’s policy and the socialist ideology that informed it eventually won, as we know, but the factional battle had by then become so bitter that one of the first moves taken by the winning side was to proclaim all dissidents “outsiders,” if not pariahs. When the state of Israel was founded in 1948, former dissidents who had spent years in underground movements found themselves not only worn out and devoid of any economic means or formal education, but also jobless, and, moreover, unable to obtain work in the public sector. Golda Meir, then Minister of Foreign Affairs, was known to have announced that no dissident would cross the threshold of the Foreign Ministry. As a result, many Revisionists turned to the private sector, mainly to the private book industry, becoming translators, editors, and publishers of popular literature in subversive publishing firms.

It should be noted that not all agents of translation in the popular book market were former political dissidents. Some, for instance, were young people with no specific political orientation who were interested in making fast money and translated or “pseudo-translated” for small subversive publishers. But popular literature was, ideologically speaking, the best outlet for those who were rejected by the mainstream for several reasons. First, they believed publishing to be a commercial

2. I am using the term dissidents unwillingly, mainly because it has, in many cultures, a positive connotation; the term in Hebrew — *porshim*, dissenters, was negative, referring to the act of leaving the commune. Detailed historical background can be found in Bell J. Bowyer 1977. *Terror out of Zion: Irgun Zvai Leumi, Lehi and the Palestine Underground 1929–1949*. New York: Avon.

business, a money-making venture, which should be managed as such, that is, publishing any genre or model, low or high, providing it would be a commercial success. Second, the spirit of entrepreneurship was part of this free market ideology. Moreover, the peripheral book industry received no governmental subsidies or grants, and its agents had to rely on their own resources. In addition, one must bear in mind that popular literature was part of the Yiddish tradition, and while the mainstream was struggling to free itself from the Diaspora heritage and shape a New Jew, agents in non-mainstream literature were less committed to this ideal and had no qualms whatsoever about peddling cheap bourgeois literature for the masses.³

Barred from public office, intellectuals of the ex-dissident camp who had received some professional training would find their place in the professional world and become lawyers or accountants. The happy few who could raise some money would resume or start academic studies. But many who had neither professional training nor funds entered the one realm which demanded neither: writing.

It could be in journalism, of course in non-mainstream papers, such as the evening papers *Yedioth Achronot* (Latest News) and *Ma'arive* (Nocturnal); or in the new "bourgeois" magazines *La'isha* (For the Woman) and *Olam Ha'kolnoa* (The World of Cinema); or even more subversive magazines, such as the then tabloid *Ha'olam Ha'zeh* (This World) and *Gamad* (Dwarf, following the British Lilliput tradition). These magazines had a "bad" reputation, either as American capitalist trash (*Cinema*) or as sensational semi-pornographic trash (*Ha'olam Ha'ze*, *Gamad*).

Since these former dissidents typically spoke various languages, they often became translators, even without having had any formal education in the field. They supported one another out by supplying work for ex-dissidents in the popular book industry.

Habitus

In terms of political/ideological inclination, it is essential to emphasize again that the dissident camp was far from homogeneous and that it included people of both extreme-left and extreme-right ideologies. In socioeconomic terms, they were

3. In 1939, H. Shunamit, alias Shlomo Gelper, wrote the best-selling popular novel *The Captive from Tel-Aviv*, and introduced the detective genre into Hebrew culture. He was also a famous translator from Yiddish and a Yiddish writer. When his ventures in the Israeli book market began to diminish, he emigrated to the U.S. and continued translating and writing in Yiddish for the Jewish community in New York.

mostly middle class city dwellers, at a time when the socialist mainstream granted high status to the image of the worker and the *Kibbutz* or commune pioneer.

The bourgeois and/or Revisionist background of these translators also conferred a different, liberal, vision of the economy. Revisionist right-wing ideology was strongly linked with economic notions of the free market, supply and demand, profit, and competition. Whereas Socialist “culture shapers” relied on institutions and parties for recognition, backing and material subsidies, right-wing dissidents relied mostly on their entrepreneurial spirit.⁴ Whereas left-wing ideologues and native-born Israelis strove to sever the links with the old world and the old Jew symbolized by the Ghetto and by Yiddish language and culture, the ex-Revisionist dissidents’ habitus included a strong link to the Diaspora, world Jewry, and Yiddish.

It follows that whereas mainstream ideology was absorbed in the all-engulfing project of the melting pot, striving to erase former national or cultural affiliations and to force the new “native” Sabra⁵ image on all newcomers, ex-Revisionist dissidents largely refused to take part in the creation of this new ethos. Thus, they were not part of the select group of “culture shapers,” from whom, as we know, they had already been estranged due to their political activism. The Canaanites, who advocated assimilation in a virtual Canaan of old, were somewhat closer to the New Jew ideology in this respect, which may explain why some of them eventually found their way into the mainstream.

Religion, or tradition, set them apart as well. Whereas the New Hebrew was an atheist and Zionism, a secular movement, many dissidents of right-wing affiliation refused to sever their ties with the Jewish religion and traditions. As a consequence, many Oriental Jews, immigrants from Arab-speaking countries who found it hard to leave religion or tradition behind overnight and felt rejected by the mainstream Sabra image, joined the underground movements and now shared the dissidents’ fortunes, though their habitus was completely different.

The following list provides a glimpse of a few well-known translators/editors/publishers in the business of popular literature. I came across their names in the course of my research on subversive popular literature in Hebrew before and after the establishment of the Israeli state. Part of my methodology was then to conduct interviews with publishers, editors, and translators who had participated in the production of the many popular books and chapbooks printed in this period.

4. Needless to say, they did not get institutional grants, and sometimes had technical difficulties in obtaining the commonest commodities, such as paper, in times of shortage.

5. The Tzabar, or Sabra, was the nickname for youth born in pre-state Israel or those who had arrived in Israel as young children. The metaphor of the Tzabar (prickly pear) reflected their rough prickly outside, in contrast with their sweet inside. In an immigrant society, the native-born soon acquired a desirable status.

Most of the participants had passed away; in certain cases, however, I managed to locate and interview close relatives. The interviews comprised questions about the person's childhood, country of origin, early career, choice of source texts and source cultures, status in the literary world, competition, self-image, and so on.⁶ It never occurred to me to ask about political affiliation — at least not at first. But once so many of them had volunteered information about their political activism, I began to notice a pattern. Still, I did not include the question in subsequent interviews, preferring to wait for them to offer it. Only in a later phase did I approach those who were famous for their political orientation. When I could not locate neither the participant nor a close family member, I looked for information on the web. Surprisingly, this led me to sites linked to the underground movements EZEL or LEHI, which referred to the participants by their code names or nicknames. The name Yaacov (Yoel) Amrami is such an example, where the publisher proudly carried his code name with him throughout his life.

What follows is a list of those individuals interviewed with a short description of their job, status, and dispositions:

Shmuel Friedman, owner of Friedman Publishing, initiator and owner of *Olam Ha'kolnoa*, from a family of Revisionists. [Deceased. I interviewed his daughter who inherited the family business.]

Eli Meishish of Deshe Publishing, till recently editor of the right-wing settlers' newspaper *Nativ*. [Interviewed.]

Shmuel Katz, EZEL, Jabotinsky's disciple and later Begin's adviser, owner of Karni publishing. [I interviewed his close friend.]

Ezra Narkis, joined EZEL as a teenager and told me he had to run errands and supply food for an underground member in hiding who was disguised as an Orthodox Jew, and turned out to be Menachem Begin. He first started translating in school, and later established his own pulp fiction firm under several names (Yanshuf [Owl], Narkis). [Interviewed.]

Shraga Gafni (dozens of pseudonym), famous writer, translator, children's book illustrator. Canaanite and active LEHI member, in charge of LEHI's Intelligence. Many of his stories depict heroic underground skirmishes led by children against the British. [Recently deceased. Internet sources.]

Jonathan Ratosh (alias Uriel Shelach, Uriel Halperin), a famous LEHI member who founded the "Young Hebrew" movement, later called the Canaanites in 1939.⁷ A translator, but mainly a poet and an editor, who was renowned in the mainstream as well. [Deceased. Very well known. Book and article about him.]

6. Interviews were usually three hours long and conducted in two or more sessions.

7. A derogatory nickname coined by the mainstream poet Avraham Shlonsky. Ratosh was 30 then, in a group consisting mostly of youngsters of 19–20.

David Shahar, famous author and translator. Ratosh figures as one of his recurring characters. [Deceased. Very well known, although he never acquired a central position in mainstream literature or publishing.]

Yaacov (Yoel) Amrami, EZEL member, Hadar Publishing (the word *Hadar* literally meaning “pomp”), provided work for Ratosh, Shahar, and other dissidents. [Deceased. Internet sources].

Aharon Amir, Canaanite ideologue, LEHI member. Prolific writer, editor, and publisher, but mostly known as a translator. Amir soon found his way to the mainstream, and eventually became an Israel Prize laureate. [Deceased. I interviewed him one month before his death.]

Amos Kenan, Canaanite, active LEHI member. Translator, writer, satirist, painter, and sculptor. Arrested in 1952 for an assassination attempt on Minister of Transportation David-Zvi Pinkas, and acquitted for lack of evidence.⁸ *Haaretz* terminated his satirical column “Uzi & Co.” Aharon Amir told me that he then supplied Kenan with work as a translator or pseudotranslator. [Deceased. Much information is available in a biography written by his widow.]

Matty Shmuelevitz, active LEHI member, sentenced by the British to be hanged in Akko prison. Wrote in the LEHI paper *Mivrak* (Telegram). Started his own publishing firm Ktavim (Writings). [Deceased. I interviewed his widow.]

Yoel Geppner, active LEHI member. Started his own publishing firm, Ledori. [Over ninety-five years of age and still of sound mind and body. Interviewed.⁹]

Maxim Gilan, poet, translator of erotica under the pseudonym G. Kasim. Claimed to be LEHI member but, according to Aharon Amir, was not. In the 1960s, following scandals and imprisonment due to his leftist political activity, emigrated to Paris, where he founded the paper *Israel & Palestine* in collaboration with PLO members when such collaboration was still strictly forbidden. As a peripheral poet, translator, and political activist, saw the benefits in assuming a dissident identity. In a case of belated recognition, he won the Prime Minister’s Prize in 2005. [Deceased. Quite famous. Internet sources.]

This list is far from exhaustive, representing only the most famous names in the industry. There are dozens of lesser-known individuals, as well as hundreds of others who are more or less faceless. A pattern emerges of talented young people

8. Kenan’s arrest and acquittal occurred four years after the establishment of the Israeli state. Pinkas gave in to demands of Religious parties to stop public transportation on Sabbath.

9. Six years ago I was invited to his 90th birthday party and turned out to be the only guest with no affiliation to the “ranks.” Most were famous ex-dissidents who shared anecdotes about their feats in the struggle against the British. The evening closed with the small crowd rising to their feeble feet to sing the LEHI hymn “Mi shura yeshahrer raq ha’mavet” (Only death shall release from the ranks). To hear Geppner discuss his experiences, visit <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1ch5if83Zgo>

who had served together in the “ranks” and then helped each other when their way to the mainstream was blocked. While this Revisionist linguistic field jointly opposed the Ben-Gurionist mainstream, it was far from united internally and was roughly divided between the two opposing camps, EZEL and LEHI. Canaanites in the LEHI camp bitterly opposed Jabotinsky followers. A few, as mentioned, found their way into the mainstream. Others, such as Gilan, used the “dissident tag” as a stepping stone, or brandished it later when the right-wing parties came into power. Though these people found their way to the publishing industry and became translators and small-time publishers, there was nothing in their personal background to prepare them for this employment and this profession was taken up as a last resort. Their heterogeneity, as well as their non-voluntary choice of profession, will be a crucial point in my questioning of the habitus theory.

Does the habitus theory apply?

Bourdieu’s habitus theory, developed in the 1980s, enjoyed a comeback in recent years when researchers in the field of Translation Studies began to focus on translators and interpreters in specific sociological contexts or settings. Bourdieu’s theory of the habitus, let us first emphasize, contributed much to Translation Studies in that it theorizes the inculcation of objective social structures into the subjective, mental experience of agents, in this case translators. Bourdieu, however, introduced two closely related terms but, as some argue, not completely compatible, distinguishing, as we know, between *personal* habitus and *field* habitus. The relationship between habitus and field is two-way, according to Bourdieu. The field exists only insofar as social agents possess the dispositions and set of perceptual schemata that are necessary to constitute that field and imbue it with meaning. Concomitantly, by participating in the field, agents incorporate into their habitus the proper know-how that will allow them to constitute the field.

Bourdieu refers to “class habitus” as the totally preprogrammed set of dispositions that is formatted and fixed under supposedly homogeneous life conditions, incorporated into an individual’s body and mindset from an early age. This definition alone has already triggered some debate within Translation Studies. Sela-Sheffi points out that by making a direct link between a person’s class, environment, upbringing, and ideology and whatever norms he or she has absorbed and internalized as his or her own and called his or her “taste,” Bourdieu may be somewhat too deterministic. Moreover, Bourdieu’s theory of the pre-programming involved in habitus acquisition does not lack inner conflicts for, while seeing class habitus as totally “preprogrammed” and “formatted and fixed” in an individual body and mindset from an early age, also emphasizes its improvisational and differential

nature (Sela-Sheffy 2005: 4). The case presented here, of translators, editors, and publishers “malgré eux” takes this improvisational nature a step forward, for this group includes people of different often clashing ideologies –political, economic, and sociological — who either stumbled into the field or had no better alternative than to participate in it. The habitus of the field, in this case, cannot be that of the translation profession per se, nor of any anti-establishment or “resistant” translation but, if anything, that of a subversive translation field in the periphery. This field was directly dependent on the local power game, that is, on the local multilayered character of both the mainstream and the periphery. Furthermore, with hardly any infrastructure to fall back on, the actors in this rather shaky field struggled for hegemony in a new culture. The concept of “dissident” translators does not apply to this particular case as the conditions and dispositions of these translators adapted in light of outside constraints and demands. First, these unstable, transitory circumstances given, we may have to modify Bourdieu’s term regarding the “improvisational nature” of the field habitus, allowing for a field to form and “unform,” fold and unfold, when its only *raison d’être* is opposition to another field. Nevertheless, if we insist on the two-way relationship between field and agent, how can we talk of pre-programming in this period of transition and inner strife when there is no “formation,” internalization, embodiment, or professional identity to speak of? The periphery was a conglomerate of small printing businesses that emerged and disappeared daily, of fierce battles between competitors over the niche that was left unattended by the establishment. In “normal” cases, the categories of understanding and perception that constitute a habitus, being congruous with the objective organization of the field, tend to reproduce the very structures of the field. Not so when the field constantly organizes and reorganizes itself, with “agents” unwillingly thrown into it struggling to survive and adapt.

Second, in the case of Israeli individuals who had spent their youth fighting in underground movements only to find themselves barred from public office upon the establishment of the state, the participants’ aspirations and demands were far “higher” than what existing conditions merited. They had aspired to leave a mark on the newborn Hebrew culture in Israel, whereas “conditions” born out of fierce local struggles left them no choice but to become small-time translators, editors, or publishers of “cheap,” marginal literature. Unlike the famous culture shapers and eminent translators, editors, and publishers in the mainstream, most periphery translators did not leave a mark, their power residing in their number, or rather in the cumulative power of the masses that read them. Still, these masses did not show much interest in them; they did not bother to seek out the “real” identity of pseudo-translations nor to distinguish between “good” and “bad” translators. There was hardly any “enjeu” to fight for, in Bourdieu’s terms, except commercial profit. There was little concern for ethics as the competition was too

fierce. Publishers openly admitted they “stole” — books, covers, and titles — from each other and from foreign books or magazines. When, so many years later, I expressed the idea to some publishers that they had contributed to the stratification of Hebrew literature, they looked at me with a mixture of disbelief and suspicion: was I pulling their leg? That they may have done so was neither intentional nor foreseen. What many of them had been involved in during their militant underground days, was the struggle over the future form and direction of the state of Israel and Hebrew culture; once their side failed, they were pushed away, marginalized, and so they tried to survive as best they could.

From a diachronic perspective, the only way one could perhaps define this group is in terms of internal struggles within the book industry, embedded as it was within internal political strife over national and cultural identity.

Professional behavior and habitus?

Unlike cases where political dissidents turned to translation because original writing had been taken away from them and their own voice had been silenced, so to speak, the Revisionists became professionals in the popular book industry when no other venues were open. The question then arises whether there is a visible link between their professional behavior and their habitus? Indeed, there is an obvious link between the two in four major aspects: (1) the selection of genres to translate, which was made on a commercial and not a didactic basis; (2) the selection of themes to translate, which were not “engaged” and did not have to revolve around Socialist values; (3) the selection of source cultures for translation, which extended beyond Russian- or Russian-mediated texts; and (4) in the freedom to disregard certain norms, especially puritan norms. The initial reliance on Yiddish literature (Shavit 1986), accompanied by the predominance of commercial considerations, enhanced flexibility in accepting what the mainstream considered “cheap,” “vulgar,” “scandalous” popular literature, up to and including erotic texts.

In terms of stylistic and literary norms, however, things seem to be even more complex. Hebrew literature was still young and so rather limited and selective in the stylistic norms it legitimized. Moreover, most translators in the periphery were neither professional enough nor empowered enough to dare undertake revolutions in style.¹⁰ Popular literature, even in the most marginal publishing houses, looked

10. A few did, like Ratosh, who attempted to revolutionize Hebrew poetry by using erotic language, for example. His attempt was marginalized and only recognized much later. His translation style was so old-fashioned, though, that his Hebrew *Cyrano*, for instance, translated in 1965, is practically unreadable today.

up to the mainstream for models of *commendable* literary style, and although some of the models made it possible to experiment with colloquial language and even slang, most translators chose “safe,” acceptable options. Even in the periphery, and sometimes even more so there, prestige seemed to lie in the high registers of the literary language and in the mastery of its multilayered sources. Moreover, side by side with popular novels and “pulp fiction,” some dissidents’ publishing firms, especially former EZEL members, had side ventures relating to ideologically-motivated literature, depicting the Revisionist ethos, Revisionist heroes, or “underground” heroic events. This literature was obviously normative in style. In other words, while it reflected a revolutionary role in the choice of genres and themes, it displayed a rather conformist approach in other aspects. It is important to stress, however, that both conformity to the norm and divergence from it were in this case rather eclectic since there was hardly any “policy” behind them. Some norms (mainly in the domain of selection) may have been induced by the habitus, yet they could just as well be attributed to necessity. They could be seen as optional strategies taken by the agents in the subversive translating/publishing field.

All in all, can we identify a professional habitus in this historical example? Do these individuals share this system of durable and transposable dispositions through which they think and act — as translators or publishers — according to their life conditions and social trajectory?¹¹ Do we have agents sharing the same disposition that engenders practices, perceptions, and attitudes that are regular, even if not necessarily fixed or invariant? A closer look at the few who made their way to the mainstream would show that it was their “star” quality and their personal charisma, not necessarily their professional performance, that allowed their mainstream success.

Those who “crossed the lines”

It may have been their stylistic normativity that allowed for or simplified the transition from periphery to center that some ex-dissidents such as Aharon Amir, Jonathan Ratosh, or Amos Kenan achieved or partly achieved. These individuals’ extraordinary charisma and outstanding mastery of Hebrew, combined with their anti-establishment character, won them a kind of “star” quality. Aharon Amir’s translation of *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* from 1951 displayed a phenomenal mastery of Israeli Hebrew and its ancient origins, with an inventiveness that was truly exemplary. His personal mannerism as an avowed Canaanite and his deliberate oriental Hebrew accent (despite having been born in Lithuania) enhanced

11. See Meylaerts 2010: 1–4 for a discussion of the question with relation to minority language.

this “star” quality and helped the public to accept his somewhat eccentric views. In contrast, years went by before the academic community recognized Jonathan Ratosh as a worthy subject of research,¹² though some researchers maintain that he had gained that star quality without really deserving it (see Sela-Sheffy 2005: 10–11). Nevertheless, in his struggle to help create an anti-Jewish Jewish state, he helped to create a nation of “Israelis” as much as mainstream Zionism did. Finally, Kenan’s satirical column, “Uzi & Co.,” his Canaanite paintings and sculptures, and his “whip” qualities infiltrated the Israeli scene, as did his Hebrew renditions of *Tarzan*, mistaken for pseudo-translations.¹³ As mentioned above, it is not incidental that these “stars” were of the Canaanite extreme-left faction, which, having no nationalistic agenda, was somewhat more favorably regarded by the mainstream than any right-wing ideology.

Professional pride?

It is hard to say whether these former dissident translators took pride in their profession, which had been mostly forced upon them by political and economic circumstances. Some of them made it into an art that transcended mere “craftsmanship;” Ratosh is supposed to have renewed or invented no fewer than 4000 Hebrew words, and was the forerunner of science-fiction translations in Hebrew, although it took years for the genre to take root. Still, he was first and foremost a poet. In fact, being poets, editors, publishers, or journalists, not to mention painters or sculptors, the Revisionist professionals all performed as “more than just translators.” Except perhaps in the case of Aharon Amir, who was awarded the prestigious Israel Prize at the age of 80 for his work as a translator, despite his tireless other efforts as a poet and editor, neither the Revisionists themselves nor the general public would define their profession according to the term “translator.” The fact that Amir translated 300 books into Hebrew, from the cheapest popular chapbook to masterpieces of English literature, mostly in bad translations, obeying

12. In 1982, a year after his death, Professor Nurith Gertz organized the symposium “Literary and Ideological Trends in the Poetry of Ratosh.” Symposium in Memory of Jonathan Ratosh: Tel-Aviv University (Hebrew). Gertz is Amos Kenan’s wife. See Ziva Shamir, 1993, *The Origins of Originality: The Poetry of Jonathan Ratosh, Father of the New Hebrew Youth (“Canaanites”)*, Tel Aviv, *Hakibbutz hameuchad*. Rachel Weissbrod, 2003, “‘You’ll Be a Man, My Son’ — Jonathan Ratosh as a Translator of Poetry,” in: *The Language and Poetry of Jonathan Ratosh*, Michal Efrat (ed.). Haifa: The Department of Hebrew Language, University of Haifa, 133–153 [Hebrew].

13. Kenan wrote serialized *Tarzan* booklets, which people assumed were pseudo-translations but which Kenan wrote them in Hebrew, under various Hebrew pen-names.

old-fashioned stylistic norms, no doubt contributed to his reputation as first and foremost a translator; but that was not how he viewed himself.

The question of readership

Who was the Revisionists' target public? Having no institutionalized infrastructure, popular literature agents had to "invent" their readership as they went along. They did not possess mainstream canonizing/consecrating powers represented by party subscribers, school curricula, favorable reviews, prestigious prizes or the support of public libraries. True, ex-dissidents had their avowed followers within their "own" political camps, but they were small in number and concerned with literature for the masses. As opposed to dissidents in other countries, who operated underground in dictatorial regimes and won the faith and even admiration of the majority of oppressed readers, the mainstream in this case still loathed the dissidents for having thrown the young country into internal strife and ruthless bloodshed. As a result, they quite deliberately addressed new immigrants as opposed to Sabra, urbanites as opposed to Kibbutz or commune dwellers, although their greatest success was in eventually finding a general public that was interested in greater diversity of reading material, not in their political affiliation.

On a diachronic note, the Revisionists' contribution to the book industry in Israel was positive in that it prevented the mainstream from stagnating (Ben-Ari 2009: 181). The commercial success of their cheap products provoked the mainstream into an attempt to commercialize canonic publishing as well. The fact that subsidies from institutions and political parties diminished over the years further adds to the realization that book publishing was as much an industry as any other. The schism between the mainstream and the dissidents was far from negligible, and far from limited to the realm of literary production. It represented a gap in Israeli culture that not only persisted but actually widened over the years. The tables were turned in 1977 when the right-wing parties came to power, and they have had the upper hand ever since in all kinds of coalitions with or without the Religious or Labor parties. In the meantime, more and more private publishing enterprises have sprung up, taking the edge off "politically" oriented production.

Field habitus?

Does Bourdieu's description of the field habitus apply in this case? Do we have internal struggle for hegemony among the participants in the field or, do we have people who are acquainted with the rules of the game, endowed with the habitus

that implies recognition and acceptance of these rules, endowed with techniques and strategies, and ready to play for the specific “enjeu” of this field? What field? That of “subversive translation”? This field, as such, does not exist; it is the result of a certain conjecture, of certain dynamic relations within the struggle for political and cultural power. Moreover, if we pursue the line of thought introduced in connection to readership and compare this group to other dissident translators in other countries, this group differs, allowing no base for a “field” definition, first and foremost because the others perform within totalitarian regimes. But were these others then “translators” or freedom fighters? Dissident translators/publishers in the former Soviet Russia worked underground and translated subversive literature for ideological reasons, often risking their lives in the process. Deprived of their own voice, Russian poets “used the voice of Goethe, Shakespeare, Orbeliani or Hugo to talk to the reader” (Baer 2010: 149, citing Russian translator Etkind in the notorious “Affair of the Sentence,” 1978: 32). They probably considered this role not a profession but a *vocation*, a political activity, and in many cases were (again probably) not earning money for it, or at least, they were not in it primarily for the money. The material they translated and published was officially censored, for translation, as well as translation criticism, soon became “a site of resistance to official Soviet culture and values” (ibid.), that was nevertheless considered “valuable” “high” literature. At the very least, these subversive translators took pride in translating and publishing this literature underground, received prestige for their “heroic” undertaking, and knew they had a vast, albeit “unofficial,” reading public in the intelligentsia that was at times subversive, or dissident, but for the most part simply unofficial. They may have been aware that they were creating, or were at least a part of a “subculture” with a “claim on the spiritual leadership of society” (Shlapentokh 1990: 122, cited in Baer 2010: 151).

