Translation and Literary Studies

Homage to Marilyn Gaddis Rose

Edited by Marella Feltrin-Morris, Deborah Folaron and María Constanza Guzmán

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By nature a transdisciplinary area of inquiry, translation lends itself to being investigated at its intersection with other fields of study. *Translation and Literary Studies* seeks to highlight the manifold connections between translation and notions of gender, dialectics, agency, philosophy and power. The volume also offers a timely homage to renowned translation theorist Marilyn Gaddis Rose, who was at the forefront of the group of scholars who initiated and helped to institutionalize translation studies. Inspired by Gaddis Rose's work, and particularly by her concept of stereoscopic reading, the volume is dynamically complementary to the burgeoning contemporary field of global comparative literature, underscoring the diversity of critical literary thought and theory worldwide.

Arranged thematically around questions of translation as literary and cultural criticism, as epistemology, and as poetics and politics, and dealing with works within and beyond the Western tradition, the essays in the volume illustrate the multi-voiced spectrum of literary translation studies today.

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Preface

> To those who have taken the time to apply the strategy of systematic stereoscopic reading to their preferred authors and literatures, thank you for taking on contemplation.
>
> Marilyn Gaddis Rose (1997:74)

Assembling a collection of essays for a volume that pays homage to a well-respected scholar is a challenging and humbling undertaking. This *Festschrift* in honour of translation studies scholar Marilyn Gaddis Rose is no exception. For decades she has been a leading figure in the field of translation studies. She was at the forefront of the group of scholars who initiated the new discipline and actively helped to institutionalize it as an academic field of study. Given that Gaddis Rose's influence on colleagues, fellow translation studies scholars, and students has been profound and lasting, we decided to edit this volume to honour her and illustrate the extent of her legacy.

Gaddis Rose's academic and scholarly contributions have inspired a diverse array of progressive research avenues, innovative pedagogical practices and perspectives on translation theory and practice that span multiple languages and cultures. Particularly noteworthy across her scholarly contribution are the implications of her theoretical perspectives on translation studies pedagogy; their practical applications as borne out of her extensive experience in academia; and her work at the unique juncture between translation, philosophy and literary studies, which ultimately coalesced into her concept of stereoscopic reading. Gaddis Rose has been deeply committed to translation pedagogy for decades. She conceptualized and put into practice the 'workshop' model for translation students in university programmes. At the State University of New York at Binghamton she founded the Translation Research and Instruction Program, and created the first PhD programme in Translation Studies in the United States. She was also instrumental in organizing the month-long international NEH Translation Theory summer institute in 1993, and in publishing the *Translation Perspectives* (vols. 1-11) and *ATA Series* (vols. 1-9). Gaddis Rose has been affiliated with and active in several professional and academic associations, such as ATA and MLA, throughout her career, and her work is emblematic of the scholarship that addresses the relationship between translation and literary studies. As can be seen in her book *Translation and Literary Criticism: Translation as Analysis,* published in the *Translation Theories Ex-*

plained series, Gaddis Rose's research addresses theoretical, methodological and pedagogical questions in translation studies as a field. While starting out from the premise that a palpable relationship does exist between translation and literature, Gaddis Rose highlights the compatibility of translation and literary criticism. She situates translation in relation to cultural history as a "continuous oscillation: balancing, realigning, balancing again" and, using the simile of the "beating heart" to speak of its organicity, she characterizes translation as a central part of that movement (1997:24). She then discusses the potential of the notion of "stereoscopic reading", i.e., of "using both the original language text and one (or more) translations while reading and teaching" to investigate the "interliminal" space of translation for literary criticism (*ibid.*:90). Gaddis Rose's work reveals her unique long-term vision and the originality and innovative nature of the questions she dared to ask. Not limited to any specific nation, school or territory, the concepts associated with her work have inspired the alumni and participants of myriad conferences, workshops, and research seminars, to move into research avenues that have expanded their original contexts.

The disciplinary space at the intersection between translation and literary studies has evolved and diversified greatly in the last three decades. The field of literary studies, and comparative literature in particular, was crucial in expanding the boundaries of nation and language beyond those most commonly represented. This intellectual expansion in turn generated a process of rethinking not only the research questions, but the very discourse of scholarly production. The development of fields such as cultural studies, world literature, and translation studies, placed comparative literature within a new, broader disciplinary perspective. This diversification in various fields of knowledge, and in the humanities in particular, had a significant effect on the study of translation, its most distinct manifestation being the so-called 'cultural turn' in translation studies in the 1990s.

Firmly rooted in the Western hermeneutic tradition – hence in what she characterizes as part of the "speculative approaches" to translation (1998/2001) – Gaddis Rose's work resonates significantly with some of the predominant critical approaches to literary and translation studies that developed strongly in the 1990s – namely the post-structuralist and post-colonial approaches. Her work has been a referent in many of these changing perspectives.

Several aspects of Gaddis Rose's legacy are reflected in the contributions included in this volume. The authors, translation scholars in their own right who were also students and colleagues of Gaddis Rose, address questions about translation from the most diverse angles of translation studies. Framed from the perspective of translation and 'literary studies', the volume aims to reach

beyond 'literary criticism', in accordance with the heterogeneity and complexity of the field of literary studies today. Given its interdisciplinary impulse and its global outreach, this *Festschrift* constitutes a critical referent in the burgeoning contemporary field of global comparative literature, underscoring the diversity of critical literary thought and theory worldwide.

The essays in this collection are divided thematically into three parts. The first part presents case studies of translation as literary criticism. In 'Returning to 'Ithaca' in Translation', **Kim Allen Gleed** discusses the relevance of the study of James Joyce as a case for translation studies. Allen Gleed provides a framework through the work of Joyce scholar Fritz Senn, who considers translation as an *approach* to understanding Joyce. In 'Translating Colette: Bisexuality and Modernism in *La maison de Claudine*', **Carol Mastrangelo Bové** analyzes the only English translation that currently exists of Colette's novel, *La Maison de Claudine*, offering a new version of selected episodes and arguing for a reading of the text that demonstrates Colette's radical politics. Bové bases her discussion about sexual norms in the United States on Lawrence Venuti's work on Irene Ash's English version of Françoise Sagan's *Bonjour tristesse*. This first part of the volume also includes the article 'Celebrating the Inevitable', by **Marilyn Gaddis Rose** herself. In an approach to reading through translation akin to the one she proposes in her book, Gaddis Rose explores productive differences among the French, German, Italian and Spanish translations of Jane Austen's *Persuasion* by analyzing Captain Wentworth's love letter of declaration and proposal through back translation. She describes ways in which the inevitable differences that emerge from translation enrich, rather than reduce, the experience of reading Austen.

The second part of the volume includes papers dealing with questions of translation and epistemology. In 'Metalanguage and Ideology: Conceptual Frameworks of Translation in the Work of Itamar Even-Zohar and Muhammad al-Khatib', **Tarek Shamma** offers a critical comparison of two theoretical approaches to translation, that of Gideon Toury and Itamar Even-Zohar on the one hand, and that of Syrian critic Muhammad al-Khatib on the other. Shamma discusses their work in light of their contexts, translation movements and literary traditions, and describes how, despite the parallel conceptual frameworks, their meta-language reflects different ideological attitudes. In 'Translation and 'the Fourth': An Account of Impossibility', **Josep Dávila Montes** also examines the metalanguage of translation theory by investigating its dialectical basis. The author discusses the origins and implications of conceptual dichotomies in translation studies, particularly around the notion of 'impossibility', and the intrinsically metaphorical basis of the traditional dichotomies that permeate translation discourse. In 'Awakening the Inner Ear: Translation as a Key

to Unfolding a Living Logos', **Eileen Rizo-Patrón** compares and contrasts the hermeneutic perspectives of German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer and French philosopher Gaston Bachelard, in particular with respect to the "search for a living logos" and its implications for translation/retranslation of philosophical and poetic texts. Finally, in 'The Art Concealed: Translation as *Sprezzatura*', **Marella Feltrin-Morris** proposes an innovative concept for translation theory by looking at the Italian Renaissance writer Baldesar Castiglione's treatise *The Book of the Courtier,* in particular at his notion of *sprezzatura*, and discusses its potential applications to the field of translation, particularly as an alternative to the notion of the translator's invisibility.

The essays in the last part of the volume engage translation as poetics and as politics. In 'Entry and Threshold: Translation and Cultural Criticism', **Joshua Price** expands on Gaddis Rose's method of 'stereoscopic reading' and applies it to a larger spectrum of cultural encounters, beyond the textual, illustrating how it can be used to understand cases of cultural translation in the Americas. In 'Translating Latin America: Reading Translators' Archives' and, like Price, taking the Americas as a locus for translation thinking, **María Constanza Guzmán** discusses the case of three North American translators of Latin American literature into English and, based on their 'archives', investigates the way they view, understand, and conceptualize their practice and their role in the development of Latin American writing. Finally, in 'Translation/Relation: Word/World', translator **Betsy Wing** offers a meditation on her translation into English of Edouard Glissant's *Poétique de la relation* (*Poetics of Relation)*. Taking Glissant's own theories as a starting point, Wing characterizes translation as exploration and discovery, as a process of contacting and connecting between languages and their cultures. The volume also features an interview with Marilyn Gaddis Rose carried out in 2011, as well as a comprehensive list of her publications – her books and articles, and her translations.

Along with offering a tribute to Marilyn Gaddis Rose and showing her our profound gratitude, in this volume we seek to illustrate the diverse spectrum of translation as scholarly praxis and performance, as enactment of the pleasure of reading and, as Gaddis Rose proposes, as a space for 'contemplation'.

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I

Translation as Criticism

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Returning to 'Ithaca' in Translation

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Abstract: *Because James Joyce's writing falls at varying distances outside of what we might call standard English narrative prose, his works force a translator to critically interpret the text, weigh multiple options, and make deliberate decisions about words, phrases and indeterminate references. As a result, the translation becomes transparent, and a bilingual reader has an amazing opportunity to witness the possibility of language and translation, seeing how the translator works, what choices he or she has made, and why. An analysis of Joyce's works and their translations can reveal much about the process of translation and what happens to the Joycean text when translated into another language and for another culture. By using Fritz Senn's model of translation as an approach to interpreting and understanding Joyce, we have the opportunity to see what happens to a text in translation as well as what happens to translation in a text. This technique teaches us as much about reading and understanding Joyce as it does about the task and craft of the translator.*

When Max Eastman (Ellmann 1986:54) asked James Joyce why he was writing *Finnegans Wake* in such an incomprehensible way, the author replied: "To keep the critics busy for three hundred years". It has not been 100 years since Joyce uttered this famous phrase, and it is certainly true that critics have been very busy thinking and writing about him and his works, but I would like to propose that he has also kept the translators busy and will continue to do so. The author brings much to bear on language, linguistics and semiotics, but only a handful of scholars have followed this line of thought through to the study of Joyce and translation. An analysis of Joyce's works and their translations can reveal much about the process of translation and what happens to the Joycean text when translated into another language and for another culture.

Joyce believed, before the translation of *Ulysses* into French, that his novel was untranslatable. After the translation of the 'Anna Livia Plurabelle' chapter of *Finnegans Wake*, the author declared: "there is nothing that cannot

be translated" (Ellmann 1982:632). To say that translating is a multi-layered and multi-dimensional activity is an obvious understatement. Translators are keenly aware of, and even sometimes obsessive about, the meaning of words, the weight of culture, the nuances and implications in a turn of phrase, and how all of these can result in the seeming untranslatability of any text, let alone one written by Joyce. The flaw, of course, in using an essentially linguistic model of translation is that in focusing on semantic equivalence, a translator could potentially miss the proverbial forest for the trees. Translation is never a solely linguistic activity, and the cultural implications are critical. Because, as Fritz Senn (1989:81) points out, "we have no theoretical ground rules for translating absurd signifiers but still have to rely on inspiration or serendipity", what follows here is an attempt to provide a framework in which to discuss Joyce and translation studies.

During the time Joyce and his co-translators were undertaking *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, little thought was given to how a translator translates, what happens to a text when translated, and what constitutes a good translation. In general, in the 1920s and 1930s, people felt at liberty to translate a text when they knew two languages and saw an opportunity to present a foreign writer's work in their national literature. Joyce's translation team had as their main goal to advance the literary fame of the author and to promote his novels. As Umberto Eco (2001:117) points out, "Joyce did not care a whit for any of our translation problems". Translation was important to him to the extent that it would widen his audience.

To look seriously and closely at Joyce in translation, we must move away from translation theorists who perhaps dabble in Joyce and move towards a Joycean who is interested in translation. We find that person in Fritz Senn, who explores Joyce in translation and considers what bilingual readers and critics might learn from these foreign language versions. He offers translation as an *approach* to understanding Joyce and coming to a deeper relationship with the original text. Although Senn suggests this method as another way to discover nuances in the novels, it can also be adapted to assess the quality of any given translation as well as to show us what happens in the process of literary translation. In his article 'Translation as Approach', Senn (1984a:4) writes:

> Thousands of readers who do not know English have "read" *Ulysses* when in fact they have not been exposed to a single word as Joyce wrote it. It is worth pausing a moment to realize that a translation changes the whole of a literary work, with the exception of, usually, the names. What is the relation between a new, entirely changed surface and the original one? And how much of the "meaning" is thus affected?

Studying these two areas and answering these questions provides us with a formula, albeit fluid and subjective, for assessing translations of Joyce. And although searching for errors in a translation should not be the sole purpose of a study of this kind, Senn (*ibid.*:6) suggests that any errors we encounter may serve as "useful portals of discovery".

Senn's article '*Ulysses* in Translation' further explains his approach. Comparing a translation with the original and with other translations, both in the same target language and in different ones, tells us much about the "nature of translation and about its limitations; on the other hand it will oblige us to take a close look at the original, from perhaps a few different angles" (1970b:249). The translator, because he or she does not have the luxury of glossing over sentences, paragraphs, or even entire pages of Joycean text that prove too challenging or too dense, is the closest reader imaginable, and is, as Senn (*ibid.*:251) puts it, "the only one who is professionally obliged to examine every single word". Senn recognizes the difficult task of word choice that any translator faces, and how much more involved this becomes for a translator of Joyce. Joyce, he writes, gives the reader many possibilities, and

> always seems to imply, to suggest, to provide clues that we *can* take up (which is no blanket justification for every conceivable fanciful interpretation). In translation it is not possible to play the same game. The reader has fewer opportunities to read with the sort of creative cooperation that seems to be a characteristic of Joycean activity. (*ibid.*:275)

Senn (*ibid.*:281) recognizes that reading a translation limits a reader's interpretation, and that a translation of Joyce will "inevitably flatter, that every one of its particles is less capable of an epiphany than those of the original, that motifs and overtones have been lost in transit", but at the same time, he sees the possibility for learning more about Joyce's texts as a result of this transit.

A translator's ability and skill as well as his or her understanding of Joyce are reflected in the translation, but so are culture and the limits and boundaries of the target language. Senn (*ibid.*:250) writes that translations also represent "diverse points of view, reflections in mirrors throwing back light on the original". Translation, a mirror-image substitute for the original, Senn (*ibid.*) posits,

> will highlight some characteristics, either where it succeeds in re-creating a particular effect or where, sometimes by a painstaking effort, a purpose

> becomes manifest. Even where it fails, the comparison, by contrast, will throw some feature of the original into distinct relief.

Difficult passages in Joyce, where language and meaning become increasingly nebulous and where a translator's hand is forced with regard to interpretation and word choice, are, as a result, the most interesting passages to apply and test Senn's model.

In Joyce's body of work, dense passages are fairly easy to come by, and we shall use Senn's approach to translation as a means of assessing two French translations of the 'Ithaca' episode of *Ulysses* (the first, translated by Auguste Morel, Valery Larbaud, Stuart Gilbert and Joyce, was published in 1929; the second, by Bernard Hoepffner[1] under the direction of Jacques Aubert, was published on the 100th anniversary of Bloomsday, June 16, 2004). To paraphrase Fritz Senn, there are no strict theoretical rules to follow when translating Joyce's "absurd signifiers", but by using translation as an approach to interpreting and understanding Joyce, we have the opportunity to see what happens to a text in translation as well as what happens to translation in a text. The translation-as-approach method asks us to look at how translation happens *in* a text and how it happens *to* a text. Applying Senn's technique to the 'Ithaca' episode teaches us as much about reading and understanding Joyce as it does about the task and craft of the translator.

There are many passages in the 'Ithaca' episode where the 1929 and 2004 translations differ, for example, in lists of items in drawers and catalogues of books, but studying those passages could lead us to the linguistic nit-picking against which Senn warns. Instead, we will look at three passages where the translations differ, but ones in which the differences can offer insights into the texts, the translators, and the audience for whom they translate.

We will begin our analysis of 'Ithaca' in translation with the question and answer on page 678:

> What acrostic upon the abbreviation of his first name had he (kinetic poet) sent to Miss Marion Tweedy on the 14 February 1888?
>
> *Poets oft have sung in rhyme*
> *Of music sweet their praise divine.*
> *Let them hymn it nine times nine.*
> *Dearer far than song or wine,*
> *You are mine. The world is mine.* (1922/1934:678)

[1] The 2004 translation was a group project with multiple translators, supervised by Jacques Aubert. The 'Ithaca' episode was translated primarily by Bernard Hoepffner, under the direction of Aubert.

In 1929, this is translated:

> Quel acrostiche sur le diminutif de son prénom avait-il (poète cinétique) envoyé à Miss Marion Tweedy le 14 février 1888?
> *Puisque les barbes tous quand Phébus les inspire,*
> *Ont loué leur amour jusques au saint délire,*
> *Laissons leur voix chanter jusqu'à ce qu'elle expire.*
> *Depuis que tu es mienne, ô mon nectar, ma lyre,*
> *Y a-t-il un empire égal à mon empire?* (1929:966)

The 2004 translation reads:

> Quel acrostiche sur le diminutif de son prénom avait-il (poète cinétique) envoyé à Mlle Marion (Molly) Tweedy le 14 février 1888?
> *Poètes souvent chantèrent en rimes*
> *Odes de douce musique fort divines.*
> *Pour faire des hymnes de strophes fines,*
> *Ornements dans l'air qui pour toi s'anime.*
> *Laisse-moi goûter ton vin et ton gin.*
> *Devant ton monde, aimant, je m'incline.* (2004:841)

As we can see from first glance, the acrostic of the original and the 1929 translation spell out "Poldy", while the 2004 translation gives us "Popold", a more common French diminutive for the name Leopold. The 2004 translators use this nickname throughout their translation, but here it poses a problem because it adds an extra line to the poem. The more significant difference, however, is how the poem is translated. The 1929 version has a clearly classical slant, with a reference to Phoebus which is not present in the original, perhaps intended to emphasize the *Odyssey* connection. The shift, though, changes our perception of Bloom. The 2004 translator opted for a closer rendering of the original, despite the added line.

The next passage is found is found on page 734-35, as the episode is coming to a close, with the question and answer:

> Then?
> He kissed the plump mellow yellow smellow melons of her rump, on each plump melonous hemisphere, in their mellow yellow furrow, with obscure prolonged provocative melonsmellonous osculation. (1922/1934:734-35)

This is translated in 1929:

> Ensuite?
> Il embrassa les ronds mamelons melons melliflons de sa croupe, chaque rond et melonneux hémisphère à son tour, et leur sillon minon marron, avec une osculation ténébreuse, prolongée, provocante, melon-odorante. (1929:1052-53)

In 2004, we have:

> Puis?
> Il embrassa les ocres onctorants melons rebondis odorants de sa croupe, sur chaque hémisphère rebondi melonneux dans leur sillon ocre onctueux, avec une obscure osculation prolongée provocatrice melonodorante. (2004:908)

The 1929 translation mimics the cadence of the original "mellow yellow smellow melons" with its "*mamelons melons melliflons*", but the word choice is somewhat skewed. The word "*mamelon*" could either be a nipple or a hillock, and it is only once we reach the French word "*croupe*" (buttocks) that the reader fully understands where on Molly's anatomy Bloom places his kiss. The translation, like the original, uses some neologisms, seen in "*melliflons*". probably from the word *melliflu*, meaning mellifluous and "*minon*", perhaps *mignon*, or lovely. Another difference in the 1929 translation is the shift from Molly's "mellow yellow furrow" to a "*sillon minon marron*", a lovely brown furrow. Here, it seems likely the translators made the shift to match the sound of the original, sacrificing a literal translation. The 2004 translator moves back more closely to the original English, replacing "mellow yellow furrow" with "*sillon ocre onctueux*", a close approximation linguistically, but one which does not have the same rhyming and assonance as the original.

The final passage for analysis is found on page 737, listing the people with whom Bloom has travelled:

> Sinbad the Sailor and Tinbad the Tailor and Jinbad the Jailor and Whinbad the Whaler and Ninbad the Nailer and Finbad the Failer and Binbad the Bailer and Pinbad the Pailer and Minbad the Mailer and Hinbad the Hailer and Rinbad the Railer and Dinbad the Kailer and Vinbad the Quailer and Linbad the Yailer and Xinbad the Phthailer. (1922/1934)

In 1929, this passage is translated:

> Sinbad le Marin et Tinbad le Tarin et Jinbad le Jarin et Whinbad le Wharin et Nibad le Narin et Finbad le Farin et Binhad le Barin et Pinbad le Parin et Minbad le Malin et Hinbad le Harin et Rinbad le Rabbin et Dinbad le Karin et Vinbad le Quarin et Linbad le Yarin et Xinbad le Phtharin. (1929:1056)

The 2004 translation reads:

> Sinbad le Saleur et Tinbad le Tailleur et Ginbad le Geôlier et Binbad le Baleineir et Clinbad le Cloueur et Linbad le Loupeur et Équinbad l'Écopeur et Pinbad le Pailleur et Rinbad le Railleur et Grinbad le Grêleur et Dinbad le Daubeur et Linbad le Kaïleur et Vinbad le Quaïleur et Linbad le Yaïleur et Xinbad le Phthailleur. (2004:911)

There is a striking disparity between the two translations in how they present Joyce's listing of names with rhyming professions. The 1929 translation opts to keep the English name and, for the most part, give that individual a nonsense profession. In some cases, luck intervenes and we have a lord (*Binhad le Barin*), the devil (*Minbad le Malin*), and a rabbi (*Rinbad le Rabbin*), but the rest are unemployed, so to speak. The 2004 translation, on the other hand, generally keeps the professions listed in Joyce and successfully finds names that sound similar in French when matched with the profession as they do in English. Towards the end of the list, Joyce's English professions become nonsensical as the narrator drifts into sleep, and the 2004 French ones follow the same pattern.

Joyce's writing, especially *Ulysses* and *Finnegans Wake*, falls at varying distances outside of what we might call standard English narrative prose. His works force a translator to critically interpret the text, weigh multiple options, and make deliberate decisions about words, phrases, and indeterminate references. As a result, the translation becomes transparent, and a bilingual reader has an amazing opportunity to witness the possibility of language and translation, seeing how the translator works, what choices he or she has made, and why. As Senn (1982:18) rightly asserts, when translating Joyce, "Translators have to put their cards on the table". Joyce's plays on words in English as well as other languages and the fluidity with which he writes is an advantage only he has as the author of the original. The translator, whatever the target language, is stripped of nearly all of that leverage. Senn (1984b:34) correctly sums this up in 'Transluding off the Toptic; or, The Fruitful Illusion of Translatability', writing: "Other languages are not as conveniently loose as English is; the translators' languages allow them far less flexibility and force them to sort

out, or impose, grammatical relationships". In 'Seven against *Ulysses*: Joyce in Translation', Senn (1970a:515) explains the point further:

> [N]o translation can be expected to give us the full orchestration of Joyce's novel. Translation, which is always interpretation as well, becomes often a matter of selection and necessary simplification … A translator will hardly command Joyce's own mastery of language. But without some corresponding delight in the possibilities of language no translator would probably be able to muster up enough courage to tackle so intriguing a task.

Perhaps the most important thing Joyce reveals about translation is the very possibility of it. Simultaneously, translation shows us even more precisely the richness and depth of the works of Joyce. Translating Joyce's works results not only in their new life in another language and culture for a whole new population of readers, but also a new life for bilingual readers in the field of Joyce studies and translation studies.

To close our study of Joyce's 'Ithaca' in translation, we will return to Joyce's conversation with Max Eastman which opened this essay. After Joyce made the promise to keep us busy for three centuries, the conversation continued, and the author (Ellmann 1982:703) wryly remarked: "The demand that I make of my reader is that he should devote his whole life to reading my works". Joyce's expectations of his critics and his demands on his readers are the same ones he places on his translators. Thankfully for both world literature and translation studies, despite the odds stacked against them, translators have met this challenge with remarkable success.

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Translating Colette
Bisexuality and Modernism in La Maison de Claudine

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Abstract: *This essay analyzes the English translations of Colette's novel,* La Maison de Claudine*, offers a new version of selected episodes, and argues for a reading of the text that has bisexuality at its core. The analysis offers a fresh psychoanalytic reading of the novel, building upon Venuti's study of the sexual norms of the target culture and Kristeva's examination of psychic formations in Colette. While acknowledging their achievement in making the acclaimed novelist available in English, the essay reveals the weaknesses of the translations by Enid McLeod and Una Vincenzo Troubridge in 1953 and Andrew Brown in 2006. The translations are inadequate to the complexity of this Modernist text, that of a bisexual woman revealing the historical and political conditions of her life in early twentieth-century France. The new version of selected scenes enables the text to voice the homosexual desire for the maternal that is at the same time a radical politics in Colette's fiction.*

This essay analyzes the English translations of Colette's novel, *La Maison de Claudine*, offers a new version of selected episodes, and argues for a reading of the text that has bisexuality at its core. While acknowledging their achievement in making the acclaimed novelist available in English, the essay reveals the weaknesses of the translations by Enid McLeod and Una Vincenzo Troubridge in 1953 and Andrew Brown in 2006. The translations are inadequate to the complexity of this Modernist text as the voice of a bisexual woman revealing the historical and political conditions of her life in early twentieth-century France. Lawrence Venuti's (2000/2002) work on Irene Ash's English version of Françoise Sagan's *Bonjour tristesse* suggests the ways in which the sexual norms of the target culture in 1956 may have been a factor in shaping the translation of Colette. Andrew Brown's 'Introduction' and Doris Lessing's 'Foreword' in the 2006 translation accurately identify the idealization of childhood in parts of the novel but – and this is particularly true of Lessing, and

also surprising given the admirable exploration of gender in her own novels – do not examine the sexuality that is at the centre of this text.

Beyond Venuti's analysis of the sexual norms of the target culture, psychoanalytic theory provides a framework for my reading and translation of *La Maison de Claudine* as the voicing of unconscious desire. The author of many novels and essays, Colette is known for the sensuality and freshness she brings to seemingly everyday events. Among the first women to write about heterosexual monogamy and marriage as a threatening, repressive way of life, she can best be appreciated as part of the Modernist movement. Here I understand this movement as a reaction to middle-class customs (that woman be monogamous and married, or else marginalized, for example, as a courtesan) and to monotheism and its male God that establish such conduct as the norm.

With at times remarkable parallels to Freud's groundbreaking work – Colette in fact talks about bisexuality in women twenty-three years before Freud's *Female Sexuality* (1931), where he described woman's psyche as more frequently bisexual than man's – Colette's writing uncovers the domination of women and the repression of unconscious desire often associated with and experienced by the female. A powerful image evoked early on in the novel is that of a young girl literally carried off by an elegant young man in an engraving entitled 'The Kidnapping'.

La Maison de Claudine depicts a stereotypical female icon, the home, in the apparently unrelated everyday events occurring in a Burgundian village. The autobiographical novel relating her mother's life from marriage to "the Savage" (Colette states that he "kidnapped" her) (1922/1986:971), until her feisty old age is in fact a critique of heterosexuality, a language of desire for the maternal as a visceral, homosexual experience, and a politics.

As I have shown elsewhere (Bové 2006), Julia Kristeva links the presence of an unorthodox sexuality in Colette's work to the middle classes' social aspirations and to the disappearing aristocracy's elitist practices in the 19th century as documented by Balzac. Colette herself has written four insightful essays and made frequent reference to the novelist in her writings[1]. For Kristeva in her analysis of Colette's relation to Balzac in *Colette* (2002:479-492), it is not that Colette directly portrays the bourgeoisie's increasing ambition as the upper class retreats. Rather, she is a social historian to the degree that she depicts the transformations in women's sexuality in the early part of the 20th century. These changes along with social aspirations and elitist practices are linked in a form of radical politics in Colette to the degree that both sets

[1] See, for example, Colette (1936, 1944, 1953b, 2001).

of behaviours are built upon psychosexual formations that can be seen as unorthodox desires for the maternal.

Kristeva's *L'Amour de soi et ses avatars: Démesure et limites de la sublimation* (2005), a brief book focusing on Colette's writing after 1921 and her relationship with her stepson, Bertrand de Jouvenal, analyzes *La Maison de Claudine* as a pivotal moment in the development of her writing as a positive "perversion" enabling creativity and as a form of subversive politics. Thus, Colette's focus on the maid in 'The Wedding', as elsewhere in this novel, reveals her identification with female servants who are more active sexually and more mobile socially than their counterparts higher on the ladder. Colette's attraction to this behaviour, not unlike that of other intellectual French women of the first half of the century – Simone de Beauvoir being a well-known example – is not shared by her mother and demonstrates the unconventional thinking of certain writers and the changes in women's attitudes toward sexuality over time.

Replete with discontinuities and the irruption of the unconscious, Colette's autobiographical novel has the non-linear sequence of other Modernist, feminist texts including, for example, Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway* (1925/1990). The reader is frequently unsure who exactly is speaking: first, she is an I, Sido's daughter, Colette – then she is a third-person omniscient narrator, then a daughter who has seemingly become the mother. The narrator clearly desires the mother; the mother and daughter-become-mother are one in a close homosexual relationship in which body and spirit flourish in a home filled with their beloved books, cats, and dogs.

In many passages of the novel, Colette's capacity for pleasure including the desire for the mother reveals itself in her memories of sisters, both Sido's half-sister from Martinique, and Colette's own half-sister, Juliette. In a passage from one of the early chapters, 'My Father's Daughter', Sido, Colette's mother, speaks:

> Elle a seulement vécu ses premières années avec nous, Eugène, Paul, Irma et moi, et avec Jean le grand singe, dans la maison où mon père fabriquait du chocolat. Le chocolat, dans ce temps-là, ça se faisait avec du cacao, du sucre et de la vanille. En haut de la maison, les briques de chocolat séchaient, posées toutes molles sur la terrasse. Et chaque matin des plaques de chocolat révélaient, imprimé en fleurs creuses à cinq pétales, le passage nocturne des chats … Je l'ai regrettée, la fille de mon père, et figure-toi, Minet-Chéri … (1922/1986:1007-08)

The translators, Enid McLeod and Una Vincenzo Troubridge, herself gay, render it:

> She spent only her early years with us, with Eugène, Paul, Irma and me, and with the big monkey, Jean, in the house where my father manufactured chocolate. In those days chocolate was made with cocoa, sugar and vanilla. At the top of the house the soft bricks of chocolate were put to dry on the terrace. And every morning they showed, printed on them like flowers with five hollow petals, the trails of the nocturnal cats. I used to miss her, my father's daughter, and, would you believe it, Minet-Chéri … (1953a:49-50)

The translations of the novel succeed to some extent in conjuring up the combination of sensations, emotions, and ideas that violate the norms of heterosexuality and the Judeo-Christian tradition on which it is based. One weakness in this chapter, though, is "I used to miss her" – "I missed my father's daughter" in the Brown translation (2006:57) – for "Je l'ai regrettée", which also means "I was sorry about her". Sido missed her stepsister for a time after she left and also felt badly because of her having filed the baby's wide fingers to make them more attractive. In the context of the story of homosexual desire for the maternal, "I used to miss her and felt sorry" would be a better translation to the degree that it also voices the culpability connected to "my father's daughter" as the object of Sido's homosexual desire, anticipating a stronger sense of transgression and guilt in the episodes to come: 'The Wedding' and 'My Sister with the Long Hair'.

The scene leads directly into 'The Wedding', the chapter in which Colette, the narrator, describes the wedding day of a young servant girl from the neighbourhood, Adrienne Septmance, whose love affair has brought pleasure to both her and Colette. This evokes the newlyweds' bedroom:

> Tout à l'heure, les jeunes mariés vont venir ici. Je n'y avais pas pensé. Ils plongeront dans cette plume profonde. On fermera sur eux les contrevents massifs, la porte, toutes les issues de ce petit tombeau étouffant. Il y aura entre eux cette lutte obscure sur laquelle la candeur hardie de ma mère et la vie des bêtes m'ont appris trop et trop peu ... Et puis ? J'ai peur de cette chambre, de ce lit auquel je n'avais pas pensé. Ma compagne rit et bavarde ... (1922/1986:1012)

McLeod and Troubridge's version reads:

> Presently the newly married couple will come here. I had not thought of that. They will sink into that mound of feathers. The heavy shutters will be closed upon them, and the door and all the exits of this stifling little tomb. Between them will be enacted that obscure encounter of

> which my mother's outspoken simplicity and the lives of the beasts around me have taught me too much and too little. And afterwards? I am frightened of the room, of the bed that I had never thought of. My companion laughs and chatters. (1953a:55)

Again McLeod and Troubridge are partly successful in rendering Colette's troubling perception of the newlyweds' imminent sex: the sights, smells, and feeling on the skin as the couple engages in an act that will harm them like the flame burning the moth's wing. "Ils plongeront dans cette plume profonde", – "They will sink into that mound of feathers" – however, fails to connote the more active, 'masculine' element in the original and in Brown's "will dive into that deep mound of feathers" (2006:63), language more appropriate to the passage to the degree that it creates an aggressive male image connected to the critique of heterosexuality in the novel. While both the woman and the man are included in the male 'Ils', according to the sexist grammatical categories of French, the male would seem to dominate the female in the image evoked briefly here. McLeod and Troubridge's translation lacks the sense of a fight, the drama that is fundamental in the seemingly innocuous narrative, "cette lutte obscure sur laquelle la candeur hardie de la mere", and in Brown's version, "that obscure struggle about which my mother's bold and direct language and the life of animals have taught me both too much and too little ... And then"? (2006:63). Going beyond the stereotypical 'war between the sexes' frequently used to describe the couple in Western cultures, the narrator questions the heterosexual relation that, she suggests here and throughout *La Maison de Claudine,* caused her to suffer, as in the case of Colette herself at the hands of her infamous husband, Willy, who pressured her to write and then published her novels under his name, when she asks, "Et puis?" – rendered well by "And afterwards?" or "And then?" The scene ends with the adolescent crying out for her mother.

A slightly younger Colette describes herself in bisexual terms in the opening of the next chapter, 'My Sister With the Long Hair'. With "the speech and manners of an intelligent boy" her most "feminine" characteristic is her hair, two long braids, immediately associated with punishment and guilt in the description of them as whips swishing around the lower part of her body (1922/1986:1013). A long hair is eventually found to be the cause of a barnyard chick's having been crippled. The narrator in this way again associates long hair with bodily harm in the chapter's opening lines. Colette then writes a hymn to such hair à la Baudelaire in which the narrator rejects her earlier distaste for long tresses to recall moments of fleeting beauty when the woman lets down her hair at night or awakens in the morning:

> Il y a bien un instant, le soir, quand les épingles tombent et que le visage brille, sauvage, entre des ondes mêlées – il y a un autre instant pareil, le matin … Et à cause de ces deux instants-là, ce que je viens d'écrire contre vous, longs cheveux, ne signifie plus rien. (*ibid.*:1013-14)

> There is just one moment, in the evening, when the pins are withdrawn and the shy face shines out for an instant from between the tangled waves; and there is a similar moment in the early morning. And because of those two moments everything that I have just written against long hair counts for nothing at all. (1953a:56-57)

> And yet there is one moment, in the evening, when the pins fall and the face glimmers shyly between tangled waves – and there is another, similar instant, in the morning … And because of these two instants, everything I have just written against you, long hair, has become insignificant. (2006:64-65)

The personal, intimate tone of the original is diminished in McLeod and Troubridge's translation (followed by Brown's version which retains the direct address) in part because the narrator no longer speaks to the hair directly.

The narrator then shifts focus to her stepsister and especially her Mongolian appearance, her obsession with reading, and her extraordinary dark hair. In this episode it is Juliette who enables Colette to give a voice to the bisexuality latent in much of the novel. One of the most powerful passages evokes a monstrous sexuality and more broadly a subversion of the social contract. It appears after Colette tells of how, her mother having completed the daughter's ugly hairstyle – the parted hair woven into two braids uncovers her temples and ears in an unflattering way – she goes up to see her stepsister. Nearly always reading, Juliette frequently has her hair arranged in an even more unattractive way than Colette, with two braids rolled across the top of her head and two more across her neck. Colette's fascination with Juliette manifests itself in desire for the older girl's room replete with "merveilles inaccessibles" (1922/1986:1015) – "inaccessible wonders" (1953a:58) or "inaccessible marvels" (2006:67) that arouse a "convoitise" that must be "domptée" (1922/1986:1016). McLeod and Troubridge translate this as "Having overcome my covetousness" (1953a:59) while Brown chooses "Once my fervent longings had been assuaged" (2006:67). Better than either of these would be the combination of them, "Having overcome my fervent longings" in order to keep both more commonly used language

(covetousness is rare) and the intensity of a fight against passion.

The translation falters more seriously when "Je goûtais dans cette chambre de jeune fille un ennui distingué dont j'étais fière" (1922/1986:1015) becomes "In that young girl's bedroom I enjoyed a lofty boredom of which I was very proud" (1953a:58) or "In this young girl's bedroom I savoured a distinguished sense of boredom that made me feel proud" (2006:67). "In this young girl's bedroom, I savoured a lofty ennui that made me feel proud" would better express the sophisticated character of this mood, associated as it is with volumes of world literature and especially with Baudelaire. Retaining the '*ennui'* of the Symbolist poet also makes clearer that the *ennui*, as sometimes in Baudelaire, emanates from a woman – here Juliette – and is often associated with a sexuality that flouts the norm. Later references to the mood, for instance, "I was bored" in both translations appropriately convey a change in her state of mind to a simple irritation.

The strongest image in the scene appears in its conclusion where Colette and Sido visit Juliette, who is on this occasion very sick, possibly with typhoid, according to the doctor. In a hallucination that is part of the discourse of bisexuality in this novel, a delirious Juliette thinks she is going to visit the poet, Catulle Mendès. She tells him that she prefers blondes like him (and not the poet, Octave Feuillet, who has whiskers) and that she has painted his mouth red, like the women in his poems.

A long braid – recalling the narrator's own braids, an important component of her bisexual appearance at puberty as Brown recognizes in his introduction – blocks Juliette's face and, along with the girl's hallucinations, horrifies Sido. We read:

> Une de ses tresses barrait son visage, brillante, ronde, gorgée de vie. Ma mère, immobile, avait penché la tête pour mieux entendre et regardait, avec une sorte d'horreur, cette étrangère qui n'appelait à elle, dans son délire, que des inconnus. Puis elle regarda autour d'elle, m'aperçut, m'ordonna précipitamment: "Va-t'en en bas … ". Et, comme saisie de honte, elle cacha son visage dans ses deux mains. (1922/1986:1018)

> One of her plaits lay across her face, shining, thick and richly alive. My mother, struck motionless, her head bent as though in the effort to hear better, stood staring in a kind of horror at this stranger, who in her delirium called only for unknown persons. Then she looked round, caught sight of me and hastily commanded: "Go away, go downstairs at once". And as though overcome with shame, she buried her face in her hands. (1953a:75)

> One of her plaits lay across her face: a shining plait, plump and bursting with life. My mother, motionless, had leant forward to hear and see more clearly, with a kind of horror, how this quite unrecognizable girl, in her delirium was summoning to her bedside nobody but complete strangers. Then she looked round, noticed I was there, and hastily ordered me: "Downstairs! Quickly… ". And, as if overwhelmed by shame, she hid her face in her two hands. (2006:70)

Rather than "thick and richly alive" (McLeod/Troubridge) or "plump and bursting with life" (Brown), the phallic braid, "gorgée de vie" would be best rendered in a form closer to the French as "gorged with life," retaining the stronger biological component and the resemblance to "engorged" here and "regorgeait" in the secretary passage. All of Juliette's exceptional, even monstrous, characteristics, from her monomaniacal gaze, to, especially, her barbaric hair, come together in the climactic moment when the ironically penis-like braid appears, frightening the mother who protects her daughter by banishing her from the bedroom. In the context of the seemingly mundane autobiographical account of a woman's life and a daughter's coming of age in *La Maison de Claudine*, the passage liberates the sexuality pulsing at the centre of Colette's writing.

The scenes I have translated differently enable the text to voice the homosexual desire for the maternal present in the original. This desire is at the same time a radical politics in this novel to the extent that it is at times connected to working-class women and marginalized in a patriarchal culture that has heterosexual sex and male authority figures at its core. While to some theorists the translator should be invisible, the writer of Colette in English needs to play a significant literary role in hearing and revealing the gendered and psychoanalytic character of her text. *La Maison de Claudine,* whose title is more aptly translated by McLeod and Troubridge as *My Mother's House*, expresses a psychic formation that we no longer read as a 'perversion' but as a creative and healthy subversion of the status quo.

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Celebrating the Inevitable

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Abstract: *Jane Austen's posthumous* Persuasion *(1817) has been promoted as a 'fairy tale for grownups'. The translations of this novel intended for French, German, Italian, and Spanish classrooms inevitably illustrate Eugene Nida's formulation of 1947. That is, these translations can be expected to add, abstract, and skew Austen's information. It should be added that such translations could inevitably also flatten or intensify, focus or disperse information. A novel in translation is bound to exemplify all of these operations intermittently, even simultaneously. This discussion, restricted to examining translations that stay close to Austen's text, will explore stereoscopically Captain Wentworth's written proposal of marriage to Anne Elliot; this letter that brings their romance to a conclusion after an eight-year interruption. Semantically there is hardly any loss and only minimal enhancement. Phonically readers with the help of the translators can create an Austen voice for themselves. Would the energy surrounding the current Austen cult predispose readers to enter* Persuasion *regardless of the language? Anecdotal evidence from the Jane Austen Society of North America suggests that bilingual Janeites regard a translation as another Austen novel and duly celebrate it.*

Jane Austen's *Persuasion* (1817) has been promoted as a "fairy tale for grownups".[1] Within the Austen industry, veritably a cult of Janeites, the novel has recently given rise to a number of parallel texts to fill in Austen's ellipses, not to mention cinema and television specials. Indeed, even Isabelle de Montolieu, the first French translator of *Persuasion*, changed the ending to accommodate what she considered would be the expectations of her audience in *La famille Elliot ou L'ancienne inclination* in 1821.[2] It would be a shame if contemporary

[1] On the cover of the DVD for the BBC version with Ciarán Hinds and Amanda Root, based on Nick Dear's screenplay (Dear 1995).

[2] French-Swiss Isabelle de Montolieu (1751-1832) was older than Austen

grownups who do not read English could not enter this accumulation of felicitous coincidences for a heroine who manages self-empowerment through opportunism. The good news, worth celebrating, is that in French, German, Italian, and Spanish (and undoubtedly in other modern languages as well) readers outside English can. Of course, back-translation indicates that there are inevitable nuanced differences, but none, in the versions examined, have deterred from the romance and its happy ending. In the translations examined, meant for postsecondary classrooms and showing the deference expected for a canonical author, the inevitable differences have tended to enrich, not reduce, and certainly not betray. For a bilingual Janeite, a translation of *Persuasion* is like finding another Austen novel – and a cause for celebration.

Thus, Eugene Nida's formulation of 1947 can be supplemented. A translation, he stated for the record, inevitably adds, subtracts or skews information. I should like to suggest that in addition a translation may also flatten or intensify, focus or disperse. A literary translation of some length, like a novel, is bound to exemplify all of these operations intermittently, even simultaneously.

None would surely dispute my claim that a translation may be judged 'good' by its critics even when additions, subtractions, and skewing are noted. Lengthy translations of canonical writers like Austen are periodically retranslated to ensure that readers have a 'good' translation available, despite the inevitabilities of language change (A Janeite would admit that Austen, albeit an acquired taste, requires some accommodation for semantic shifts in English). Readers of Austen in translation, like readers of Austen in twenty-first-century English, will read as themselves with their own psycho-histories and geo-political situations, thereby changing focus and intensity.