In this respect, they are in no way similar to the peripheral dissidents in a democratic regime, where highly-valued literature — in terms of cultural capital — was translated and published by the mainstream. The latter could not take pride in the “cheap” material they translated and published, nor was the establishment ever interested enough in them to grant them the status of an “opposition” or to try to censure them. They did not fit into the category of resistant activists either, for they had left their activist days behind. To quote Tymoczko (2010: 11), there was no “engagement” in their activity which was manifested in a range of enterprises. Most of them had a passive reaction to circumstances.

This distinguishes them from another category of translators/publishers in totalitarian regimes, namely political dissidents in Soviet Russia or in Latin America who temporarily turned to the relative safety of translation (Milton 2010: 206) in situations where speaking their mind and publishing original writings would have been dangerous. Unlike Israeli dissidents of the 1950s, though, these temporary

translators/publishers in the Soviet or Latin-American regimes may have had a prior status, a reputation as poets or authors for instance, which they could not maintain under a dictatorship, and which they may have resumed when circumstances were again favorable.¹⁴

Is translation, then, a surrogate for writing? Is the more “passive” act of translation a transitory stage to the activism found in original writing? Or teaching? Or leading a political party? Are dissidents, wherever they may be, in fact preconditioned by their “dissident habitus,” whatever form it may take, to become translators? Or, rather, to become translators as long as conditions are “unfavorable” and later “graduate” to more active roles when conditions become favorable again? Does this have any implication for conceptualizing the habitus of the field in general? Is this anomaly just an affirmation of the behavior of the field in “normal” times, and therefore the exception that proves the rule? Or is this abnormal case just an amplification of the problematic aspects of the field habitus theory? Is the translation field habitus in this case just a surrogate, a springboard, so to speak, to better jobs, to a higher status, to the “real” thing? A glimpse at the literary figures of translators and interpreters in several contemporary works of fiction suggests it may well be so (see Ben-Ari 2010:220–242), in spite of the progress made in the advancing of translator’s image reflected in research.

Although these questions remain unresolved and require further investigation, one thing is clear: the field habitus theory does not suffice in this case as there is no one definable “field” here, unless it is a surrogate or a temporary one. One has to fall back on Even-Zohar’s more dynamic theories of the power struggle between center and periphery and perhaps of culture –shaping and the maintenance of cultural entities (Even-Zohar 2002). The small, peripheral ex-dissident group would not have survived unless it was also “profitable” in some way to belong to their group. It became profitable — commercially — once it gave up its political/ideological hue to become part of a larger economic and cultural entity, referred to here as “popular literature,” finally acknowledged by the mainstream in the 1970s. It did *not* become profitable in terms of symbolic capital like status or prestige, and the agents involved — who had made much money at first and then lost it when the system normalized — never showed any pride in their undertaking. In fact, they shrugged off all compliments for having been pioneers in introducing change, considering such comments as irrelevant to their initial motives. Many, like Geppner, insisted they would have chosen a different career if they could live their lives over.

14. Pasternak comes to mind, of course, or Akhmatova, or Joseph Brodsky identifying himself as “Poet. Poet translator” in his trial (Baer 2010: 161). So too does Monteiro Lobato in Brazil (Milton 2010: 206–207).

Conclusion

Within the framework of the sociological turn, this short analysis of political dissidents participating in the book industry probes and problematizes Bourdieu's double sense of habitus. On the whole, people who shared the same habitus, here "a dissident habitus," functioned in much the same way in turning to (or being driven to) peripheral, subversive translating, editing, and publishing in the production of popular literature. However, their so-called shared habitus was far from homogeneous, and its characteristics were shared by many other fields. Moreover, these individuals did not choose their profession but rather accepted it as a last resort. True, their various intellectual, linguistic, and literary abilities may have been preconditioned by their habitus, and when opportunity presented itself they were to some degree bound to become agents in the literary game. But this is a rather far-fetched assumption for they might have joined any number of other professions had circumstances such as funds and age allowed. It was obviously the particular power struggle within the cultural field that engendered the choice in this particular situation, not any habitus of the literary or translation field in itself. The fact that political dissidents in totalitarian regimes such as Soviet Russia and Latin America turned to translation as well, in a situation in which no other job was open to them, or that intellectuals in former Soviet Russia translated and circulated texts clandestinely as an act of resistance to censorship, presents an intriguing topic for further investigation of the field habitus as a temporary surrogate entity. In the Israeli case, the translation of popular literature was yet another battlefield in the greater struggle to shape modern Israeli culture to define national and cultural identity. Those who participated in it were driven by the desire to control the meager symbolic and material capital the establishment had left them.

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“The sheikh of the translators”

The translation methodology of Hunayn ibn Ishaq

Ghada Osman

With the ascension to power of the Abbasid dynasty in 750 CE and the transfer of the capital of the Muslim Empire to the newly-created city of Baghdad, the middle of the eighth century heralded an era that in Islamic history is referred to as the “Golden Age,” during which period the Muslim world became an unrivaled intellectual center for science, philosophy, medicine, and education. Approximately eighty years after the dynasty’s rise to power, the Abbasid Caliph (ruler) al-Ma’mun (d. 833 CE) established in Baghdad *Bayt al-Hikma* (the House of Wisdom), an educational institution where Muslim and non-Muslim scholars together sought to gather the world’s knowledge not only via original writing but also through translation. Probably the most well-known and industrious translator of the era was Hunayn ibn Ishaq (d. 873 CE), known in the West by the Latinized name “Joannitius.” Referred to as “the sheikh of the translators,” he is reported to have mastered the four principal languages of his time: Greek, Syriac, Persian, and Arabic. Hunayn is credited with an immense number of translations, ranging from works on medicine, philosophy, astronomy, and mathematics, to magic and oneiromancy. This article looks at Hunayn’s work, briefly places this key figure within the translatorial *habitus*, discusses his methodology towards translation, as described in his own works, and examines that methodology in light of the sociological and sociolinguistic factors of the time.

Introduction

With the ascension to power of the Abbasid dynasty in 750 CE and the transfer of the capital of the Muslim Empire from Damascus to the newly-created city of Baghdad, the middle of the eighth century heralded an era that in Islamic history is referred to as the “Golden Age,” during which period the Muslim world became an unrivaled intellectual center for science, philosophy, medicine, and education. Approximately eighty years after the Abbasid dynasty’s rise to power, in the year 830 CE, the Abbasid Caliph (ruler) al-Ma’mun (d. 833 CE) established in Baghdad

the House of Wisdom (*Bayt al-Hikma*), an educational institution where Muslim and non-Muslim scholars together sought to gather the world's knowledge not only via original writing but also through translation. Patronized by the secretaries (*kuttab*) of the Abbasid administration, related state functionaries, and independent patrons, the House of Wisdom was an institution in which classic ancient works of Roman, Chinese, Indian, Persian, Greek, and Byzantine origin that would otherwise have been lost were translated into Arabic and Persian and made available to a larger audience. Shortly after its establishment, the House of Wisdom became a school for physicians, scientists, and even translators.

Probably the most well-known and industrious translator of the era was Hunayn ibn Ishaq (d. 873 CE), known in the West by the Latinized name "Joannitius." Referred to as "the sheikh of the translators" because of his prominence in the field, he is reported to have mastered the four principal languages of his time: Greek, Syriac, Persian, and Arabic. Hunayn is credited with an immense number of translations, ranging from works on medicine, philosophy, astronomy, and mathematics to works on magic and oneiromancy. In his 856 CE work, titled "Risalat Hunayn ibn Ishaq ila Ali ibn Yahya fi dhikr ma turjima min Kutub Jalinus bi-'Ilmihi wa Ba'd ma lam yutarjam," [Hunayn ibn Ishaq's letter to Ali ibn Yahya (the son of one of the Caliph's astronomers) mentioning which of Galen's books according to his knowledge have been translated and which have not] and henceforth abbreviated as "Risala," Hunayn enumerates 129 titles, of which he himself translated about 100 into Syriac or Arabic; this list is not even an exhaustive catalog of all his translations (Hunayn 1966). Of Galen's works specifically he translated 58 books into Syriac alone, 12 into Arabic, and 22 into Syriac first and then into Arabic. This is in addition to the augmentations, summaries, and corrections he brought to the works of his pupils and of his predecessors. Hunayn often summarized ancient works, at times presenting them in the form of questions and answers; he explicated several of these ancient texts, and compiled many books based on material selected from Greek scholars (al-Qifti 1970: 171). He wrote on a variety of subjects, including philosophy; within that field he translated some of Plato's and Aristotle's works, such as the former's *Timaeus* [Dialog] and the latter's *Metaphysics*, as well as the commentaries of the ancient Greeks. He also translated writings on agriculture and religion, and worked with Arabic grammar and lexicography. Moreover, Hunayn authored around 30 of his own books about religion and medicine, the overwhelming majority of which were in Arabic.

While Hunayn ibn Ishaq's work is impressive just by its sheer volume, it is even more significant due to its role as the principle method by which Greek learning was preserved and eventually came to be known in the West and elsewhere. His Western counterpart Gerard of Cremona (1114–1187) is renowned for a similar role — having preserved and disseminated Greek works by translating them

into Latin — yet Gerard worked a full three centuries later, and did not author his own works.

This article looks at the translation work of Hunayn ibn Ishaq, about whom very little has been written in general and in English in particular. The four main English-language articles on the figure, Michael Cooperson’s “The Purported Autobiography of Hunayn ibn Ishaq” (1997), Rosanna Gorini’s “The Process of Origin and Growth of Islamic Medicine: The Role of the Translators” (2005), Max Meyerhof’s “New Light on Hunain ibn Ishaq and his Period” (1926), and DW Tschanz’s “A Glimpse on the Figure of Hunayn bin Ishaq” (2003), examine a particular incident in Hunayn’s relationship with the Caliph, Hunayn’s medical works, a list of Hunayn’s main benefactors and book titles, and Hunayn’s general and life history, respectively. The present article, on the other hand, specifically focuses on this key figure’s approach to translation, his methodology, as spelled out in his own writings, examining it in light of the sociological and sociolinguistic factors of the time. It begins by briefly contextualizing Hunayn’s situation within the framework of translatorial *habitus*, then provides background information about Hunayn, moves on to a concise discussion of the sociolinguistic situation of the Muslim Empire in the eighth and ninth centuries, and finally delves into an examination of the methodologies of translation adopted by Hunayn, especially vis-à-vis certain contemporary sociological and sociolinguistic factors. These sociological and sociolinguistic considerations include the movement of Muslim populations throughout the rapidly growing Muslim-ruled Empire and therefore, by extension, the expansion of the Arabic language both geographically and lexically, the shift in the purpose of translation and its audience, and the beginnings of the development of translation as an expanding field.

Translatorial habitus

Scholarship on pre-modern translation efforts and methodologies has been understandably scarce, due to the paucity of source material on the subject. A few works on the topic, such as Weihe Zong’s “An Overview of Translation in China: Practice and Theory” (2003), trace some key translators of the pre-medieval and medieval eras. However, little has been found regarding how these figures approached translation. The work of Hunayn ibn Ishaq therefore represents one of the earliest discussions of translation methodologies. But how does one situate the work of such a proto-translator? Writing at a time when the field of translation had not been defined, Hunayn worked to establish parameters for himself and his students. Thus, it is crucial to identify Hunayn’s *habitus* as an individual.

Jean-Marc Gouanvic, one of the earliest authors to situate Pierre Bourdieu’s concept of *habitus* within the context of translation, explained how, as Wolf

and Fukari succinctly summarize in their volume *Constructing a Sociology of Translation* (2007), “During the translation procedure, the act of translating is incorporated through, and at the same time influenced by, the translator’s *habitus*, which can be identified by reconstructing the translator’s social trajectory” (Wolf 2007: 19). Gouanvic describes two levels of *habitus*: the translator’s as a result of his or her practice and the specific *habitus* that is constructed while the cultures involved encounter one another during the transfer process. In other words, translation strategies, according to Gouanvic, are generally not to be understood as deliberate choices conforming to or breaking translational norms — of which there appear to have been barely any during Hunayn’s time — but rather as the translator’s own *habitus*, which both structures field in question and, in turn, is structured by it (Gouanvic 2005: 157–158). We see this interplay in the work of Hunayn ibn Ishaq.

In his response to Bourdieu, Bernard Lahire stresses — as the title to his book *La culture des individus* (2004) suggests — that the individual is not trapped in the tight web of the *habitus*, as Bourdieu posits, but instead that he is determined by multiple social experiences which influence him over the span of a lifetime. Lahire criticizes the universalist stance of the notion of *habitus* in particular, arguing that individuals can draw on a vast array of dispositions which allow for a more differentiated view of their socialization. As Wolf and Fukari point out:

When Lahire argues for a sociology ‘at the level of the individual’, he is seeking to foreground the plurality of the individual’s dispositions... and the multiplicity of different situations in which the agents interact. The focus on the diverse modalities which prompt the habitus could provide a better route to explain the conditions underlying translation strategies, and reconstruct the unconscious and conscious motives which trigger specific translation situations.

(Wolf and Fukari 2007: 22, Lahire:393)

Studying Hunayn’s discussions of his translation work confirms the importance of this approach. Hunayn related methodology to varying situations and to diverse subject matter. Gouanvic, as well as Daniel Simeoni, describes the shift in the translation field that takes place with the shift in the subject area as the text is translated (Simeon 1998: 31, Gouanvic 2001: 36). Hunayn’s list of varying approaches according to content and audience certainly supports this fluidity.

Thus, by necessity, when studying a proto-translator such as Hunayn, one must engage in a micro-level analysis that takes into consideration the role of the individual and the issues, cultures, and communities with which he is in contact. Yet such a methodology, developing out of necessity, is, in fact, according to Gouanvic and Lahire, also the most appropriate regardless of circumstance as *habitus* can only be examined at the micro-level, which in turn sheds light on the

macro-level analysis, providing fodder for discussion regarding the inception of regulated translation activities.

Hunayn ibn Ishaq: Background

Abu Zayd Hunayn ibn Ishaq al-Ibadi was born in Hira, Iraq in 809 CE, and died in Baghdad in 875 CE. Like most people of his hometown, he was a member of a Nestorian Christian sect. Hunayn’s father, Ishaq, was a pharmacist. The young Hunayn, wishing to study medicine, joined the celebrated Medical Academy of Jundishapur (in Kuzistan, a province of Persia) that had been founded at the beginning of the fourth century CE by the Sassanid King Sapur II. Hunayn’s teacher was Yuhanna ibn Massawayh (d. 857 CE) who had migrated to Baghdad at the beginning of the ninth century CE where he had established a hospital, and was appointed director of *Bayt al-Hikma*.

Hunayn was most likely trilingual from his youth; Arabic was the vernacular of his native town, Persian a frequently-used tongue in his region, and Syriac the language of the liturgy and of higher Christian education. As a young teen, Hunayn went to Baghdad and studied medicine with Yuhanna ibn Massawayh at *Bayt al-Hikma*, but his habit of intensive questioning angered Yuhanna, who threw him out in a fit of rage after one too many questions, disparagingly criticizing his knowledge of medicine and of Greek.

Hunayn therefore applied himself to the study of Greek, traveling to and living in “the lands of the Byzantines” [bilad al-Rum] for two years until he mastered the language. This enabled him to learn medicine directly from the writings of Hippocrates (d. 370 BCE), Galen (d. 201 CE), and other notable figures in the field. He also went to Basra in Iraq, where he perfected his Arabic grammar. The thirteenth-century biographer Ibn Abu Usaybi’a wrote of him, “Hunayn was the most learned and knowledgeable person in his time in the Greek, Syriac, and Persian languages, which none of the translators of his time knew; he was always trying to improve his knowledge of Arabic, until he became one of the best versed in it” (1965: 186).

Now a master of Greek, Syriac, and Arabic, Hunayn came back to Baghdad around the year 826 CE. Upon his return, Hunayn displayed his newly-acquired skills by reciting the works of Homer and Galen. In awe, his old teacher Yuhanna ibn Masawayh reconciled with Hunayn, and the two started to work together. In time, Hunayn became such an effective physician that the Caliph ended the long list of personal physicians from the Bukhtishu family and named Hunayn instead as his doctor. Furthermore, impressed by Hunayn’s intelligence and linguistic ability, the Caliph placed him in charge of *Bayt al-Hikma*, prompting Yuhanna to entrust him with the translation of Galen’s works into Syriac and Arabic. Hunayn was

one of a handful of scholars who had the opportunity to travel to Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and even Byzantine lands to obtain works of scholarship for translation (Al-Nadim 1970: 693). For example, Hunayn said of Galen's "On Demonstration," a rarity in the ninth century, "I took pains to search for it and visited Iraq, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, but I could find only half a copy in Damascus" (Ibn Abu Usaybī'a 1965: 187). This revival was greatly assisted by the encouragement of the Caliphs and of independent patrons such as the three sons of Musa ibn Shaker, one of the Caliph's astronomers, who spent large sums of money to this end. In this fashion the most important of the Greek works on medicine and philosophy found their way to the Abbassid capital.

Once Hunayn became chief physician to the Caliph, the latter supported a translation institute under him. But Hunayn preferred to work for independent patrons, such as the abovementioned sons of Musa ibn Shaker. The three brothers, who were of humble origins but who had become the most famous mathematicians of their age, paid the best translators such as Hunayn about five hundred gold coins per month, as well as — as mentioned above — financing their expeditions to search for manuscripts (Al-Nadim 1970: 585).

During the earliest phase of the translation movement, under the late Umayyad dynasty and that of the very early Abbasids, the Arabs knew no Greek and were thereby forced to adopt a multi-step, multi-language translation process. Greek documents would be translated first into Syriac and then from Syriac to Arabic. Even during later translation efforts this was often the case; for example, since few of Hunayn's disciples had their teacher's mastery of Greek, Syriac, and Arabic, the translation of texts was often via a multi-step process. Thus, Aristotle's *Topics* was translated first into Syriac by Ishaq ibn Hunayn and the *Sophistici* [Fallacies] by Ibn Na'imah and Abu Bishr Matta, after which Yahya ibn Adi rendered both these Syriac versions into Arabic (Al-Nadim 1970: 600).

The sociolinguistic environment

The language situation in the Arabic-speaking world of the eighth century was one of transition. Just one century previously, many of the inhabitants had been monolingual or bilingual in languages that did not include Arabic, such as Aramaic and Greek in Syria, Persian and Aramaic in Iraq, or Coptic and Greek in Egypt. Within a century, populations were shifting to become bilingual or trilingual in languages including Arabic or even monolingual in Arabic. The large-scale shift from a diversity of local languages to an almost uniformly Arabic-speaking realm is often attributed to a Caliph of the Umayyads, the dynasty preceding the Abbasids. This Caliph, Abd al-Malik (r. 685–705 CE), instituted many reforms across the Muslim Empire and decreed in the year 700 CE that Arabic replace local tongues as the

official language of government. Almost overnight, local bureaucratic officials had to learn to communicate in the language, and it took little time for official documents to be written in almost flawless Arabic. Yet as extraordinary as this shift was, it represented only one aspect of the exceptional hold that Arabic came to enjoy. Even more striking was Arabic’s rapid ascent as the literary language of an empire, to the extent that even non-bureaucratic texts by non-Muslims (such as the Egyptian Christian community’s religious manuscripts, for example) came to be written in Arabic. Furthermore, Arabic became the *lingua franca* or a vernacular for much of the population of the Muslim Empire, for Muslim and non-Muslim individuals alike.

Nonetheless, in many ways, the Arabic lexicon had yet to catch up with Arabic’s status as a *lingua franca*. This concern had been apparent as Arabic took over as the language of government, and many bureaucratic terms had to be coined in the process. Arabic faced this problem to an even greater extent with the endeavors of *Bayt al-Hikma*, as the language poised itself to become an instrument of scientific thought. Rather than simply borrowing lexical items from other languages such as Syriac or Persian, which, renowned Arabist Kees Versteegh emphasizes, “whether lexical or non-lexical, is a process that takes place at the level of the speech community: a foreign element is said to have been borrowed if it is incorporated in the structure of another language, whether it is integrated or not” (Versteegh 2001:478), the more capable Hunayn, who found Arabic lexically poor in terms of nomenclature as compared to Syriac, Greek, or Persian, actually attempted to coin completely new words. Another significant sociolinguistic factor was that as Arabic began to spread rapidly, it was more markedly bifurcating into the diglossic phenomenon of a classical written and a colloquial spoken form, and, much to the horror of scholars, writers and speakers were mixing the two, as newer generations lost command of what was seen to be the “original” and “proper” (namely classical) form (see, for example, Ibn Khaldun 2005: 283, 347).

Hunayn’s translations reflected these and other sociological and sociolinguistics factors in a variety of ways. These translation considerations included: varying the target and even the source language of the translators, expanding the Arabic lexicon, turning to an *ad sensum* approach, developing the annotated translation, catering to the audience, and factoring in the translator’s experience. Each of these is discussed below.

Varying source and target languages

The plurality of languages of learning during Hunayn’s time meant that he did not always simply translate from Greek into Arabic. The language into which he translated his works often depended upon who had sponsored a particular commission.

If the sponsoring patron was a Syriac-speaking Nestorian Christian (usually a physician of Jundishapur or Baghdad), Hunayn would have the Greek translation rendered into Syriac, whereas if the patron was an Arab and a Muslim (usually of the court or a scholar), the work would be rendered into Arabic. However, Hunayn further elaborated on these rules. Frequently, he translated a work from Greek first into Syriac, then from Syriac to Arabic, thereby providing for a market of both Christian physicians and Muslim scholars. Hunayn tells us that the Christian scholars, at least, used to gather daily to study a standard work from the “books of the Ancients” and an explanation of it when available (1966: 12); his translation efforts thus provided them with new titles to read during these study groups. In a few cases, books were translated from Greek into Arabic, then from Arabic to Syriac. This was the case with Galen’s book on chest and lung movement, which Stefan ibn Basil translated first into Arabic for one of the Musa brothers, after which Hunayn’s nephew Hubaysh translated it from Arabic to Syriac (Hunayn 1966:23–24). Sometimes Hunayn himself translated from Greek directly to Arabic, as he did with Galen’s treatise on sound (Hunayn 1966:24). Occasionally, he rendered the Greek into Syriac and Arabic simultaneously, as was the case with another of Galen’s treatises that was also commissioned by one of the Musa brothers (Hunayn 1966:42).

Furthermore, in his endeavor to translate as many Greek texts as possible, Hunayn ibn Ishaq was frequently aided by his son, Ishaq ibn Hunayn, and his abovementioned nephew Hubaysh ibn al-Hasan al-ʿAsam, as well as several other disciples such as Thabit ibn Qurr and Isa ibn Yahya ibn Ibrahim and even some Greek-speaking slaves in Baghdad. Especially under the Caliph al-Mutawakkil (r. 847–861 CE), Hunayn worked among other translators of Greek into Syriac and Arabic, and the Caliph placed under his direction scribes versed in the work of translation, such as the abovementioned Stefan ibn Basil and Hubaysh, as well as Musa ibn Khalid and Yahya ibn Harun. These individuals carried out translations that Hunayn afterwards revised.

These collaborative efforts sped up the translation process dramatically. It was quite normal at times for Hunayn to translate a Greek manuscript into Syriac and to have his nephew finish the job by translating the text from Syriac to Arabic, while Hunayn moved on to the next project. This method had the added advantage of enabling a translator to correct his partners’ errors. Since some of Hunayn’s assistants did not understand Greek well enough, they made Syriac translations after Hunayn’s Arabic, or, much more often, Arabic translations after Hunayn’s Syriac (Al-Nadim 1970:699). While Hunayn exercised control throughout his career over the output of his disciples, their work should not be underrated. Hubaysh, for example, was an important medical translator, and it was Ishaq, Hubaysh, and one of Hunayn’s other disciples who took primary responsibility for translating philosophic and mathematical texts, including nearly all of Aristotle’s works (Goodman

1990: 487). Al-Qifti and al-Nadim point out that in fact Ishaq’s Arabic was superior to his father’s (Al-Qifti 1903: 80; Al-Nadim 1970: 700), a phenomenon of the language situation of the time in which Arabic was gaining dominance among both the Muslim and non-Muslim younger generations.

Hunayn’s model of checking the faithfulness and accuracy of a translation after its completion did not stop with Hunayn’s son Ishaq or his nephew Hubaysh, who consistently gave their translation work to Hunayn for review. Other translators frequently met with Hunayn so that he could approve or improve the accuracy of their translation work. One example is when Stefan ibn Basil had Harayn check his translation from Greek to Arabic of Galen’s book on chest and lung movement (Hunayn 1966: 23–24).