To return to Austen's *Persuasion,* we simply cannot read it as Austen's first readers did, whether in English or in translation. Moreover, if we were first introduced to Austen as teenagers, we cannot, as 'grownups', read the same novel.

Austen makes use of letter-writing as a narrative strategy, and *Persuasion* contains one of the most famous love letters in British literature. This is Captain Wentworth's formal declaration – he had made an implicit declaration three chapters earlier – and proposal. Frankly I think it is more a letter that women wish a man would write, rather than a letter a man is likely to write, but, like all Janeites, I am willing to believe that in the early 19th century such a letter is plausible. Captain Wentworth has reached a stage of desperation – or so

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(1775-1817). She was a prolific translator and novelist. David Gilson in *A Bibliography of Jane Austen* (1982/1997) lists translations also from Czech, Polish, Portuguese, and Swedish. See also the work of Valérie Cossy (2004, 2006).

the reader assumes. The reader knows that Anne Elliot still loves him after an eight-year hiatus, and the reader has been waiting since chapter X for him to realize that he still loves her. The reader expects him to be manly enough to recognize that he holds her in regard and to act upon it. The room where he writes is crowded, and two separate conversations impinge on his consciousness. The Captain, the reader assumes from Austen's narration, listens to both conversations: one regarding an imminent wedding that will prevent a long engagement and the other on the circumstances that jeopardize a long engagement. He overhears Anne Elliot, who broke her engagement to him eight years earlier, say that women, unlike men, love longer when life and hope are gone. He hastily scribbles a proposal and makes sure that she sees the letter before he leaves the room.

Readers may wonder how cognizant Austen, unmarried and rarely courted, was of the *double entendre* with which he opens the letter. However, she did have naval officers in her family and could imagine the letters they would write. The Captain's beginning is direct. The letter is both tender and aggressive with coded pornography (neither early nineteenth-century readers nor contemporary readers expect Captain Wentworth to have been celibate during the eight years). He writes, "You pierce my soul. I am half agony, half hope" (1817/2006:238).

Bracketed back-translation will follow each quotation.

André Belamich puts it this way in French: "Vous transpercez mon âme. Je suis partagé entre l'angoisse et l'espoir" (1980:277) [You pierce – or stab – my soul. I am divided between anguish and hope]. Belamich is somewhat less direct than Austen. "L'angoisse" is a strong word: it could be translated as "dread", but it lacks the sexual connotations that "agonie/agony" has with "dying", and, as a consequence, the connection "dying" has with sexual ecstasy. In French the Captain is not admitting to being consumed by his passion. He is merely torn between anguish and hope; these two moods have not taken over his consciousness and kept him in their thrall, as is implied in the English. Overall, the translation shows loss of information and intensity. Nonetheless, a reader is not misled.

On the other hand, Ursula and Christian Grawe bring the Captain's self-control to the breaking point in *Űberredung*: "Sie durchbohren meine Seele. Ich schwanke zwischen Qual und Hoffnung" (1983/2007:288) [You have pierced through my soul, I waver – or tremble – between excruciating agony and hope]. These translators add intensity with "durchbohren" and keep the aggressive internal metaphor. Throughout the Grawes replicate Austen's spare style.

The anonymous Italian translator also steps up the desperation in *Persuasione*: "Mi penetrate l'anima a fondo. Sono diviso tra l'angoscia più cupa

e la speranza" (2002:277) [You penetrate my soul to the core. I am divided by an uncommon anguish and hope]. An adjective is added to "anguish" for emphasis.

In Spanish Juan Jesús Zaro in *Persuasión* writes: "Usted me ha atravesado el alma. Me debato entre la agonía y la esperanza" (2003:299) [You have pierced my soul. I am struggling between agony and hope]. "Agonía" is related to "dying", so that nuance is carried over, although "struggling" is hardly "taken over by" as Austen's diction implies.

All translators are convinced that Captain Wentworth would use the formal 'you'. This is probably a correct assumption. When the couple was briefly engaged eight years before the novel begins, the Captain would have said 'Miss Anne' in front of a third party, but 'Annie' in private. During the novel, he refers to her as 'Anne', and leaves off the salutation in the proposal, putting the initial 'A' on the letter and signing off with 'F.W.'

The letter is brief. After all, Captain must write it in fewer than 15 minutes. As he closes, he moves to an observation inspired by tender feelings: "You sink your voice, but I can distinguish the tones of that voice that would be lost on others … " (1817/2006:258).

Belamich stays close but explains the action: "Vous baissez la voix mais je puis distinguer les inflexions de cette voix, quand même elles échapperaient à d'autres" (1980:278) [You lower your voice, but I can detect inflections, even when they would escape others].

The Grawes keep the internal metaphor, i.e., "sink" for "lower", and make the sentence more explicit: "Sie senken Ihre Stimme, aber ich kann die Laute dieser Stimme unterscheiden, wenn andere sie nicht einmal hören würden" (1983/2007) [You sink your tones, but I can distinguish the inflections, even if others would not hear them].

The Italian is semantically close to the English and possibly was guided by the French: "Voi abbassate la voce, ma io distinguo i toni di quella voce anche quando gli altri non potrebbero udirli…"(2002:277) [You lower your voice, but I distinguish the tones of that voice, even when others would not hear them …].

Zaro keeps Austen's spare style, but like the French and Italian translators, explains that to sink one's voice, one lowers one's voice: "Usted baja la voz, pero yo puedo distinguir sus tonos, aunque para los demás se pierdan … " (2003:299) [You lower your voice, but I can distinguish your tones, even when they are lost for the rest …].

As readers of English notice, the Captain ends his proposal with an ultimatum. The ultimatum reminds readers that the Captain is a man who has made a fortune commanding a vessel in the British navy and seizing other

ships for spoils (since this is the era of the War of 1812, the ships he seized were probably American). He says, "A word, a look will be enough to decide whether I enter your father's house this evening or never" (1817/2006:258). Therewith he transfers his panic to Anne. She makes her exit, essentially following him, as quickly as she can. When Anne meets Captain Wentworth on a thoroughfare, her brother-in-law accompanying her asks the Captain which direction he is going, since Anne is too distraught to get home by herself. The Captain is taken up short and answers, "I hardly know" (1817/2006:266). The French and Italian translators recognize that the Captain is nonplussed: "Je n'en sais trop rien" (1980:288) [I really don't know]; "Non saprei" (2002:280) [I wouldn't know]. The German and Spanish translators are more explicit: "Ich weiss es selbst nicht recht" (1983/2007:292) [I really don't know it myself]; "La verdad es que no lo sé" (2003:301) [The truth is that I don't know]. All that is needed at this point is to unravel (or rather reknot) threads of the plot severed eight years earlier.

The examples used throughout are from translations meant for the classroom. This means that there was an instructor present to complement explanatory material on Austen's life, times, and status in British literature. The translations do not capture Austen's irony, usually subtle, which many English readers miss also. Hence, the translations cannot capture Austen's class criticism, indirect and remarkably astute for her era. Nor can we expect translations to capture Austen's gender criticism which eluded English scholars for nearly 100 years. Postsecondary readers can supply these aspects of Austen. Not only will they read from their own situations, but from their own lives and the supplementary classroom materials, they can work back to the irony and then move forward from their own psycho-histories and socio-historical timing.

They will, in short, supply individual interliminals, i.e., the space between whatever text they are reading, whether by Austen or by one of her translators. Semantically, these have been minimal.[3] The additions are logical and slight and serve to compensate the subtractions, while skewing in the example used has been non-existent.[4] All translators have clearly intended to make the

[3] See my *Translation and Literary Criticism* (1997) for a discussion of the space between the first text (the original) and the subsequent texts (the translations or inter-genre adaptations).

[4] In my essay on 'Illustrating Nida's Precepts When Teaching Literature in Translation' (2009:303-314), I take up an instance where the translators are puzzled by "Captain Wentworth cleared the hedge" (Austen 1817/2006:97-98), but whether he jumped over it or swung a leg over it is not important to this critical scene. All translators let their readers know that Anne was overwhelmed by the experience

Ur-text easier to visualize or interpret. The focus has been kept and usually the intensity. How much readers fill in Austen's ellipses is up to them.

What translators cannot do is reproduce Austen's voice. But their readers must do what Austen's readers in the 21st century are obliged to do, i.e., make auditory inferences from the semantic cues and extra-textual information. Austen's voice, like Anne Elliot's, was meant for Captain Wentworth's ears.

It should be stated by way of conclusion that for bilingual Janeites reading *Persuasion* in a language other than English but in a language they happen to know is almost thrilling. They automatically translate back. It is akin to finding another Austen novel. They bring to their reading their own connections to the culture(s) of the translation.

Yet even readers who are not cultists, like students encountering Austen for the first time, can forge her voice from the semantic cues. All of these translators have, through such cues, let Austen's voice echo. Readers who, like Captain Wentworth, enter the thrall of Austen are likely to incorporate her works into their own memory repertoires. In the end the loss of Austen's voice may seem illusory. If it is an inevitable loss, it is nothing to deplore. It rides on the semantic integrity. No reader of translation was misled. What remains is cause for celebration.

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of feeling his hands on her body. Readers can infer that this was an instance of mutual body memory.

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II

Epistemologies of Translation

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Metalanguage and Ideology

Conceptual Frameworks of Translation in the Work of Itamar Even-Zohar and Muhammad al-Khatib

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Abstract: *This paper examines the metalanguage employed in two theoretical approaches to translation – the polysystem theory of Itamar Even-Zohar, formulated to analyse translation into Hebrew in the early 20th century, and the work of the Syrian critic Muhammad Kamel al-Khatib in his study of literary translation into Arabic in the late 19th and early 20th century. Despite parallel conceptual frameworks, the terminology each used reflected different ideological attitudes. Through a comparative analysis of these two approaches, the paper investigates the influence of translation metalanguage on research methodologies. My intention is to demonstrate that the choice of terms is not a purely technical matter; it reflects and affects ideological positions. It is further argued that the multiplicity of terminological systems in translation studies, even when designating more or less 'similar' phenomena, is not a symptom of fragmentation, but an inevitable, even a healthy, situation.*

Itamar Even-Zohar and Muhammad al-Khatib formulated their theoretical frameworks in an attempt to account for largely similar phenomena – active translation movements from European literature which revived classical literary traditions and introduced new genres. But their approaches were informed by different (even opposing) schools of thought and motivated by different aims. In investigating their different approaches (vis-à-vis arguably similar contexts), this papers examines the connection between theoretical positions and the terminologies they adopt. My goal is to explore the extent to which definitions and technical terms are neutral labels or an inseparable part of one's ideology.

Polysystem Theory

The cornerstone of Even-Zohar's theory of translation[1] is the concept of the polysystem, which he originally conceived as a model for language, then applied to "literary production" (1978:11). The polysystem is a "system of systems", a complex of interrelated sub-systems or "genres" (*ibid.*:15). Even-Zohar defines the polysystem on the basis of binary oppositions between the centre and the periphery of the polysystem, and between canonized and non-canonized forms within it, describing the process of literary evolution in the context of these conflicts. Viewing translation as a part of the literary polysystem, Even-Zohar adopted a "target-oriented" approach to translation, which focused on translated works as such, analyzing them in terms of their position and role within the polysystem rather than in comparison with their originals (Weissbrod 1998:37).

Even-Zohar's polysystem theory was further developed by Gideon Toury. Toury used Polysystem theory as a framework to study translated literature into Hebrew in the period from 1930-1945. In investigating the decisions made during the translation process, he endeavoured to unveil a system of rules governing translation in this particular polysystem. In his strictly empirical approach, Toury argued that translation theory should be concerned with exploring historical and political "facts", a set of laws that he calls "translation norms", which are sociocultural constraints specific to a culture, society and time (1995:54).

Translation and Modern Arabic Literature

Even-Zohar argues that there are three conditions that allow, or demand, translation to occupy a central position in the literary polysystem: 1. when a literature is "young" or is in a formative stage; 2. when a literature is peripheral or "weak" relative to a group of related literary polysystems; and 3. when a literature is going through a crisis or a transitional period (1990:47). The central role of translation in Hebrew literature, which gave context to his theory, was due to the third factor. As Gideon Toury explains, Hebrew literature of the

[1] It should be noted that my purpose here is not to critique Even-Zohar's (or, for that matter, al-Khatib's) theoretical formulations as such, and much less to assess their later developments and relevance to the current state of translation theory or the study of Arabic literature. What this paper attempts is to investigate the role of terminology in two parallel theoretical frameworks, developed to account for comparable intellectual phenomena. In other words, these are mainly case studies.

1930s and 1940s, which forms the basis of his study of the norms of literary translation into Hebrew, was in a "transition period" (1980:123), where, as Even-Zohar puts it, translated literature can "participate actively in *modelling the centre* of the polysystem" (cited in Toury *ibid.*).

A similar situation underlies al-Khatib's study. Arab societies of the 19th and early 20th centuries, particularly in Egypt and the Levant, were in a process of profound transformation, on the political, social, cultural, and literary levels. After hundreds of years of isolation under Ottoman rule, the Arab World first came into contact with the West in the 19th century – first, though missionary activities in the Levant, and later, and more significantly, through the French Expedition to Egypt in 1798-1801. Though short-lived, the French occupation left a deep impact on the intellectual development of Egypt and other Arab countries. The sudden awareness of the wide chasm that separated the Arab World from European progress generated an 'awakening', characterized by the attempt to catch up with the scientific, material, and intellectual achievements of the West. Thus, the 19th and early 20th centuries were a period of 'the revival' or 'the renaissance' (al-*Nahda*),[2] which inaugurated the modern era of Arab history and culture. The renewal of Arab societies took two forms: the rejuvenation of the classical Arabic heritage of the golden age of empire (primarily between the 8th and 13th centuries A.D.), and, more radically, the assimilation of European technology, political models, and thought. Translation played a major role in the latter process.

A surge in translation activity (especially of literature) occurred in the second half of the 19th century thanks to individual translators who were responding to a new and growing readership, created by the "mushroom growth of non-governmental journalism" (Cachia 1990:33). In particular, there was a strong demand for fictional works: "As the reading public grew, Arabic language journals began to appear in substantial numbers, attracting new readers by offering translations of Western fiction" (Moosa 1997:97). Novels were being translated in rapid succession, and they accounted for the largest portion of translated literature by far.

The intense popularity of translated fiction was indicative of a growing appetite for a genre that was virtually new to Arab readers. For almost 1,500 years up to the 19th century, poetry had occupied pride of place in classical Arabic literature, and while Arabic enjoyed several genres of narrative fiction, most notably folk tales transmitted orally (such as the *Arabian Nights*), it is generally agreed that the novel in its modern form first emerged in Arabic as a

[2] Compare the "revival period" in Hebrew literature, in which translation flourished (Even-Zohar 1978:12).

direct result of the contact with Western literature. Thus, translation was needed to introduce Arab writers to the novel and help them master its techniques. Moreover, the popularity of translated fiction prepared the reading public for this new form and encouraged Arab writers to try their hands at it.

The Cultural Chain

It was to provide an interpretation for this phenomenon that al-Khatib developed his theoretical approach to translation. Just as Even-Zohar's polysystem was conceived as a general framework for the history of Hebrew literature (Gentzler 1993:105), al-Khatib constructed the model of the "cultural chain" to account for the emergence of the Arabic novel in the context of interaction with Western literature. In his major contribution to the study of the genesis of Arabic fiction, *Takween al-riwayah al-'arabiya* [The Formation of the Arabic Novel], al-Khatib introduces the concept of a "literary chain"[3], a complex of interrelated literary genres, which form the "rings" of the chain (1990a:8). This literary chain combines with other forms of cultural activity, such as philosophy, history, music, and art, to form a "cultural chain", which, in turn, is connected with political and social ones. The literary chain, he argues, is intimately bound up with its sociopolitical context, for it contributes in a substantial way to the formation of the "worldview" – a key term in al-Khatib's approach (*ibid.*:8-9). As influenced by German philosophy, and to a lesser extent by the work of Lucien Goldmann, al-Khatib's treatment of this concept emphasizes the symbiotic connection between a people's worldview and their language.

It is meaningless, al-Khatib stresses, to talk of "gaps" in a literary chain that "lack" genres found in other literary traditions. For every literary cultural chain fulfils a particular function in it social and cultural context (1990a:8-9). However, there are moments of crisis in the cultural history of a nation when canonical literary genres become "petrified", and can no longer keep with the pace of change: the social and intellectual conditions in which they emerged eventually elapse, and new conditions bring a new worldview, which necessarily requires new genres (*ibid.*:62-65). As a result, a revision of the established literary chain becomes necessary, even inevitable. On these grounds, al-Khatib conceives of the development of literary tradition as a process of conflict, where new "rings" break into the chain to establish themselves there, thereby updating the canonized system (*ibid.*:171-73).

It was such a process of development, al-Khatib maintains, that Arabic

[3] All translations, unless otherwise stated, are my own.

literature underwent throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Conventional literary genres, espousing a worldview centred on the sacred, relying on rarefied style, and divorced from the language of everyday life, were becoming increasingly incapable of dealing with complex modern problems. Drawing on Mikhail Bakhtin's conception of the novel as "dialogic" discourse, a site of multiplicity and polyvocality (e.g. Bakhtin 1981/2000:262-63, 324-325), which presents different, and often contradictory perspectives, al-Khatib argues that it was the novel, more than any other genre, that contributed to the evolution of the Arabic literary chain in response to the challenges of modernity. As a literary form that embraces "dialogism, diversity, and polyphony", it was a direct challenge to, and a necessary improvement on, established literary practices, which "were based on the absolute and the monophonic" (1990a:41). Thus, the integration of the novel into the traditional literary chain brought with it a new worldview, one which "celebrates the human, the relative, and the mundane … in place of the sacred, the absolute, the abstract", elements of the worldview which, al-Khatib maintains, "characterized the traditional Arabic literary chain until the early twentieth century" (*ibid.*:43).

Translation was, as it were, the entering wedge through which the new genre infiltrated the Arabic cultural chain. Al-Khatib argues that translation directly changed the cultural chain by revising its most important rings – "language and values" (*ibid.*:54-55). First, translated fiction introduced new moral, social, and cultural mores, "which originated in a sociocultural chain of a different worldview" (*ibid.*:80). That was such a contentious issue in early debates about translation that some traditionalists lamented the detrimental moral effects of translated literature, since it depicted customs and value systems that might be appropriate in their original context, but damaging if transplanted into another environment (al-Khatib 1990b:201, 1990a:79). No less significant was the linguistic renewal effected by translation. Translators expanded classical Arabic to enable it to deal with the demands of a new form of writing, and, as al-Khatib insists, the worldview with which it was intertwined (1990a:54). For that purpose, translators created numerous new terms pregnant with new values and "modernized" Arabic through linguistic and stylistic innovations (*ibid.*).

Similar Concepts/Different Terms

Looking at the theoretical approaches we have outlined from a comparative perspective, it is noteworthy how parallel conceptual outlooks (developed to describe comparable phenomena) adopted such different nomenclatures. The

differences are, of course, more than a matter of mere terminology. Al-Khatib and Even-Zohar had different premises, ideological positions, and aims. Al-Khatib's formulations were informed by his Marxist background: the model of the cultural chain conceptualized literary development as a dialectic conflict of genres (each integrating a particular worldview). The term "chain" invokes images of entrenched tradition and necessary resistance. It depicts the process of literary (as well as sociopolitical) evolution as a struggle between conservative and modern forces. Moreover, al-Khatib's view of interconnected cultural, political, and social chains allowed him to introduce political forces into the literary scene. Actually, it could be argued that his target-oriented focus was motivated by the need to connect the history of Arabic literature and translation to the internal dynamics of Arab society in the period under study.

Ideological orientation is less overt in the case of polysystem theory. One reason for this could be the fact that Even-Zohar's ideas were influenced by a literary, rather than a political, school of thought. The term "polysystem", the methodology whereby literary productions are seen as "facts" of the target culture, and the view of literary evolution in the context of the conflict of "higher" and "lower" genres, were all products of Russian formalism, especially the work of Jurij Tynjanov (Hermans 1999:103). However, as Theo Hermans remarks, "the claim to neutrality or objectivity is already an ideological statement in itself; understanding, whether in terms of Popper's searchlight theory or in more hermeneutic terms, is possible only from a given point of view, starting from preconceptions" (*ibid.*:36). In this regard, the over-emphasis on detached, objective investigation and the treatment of translations as natural phenomena to be explored in a scientific manner could be attributed to the "polemical context" in which the polysystem theory came into being (*ibid.*). For Even-Zohar, and such theorists as James Holmes and Gideon Toury, were anxious to gain a foothold for translation theory as a legitimate academic discipline at a time when literary criticism ignored the study of translation or treated it as a minor and derivative subject (*ibid.*:103).

But while the theoretical formulations of Even-Zohar and al-Khatib can both be argued to have their ideological underpinnings, there remain some important differences. Al-Khatib's research methodology is, for the most part, operational and context-bound. For his aim was not to formulate a general theory of the nature and evolution of literary forms (whether translated or not), but to study the rise of the Arabic novel from a particular theoretical standpoint. I believe that this specificity accounts for the strengths as well as the weaknesses of his approach. On the one hand, his detailed attention to the conditions that surrounded literary activity allowed him to integrate political and social factors unobtrusively into the study of translation. In this

respect, his account has an edge over polysystem theory, which often tends to be "abstract and depersonalized" (Hermans 1999:118). As Theo Hermans explains (*ibid.*):

> There are two reasons for this. One is that polysystem theory is aware of the social embedding of cultural systems but in practice takes little heed of actual political and social power relations or more concrete entities such as institutions or groups with real interests to look after … The other reason follows from this. Polysystem theory invests heavily in classifications and correlations but shies away from speculating about the underlying causes of such phenomena as changes in genres, norms, and the concepts and collective practices of translation. As a result it is left with description and explanation both inhabiting the same space, creating the suggestion of literature and culture as autonomous series.

However, the polysystem model (though bound by specific conceptual parameters) is more generalizable, and would seem to be more fitting as the foundation for a framework of translation theoretical principles not tied to a particular cultural environment – an essential prerequisite for any theory of translation.

To be sure, this does not mean that al-Khatib's formulations are incapable of expansion. One does not have to be a Marxist to accept the position that literary development is driven by the conflict of minor and major genres, or between tradition and innovation. The polysystem approach itself amply demonstrates that. Indeed, it is not difficult to conceive of the basic tenets of al-Khatib's adopted by scholars who do not necessarily share their ideological premises. But it is obvious that such terms as "chain", "cutting", and "breaking into", involve a certain extent of unmalleability: they carry distinct normative and confrontational connotations. Consequently, assimilation to a different context would seem to call for an adjustment of terminology.

This, of course, is only a hypothetical situation. A change of terms (whatever the motivation) would entail (and would undoubtedly be caused by) a shift of research methods and theoretical outlook. In other words, nomenclature is not simply a matter of neutral description, but is an organic component in the formation and application of theory. The terms and metaphors used in the formation of theoretical positions are closely intertwined with presuppositions about translation, translation theory, and their intellectual, cultural, and political significance. In fact, the terminology used in translation research can shape its methods and the conclusions that emerge from it.

The different nomenclatures used in the approaches discussed above only reflect the great terminological diversity in theoretical approaches to translation, which, though acknowledged as somehow inevitable, has sometimes been a cause for concern. It should not be surprising in a field with such diverse roots and applications, and a rapidly growing body of theory, to hear warnings about possible fragmentation and confusion (Venuti 1997:360; Munday 2009:12; Chesterman 2005). Andrew Chesterman, for example, warns of the risk of "borrowing theoretical concepts and methods" for applications that "remain superficial, not supported by an adequate understanding of the original context in which these concepts were developed" (*ibid.*:21).

Chesterman's warning against dilettantism is well justified. Too often translation scholars, eager to expand the field and stake their claims to an original contribution to an emerging body of scholarship, have seized on concepts from any number of disciplines in the humanities, the social sciences, and even natural science. Some of the resulting approaches, as Chesterman puts it, have done nothing more than "transfer labels" (*ibid.*). Still, it is hard to accept his rather optimistic contention that "definitions are not ends in themselves; they are only means, tools which enable us to ... set up useful classifications on the basis of which we can make interesting generalizations", and that, consequently, "refining the precision of definitions is ... less valuable than simply agreeing on *working* definitions and basic terminology, and then using them to formulate interesting hypotheses that can be tested" (*ibid.*:28).

This proposition, assuming that similar conceptual frameworks can be grouped together under one heading, posits a separation of term and concept that, as the examples above demonstrate, is quite artificial. The main weakness of Chesterman's argument is thus his equation of the facile and uncritical appropriation of labels with genuine differences of theoretical, and even ideological, positions. Notwithstanding the necessary efforts to connect separate threads in the reflection on translation, to seek a 'shared ground', the interdisciplinary nature of translation studies would always ensure that varying terminologies reflect the contributions that various branches of knowledge have made, and will continue to make, to translation research. I would suggest that, despite potential problems of overlap (and even confusion), this situation is better suited to the complex tasks that face translation scholarship, which always has to answer questions in widely diverse domains—culture, politics, linguistics, philosophy, and so on. Under these circumstances, it is limiting, if at all possible, to mask differences of ideology in pursuit of a consistent metalanguage: a multiplicity of translation terminology is essential for the necessary flexibility and wide applicability of theoretical interpretative frames.

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Translation and 'the Fourth'

An Account of Impossibility[1]

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Abstract: *Within the body of scholarly works usually arrayed under the rubric of 'translation theory', there is a sort of 'dialectics': a 'dialectics in the theory of translation' that, in its extremes, tends to regard translation either as 'impossible', or as an exercise of 'extracting true meaning'. There is an almost infinite number of intermediate positions and approaches between both ends. Also, translation theory presents itself under the fashion of several other dichotomies such as faithfulness/unfaithfulness, literal/free translation, foreignizing/domesticating translation. This paper contends that the seeming dichotomy between possibility and impossibility that appears to permeate any discourse on translation theory has an intrinsically metaphorical basis, and that, in spite of the many maps of binary relationships that the couplet source/target invites to sketch, the true nature of translation belongs not to the dominion of binary dichotomies but to one of triadic, mediated and unstable relations.*

It could be said that, within the body of scholarly works usually arrayed under the rubric of 'translation theory', there is a 'dialectics in the theory of translation'. As the Italian semiotician Umberto Eco puts it, there are two extremes toward which translation theories seem to tend: the skeptical or holistic argument on one end, and the postulate of a perfect language on the other (2001:220-21). There is of course an indefinite number of intermediate positions and approaches between both, but the best possible way to outline this differentiation is probably through extreme exemplification. Quine (1959/1998), Derrida (1974/1991), and Schleiermacher (1813/2002) would be good representatives of the skeptical argument (translation entails a certain

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– or sometimes major – degree of impossibility), while Benjamin (1923/2000), Nida (1964), Reiss and Vermeer (1984/1991), and the functionalists in general would be standard-bearers of the opposite position.

However, translation theory also presents several other dichotomies: faithfulness/ unfaithfulness, literal/free translation, foreignizing/domesticating translation, etc. In a way – perhaps less specific, but equally dialectical – it could be said that, whenever skepticism appears, impossibility is an underlying factor, and wherever function-oriented theories flourish, they do so from a 'possibilism in translation' of sorts.

This paper contends that the pervasive dichotomy between possibility and impossibility that seems to permeate every discourse on translation theory is intrinsically biased by its metaphorical basis, and that, in spite of the many maps of binary relationships that the pair source/target invites to sketch, the true nature of translation does not belong to the domain of dichotomies.

Semiotics in Translation Theory

Since the thought of possibility/impossibility has been brought to the table from the semiotics of Umberto Eco, it seems appropriate to scrutinize it from the standpoint of semiotics in general and, in particular, from the theoretical construct of the father of this discipline, the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce.

While remarkably limited in scope and breadth, the general attention that translation theory has paid to semiotics so far is mostly credited to the works of Dinda L. Gorlée. Her two books, *Semiotics and the Problem of Translation* (1994) and *On Translating Signs: Exploring Text and Semio-Translation* (2004), constitute an exhaustive inquiry into translation and translation theory from a Peircean perspective. Her approach successfully provides interesting connections between the thought of the American semiotician and that of other authors, such as Ludwig Wittgenstein (1953/2001) or Roman Jakobson, the latter perhaps more traditionally associated with the canonical body of theories of translation.

Resorting to Peirce is never an easy task, given the broad and fragmented nature of his writings.[2] Apologies are in order to every Peircean scholar who,

[2] Peirce's thought is overarching and, if not contradictory in some instances, at least complementary to the range of different definitions that he provided to some of his key concepts (Eco 1997/1999:116). In order to reach a somewhat articulate understanding of his triadic thought, the reading of 'Trichotomic' is recommended (1988/1999).

reading this paper, may fairly deplore the oversimplification of his construct. Utilizing his theories in the field of translation theory is still appealing, albeit carrying the shadows of uncertainty that result from applying to translation phenomena a theory of signs that never had translation as its declared focus of interest.

Jakobson, in his famous essay 'On Linguistic Aspects of Translation', brought to the forefront the underlying relationship between translation, interpretation – not as oral translation but as a cognitive act – and semiosis: the process of sign growth and evolution that in Peircean semiotics constitutes the intrinsic core of the act of knowing and understanding (1959/2000:113-18). In semiosis, something stands for something else: *aliquid pro aliquo*. Not surprisingly, Jakobson's essay – which could more justly be listed under the rubric of semantics, rather than as a theory of translation properly speaking (Zabalbeascoa 2005) – openly draws on that Peircean conception of semiosis that Umberto Eco would later elaborate as "unlimited semiosis": the concept that when the new sign arises, it better resolves the previous one (1979/1999:65-68). Or, as Jakobson puts it in quoting Peirce, a new sign arises "in which it [the previous one] is more fully developed" (1959/2000:114), altogether in a never-ending chain of substitutions that constitutes signification. Here, *significare* means "to put inside a sign" – which is, not surprisingly, and according to this view, what semiosis precisely does: to put one sign inside/instead of another.

For Jakobson, translation constitutes the *summum bonum* instantiation of the interpretive act (Eco 2001:67-77). Beware: not that semiosis/interpretation is, or equals, translation, but translation is indeed a neat manifestation – probably the neatest one or, at least, the most theoretically-comfortable one – of semiosis as an interpretive act: a target text can be considered to be a 'sign' of its source. Herein lies the reason why translation phenomena are so suitable to explain semiosis, as Jakobson does when he talks about Russian and English nouns for 'cheese' and their lack of strict semantic fit (*ibid.*:113-14), or as he travels through dictionary definitions in a sort of a mock quest of establishing meaning by subsequent, never-ending references to the next lexicographical entry, to the next bilingual equivalency. This is not surprising, since no one can deny that translation is a business of bringing sets of signs to be substituted by other signs or to be "put in other signs" (Pym 1993:37-40).[3]

Trying to summarize semiosis and unlimited semiosis in a few sentences

[3] Anthony Pym puts forward a solid conceptual relationship between Derridean "différance" and Peircean semiosis, pointing out that translation is just another way in which meaning is produced and displaced.

is a daunting task. However, we can try to refresh our memories by putting forward a rather simplified, but equally useful, version of what we think can convincingly account for the existing possibility/impossibility dichotomy in translation theory or, rather, for the equivocal nature of this dichotomy.

As is widely known, the Peircean sign is triadic, not binary, as is Saussure's. The Peircean sign is often represented in the form of a triangle in which the top vertex belongs precisely to the third, mediating instance of the sign and is called the "Interpretant". The Intepretant mediates between the bottom vertices, the sign-vehicle ("Representamen") and what the sign stands for ("Referent"). These latter two may be thought of as corresponding, respectively, to Saussure's "signifier" (the word/sign "t.r.e.e.") and "signified" (the concept of a /tree/ or its mental representation) (Chandler 2002/2006:32-36).

Paul Thibault contends that "the interpreter features implicitly even within Saussure's apparently dyadic model" (cited in *ibid.*:35). In another tenor, and with his peculiar style, Jacques Lacan (1957/2006:149-54) will confer a sense of interpretation and agency – in the form of subjectivity or, rather, "subjectification" – to the "bar" (*barre*) that divides and relates Saussure's signified (/tree/) and signifier (*arbre*) of the Saussurean sign. For Lacan, the subject that interprets the sign "resides" in the *barre*, in the "division".[4] It is the subject who establishes the correspondence between signified and signifier: it is the – subjective – interpretation that makes both elements constitute a sign.

The indisputable merit of the Peircean sign is the fact that it is hardly ever static: a sign is a completely developed sign because it is alive, dynamic, and permanently mediated in interpretation through sign transformation. It is in that substitution/interpretation/transformation where the possibility of constructing meaning resides.

Hence 'one', 'two', and 'three' are the basic cognitive operations in Peircean semiotics, and these can be equated to sensation/perception, memory/adequacy, and meaning/substitution, respectively. There is a referent (first: object, perception, sensation, the "tree" I see, smell, hear and represent mentally), there is a representamen of the referent (second: sign-vehicle, representation, the four-letter word "t.r.e.e", or rather, the mental representation of its sound) and there is an interpretation of them and their relationship (third: interpretant, substitution, transformation, the connection between the sign "t.r.e.e." and what it represents). The new sign hence established becomes in turn subject

[4] Word choice in Lacan is frequently as meaningful as it is playful: the shuffling of letters that occurs from *arbre* to *barre* is hardly casual, and seems to suggest that it is always the subject (the *barre*) who is in charge of "making a sense" of the sign (i.e. of "interpreting" it). Or, rather, that the subject resides precisely in the interpretation of signs, equating thus cognitive activity with "sign activity".

for further signification – the sign of a sign: the simplified, green icon of a tree meaning 'recycling' or 'nature-friendly', or the commentary of a poem about a portrait of a man.

Three of the four basic tropes align under these three concepts: synecdoche (part for all) in the first place, metonymy – contiguity that is adequacy and therefore similitude (Eco 1997/1999:117-25) in the second – and metaphor or symbols (replacement) in the third.[5] Semiosis – sign substitution and transformation, and therefore meaning – has its place precisely in the order of interpretation, under the realm of metaphor and symbol, in the domain to which language belongs and reigns.

The Metaphorics of Possibility and Impossibility

Translation has been seen as nothing else but a text about a text, accepted by its reader in a disguise of equivalence, which, ideally and impossibly, would eventually provide the perfect suspension of disbelief: "I don't read Russian, but I am reading Dostoyevsky". In a sense, translation hopes to be the perfect forgery, a metatext that is an original text, a text about a text that just happens to be in another semiotic system.[6]

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[5] Theories and theorists disagree on the precise limits of all three tropes. While synecdoche is sometimes regarded as a simple form of metonymy, Eco would disagree with the distinction between one and the other (1984/1990:204-11). Lacan would establish a difference between metaphor and metonymy based on Jakobson's sintagmatic/paradigmatic differentiation (1957/2006:119-220), while Lakoff and Johnson (1999:58) would put it in terms of mapping through different cognitive domains (metaphor) or the same cognitive domain (metonymy). I have proposed elsewhere a differentiation between synecdoche and metonymy based on a sense of selective displacement: synecdoche selects a central feature of the whole, while metonymy seems to choose a non-central (displaced) part of the whole, or even a non-part of the whole that is closely related to it (Dávila-Montes 2008:296-99).

[6] There is no lack of theoretical approaches that see translation as a metatext. Julianne House (1977/1981), within the functionalist tradition that suitably regards translation as "information … about information originally offered in another language" (Schäffner 1998/2000:226), will consider whether the translated shows itself openly as a metatext (overt translation) or not (covert translation). Along these lines, relevance theory (Gutt 1990) will present translation as an interpretive act. Séan Golden (1997:218) rejects the idea of translation as metatext and maintains that a translation reflects the original as an exercise of the poetic function. However, we deem that this does not necessarily contradict or exclude the above, since Golden's proposal is established in order to differentiate 'poetics' (production, therefore exercise of the poetic function) from 'aesthetics'

Translation is interpretation – the target sign means, stands for, substitutes the original sign – and still one tends to demand unjustly from translation that it do something more than standing for or substituting. Translation is requested to mean the same as the original sign, tending to forget that meaning is a precisely imperfect flowing and fluctuating substitution. Resolving the previous sign into another one which is more satisfactory – semiosis – does not entail perfection, and therefore a deadlock, but change.

Translation is interpretation from which representation – often a *perfect* representation – is iniquitously demanded. Why does translation tend to be so heavily taxed, when no one would dare to demand so from even the most accurate physical or chemical models and formulae, or even from the most precise means of mechanical reproduction? Why has translation elicited for millennia debates about 'the wrong question'?

The answer must necessarily lie in the same reason why translation is comfortably defined as interpretation, but as a *peculiar* type – a specific subset, most representative and yet peculiar – of interpretation. As Eco (2008/2001:219) suggests, in interpretative semiotics translation is interpretation with the peculiarity that two different languages are involved. As it has been underscored earlier, translation, as a product, is the result of a semiosic process in which a sign (target) better resolves a previous sign (source).

This process presents an anomaly, though: it usually cannot be verified by the user of the target sign. There is an intrinsic lack of internal verifiability of the main tenets of semiosis, 'a sign that better resolves the previous one'. Except in cases of exaggerated misinterpretation, blatant inconsistency or unbearable foreignization, the readers of the translated text will readily assume reasonable correspondence – as readily as they would assume mistranslation when something was too startling or simply too painful to be considered adequate, no matter how 'faithful' the translation. The credibility of a good translation is always at stake when it faithfully renders strangeness.

Surprisingly, only when a translator or an informed critic compares source and target, a translation may become insufficient or flawed: a sign that does not resolve the previous sign in a satisfactory way. Only in a comparison, unfaithfulness may arise. When the relationship between original and target is interpreted, the issue of its adequacy or inadequacy arises. However, is this process of comparison anything else but submitting, through criticism or theorization, source and target to the processes and mechanisms of thirdness? By scrutinizing the relationship between

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(therefore reception). Under Peirce's semiosis, the poetic function can be seen as an exercise of re-signification.

sign-vehicle (target) and referent (source), the reenactment of interpretation takes place again, since the critique of a translation mimics the very process of translating: thirdness, interpretation.

Now, most theoretical production on translation – especially that which tends toward the militancy of possibilism or impossibilism in translation – necessarily draws on a minimum degree of criticism (interpretation, then) and, therefore, its natural territory is one of thirdness.

Translation proper also belongs to the order of interpretation, of creation of meaning, and, therefore, to the order of metaphor: translation explains one text (one sign) in other words, just as metaphor does. The coincidence goes beyond sheer etymology (*transfero, transfere, transtuli, translatum* in Latin is *metapherein* in Greek: 'to take beyond'). However, the operation of theory at the level of interpretation – the establishment of new relations and insights; the proposal of new approaches to translation phenomena – forcefully places the object of study in the level immediately below: source and target are flattened down to the lower side of the triangle: correspondence is sought between target and source. Theory, therefore, brings the object of theorization to the region of objectivity, a region of similitude, measurability, and adequacy. In this region, equivalence and faithfulness quickly spring up as terms of comparison and, therefore, of dichotomy, as terms of a metaphorical discussion about possibility and impossibility. For possibilist approaches, translation is a matter of similarity and therefore of continuity and metonymy: the target text is seen as an extension of the source. For impossibilist theories, translation is a matter of failed referentiality, of synecdoche: a translation can only show a part of the whole.

An insurmountable two-fold risk seems to underlie all metadiscourse: the one of forgetting that metadiscourse is nothing else but discourse, as Derrida argues in many instances (e.g. 1974/1991, 1985/2002), and the other, overlooking that all discourse, including the one scrutinized by the metadiscourse, 'always already' operates at the 'meta' (-phoric) level too. This reification of the linguistic object happens in the process of translating a text, during which the translator strives to settle the meaning of the original: a proof that translation also behaves as a metadiscourse (a text about a text), with all the associated risks and accomplishments.

Within the realm of literary studies – also a metadiscourse – and also in the sheer enjoyment of literature itself, we are used to conferring upon metaphors the explanatory power of an extraordinary order. Obvious to the poets of all times and languages (Burke 1954/1965:59-96), this notion of metaphor as "new explanation" is also true for modern-day stances in the field of neurolinguistics, that contemplate metaphor as the elementary device of our cognitive activity (Lakoff and Johnson 1999:118-29).

Outside the literary world, metaphor is usually confined to the limits of the quasi-truth or considered to be, plainly, non-truth. The stigma of translation is caused by the natural insistence to keep translation outside the domain of metaphor, in demoting it to the level of similarity while expecting from translation that it carries the banner of unequivocal referentiality – or, at least, of similitude.

In Peircean terms, then, translation would be subject to the illusion of offering a fourth level of transformation: a sign is transformed into another sign, in an operation that would outdo semiosis, a transformation that has equivalence as its ultimate goal, a transformation that entails no transformation. But if meaning is transformation, the 'next' transformation of a text that translation entails is still an operation of the same nature. Translation is still semiosis, and it stays in the domain of thirdness, where human cognition ultimately resides.

The shame of translation is, therefore, that the better it is, the more sharply it unveils the illusion of knowledge as a stable entity, hence its perpetual conviction of cursed unfaithfulness, when faithfulness is just illusory. Translation's fault is to point out – unavoidably – the fear that one's own code of representation (one's own language) is not a faithful translation of reality.

Translation is nothing but imperfect, a fallible, fluid, and enriching substitution, just as any other piece of true human cognition. The perpetual oscillation of translation theory between patent possibility and painful impossibility begs for inquiry into what seems to be something else – the non-existent Peircean 'fourthness' – when there cannot be anything but more of the same never-ending flow of substitutions and transformations. Translation, however, as a purely metaphorical activity, naturally abhors any kind of univocal referentiality. Yet, we naturally seek in Translation the soothing illusion of equivalence.

The reason for this tendency toward identification and dualism lies necessarily in the intrinsically dynamic – and therefore unstable – nature of metaphor, thirdness, and translation, and also in the idiosyncratic move toward stasis that all theorization – categorization, description, modelling, and equilibrium – entails. Translation is essentially unbalancing: as an object of study itself, it is so necessarily transgressing of categories that it rejects categorization – and therefore similitude – by shrugging off dichotomies. It is not surprising, then, that while dichotomy seems to keep permeating a good deal of the theoretical debate, neither end of the possibility/impossibility dialectic has prevailed in more than 2,000 years of Western translation theory, not even in the form of synthesis.

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Awakening the Inner Ear

Gadamer and Bachelard in Search of a Living Logos

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Abstract: *The aim of this essay is to test the limits and explore new possibilities in our ongoing 'search for a living logos' amid the twists and turns of translation/retranslation, as we learn to tune our inner ear to the subtle reverberations and resonances in philosophical and poetic texts which reveal themselves uniquely in different reading contexts. This challenge is first addressed by comparing and contrasting the hermeneutic perspectives of German philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) and French philosopher Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962). When highlighting and summarizing their hermeneutic principles and practices, as well as their respective notions of the 'living logos', their key texts will be cited in English translation – namely, Gadamer's* Truth and Method*, and Bachelard's series on the elemental imagination, as well as his* Poetics of Space*, and his* Poetics of Reverie*. Later in the essay, certain passages from Bachelard's texts will be quoted in French, especially in those cases when his interpretive reading or controversial translation of another author's work is at issue, offering opportunities for fertile meditation and discussion – namely, his readings of Thoreau's 'Walking' and Roupnel's* Siloë*, including a pivotal line on 'truth' from Samuel Butler's* Life and Habit*.*

Can the hermeneutic art and discipline of translation play a critical role in the advancement of a mode of poetic-philosophical thinking devoted to the task of bringing a living *logos* into being? In this essay we begin exploring this question by revisiting Gadamer's reflections on the nature of hermeneutic understanding and translation in his magnum opus, *Truth and Method,* to focus on a striking insight that alights at the end of this volume – an insight on the essence of language that takes us back to Bachelard's intuitive explorations of the *logos* in his works on the elemental poetic imagination. Our intent here is to show how Bachelard's practice of lucid or waking reverie (*rêverie*) in the study of literary-philosophical texts (1960:5-6 *et passim*) serves as a fruitful

complement to Gadamer's more systematic philosophical hermeneutics. The question ultimately to be raised is whether the practice of Bachelardian reverie in hermeneutic and translation studies is, as one critic suggests, little more than an exercise in solipsistic aesthetics unconcerned with the 'truth' in a text, or whether it offers valuable ways of awakening the inner ear and cultivating a mode of listening that is attuned to becoming – hence, in effect, fostering the birth of truth.