Arabicization: Expanding the lexicon

While medieval scholars refer to this frantic translation of texts as “Arabicization” (see, for example, Ibn Khallikan 1978: 1:217), suggesting a process that is more language-centric and thereby goal-oriented than the broader description “translation,” the Arabic language’s poorer lexicon in certain realms seemed — at least to some translators — to preclude any sort of thorough Arabicization. In his early writings Hunayn had pointed to the dearth of adequate nomenclature in Arabic compared to Syriac, Greek, and Persian (Goodman 1990: 488). In fact, Hunayn preferred Syriac for the initial translation because of this language’s richness in scientific and learned terms, as compared with the Arabic language of the time. As Ghalioungui points out in his introduction to his English translation of Hunayn’s Arabic rendering of Galen’s *Questions on Medicine for Scholars*, “Hunayn poured into an Arabic mold a terminology he had to coin, to convey previously unknown concepts” (1978: v). Some terms, such as *cephalic* or *basilica*, which could be used without knowing their literal meanings, “he merely dressed in an Arabic garb. But for those concepts, like humours and temperament, that could not be fully comprehended without understanding their significance, he used Arabic words, while succeeding in giving them acceptations independent of their vernacular usage” (1978: v). For example, while other scholars, such as his teacher Yuhanna ibn Masawayh, translated more specific terms from Greek into languages other than Arabic in the midst of Arabic texts, rendering, for example, *muscae volitantes* (floating specks in front of the eyes) as the Syriac *amtana* (opacity) and the Persian *bad bakhast* (wind of flies), Hunayn rendered it with the Arabic word *khayal* (shadow or shadow-like). In so doing, Hunayn also avoided the tendency of fellow translators to give longer, more cumbersome literal renditions or calques, as his predecessors did when dubbing Greek *palindromon neuron* (*nervus recurrens*) with the Arabic *al-‘asaba ar-raji‘a ila fawq* (the nerve that returns upwards) (see

Meyerhof 1926:712). In this manner, Hunayn focused on developing an Arabic technical vocabulary and style for scientific discourse.

Hunayn relied not only on mere translation but also on previously compiled glosses, explanations, and summaries for new lexical items. At times, such as in his translation of *Kitab Ta'bir al-Ru'ya* [Book of Dream Expression], rather than simply transcribing a transliterated term or coining a literal translation, Hunayn left a blank when he could not come up with a convincing lexical item, only to return to it at a more opportune moment, namely after collecting a set of books on the subject. He would consult this collection and allow ideas to ferment before arriving at the appropriate lexical rendition.

Moreover, when available, multiple copies of a source language text were compared against each other before a translation was undertaken. In his "Risala," Hunayn explains that he used to collect as many Greek manuscripts as possible and to collate them in order to have a sound textual basis for the translation (1996:2) and a wider possible range of lexical items in the source language. With the abundance of manuscripts collected from far-away realms, Hunayn even used this method to revise the abridged translations of his predecessors, like Serjius and Ayub al-Rahawy, as well as those of his pupils. Having been reared on this methodology, his son, Ishaq ibn Hunayn, thirty years after having translated the exposition of Themistius into Arabic from a manuscript that was in poor shape, found a manuscript that was in far better condition and collated it with the first translation (Al-Nadim 1970:605).

The ad sensum approach

Unlike other translators of the past and in the Abbasid period, Hunayn greatly opposed translating texts word for word. Instead, he attempted to attain the general meaning of the subject at the sentence level, as evidenced by the abovementioned rendering of *muscae volitantes* (floating specks in front of the eyes) as *khayal* (shadow or shadow-like). He aimed at expressing himself fluently and with scientific precision, avoiding obscurity or distortion of meaning.

At the beginning of his "Risala," Hunayn stressed that it is important to know for whom a work is translated in order to evaluate its faithfulness, accuracy, and register (1966:2). According to Hunayn's understanding, one of the primary qualities that defines a source text is the use for which it is consulted, and the obligation of the target text, therefore, is to reproduce those particular features. A scientific text ought to be clear and precise, not wordy or ambiguous, for example. Thus, Hunayn pondered the problems of translation and arrived at the conclusion that a translator should try to find expressions that are close to the original while avoiding any violence to the idiomatic usage of the language into which he translates (1966:4, 5, 6; see Hugonnard-Roche 1990).

The annotated translation

Also noteworthy in Hunayn’s work was the larger context within which he viewed translation. In general, the *Zeitgeist* was such that scholars would simply translate a work and feel that their task had been completed. Perhaps because of his depth of knowledge as a physician, Hunayn was one of the first to come up with the annotated translation as a common formula, clearly signaling which parts of a text were his words versus those of the original.

Just an overview of Hunayn’s description of his translation of fifteen of Hippocrates’s works as explained by Galen demonstrates the translator’s variety of approaches:

1. The explanation of the Hippocratic Oath, about which Hunayn says: “I translated it into Syriac and added an explanation of its difficult passages.”
2. The explanation of “Regimen in Acute Diseases,” about which he said: “and I summarized its meanings in the form of questions and answers.”
3. The explanation of “Epidemics,” about which he says: “To the translation I made of Galen’s explanation of the second article of ‘Epidemics,’ I added, separately, the translation of Hippocrates’s text into Syriac and into Arabic. I then translated into Arabic the eight articles in which Galen explained the sixth chapter of ‘Epidemics.’ When the explanations of the four articles of the Hippocratic book known as ‘Epidemics,’ which are the first, second, third, and sixth of Galen, amounted to nineteen articles, I summarized them in Syriac in the form of questions and answers.”
4. The explanation of “De officina medici,” about which he says: “I copied it in Greek, then translated it into Syriac, and made an index to it.”
5. The explanation of “Winds, Waters, and Countries,” about which he says: “I translated the text of Hippocrates and added to it a short explanation; but I did not complete it. I also rendered it into Arabic.”
6. The explanation of “Diet,” about which he says: “I translated the text of Hippocrates, and added a short explanation to it.”
7. On the original and apocryphal Hippocratic books, he says: “I made catalogues” (Moussa 1978:xx).

Gradually, Hunayn’s disciples began to follow this approach, even with Hunayn’s own translations. For example, Thabit ibn Qurra took *Kitab Iqlidis* [Euclid’s Book] that had been “Arabicized” by Hunayn, organized it, and clarified which words were of foreign origin within it (Ibn Khallikan 1978:1:313), thereby purging the rendition of even more words of foreign extraction.

Catering to the audience

Hunayn firmly believed that the quality of a translation depends not only on the intellectual power of the translator but also on the intelligence of the person for whom it is done (Hunayn 1966: 22). He elaborates upon this theme in his description of his translation of *The Pulse*: “Then I translated it for Samulwayh after I had done *The Medical Art*... Because he was highly intelligent and very widely-read, I took great care to be extremely precise in everything I translated for him” (Hunayn 1966: 29). Similarly, when discussing *The Bones*, Hunayn explained: “I translated it some years ago for Yuhanna ibn Masawayh. In my translation I set myself to investigate its ideas as thoroughly and clearly as possible because Yuhanna likes clear speech and always insists on it” (Hunayn 1966: 22); at another point Hunayn describes a translation for Yuhannah in which he used “the utmost care, clarity, and a fluent style” (Hunayn 1966: 33). Likewise, Hunayn translated *The Elements According to Hippocrates* into Syriac for Bakhtishu ibn Jibril “diligently and meticulously,” as “most of what I translated for this man towards the end of my youth was translated in this way” (Hunayn 1966: 47).

Relevant to this consideration of audience is the fact that most of Hunayn’s translations are in an intermediary form of Arabic, transition between classical and spoken. As explained previously, by the ninth century Arabic had continued to bifurcate into these two diglossic forms, and written pieces took on characteristics of spoken Arabic, much to the chagrin of scholars who insisted that all texts adhere completely to the “proper” written form. Hunayn, whose earlier trip to Basra had specifically been to study Arabic grammar, recognized that his audience might be more comfortable with a less systematically precise and classically-oriented language and writes accordingly, using a relatively simple style. This may have been due in part to the influence of his teacher Yuhanna, who — as quoted above — “liked clear speech and always insisted on it” (Hunayn 1966: 33). However, Hunayn also made sure to root his writing in a form that is “classical enough” in order to give his translation the erudition and prestige appropriate for a work of scholarship.

Gaining experience

In Hunayn’s view, it was not enough to know the source and target languages. Rather, he greatly valued training and experience. Speaking of Sergius, he wrote that “his translation of the eight remaining articles was after he had become trained, so his translation of it was more accurate than his translation of the first part.” Perhaps Hunayn had come to this realization through his own journey: as he had become more experienced, he noted that his first attempts at translating

technical works had been faulty, and he returned to rework them (Hunayn 1966: 6, 18), spending much effort improving his and others’ accuracy, especially when the translations had been commissioned by a person of exceptional learning and culture. In his youth, Hunayn translated Galen’s *De differentiis februm* and *On the Natural Faculties* for the physician Baktaysu, but, not being satisfied with his translation of these two books, he subsequently corrected and even re-translated parts of them. When speaking of Galen’s *On Sects* he wrote, “I translated it when I was young from a defective Greek manuscript; and when I was forty, my pupil Hubaysh asked me to correct it after I had collected a number of Greek copies of the same work. I therefore arranged these in such a way that I could build up a correct copy. I then compared this work with the Syriac text which I corrected, and this is the method I followed in everything I translated” (Moussa 1978: xvi).

Conclusion

The most well-known and industrious translator of his era, “the sheikh of the translators” Hunayn ibn Ishaq, master of Greek, Syriac, Persian, and Arabic, is credited with an immense number of translations, ranging from works on medicine, philosophy, astronomy, and mathematics to magic and oneiromancy. Yet Hunayn should be studied not only for the number of translations that he produced but also for his original approach to the task of translation. In observance of his sociological and sociolinguistic environment, Hunayn varied his target and at times even his source language, expanded the Arabic lexicon, adopted an *ad sensum* approach to translation, adopted the format of the annotated translation, catered specifically to his audience in a variety of ways, and valued the translator’s experience as a valuable tool. In a context almost devoid of translatorial norms, Hunayn made choices that, to quote Simeoni’s words on translatorial habitus, were to him “the only valid ones, all others being either futile, distasteful or plain wrong” (1998: 17–18). In so doing, he made translated works accessible to a variety of audiences and set the stage for other translators — both contemporaries and those working centuries later — to engage in detail with his approaches. His *habitus* as an individual, as well as the distinct *habitus* of the newly-interacting contexts around him, created a novel approach and a prodigious body of work. Especially in Muslim Spain, where language shifts were a norm and translation thereby a frequent occurrence, authors such as Abu al-Salt al-Andalusi (Ibn Khallikan 1978: 247) came to engage at length with Hunayn’s prescriptions, thus creating and fostering vibrant debates and discussions and giving rise to a methodology of translation that sources suggest was unprecedented in its time.

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The Art of War in retranslating Sun Tzu

Using cultural capital to outmatch the competition

Zhongwei Song

The field of translation is a battleground on which, according to Bourdieu, cultural reproducers compete over cultural capital synonymous with higher social status and greater power to control texts and attribute meaning to them. On the surface, the struggles are about defending ideas and satisfying tastes, but they are also about how to control cultural capital and how to eventually convert it into economic capital. Against this background, this article explores the issue of retranslation of classic texts, using Bourdieu's sociological concepts to analyze why *The Art of War* is frequently chosen for retranslation, how a challenging translator qualifies himself as someone more capable than his predecessors of doing full justice to the classic text, and, more importantly, what strategies are used to compete against the most respected translators in so doing. The article concludes that retranslating classic texts is a social practice whereby individual translators are inclined to use as their common strategy all kinds of cultural capital (embodied, objectified, and institutionalized) to outmatch the competition not merely within textual practice but also well beyond it.

Introduction

Translation research has for a considerably long time focused primarily on source and target texts and given little attention to issues such as the retranslation of classic texts. Ignoring cognitive, social, and cultural constraints under which translators operate (Prunč 2005:40), researchers tend to deem the issue a question of intertextuality centered on the relationship between the original and its translation. In reality, however, the social practice of retranslating classic texts is far more complex than is suggested by the traditional relationship between source and target texts. First and foremost, “as translation remains forever repeatable and provisional, every particular rendering potentializes others” and “the choices made in individual translations merely temporalize the excluded alternatives” (Hermans

2005:62). This very social attribute betrays the fact that translation, in whatever form, is a source of struggles. Second, the act of retranslating involves a *group of translators*, who, by translating the same “sacred original,” bond the past with the present across different historical and sociocultural contexts. In so doing, they inevitably inscribe otherness and foreign values into the target culture’s current value system. Third, apart from the direct involvement of translators engaged in the retranslation of classic texts, there are critics, agents, publishers, and other intermediaries, who, with various motivations, intentions, and constraints, both political and economic, shape social demands and the reception of retranslations. Fourth, the retranslation of classic texts is, for many reasons, a very lucrative field for translators, agents, publishers, and institutions alike. For this reason alone it deserves greater scholarly attention.

Without the analysis of sociological considerations, the stakes and functions of various retranslated versions of a given classic text, the specific social contexts in which they are embedded, and the motivations of their translators may not be fully understood. In other words, using sociological methods offers the advantage of situating the act of retranslating classic texts not in a simple linguistic framework for the assessment of errors through intertextual comparison but in a more complex and dynamic sociological milieu where the act can be viewed as a social practice. To this end, it is necessary to reintegrate into the analysis all the agents — individuals and institutions — that participate in this practice (Heilbron and Sapiro 2007:104) in order to understand how, in terms of cultural capital, they struggle to preserve or subvert the hierarchy of values within this space of retranslating and how and in what ways translators try to “outclass” one another in translating the same classic text.

Particularly inspired by Bourdieu’s sociological theory, which, as Heilbron and Sapiro (2007:94) point out, embraces the whole set of social relations — political, economic, and cultural — in which translations are produced and circulated, this article presents a case study on how *The Art of War* has been retranslated by two American translators, Samuel B. Griffith (1906–1983) and Gary Gagliardi (1951–). By focusing more attention on translators themselves and using Bourdieu’s sociological theory to critically analyze their role as social and cultural agents actively participating in the production and reproduction of textual and discursive practices (Inghilleri 2005:125), this article intends to shed light on how the two translators of Sun Tzu used their cultural capital to outmatch the competition not only within their textual practice but beyond it in different historical and sociocultural contexts.

Culture capital, habitus, and differences

Translation is about power relations and the product of their interaction under given historical conditions. Though inevitably explored in textual practice, as Bassnett (1996: 21) points out, power relations reflect the power structures within the wider cultural context. In other words, the field of translation is a site of struggles, a concept that Bourdieu (1993) uses to describe the field of cultural production in much broader terms: cultural reproducers are all competing over cultural capital because whoever possesses more of it enjoys higher social status and greater power.

As a social relation within a system of exchange (Bourdieu 1993), cultural capital extends “to all the goods material and symbolic, without distinction, that present themselves as rare and worthy of being sought after in a particular social formation” (Harker 1990: 13). Interestingly, according to Bourdieu, cultural capital expresses itself in three forms: *embodied*, *objectified*, and *institutionalized*. Embodied cultural capital consists of the inherited and acquired properties and individual embodies. It derives, in other words, not only from the investment of time dedicated to education but also from habitus. Bourdieu defines habitus as “a general, transposable disposition, which carries out a systematic, universal application — beyond the limits of what has been directly learnt — of the necessity inherent in the learning conditions” (1979: 170). Given its nature as “the necessity internalized and converted into a disposition that generates meaningful practices and meaning-giving perceptions” (ibid.), habitus forms the “objectivity of the subjective,” which reflects social reality shaped to some extent “by the conceptions and representations that individuals make of the social world” (Bourdieu 1993: 4). In translation, for instance, a translator has an inclination to build up his personal relationships with the author in order to appreciate his habitus, just as Ralph Nelson confesses humorously in his poem about how he balances this translator-author relationship:

And chose an Author as you choose a Friend;
 United by this sympathetick Bond,
 You grow familiar, intimate and fond.
 Your thoughts, your Words, your Stiles, your Souls agree
 No longer his Interpreter, he He. (qtd. in Bassnett 1996: 11)

The closer to the author in habitus, the more acceptable the translator is as the representative of the author, if not the author himself, since embodied cultural capital is “a form of knowledge, an internalized code or a cognitive acquisition which equips a social agent with empathy towards, appreciation for or competence in deciphering cultural relations and cultural artifacts” (Bourdieu 1993: 7).

Unlike the symbolic nature of embodied cultural capital, objectified cultural capital refers to physical goods only, which, unlike the other two capitals, can be transmitted by sale. A literary work, its translated version, and related books are all cultural capital in the objectified form, which, once transmitted, can be directly converted into economic capital. That said, closely linked to the labor market is institutionalized cultural capital, which encompasses all sorts of certificates, credentials, and titles recognized by society. This third classification of capital is what makes a bearer acceptable in his society at the end of the socialization process known as education (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998:42).

In general, cultural capital is the totality of one's knowledge, skills, experience, competencies, and worldview that eventually determines how great a social and financial advantage or status its owner could have in a given society. As with economic capital, cultural capital is also an investment of an appropriate kind, capable of generating "profits" (De Graaf, De Graaf and Kraaykamp 2000). In this sense, therefore, in order to successfully compete for cultural capital, a competitor must have enough cultural capital in all three forms as equity.

In competition for cultural capital in the field of translation, translators largely engage in a perpetual fight over authority and power with the authors (Venuti 1995). However, those engaged in retranslating classic texts often appear less concerned with authors. The visibility these translators display in retranslating classic texts stands in sharp contrast to the timidity of traditional translators at large who tend to make themselves undetectable and unidentifiable. This behavior is triggered, to a great extent, by the intrinsic nature of classic texts and their relationship to cultural capital.

What can be qualified as a classic text? To borrow a definition from Lefevere (1992: 19), it is a work of literature that was canonized more than five centuries ago but remains secure in its position regardless of how often the dominant poetics itself is subject to change. Albeit Eurocentric, this definition is largely valid across cultures; a classic text is one that is widely held to be a work of the highest class and with enduring excellence, written by a master of the past. As such, the issue of authorship and copyright has little bearing on the individual who will translate it. Translators, once having embarked on the translation, have little pressure either to repress their own personalities or to participate in a so-called psychological relationship with the author (Venuti 1995) because they believe they possess a kind of executive authority to provide the text with the "right" interpretation and to align it with current social conditions and the dominant poetics (Lefevere 1992: 19). Further as Gentzler observes, under the influence of the poststructural scholarship, contemporary translators, particularly those in the United States, "have become increasingly liberated — that is, less apt to uncritically adhere to source-text linguistic and semantic aspects — and more open to importing extra

linguistic codes and cultural markers from the source culture” (2002: 197). As a result, translation becomes “a deliberate and conscious act of selection, assemblage, structuration, and fabrication — and even, in some cases, of falsification, refusal of information, counterfeiting, and the creation of secret codes” (Gentzler and Tymoczko 2002: xxxiii).

In his analysis and comparison of the translations of Virgil’s *The Aeneid*, Lefevere discovered a significant disparity between translations of different times, which confirms the changing behaviors of contemporary translators. According to him, the older versions of *The Aeneid* “represent types of translations that do not try to replace their original, but to supplement it, whereas modern translations mainly try to replace it” (Bassnett and Lefevere 1998: 43). Being sensitive to their own worldviews and aware of how such views might color the translation process (Gentzler 2002: 216), modern translators exhibit a tendency to be freer in playing with the meanings of a canonized classic text.

What a translator must seriously consider is how transmittable and marketable a classic text can be. In other words, the translator must take into account whether the reader has enough embodied cultural capital to appreciate the work. The decision to select a classic text for translation shapes, by and large, not only how the translator explores power relationships within the text itself but also how he positions himself in the power structures to deal with power relationships that extend into the marketplace. That being said, once the translation process has begun, the text is “likely to be doubly domestic, determined not only by the domestic values which the translator inscribes in the foreign text, but also by the values inscribed in a previous version” (Venuti 2004: 25). This consequence indicates that a translator, while intending to add value or cultural capital of his own, has a strong tendency to replace some, if not all, of those previously invested values. The desire for value addition and value replacement is so strong that it has become an internalized necessity of the translator to make “an appreciable difference” (Venuti 2004: 26) so that the new version can be distinguished from and stand out among other versions in existence.

To establish one’s difference and value, one must confront the unique approaches past translators have employed to distinguish themselves from their contemporaries and even from future translators. James Welldon, one of the first English translators of *The Politics of Aristotle*, stressed as early as 1883 the importance of being different as a translator of Aristotle. In the preface Welldon sets up certain rules so as to distinguish himself from previous translators and to deter any future challengers. Welldon insists that any translator that wants to do full justice to the *Politics* “has indeed a threefold task, viz. to translate it, to write a commentary upon it, and finally to publish a series of essays on subjects connected with it” (1883: v). In so doing, Welldon marked his turf and explicitly implied that

one must weigh how much cultural capital one possesses before undertaking the retranslation of a classic text.

Brooding over the necessity for a new version of *The Politics*, Ernest Barker convinced himself that “[T]he *Politics* is a book which is needed — and needed in modern dress and a modern English idiom — by the ‘general reader’ of all the Anglo-Saxon world” (Barker 1946: v). Barker’s justification clearly indicates that he was retranslating *Politics* with what Venuti calls “particular identities” (Venuti 2004) in mind, and that his intention was to “satisfy different demands” (Lefevre 1990: 5) of the general English-speaking readers. To stress that *Politics* was in need of a new dress, that is, of a modern English idiom that was beyond the reach of Wellton, Barker broke the monopoly and claimed his share of cultural capital.

Cultural capital not only arises from the original author or is contained in the original text itself but is also created and realized by the translator who translates the text into another language. Once translated, a classic text becomes imbued with the translator’s particular identities, compounding the values intrinsic in the original text and those left by all other translators. Consequently while “no translation is an innocent, transparent rendering of the original” (von Flotow 2001: 14), “the act of translation is itself very much involved in the creation of knowledge” (Gentzler and Tymoczko 2002: xxxiii).

Bourdieu explains the process of distinguishing oneself in the following passage:

To “make one’s name” means making one’s *mark*, achieving recognition (in both senses) of one’s *difference* from other producers, especially the most consecrated of them; at the same time, it means *creating a new position* beyond the positions presently occupied, *ahead* of them, in the *avant-garde*. (1993: 106)

This so-called *difference* is part and parcel of the translator’s embodied cultural capital, and it is as much expressed in the creativity, techniques, and strategies involved in the translating process as desired for market recognition, which is to be achieved in tandem with the other two forms of cultural capital. To be successful, textual differences in strategies and styles are not enough because translation is unfortunately only repaid with low status and low regard, despite the requirement of a high degree of skill (Bassnett 1998: 10). As Lefevre comments:

Cultural capital, then, is the kind of capital intellectuals can still claim to have, and even, if only to some extent, to control, as opposed to economic capital, which most intellectuals do not even claim to have any more. (Lefevre 1998: 42)

The fact that “possession of cultural capital does not necessarily imply possession of economic capital” (Bourdieu 1993: 7) seems, therefore, to derive from not only differences in the cultural capital invested in the textual world but also on the

marketing of these differences. In this sense, the ultimate goal of creating productive differences is to gain, control, distribute, redistribute, and eventually convert cultural capital into economic capital.

The Art of War

Written in the sixth century BC, a time of political unrest and military conflict, Sun Tzu's the *Art of War* is arguably the world's oldest thesis on military strategy. Since the first translation came out in the eighteenth century, the text has now been translated into over 30 languages, exerting a tremendous influence globally. In English alone, there are dozens of versions. Since 1963, more than twenty English translators have presented their interpretations of Sun Tzu, including Samuel B. Griffith and Gary Gagliardi, the subjects of the following case study.

The enduring attraction to Sun Tzu derives from unique properties of the text, which contains fundamental military principles and ageless wisdom. As summed up by Liddell Hart, a widely-respected Western military strategist during and after World War II:

Sun Tzu's essays on '*The Art of War*' [...] have never been surpassed in comprehensiveness and depth of understanding. They might well be termed the concentrated essence of wisdom on the conduct of war. Among all the military thinkers of the past, only Clausewitz is comparable, and even he is more 'dated' than Sun Tzu, and in part antiquated, although he was writing more than two thousand years later. Sun Tzu has clearer vision, more profound insight, and eternal freshness. (Griffith 1963: forward)

These fundamental concepts inspire not only military professionals but also people of all walks of life dealing with their own jobs, which also require strategy. As Ames maintains, what makes Sun Tzu important is that his way of thinking can be applied to various dimensions of the human experience in our complex world (Ames 2009: online).

The classic status of this text has led to infighting among translators across generations. Giles (1875–1958), for example, decided to translate the text largely because Pere Amiot's (1718–1793) version "contains a great deal that Sun Tzu did not write, and very little indeed of what he did" (Giles 2002:v). What spurred Cleary (1949–) into presenting his version is that, to him, past interpretations of the text were too limited, confined only to representations of the West and failing to produce a presentation from a Taoist standpoint (Cleary 2009).

There is little doubt that *The Art of War* is a classic text, not only possessing a high degree of cultural capital but also capable of generating additional value

through retranslation. Given that so many translators have engaged in reinterpreting *The Art of War*, the text has inevitably become a site of struggle, where those “who dominate their field of production also dominate the market” (Bourdieu 1993: 108).

The case study

The following case study attempts to isolate the strategies employed by Gagliardi to challenge Griffith’s translation of *The Art of War*. Although both men are American, they two share little in terms of their historical context, ideological orientation, academic training, and military background. The differences that render the two translators so distinct make Gagliardi’s challenge all the more intriguing.

Griffith was a general in the U.S. Marine Corps. As he had a great interest in China and the Chinese language, he enrolled in Oxford University upon his retirement and was awarded a Ph.D. in Chinese military history. In 1961 he translated Mao Zedong’s *On Guerrilla War* and two years later translated Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*. The two translations greatly enhanced understanding among U.S. armed forces and politicians of Chinese military thinking during the Cold War period. A prolific writer, Griffith authored several books and many articles on military history. His books include: *Mao Tse-Tung on Guerrilla Warfare* (1961), *The Battle of Guadalcanal* (1963), *War for American Independence, Peking and People’s Wars* (1966), *The Chinese People’s Liberation Army* (1967), and *History of the Second World War* (1974).

Gagliardi has had an equally impressive career but one that is sharply different from Griffith’s. A Harvard dropout, he taught himself the Chinese language. Later on, he became a successful businessman and multimillionaire by applying Sun Tzu’s strategies to his businesses. In 1993, ten years after Griffith’s death, Gagliardi translated *The Art of War*. Since then, he has authored quite a few books on how to apply Sun Tzu’s strategies to everyday problems, which are published exclusively by Clearbridge Publishing. He also has written many articles on his blog and on his many other websites.

By analyzing why and how Gagliardi challenges Griffith, I hope to offer an explanation in terms of cultural capital as to how emerging translators like Gagliardi qualify themselves as capable of doing full justice to time-honored classic texts, and, more importantly, what common strategies they use in doing battle with the most respected translators. Apart from referring to websites such as Sonshi.com, which features interviews with many of Sun Tzu’s translators, I relied mainly on Gagliardi’s website, <http://GaryGagliardi.com>, and on those websites affiliated with or owned by him, including his personal blog, the website of The Science

of Strategy Institute, a multinational company he founded, and the Clearbridge Publishing House, which appears to publish only works by Gagliardi. My analysis of Griffith, on the other hand, is based solely on the preface to his translation since the translator's preface typically expresses the translator's intention and maps out the contours of literary ideology and exposes for us "the socio-political context which commands literary exchanges" (Simon 1990).

Griffith's investment of cultural capital

Griffith translated *The Art of War* in the early 1960s against the backdrop of the armistice that ended fighting in the Korean War, the burgeoning American involvement in Vietnam, the adamant implementation of a U.S.-China policy aimed at "rolling back Chinese expansionism," and Cold War tensions that reached their peak with the Cuban Missile Crisis. Interpreting the purpose of Sun Tzu's work as "to develop a systematic treatise to guide rulers and generals in the intelligent prosecution of successful war" (Griffith 1963: x), Griffith aimed to introduce Sun Tzu to U.S. military leaders and policy-makers Sun Tzu, who "has a pre-eminent position in the canon of Chinese military literature" (Griffith 1963: viii). He states:

The *Art of War* has had a profound influence throughout Chinese history and on Japanese military thought; it is the source of Mao Tse-tung's strategic theories and of the tactical doctrine of the Chinese armies. Through the Mongol-Tartars, Sun Tzu's ideas were transmitted to Russia and became a substantial part of her oriental heritage. *The Art of War* is thus required reading for those who hope to gain a further understanding of the grand strategy of these two countries today. (1963: xi)

To establish his legitimacy as a more authentic representative of Sun Tzu, Griffith increased the text's cultural capital by injecting a huge amount of information that was previously either unavailable or inaccessible to his predecessors. To drive home the work's relevance to the Cold War context he furnished, as part of the background knowledge, a multitude of citations from 11 ancient commentators and depicted at length the complex situation of the Spring and Autumn (722 BC and 481 BC) and the Warring States (475 BC to 221 BC), thus turning the translation into an encyclopedia of Sun Tzu, an undertaking nobody had ever attempted before.

To reinforce his symbolic power, Griffith invited Liddell Hart, who was and continues to be known as a modern Western version of Sun Tzu, to write the foreword for him. In the foreword, Hart asserts that "[t]here has long been need of a fresh and fuller translation of Sun Tzu, more adequately interpreting his thought" (Griffith 1963: vi). In addition, Hart highlights the tremendous significance of this new version against the backdrop of a new era:

That need has increased with the development of nuclear weapons, potentially suicidal and genocidal. It becomes all the more important in view of the re-emergence of China, under Mao tse-tung, as a great military power. So it is good that the task should have been undertaken, and the need met, by such an able student of war and the Chinese language and thought as General Sam Griffith.

(Griffith 1963:vi)

Furthermore, printed on the cover page of the translation was UNESCO's recognition of the book as part of its Chinese translation series. This certainly lent Griffith unprecedented legitimacy as Sun Tzu's representative.

All these factors added cultural capital to his investments both within and beyond the textual practice and contributed, in no insignificant measure, to the popularity and relevance of the text to the Cold War, establishing Griffith as one of the most respected translators of Sun Tzu throughout and even after the Cold War.

Gagliardi's strategy

Griffith's translation remained largely unchallenged until after his death in 1983. Since then, coincidentally or not, more English translations have made inroads into the marketplace. Scholars and translators have increasingly positioned themselves in opposition to Griffith, who, they claimed, had turned Sun Tzu into a purely military figure. They argued that *The Art of War* should not be treated as simply a set of military engagement principles but as a philosophical text, a way of living and thinking (Ames 2009). Furthermore, the proliferation of translations of Sun Tzu's work points to the changing world of economic globalization, signifying the necessity of another round of refashioning of the classic text for new readers. Of all the translators of Sun Tzu, Gagliardi challenges Griffith and other translators with a particular vengeance. Sonshi.com describes Gagliardi as a controversial figure who makes it very difficult to reconcile the website's "interview with him and his less-than-kind comments he made on his website about some of the authors we previously interviewed" (<http://www.sonshi.com/gagliardi.html>).

Gagliardi launched his attack largely on two fronts: textual and beyond. In terms of the text, Gagliardi criticizes the Oxford-trained scholar for his omissions and additions, claiming that Griffith "sometimes combines phrases that Sun Tzu did not combine." He lashes out at Griffith for unacceptable word choices such as "gobble," "thwart," and "at bay," which, he claims, are odd and beyond the use of ordinary readers. Further, to discredit Griffith as outdated, Gagliardi describes him as from another era, claiming that Griffith's "is an excellent work if the reader wants *The Art of War* from the viewpoint of a nineteenth-century military man" (Gagliardi 2009c).

In order to distinguish his translation from Griffith's, with its encyclopedic approach, Gagliardi simplifies his translation. He incorporates two forms of translation into a single text, the first being a close, character-by-character translation into English alongside the Chinese source text, and the second being a phrase-by-phrase translation into more naturally-sounding English prose. His rationale is, as he explains, that no single English translation alone can capture the many insights contained in Sun Tzu's actual words. Completely negating all the previous versions, he writes, "Even when a translation gets a part of Sun Tzu basically correct, there is still a big difference between what Sun Tzu wrote and what you read in most English translations" (Gagliardi 2009b).

To underscore the uniqueness of his translation as compared with Griffith's, Gagliardi claims that he does not create any "false" paragraphs or groupings of sentences. Rather, he shows each phrase as a line, as in a poem, and separates each block from the other blocks with a space exactly as Sun Tzu did, making it a stanza — again, as in English poetry. These lexical and grammatical choices were intended to allow general readers, including those not familiar with academic discourse, to easily understand his book (Fang, Song, and Wu 2008).

In terms of sentence structure, for example, Griffith's translation scores 60% in the use of complex clauses and 40% in the use of simple clauses whereas Gagliardi's scores 25% in the use of complex clauses and 75% in the use of simple clauses. This means that for the average reader Gagliardi's translation is easier to understand. With regard to words contained in clauses, Griffith's translation scores on average 10.33 per clause while Gagliardi's scores 6.56 per clause, which is significantly shorter. Moreover, Gagliardi tends to use "you" rather than "he" or "one" to establish a more personal relationship with the reader.

To compete against Griffith on the level of content — Liddell Hart described Griffith as an able student of war and the Chinese language and thought (Griffith 1963: vi) — Gagliardi has gone to great lengths to convince his readers that he also has a military mind that was shaped by his upbringing. He depicts his family life on a military base in Fairbanks, Alaska, often in great detail; both his parents were serving in the U.S. Army. According to Gagliardi, his uncle was the first American serviceman killed in the Japanese attack on the Philippines, the day after Pearl Harbor. His father, serving in the Philippines with his brother, became one of the few survivors of the Death March of Bataan, and spent the remainder of the World War II in a Japanese prison camp. Both his father and uncle were awarded the Silver and Bronze Stars. His mother was an officer in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. At an early age, Gagliardi contends, he dreamed of serving in the army. However, due to his poor eyesight, he did not qualify for military service.

The "unique family" he describes supports his claim to legitimacy in translating *The Art of War*. The military connection he stresses builds up his "military

credential,” as it explicitly implies that simply growing up in a military family has lent him that particular kind of habitus that allows him to empathize with and appreciate *The Art of War*, which contributed to his competence as a translator.

To further match Griffith’s credentials in other forms of cultural capital, Gagliardi introduces himself as a multimillionaire entrepreneur, strategic analyst, translator, and graduate of Harvard Business School. He promotes his translation as the world’s only award-winning translation of *The Art of War* (Gagliardi 2006), attributing his business success and subsequent achievements to his thirty years of research on Sun Tzu and his application of the principles of *The Art of War*. He declares that because his version is aimed at problem-solving in the economy, to buy and read his translation is the path to economic success.

To compete with Griffith as a prolific writer, Gagliardi also produces an impressive list of his publications, of which most are derivative products of Sun Tzu. The books he has written include *Strategy Against Terror: Ancient Wisdom for Today’s War*, *The Warrior Class: Sun Tzu’s The Art of War*, *Sun Tzu’s Art of War Plus Its Amazing Secrets*, *Sun Tzu’s The Art of War Plus The Art of Career Building*, *Sun Tzu’s The Art of War Plus The Art of Marketing*, *Sun Tzu’s The Art of War Plus The Art of Sales*, *Sun Tzu’s The Art of War Plus The Art of Small Business*, *The Art of Love*, *The Art of Parenting Teens*, *The Art of War/The Art of Starting a Business*, and *The Art of War Plus the Ancient Chinese Revealed*.

While discrediting Griffith by simplifying Sun Tzu in lexicon, Gagliardi has paradoxically mystified the semantic content of the text, which, he advises, is impossible to fully understand not only because “Chinese characters have an array of meanings that all play into interpreting the text” but because the text is too mathematical for most modern readers (Gagliardi 2009b). To help present and future readers, Gagliardi has established a multinational company called The Science of Strategy Institute. This institute offers several levels of membership and its mission “is to make it easy to master the body of competitive knowledge that began with Sun Tzu’s *The Art of War*” (Gagliardi 2009d). With the institute dedicated to teaching Sun Tzu strategy and issuing certificates to members on completion of each training session, Gagliardi is trying to give his readers more cultural capital, which will in turn convert his own into economical capital. To fully appreciate Sun Tzu, Gagliardi suggests, the readers must invest in all his related books published by Clearbridge Publishing, which appears to publish no other books but Gagliardi’s, thus moving *The Art of War* from the high end of the marketplace to the low end in all possible ways.

Conclusion

By invoking Bourdieun sociological concepts such as cultural capital and habitus, this article presents a case study that analyzes how Griffith and Gagliardi have engaged in retranslating *The Art of War*. It clearly suggests that retranslations of classic texts be understood through the social practices and relevant fields in which they are constituted and that “they be viewed as functions of social relations based on competing forms of capital tied to local/global relations of power” (Inghilleri 2005: 143).

Doubtlessly, both Griffith and Gagliardi have pursued cultural capital in and through translating *The Art of War*. Gagliardi, however, appears to be more focused on how to leverage all three forms of cultural capital than Griffith in pursuit of economic capital. To achieve a larger readership that guarantees the successful conversion of cultural capital into economic capital, he has moved Sun Tzu from the realm of high and serious culture into that of low and popular culture.

While Griffith may continue to be regarded as one of the best translators of Sun Tzu, it cannot be denied that Gagliardi’s efforts to render the text relevant, namely refashion the past according to the concerns of the present (Corbett 2001: 157), may allow Sun Tzu to live on in translation (Gentzler 1993: 163). While he is making profits out of Sun Tzu, who could argue that Gagliardi has not created cultural capital in the process of retranslating *The Art of War*?

By applying Bourdieu’s concepts to the analysis it is shown that as a lucrative field, the retranslation of classic texts often witnesses infightings over authority among translators themselves. While on the surface, this infighting appears to be about defending ideas and satisfying tastes — not to mention, performing Sun Tzu’s own theories — they are, in essence, aimed at the redistribution of cultural capital, which is regenerated and realized in the translational act ultimately “translated” into economic capital.

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Italy's other Mafia

A journey into cross-cultural translation

Giuditta Caliendo

Following its translation into more than thirty languages, Roberto Saviano's non-fiction novel *Gomorra* [*Gomorrah*], has unveiled to a vast number of readers across the globe the endless saga of Naples' crime syndicate, the Camorra (from which the book's title derives its bitter play on words). Literary critics and reviewers in the UK and in the U.S. have widely acclaimed Saviano's talent in depicting the corruption plaguing Naples' gloomy and degraded hinterland, although the sociocultural context portrayed in *Gomorra* is naturally distant from the repertoire of the target culture: the text is widely populated by culture-bound concepts and implicit meanings, which further complicates the translation process. Through a contrastive analysis of the Italian and English versions of the exposé, this study explores the strategies employed in translating the voices and deeds of Naples' mobsters, as well as the socioeconomic setting of the Camorra. With reference to types of non-equivalence between the two language versions, this article investigates to what extent the English translation contributes to the identity-building process of the Camorra as a separate and far more deadly criminal organization vis-à-vis the Sicilian Mafia.

Introduction

This article will examine the English version of the Italian bestseller *Gomorra*, a non-fiction novel written in 2006 by the young Neapolitan author Roberto Saviano and published in the UK and the U.S. in the following year (by Macmillan (2007a) and by Farrar, Straus & Giroux (2007b), respectively; translation by Virginia Jewiss). The significance and the impact that *Gomorra* had on a global scale can be inferred by the synoptic introduction to its UK edition which illustrates the main contents of the exposé:

[...] Roberto Saviano compiled the most thorough account to date of the Camorra and its chilling significant role in the global economy. [...] the Camorra has an

international reach and large stakes in construction, high fashion, illicit drugs and toxic-waste disposal. It exerts a malign grip on cities and villages along the Neapolitan coast and is the deciding factor in why Campania has the highest murder rate in all of Europe and why cancer levels there have skyrocketed in recent years.¹ (Saviano 2007a: book cover)

The fact that Saviano's nonfiction fascinated and shocked readers in more than fifty countries inevitably raises questions as to the cultural transfer of elements pertaining to Naples' criminal culture that are a product of their local socio-economic context.² Here, the challenges for the translator are obviously related to the transfer of linguistic and cultural features that express the specific social and human depravities darkening the region of Campania and that are lacking in the target language.

Interestingly enough, such transfer also occurs in the source text itself. For example, some of the references contained in *Gomorra* may be regarded by many Italian readers as locally-bound, i.e., 'embedded' in a less familiar southern cultural framework (that of the region Campania) and lacking specificity at the national level. On a recent TV show, Saviano lamented that most of the Camorra news stays local; most crimes, killings, and unlawful acts taking place in Campania are not sufficiently reported by national channels, and remain largely unknown to most Italians.³ On the same TV show, Saviano himself argued that this limited media coverage is not the result of some political strategy but is simply due to the fact that Camorra stories are seen by the average Italian reader as 'typically local' news, and therefore not worth national coverage. As a response to this problem, *Gomorra* was conceived by its author as a wake-up call to break through the indifference that generally greets Camorra stories in Italy. *Gomorra* was, after all, originally written in Italian for Italians in order to raise public awareness beyond regional boundaries. So, in a way (although on a different scale), both the source text and the target text work in the same direction: to inform the general reader about the Camorra and warn against the dangers of a hidden though deadly machine constantly at work.

Quite predictably, *Gomorra* is not the first book on Naples' criminality to address an international readership, although it is absolutely unrivaled in terms of the number of copies sold (2.5 million in Italy and more than 3 million across

1. Roberto Saviano, 2007. *Gomorra. Italy's Other Mafia*. London: Macmillan. Back cover synopsis.

2. <http://www.robertosaviano.it/biografia> (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

3. 'Che Tempo che Fa', *RaiTre*, March 25, 2009. http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_drSvvpbZwg&feature=related (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

the globe).⁴ In reaching such a wide international audience, *Gomorra* introduced the world to a new breed of organized crime.⁵ In such cases, the translator holds a great responsibility in affecting the representation and the perception of the cultural scenario in which 'otherness' is embedded. The translation 'sets a precedent' and has an initiating function: it introduces new identities as well as an unexplored system of cultural representation in order to make both accessible (if not acceptable) to the target reader. In their role and attitude for instance, the audacious *Camorristas* are completely different from the Sicilian *Mafiosos*. One of Saviano's aims is, after all, not only to make clear that the Mafia and the Camorra are two separate criminal organizations but also that the Camorra now dwarfs both the Sicilian Mafia and southern Italy's other crime organizations in terms of numbers, economic power, and violence.⁶

1. Theoretical framework

This article draws upon recent debates on the role of an emergent sociology of translation within the broader context of translation studies (Pym 2006; Simeoni 2007; Wolf and Fukari 2007; Wolf 2009) and embraces the concept of translation as a socially-driven process. Sociology of translation, a research area that is "still in the making" (Wolf 2007), analyzes the implications of translation as a social practice which integrates textual and extra-textual analyses. From this sociological outlook, the central issues are: cultural identity and perception, relations between center and periphery, power and ethics, and the transfer of cultural elements between different repertoires.

Viewed through a social systems lens, translation is considered to be a discursive practice that is constitutive of culture and that contributes to the construction of social identity, image, and roles (Wolf 2007: 17). This is in line with what is also propounded by Gentzler: "[T]ranslation constitutes one of the primary means by which culture is constructed and is therefore important to any study of cultural evolution and identity formation" (2008: 2). This view raises specific questions related to the responsibility of the agents involved in the translation process (Tymoczko 2000; Tymoczko and Gentzler 2002; Bollettieri, Bosinelli, and Di Giovanni 2009) and presents the translator as a constructing agent in society,

4. Source: <http://www.robertosaviano.it/libri/test-libro-1/> (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

5. <http://us.macmillan.com/gomorra> (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

6. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/europe/man-who-took-on-the-mafia-the-truth-about-italys-gangsters-420427.html> (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

especially in contexts of cultural change and identity formation (Wolf and Fukari 2007). By making textual choices, translators are thus considered to be re-enunciators, influencing the way the source culture is perceived and portrayed in the receptor culture and therefore “acquir[ing] agency in the evolving social, political and cultural configurations that make up society” (Hermans 2009:97).

2. General background, aims, and methodology

Recently the term *Camorra* has begun to appear in the English language with higher frequency, especially in the press. This is mainly due to the latest waste crisis and scandals in Naples and to the international success of the novel *Gomorra*. The 2008 film of the same title, which was based on the novel, won the Grand Prize at Cannes.

One of the earliest occurrences of the term *Camorra* in the English dictionary can be traced back to 1921 and corresponds to an entry in the *Etymological Dictionary of Modern English* by Ernest Weekley:

Camorra: It. [Italian] secret society. Origin obscure.

As the entry in the Oxford English Dictionary shows, the feature of secrecy still characterizes the current use of the term:

Camorra: A **secret society** of lawless malcontents in Naples and Neapolitan cities. (Oxford English Dictionary, second edition) [emphasis added]

One of the aims of Saviano’s exposé is to lift this veil of secrecy. As expressed in an article published in *The Independent* in 2008, Saviano’s novel reveals to the world the existence of a new type of organized crime that contrasts the well-known Sicilian Mafia:

The rest of the world was very vague about the Camorra until Saviano came along. Sicily was the home of *the real mafia*, the ones we cared to know about, whose sadistic brutality could be refined into thrilling romantic nonsense for the big screen. Sure there must be bad people in Naples, too, but the sort of miserable low lifes you find everywhere if you look hard enough.⁷

(Popham 2008: online; emphasis mine)

Tom Behan, one of the major academic experts on the Camorra and Italian organized crime, interestingly remarks that, although Sicily has always been conceived as the home of “the real Mafia,” the Camorra came first. The term Camorra was in fact coined well before the word Mafia: “The first known use of the word ‘Mafia’

7. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/people/profiles/roberto-saviano-author-of-gomorra-the-book-exposing-the-naples-mafia-965482.html> (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

occurred in 1862, over a hundred years after the first use of the word 'Camorra' in Naples, and the first police reference to Mafia occurred in 1865, forty-five years after the first police report on the Camorra" (2009:41). Behan also underlines the confusion that has so far existed between the Camorra and the Mafia: "Ten years ago, without making any distinction between the Camorra and the Mafia, the *Daily Mail* published a list of Italy's top ten organized crime bosses — the top two were Carmine Alfieri and Lorenzo Nuvoletta, both members of the Camorra" (2009: 13).

In order to understand what the Camorra is all about, Saviano attempts to demonstrate what it is not: it is not the Mafia. One of the book's intentions is, in fact, to free the Camorra from Mafia-like attributes in order to give it autonomy and identity as *the* criminal organization. In this respect, Saviano writes:

Since I was born [1979], 3,600 deaths. The Camorra has killed more than the Sicilian Mafia, more than the 'Ndrangheta, more than the Russian Mafia, more than the Albanian families, more than the total number of deaths by the ETA in Spain and the IRA in Ireland, more than the Red Brigades, the NAR, and all the massacres committed by the government in Italy [...]. But there's no little flame, no sign of a conflict. This is the heart of Europe. (Saviano 2007a: 120)

Apart from outstripping the Mafia in terms of its death toll, the Camorra also differs in that it lacks the mythology, glamour, grandeur, and codes of honor of the Mafia. The book depicts *Camorristi* as are simple entrepreneurs going about their ordinary lives, which are ruled by business and money.

In the light of the above, this article aims to investigate to what extent the English translation contributes to the identity-building process of the Camorra as a separate criminal organization vis-à-vis the Sicilian Mafia. In particular, the analysis looks at the way translators participate in the powerful acts that create knowledge and shape culture. The effects of their work are aptly described by Chesterman as "translation repercussions" (2007: 180), that is the changes translation produces in the evolution of the target language and in the perception of cultural stereotypes. In the specific case of *Gomorra*, the act of translating is a process that can potentially break certain silences and can be liberating by exposing hidden cultural worlds or allowing openings for marginal discourses.

Through a contrastive analysis, this study measures translational shifts and deviations with reference to types of non-equivalence between the two language versions of the exposé. Shifts in translation are then described in order to deduce the underlying tendencies in the English version. Camorra-related lexical terms are selected and scrutinized in order to assess whether peripheral and culture-specific elements are given visibility and shape in the translated text (for instance through the use of loanwords and foreignisms) or if, on the contrary, these elements tend

to be flattened and domesticated to accommodate the institutionalized repertoire of the English-speaking readership (Toury 1995). More specifically, the analysis concentrates on the use in the translated text of: (i) culture-bound elements, (ii) intertextual references, and (iii) specialized terminology.

The approach adopted when comparing source and target text is descriptive and empirical, based on the analysis of textual micro-structures, especially lexical units. In addition to the comparative model, the analysis is also complemented by relating the English translation to a non-translated text of a similar genre and in the same language which acts as a benchmark to assess the translator's choices and the overall intralinguistic profile of *Gomorra*. In particular, some of the Camorra-specific terms occurring in the English translation as borrowings or translations are compared to their use in the 2009 English work *See Naples and Die. The Camorra and Organized Crime*, by Tom Behan. Not being a translation, Behan's work is used as a reference to gauge whether *Gomorra*, by comparison, reflects a more innovative or conservative approach.

3. Symbols of the Camorra

Saviano's debut book reveals an entirely new cosmology of Camorra symbols: toxic waste, building trade, high fashion, child soldiers, buffalo mozzarella, and female bosses. The latter stand out as the 'ladies' of the Camorra which, in Saviano's words, is nowadays a very matriarchal system:

The typical image of the Camorra woman is of a female who does nothing but echo the pain and will of her men — her brothers, husbands, and sons. But it's not like that. The transformation of the Camorra in recent years has also meant a metamorphosis of the woman's role, which has gone from that of a maternal figure and helper in times of misfortune to a serious manager who concerns herself almost exclusively with the business and financial ends of things, delegating the fighting and illegal trafficking to others. (Saviano 2007a: 141)

The 'Dark Ladies' of the Camorra

In the English translation, women do not seem to be invested with the same strength and authoritativeness as they have in the source text. This is due to some omissions in the target text which inevitably reduce the powerful image of these female leaders. In example (1) below, the specific reference to the senior position occupied by Anna Mazza, a "*dirigente camorrista*" (literally, 'Camorra leader', or 'Camorra executive'), is completely left out. This necessarily weakens the woman's profile and the overall identity-building process of the female mobster:

- (1) *Una figura storica di dirigente camorrista è sicuramente Anna Mazza, vedova del padrino di Afragola, una delle prime donne in Italia a essere condannata per reati d'associazione mafiosa, come capo di un sodalizio criminale e imprenditoriale tra i più potenti.* (Saviano 2006: 157)

One such historic figure \emptyset is Anna Mazza. Widow of the godfather of Afragola, she headed one of the most powerful criminal and business organizations and was one of the first women in Italy to be found guilty of Mafia-related crimes. (Saviano 2007a: 141)⁸

On a similar note, in example (2) Saviano uses the military title *generalesse* (which in Italian corresponds to 'female generals') to advocate the authority and power of Camorra women. However, in the target text the appellative is weakened by the choice of the Saxon genitive ("generals' wives"), which in itself suggests subordination and a type of authority that is dependent upon family ties and male figures:

- (2) *Se destino e capacità lo permetteranno quel capitale frutterà, e le donne diventeranno imprenditrici, dirigenti, generalesse [...].* (Saviano 2006: 157)
If talent and destiny are in their favor, that capital will bear fruit and the women will become entrepreneurs, managers, or *generals' wives* [...]. (Saviano 2007a: 141)

A further example in the target text concerns Celeste Giuliano, another female Camorra boss mentioned in *Gomorra*. In the source text she is described as the "guappa" of downtown Naples:

- (3) *Celeste ha l'immagine della napoletana classica, della guappa del centro storico, i capelli tinti biondo platino, gli occhi chiari gelidi sempre affogati in tuorli di ombretto nero.* (Saviano 2006: 157)
Celeste looks like the typical Neapolitan female, the downtown *Camorra woman* — platinum blond hair, cold, pale eyes drowning in yolks of black eyeliner. (Saviano 2007a: 150)

The culture-bound Neapolitan term *guappa* can be considered a title of privilege in the context of the Camorra and indicates a senior member of the criminal organization, generally a man (*guappo*). In line with a more innovative and proactive approach, foreignizing strategies (including the use of paratextual material like footnotes or explanations) could have been adopted to import this new and unfamiliar term to the receptor culture. However, as can be seen from example (3), *guappa* is rendered in English with the neutralized and domesticated expression "Camorra woman," thus depriving it of its strength as a title and its general flavor

8. Emphasis added in examples (1)–(18).

of authenticity. This also undermines the identity-construction process with the loss of the reference to one of the key figures of the Camorra universe: *il guappo*.