Gadamer's Hermeneutic Afterthought

In a supplement entitled 'To what extent does language preform thought?' at the end of the second edition of *Truth and Method* (1975),[1] Hans-Georg Gadamer (1900-2002) reminds his readers that language learning entails not only acquiring words, idioms and modes of expression but, more fundamentally, developing new ways of thinking and feeling, of forming opinions, arguments and convictions according to a set of preformed articulations of meaning. Western languages have long been rooted in the '*logos* of ratio' of Greek metaphysics furthered by Plato and Aristotle as it became detached from the Pre-Socratic notion of *physis*.[2] It is this metaphysics that gradually gave rise to our technological civilization with its Promethean ideals of mastering nature and society. The problem of linguistic relativity later fore-grounded by linguists such as Benjamin Lee Whorf or Wilhelm von Humboldt, Gadamer recalls, had already been hailed by Nietzsche's proclamation that "God's most creative act was to create grammar", implying that human beings are initiated, from the outset, into these schemas of world mastery in such a way that we can never quite get behind the legacy of grammar (1975:493-94). Such linguistic heritage becomes a cultural heritage of forms and techniques of working, domination, ideals of liberty, objectives of order – namely, a way of life.

Faced with the weighty evidence of history, at this critical juncture Gadamer feels compelled to ask: To what degree has this patterning of Western thinking actually *determined* our lives? Does it irrevocably limit our capacity to tune into realities that might not correspond to our concepts, fabrications, opinions, or expectations? And what is the fate of 'truth' in all this? How much does language shape even our earliest experiences of the world? Might

[1] This piece first appeared in Vol. II of Gadamer's *Gesammelte Werke* (1970:199-206). It was added as a supplement to *Truth and Method* (1975), text cited henceforth. See References for publication details.

[2] Heidegger examines this detachment of the rational *logos* from a living *physis* (Gk. Nature) in his *Introduction to Metaphysics* (1959:178-94).

these patternings not create prejudices or necessities that would force us to run down a path to the destruction of our own technological civilization and, even worse, to the technological self-destruction of humanity?

These questions become all the more poignant as Gadamer reflects on the hermeneutics proposed in the first version of *Truth and Method* – a hermeneutics that emphasizes the fundamental role of *language* in human experience as it involves us in "hermeneutic circles" of understanding in our exchanges with the world and others from the very start. After his debates with Jürgen Habermas, however, Gadamer is willing to admit that the linguistic relativity shaping our minds and worlds may not necessarily hold us in unbreakable shackles (*ibid.*:495). He accepts Habermas's observation that there is a pre-linguistic experience of the world – for we respond most immediately to gestures and are capable of intuitively understanding people's facial expressions, tones, laughter, tears. Even more, he agrees that the very possibility of taking a *critical stance* with regard to our preconceptions and linguistic conventions in itself bespeaks to the fact that our human capacities potentially exceed any fixed form of instituted language, though not what he will persist in terming "the linguistic *virtuality* of our reason" (*ibid.*:496).

Thus, by the time he writes this final supplement, Gadamer's urgent question becomes: "*How* are we to succeed in turning the pre-formed conceptual matter we inherit into a *living fluid speech*"? (*ibid.*:493, my emphasis). This is a special challenge when it comes to understanding *written* language, which tends to take the form of sedimented or solidified relations in our culture. Our entire world, Gadamer remarks, is more or less a "literary" one administered by writing and transcription. To be henceforth understood, everything in writing requires a kind of "heightening of the inner ear". This is important not only in poetry but also in philosophy as in all authentic dialogue and translation. Gadamer will thus emphatically enjoin his students:

> You must sharpen your ear. You must realize that when you take a word in your mouth, you have not taken up some *arbitrary tool* which can be thrown in a corner if it doesn't do the job, but you are committed to a line of thought that comes from afar and stretches beyond you. What we do is always a kind of changing back that I want to call translation in a broad sense. To understand and read is already to translate, and to translate is to translate again. (*ibid.*: 496-97, my emphasis)

In our ordinary daily transactions translation tends to occur, however, as an unreflective process. Gadamer indeed defines translation as "an *indivisible unity* of implicit anticipation, of presumption of meaning in general, and of

the explicit determination of what one presumed. All discourse," he adds, "includes something of this anticipation and determination" (*ibid.*:497). Gadamer's definition applies, in this case, even to our typical reactions to one another in daily life, to our pre-reflective interpretations of others so commonly manifest in interpersonal conflicts, mass media sound-bytes, or run-of-the-mill political debates. But such translation all too often entails the projection of our own *a priori* categories upon others,[3] revealing more about ourselves than it does about others, or about what they are trying to say to us. Gadamer describes such a form of thinking and speaking as a manner of habitual recitation, to be contrasted to that other mode of speech we might engage in at special moments of crisis or grace when we are truly brought to think on our feet, and from the heart.

It is at this point that Gadamer is struck by the burning insight that will bring his supplement to *Truth and Method* to an end:

> The basic misunderstanding concerning the linguistic character of our understanding is one of language, as if language were an existing whole composed of words and phrases, concepts, points of view and opinions. In reality, language is the single word whose virtuality opens up the infinity of discourse, of discourse with others, and of the freedom of speaking oneself and of allowing oneself to be spoken. Language is not its elaborate conventionalism, nor the burden of pre-schematization with which it loads us, but the generative and creative power unceasingly to make this whole fluid. (*ibid.*:497-98)

Bachelard's Explorations of a Poetic *Logos*

Let us now turn to a philosopher who *prima facie* could be described as coming from the opposite pole as it pertains to hermeneutic practice and theory. An established French philosopher of science, Gaston Bachelard (1884-1962) surprised the academic world in the 1930s by turning full-throttle into an exploration of the poetic imagination. In what follows I hope to show that, while exhibiting a markedly different philosophical style, Bachelard's work actually helps flesh out some of Gadamer's key hermeneutic insights by illustrating

[3] Even in the practice of written translation, early translation drafts often reveal the expectations we project onto an author's words in our attempt to make sense of them, as we incorporate them into our lingo. Further revisions may however reveal that the source text was implying different meanings, or that it harboured some fertile ambivalence worth bringing to the fore – as illustrated towards the end of this study.

phenomenologically *how* it is that readers can most readily come in touch with language's *generative* force. In a prolific exploratory reading of poets and philosopher-poets throughout his book series on the elemental imagination (1938-1948),[4] Bachelard seems to arrive at his most fruitful discoveries through a process of trial and error.

Towards the end of his career, however, Bachelard will have a chance to marshal his most important hermeneutic discoveries in the introduction to *The Poetics of Space* (1969; *La Poétique de l'espace,* 1958), where he proposes the cultivation of a mode of listening and thinking that attunes itself to the pulse of a text by first practicing a vigilant *attitude of crisis* with respect to our preconceptions, while bracketing our initial reaction to words. To tap into the novel life of a literary image or phrase, he then invites us to experience its reverberations (*retentissement*) in the manner of Minkowski's phenomenology. In reverberation, he writes, a poetic image has sonority of being – "sonority" not in a merely sensory sense, but insofar as it is capable of determining or changing the entire tonality of life. The waves experienced in reverberation are simultaneously sonorous and silent, but their dynamism breathes itself into "a slice of the world" through an image that takes immediate root in our souls (1969:xii-xiii). Bachelard is particularly careful to distinguish, at this point, between what he calls the *resonances* and the *reverberations* of an image. While resonances are dispersed on the affective or emotional planes of our life-world, reverberations invite us to give greater depth to our own existence. In the resonance we hear and react to the poem; in its reverberations we speak it, it becomes our own. Most importantly, the reverberations of a single poetic word can bring about a transformation or change of being (*un virement d'être*), a veritable awakening of poetic creation (*ibid.*:xviii). By its novelty, even the subtlest *variation* of one image can set into motion our entire linguistic mechanism.

The images Bachelard gathers into his crucible of meditation thus have the virtue of placing us at that origin of the speaking being to which Gadamer will allude so decisively at the conclusion of his magnum opus. Learning to experience the reverberation of images by reading in what Bachelard terms

[4] Bachelard texts cited below refer to their published English translations, where available. The series on the elemental imagination just mentioned includes: *La Psychanalyse du feu* (1938; *Psychoanalysis of Fire,* 1964), *L'Eau et les rêves* (1942; *Water and Dreams,* 1983), *L'Air et les songes* (1943; *Air and Dreams,* 1988a); *La Terre et les reveries de la volonté* (1947; *Earth and Reveries of Will,* 2000), *La Terre et les reveries du repos* (1948; *Earth and Reveries of Repose,* 2011). See References for bibliographical details of French originals and English translations (current and forthcoming).

lucid or poetic reverie – following the specific tonality of an element (earth, fire, air, water) – we indeed "begin to feel a poetic power rising naïvely within us. After the original reverberation", he notes, "we may experience resonances, sentimental repercussions, reminders of our past. But the image has touched the depths before it stirs the surface" (*ibid.*:xix). The image offered us by reading the poem has already taken root in us. Although it has been given us by another,

> we begin to have the impression that we could have created it, that we should have created it. It becomes a new being in our language, expressing us by making us what it expresses. In other words, the image is at once a becoming of expression, and a becoming of our being. Here expression creates being. (1969:xix)

In one of his earlier books, *Air and Dreams* (1988a; *L'air et les songes,* 1943), Bachelard had gone as far as to propose that the Word – namely, the literary or sacred *logos* that praises, prays and sings – acts as "a prelude to *natura naturans*, which in turn produces the *natura naturata* that can be heard in the sounds and forms of created nature" (1988a:98-99). It is from Spinoza that he borrowed the distinctive categories of *natura naturans* (nature as creative agency) and *natura naturata* (nature as a created product). But Bachelard was already interpreting them creatively when he proposed even earlier in *Water and Dreams* (1983; *L'Eau et les Rêves*, 1942) that "mankind imagining is the transcendent aspect of [Spinoza's] *natura naturans*" (1983:10). His claim was that this transcendent aspect of nature takes on concrete manifestation in what he would eventually coin "literature *litteraturans*"[5] – namely, literature as an agency of creative evolution rather than as a created product (*litteraturata*). Bachelard's very own hermeneutic practice in reading the work of poets and philosophers from Heraclitus to Heidegger, from Plato to Paz, could in effect be cited as one example of such literature *litteraturans*.

Drawing on seventeenth-century alchemical literature in *Earth and Reveries of Will* (2002; *La Terre et les reveries de la volonté*, 1947), for example, Bachelard will posit the role of the reader as an agent in cosmic creation by providing an illustration of being's evolution through a startling translation of Heidegger's notion of "being-in-the-world" (1962:78-86). Bachelard begins to unfold this idea through an alchemical reverie, which I now briefly paraphrase to help contextualize his own astonishing feat of transmutation: As alchemists

[5] 'A Psychology of Literary Language: Jean Paulhan' ('Une psychologie du langage littéraire: Jean Paulhan', 1942-1943), published in Bachelard's posthumously collected essays, *The Right to Dream* (1988c:140).

collect early morning dew from the heavens to mix in with the impure matter in their crucibles, they imagine themselves participating in the becoming of the world from the depths of being, by dreaming of dew as a seed or germ of daily renewal. Not only, he suggests, are alchemists constantly on the lookout for *pure* dew, which the universe rarely provides ready-made, but they work at distilling and re-distilling whatever they do find, in order to eliminate superfluities and eventually produce a pure germ that may act as an absolving force (2002:251). Then, swinging back and forth from the "alchemist" to the "reader" by using the impersonal French pronoun *on* (one), Bachelard proceeds to play a peculiar variation on the well-known Heideggerian theme:

> One is certain to experience being-in-the-world [*l'être-dans-le-monde*] because one is a being-becoming-the-becoming-of-the-world [*l'être-devenant-le-devenir-du-monde*]. Alchemists assist the world in its becoming by actually participating in its realization. They are *agents* of the world's becoming. (*ibid.*:251)

Through reverie, readers are thus invited to see themselves as alchemists who patiently assist in the world's becoming by seeking out its seed images, harbouring them with care, nurturing and developing their possibilities. As Bachelard will later reiterate in *The Poetics of Space*, "a poetic image which stems from the *logos* is personally innovating" (1969:xix-xx). Adopting an objective attitude in the face of such an image, on the other hand, would risk stifling its reverberation by rejecting on principle the trans-subjective depth at which the original poetic phenomenon starts. Psychoanalysts, he laments, tend to intellectualize images by translating them too readily into determinate concepts that neither *sing* nor *dream*. The label "*traduttore, traditore*" would apply to the interpreter in such cases (*ibid.*:xx). Only a reading enlivened by what Bachelard terms "substantial participation" (1988a:8) could remain faithful, in his view, to the living *logos* of a text.

Towards the very end of his life, in *The Flame of a Candle* (1988b; *La Flamme d'une chandelle,* 1961), Bachelard will compare such a hermeneutics attuned to the reverberations of an image to the act of watching the flickering tip of a flame at the edge of the seen and unseen. For him, a writer's image lures us, draws us in like a flame (*ibid.*:1-2). One could always choose to regard such a flame from a distance as a fully visible object, and simply reflect it on the surface of consciousness – or the target language – as in a cold mirror. But if the writer's word strains toward something that moves beyond its formal or visible boundaries, toward something that exceeds clear determinate thought, the only way for a translator to do it justice is to enter into the heated if invisible

space of its super-flame, and let it spark something heretofore unforeseen.[6] It is the latent excess energy of a poetic image or phrase that dreams newly in us, inspiring us to sing, to pray, to colour it anew. In this regard, he tenders a line in *Water and Dreams* which risks upsetting certain taboos about the inviolability of poetic form: "Dreams continue their growth," he writes, "*despite* the poems that express them" (1983:18). Over and above their conventional features, Bachelard gives clear precedence to the *oneiric energy* that gives rise to specific words in poems.

The translation of a text via Bachelardian reverie thus becomes a chance for the reader's substantial participation in what Dylan Thomas once sang as "the force that through the green fuse drives the flower" (1952:90) – another way of thinking about that poetic reverberation which nourishes and consumes the flower of *language*, no less than it does the flower of nature.

Bachelard as Dissident Reader: Engaging Thoreau's 'Walking'

We have just seen that it is on the level of single *images* that Bachelard prefers to practise his elemental hermeneutics (1969:xxi). Yet Bachelard's very training as laboratory scientist which would foster his sensitivity to detail will occasionally lead him – when combined with his poetic enthusiasm for the discovery of the living *logos* of a text – into transgressions that seem to disregard an author's words as "arbitrary tools" (incidentally setting off Gadamer's hermeneutic alarm). At this juncture, then, it behooves us to take a close look at the possible dangers of "reading reverie" for the translator. I draw my example here from Bachelard's reading of a passage on the valorization of mud in *Earth and Reveries of Will* – a passage which points to the leading substance of Thoreau's essay 'Walking' (1862/1993).[7] As Bachelard will sum it up:

> All great terrestrial dreamers love the earth … William Blake sings of

[6] Translators are familiar with those moments when we must take a *poetic leap*, either because of some fertile ambiguity in the source text or because its idioms have no exact parallel in the target language. In such cases, the translator is compelled to engage in a *creative act* by moving beyond pre-fabricated thoughts – i.e. he or she becomes immersed in a poetic moment when thought must renew itself by mutating or being generated anew.

[7] In his French *La Terre et les reveries de la volonté* (1947:131-32) Bachelard cites Léon Bazalgette's French translation of Thoreau's text, 'Marcher' (1921:222).

> "The matron Clay". Henry David Thoreau puts it this way: "I enter a swamp as a sacred place – a *sanctum sanctorum*. There is the strength, the marrow of Nature." He goes on to declare his veneration for mud "rusted with the blood of many a meadow." (2002:100)

Kenneth Haltman, however, in a critical essay on the role of reading and translation in Bachelard, points out that in the flurry of discussing the substance of Thoreau's essay Bachelard managed to distort a line from the French translation of Thoreau's piece, claiming he did so to suit his own argument about the fertile powers of maternal earth (2000:67-75). While Bachelard was extolling Thoreau's veneration of "mud" in his reading of "*la boue*, *rouillée du sang de maints marais*" (mud rusted by the blood of many a meadow), the grammatical subject of Thoreau's line had actually been a set of agricultural tools, the last of which happened to be the "bog-hoe" (*la houe*). Bachelard could have easily mistaken *la houe* for *la boue* in the haste of transcription, driven by poetic enthusiasm compounded by ageing eyesight. But Haltman suspects a more serious transgression (*ibid.*:69) – to wit, that instead of heeding Thoreau's line of thought, Bachelard used the French *la houe* as an "expendable tool", deliberately substituting the plural adjective *rouillés* with the singular feminine *rouillée* to make it agree with "maternal mud", rather than with the "agricultural tools" by which Americans, in Thoreau's account, have earned more important victories than those gained by weapons stained with enemy blood:

> The weapons with which we have gained our most important victories, which should be handed down as heirlooms from father to son, are not the sword and the lance, but *the bush-whack, the turf-cutter, the spade, and the bog-hoe*, *rusted with the blood of many a meadow*, and begrimed with the dust of many a hard-fought field. ('Walking': par. 49; my emphasis)[8]

Haltman concludes on this basis that Bachelard's reading offers but "revealing illustrations of his own ideas constituted in advance … in a manner less disciplined than Bachelard would have us believe" (2000:73). Yet, while in a sense justified, such a critical conclusion is rather overhasty in my view. For just before the passage explicitly cited by Bachelard, Thoreau had underscored the elemental image that would lead his French reader to see *la boue* (mud)

[8] Paragraphs from Thoreau's essay 'Walking' in *Walden and Other Stories* are numbered here as published online at http://www.bartleby.com/28/15.html [last accessed 8 September 2011]

in place of *la houe* (mud in the bog-hoe). As is apparent here, Bachelard did not arbitrarily project the link between "the blood of many a meadow" and "sacred mud":

> It is said to be the task of the American to work the virgin soil … I was surveying for a man the other day [a property full of swamps] … where at one time I saw my employer actually up to his neck and swimming for his life. Nevertheless … he remarked to me, true to his instincts, that he would not part with it for any consideration, on account of the mud it contained. And that man intends to put a girdling ditch round the whole in the course of forty months, and so redeem it by the magic of his spade. ('Walking': par. 48)

Thoreau himself had in fact been celebrating that "sacred mud" already in earlier passages of 'Walking' (par. 45), which Bachelard cited to introduce his comment about the American writer's elemental orientation: "I enter a swamp as a sacred place – a *sanctum sanctorum*. There is the strength, the marrow of Nature" (2002:100). One might then reasonably say that, despite a technical transgression, Bachelard's comment on Thoreau's text had faithfully followed the magnetism of its leading imagery.[9] No doubt he inaccurately cut-and-pasted a line where Thoreau had meant to evoke the "working tools" that gave rise to the robust culture Americans enjoyed at the time – masculine tools stained with the mud Bachelard wished to highlight as the fertile blood of the meadow. But poetic texts such as Thoreau's 'Walking' cry out for a productive hermeneutics that grants at least equal sway – if not primacy – to an elemental imagination rooted in the *logos* of *physis* that underlies (periodically both nourishing *and* corroding)[10] the more technically formalized *logos as ratio* which has prevailed in modern thought. In such cases, the French phenomenologist will boldly challenge his students even further with this proposal:

> Since the poet dares to write an extreme reverie, the reader must dare to read it to the point of a kind of beyond of reader's reveries – without reticence, without reduction, without worry about objectivity – even

[9] An even earlier passage from Thoreau's 'Walking' offers yet another guide for interpretation: "What is it that makes it so hard sometimes to determine whither we will walk? I believe that there is subtle magnetism in Nature, which, if we unconsciously yield to it, will direct us aright" (par. 21, my emphasis).

[10] In *La Terre et les reveries du repos* (1948; *Earth and Reveries of Repose*, 2011) Bachelard devotes a large part of his chapter on 'Embattled Intimacy' to the corrosive powers of nature – to its necessary virtues of decay – and not only to its nourishing powers (1948:62-75).

> adding, if it is possible, his own fantasy to the fantasy of the writer. Reading always at the summit of images, stretched toward the desire to surpass the summits will give the reader well-defined exercises in phenomenology. (1971:204)

The question lingering before us is how beneficial such phenomenological *exercises* can be for students of literary translation and philosophical hermeneutics, despite the obvious pitfalls – or perhaps even thanks to them.

Challenges and Joys of Translating Bachelard

To conclude by way of addressing that lingering question, I propose taking a close look at a revealing passage from the introduction to *L'Intuition de l'instant* (1932), Bachelard's seminal work on time, which – along with his philosophical interpretation of Roupnel's meditative drama *Siloë* – illustrates an approach to translation that calls on the active participation of the subject. Aside from the overall hermeneutic interest of this passage (cited at length below to help contextualize our discussion), its particular interest for us is that it draws on a provocative line on the nature of 'truth' and 'interpretation' from Samuel Butler's *Life and Habit* (1910; *La vie et l'habitude,* 1922) which Bachelard cites in Valéry Larbaud's French translation:

> *Siloë* est un livre riche de pensée et de faits ... Alors que les romans de M. Roupnel sont animés d'une véritable joie du verbe, d'une vie nombreuse des mots et des rythmes, il est frappant que M. Roupnel ait trouvé dans sa *Siloë* la phrase condensée, tout entière ramassée au foyer de l'intuition …Nous avons donc repris les intuitions de *Siloë* aussi près que possible de leur source et nous nous sommes efforcé de suivre sur nous-même l'animation que ces intuitions pouvaient donner à la méditation philosophique. Nous en avons fait pendant plusieurs mois le cadre et la charpente de nos constructions. D'ailleurs une intuition ne se prouve pas, elle s'expérimente. Et elle s'expérimente en multipliant ou même modifiant les conditions de son usage. Samuel Butler dit justement: *"Si une vérité n'est pas assez solide pour supporter qu'on la dénature et qu'on la malmène, elle n'est pas d'une espèce bien robuste"*.[11] Aux déformations que nous avons fait subir aux thèses de M. Roupnel, on pourra peut-être mesurer leur véritable force. Nous nous sommes donc servi en toute liberté des intuitions de

[11] Bachelard's note: *La vie et l'habitude* (1922:17).