Guappo

The Neapolitan term *guappo* comes from the Spanish *guapo*, *valiente*, and covers a wide semantic range. A *guappo* is not a simple criminal but also someone who is particularly brave and audacious:

Guappo: [guà·po] s.m., *napoletano* ~ **Bravaccio, camorrista: estens., persona sfrontata e arrogante** ◇ Dallo sp. Guapo ‘coraggioso’ (Devoto-Oli 2004–2005) [origin: Neapolitan ~ **unfearing, a member of the Camorra: a person acting boldly and arrogantly** ◇ from Spanish *guapo* ‘courageous, untamed, savage’]

Interestingly enough, recent publications on the Camorra in English have widely used the authentic term *guappo* as a borrowing from Neapolitan. In his book, Tom Behan makes wide use of the term *guappo*, which clearly refers to someone more determined, violent, and expert than a random ‘tough guy’:

- (4) The prices imposed between buyers and sellers, according to one trader, ‘are not imposed through violence, but through convincing arguments’, with the *guappi* then taking a percentage of the sale price. (Behan 2009: 61)
- (5) While many *guappi* had traditionally controlled fairly large and significant sectors, such as fruit, vegetables and meat markets, the growth of the contraband industry required [...] defence against increased police activity (Behan 2009: 156)

The first time Behan uses this borrowing in his work *See Naples and Die*, it is accompanied by a note containing background information which reads: “A *guappo* is a Neapolitan word generally used to denote a senior member of a criminal gang, often prepared to use violence” (Behan 2009: 291).

Although Behan’s work is not a translation, his foreignizing approach is in stark contrast with the strategy opted in *Gomorra*. As can be seen from examples (6) and (7) below, the word *guappo* is not only translated (always according to patterns of simplification) but is translated in different ways throughout the novel (“local thugs,” “tough guys,” “boys”). This divergence creates confusion and dispersion and undermines the identity-building process of the *guappo*, a key figure in the Camorra’s hierarchy, in the mind of the reader:

- (6) *Le nuove generazioni di boss non hanno un percorso squisitamente criminale, non trascorrono le giornate per strada avendo come riferimento il **guappo di zona**, non hanno il coltello in tasca, né sfregi sul volto.* (Saviano 2006: 273)

New generations of bosses don't follow an exclusively criminal path; they don't spend their days on the streets with the *local thugs*, carry a knife, or have scars on their face. (Saviano 2007a: 250)

- (7) *I nuovi sovrani militari dei sodalizi criminali napoletani non si presentano come guappi di quartiere, non hanno gli occhi sgranati e folli di Cutolo, non pensano di doversi atteggiare come Luciano Liggio o come caricature di Lucky Luciano e Al Capone.* (Saviano 2006: 125)

The new military sovereigns of the Neapolitan criminal associations don't present themselves as neighborhood *tough guys*, don't have the crazy, wide-eyed look of Raffaele Cutolo, don't feel the need to pose as the Cosa Nostra boss Luciano Liggio or caricatures of Lucky Luciano and Al Capone. (Saviano 2007a: 111)

As the above examples show, the target text exhibits semantic generalization: the term *guappo*, which has its own specific value in the Camorra culture, is translated as the more generic "thugs" or "tough guys." Interestingly enough, while this term is deprived of its authenticity and translated rather than used as a borrowing, in the second part of example (7) an explicit reference to *Cosa Nostra* is purposely added to help the reader identify the boss Luciano Liggio: the Italian "*doversi atteggiare come Luciano Liggio*" becomes in English "the need to pose as the Cosa Nostra boss Luciano Liggio." The explicit reference to the Sicilian Mafia added in the text ("*Cosa Nostra*") is thus clearly used as an instrument of amplification by the translator, who is confident she can rely on the reader's implied knowledge of the Sicilian *Cosa Nostra* in order to qualify the boss Luciano Liggio as a Mafia boss.

Pentito

While *guappo* is never used as a borrowing in *Gomorra*, the translator's approach is completely different with respect to *pentito*, a well-known term already belonging to the Sicilian Mafia vocabulary with which the reader might be more familiar through Mafia-themed books and movies.

As can be seen from Table 1, *pentito* in the text is mostly used as a borrowing, in spite of the fact that *pentito* (unlike *guappo*) is a specialized, law-related term and has a set of officially recognized translations with varying degrees of

Table 1. Different translations of the word *pentito* in *Gomorra*

Source Text	Target Text
	Pentito/i 28
<i>Pentito/i</i> 36	State(s) witness/es 5
	Informant/s 3

Table 2. Official translations of *pentito*⁹

Translation of <i>pentito</i>	Official source
Informer	InterActive Terminology for Europe (IATE)
Cooperative witness	
Grass	Italian Ministry of Home Affairs
Supergrass	
Cooperating witness	
Turncoat	
Repentant	European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction (EMCDDA)

formality. Those listed in Table 2 are only some of the many official sources providing a translation of the word *pentito*.

In spite of all these official alternatives, in 78% of the cases the word *pentito* is left untranslated when describing the tales of *Gomorra*. However, although this strategy is probably aimed at retaining the foreignness of the source text, for the target text reader the word *pentito* is rich in connotations and historically associated with the Mafia:

Pentito: Originally and chiefly in Italy: a person formerly involved in criminal activity (*esp. as a member of the Mafia*) who collaborates with law-enforcement authorities in return for a lenient sentence or immunity from prosecution; an informer. (Oxford English Dictionary, Second edition)

Picciotto vs. Guaglione

Some inconsistencies between foreignizing and domesticating strategies in relation to Neapolitan terms can be found in the different renderings of the terms *picciotto* and *guaglione* in the English version of *Gomorra*.

In Neapolitan, *guaglione* simply translates as ‘kid’ or ‘young man’, while in the Camorra jargon it denotes a ‘would-be *camorrista*’ and conveys a very precise meaning (‘young thug who intends to join the Camorra’):

Guaglione: m. ‘giovane delinquente che desidera entrare nella *camorra*’; sintagma prep. *guagliune e malavita* pl. ‘giovani delinquenti’. (De Blasio 1973, in Montuori 2008: 122)

9. Terminological sources (last accessed: June 13, 2012):

IATE: www.iate.europa.eu

Italian Ministry of Home Affairs: <http://www.interno.it/mininterno/export/sites/default/en/index.html>

EMCDDA: <http://www.emcdda.europa.eu>

In line with the translation of *guappo* illustrated in examples (6) and (7), in *Gomorra* there is a similar general trend towards generalization and simplification as far as the translation of *guaglione* is concerned. As the examples (8)–(10) show, this culture-bound term is turned into the more neutral “kids” or “boys,” thus erasing the cultural specificity of the source text as well as the ‘criminal hue’ conveyed by the term *guaglione*:

- (8) [...] *poi Giovanni Aprea “punt ‘e curtiello” perché il nonno, nel 1974, partecipò al film di Pasquale Squitieri I guappi, interpretando il ruolo del vecchio camorrista che allenava i “guaglioni” a tirare di coltello.* (Saviano 2006: 67)

And Giovanni Aprea was *punt ‘e curtiello* or point the knife¹⁰ — because his grandfather played the role of an old Camorrista who teaches the boys to use a knife in Pasquale Squitieri’s 1974 film *I guappi*. (Saviano 2007a: 55)

- (9) *Tamburino: “Gino, ce ne sono a milioni qua. Sono tutti guaglioni... tutti guaglioni... mo ti faccio vedere che combina quello...”* (Saviano 2006: 250)
 Tamburino: “Gino, there’s millions of ‘em here. They’re kids, all of them... kids...now I’ll show you what he’s up to, that one...” (Saviano 2007a: 79)

- (10) [...] *simbolo della forza dei suoi affari e ancor più promessa di successo per i suoi guaglioni che se sapevano come comportarsi prima o poi avrebbero potuto raggiungere quel lusso, anche alla periferia di Napoli, anche nel margine più cupo del Mediterraneo.* (Saviano 2006: 103)

[...] a symbol of the power of his business, and a promise of success for his boys, who, if they knew how to act, might one day have such luxury, even in the outskirts of Naples, even on the darkest shore of the Mediterranean. (Saviano 2007a: 91)

The choice of translating a culture-bound term into English rather than using it as loanword can be seen to be in line with a general domesticating strategy. However, at a closer glance, this approach does not seem to have been adopted consistently throughout the book. This conclusion is reinforced by the fact that while *guaglione*, as illustrated above, is never used as a borrowing, the word *picciotto* is left untranslated:

- (11) *In maniera mnemonica ripetevano mimando tra loro i dialoghi de II camorrista anche due ragazzini di Casal di Principe, Giuseppe M. e Romeo P.*

10. In example (8), the English translation contains a possible oversight. The Neapolitan nickname given to Giovanni Aprea “*punt ‘e curtiello*” literally means ‘knife tip’. The translator renders the noun *punta* (‘tip’) using a verb “*puntare il coltello* or point the knife.” This mistranslation was possibly due to the fact that *‘e* in Neapolitan stands for the preposition ‘of’, not for the article, which would have been *‘o* (‘the’).

Facevano vere e proprie scenette tratte dal film: “Quanto pesa un picciotto? Quanto una piuma al vento.” (Saviano 2006: 275)

Two kids from Casal di Principe, Giuseppe M. and Romeo P., knew *Il camorrista* dialogues by heart and would act out various scenes: “How much does a *picciotto** weigh? As much as a feather in the wind.”

(Saviano 2007a: 252)

* The lowest-ranking *Mafioso*. — Trans.

As example (11) shows, *picciotto* is used as a borrowing. In addition, the first time it occurs in the translation, it is followed by an explanatory note. The *Mafia* is, once again, used by the translator to make this foreign concept more accessible to the target text reader. Employing the strategy of amplification, the translator uses the noun “*Mafioso*” (and *not* the more specific *Camorrista*) to invoke the reader’s schemata and thus clarify the meaning of *picciotto* and his (low) ranking in the criminal hierarchy.

While the word *picciotto* exists in both Sicilian and Neapolitan dialects, it is originally a *Camorra*-related term. As expert Marco Monnier explained in his 1863 work *La Camorra*, the term *picciotto* is used to address the lowest rank of the *Camorra* hierarchy (1863: 6–7). Monnier (1863: 7) also lists the three stages of apprenticeship that *Camorra* novices had to go through in their ‘career’ before becoming a fully-fledged *Camorrista*:

1. *Tamurro*
2. *Picciotto d’onore*
3. *Picciotto di Sgarro*
4. *Camorrista*

Clearly, the term historically and officially belongs to the vocabulary of the *Camorra*. The translator’s choice to explain it by reference to the *Mafia* is therefore unwarranted here, all the more so since the immediate context is the *Camorra*: the dialogue that the two kids are acting out in example (11) is taken from *Il Camorrista*, a film directed by Giuseppe Tornatore in 1986.

From what emerges so far, the source text lexical elements which also belong to the vocabulary of the Sicilian *Mafia* (and that can be more familiar and evocative to the target text reader) tend to be borrowed in translation. *Camorra*-specific terms, on the contrary, are generally translated, simplified, and therefore deprived of their local color in favor of a more ‘domesticating,’ stereotyped, and target-reader oriented solution.

4 Framing the Camorra in its historical and social context

Saviano's prose is one part undercover investigation, another part history, and a third part autobiography; it is therefore rich in references to Italian culture and society, especially to events that contributed over the years to the development of the Camorra and to the exponential growth of its illegal trafficking. The intertextual and exophoric references to the Italian context that can be found in the text represent a crucial cohesive means for the reader to understand what the Camorra is, and has been, all about. Most aspects tend to be 'taken for granted' in the source language, and so, it falls to the translator to track them down and expand on such references in such a way as to preserve the referential and informative function of the source text.

A successful example in the translation of *Gomorrhah* concerns Giovanni Falcone, an iconic Sicilian judge who waged legal war against the Mafia and was eventually assassinated in 1992. The first time he is mentioned in the novel an amplification strategy is adopted. In order to orient target text readers, the translator adds a comprehensive footnote concerning Judge Falcone:

- (12) *Negli anni della guerra all'interno della Nuova Famiglia, dopo la vittoria su Cutolo, i Nuvoletta mandarono a chiamare l'assassino del giudice Falcone, Giovanni Brusca, il boss di San Giovanni Jato, per fargli eliminare cinque persone in Campania e scioglierne due nell'acido.* (Saviano 2006: 62)

During the feuds within La Nuova Famiglia, after their victory over Cutolo, the Nuvolettas sent for Giovanni Brusca, the boss of San Giovanni Jato and the murderer of Judge Giovanni Falcone*.

**Falcone, who was killed on May 23, 1992, was an important anti-Mafia magistrate and one of the major figures in the 1986–87 Maxi trial, in which 360 Mafiosi were convicted. Falcone and his wife, Francesca Morvillo — also a magistrate — and three policemen were killed when a roadside bomb exploded as they drove from the airport to Palermo. — Trans.*

Example (13) is, on the contrary, not as efficacious in terms of the amplification devices used. It concerns the reference to the 1983 film *Mi manda Picone*, directed by Nanni Loy and reporting on the plague of racket and extortion of money that ravaged Southern Italy and Naples in the 1980s. This passage is paramount because it is here that Saviano draws a comparison between the old and new systems of extortion (also see example (14)): the former was based on making door-to-door rounds, while the latter is built on the imposition of product supplies:

- (13) *Ormai l'estorsione mensile, quella alla Mi manda Picone, il film di Nanni Loy, del porta a porta a Natale, Pasqua e Ferragosto è una prassi da clan straccione,*

usata da gruppi che cercano di sopravvivere, incapaci di fare impresa. Tutto è cambiato. (Saviano 2006: 61)

Only beggar clans inept at business and desperate to survive still practice the kind of monthly extortions seen in Nanni Loy's film *Mi manda Picone*, or the door-to-door rounds at Christmas, Easter, and August 15. Everything has changed. (Saviano 2007a: 50)

Regrettably, when the film *Mi manda Picone* is mentioned in example (13), no further information is provided to readers in order to guarantee greater comprehensibility. For instance, a simple temporal reference might have been useful to locate the action and understand that this criminal practice has changed since the 1980s, thus implying an important 'evolution' of the Camorra's system of extortion: now "only beggar clans inept at business" still practice this kind of door-to-door extortion. The lack of amplification devices in the target text prevents readers from fully appreciating the logic underlying the Camorra's practice, their connections to the social framework, and, more importantly, their historical development.

On a more marginal note, example (13) also contains a generic temporal reference to "August 15," which in English completely neutralizes the culture-bound *Ferragosto*,¹¹ a holiday celebrated in Italy on August 15 to celebrate the Assumption of the Virgin Mary and belonging to the triad of the most important Italian festivities, which also includes *Natale* (Christmas) and *Pasqua* (Easter). An important cultural reference is missing here, as the reader may wonder what connection this date might have with Christmas and Easter and possibly why these rounds were supposed to take place in the heat of August. The addition of paratextual elements might have explained that this date also coincides with the Catholic celebrations commemorating the Assumption of the Virgin Mary, her physical elevation into Heaven. There is in fact a sort of Camorra 'agenda,' whose deadlines incongruously follow the liturgical calendar.

Going back to the racket described in *Mi manda Picone* (see example (14)), Saviano explains the mechanism that underpins the new system of extortion. Today money extortion is based on the "*imposizione delle forniture*":

- (14) *I Nuvoletta di Marano, periferia a nord di Napoli, avevano innescato un meccanismo più articolato ed efficiente di racket fondato sul vantaggio reciproco e sull'imposizione delle forniture. Giuseppe Gala era diventato uno*

11. The word *Ferragosto* comes from the Latin '*feriae Augusti*,' meaning 'Emperor August's holidays.' This pre-Christian *feriae* celebrated the middle of summer and the end of hard agricultural labor in the fields. The holiday was later on adopted by the Catholic Church to commemorate the Assumption of Mary. Early Christians believed that the Virgin Mary's resurrection and entry into heaven occurred on the 15th of August.

dei più apprezzati e richiesti agenti nel business alimentare. Era agente della Bauli e della Von Holten e attraverso la Vip Alimentari aveva conquistato un posto di esclusivista della Parmalat per la zona di Marano. (Saviano 2006:61)

The Nuvoletta clan of Marano, on the northern outskirts of Naples, set up a more efficient extortion racket based on reciprocal advantage and the *taxing of supplies*. Giuseppe Gala had become one of the most valued reps in the food business. He was much in demand, presenting Bauli and Von Holten, and through Vip Alimentari he became the exclusive Parmalat rep in Marano clan territory. (Saviano 2007a:50)

It should be noted that *imposizione* does not mean ‘taxation,’ as the translator understands it here. *Imposizione* is a polysemic word in Italian, meaning ‘command/imposition,’ as well as ‘taxation.’ In example (14) above, the translator opts for ‘taxation’ as she probably assumes that bosses extort money from storekeepers by having them pay a tax. However, Saviano is reporting on the fact that this clan is using a new and more efficient extortion racket, which consists of *forcing* storekeepers to buy certain food supplies (the Italian *forniture*) and specific brands, like Bauli and Von Holten. As the example (14) shows, the *camorrista* Peppe Gala guarantees a considerable number of orders to the food companies he represents. He ‘imposes’ certain brands upon traders, like Bauli, and their food products. In turn, retailers and supermarkets are happy to deal with this *camorrista* as he can pressure suppliers into offering better discounts to them. The mistranslation of this important passage hampers the understanding of the mechanism of the racket being described and generates discrepancies with numerous other references to the new racket system occurring throughout the text, such as the following:

- (15) Products “adopted” by the clans are not imposed through intimidation *but rather by means of advantageous pricing*. The concerns Gala represented declared they had been victims of the Camorra racket and had had to submit to the diktat of the clans. Yet data from Confcommercio — the Italian business confederation — reveals that from 1998 to 2003 the companies that turned to Gala experienced a 40 to 80 percent increase in annual sales. (Saviano 2007a:50)

5. Specialized language

This comparative investigation concludes with an analysis of the technical terms that can be found in *Gomorrhah* and that relate to the specialized fields of law and crime. In particular, I will concentrate on the most important crime mentioned in Saviano’s narrative: *associazione di tipo mafioso / associazione camorristica*. This

Table 3. Official translations of *associazione di tipo mafioso* and *associazione camorristica*

Translation of <i>associazione di tipo mafioso</i> and <i>associazione camorristica</i>	Source
Membership of the Mafia	(UK Home Office (Home Office Report 17/02) ¹³
Membership of Mafia-type associations	(UK Home Office (Home Office Report 17/02)
Membership of a Mafia-type criminal association	OPINION OF THE APPEAL COURT OVER THE EXTRADITION OF ANTONIO LA TORRE — Antonio La Torre vs. Her Majesty's Advocate, 14/07/2006 ¹⁴

offense is particularly interesting because, while it is alien to many legal systems, in Italy it is specifically covered by Article 416-bis of the Criminal Code.¹²

Table 3 lists some possible translations of the crime used by competent bodies, such as the UK Home Office. None of them is, nevertheless, ever used in *Gomorra*.

The first time this crime appears in the narrative (example (16)), the translator employs a simplification. “*Reato di associazione mafiosa*” is generalized into the verb phrase “having ties to the Mafia,” completely omitting the crucial reference to Article 416-bis which, as anticipated above, incorporates the offense of mafia conspiracy into the Italian Penal Code:

- (16) *Corleone, in confronto a Casal di Principe, è una città progettata da Walt Disney. Casal di Principe, San Cipriano d'Aversa, Casapesenna. Un territorio con meno di centomila abitanti, ma con milleduecento condannati per 416 bis, il reato di associazione mafiosa, e un numero esponenziale di indagati e condannati per concorso esterno in associazione mafiosa.* (Saviano 2006: 207)
- Compared to Casal di Principe, Corleone is Disneyland. Casal di Principe, San Cipriano d'A-versa, Casapesenna. Fewer than one hundred thousand inhabitants, but twelve hundred of them have been sentenced for *ø* having ties to the Mafia, and a whole lot more have been accused or convicted of aiding or abetting Mafia activities. (Saviano 2007a: 188)

The above omitted reference to Article 416-bis undermines the specificity of the original text and flattens the multilayered technicality of the novel, whose readers might range from non-insiders to experts of Italian law or organized crime. The

12. http://www.camera.it/_bicamerale/leg15/commbicantimafia/files/pdf/Art_416bis.pdf (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

13. <http://www.scotcourts.gov.uk/opinions/2006HCJAC56.html> (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

14. A Comparative Analysis of Organised Crime Conspiracy Legislation and Practice and their Relevance to England and Wales:

<http://rds.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/rdsolr1702.pdf> (last accessed: June 13, 2012)

second time this crime is mentioned (example (17)), a more generic translation is, once again, put forward: in this case the compound “Camorra ties” is used, rather than the official translation of the offense. Once again, reference to the legal ground on which the charge is based (Article 416-bis of the Criminal Code) is omitted without a specific reason:

- (17) *Venne arrestato anni fa per associazione camorristica, accusato di essere il cassiere del clan dei Casalesi, l'accusa propone la condanna a otto anni di reclusione per 416 bis.* (Saviano 2006: 207)

He was arrested years ago for *Camorra ties*, accused of being the treasurer of the Casalesi clan. The prosecution asked for a sentence of eight years \emptyset . (Saviano 2007a: 188)

As already highlighted, this crime is extremely important in the context of Italian law, so much so that an *ad hoc* article (416-bis of the Criminal Code) had to be purposely enacted. By omitting this key reference in the text, the translator prevents the reader from understanding the impact that the Camorra has on Italy's social and legal framework. In addition, this omission strongly reduces the text's authoritativeness: being a chronicle in highly-journalistic style and belonging to the genre of the non-fiction exposé, the book's credibility also depends on reference to actual facts and specific, often technical, details.

Another instance of simplification of Camorra-related specialized vocabulary can be found in the chapter entitled “Aberdeen Mondragone” when Saviano describes the position of Antonio La Torre, who had been living ‘safely’ for many years in Aberdeen, Scotland, because membership in a Mafia-type criminal association was not an offense known to the law of Scotland:

- (18) *Per anni aveva evitato sia l'arresto che l'estradizione, facendosi scudo della sua cittadinanza scozzese e del mancato riconoscimento da parte delle autorità britanniche dei reati associativi che gli sono contestati.* (Saviano 2006: 288)

[...] but for years his British citizenship and the fact that the authorities did not recognize his alleged *crimes* shielded him and he had been able to avoid extradition. (Saviano 2007a: 262)

As example (18) shows, *reati associativi* is translated with the more generic and simplified “crimes.” However, the technical term *reato associativo* (‘associative crime’) is regulated by Articles 416 and 416-bis of the Italian Criminal Code and encompasses a number of other specific crimes, such as:

- Associazione per delinquere (crime syndicate)
- Associazione di tipo mafioso (membership of Mafia-type associations)

- Associazioni con finalità di terrorismo anche internazionale o di eversione dell'*ordine democratico* (associations with the aim of terrorism or with subversive aims)

Once again, generalizations and omissions of specialized references in the English text risk compromising the book's primary function: informativeness. Following Reiss's classification (2004: 171), *Gomorra* might be considered mainly informative (privileging "communication of content") rather than expressive ("communication of artistically organized content") or operative ("communication of content with a persuasive character"). Regardless of the author's use of style, metaphors, and visual imagery, the informative function of this book is clearly dominant and should therefore remain prominent in the English version. Being an exposé of shocking revelations, Saviano's work aims at fighting Naples' criminality by raising public awareness of the Camorra, its structure, internal mechanisms, and global risks. To this purpose, its function remains highly content-focused, like a newspaper article, representing objects and actual facts. Omissions or simplifications of specialized terminology in the translated text, therefore, lower its level of factuality and compromise the priority of its primarily referential function.

6. Conclusions

In translation, *Gomorra* crosses sociocultural boundaries across which tradition and identity are inhomogenous and incongruent. The sociocultural context portrayed in the Italian exposé is naturally distant from the experiences of the English-speaking target text reader: the Italian text is widely populated by culture-bound concepts and implicit meanings, which further complicate the translation process. The subjects of the source text operate in complex networks of symbols and meanings which call for permanent interaction. In such a context, identity construction is performed through the negotiation of the conflicts arising from cultural difference and the different social discourses involved.

From a preliminary analysis though, the English version appears hesitant to give the Camorra an autonomous and independent cultural representation in the target culture. Although divergences between the two texts are not always radical, the accumulation of minor shifts eventually produces a difference at the macro level in the portrayal of the Camorra. When importing new and unfamiliar elements into the receptor language, the opportunity for exoticization is often missed and the frequency of generalization in the English translation is high. Camorra-specific terms tend to be deprived of their local specificity and modified in favor of more habitual and stereotyped options. In addition, the English version frequently relies on references

to the Sicilian Mafia to 'filter' images and identities that pertain to the scenario of the Camorra, while important elements that qualify the source text as highly referential (factuality, concrete details, accuracy, and specialized information) are sometimes missing, to the detriment of the translation's informative function.

From a wider perspective, the translated text seems to be characterized by conservatism, thus failing to create the site for 'the other' to appear and the conditions through which "newness comes into the world" (Bhabha 1994: 227). This clashes with the awareness-raising intent of the author and prevents the Camorra from gaining full narrative representation as a major criminal phenomenon whose repercussions are lethal, global, and can no longer be overlooked.

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Translators in international organizations

A special breed of high-status professionals?

Danish EU translators as a case in point

Helle V. Dam and Karen Korning Zethsen

This article focuses on the occupational status of translators in international organizations. It reports on an empirical study on the job status of Danish staff translators working in the European Union as compared to that of Danish staff translators working in the national market. The study is based on data from questionnaires completed by 63 EU translators and 113 national-market translators, i.e., a total of 176 respondents. The translators' perceptions of their occupational status were studied and compared through their responses to questions revolving around four parameters of occupational prestige: (1) remuneration, (2) education/expertise, (3) power/influence, and (4) visibility. Based on the literature, we hypothesized that the EU translators would enjoy a higher status than the national-market translators — a hypothesis which the study failed to confirm. In the article, the analyses and findings of the study are discussed, along with the possible reasons for the lack of alignment between the hypothesis and the results.

1. Introduction

The sociological turn in translation studies has been accompanied by growing attention to translation as a profession and translators as a social and professional group. Within this context, the topic of the present article — translators' occupational status — is also beginning to attract scholarly attention after having been kept in the shadows for a long period of time. Though still rarely the central topic of any single publication, the subject of translator status has recently started to surface in publications by scholars internationally (e.g., Abdallah 2010; Chan 2009; Dam and Zethsen 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011; Katan 2009; Koskinen 2008 and 2009; Meylaerts 2010; Monzó 2009; Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger 2008; Setton and Liangliang 2009). With this article we wish to shed more light on the still under-researched but emerging topic of translator status.

What little empirical research has been conducted so far points in the same direction: translation seems to be considered a low-status profession in large parts of the world. In a Finnish study, Kristiina Abdallah (2010) reports that translators complain about lack of appreciation, low remuneration, feelings of powerlessness, and invisibility in connection with clients. In their report on a research project in progress, the Israeli scholars Rakefet Sela-Sheffy and Miriam Shlesinger (2008) mention the enigma of the marginalization of translators, their lack of power and visibility in spite of the importance of their work. In our own previous work, we have studied the status of Danish company, agency, and freelance translators (Dam and Zethsen 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011), and the results consistently show that these translators too have a relatively low status despite their background in a system which offers both state-authorization and a full-fledged M.A. in translation (for details, see Dam and Zethsen 2008). Against this background, it is particularly interesting to look at a group of translators who are widely believed to have a high occupational status, as this may help us to ascertain whether low status is a structural, inherent feature of the profession or simply due to historical circumstances, such as low pay or lack of efficient gate-keeping mechanisms. This article focuses on one such presumably high-status group, namely translators in international organizations, specifically Danish staff translators working in the European Union, where we find the largest translation services in the world. The Danish EU translators will be compared with a group of translators having almost identical characteristics, except that they are not employed in an international organization: Danish staff translators working on the national market.

Though the group of translators selected for the present study — Danish EU translators — represents only a fraction of all translators employed in international organizations, we assume that the findings will be at least partially valid for the population of internationally employed translators at large and hence of interest to the translation studies community in general.

2. On the concept of status¹

If asked what ensures job status and prestige,² most people intuitively list a selection of parameters such as money, fame, power, educational background, worthiness, and value to society. The weighting of these or similar parameters may fluctuate from context to context, but the parameters as such are likely to remain

1. Section 2 is based on Dam and Zethsen (2008).

2. The terms 'status' and 'prestige' are used synonymously in the present article.

the same, at least in a Western culture (Nakao, Hodge, and Treas 1990: 15). In the 1940s, the sociologists Cecil C. North and Paul K. Hatt (1947) developed occupational prestige scales which sparked debate about whether such scales reflected, for example, the *worthiness* of occupations or the *material rewards* connected with a certain occupation (Ollivier 2000). Based on the 1947 North and Hatt prestige study and the 1950 U.S. census, Otis Dudley Duncan (1961) constructed a Socio-economic Index (SEI), a highly-influential quantitative measure which operates as a predictor of prestige. Duncan's index showed at that time that *educational background* and *income* had come to be considered the main determinants of occupational prestige.

In her overview article, Michèle Ollivier (2000) suggests that today occupational prestige scales reflect factual evaluations of the economic and cultural advantages afforded by occupations rather than normative evaluations of their worth. At the same time, however, she considers whether "society-wide, consensual evaluations" remain relevant given a post-modern perspective or whether they have given way to a "multiplicity of local status orders" (ibid.:2). What Ollivier suggests is that certain status parameters may be important to some people in some contexts but not to all people in all contexts. In other words, status cannot be viewed as an absolute notion but is a complex, subjective, and context-dependent construct.

When individual countries are taken as a whole, however, many studies have shown general agreement across class, gender, race, and other categories about what constitutes high- and low-status jobs (for an overview, see Nakao, Hodge, and Treas 1990), though the relative weight of status parameters may vary from country to country. For example, in a comparative study Neil J. McKinnon and Tom Langford (1994) found that parameters of occupational prestige in the United States and Canada were very similar, with the exception that *moral worthiness* was a more important determinant of prestige in the U.S. than in Canada — a finding they explain as indicating value differences between the two countries.

The most recent national Danish study of occupational status was conducted in 2006 (Ugebrevet A4 2006), and it identifies four main parameters as determining status in a Danish context: (1) remuneration, (2) education/expertise, (3) power/influence, and (4) visibility/fame. The four parameters confirm both status and translation literature present as important, so generally speaking we assume that these parameters apply throughout the (Western) world, but in various combinations, with different weights, in different contexts, at different times. Consequently, they have formed the basis of the study reported on in the present article as well as in our previous empirical investigations of translator status. The four status parameters are described in more detail in the analysis section (Section 5).

3. Hypothesis

Even though there is general agreement that translation is not a high-status occupation, there is no consensus in the literature about which groups of translators have the highest or the lowest status. One thing seems to be taken for granted though, namely that conference interpreters are at the very top of the translator/interpreter status continuum (see Dam and Zethsen 2011 for a more detailed discussion of this continuum). According to Daniel Gile (2004: 11–13), conference interpreters enjoy the highest prestige and the highest remuneration within the translation and interpreting profession because these interpreters usually work for international organizations, large industrial corporations, etc., and conference interpreting is often associated with an exciting, sometimes glamorous working environment where the interpreter has the chance to meet well-known personalities. This is corroborated by Ebru Diriker's empirical research on conference interpreters, which shows that the representation of the profession in the Turkish media is closely connected with big events, high remuneration, great careers, and even personal fame (Diriker 2005; see also Diriker 2004). Other groups of translators and interpreters, such as commercial translators and community interpreters, have a lower status due to lower visibility and the lower social and financial status of users. Both Sela-Sheffy and Shlesinger (2008: 86) and Gile (2004: 13) quite plausibly argue that the prestige of the client reflects on the translator/interpreter. Like conference interpreters, translators within the EU work for an international organization with a certain prestige and they enjoy a high level of remuneration. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that EU translators, like other translators employed in international organizations, have a relatively high level of status — probably at the very top of the translator status continuum.

If, more specifically, we compare the conditions of national Danish translators and Danish EU translators, there are reasons to believe that the latter group has a higher status than the former. In principle, Danish translators in the EU do not have a higher level of education than their colleagues on the national market (see Section 4 below), but they do have to pass a *concours* (widely believed to be quite demanding) to obtain permanent employment. Once permanent employment has been obtained, job security is extremely high (Wagner, Bech, and Martínez 2002: 95). It is a moot point whether Danish EU translators are more visible than their national counterparts, as one of the main conclusions in a comprehensive ethnographic study of Finnish translators in the EU Commission conducted by Kaisa Koskinen was that low visibility and physical isolation is part and parcel of the jobs of these translators (Koskinen 2008). However, it seems likely that the high profile — and power — of the EU translators' place of employment may also reflect on them, as explained above. As Koskinen herself (2008: 93) points out: "It

seems that the institutional identity is like a cloak you can put on when necessary, to benefit from the added support of the entire institution behind you.” Also, physically the translators live abroad and their lifestyle may be seen, by the average Dane, to be international and even associated with a certain glamour. In her study, Koskinen (2008: 109, 111, 117) mentions general outside assumptions of an exotic, affluent, highflying, and even glamorous lifestyle of EU translators. Perhaps most important of all, there seems to be no doubt that Danish EU translators have a higher salary than their colleagues at home (they are A-officials like other EU employees with an academic degree (Wagner, Bech, and Martínez 2002: 95; Koskinen 2008: 91)). In view of the above, our empirical study is based on the hypothesis that *Danish translators working for an international organization such as the EU have a higher status than Danish translators working on the national market.*

4. Methodology

As status is a subjective concept, we shall not attempt to test the hypothesis by means of objective fact, but shall focus on how the translators themselves perceive their occupational status; the translators’ perceptions and opinions were elicited by means of questionnaires as detailed in Section 4.3. We have chosen to let the translators speak for themselves rather than ask the opinion of non-translators, in spite of the fact that outside views clearly play a large part in the construction of a profession’s status. In our first study of translators’ occupational status (Dam and Zethsen 2008), we did in fact study the perceptions of both translators and people outside the profession. As it turned out, the viewpoints of the two groups coincided to a very large extent, and close scrutiny of the non-translators’ responses showed internal discrepancies suggesting that their answers were occasionally less than honest (*ibid.*; see especially pp. 84–88). For these reasons, and based on the assumption that the members of a profession are experts when it comes to assessing their own occupational status, we have chosen to base the present study exclusively on responses elicited from the translators themselves.

The study, then, is based on quantitative analyses of questionnaires completed by a group of Danish staff translators working in the European Union (also referred to as *EU translators* in the analyses below), on the one hand, and a group of Danish staff translators working in the national market (also referred to as *national-market translators*), on the other. The analyzed data consist of questionnaire responses from 63 EU translators and 113 national-market translators, i.e., a total of 176 respondents. Each of the respondent groups consists of two sub-groups: the group of EU translators covers 39 translators working for the European Commission and 24 translators working for the European Parliament, while the

group of national-market translators is made up of 47 company translators and 66 agency translators, as summarized below:

- 63 EU translators
 - o 39 Commission translators
 - o 24 Parliament translators
- 113 national-market translators
 - o 47 company translators
 - o 66 agency translators

Apart from the inherent difference in place of employment, the potential influence of which we are interested in studying in the present project, an attempt was made to select a sample of translators which was as homogenous as possible: only Danish translators (whether working in a Danish translation department in the EU or in a Danish company or agency located in Denmark) employed on permanent contracts and for whom translation is their main occupation were selected to participate in the study. A further requirement was that the respondents hold a university degree at the master's (or corresponding) level and that they have been employed as translators for at least six months. Translators at all levels of employment were included, i.e., also those with administrative or management responsibilities. Apart from providing a certain level of homogeneity for reasons of comparability, these selection criteria served to ensure a sample of translators with a strong professional profile and presumably at the high end of the translator status continuum, although the hypothesis was that the EU translators would have a higher occupational status than the national-market translators.

The data collection processes for the different groups of respondents are explained in the following subsections.

4.1 Data collection — the EU translators

We initially selected for participation those EU institutions with the largest numbers of translators in their employ, i.e., the European Commission, the European Parliament, and the Council of Ministers. The Danish translation departments of these three institutions were contacted and, after some debate concerning data protection, the Commission and the Parliament agreed to participate in our investigation. The Council declined due to their data protection policy.

57 Danish translators in the Commission appeared to fulfill the abovementioned requirements for participation and were invited to participate in the study. Out of these, 49 translators filled in a questionnaire. In the Parliament, 32 translators seemed initially to fulfill the requirements. Among these, 25 agreed to

participate. With a total of 89 potential respondents and a total of 74 responses, the initial response rate amounted to 83%. Upon closer scrutiny, it turned out that five respondents had begun but had not completed the questionnaires, and six did not fulfill the criteria for participation after all, as evidenced by their responses to a series of control questions. The questionnaire responses of these translators were filtered out and do not form part of the final sample, which thus consists of data from a total of 39 Commission translator questionnaires and 24 Parliament translator questionnaires, as indicated above. The data from the EU translators were collected in the early months of 2011.

4.2 Data collection — The national-market translators

To collect data on national-market translators, we searched out and contacted all the private Danish companies and translation agencies that employ three or more translators with the profile specified above and ended up with a total of 50 companies, most of them among the largest Danish companies, and a total of 28 agencies. Thus, *all* Danish translators who might match the above profiles and whose companies or agencies seemed to match the profiles were contacted, not merely a selection or sample.

The vast majority of the companies and agencies who were contacted but ended up not participating in the study did not participate because, upon further scrutiny they turned out not to fulfill the criteria for participation. Only two companies and two translation agencies actually declined to participate. Having identified the relevant participants, we sent out questionnaires to 78 agency translators, of which 76 were completed and returned. That is, after the initial selection, the response rate among the agency translators was 97%. For the company translators, we are not able to present similar figures, as they were not contacted by us directly but through contact persons in the participating companies who had agreed to ask all the company's translators with the desired profile to fill in a questionnaire and to collect and return the completed questionnaires. We received 51 completed questionnaires from company translators, and based on our correspondence with our contact persons in the companies, we are confident that we have obtained completed questionnaires from the majority of eligible translators.

Some of the respondents (four company translators and ten agency translators) did not fulfill the criteria for participation after all, as evidenced by their responses to the control questions in the questionnaires. The questionnaire responses of these translators were removed, which means that the final national-market sample consists of responses from a total of 47 company translators and 66 agency translators, as previously indicated. The data were collected among the company translators in January 2007 and among the agency translators in January 2008.

The Danish translation market is relatively small, and the number of translators who participated in our study, though not a large number per se, represent a significant section of the total of Danish company and agency translators with the desired profile.

4.3 Questionnaires

The questionnaires employed in the three sub-studies were as similar as possible, though by necessity adapted to suit the different respondent groups (company, agency, and EU translators). Apart from the control questions, which were included to enable us to verify that the respondents fulfilled the criteria for participation, the questionnaires contained a series of demographic questions (age, gender, educational background, work experience, etc.). Most of the questions, however, were designed to elicit information about how the translators assessed their occupational status and revolved around the four main indicators of status identified in Section 2 above: (1) remuneration, (2) education/expertise, (3) power/influence, and (4) visibility. These questions, which are described in some detail in the analysis sections below, focused on perceptions, attitudes, and opinions rather than facts, and most were designed to be answered by typically checking one of five statements representing different degrees of agreement with the questions. An example of a question concerning the second status parameter, education/expertise, could be: 'Is translation, in your opinion, an expert function?', followed by the five standard response categories: (i) 'to a very high degree'; (ii) 'to a high degree'; (iii) 'to a certain degree'; (iv) 'to a low degree'; (v) 'to a very low degree or not at all'.³ The answers were ordered vertically in descending degrees, with the highest degree placed at the top and the lowest at the bottom. This order was chosen to give prominence to the highest ranking possibilities so that the respondents did not feel tempted to tick the answers representing the lowest degrees just because they came first. Thus, we chose to facilitate high-status rather than low-status answers. As the common perception of translators seems to be one of low status, we wanted to ensure that if this were confirmed in our study, it would not be a consequence of the way the choice of responses was represented.

The first drafts of the questionnaires were tested and revised in accordance with the testers' comments and responses. The final questionnaires, which took approximately 10 minutes to fill in, contained between 28 and 33 questions, depending on the respondent group (28 for the company translators, 31 for the agency

3. The questionnaires were originally in Danish and the examples shown here are our translations.

translators, and 33 for the EU translators). The questionnaires were prefaced by a brief explanation of the research project, and the respondents were informed that their responses to the questionnaires would remain anonymous. Also, they were instructed to give their first response to the questions whenever possible, to be honest, and to avoid 'politically correct' answers.

5. Analyses and results

The questionnaire responses were processed using the statistical software program SPSS (the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences). For this purpose, the five graded response categories accompanying the tick-off questions in the questionnaires were converted into numerical values between 1 and 5, with 1 representing the lowest degree ('to a very low degree or not at all') and 5 the highest ('to a very high degree'); the use of numerical values allowed us to calculate the mean values of the responses and thus facilitated intergroup comparisons. The between-group differences found in the data were tested for statistical significance by means of t-tests. Below, the research findings are generally represented figuratively through columns symbolizing the five response categories featured in the questionnaires, with the mean values of the two respondent groups' ratings indicated in the accompanying text. The many details of the t-tests are not specified, but it is stated whether the intergroup differences discussed were found to be statistically significant or not.

In the following subsections, we shall consider the results of the questionnaire studies in relation to each of the status parameters which guided the study: *remuneration* (Section 5.2), *education/expertise* (Section 5.3), *power/influence* (Section 5.4), and *visibility* (Section 5.5). Also, results from questions designed to inquire more generally and directly into the issue of translator *status and prestige* are discussed. Although these questions were placed at the very end of the questionnaires to avoid being too explicit about the topic of the research project, they are considered first below (Section 5.1). Several questions, both direct and indirect, were asked in relation to each parameter, but we shall limit ourselves to discussing the results for the most central and representative questions only.

5.1 Translator status and prestige in general

The two groups of respondents were asked how they perceived their status as translators in society. Their answers were distributed as shown in Figure 1.

As we can see in Figure 1, the preferred answer for both groups of translators was the neutral middle category (3), whereas their second choice was the low

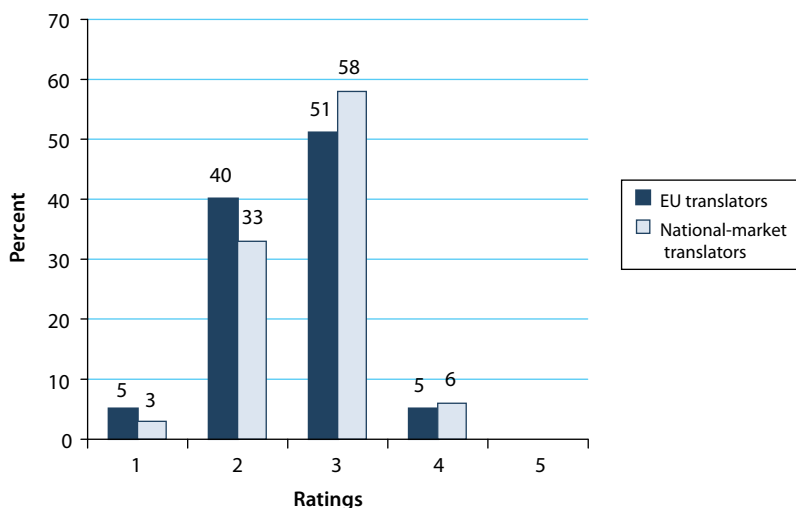


Figure 1. Translator status as perceived by the EU translators and the national-market translators

degree of status represented by the value of 2.⁴ A few of the respondents in both groups also marked the lowest possible degree (1) or the second highest category (4), but none chose the highest ranking option (5). On the whole, the ratings of the EU translators and the translators on the national market are remarkably similar. The high degree of similarity in the response patterns of the two groups is also evident in the calculated mean values: the mean value of the EU translators' ratings of their occupational status is 2.56, whereas it is 2.68 for the national-market translators. If anything, the scores of the national-market translators are in fact higher than those of the EU translators. However, the difference is very small and not statistically significant.

Clearly, these results run counter to our hypothesis that translators in international organizations perceive their occupational status as higher than their national-market counterparts perceive theirs. As can be concluded from the fact that the average ratings of both groups are below the middle value (i.e., 3) on the 1–5 rating scale, there is remarkable consensus even among these supposedly high-profile translators that theirs is not a high-status profession, no matter whether they are employed in a national or an international context.

Similar response patterns — below-middle ratings and no statistically significant differences between the two groups — arose in the other questions which were geared to inquire directly into the issue of translator status and job prestige

4. The figures have been rounded and the total may therefore in some instances be less or more than 100 percent.

in the questionnaires. In the following, we shall see whether an analysis of the individual status parameters of remuneration, education/expertise, power/influence, and visibility can shed some light on these findings.

5.2 Remuneration

Salary or income is widely believed to be a main determinant of occupational prestige. References to support this fact can be found everywhere in the literature, both in the field of translation studies and in the sociological literature on professions, professionalization, and occupational prestige (e.g., Venuti 1995; Weiss-Gal and Welbourne 2008).

In the present study, we asked the translators to indicate their current salary by marking one of the monthly income ranges specified in Figure 2.

It is clear from Figure 2 that the level of remuneration of the EU translators is much higher than that of their national-market counterparts. The salary ranges most frequently marked by the EU translators are the ones to the right in the figure, at the high end of the scale, whereas the national-market translators concentrate their responses to the left, at the low end of the scale. In total, 70% of the EU translators indicate one of the top-seven salary ranges (between 55,000 and 85,000 DKK or more) as the relevant salary level, whereas this is the case for only 4% of the national-market translators. In contrast, only 28% of the EU translators mark one of the bottom-seven ranges (between 25,000 DKK, or less,

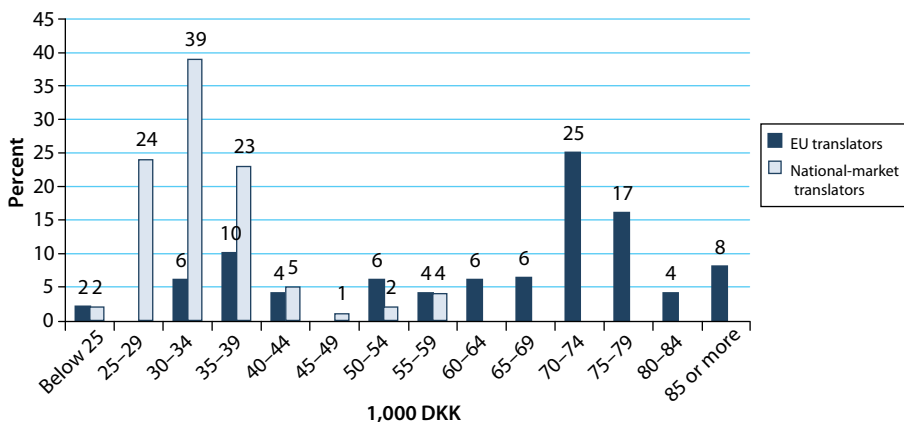


Figure 2. The monthly salaries of the EU translators and the national-market translators indicated in Danish Kroner (DKK)⁵

5. One Euro corresponds to approximately 7.5 Danish Kroner (DKK), and one U.S. Dollar to about DKK 5.5 (December 2011).

and 54,000 DKK) as relevant for them, whereas this is the case for almost all the national-market translators (96%). For several reasons, the salary levels of the two groups of translators are not directly comparable. The tax level and cost of living are quite different for the two groups, who live in different countries and under different systems (for example, the EU salary includes child allowances, whereas Danes receive such benefits from the government). Also, the data pertaining to the national-market translators were collected in 2007 and 2008, whereas the data on the EU translators were collected later, in 2011, when salaries and prices were probably slightly higher. Still, the gap between the salary levels of the EU translators and their national-market colleagues is so large that there is no doubt that it does reflect a real difference, especially considering Denmark's notoriously high tax level and cost of living.

The large salary differences found in this study are hardly surprising. It has been stressed time and again that EU translators earn excellent salaries. The EU translators in the present study also confirmed this by rating their satisfaction with their salaries at an average of 4.43 on the 1–5 scale. As for the sample of national-market translators, some of the earlier studies by the present authors show that, although these translators earn a decent salary, they still earn less than other Danish professionals with the same level of education and work experience and who work under similar circumstances (Dam and Zethsen 2008; 2011). Compared to the EU translators, the national-market translators' salaries are therefore clearly lower, in absolute as well as in relative terms.

It is interesting to note that these differences point to a lack of direct correlation between occupational status and the level of remuneration. As we saw in Section 5.1, the two groups of translators have almost identical perceptions of their occupational status; at the same time they clearly have very different levels of income. In a correlation analysis which we conducted in an earlier study (Dam and Zethsen 2009), we demonstrated a correlation between salary level and low status perceptions (low salary correlated with low status ratings and high salary correlated with an absence of low status ratings), but we found no correlation between salary level and high status ratings. As we tentatively explained this finding, a certain level of remuneration may be a *necessary* condition in order for the translators not to view the status of their profession as low, but it may not by itself be *sufficient* to ensure a high-status perception. As also pointed out by Koskinen in her comprehensive study of EU translators, "Economically, EU translators are top professionals. Nevertheless, in their everyday work they seem to suffer from the age-old translators' problems arising from misrecognition" (Koskinen 2008: 152). Thus, the financial rewards afforded by an occupation may not play the decisive role that is often attributed to them, at least not when it comes to the translation profession.

5.3 Education/expertise

In the Danish study of occupational status which forms the basis of our model of analysis, jobs requiring a high level of education and a high degree of expertise and specialized knowledge were at the absolute top of the prestige scale. Also, sociological literature describes education and knowledge as important elements of professionalization (see the overview article by Idit Weiss-Gal and Penelope Welbourne 2008), and translation literature frequently references the relationship between education or training and status (e.g., Chesterman and Wagner 2002: 35; Schäffner 2004: 8).

In this study, all the respondents had the same factual level of education, as a Master's (or corresponding) degree was a criterion for participation.⁶ In the following analysis, therefore, we shall focus not on educational background but on expertise perceptions.

The translators were asked a series of questions relating to their perceptions of their level of expertise and specialized knowledge. In one question, we simply asked the respondents to assess the degree of expertise required to perform their job as translators, and the answers of the two groups of translators are shown in Figure 3.