> *Siloë* et, finalement, plus qu'un exposé objectif, c'est notre expérience du livre que nous apportons ici.
>
> Cependant, si nos arabesques déforment trop l'épure de M. Roupnel, on pourra toujours restituer l'unité en revenant à la source mystérieuse du livre. On y retrouvera, comme nous essayerons de le montrer, toujours la même intuition. D'ailleurs, M. Roupnel nous dit que le titre étrange de son ouvrage n'a de vraie intelligence que pour lui-même. N'est-ce pas inviter son lecteur à mettre aussi, au seuil de sa lecture, sa propre Siloë, le mystérieux refuge de sa personnalité? On reçoit alors de l'œuvre une leçon étrangement émouvante et personnelle qui en confirme l'unité sur un plan nouveau. Disons tout d'un mot: Siloë est une leçon de solitude. (1932:7-8)

My recent translation of Bachelard's text into English, *Intuition of the Instant* (2012; forthcoming), naturally includes a re-translation of the line from Samuel Butler's book back into its source language. But upon finding Butler's original version, the significance of the subtle mutations undergone by the text in the process of its translation into French, and then back again into English, becomes suddenly apparent. The question that arises at once is whether or not such re-translations are potentially fruitful – if at all legitimate – and if so, what it is they could teach us about the import of such exercises for heightening the inner ear in translation studies. But before we attempt a response, let us take a look at the passage in question, this time in English translation:

> *Siloë* is a book rich in food for thought ... While Roupnel's stories are animated by genuine verbal joy, by the life of words and rhythms, it is most striking that in *Siloë* Roupnel has hit upon the pithy phrase, fully gathered at the hearth of intuition … We have thus taken the intuitions of *Siloë* as far back to their source as possible, and have striven to pursue the inspiration these intuitions could provide to philosophical meditation. For several months they have become the frame and context of our deliberations. After all, an intuition is experienced, not proven. And it is experienced by our multiplying, or even modifying, the conditions of its use. As Samuel Butler aptly noted: "*If a truth is not sturdy enough to endure distortion and rough handling, it does not belong to a very robust species*".[12] Indeed, through the very deformations

[12] I have retranslated Larbaud's version of Butler's passage – "*Si une verité n'est pas assez solide pour supporter qu'on la dénature et qu'on la malmène, elle n'est pas d'une espèce bien robuste*" (1922:17) – specifically to retain the flavour of the French metaphor that inspired Bachelard's reading. Cf. Butler's original

> to which we have subjected Roupnel's theses, readers may be able to *measure their true force*. We have thus made free use of the intuitions of *Siloë* and – in a final analysis – more than an objective account, it is our experience of the book that we will offer here.
>
> However, if the integrity of Roupnel's text is much too deformed through our arabesques, readers can always restore its unity by returning to the mysterious source of the work. As we will attempt to show, the same key intuition keeps re-emerging in this book. Roupnel avows, moreover, that its strange title is truly intelligible only to himself (*Siloë*, 8). Is this not a way of inviting readers to bring their own Siloam, the mysterious refuge of their personality, to the threshold of their reading? Each reader thus receives from the work a strangely moving and personal lesson that confirms its unity on a new level. In a word: *Siloë* is a lesson in solitude. (My translation and emphases)

The implication in Bachelard's allusion to the "mysterious source of the work" to which readers can always return is, I reiterate, that every living philosophical text is called forth and animated by a poetic element which acts as a hidden spring capable of giving rise to an aura of potential meanings. Although Bachelard alludes to this source via a series of metaphors throughout his works – a "secret hearth" (1932:6), a "destinal centre" (1969:9), an oracular or magnetic site that draws a text into the "fluid substance of its future" (1988c:48-49, 141) – it remains nonetheless an elusive force that can never be objectively exposed, but only divined by awakening the inner ear to its reverberations, so that the subject may intimately participate in the living *logos* of texts – stirred anew each time, as though for the first time.

In view of the above-cited examples, it is my ultimate wager that readers – in their education as thinkers and translators through the practice of Bachelardian reverie (lucid reverie that follows the call of a living *logos* to its potential future through the reading, translation, and re-translation of poetic-philosophical texts) – will grow increasingly adept and attuned to experiencing: (1) the birth of meaning and novel insights (personal, social, ecological, spiritual); (2) the transformation of human language itself, through its emerging variations over time; (3) the re-birth and transformation (i.e. becoming) of their own being through creative variations in their thoughts, feeling habits,

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sentence in *Life and Habit*: "Unless a matter be true enough to stand a good deal of misrepresentation, its truth is not of a very robust order, and the blame will rather lie with its own delicacy if it be crushed, than with the carelessness of the crusher". (1910:1)

and somatic patterns. For, as Bachelard was to discover, every living phrase vibrates bearing a subtle tune or *line of force* (1986:83), a virtual *nerve fibre* that acts as a neurotransmitter between soul and body (1969:xxiv, 220). Hence the hidden yet concrete evolutionary potentials of poetry that Bachelard kept announcing since his earliest writings, and with increasing fervour in his later works (1988c:140).

After re-reading Bachelard's seminal *Intuition of the Instant*, one is left wondering indeed if the springs of *Siloë* evoked in Roupnel's philosophical drama – and ostensibly inspired by the pool of Siloam where a blind man gains his sight in John's Gospel (9:7) – might not have alluded, after all, to that very element Gadamer had been divining and reaching for in his own surprising postscript to *Truth and Method*, when he described language as that "*single word* whose virtuality opens up an infinity of discourse" – as "the generative and creative power unceasingly to make this whole fluid" (1975:498, my emphasis).

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The Art Concealed

Translation as Sprezzatura

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Abstract: *In his influential treatise,* The Book of the Courtier *(1528), the Italian Renaissance writer Baldesar Castiglione introduces the fascinating concept of* sprezzatura *(translated as 'nonchalance' or even 'disdain'), which he urges the perfect courtier to practise in order to disguise his meticulous training and make his actions appear graceful and effortless. This essay applies the concept of* sprezzatura *to the sphere of translation in order to give a healthy twist to the notion of invisibility. Indeed, far from reflecting a humble acceptance of a marginal role or the refusal to acknowledge one's centrality and responsibility to the text, through* sprezzatura *invisibility becomes the effect of a skilful strategy whereby translators, unseen and therefore ever more in control, create an artful spontaneity, forging an artificial but seemingly natural connection between the audience and the truly invisible player – the author. Ultimately,* sprezzatura *allows translators to see themselves as consummate illusionists and promotes a translating style that, rather than chasing perfect equivalence and mourning losses, trusts the suggestive power of language to evoke the distant echoes of a foreign text.*

One of the recurring terms used to describe the process of translation is that of appropriation. Purists and skeptics alike often resort to the image of a metaphorical theft in order to either condemn any solution that might appear to tamper with the source text, or to label translation as as a whole as a violent or at least aggressive act.[1] The image of appropriation itself has in turn been appropriated by some translators or translation theorists who seek to do away with the stereotype of translation as a servile activity and who, instead, promote

[1] One of the most elaborate treatments of translation as aggression can be found in George Steiner's *After Babel: Aspects of Language and Translation* (1975/1998), specifically in Chapter Five ('The Hermeneutic Motion').

a more visible, even bold approach to the text on the part of the translator.[2]

The reason for this emphasis on the element of appropriation as a preface to the present essay on *sprezzatura* is that, in a sense, my reading of this term is indeed an appropriation. The Italian Renaissance diplomat and writer Baldesar Castiglione, who was the first to use it in his *Book of the Courtier*,[3] did not associate it with translation, and one would be hard pressed to claim that the text deals with translation at all. However, it does deal quite extensively with language in several sections of the book: in the Epistle of the Author, where Castiglione defends himself against the accusation of not writing in Boccaccio's style; in Book One, which deals with ways to avoid affectation in language and discusses archaisms, good writing, and imitation; in Book Two, where the author examines amusing talk; and in Book Three, where he outlines the proper conversation to be carried on by a Lady.

For this reason, many of the observations on language can indeed, without an improbable leap, be applied to translation. Furthermore, Castiglione states very clearly that *sprezzatura* can and should be practised "in all things" (1959:43) and, not by chance, the term has been applied to the most disparate fields. Indeed, *sprezzatura* has become an effective selling point, so much so that, on the shelves of popular bookstores one can easily find the sleek volume, *Sprezzatura: 50 Ways Italian Genius Shaped the World*, edited by Peter D'Epiro and Mary Desmond (2001), a fairly thorough introduction to Italian civilization that features a series of bite-sized essays on Julius Caesar, Ovid, St. Francis of Assisi, Dante, Petrarch, Boccaccio, Leonardo da Vinci, Castiglione himself, Galvani, Leopardi, Maria Montessori, Rossellini, and other world-renowned figures. Impervious to the urge to provide an extensive justification for the concomitant presence of such an array of poets, saints, inventors, educators, and film directors under the banner of *sprezzatura*, the editors chose the elegant and simple solution of starting the book with an epigraph by none other than Castiglione himself: "Everyone knows the difficulty of things that are exquisite and well done – so to have facility in such things gives rise to the greatest wonder" (1959:43). Apparently, poetry, inventions, movies, and military conquests must all be just a question of *sprezzatura*.

In this all-encompassing use of the term, its application to translation does not seem so preposterous, especially given the fact that, like *sprezzatura*, translation requires dissimulation and disguise. The purpose of this essay, therefore, is to establish the extent to which the concept of *sprezzatura* might be serviceable

[2] A famous example is Suzanne Jill Levine's *The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction* (1991).

[3] *Il libro del cortegiano* was conceived and written between 1508 and 1518, and published in 1528. See References for publication details.

to describe the act of translation, and whether an approach to translation that seeks to incorporate a certain *sprezzatura* would be desirable.

First of all, it seems appropriate to contextualize the concept: Castiglione introduces it in the first Book of the *Courtier*, as Count Lodovico da Canossa, in examining the qualities of the perfect courtier, warns his interlocutors against the danger of affectation (the polar opposite of grace), and recommends practising

> in all things a certain *sprezzatura* [nonchalance], so as to conceal all art and make whatever is done or said appear to be without effort and almost without any thought about it. And I believe much grace comes of this: because everyone knows the difficulty of things that are rare and well done; wherefore facility in such things causes the greatest wonder; whereas, on the other hand, to labor and, as we say, drag forth by the hair of the head, shows an extreme want of grace, and causes everything, no matter how great it may be, to be held in little account. Therefore we may call that art true art which does not seem to be art; nor must one be more careful of anything than of concealing it, because if it is discovered, this robs a man of all credit and causes him to be held in slight esteem. (*ibid.*:43)

The Count insists on the need to seem "to have one's thoughts elsewhere than on what one is doing" (*ibid.*:44), that is, on the need to feign carelessness with the utmost care. However, it is important never to exceed in this staged nonchalance, or one might risk achieving "the opposite of the desired effect, which is to conceal the art" (*ibid.*:45). Further down, the Count adds:

> this excellence (which is opposed to affectation, and which, at the moment, we are calling *nonchalance*), besides being the real source from which grace springs, brings with it another adornment which, when it accompanies any human action however small, not only reveals at once how much the person knows who does it, but often causes it to be judged much greater than it actually is, since it impresses upon the minds of the onlookers the opinion that he who performs well with so much facility must possess even greater skill than this, and that, if he were to devote care and effort to what he does, he could do it far better. (*ibid.*:46)

The goal of *sprezzatura* is therefore twofold: it must give an illusion of spontaneity for the purpose of attaining "grace", which, in the context of Castiglione's text, as Rosemarie LaValva observes, is "essentially a favor, a something good

done in order to be *gradito* (well received) by a certain someone who becomes *grato* (grateful) in return; it is the effort to please and therefore gain favors and be pleased" (2007:124-15). In other words, there is nothing spontaneous about *sprezzatura*, which is instead a calculated effort to ingratiate the audience. The other goal of *sprezzatura* is that of suggesting a greater knowledge and ability than the ones that are displayed. That is where the element of *sprezzo* or *disprezzo* (scorn, contempt, or more simply, disregard) comes into play. Since, as LaValva explains, such *sprezzo* consists in "the de-valuing or undervaluing of something with the suggestion of a superior disdain" (*ibid.*:126), it requires a detachment from the art itself, lest a visible involvement should betray the exercise and care that go into it.

The concept of *sprezzatura* seems quite applicable to the context of translation, which, by its very nature, requires a form of disguise. In order for the reader to experience the illusion of an unmediated relationship with the text, it is in fact necessary for the translator to deploy what Lawrence Venuti calls the strategy of "fluency", the function of which is that of producing "an illusionistic effect of transparency" (1995:57). In other words, "the translation seems as if it were not in fact a translation, but a text originally written" in the target language (*ibid.*:57). If *sprezzatura* serves to conceal the effort of a performance, one can say that fluency serves to conceal the awkwardness and stridency caused by the rarely smooth encounter with a foreign language and culture.

In *The Translator's Invisibility*, Venuti identifies fluency as "a discursive strategy ideally suited to domesticating translation" (*ibid.*:61), that is, a type of translation that bends (Venuti would add "ethnocentrically") the source text to the cultural and linguistic demands of the target audience. It is important to keep in mind that, to a large extent, a process of domestication is at work in every translation, even those that seek to challenge readers by refusing to offer a predigested version of the source text and, instead, accentuate its foreignness through various techniques (leaving terms untranslated, opting for unconventional sentence structures that mirror those of the source text, and so on). Essentially, exoticism, too, defines itself in relation to the domestic culture and its perception of otherness.

As for fluency, while some object against its being the main gauge of a translation's success or failure, given that it only takes readability into account, it is unquestionably the element that determines the effectiveness of the disguise put up by the translator and, consequently, the degree to which it creates the illusion of transparency. At any rate, despite the points in common between fluency and *sprezzatura*, the latter term is much more complex since it emphasizes the skill and training necessary to achieve the desired effect.

While fluency may represent the outcome of such endeavour (thus pushing it to the background and making it even more invisible), *sprezzatura* is at the heart of it, an indispensable ingredient that conceals and at the same time testifies to the painstaking preparation required of the dancer, painter, sculptor, musician, orator, and translator.

Unlike much of the terminology used to describe translation, which either underscores its servile status as a derivative art, or attempts to deliver it from its gloom by means of violent metaphors (including that of cannibalism), *sprezzatura* subtly celebrates translators as powerful artists who, through meticulous training, can disguise their presence and thus fool the audience into forgetting that *they* (the translators) are the ones orchestrating the illusion. In this light, invisibility is no longer equal with humble acceptance of a marginal role or with the refusal to acknowledge one's centrality and responsibility to the text. On the contrary, invisibility becomes the effect of a skilful strategy whereby the translator, unseen and therefore ever more in control, pulls the strings – of the text, but also the emotional chords of the readers – and creates an artful spontaneity, forging an artificial but natural-sounding connection between the audience and the truly invisible player – the author.

On the topic of feigned invisibility, it might be worth noting how Castiglione himself masterfully succeeds in staging his own absence from the text: at the beginning of Book One, addressing Messer Alfonso Ariosto and his request that he discuss "what manner of man he must be who deserves the name of perfect Courtier" (1959:11), Castiglione graciously agrees to "rehearse some discussions which took place among men singularly qualified in such matters" (*ibid.*:12), but immediately adds:

> And even though I was not present and did not take part in them, being in England at the time when they occurred, I learned of them shortly thereafter from a person who gave me a faithful report of them; and I shall attempt to recall them accurately, in so far as my memory permits, so that you may know what was judged and thought in this matter by men worthy of the highest praise … (*ibid.*:12)

While Castiglione is by no means the first to employ this technique (it has in fact been suggested that he may have borrowed it from Cicero's *De Oratore*), in the case of *The Book of the Courtier* the benefits of removing himself from the discussion are particularly extensive: for instance, this make-believe absence partly shields him from the accusation of having planned to propose himself as a model for the perfect Courtier, since he is allegedly reconstructing the discussion on the basis of a "faithful" report given to him by a "person"

who may or may not have been present when it took place. Furthermore, the author's staged invisibility functions in cahoots with his nonchalant profession of humility: in the dedicatory letter to Signor Don Michel de Silva, Bishop of Viseu, Castiglione announces:

> I send you this book as a portrait of the Court of Urbino, not by the hand of Raphael or Michelangelo, but by that of a lowly painter and one who only knows how to draw the main lines, without adorning the truth with pretty colors or making, by perspective art, that which is not seem to be. (*ibid.*:3)

In a text like *The Book of the Courtier*, which, although not strictly a moral treatise, serves nevertheless as a *speculum* that insists on the need to dissemble knowledge and ability, such expressions (however conventional) of inadequacy sound very much like the ultimate example of *sprezzatura*. As further proof, we may consider Castiglione's defence against those who suspect him of modelling his courtier after himself:

> To these persons I will not deny having tried to set down everything that I could wish the Courtier to know; and I think that anyone who did not have some knowledge of the things that are spoken of in the book, however erudite he might be, could not well have written of them; but I am not so wanting in judgment and self-knowledge as to presume to know all that I could wish to know. (*ibid.*:7)

In this context, the Socratic claim of lacking sufficient knowledge functions effectively as a tool to underscore the author's actual knowledge, and therefore, as yet another form of *sprezzatura*. We find a similar language in the Epistle of the Translator, written by Sir Thomas Hoby, who produced the first English translation of *The Courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio* in 1561:

> And though the hardnesse of this present matter be suche, and myne unskylfulnesse to undertake this enterprise so greate, that I myghte with good cause have despaired to bringe to an ende it, that manye excellent wittes have attempted, yet coulde I not chouse but yelde to the continual requestes and often perswasions of many yong gentlemen, which have may chaunce an opinion that to be in me, that is not in deed, and unto whom in any reasonable matter I were skilfull in, neyther I coulde nor ought of duetie to wante in fulfillyng their desire. (1561/1967:9-10)

Although it was not at all uncommon to preface a translation in these terms, Hoby's humbleness seems particularly appropriate to fit the requirements of the perfect Courtier and, namely, the need to disguise one's ability.

It is worth expanding on another characteristic of *sprezzatura*: that of suggesting a superior knowledge or ability than meets the eye. The Count gives plenty of examples where this is the case: fencing, dancing, singing, painting. With regards to painting, he observes the following:

> Often too in painting, a single line which is not labored, a single brush stroke made with ease and in such a manner that the hand seems of itself to complete the line desired by the painter, without being directed by care or skill of any kind, clearly reveals that excellence of craftsmanship, which people will then proceed to judge, each by his own lights. (1959:47)

Here, the slyness of *sprezzatura* reaches its peak: the attempt to disguise the artistic endeavour and downplay the artist has achieved precisely the opposite, that is, it has managed to direct the gaze on the seemingly effortless process and on the individual whose creative potential could easily translate itself into much greater feats. This is where translation and *sprezzatura* need to part ways, not so much because the translator cannot afford to make such a public display of craftsmanship, but because, throughout this calculated self-promotion, the artistic product becomes not only secondary, but even subordinate to the attainment of a personal goal: in short, all of these activities reveal themselves as mere instruments for the Courtier to gain admiration, trust and favours through the power of suggestion. Undeniably, literary translations have been routinely undertaken for purposes that are far from lofty (so do non-literary translations, for that matter, but the latter serve a variety of functions and do not usually claim to be art). However, literary translation should uphold, first and foremost, the primacy of the text (both source and target), and therefore, any approach that shifts the focus from the text to other criteria becomes questionable at best.

Nevertheless, rather than discarding the concept completely, it might be more advantageous to see if any aspect of it can be salvaged and perhaps reinvented. For instance, the power of suggestion, that hint to something "beyond", which in Castiglione's text corresponds to the Courtier's greater potential, could be redirected to the target text itself and put to good use in order to stir an echo of those elements that seem irretrievable during the translation process. This method appears especially suitable for the translation of poetry, where losses weigh most heavily and the search for corresponding gains can give

rise to frustration. Once the inevitability of loss has been accepted (in the same way as, in Castiglione, the unspoken impossibility to achieve perfection), the skilful translator can still manage to convey the "beyond". Although the effort must remain unseen, or the appearance of ease would irreparably crumble, the multiplicity of meanings, sounds, and images need not be lost altogether making the appearance of ease – that castle of cards so scrupulously put together by the translator – irreparably crumble.

In concluding these remarks we may return to the original questions: Can the concept of *sprezzatura* effectively describe the act of translation? And is an approach to translation that seeks to incorporate a certain *sprezzatura* desirable? While no single approach should determine a translator's choices, *sprezzatura* does give a healthy twist to the notion of invisibility, allowing translators to see themselves as consummate illusionists and promoting a translating style that, rather than chasing perfect equivalence and mourning losses, trusts the suggestive power of language to evoke, with graceful nonchalant ease, the distant echoes of a foreign text.

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III

Translation and Writing Poetics and Politics

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Entry and Threshold

Translation and Cultural Criticism

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Abstract: *This essay explores what can be gained by applying the methodology of 'stereoscopic reading' to cultural encounters, particularly at the point of differences in power. I argue that stereoscopic readings at these nodal moments of cultural domination can potentially be not only interpretive: they can have a transformative effect. In other words, a stereoscopic reading of a cultural encounter interacts with and affects the cultures, languages, and politics it interprets and theorizes. I review two examples of how such an approach might be applied. This essay is largely methodological, in the sense of specifying and exemplifying a theory for how research could proceed. Along the way, I clarify what might be a 'cultural' translation and how that enriches our experiences of difference. In countenancing power-exchanges, the moments I analyze are anguished, the protagonists ambivalent, and the situations rife with ambiguity.*

In *Translation and Literary Criticism*, Marilyn Gaddis Rose describes the benefits of reading a text alongside its translation. She terms this a "stereoscopic" reading, and recommends it as a basis for interpretation and evaluation – for literary criticism, in short (1997:7). Rather than paint translation in terms of loss or betrayal, she sees what new insights and meaning can be gained by seeing how texts have been translated. I would like to explore applying the methodology of stereoscopic reading to cultural encounters, particularly at points of difference in power. My argument is that stereoscopic readings can provide critical insight into exchanges and translations at moments of cultural domination. I argue, furthermore, that stereoscopic readings at these nodal moments of tense encounters can potentially be more than merely interpretive: they can have a transformative effect. In other words, a stereoscopic reading of a cultural encounter interacts with and affects the cultures, languages, and politics it interprets and theorizes.

This essay is largely methodological, in the sense of specifying and exemplifying a theory for how research could proceed (Harding 1987). Along the way, I clarify what might be a 'cultural' translation and how that enriches our experiences of difference. In countenancing power-exchanges, the moments I analyze are anguished, the protagonists ambivalent, and the situations rife with ambiguity.