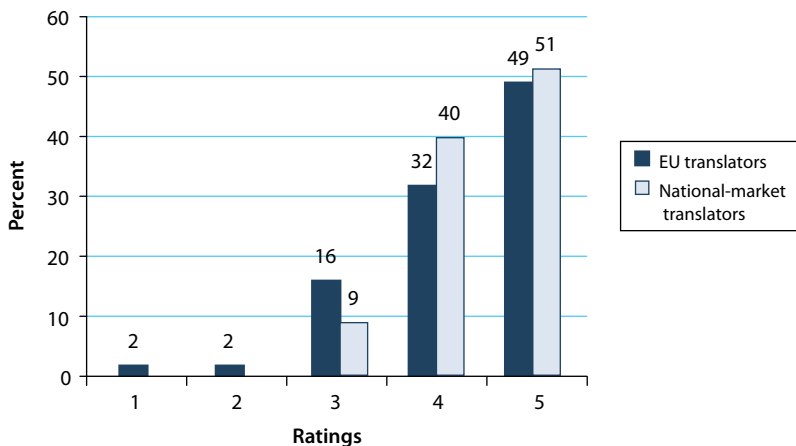


Figure 3. Degree of expertise required to translate as assessed by the EU translators and the national-market translators

6. The sample of translators working on the Danish market was more homogenous as they all had a Master's degree in specialized translation, whereas the translators working for an EU institution had different kinds of university degrees. There is, however, no evidence in the data to suggest that differences in type of degree lead to differences in perceptions of occupational status.

Figure 3 shows a tendency in both groups of translators to see translation as an expert function and themselves as highly skilled experts, a finding which was confirmed by the other data in the study. The highest rating (5) is both groups' preferred choice, followed by the second highest score (4), after which the middle category (3) follows. A few of the EU translators marked one of the lowest ranking options (1 or 2), which is unmatched in the national-market translators' responses. Thus, though there are certain differences in the response patterns of the two groups, the similarities are more salient, as also reflected in the average expertise scores, which amount to 4.25 on the 1–5 rating scale for the EU translators and 4.42 for the national-market translators — very high and very similar scores. The small difference is not statistically significant and may therefore be attributed to chance.

5.4 Power/influence

When people are asked to give their first impression of what determines occupational prestige, they frequently answer, “money and power.” To have power and be able to influence one's situation as well as one's surroundings is similarly considered essential in the sociological literature on professions, in which concepts such as *authority* and *autonomy* abound (e.g., Weiss-Gal and Welbourne 2008). However, power/influence is a job trait that translators are often said to lack (e.g., Chesterman and Wagner 2002:78; Lefevere 1995:131; Snell-Hornby 2006:172;

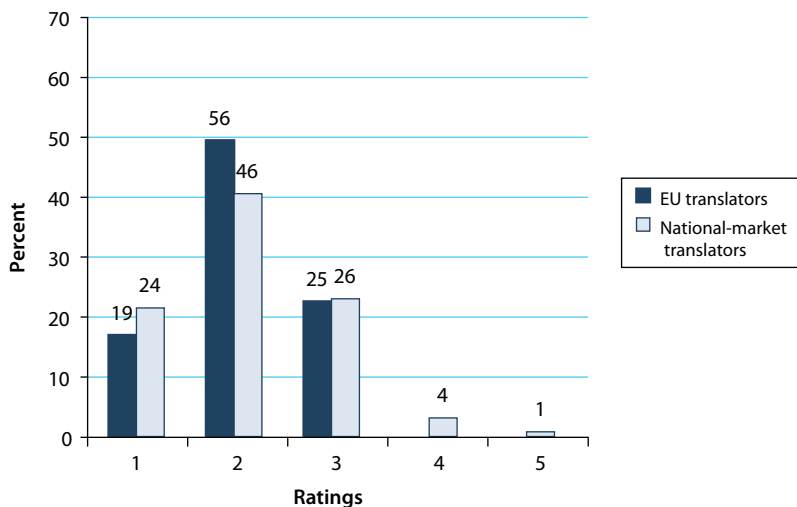


Figure 4. The EU and national-market translators' perception of the degree of influence connected with their job

Venuti 1995:131). As we shall see, the translators in the current study are no exception.

In our study, the respondents were asked to answer a handful of questions about their influence as translators and their access to managerial positions and promotion, while the concept of power, which most people are reluctant to admit striving for, was not addressed directly in the questionnaires. First, the translators were asked a very general question about job influence, namely to what extent they perceived their job as a translator as connected with influence, based on which we obtained the answers specified in Figure 4.

As we can see in Figure 4, the two groups of translators rate their level of influence as low, mainly between 1 and 3 on the 1–5 rating scale, with 2 being the score preferred by both groups. Only in the sample of national-market translators do we find a handful of respondents who indicate that they have high or very high degrees of influence (categories 4 and 5) — scores which are absent from the responses of the EU translators. The similarity in the response patterns of the two groups is also manifest in the average scores, which were calculated to be 2.06 for the EU translators and 2.12 for the national-market translators. The difference in the average values for the two groups is both small and not statistically significant. It is noteworthy that among the status parameters studied, that of influence consistently received some of the lowest scores, surpassed only by the parameter of visibility in some instances (see Section 5.5 below).

Surprisingly, the translators' assessments of influence did not seem to correlate with the factual number and accessibility of management positions. In the sample of EU translators, only 8% of the respondents stated that they held an executive office or managerial position, whereas a fairly large proportion of the national-market translators, 18%, were both translators and managers. In spite of this difference, there were no significant differences in the mean influence ratings of the two groups, as we saw earlier. However, if we look at within-group differences, the managing translators on the Danish market did tend to rate their influence as translators higher (2.75 on average) than did the general population of national-market translators (2.12 on average) — a difference which had no statistically significant match in the sample of EU translators, among whom the corresponding ratings were 2.20 and 2.06 respectively.

When asked about the possibilities of achieving an executive office or managerial position, the EU translators' average assessment amounted to 2.79 on the 1–5 scale, whereas that of the national-market translators was 22% lower, 2.29 — a relatively small but statistically significant difference. Apparently, the possibilities of promotion are better or more visible, though not excellent, for translators working for the EU institutions (see also the chapter on job prospects for in-house translators in Wagner, Bech, and Martínez 2002:95–97) than for translators working

on the Danish market, but, again, this does not seem to have an effect on their evaluations of influence, which remains low independent of career advancement possibilities.

5.5 Visibility

The visibility of a profession and its members is a generally acknowledged status parameter, but in translation studies the concept has carried a meaning of its own since Lawrence Venuti introduced the idea of translators' textual invisibility in the mid-1990s (Venuti 1995), linking it with the lack of recognition experienced by many literary translators. Since the present article is based on a questionnaire survey and not on analyses of translated texts, we shall not address the question of textual (in)visibility here, but rather focus on physical and professional (in)visibility as perceived by the translators who completed the questionnaires.

The *physical visibility* of professionals is closely linked with the location of their workplaces: are they placed in a central or peripheral position in the organization or company that they are part of? Apart from providing possibilities of being physically seen by others, a central location in an organization obviously has symbolic value, as a central location implies importance and prestige.

In order to assess their physical visibility, we asked the EU and national-market company translators in the sample where in the organization or company their office or workplace was situated.⁷ Only 13% of the EU translators checked the option 'in a central position/close to the center of decision- or policy-making',⁸ whereas this was the case for more than three times as many, 41%, of the national-market translators. Conversely, the majority, 64%, of the EU translators and a minority, 11%, of the national-market translators responded that their workplace was situated 'in a peripheral position/far from the center of decision- or policy-making.' The rest (24% and 48%, respectively) stated that they worked 'neither in a central nor in a peripheral position/neither close to nor far from the center of decision- or policy-making.' That is, generally the national-market translators felt they were placed in central or at least in "neutral" locations in their companies, whereas most of the EU translators stated that they worked at some distance from

7. The agency translators were exempted from this part of the study since they are not part of a large organization or corporation but generally work in relatively small translation firms where central vs. peripheral location is less of an issue.

8. The company translators were asked whether their workplace was located in 'a central (or peripheral) position in the company,' whereas the EU translators, who work in a huge organization the centre of which is not easy to identify, were asked whether they worked 'close to (or far from) the centre of decision- and policy-making.'

the center of decision- and policy-making. The average value of the ratings, this time on a 1–3 scale (peripheral position/far from the center = 1; neither-nor = 2; central position/close to the center = 3), amounted to 1.49 for the EU translators and 2.30, or 54% more, for the national-market translators. This relatively large intergroup difference was statistically significant, and we may therefore conclude that, physically, the EU translators feel less visible than the national-market translators. This is hardly surprising in light of the tendency of some EU institutions to locate their translators in separate buildings, sometimes far removed from the rest of the institution, with all the negative implications such a detached position entails (see Koskinen 2008).

The concept of *professional visibility* is multifaceted and can be approached in a variety of ways. In our study, the translators were first asked to indicate the degree of their professional contact with others (clients, colleagues, etc.). Apart from four EU translators who stated that they only had a low or a very low degree of contact with others (categories 1 or 2 on the 1–5 scale), all the translators in the sample marked the middle category (3) or one of the two highest ranking options (4 and 5). The average values of the contact ratings in the study were 3.79 for the EU translators and 4.22 for the national-market translators, i.e., relatively high scores for both groups, but slightly higher (11%) for the latter. The between-group difference is statistically significant.

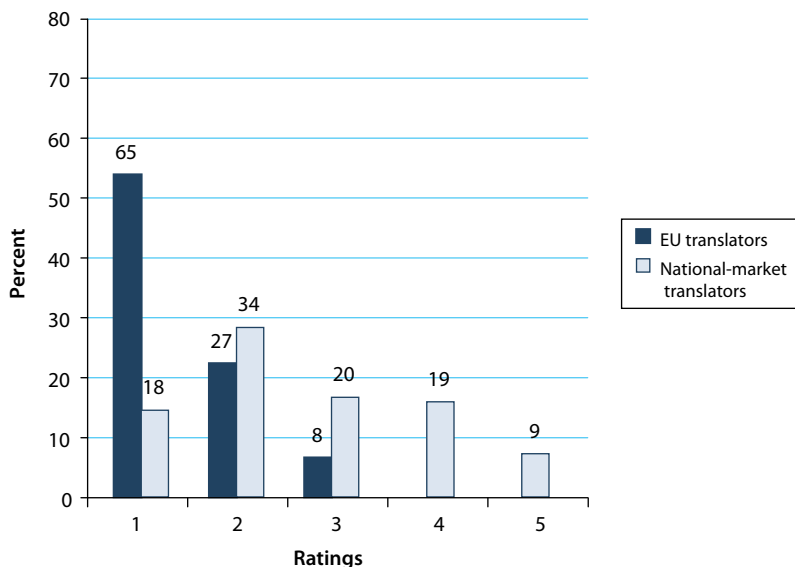


Figure 5. The EU and national-market translators' assessments of how known they are to their clients

The EU translators' relatively high contact ratings may seem to contradict their low physical visibility scores discussed above, but it should be noted that we did not ask the translators in the study to distinguish between contact with translator colleagues, on the one hand, and other professional groups, on the other. In the literature on EU translation, it is repeatedly stressed (and lamented) that translators working for EU institutions have little, or no, contact with the people that they translate for, their clients, be it the source-text writers or the users of their services (end users in the member states, politicians, other EU officials, etc.) (Koskinen 2008:95; Wagner, Bech, and Martínez 2002:87). On the other hand, EU translators usually form part of a large translation team, a tightly-knit professional community, which is difficult to find elsewhere in the world of translation (Anna-Karin Batcheller as cited in Wagner, Bech, and Martínez 2002:120; Koskinen 2008:95). It is therefore very likely that the relatively high degree of professional contact reported by the EU translators in the present study is directed toward their in-house translator colleagues rather than toward other professional groups, whereas the contact that the national-market translators report having may be more multifaceted.

This assumption about the diverse nature of the professional contact experienced by the two groups finds support in the translators' responses to the following straightforward question about how known they are to their clients and readers: 'how many of the people that you translate for know who you are?' In this case, the response categories were verbalized as 'nobody' (1), 'a few' (2), 'some' (3), 'most' (4) and 'all' (5), and the translators' answers were distributed over the five categories as shown in Figure 5.

Even a quick glance at Figure 5 tells us that the EU translators consider themselves less known to their clients and readers than the national-market translators, though quite a few in the latter group also mark the lower ranking options. The average value of the EU translators' ratings is 1.43 on a 1–5 scale, whereas the corresponding value of the national-market translators' responses is 87% higher, namely 2.68 — a difference which is both large and statistically significant. This result corresponds well with the frequent reports by EU translators on lack of feedback from clients (e.g., Koskinen 2008:106). Wagner, Bech, and Martínez (2002) reproduces a series of interviews with EU translators, who — when asked the question "Do you ever get feedback from end users" — reply "Not that I know of" (ibid.:119), "No" (ibid.:122), "Hardly ever" (ibid.:129) or even "I have never had feedback from end users" (ibid.:135).

All in all, the visibility scores in our study — both those shown and discussed here and those we have left out for reasons of space — are significantly lower for the EU translators than for the national-market translators. Though they report having a relatively high degree of professional contact with others — translator

colleagues most likely — the EU translators generally suffer from a low degree of visibility, in absolute terms and relative to their national-market counterparts.

6. Conclusion

With the present study, we set out to investigate the differences in occupational status between two comparable groups of professional translators, namely Danish staff translators working in the European Union and Danish staff translators working in the national market. The purpose of the study was to test the hypothesis that Danish translators working in international organizations such as the EU have a higher occupational status than Danish translators working in the national market do due to the high profile of the former's place of employment and the international, presumably even glamorous, working environment and lifestyle that is associated with international employment. Add to this the high bar set by the *concours* system as well as the high remuneration, low taxes, and fringe benefits of EU translators, and we would expect to have the perfect recipe for high status.

The research findings did not support the hypothesis. Not only did the EU translators not rate their occupational status and job prestige any higher than did the national-market translators, their general status and prestige ratings were also relatively low, below the middle value of 3. As to the individual status parameters, we found no differences (i.e., only extremely small and not statistically significant differences) between the two groups of translators in terms of perceived levels of expertise and influence. Both EU and national market translators seem to associate the translation profession with a high degree of expertise and a low degree of influence. The only real differences were found in relation to the parameters of remuneration and visibility. Danish staff translators in the EU clearly earn higher salaries than Danish staff translators on the national market, whereas the national-market translators enjoy a more privileged position when it comes to physical and professional visibility. In fact, the real challenge for EU translators in relation to their status seems to lie in their lack of visibility. Our quantitative results thus corroborate Koskinen's qualitative study (2008).

More generally, the present study does not lend empirical support to the general assumption that translators in international organizations are a special breed of high-status professionals. Clearly, the study cannot claim to be representative of all translators employed in international organizations, as only Danish staff translators working in the European Union have been investigated. To achieve a fuller understanding of the situation, we would also need to look at other nationalities and other international organizations. Interpreted per se, however, and with reference to the question raised in the introduction, our findings do indicate that low

status is a structural, inherent feature of the translation profession rather than a product of historical circumstances, such as low pay or inefficient gate-keeping systems. EU translators certainly do not suffer from low pay, and access to the EU translation market is severely restricted by, among other factors, the *concours* system. But despite all the apparent advantages of EU translators in a status context, they tend not to rate themselves as high-status professionals. As a Finnish EU translator says in Koskinen (2008:92), “We have the status of an official but in reality we are translators just as any other translators in the world.”

Our previous studies (see especially Dam and Zethsen 2010) reveal that the general public’s lack of recognition of the level of expertise required to translate is the primary barrier to full professionalization of the translation industry and is highly detrimental to translator status. Translators clearly see themselves as experts, but others do not (“everybody knows English” and “anyone who knows two languages can translate”). Are these status problems inherent in translation because of the reproductive nature of the act (instrumental value only — no substance value (Koskinen 2008:92))? And does the prototypical personality or gender of the translator play a role (“passive and shy” (Wagner, Bech, and Martínez 2002:125) with a “habitus of subservience” (Simeoni 1998))? These questions, as well as that of what may be done to raise the status of the profession, deserve to be studied further.

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Power in face-to-face interpreting events

Ian Mason and Wen Ren

The traditional view holds that professional interpreters should be transparent, invisible, passive, neutral, and detached, a view reiterated and reinforced in the prescribed interpreters' codes of conduct of national and international professional organizations. Such an idealized role construct, however, is from time to time deconstructed in real-life face-to-face interpreting events. In this paper, face-to-face interpreting is seen as a three-way communicative event in which the interpreter is a co-structor of the interaction and can therefore be a powerful figure. From the perspective of interpreting as a socially-situated activity, the paper adopts Michel Foucault's concept of power, defining it not as the traditionally dominating force to monopolize, control, or rule, but as a kind of strategy, disposition, maneuver, tactic, or technique, functioning in a network of relations. Although interpreters often lack institutional power, they may be equipped with power within the exchange as a result of their bilingual and bicultural expertise. They may exercise this power by adopting various verbal and non-verbal strategies to negotiate, coordinate, check, and balance power relations. This can be specifically manifested in interpreters' social action as co-interlocutors, empowerment figures, or in the adoption of a non-neutral stance. Examples are cited from authentic interpreting events to analyze interpreters' power-at-work, focusing on their verbal and non-verbal behaviors, in particular, their positioning and gaze.

1. Introduction

Mankind's interlingual communication has been inextricably linked to the issue of power since antiquity. According to Hermann (2002), the earliest depictions of a face-to-face interpreting event found in the temples and tombs of the ancient Egyptians dating back to 3,000 BCE., in which foreigners (Nubians, Libyans, and Asiatics) were portrayed as prisoners or vassals, paying tribute to the supreme Egyptian king or Pharaoh. Their communication was made possible only through the mediation of an interpreter, a "speaker of strange tongues," and even then, the

words that have survived via the inscriptions are not their own but suitably deferential words put in their mouths by the Egyptians. Indeed the ancient Egyptians believed that only they themselves were entitled to the honorary title “man” and all foreign races were simply “wretched barbarians.” Any encounter with foreigners constituted a sharp contrast between the powerful and the powerless (Hermann 2002: 15–16).

What had happened in ancient Egypt was not an isolated case. Things of a similar nature took place when in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries early Spanish colonizers such as Christopher Columbus and Hernán Cortés came to the American continent, where more than 1,000 languages were spoken by the aboriginal peoples. The powerful colonizers did not treat the natives as equal partners. They captured and trained some of the locals to be interpreters and sometimes used as many as three interpreters on one occasion to make sure that the colonizers’ voice was unequivocally heard and their strength unerringly felt (Bastin 1998: 506). According to Li (2002), in ancient China, as early as 1122 BCE, Wuwang, king of the emerging Zhou Dynasty, waged war against Zhouwang, king of the declining Shang Dynasty, and dealt Zhouwang’s army a great blow. Soon after, the neighboring state of Sushun, afraid of Wuwang’s rising power, rushed to present tributes to the Zhou Dynasty. The interpreter definitely had a part to play in the communication between the mighty and the weak. (*ce fu yuan gui • wai cheng bu: Wuwang fa zhou, qiang yi hui yu mu ye, Sushun lai xian*; cf. Li 2002: 1).

These early historical events share one thing in common: face-to-face interpreting events, from their inception, took place not just between different languages and cultures, but also between tribes, communities, countries, and races with huge imbalances of power and disparities of status. A social perspective on interpreted events thus becomes indispensable. The presence of interpreters, while making communication possible, often served to maintain and reinforce these power relations and occasionally even altered them. That this continues to be true of contemporary interpreter-mediated interactions is amply documented in such recent studies as Metzger (1999), Davidson (2000 and 2001), Ren (2010), and in those focusing on interpreting as a socially-situated activity (e.g., Inghilleri 2003, 2005, Angelelli 2004a, b, and 2010).

Moreover, in today’s world when freedom, democracy and equality are regarded as natural human rights, unequal dialogues and unfair exchanges between nations, (sub-)cultures, and communities persist through unequal access to resources. For instance, in an interpreter-mediated encounter between a doctor and a patient (cf. Davidson 2000, Angelelli 2004a), between a judge and a suspect (cf. Hale 2004), between an immigration officer and a refugee (cf. Pöllabauer 2004, Maryns 2006), between a dominant language speaker and a minority language speaker (cf. Mason 2005), between a hearing person and a member of the deaf

community (cf. Brennan 1999), or between someone from the first world and another from the developing world (cf. Barsky 1996, Davidson 2001), the first of each pair is usually the more powerful figure, in possession of knowledge and other resources which places the latter in a disadvantageous position in the communication.

In addition to differential access to resources (e.g., command of the sanctioned genres and discourses), Blommaert identifies voice (“the ways in which people manage to make themselves understood or fail to do so,” Blommaert 2005a:68) and entextualization (the use of a text or utterance in a new or different setting, a process of decontextualizing and recontextualizing, Blommaert 2005a:47) as two of the key vectors of inequality in intercultural exchanges. That is to say, a discourse which has status and value within its own original setting may not be valued in the same way when transplanted elsewhere and, by the same token, voice may no longer make itself heard. Such concepts are, we suggest, central to a sociology of interpreting.

2. The interpreter’s role

What then of the position of the interpreter, this indispensable intermediary? Throughout the history of interpreting in China and the West, numerous metaphors or similes have been applied to the image or role of interpreters. They are called “tongue man,” “parrot,” or other people’s “mouthpiece”; they are compared to a “conduit,” “echo machine,” or “voice box,” all metaphors that suggest the invisibility and powerlessness of the interpreter (i.e., Li 2002, Wadensjö 1998; Roy 2000; and Angelelli 2004a, b). Indeed, it has been the traditional and persistent view that interpreters should be transparent, invisible, passive, neutral, and detached. They should do no more than make a faithful and accurate language switch and are not entitled to intervene in the communication process; they should just translate and they should translate everything; an ideal interpreter should not make people feel his/her presence. Along with the professionalization of interpreting, this view has been reiterated and reinforced in interpreters’ codes of conduct as prescribed by many national and international professional translation and interpreting organizations. The following examples are characteristic.

AUSIT (Australian Institute of Translators and Interpreters Incorporated): Interpreters and translators must relay accurately and completely all that is said by all parties in a meeting — including derogatory or vulgar remarks, non-verbal clues, and anything they know to be untrue; not alter, add to or omit anything from the assigned work. [...] Professional detachment must be maintained at all times.

(See <http://www.ausit.org>)

AVLIC (Association of Visual Language Interpreters of Canada): Members shall remain neutral, impartial, and objective. They will refrain from altering a message for political, religious, moral, or philosophical reasons, or any other biased or subjective consideration. (See <http://www.avlic.ca>)

NRPSI (National Register of Public Service Interpreters, United Kingdom): Interpreters will interpret truly and faithfully what is said, without anything being added, omitted or changed [...] not enter into the discussion, give advice or express opinions or reactions to any of the parties... [They] will act in an impartial and professional manner (Phelan 2001: 44–45).

As these examples illustrate, faithfulness, accuracy, neutrality, impartiality, and detachment are the key notions in the role prescription of interpreters. In other words, the interpreter is expected to remain invisible and powerless, functioning as a translating machine throughout the communication process. A rare exception to this is the document published by the California Healthcare Interpreters Association Standards and Certification Committee (CHIA 2002). In these standards there is explicit recognition of the need, in certain circumstances for a patient advocacy role:

In this role, interpreters actively support change in the interest of patient health and well-being. Interpreters require a clear rationale for the need to advocate on behalf of patients, and we suggest the use of the ethical decision-making process to facilitate this decision. (CHIA 2002: 14)

Recognizing that this is an area requiring professional judgment and sensitivity, CHIA seeks to give guidance on how this advocacy role is to be practiced. In doing so, it recognizes the realities of interpreting practice. For, as will be shown below, the idealized role construct of the invisible, machine-like interpreter is frequently deconstructed in real-life face-to-face interpreting events.

R. Bruce W. Anderson (1976/2002) was one of the first few scholars to talk about the power of the interpreter. He claimed that the interpreter is “a power figure, exercising power as a result of monopolization of the means of communication” and having “an unusually great impact on the structure of the entire situation” (Anderson 2002: 208–217). More recent scholarship investigating actual interpreting behavior confirms, indeed reinforces this view of interpreters’ power. For example, Wadensjö (1998: 13) observes that interpreters “fill a function in the institutional system of control,” while Metzger (1999) exposes the “myth” of interpreter neutrality. Both these points are echoed by Davidson (2000, 2001), who concludes that the medical interpreters whose performance he analyzed are “institutional insiders” (2000: 401) who often act as “co-clinicians” (2001: 175) in answering patients’ questions to a doctor. Angelelli (2004a) provides convincing evidence both of institutional constraints and of the interpreter “as a co-participant

and co-creator,” whose agency is “manifested as visibility” (2004a: 141). In a different setting, that of asylum interviews, Pöllabauer (2004) finds that the interpreters in her study are highly interventionist, seeking to “meet (and anticipate) officers’ expectations” (2004: 175).

Why then is there a gap between what interpreters are expected (in most codes of conduct) to do and what they actually do? Who are the real power figures in an interpreter-mediated encounter? How are the power relations in these events manifested, maintained, or altered?

3. Power

From the perspective of interpreting as a socially-situated activity, Michel Foucault’s concept of power may serve as a useful analytical tool to help us better understand these questions and the power exercised by the interpreter. According to Foucault’s theory of the micro-physics of power, power is defined not as the traditionally dominating force of a particular group to monopolize, control, or rule, but as a kind of strategy, disposition, maneuver, tactic, or technique, functioning in such a way

that one should decipher in it a network of relations, constantly in tension, in activity, rather than a privilege that one might possess. [...] In short, this power is exercised rather than possessed; it is not the ‘privilege,’ acquired or preserved, of the dominant class, but the overall effect of its strategic positions...