Stereoscopic Readings of Texts

Stereoscopic readings are predicated on possibility. Gaddis Rose sees exuberant potential at the interstitial moments between a literary text and its translations: "If we do not juxtapose a work and the translations it elicits, we risk missing many a gift inside the borders. Each phrase, each sentence, each paragraph has a boundary that is more a threshold than a barrier" (1997:7).

Her generative hermeneutics take the edges of languages as marking portals and passageways rather than walls. Translations offer gifts instead of loss. Hers is a hermeneutics of hope. Its focus is process: the stereoscopic reading studies the deliberative process of intercultural transmission. Framed slightly differently, the hermeneutical circles emanate from more than one centre. Built on a parallax structure of the 'original' and its translation, the reading is grounded in several worlds of meaning.

These worlds, brought into constellation with each other, generate for Gaddis Rose an interliminal space of understanding (*ibid.*:7). From this interliminal position between texts, Gaddis Rose argues, one can harvest fruit that would be difficult to reach any other way. One can explore meaning – the semantics – and the context of the meaning – the pragmatics – from an unexpected and rewarding angle. Let us designate this interliminal space a *meta*semantic and *meta*pragmatic standpoint **(**Silverstein 1993**)**. Like gravity, this metasemantic and metapragmatic standpoint is generated by the worlds it analyzes, and it is *of* them – it does not exist as a standpoint without these external points of reference. At the same time the stereoscopic reading is a critical discourse, a meta-discourse that comments on the texts and their interrelation.

From Text to Context

In the late eighties and nineties, translation studies underwent what has been termed a 'cultural turn' (see Bassnett and Lefevere 1990): weaned on literary texts and housed usually in comparative literature departments, translation theorists turned to analysis of the full socio-cultural and linguistic context

of translation (see also Simeoni 1998). This substantive, ethnographically rich approach provides the platform for revisiting the utility of stereoscopic readings. The interpretive apparatus is not so much structuralist as Weberian; meaning emerges less in terms of a series of oppositions than through *verstehen* or understanding.

I would like to take up stereoscopic reading as a methodology to read communication in and through cultural and political difference. Taking a stereoscopic approach to the multiple cultural, social, and political realities that surrounds us can enhance translation theory and cultural studies. I will deliberately read cultural and political formations together. The complex they form is not static, but rather is protean and dynamic. Let us take Joan Scott's analysis as a point of departure. Political movements, she writes,

> develop tactically and not logically, improvising appeals, incorporating and adapting various ideas to their particular cause. By conceiving of such movements as mélanges of interpretations and programs (instead of as coherently unified systems of thought) we come closer not only to how they operated but to the web of relationships within which they developed. (1988/1999:61-62)

What Joan Scott says of political movements may be said of social dynamism more generally. Each 'culture' is seething with internal differences, strains, striations, oppositions, contradictions, and power divides. Similarly, the relationships *between* or *among* cultures are ever-changing, as they meld and mix and exchange substances (economic, symbolic, material, linguistic) at many points. A stereoscopic reading, in reading these differences, participates in the inward churning of culture's internal fractures and fissures.

Applied to cultural and political movement, stereoscopic readings could elucidate, elaborate, and challenge the meaning of power as it is translated across worlds of sense, with the attendant social elements, emotive coloration, and political contradictions. A stereoscopic reading provides a methodology to contemplate political and social fragmentation without seeking easy solution or facile resolution.

Gaddis Rose avoids considering effects of overtly unequal social relations. As I take up cultural practices of translation, I will focus on the political and ethical dimensions of inequality Gaddis Rose leaves largely untreated. This terrain is vexed, tense, fraught, and difficult.

Paul Ricoeur argues that since Cain and Abel, brotherly love is not something "natural" but rather achieved, honoured, and worth aiming for (2006). Since Babel, Ricoeur continues, communication must be worked for, striven

for. Ricoeur sees translation as an ethical achievement. For intercultural translation as an epistemological project of stereoscopic interpretation and as an ethical project, the emphasis is on practice and process instead of outcome, product, or target.

Similarly, the notion of interculturality has been elaborated in Latin America to describe dialogue among contemporary indigenous movements at the site of power (Walsh 2002, 2006).[1] Boaventura de Sousa Santos assigns translation a special role in forging counter-hegemonic cultural contact (2004).[2]

While 'contact' in the Americas has often meant conquest, cultural genocide, and domination, I would like to see whether contact and dialogue across

[1] "En el Ecuador, construir la interculturalidad ha sido, desde inicios de los noventa, un principio político e ideológico del movimiento indígena ecuatoriano, principio que se integra a las demandas que plantean frente a un Estado monocultural para transformar las políticas públicas y la misma concepción de Estado. En los últimos años, también ha empezado a ser un componente importante del pensamiento del emergente movimiento afroecuatoriano. Finalmente, como respuesta a estas presiones o tal vez para usarlas de acuerdo con sus fines políticos, el Estado ha ingresado al escenario de la interculturalidad asumiéndola como un deber que le concierne." (Walsh 2002:115)
(In Ecuador, constructing interculturality has been, since the early 1990s, a political and ideological principle of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement, a principle that integrates the demands it makes of a monocultural State to transform public politics and the very conception of the state. In recent years, it has also begun to be an important component in the thinking of the emergent Afro-Ecuadorian movement. Finally, as a response to these pressures or perhaps to use them for its own ends, the State has come on to the scene of interculturality, taking it on as an issue which concerns it – my translation).

[2] In progressive critical theorizing, 'translation' is sometimes credited as a way out of political impasse. Boaventura de Sousa Santos offers 'translation' as an antidote to grand theorizing. He asserts that "only through mutual intelligibility and subsequent possibility of aggregation among nonhegemonic knowledges is it possible to construct counterhegemony." (2004:181) In the world Sousa Santos imagines, translation builds coalition on the ground in the Global South, over and against the domination of Western epistemologies. 'Translation' is the means, the method. Seeing 'translation' as a way to "mutual intelligibility", begs the question for how vastly, even incommensurately built worlds come to be accessed by outsiders – how 'translation' would be the instrument of commensuration. Taking 'translation' simpliciter risks a utopian world of mutual transparency. Stereoscopic reading is a way to surmount this circularity in which 'translation' is otherwise viewed as providing an unproblematic transparent window from one set of meanings to another. The metatextual relation – reflecting on a text juxtaposed with its translation in order to adduce their relationship - will be a more discerning and ultimately more practical process of bringing nonhegemonic knowledges into relation for a counterhegemonic bloc (in Gramsci's sense of historical bloc).

difference can aid in distilling something like truth, meaning and insight, as well as make challenges to hegemonic formations of power and discourse.

Ernesto Martínez offers himself as an example of how a "queer man of color … respond[s] to various forms of gendered violence as a ritual form of male subject formation" (2008). He explores the phrase "no te dejes" in terms of its uses, cultural meanings, and implications for gender formation and gender politics in Latino communities. He uses it moreover as a vehicle to reflect on queer Latino masculinities and the possibilities for queer Latinos to be effective allies to women of colour, and in particular to feminists of colour. Understanding this context is necessary to understanding the acts of translation.[3] I quote him at length.

> For some of the queer Latino men here in the room, the phrase "no te dejes", (which roughly connotes, "don't let them do that to you" or "fight back") will be very familiar – perhaps too familiar and painful, a phrase uttered too many times by the people who have claimed to care for us, to love us, a phrase that for some of us has meant not a rescue from violent scenarios, but in fact the opposite, a requirement of us to immerse ourselves in violence in order to practice and assert the masculinity that is at risk of being lost. (2008)

He immediately situates us in its use.

> When I think about the phrase "no te dejes", I think about the part of my youth that I lived in Jalisco, Mexico – the state where "men

[3] "El paradigma de la interculturalidad no puede ser pensado sin considerar las estrategias políticas contextualizadas, como tampoco sin asociarlo a las políticas culturales de identidad y subjetividad. Las políticas culturales y las políticas de lugar se hallan entretejidas. Por ello, la manera como la interculturalidad, como principio político e ideológico del movimiento indígena ecuatoriano, ha sido conceptualizada por los individuos y por la colectividad, dentro de prácticas localizadas como 'sitios de resistencia', demuestra que las subjetividades y las luchas se constituyen espacialmente" (Walsh 2002:117-18, citation removed).
(The paradigm of interculturality cannot be thought without considering political strategies in their context, just as they cannot be considered without associating them with their cultural politics of identity and subjectivity. Cultural politics and the politics of place are interwoven. That is why interculturality, as a political and ideological principle of the Ecuadorian indigenous movement, has been conceptualized by individuals and by the collectivity, within local practices, as 'sites of resistance' that demonstrate that subjectivities and struggles are constituted spatially – my translation).

> are born" – and I think about the very strong sense I had growing up that men were never victims. What happened *to* men is what men *let happen* to them. There was nothing ever outside of a man's control, not his body, not his wife, not his children. This was an illusion of remarkable girth and substance, and it was most poignantly evident in the everyday language and behavior that such a world-view nurtured. "No te dejes" was the paradigmatic comment young men made to each other when one was being subjected to the will of another man. "No te dejes," however, made no judgment on the man who was the aggressor, who was assaulting another man physically or humiliating him with language. "No te dejes" only had purchase on the subjected, its weight hung over men, and their status as men, for what they had let or were letting happen to them. Ironically, in such a world, there was a very thin line between los Hombres (the men) y los Otros (the others – putos, Jotos, Maricas, etc.). In fact, one was always one or two performatives away from manhood, from establishing it or getting it back. (2008)

Martínez juxtaposes the Spanish and the English to initiate his own stereoscopic reading as a thick description at the intersection of cultures that are homophobic and full of violent masculine jousting. Martínez's translation contextualizes "no te dejes" within a cultural and gender politics dense with its associated meanings, gestures. He places the expression, in other words, in the cultural field in which it emerges.

Martínez engages in a stereoscopic reading in order to interrogate the radical potential of his passivity:

> I place a great deal of praxical importance on this notion of 'inaction' as recognition because it is clear to me that such a perceived lack of response – which in the oppressive world-view is an avowal of one's weakness – is also an initiation into potentially radical meaning-making. (2008)

But his exploration is ambivalent; he wonders if passivity is shameful and worth forgetting. His self-assured exploration is methodologically combined with a hermeneutics of suspicion and doubt. The combination signals a key element of a painfully honest and ethically balanced account of cultural politics on the level of spoken word and embodied gesture.

> I have asked myself probing, encouraging questions at the top of empty journal pages – "Neto, piénsale duro, ¿con quién, dónde, y porqué te

> dejabas?" (with whom, where, and why did you facilitate your own subjection?) – because only in the re-framing of the question to make explicit the people the places and the rationales for passivity can I see past the injunction to simply "fight back you fucking puto", and more clearly understand the dimensionality of the issues at hand. (2008)

Martínez's writing is a performative: His essay is a re-framing to understand the dimensionality of the issues at hand – gender formation and (in)action as the basis for radical political formations. I am taking his decision to translate and appose Spanish and English as a source of semiotic wealth and pragmatic possibility as he seeks to dislodge facile readings of passivity as weakness. At the point of activity – or inactivity – the stereoscopic reading he conducts brings us to the point of action – or tactical, germinative inaction. The exploration grants an afterlife to the phrase: Martínez's intense intellectual self-discovery starts by taking a phrase used to buttress violent assertions of masculinity and through the exercise, brings the reader to see the possibilities for pro-feminist men to be allies to women of colour.

It's the mid 1990s, Rio de Janeiro. Amidst a crowd, I am standing with Rick Santos, a translator and scholar, colleague and friend. He is Brazilian and also a US citizen. We are demonstrating outside the US consulate in Rio de Janeiro. We are standing with Brazilian workers who are protesting free-trade agreements with Brazil. We're shoved back by the Brazilian security guards who work for the US consulate. We make our way to the front of the crowd. As the action intensifies, I see Rick move away from me, to the line, the epicentre. Rick spontaneously begins interpreting selectively between consulate employees and the crowd. Rick takes up the narrative:

The Brazilian consulate guards were like thugs. We were chanting in Portuguese. I thought as long as we were screaming in Portuguese, they wouldn't listen to us. There was a clean split, a bubble, between English and Portuguese. I wanted to break the split. And I thought of Augusto Boal's *Theatre of the Oppressed* (2008). I started screaming at them in English and thrusting my US passport over. At first the guards pushed back against me, but on hearing the English and seeing my passport, some consulate officials came out to see what was going on. They tried to bring me in to the consulate. While the consulate workers were trying to hustle me in, the Brazilian security guards muttered foul threats to me quietly, under their breath, "Shut the fuck up", etc.

The clean English atmosphere was trying to draw me in. Meanwhile the consulate's own guards were saying these brutish or outlandish things to me. I would translate what they were saying into English and say to consular officials

"He's threatening me". The consular officials answered that the guards did not have that authority. I was trying to break down the clean break – the break between the people from the embassy, who were using these Brazilians as a buffer. A phony barrier. "We do not condone violence", they would say to me, and I say back, "Are you aware that they are threatening me?"

"They are not trained". The officials responded. "They are poorly trained, but we need to keep the consulate protected". At that point I turned to the crowd and the guards and say in Portuguese, "They are saying these Brazilian guards are not well-trained. Are they saying we are like savages?" And that of course riled up the crowd even more, this disrespectful way of describing the Brazilians. And I would turn to the guards and say, "This guy said you're not supposed to threaten to us, why are you threatening us?" and I said that to the guards in front of the crowd. At some point the guards just stopped, nonplussed, and looked at the people from the consulate and did not know what to do.

Without the translation, the people demonstrating were otherwise cut off from this part of the communication. The people from the consulate were trying to have a private conversation with me but I would translate immediately for the crowd. The consular officials would talk to me as an American, and I was constantly reminding them that I am Brazilian. But I also kept constantly shoving my passport at them, "I'm you", but I was also saying "I'm them". That's the crux of the thing. The need to break down that barrier: I am you but I am not you. Many of the consular workers had probably lived in Brazil for some time, but they wouldn't speak Portuguese, and they would condone whatever the guards would do. Meanwhile, they were trying to get me inside to the consulate even while the guards were violently keeping everyone else back, away from the entrance. I shouted, "They are letting me in, give me some literature". I took in the pamphlets and I sought someone out, and I gave them the literature from the workers' unions.

I kept thinking of *Theatre of the Oppressed*. Boal argues for rupturing the barrier between spectator and the play. The people from the consulate were isolating the play from the crowd, along with the guards. At the time, I saw the guards as complete sell-outs. I say let's break down the barrier between play and spectator, and I thought I'd break it through translation. I wanted to break through the language split. These people are saying this, and what do you say to that?

The two-way interpreting Rick effects between Portuguese and English reveals in real time the political meanings of language use as exclusionary. Interpreting (translating) challenged the way English speakers framed space and legiti-

macy. His interpreting revealed the inherent contradictions, not to mention absurdities, which issue from 'legitimacy' in the context of US imperialism. The simultaneous interpretation is also a 'simultaneous' stereoscopic reading conducted literally in the street. In the context of a street demonstration, the stereoscopic reading susses out far more than semantic content or the sound-shape of language. The reading offers a commentary on the pragmatics of power, it questions the authority and institutional backing of surrogate power to issue threats, it violates linguistic division in participating in mass mobilization against neo-liberal reform. In this way it participates in the realignment of power – the "small acts" of which Howard Zinn spoke, the "endless succession of surprises"[4] unfolding in an infinite succession of presents, in defiance of inequity, towards a more just social organization.

Conclusion

Through stereoscopic readings, political change can unfold in the performance of translation. Performance, comments Diana Taylor, functions epistemologically. "Embodied practice, along with and bound up with cultural discourses, offers a way of knowing" (Taylor 2002:45). Analysis of the moment of political enactment can offer a theory of change. Let's return to Joan Scott's justification for a theory of change in the study of political movement.

> A full study of [Chartism's] discourse, however, could give insight not only into the particular politics of that movement but into the processes by which social relationships were conceived and constructed … A theory of meaning that assumes a multiplicity of references, a resonance beyond literal utterances, a play across topics and spheres makes it possible to grasp how connections and interactions work. When such a theory posits the multiple and contested aspects of all definitions, it also contains a theory of change since meanings are said to be open to reinterpretation, restatement, and negation. The questions, of course, are: how, by whom, and in what contexts do these reformulations take place? When, furthermore, we understand the ways in which the contrasts and oppositions secure meanings, we can identify the various ways in which sexual difference was used to construct the working class. (1888/1999:66)

[4] "We don't have to engage in grand, heroic actions to participate in the process of change. Small acts, when multiplied by millions of people, can transform the world" (Zinn 2004).

Ernesto Martínez provides an example of how research can proceed. As I read him, Martínez's acts of self-translation go toward the reformulation of these utterances, and of politics itself, including the politics of multilingualism, queer positionality, as well as passivity, forgetting, and shame. Rick Santos relates a praxis of stereoscopic reading that transforms its own ground, building on the Brazilian tradition of consciousness-raising using the transformative invisible theatre techniques of Augusto Boal.

The analysis has taken these moments of reflective, critical cultural and political encounter as the point of departure. I am not reading the moments as 'texts', but rather as performances of culture and politics. I have proceeded from Diana Taylor's account of performance as "simultaneously denoting a process, a praxis, an episteme, a mode of transmission, an accomplishment, and a means of intervening in the world" (2002:49). I would only pluralize her account – the performance of self-translation across these worlds resonates differently in each. It is at these moments that the performance carries "the possibility of challenge, even self-challenge, within it" (*ibid.*:49).

Neither Martínez nor Santos engages in unequivocal celebration of living life in translation or on the hyphen; rather, they mine the hard truths to be gained through the often agonistic, conflictual process of shuttling back and forth and then reflecting on how meaning and politics are refracted across languages.[5]

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Translating Latin America
Reading Translators' Archives

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Abstract: *Translation played a crucial role in the path Latin American letters followed throughout the 20th century, and it continues to shape the way Latin American writing is inscribed in the world of literature. Contemporary Latin American writing is to an important extent a function of its international reception. Translators are key agents in this dynamics of literary and cultural production. Both their work and their reflection on their practice at times dispute essentializing concepts of the literary. They also illuminate aesthetic and geopolitical connections. This article investigates the 'archives' of three North American translators of Latin American literature: Gregory Rabassa, Suzanne Jill Levine, and Sergio Waisman. It focuses on the translators' views and understandings of their own practice, on the conceptualizations of language and textuality that inform their characterizations of their practice, and on various determining elements that condition their role, image, and position as agents of the Latin American narrative imagination.*

Translation played a crucial role in the path Latin American letters followed throughout the 20th century; it continues to shape the way Latin American writing circulates and is inscribed in the world of literature. Contemporary Latin American writing is to an important extent a function of its international reception. Translators are key agents in this dynamics of literary and cultural production. Both their work and their reflection on their practice respond and, at times, contest conceptions of the literary. They also illuminate aesthetic and geopolitical connections.

I investigate the context in which the translation of Latin American writing is practised by looking at translators' life histories, at various overdetermining factors of their practice, and at the framework through which they view their role as agents of language and culture contact in the Americas. I place attention on translator's statements as part of the translator's body of works. These

statements are found mostly in written documents, texts, and paratexts (e.g., prefaces, footnotes, articles, accounts of their own work, as well as annotated drafts and manuscripts, letters, interviews). It is my assumption that these texts along with the translations themselves and the translators' biographies and histories form, as a totality, an 'archive' of intellectual production, what I call the 'translator's archive'. As an operational notion, the archive enables me to refer to the collection of texts and documents that pertain to the translator, and which, in turn, enter in relation among themselves and with other narratives and other forms of discourse.[1] At the intersection between the social, the political and the intimate and subjective, the examination of translators' archives reflects their self-understanding and the 'theories' of language that inform their practice.[2] Admittedly random and fragmented, the archive nonetheless reveals the discursive network of translated narratives as well. As such, it sheds light not only on the translations themselves, but also on the relationships and fluid mappings of literature. It also relates to the larger spectrum of literature that becomes accessible through "distant readings",[3] where translation appears inherently embedded within the landscape of practices of interpretation and of the circulation of knowledge and narratives. The translator's archive illuminates the workings of what Beatriz Sarlo (1998) calls "la máquina cultural" – or the "machine" of culture – and the relationship between translation and cultural history.

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[1] The development of this notion is in part informed by Michel Foucault's work, *The Archaeology of Knowledge* (192/1985). Diana Taylor has also referred to the 'archive' in her work about translation and performance in Latin America (*The Archive and the Repertoire,* 2003). I am grateful to Joshua Price for the reference to Edward Said's use of the concept as 'cultural material' in *Orientalism* (1979). Roberto González Echeverria's use of the notion in *Myth and Archive: A Theory of Latin American Narrative* (1990) is particularly relevant for my examination of the translator's archive, as he uses it to explain the relationship between fiction, discourse, and memory.

[2] From a methodological perspective, this work is grounded, in part, on Daniel Simeoni's proposal for a sociological approach to the figure of the translator (1998). I elaborate in more detail on the conceptual framework for the notion of the 'translator's archive' and its relationship with Simeoni's proposal to articulate translators' 'sociographies' in an article that will be published in *Translating Concepts in Human and Social Sciences. Around Daniel Simeoni's thinking*, a special issue of *TTR*, edited by Hélène Buzelin and Alexis Nouss.

[3] Franco Moretti has proposed the notion of "distant reading" as a way of taking the necessary critical distance from the text, or texts themselves, to understand larger mappings that reflect, problematize, and offer more complex ways of approaching what he views as the fundamentally unequal world of literature (2000:56-57).

In this paper I look at the case of three contemporary translators of Latin American literature into English: Gregory Rabassa, Suzanne Jill Levine, and Sergio Waisman. I have investigated the archives of these US translators to offer a perspective of North American translators of Latin American literature as a collective. In this paper, I focus on the ways in which these three translators understand their practice, the views on writing and textuality that inform their articulations of it, and their characterizations of their own image as agents in the construction of the Latin American imaginary.