(Foucault 1977:26)

In other words, power is not just a set of institutions and state apparatuses which dominate by virtue of their ability to impose their will through legislation, the courts and so on. The network of relations of which Foucault speaks operates at all levels and in all social groups and is in a state of constant tension. Elsewhere he describes this tension as the immediate effect of inequalities and imbalances, creating temporary states which are “always local and unstable” and which may be reinforced or weakened or even inverted in a constant struggle between social forces (Foucault 1976:122).

In a face-to-face interpreting event, we therefore need to make a distinction between *institutional power* and *interactional power*. Institutional power refers to the power that government, authorities, corporations, or organizations possess. For instance, in a medical setting, the doctor is more powerful than the patient; in a legal setting, the judge and attorney are more powerful than the suspect or witness, as the former are institutionally empowered to initiate, lead, control, and terminate the communication process. However, in an interpreter-assisted case, the

interpreter is also equipped with a special interactional power, or power within the exchange, as a result of his or her bilingual and bicultural expertise. Interpreters can exercise this unique power by adopting certain verbal and non-verbal strategies to coordinate the communication (cf. Wadensjö 1998), to negotiate, check, and re-balance the power relations, thus exerting a certain influence on the direction and outcome of the interaction (cf. Angelelli 2004b on the interpreter's agency). These strategies, tactics, and techniques are what Foucault termed micro-power. This is not the structurally top-down authority acquired to prohibit, control, or manipulate (as is the case with a doctor or judge/attorney in a medical or legal setting), but a strategy, mechanism, or modality exercised to bring about a "temporary inversion of power relations," to induce some effect "on the entire network" (Foucault 1977: 27). It is worth noting that based on the theories of Basil Bernstein, Inghilleri (2003) makes a similar distinction between "socially constituted norms" and "local interactional practices." It is in the points of tension between these norms and practices that Inghilleri sees "the possibility for change or challenge to the existing social relations and social practices" (2003: 262) in the field of interpreting.

4. Manifestations of institutional power

We first briefly consider institutional power, which is not the central focus of this paper but which manifests itself in certain institutional settings and reminds us that, in institutional terms, face-to-face interpreters enjoy only very limited power. Evidence of the ways in which institutional power surfaces in real interpreted encounters is not hard to find. Example 1 is taken from a transcript of the pre-trial hearing of the State of California vs. O.J. Simpson case in 1995. Simpson, a famous former football star, had been accused of murder. A key witness in the trial was Rosa López, a speaker of Spanish, who was housemaid for one of the Simpsons' neighbors. Now, interpreters for courts of law in the United States receive detailed and explicit training which instructs them to translate everything that is said but nothing more (see, for example, Berk-Seligson 1990). They are expected not to intervene and are aware that any such intervention will meet with disapproval. The rules of the exchange (cross-examination of the witness) are apparent in the sequence in Example 1: the attorney controls the exchange; the judge can (and does) intervene; the interpreter is positioned as a linguistic stand-in for the witness, rendering each of the latter's turns at talk in English as literally as possible. In effect, the interpreter positions herself as a "non-person," not intervening even when she possesses the requested information.

Example 1¹.

- 1 ATT What's her name?
 2 INT *¿Cómo se llama?* [What is your name?]
 3 W *Josefina*
 4 INT Josefina
 5 ATT What's her last name?
 6 INT *¿Cuál es el apellido?* [What is the surname?]
 7 W Rodríguez
 8 INT Rodríguez
 9 ATT And how do you spell her first name?
 10 INT *¿Y cómo se deletrea el nombre Josefina?* [And how is the name Josefina spelled?]
 11 W (5) (xxx)
 12 INT I don't know how you spell it, Josefina! (5)
 13 ATT Could she try and spell it for me please? (1) I would appreciate that
 14 greatly.
 15 INT *¿Puede intentar deletrearlo?* [Can you try to spell it?]
 16 W *(xxx) letra por letra y está muy largo el nombre...* (4) [letter by letter and the name is very long].
 17 INT Then I have to do it letter-by-letter and it's a very long name
 18 J Is it spelled the normal way?
 19 W A-ha
 20 INT A-ha
 21 W *Sí, sí* [Yes, yes]
 22 INT Yes, sir
 23 ATT Is it the normal way?
 24 J Yes, Josefina in Spanish, certainly.

Source: *Court TV*, O.J. Simpson Pre-Trial Hearing

In all, then, it takes no fewer than twenty-four turns to establish the name of a person referred to by the witness. It is inconceivable that the interpreter could not offer the correct spelling of the name *Josefina* but she does not have authority to supply the answer to the simple question. (We can contrast this behavior with that of interpreters in asylum hearings who often take the initiative in providing spellings of names on behalf of their client.) Of course, there are valid legal reasons why the interpreter in Example 1 should not offer the spelling. The prosecuting attorney's purpose here may be to show that the witness cannot spell (perhaps part of an effort to discredit her as unreliable) so that an interpreter intervention would be unwelcome. The judge, on the other hand, can — and does — intervene. The institutional power differential is strikingly apparent.

1. For a key to the transcriptions, see end of article.

A further example reinforces this point. Example 2 comes from Susan Berk-Seligson's (1990) study of interpreters in American courtrooms. It shows that when the interpreter becomes visible and seeks to assist a witness in her testimony (i.e., an attempt at empowerment), the intervention does not work. In the sequence prior to the lines cited below, the interpreter has addressed the witness as *Señora* (Ma'am), thus seeking to establish a relationship of respect. The witness then addresses her replies to the (female) interpreter.

Example 2.

- 1 W (answering an attorney's question) *No, señorita.*
[No, Miss]
- 2 INT No, Sir
- 3 ATT Did you know you were entering the country illegally?
- 4 INT *¿Sabía usted, — puede usted contestarle al licenciado*
[Did you know — you can reply to the attorney.]
- 5 Excuse me, I'm advising her not to answer 'yes, Ma'am' or 'no,
6 Ma'am' because I'm just the interpreter. Excuse me. *Señora, cuando*
7 *usted conteste, conteste al al licenciado porque yo no más como una*
8 *mani, ma-, maquinita que le están traduciendo. — Cuando usted*
9 *entró*
10 *a este país, señora, ¿sabía usted que estaba entrando ilegalmente?*
[Ma'am, when you reply, reply to the attorney because I'm no
more than a little machine translating you. When you entered this
country, Ma'am, did you know you were entering illegally?]
- 10 W *Si, señorita.*
[Yes, Miss]
- 11 INT Yes, Sir
- Source: Berk-Seligson (1990: 152)

Berk-Seligson's analysis of this exchange focuses on the problems of interpreting polite address, amply illustrated in the sequence. From the perspective of instantiation of institutional power, the sample is equally revealing. In an attempt to make the witness address her answers to the (male) attorney instead of to the interpreter ("Yes, ma'am"), the interpreter has stepped out of role and risks official disapproval for her intervention (lines 4–8). Given the failure of this maneuver (see line 10), the interpreter is likely to be discouraged from attempting further interventions. Her attempt to give the witness status and respect — and therefore voice — to the witness has rebounded negatively on her, creating a problem she feels she has to resolve and then causing her to apologize (twice) for the intervention. Both examples — 1 and 2 — show power relations in court as pre-determined by the institutional setting.

Is the distinction we have made, then, simply a matter of institutional setting, the courtroom/legal setting versus medical and social services and so on? It does appear to be the case that, in some countries at least, the courts constrain aspects of interpreter behavior more than other social institutions do that may rely on interpreter qualifications (e.g., the DPSI in the United Kingdom) rather than institution-specific training and may simply trust the experienced interpreter's professional judgment. Even in these situations, however, the institutional balance of power remains. For example, when interviewed, Angelelli's (2004a) healthcare interpreters appear to be keenly aware of power differentials and of the inescapable institutional constraints on their behavior. The effects of institutional power on the interpreter's practice are real but may just be somewhat less conspicuously manifested than in Examples 1 and 2 above (though see below, Example 6, line 13, for an instance of an immigration adjudicator intervening to control interpreter behavior). It is not therefore being argued here that interactional power replaces institutional power in certain social settings: both dynamics work together at all times and may offer opportunities for change or challenge, as Inghilleri (2003:262) suggests.

5. The interpreter's interactional power

We now turn to the specifics of interpreters' power within the exchange. In order to do so, we will pursue the notion of interactional power a little further. Etienne Wenger, for whom power is "the ability to act in line with the enterprises we pursue" (Wenger 1998:189), adopts a view similar to that of Foucault but that additionally sees power as inextricably bound up with considerations of *community* and *identity*. It is through the communities, both professional and social, in which we are involved that we define ourselves in a joint process of identification and negotiation. We can, for example, identify ourselves with or in opposition to the values or discourses of our employer, our colleagues, or, say, a circle of friends. Through interaction, we negotiate these feelings of participation or non-participation in joint enterprises. Indeed, like Foucault's conception of power, Wenger's concept of communities of practice seems particularly well suited to an analysis of the social position of the face-to-face interpreter. An interpreter working for immigration authorities, for example, may, through years of practice, begin to identify with the goals of the institution — or at least the immediate interactional goals of the officers they work with; conversely, through some negative experience (being overruled or reprimanded) or through constant association with (communities of) disadvantaged people, the interpreter may gradually acquire an identity of non-participation, of not being part of the institution, or of belonging more

to the ethnic community of the immigrant. Neither identity prevents the interpreter from performing a skilled, professional job. Nevertheless, the negotiation of meaning and thus the network of power relations may in subtle ways be affected by these processes. These various identities and positionings are amply evident, for example, in the semi-structured interviews of healthcare interpreters analyzed by Angelelli (2004a: 105–128). Their testimonies reveal their keen awareness of institutional power differentials but also of their own power within exchanges, as well as their identity and positioning.

In recent sociologically-oriented studies of interpreting (e.g., Inghilleri 2003, 2005, 2006; Valero Garcés and Gauthier Blasi 2010), these processes have been convincingly described within Bourdieu's framework of field, capital, and habitus. Such accounts are already well known in translation and interpreting studies and need not be reiterated here. It is important, though, to point out that the theoretical insights advanced in this article, from Foucault, Blommaert, and Wenger, are intended not to replace but to complement the field and habitus frameworks. Indeed, Blommaert (2005b) and Wenger (1998:284) explicitly acknowledge the influence of Bourdieu's theories on their own thinking. But just as Angelelli (2004a:29) seeks to describe a distinct, interactional level of analysis complementary to that inspired by Bourdieu's social theory, we find some analytical insights drawn from Foucault (e.g., networks of relations), Blommaert (voice, entextualization), and Wenger (identity, community, alignment) useful in linking macro-structures of power to individual instances of social practice.

We now distinguish three principal ways in which interpreters exercise the interactional power we have been discussing: adopting the stance of co-interlocutor in the exchange, making moves which empower a certain party, and/or adopting a non-neutral stance.

Let us first discuss the interpreters' role as a *co-interlocutor*. Although interpreters are required by professional codes of conduct to translate accurately and completely what is said by all parties in a meeting, nothing more and nothing less, and to behave like a bilingual ghost (cf. Collados Aís 2002:336) without drawing attention to themselves, more often than not they contribute their own utterances to the interaction in either a slight or substantial way. To put it in Claudia Angelelli's (2004b) words, they may have text-ownership of a partial or whole speech segment. These interpreter-owned texts are not merely requests for repetition, clarification, or explanation of certain unclear or misunderstood messages; nor are they just longer or more complicated sentences in the target language, resulting from the lexical or syntactical differences between the two working languages. Rather, they are intentionally initiated by the interpreter to achieve certain purposes. For instance, interpreters may voluntarily introduce themselves, propose a meeting format, explain cultural differences, answer a question, make

a suggestion, or conduct small talk with one or both parties. As gatekeepers, they may sometimes even withhold certain information that they deem inappropriate (vulgar remarks, cultural taboos, etc.) or irrelevant, even if they are trained not to do so. In this respect, Davidson (2000: 400) finds that the healthcare interpreters in his study in effect act as “gatekeepers who keep the interview ‘on track’ and the physician on schedule.”

Second, there is the interpreter’s role as an *empowerment* figure. If empowerment is generally understood as “giving support needed to allow individuals to use power that is naturally their own” (VanderPlaat 1999: 773–785), interpreters’ empowerment action refers to the verbal or non-verbal strategies they employ to enable a disadvantaged party to have better access to information, to take a turn to speak, to decide on their own to do or not to do something. In theory, any two parties in a dyadic encounter will enjoy equal legal status. In reality, however, the party in possession of policy, knowledge, information, and institutional discourses is institutionally more powerful than the other party and may rely on this advantage in the exchange, for instance, the doctor vs. the patient, the policeman vs. the suspect, the attorney vs. the witness, the immigration officer vs. the immigrant, the native vs. the foreigner. This power differential may sometimes hinder smooth or thorough communication between the two parties. The presence of an interpreter on these occasions will not only turn the interactional structure into a triadic pattern but may also bring change to the original network of power relations. This is where the interpreter’s agency — a key concept in the work of Angelelli (e.g., 2004a) and Inghilleri (e.g., 2005) — is at its most apparent. Because of their unique access to the resources of the two languages and cultures at work and depending on processes of identification and negotiation, interpreters are capable of empowering or assisting comparatively weaker parties to exercise their responsibility to make decisions for themselves. For example, the interpreter may remind a patient of his or her right to ask the doctor about the possible side effects of certain medication, encourage the visitor to seize the opportunity to speak after the long speech of the host, or inform a foreign shopper that he might be charged too much and so should bargain with the seller. Sign language interpreters may sometimes consider themselves an ally of deaf clients, identifying with their interests and exercising agency for them. In Malaysia, court interpreters may even act as the unrepresented defendant’s advocate, coaching and directing the accused to answer questions or ask for plea, to provide an “interpretation” rather than a “translation” (Ibrahim 2007: 210–211). In all these circumstances, then, the degree of interpreters’ intervention is governed by the interpreters’ self-identification and their assessment of the participants’ need for mediation.

The third type of interactional power introduced above is the interpreter’s ability to depart from a strictly *neutral stance*. The principle of neutrality and

impartiality is, with few exceptions (see reference to CHIA 2002 above) prescribed as one of the fundamental ethics that interpreters must observe. Any behavior, be it verbal or non-verbal, showing partiality toward either party in an exchange, tends to be judged as professional malpractice. To avoid this, interpreters are advised to remain detached throughout the process, to convey no attitude of their own to both parties, to adopt a strict or formal style in their behavior (cf. Wadensjö 1998:240), not to engage in unnecessary discussions with, or offer suggestions to, either party, or give opinions or judgments on anything, even if asked for. In reality, however, this does not seem to be an easy task (cf. Metzger 1999, Davidson 2000). Interpreters mediate between two cultures, but this does not mean that they are placed at the very center of the two cultures. Their own cultural identity and affiliation to communities of practice may affect their understanding and interpretation of the situation and may influence their decision making. This kind of understanding, interpretation, and decision making is not totally devoid of subjective judgment, attitude, and personal feelings.

6. Positioning and gaze

Let us now consider some illustrations of how power relations are enacted in actual exchanges, focusing on the three manifestations outlined above

- The interpreter as co-interlocutor
- Empowerment
- Non-neutrality

and on two particular ways in which the exercise of power surfaces in observable behavior

- *Positioning* (in terms of positions offered and accepted or rejected)
- *Direction of Gaze* (of interpreter).

In the examples that follow, we focus on immigration interviews. Here, it appears that in many countries there is much less institutional constraint on interpreters, beyond injunctions to translate “accurately” and “ethically.” Example 3 shows an interpreter positioning herself as co-interlocutor by asking an additional question on an immigration officer’s behalf. She appears to do this in an attempt to empower of the institutionally powerless immigrant who has been arrested for working illegally in the United Kingdom.

Example 3.

- 1 IO Did you look round for a job in Poland?
 2 INT *Czy szukałeś pracy? Szukałeś pracy i nie było?*
 [Did you look for work? You looked for work and there wasn't any?]
 3 IMM *Tak.* [Yes.]
 4 INT Yes, he was looking for work but there was no work.

Source: UK television Channel 4 documentary: *Illegal Immigrants*. 09/30/1997.

What may have been the interpreter's motivation in this case is that the simple question "Did you look for work?" might prompt the reply "No," thus potentially positioning the immigrant as idle or work-shy. The interpreter's version (line 4), which in no way represents what the immigrant has actually said, may not only present the person in a better light but also provide a plausible rationale for his attempt to emigrate. In effect, the interpreter has re-entextualized the immigration officer's question in order to ensure that the immigrant's reply has voice, as defined by Blommaert (2005a).

In Example 3, the would-be immigrant plays a generally passive role fairly characteristic of immigration hearings, in which claimants often appear to recognize and accept their powerlessness giving minimal replies and abandoning attempts to give a full account of their situation. However, they do, in general, respond to the questions they are asked — and in the form the questions are asked by the interpreter. Example 4 illustrates the power of the interpreter as co-interlocutor to shift the focus of questions in ways that could be potentially significant to the outcome of the exchange.

Example 4.

- 1 IO That immigration officer asked you two questions, how long will
 you
 2 be here and what will you do here. What did you say in reply to
 those
 3 questions?
 4 INT *I ten urzędnik zapytał, dał ci dwa pytania: jak długo... coś ty jemu*
 5 *powiedział? Prawdę?*
 [And this clerk asked, gave you two questions: how long... what did
 you tell him? The truth?]
 6 IMM *Powiedziałem nieprawdę, powiedziałem że będę tutaj w celach*
 7 *turystycznych.*
 [I told an untruth, I said I would be here for tourist purposes.]
 8 INT I said that I came here on a visit, to do a bit of sightseeing.

Source: UK television Channel 4 documentary: *Illegal Immigrants*.
 09/30/1997.

At lines 4–5, the interpreter curtails her rendition of the immigration officer's turn (lines 1–3) but adds a one-word question of her own: *Prawde?* ('The truth?') In doing so, she not only acts as co-interlocutor with the officer, positioning herself as entitled to ask questions on behalf of the authority; she also recontextualizes the exchange by inviting the immigrant to admit explicitly to lying. Of course, the interviewer's interactional goal (see Spencer-Oatey 2008: 17) in this exchange is indeed to establish that the immigrant did not reveal on entry to the country his intention to seek paid employment and it could be that the interpreter's move is designed simply to get to the point. But the immigrant's immediate confession to lying (line 6) shows how potentially powerful the interpreter's additional question has been. It is perhaps her realization of this that motivates her to omit this explicit confession in her rendition (line 8). Whatever the motivations, the example illustrates very clearly the interpreter's power to control the exchange.

Occasionally, however, this power may temporarily elude the interpreter. An interviewee may, if able to do so, bypass the interpreter by responding directly to questions in the language of the interviewer, a positioning that may be either accepted or resisted by the other participants. In Example 5, an interpreter resists the passive positioning ascribed to her by the asylum seeker's initiative by attempting to re-assert her right to participate.

Example 5.

- 1 IO Did you see a British immigration officer?
- 2 AS (in English) Yeah
- 3 IO What document did you give that immigration officer?
- 4 AS My university card
- 5 IO And did you have any problems?
- 6 AS [*shakes head*]
- 7 INT (in Arabic) There were problems?
- 8 AS [*shakes head*]

Source: UK television Channel 4 documentary: *Illegal Immigrants*.
09/30/1997

The question has already been asked and answered (lines 5 and 6) but the interpreter (line 7) seeks to re-assert the default turn-taking sequence by asking the question again, in Arabic this time. Thus, the interpreter's intervention is, on this occasion, in her own interests rather than those of her client, reclaiming not only her right to be a full participant in a three-way exchange but also her gate-keeping power. The example illustrates the negotiability of the network of power relations (cf. Foucault 1977: 26) within the exchange.

Together with the categories of co-interlocutor and empowerment, we identified a third aspect of the interpreter's power potential, namely the adoption of a

non-neutral stance. As observed above, strict neutrality is required of interpreters, yet cultural identity and social affiliation are so strong that they may, perhaps even unconsciously, affect actual behavior. This may occur, for example, when an interpreter belongs to the same ethnic group as a client or when the latter identifies the interpreter as his or her only friend in a threatening environment such as a court of law or a police station (cf. Angelelli (2004a: 9–11)). It may also happen that interpreters working regularly for an institution become part of that community of practice (cf. Wenger 1998) and begin to reflect its stance and attitudes.

Our last example concerns gaze behavior and facial expression, typically two aspects of physical behavior that, as communicators, we do not always consciously monitor or control. Yet gaze behavior can exert influence. In Example 6, taken from broadcast video of an asylum hearing conducted in German and English, the interpreter, while listening to an asylum seeker's reply to a question, sometimes looks toward the speaker but sometimes looks away.

Example 6.

- | | | |
|----|-----|--|
| 1 | IO | <i>Is' das 'ne größere Stadt oder ein Dorf, was ist Waterloo?</i>
[Is that a bigger town or a village, what is Waterloo?] |
| 2 | INT | Is it a big town or a village? |
| 3 | AS | a village. |
| 4 | INT | <i>Ist ein dorf</i> [It is a village] |
| 5 | IO | <i>mhm (2) Und in welchem Bezirk liegt das?</i>
[And in which district does that lie?] |
| 6 | INT | and in which district is Waterloo situated? |
| 7 | AS | Waterloo District ok |
| 8 | INT | in which district is this village called Waterloo |
| 9 | | situated? |
| 10 | AS | (xx) from Freetown (.) Freetown you will pass this thing like (.) after I |
| 11 | | come off of Freetown (xxx) to |
| 12 | INT | <i>wenn man aus Freetown kommt</i>
[when one comes out of Freetown] |
| 13 | IO | <i>ja lassen se' 'ne ruhig erst erklären</i>
[just let him explain first] |
| 14 | AS | uhh out if you come off of Freetown and you go out like, I don't
know |
| 15 | | how can I explain because after Freetown you are going to the
village. |
| 16 | INT | <i>Ich weiß nicht genau, wie ich das erklären soll, wenn man aus</i> |
| 17 | | <i>Freetown kommt, kommt man in einem Dorf (1) und (.) dort liegt</i> |
| 18 | | <i>Waterloo.</i> |

[I don't know exactly how I should explain that, when you come out of Freetown you come to a village and there lies Waterloo.]

Source: German TV documentary *Menschen hautnah. Die Entscheider*. WDR.

Transcription: Maria Tillmann (2006: 112)

At lines 14–15, a not-very-articulate sequence uttered by the asylum seeker, the interpreter not only looks away but also adopts a particular facial expression. Now, when an interpreter is in listening mode, a frown accompanied by gaze directed *toward* the speaker usually elicits a response by the latter (e.g., a clarification or a repetition). Here, however, the interpreter, directing her gaze *away* from the speaker and thus partly toward the interviewer, also frowns, narrows her eyes, and draws her lips sideways. In doing so, she clearly signals her negative evaluation of and distancing from what is being said. This could reflect conscious behavior, but it is equally possible that, in her effort to follow what is being said, she has unconsciously signaled an attitude. Whatever the case, it is perhaps significant that the immigration officer, in her next turn at talk, declares to the asylum seeker: “(in German)... what you are telling me here, all of that is neither one thing nor the other. I have the impression you don't want to say where you come from” (Tillmann 2006: 112).

This body language of detachment from what is being said stands in stark contrast to another interpreter representation from the same set of asylum interviews. In this case the interpreter, translating an asylum seeker's turn at talk, leans forward toward the adjudicator, seeks eye contact with him, and employs hand gestures and varying facial expression in order to give life to the applicant's narrative. This stance is a clear example of what Wadensjö (1998: 247) calls “relaying by replaying” rather than “relaying by displaying.” In this sense, displaying would involve minimizing expressiveness and thus dissociating the interpreter's self from the testimony being translated whereas replaying, as in this case, involves an attempt to re-present in translation all of the expressiveness of the previous speaker. Such a stance is a clear attempt at empowerment of the institutionally weaker party in the exchange. Taken together, these two cases of gaze and gesture provide a clear illustration of the interpreter's scope for departing from strict neutrality, for exercising interactional power, and for alignment within and between communities of practice.

7. Conclusion

The examples we have cited can do no more than illustrate what we believe to be a general phenomenon. They do not amount to an empirical quantification of trends

in interpreter behavior. They do, however, confirm the significance of similar findings reported by other scholars (Wadensjö 1998, Bolden 2000, Davidson 2000, 2001, 2002, Pöllabauer 2004, Angelelli 2004a, b, etc.), thus suggesting that these are not isolated cases. Indeed, taken together, the similarities of behavior noted in the data presented in the fast-growing body of published research on dialogue interpreting are striking. What can be observed in so many of these exchanges is the way in which power is negotiated between participants, including the interpreter. Institutionally, participants start from very different positions; but the inherent inequalities among them are, without doubt, subject to a constant process of negotiation and, therefore, of recontextualization. If we are correct in the case we have made concerning interpreters' power in face-to-face interaction, then this issue becomes one of relevance not only to interpreting studies research but to practitioners, trainers, those who set standards and codes of practice, and, more generally, to users of interpreting services. Appeals of this nature have, of course, been made previously (e.g., Angelelli 2004a: 136–140; Inghilleri 2005: 81–83); but, with a few exceptions, they do not appear to be heard. A disconnect between research findings and public assumptions continues to exist. A greater awareness of these issues could lead to a reassessment of interpreters' powers and accountabilities. All stakeholders, including the interpreters themselves, deserve to be involved in the debate.

Key to transcriptions

ATT	=	attorney
INT	=	interpreter
W	=	witness
J	=	judge
PAT	=	patient
IO	=	immigration officer
IMM	=	immigrant
AS	=	asylum seeker
(xxx)	=	inaudible or obscure
bold	=	emphasis
(2)	=	timed pause
(.)	=	short pause

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