Gregory Rabassa is one of the best known translators of Latin American literature from the 20th century. Rabassa has translated over fifty Latin American novels from the seventies to the present. The first novel he translated was *Rayuela,* by Julio Cortázar (*Hopscotch*, 1966), with which he was awarded the *National Book Award*. Rabassa's best-known translation is his version of *Cien Años de Soledad* by Gabriel García Márquez (*One Hundred of Solitude,* 1970). He has translated well-known Latin American authors as well as lesser known writers. Through his translation work, Rabassa has devoted a considerable part of his life to the diffusion of Latin American literature to an English-American audience. He is, to this day, one of the most important English translators of literatures in Spanish and Portuguese. Particularly in the 1960s and 70s, Rabassa played a key role in the internationalization of Latin American literature, which turned out to be a significant element in the formation of its canon and the configuration of its global image. Given the value of his work in terms of cultural capital and due to the fact that he is a renowned and visible translator, Rabassa embodies the value and power of translation.

Suzanne Jill Levine did her first literary translation in the late sixties, a version of the short story 'Blacamán el bueno, vendedor de milagros' by the Colombian author Gabriel García Márquez. Levine is well known for her translations *Three Trapped Tigers* by Guillermo Cabrera Infante and *Betrayed by Rita Hayworth* by Manuel Puig. She has translated more than twenty novels by Latin American authors including Cabrera Infante and Puig and also Adolfo Bioy Casares, Julio Cortázar, José Donoso, Carlos Fuentes, Silvina Ocampo, Alejandra Pizarnik, and Severo Sarduy. She is also the author of books and numerous articles about translation and Latin American literature, including *The Subversive Scribe: Translating Latin American Fiction* (1991) and the literary biography *Manuel Puig and the Spider Woman: His Life and Fictions* (2000). Like other literary translators, Levine is a writer, a scholar, and an educator. An early student of Rabassa's, she also belongs to the generation of English translators who participated in the formation of the so-called Boom in Latin American literature in the sixties and its aftermath.

Sergio Waisman has translated into English works by the Argentineans

Ricardo Piglia and Juana Manuela Gorriti, and the Bolivian Nataniel Aguirre. He is the author of the novel *Leaving* (2004) and the critical study *Borges and Translation: the Irreverence of the Periphery* (2005). Waisman has translated six books of Latin American literature, including *La ciudad austente* by Piglia (*The Absent City*). His latest translation is a new version of *Los de abajo* (*The Underdogs: A Novel of the Mexican Revolution*) by Mariano Azuela. Like Rabassa and Levine, Waisman is an academic and an educator. As a literary translator, he represents a generation that follows – in one way or another – the path and legacy of translators such as Levine and Rabassa.

Given the extensive intellectual contribution of these three translators, it would be possible to devote entire studies to each one of them. However, in this paper I am interested in approaching their work, role, and legacy, as a collective, while respecting their heterogeneity. There are numerous common aspects – biographic, social and historical – that link Rabassa, Levine and Waisman. Besides the fact that they are part of the academic literary translation milieu in the United States, the commonalities among them can be traced back to their personal histories. They were all born and raised in multilingual, multicultural homes in New York, and this circumstance marked their practice.[4] For instance, although Rabassa affirms that his path to translation was a matter of chance, he recognizes that there are features in his biography which led to his predisposition to translation (2005; Guzmán 2010). As he recalls, at his Yonkers home, bilingual word games were a constant. His parents were of Catalan, Cuban, British and US origin. The cases of Levine and Waisman were analogous in this regard; Levine was the youngest daughter of European Jewish parents, and Waisman was born in the late sixties to Argentinean parents. Such cultural background conditioned the translators' relationship to language and to the negotiation of meaning.[5] Their life experience points to an image of language as plural and multiple. In their biographic narratives, the three trace the origin of their histories as translators, i.e., as cultural negotiators, early on and beyond the professional realm, underscoring determining considerations and experiences that are social as well as deeply personal.

There are also common aspects about their translation practice specifically. Rabassa, Levine, and Waisman have translated living authors and have entered in relationships with them that go beyond sporadic consultation. This

[4] The statements and information I include about Rabassa, Levine and Waisman comes from various sources, including my own interviews with the three translators (see 'References').

[5] Viewed as national subjects and in regard to US identity, Rabassa, Levine and Waisman embody the contradictions of their nation's monolingual self-identification, challenging with their selves this aspect of the national imaginary.

was the case of Rabassa with Cortázar, of Levine with Cabrera Infante, and – to a lesser extent – of Waisman with Piglia. Levine's case is particularly significant: she worked so closely with Cabrera Infante while translating *Three Trapped Tigers* that the author called the translation a "closelaboration" (1991:47). Looking at the accounts about these relationships, the letters they exchanged, and the impact these had on the translated texts, shows the extent to which the relationship itself – an ongoing conversation – added texture and depth to the translation event.

There are also similarities in regard to the social standing of these three translators. The three hold professorships of language and literature at US universities. Translation is part of their academic profile, which also integrates teaching and other forms of writing (fiction, criticism, etc.) Even though they do not belong to a wealthy dominant elite, these three translators – and this could be said about many literary translators – are a sort of modern *letrados,* a 'lettered' class with its particular social specificity. Being grounded in an institutional structure allows them to approach literary translation beyond the most pressing financial considerations, as academic life offers a relative stability to practise what is otherwise a poorly compensated activity – this may in fact be one reason for the often ambivalent relationship between literary translators and the marketplace. Occupying such a social position, Rabassa, Levine, and Waisman have been able to devote several years and a considerable part of their intellectual production to literary translation – in the case of Rabassa, almost fifty years – and they continue to do so.

The relationship between translation and criticism in the work of these three translators is evident. Each of them has written numerous articles and at least one book on translation. In 2005 Rabassa published his book, *If this be Treason: Translation and its Dyscontents*, a "translator's memoir" in which he presents succinctly his ideas about translation and about language and narrates his experiences translating numerous authors (2005). Levine's *The Subversive Scribe* (1991) is a self-reflective critical study about her translation experiences, in which the translator discusses the productive challenges she faced while translating Sarduy, Cabrera Infante and Puig. Waisman wrote the book *Borges and Translation: the Irreverence of the Periphery* (2005), a study of the importance of translation in Borges's work, his aesthetics and ideas about writing, in which he included an epilogue of his experience translating Piglia. Alongside his novel *Leaving* (translated into Spanish as *Irse*) in which language and translation are also central, this theoretical work offers a complex picture of Waisman's ideas and self-understanding.

In their reflections on their practice, these three translators coincide in resisting the so-called dogma of impossibility of translation – i.e., a view of

translation based on a limited understanding of fidelity based on form. Rabassa, Levine, and Waisman have translated avant-garde works that defied certain formal and aesthetic orders of their time. Nevertheless, the differences among their characterizations of their task are partly due to the fact that they formulate the act of translation according to their respective conceptual repertoire. In Rabassa's writings one can observe a more romanticized conception of translation and textuality. For him, translation is a craftsman's work as well as an art, and one has no access to its inscrutable and mysterious process. Beyond advocating the institutional visibility of translators, and despite the fact that, in practice, he has been an indefatigable agent, mobilizing the translation and visibilization of minor works, authors, and literatures, Rabassa does not grant the study of translation any value beyond strictly formal and stylistic considerations. In contrast, Levine sees translation as a locus to understand Latin American literature today. She situates herself and her performance in relation to each translation project, establishing a counterpoint whereby she, as a translator and as a woman, makes herself present, responds, questions and negotiates – in a way both playful and engaged – through various gestures and actions, her role in regard to the text and the author. Her reflections bring to the fore a view of translation as constant creative and productive tension. Similarly to Levine, Waisman situates himself actively with respect to the text. Grounded in a post-structuralist perspective, he views the translator and the writer in a position of interdependence. Given the inherent "interconnections between reading, writing and translation" (Guzmán 2009b), for him the notions of translation and writing are practically interchangeable: translation is one of many readings in a continuum of rereadings of which any text – originals included – are part. Waisman writes about and performs the idea of a work as an open and fluid discursive fabric. He also finds translation, as a concept, to be key to understanding the literature of the Americas: from a non-essentializing comparatist's viewpoint, he sees the literatures of the north and of the south, as well as Latin American literature and Argentinean literature itself, as plurivoiced, multicultural literatures. For him literature *is* translation, both within the texts themselves, and between the north and the south and within the boundaries of national literatures – as writers and translators enter in a relation of exchange with their own traditions.

Anecdotally, Rabassa recognizes the personal nature of his relationship to translation. Levine's writings engage more deeply with the question of the relationship between the translation and the self. They show the extent to which translation is lived, embodied experience. To her, translation is self-aware creation, it is clearly marked by her own self as a woman translator, who creates, recreates, struggles and negotiates with the texts until their

realization. She undertakes the act of translation as an aesthetic and political one. For Waisman, translation also goes beyond the space of literatures and literary languages. In his writings one perceives his commitment – almost an existential urgency – with the south, and given his very close relationship with Argentina, with this country in particular. To him, language is a site of identity and translation is a means to compose the subject from his fragments, across distances. Waisman's writings – fiction, criticism, and translation – show a permanent questioning of the limits of language and expression, in the work of the authors he translates and also in his own.

Furthermore, there is in Levine's and Waisman's visions a recognition – both objective and critical – of the market and, in particular, of the asymmetric relationship between Latin American authors and the institutional forces of the world literary marketplace. Levine speaks of translators as a collective, and wonders, for instance, what it means to translate in the context of "the formal and linguistic complexities of twentieth-century fiction" (1991:xii). She relates the practice and role of translators of Latin American literature to "the complex political history of the big American continent", and wonders how to restate the homage to and critique of a dominant culture by a marginal culture in the language of the dominant culture (*ibid.*:9). To her these constitute some of the challenges faced by the American translator of contemporary Latin American fiction.

As part of the process of production, translation participates in the exclusions inherent in canon-formation processes. Levine affirms that, in spite of a stronger consciousness of intercultural relations, especially since the sixties, and even though publishers were able to overcome total isolationism, cultural, political and market pressures continue and lead to the perpetuation of such exclusions (2005:315). Like Waisman, Levine is aware of the symbolic and cultural capital of English-language translation. Both translators recognize what Jean Franco calls the institutional and market exclusions of literature and their "repressive selectivity" (2002:261), as well as their own role as cultural agents in their specific historical junctures.

Rabassa, Levine and Waisman are situated in relation to external forces that condition their production. In the case of Rabassa, his first translations were produced against the backdrop of the cold war and, in the aesthetic scenario of the sixties, of what John Barth (1960,1980) called the "exhaustion" of US literature that preceded the Latin American literary 'Boom' – whereby Latin American literature represented a renewal or "replenishment". This phenomenon paved the way for the importation of more literature from the south. Even though the authors that Levine began to translate in the seventies are not strictly considered as part of the writers of the Boom, they are associated with

it, and their work is associated with the same movement of internationalization of Latin American literature – in fact, the same institutions and agents that supported Rabassa's translations also supported some of Levine's. For almost five decades, Rabassa has been an agent in the travelling of Latin American narratives from the south to the north. Also a cultural agent, Levine at times intervened, as a woman translator, to contest established orders, aligning herself with particular forms of marginal writing.

Waisman's translating practice, on the other hand, belongs to the generation that followed. It is, to some degree, an offshoot of the performance of his predecessors. Whether he conforms to it or contests it, Waisman's translations are already inscribed in the tradition of English translation of Latin American literature and entered in contact – and in tension – with an already existing canon. Whether consciously or unconsciously, his translations *respond* to the canon of translations formed during the sixties and seventies – much like the writers themselves, and Piglia is not an exception – position themselves in relation to their forbearers. His decisions, preferences and strategies are part of such translation landscape.[6]

Literary translators are part of a collective network of agents and forces that make the translating event possible. Whether or not they are aware of the economic conditions of their production, the writings of these three translators are testimony of the relationship between their practice and larger material and symbolic forces and structures. Upon examining their archives – i.e., their statements, biographies, and practices, in light of the larger cultural archives of their times – their multiple singularities come to the fore despite their similarities. Such heterogeneity of voices is indicative of a larger heterogeneity, that of Latin American literature itself and of its relation to larger territories of literature – including world literature. As a counterpoint to globalizing, homogenizing discourses, such heterogeneity offers a clearer,

[6] Selection criteria and translation strategies also respond to these external conditions. The most famous translations of Rabassa's, such as *One Hundred Years of Solitude,* are perceived, today, as fluent renditions of the work – i.e., conforming to what Lawrence Venuti (1995:43) has called the "canon of fluency" – seemingly transparent and readily intelligible. Waisman's, on the other hand, can be considered more daring, more "foreignizing" (*ibid.*), from a purely formal and expressive viewpoint. However, Rabassa's translations should also be viewed in their relation to the moment when they appeared, as a translated literature in formation. In a sense they paved the way – created a readership and an institutional space – for literary phenomena such as the case of author Roberto Bolaño. Contemporary translators such as Waisman seek, within an already existing tradition, to 'preserve' in translation (i.e., create) the heterogeneity, singularity, and 'difference' of Latin American literature in the context of world literature(s).

more accurate and nuanced image of the realities referenced.[7]

It is all the more important to situate Rabassa, Levine, and Waisman – the translators themselves and their translations – given the profound effect of the decisions made by English-language translators within and beyond the literary. Within the realm of literary practices – which are, in turn, part of the larger spectrum of social practices – translation into English has become, as Michael Cronin affirms, "the most widely accepted means of symbolic exchange" (1998:152). English translation gives way to new (potential) readerships "not yet realized" (Venuti 2000:485),[8] and is also a condition of possibility for translation into other languages. Moreover, translated narratives are part of larger discursive and social fabrics. The work of Rabassa, Levine and Waisman has produced and will continue to produce effects that exceed the territory of literary discourse as it is conventionally understood. Latin American literature in translation participates in shaping the global image of Latin America. It is part of discursive relationships that reflect sociopolitical conditions; in turn, the diffusion of translated narratives generates new, organic relationships and recombinations. The examination of the translation performance of Rabassa, Levine, and Waisman also illuminates the discursive base of images of Latin America to the extent that such images get constructed in and through literature.

The social positioning of literary translators conditions their role as agents of the "narrative imagination" (Cronin 2003:5) they participate in shaping. Looking at translators of Latin American literature as a collective, at the configuration of their individual archives, reveals the extent to which translation constitutes, in itself, an archive of what Pascale Casanova (2004) characterizes as the "immense composition"[9] of the world of literature. Translators' archives are evidence of the extension and depth of translators'

[7] I refer here to G. C. Spivak's proposal for countering the homogenizing impulses of globality by foregrounding heterogeneity for a "planetary" understanding of literature (2003:71-102).

[8] For a discussion of the community-formation potential of translation see Venuti's discussion on "utopian communities" (2000:485).

[9] According to Pascale Casanova (2004:3), rather than taking texts in isolation, literary investigations should contemplate the "entire configuration" to which texts belong, that is, "the totality of texts and literary and aesthetic debates" with which a work of literature "enters into relation and resonance", and which forms the true basis for its singularity and originality. She posits: "Everything that is written, everything that is translated, published, theorized, commented upon, celebrated – all these things are so many elements of a vast *composition* …" (*ibid.*) [my emphasis].

legacies, the multiplicity of effects of the translation events with which they are associated, and the territories of the interpretive communities they generate intersubjectively in the contested space of written culture.

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Translation/Relation

Word/World

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Independent Scholar

Abstract: *The practice of translation is a process of contacting and connecting between languages and their cultures and the work it involves is one of exploration. The translator seeks to open a text and create a path giving access to the sense composed of the words/ideas/images of the first, original text. It must be done in such a way that readers of the newly written work will have an understanding of the first writer's meanings that connects with their own, culturally specific understandings to form a new energy. The reader/translator's understanding requires a secure grounding in that cultural specificity but at the same time must be open to other ways of making sense of the world. The theories of Edouard Glissant, most specifically those articulated in his* Poétique de la relation (Poetics of Relation)*, shed light in many different ways on the difficulties and pleasures of translation as discovery.*

The practice of translation opens up worlds both for the translator and for the culture into which she or he is introducing a work from another place. It is a form of work that has always implied direction: from whom to whom. Yet the translator must be an explorer in laying down new tracks through the yet-to-be-translated text. The only required tools for this voyage of discovery are the ability to read one language and write another. Dictionaries help and in my case are also required but provide no overview. In my first translations I simply took off and let the sequential arrangement of words take me where they would into the loops and circles inherent in challenging texts. All sorts of theories offered themselves, directing me to different approaches; however, not until I encountered (and translated) *Poétique de la relation* (*Poetics of Relation*) by the Martinican novelist, poet and theorist, Edouard Glissant (1990, 2011), did I find a theory capable of casting light in enough directions to be useful as a guide to translation as discovery.

Relation – Relation

English-readers encountering the French word *relation* tend to think of 'relationship'. Our pop-psychology's gleeful focus on tearful confessions and sure-fire remedies for relationships with our relations (and others) is hard to avoid.

But, as Glissant uses it, '*Relation*-Relation' does not require atonement or completion: no specified "between who and whom" or even "between what and what". Relation functions more broadly and almost intransitively. It is an action that is multilingual, multilateral, multifarious: a form of interaction symptomatic of our era.

Our world of cell-phones, CNN, blogs and tweets expects instant communication—safe, individual, instant contact that can be turned off and on. Contacts between cultures have sped up as well, no longer crossing huge spans of time to work almost imperceptibly in effecting change. In most parts of the world it is almost impossible to remain unaware of other ways of living. Newness – our 'news' – arrives from all directions – instantaneous, fragmentary, chaotic, and multilingual. Glissant proposes that only by recognizing the irreducible power of this newness from elsewhere and taming our monolingual impulse (the old, imperial response to difference) will we make sense of this world (1997).

We must change our approach. The old logic of Discover/Conquer driving Western History must be transformed into a new source of energy. Contact/Connect. All cultures are in this together.

Our news usually comes filtered by 'the Media', where even with new interactive sites the profit motive necessarily panders to the currently dominant culture. The sole language spoken is the *lingua franca* of profit. Though different sides of important issues may, indeed, be aired, it is always in an oppositional mode – 'fair' to both sides – the interaction of the two sides seldom seen as the emergence of something new. News as oppositional. Issues as binary. The sound bite: the news bit. And this polarization is even more pernicious in the TV programmes, blogs and twitters where we see only the point of view agreeing with our own. Because even when, as they say "events unfold", reporters seek out a frameable narrative, a linear progression that dismisses dissent as error. The Truth will out – with no spiralling out of control!

Such a neat split is not inevitable, however, because our ease of travel, actual or virtual, lets other views through the cracks. In film, even the most carefully edited images show us human faces expressing things left unsaid – perhaps unsayable…

Or, we can hear in the music of Africa, South America, Asia how, more

easily than words, it interacts with, but is never conquered by our own. For instance, with the late Ali Farka Touré, billed on his last CD, *Savane,* as 'The King of Desert Blues', we hear the Blues: African slave field hollers and laments transported into American music, transformed, transmuted – translated/related up and down the rivers of jazz (New Orleans, Chicago, R & B) into our countrysides and now back to Mali where a great guitarist made it African all over again.

Or, turning to literature, though we may expect our own language to comprehend – grasp and control all it encounters, it is clear that where languages resist each other both are changed.

Our communication is ripe for *Relation*. Relation is non-linear, it implies a potential synchronicity, where encounters in time and space are not functions of chance but of the emergence of new meaning. Elsewhere is not a threatening or beckoning 'Other', it is all around us – an associative network of relation – exchange – transformation.

The poetic arising from these conditions, according to Glissant, is "forever conjectural" (1997:32). Meaning is infinitely differed; its power lies in being open, "directly in contact with everything possible" (*ibid.*). It arises in opposition to the "ideological stability" and "comfortable assurances linked to the supposed excellence of a language" (*ibid.*); it is slippery, hard to grasp. And he is ever so pleased with his own name in this context: Glissant meaning slippery.

Here this translator's mind (associative, non-linear) begins to drift, considering how this 'open poetics' provides both far too much and way too little as a tool for exploration. Translation theories always imply a second party translator, picking up and transporting, transmitting, transferring if not blatantly transforming or transgressing an original. They never drop the prefix 'trans-' with its sense of 'across' in an attempt to clarify the process. I mistrust theories anyhow, have never found any to be one-size-fits-all. I think they make for glibness.

Look it up with tools I trust: dictionaries: To be glib is to be too quick with an answer – too sure of one's position – too easily predictive, too intent on fluent discourse. Glibness assumes there will be no unforeseen relation. No re-latio – 'carrying back'. Glibness assumes the words in question move one way only, via one active participant, the translator, the one who will convey the sense of the words into her own language (the Target Language). But in Relation there is a sort of spiralling movement.

Cultural self-assurance can lead to the glibness I wish to avoid, but conscious cultural specificity is essential to the charged mutual mutations of relation. Edouard Glissant is from the small Caribbean island, Martinique,

which is officially an overseas *département* of France. The official absorption of Martinique into the French state, opposed by Glissant and many others, did not improve the already difficult matters of identity for Martinicans. Almost everything on the island now is imported from France – consumer goods, literature, French, of course, and history. Education through secondary school has always been French, the equal of that in metropolitan France – all the dark-skinned children learned about their 'Ancestors the Gauls'.

The educated middle class in Martinique invests too much time and energy, according to Glissant, in avoiding their real identity, refusing their slave ancestry and becoming more French than the French (1997:148). Glissant's passion as a writer has been to imagine, instead, a history from fragments handed down through generations and from the observed results around him, and to ground it in the specificity of where the Martinicans now find themselves – in relation to their own Caribbean geography, locating them at a major point of cross-cultural fertilization.

The cross-cultural processes that he finds so important and empowering are referred to by Glissant as "creolization" and "*métissage*" (*ibid.*:34). Creolization is a broad term that includes any part of cultural interchange through which a new and complex mix of meanings in the world would be produced. The Creole language as it sprang rapidly into being is only one example. The contemporary music that I mentioned briefly before, music moving fruitfully among cultures, would be another. The loosening of fixed categories of knowledge and the acceptance of ambiguities inherent in reality is a broader example.

Glissant's writing uses language that includes this creolizing tendency while remaining a very elegant, educated French. In Creole the fixed demands of French yielded before its African influenced syntax where, for instance, the use of a noun as a verb and vice versa is easily permitted. My Creole dictionary does not classify words as noun, verb, adjective or adverb because they so frequently change category. A simple example is the word *kafé*, which, though sometimes a noun: *kafé-la tro fo* ('the coffee is too strong'), has a verbal function as well in *An ka kafé*, which literally means 'I coffee', that is, 'I'm having a coffee'. As in Glissant's ideal world, positions and functions are non-hierarchical and fluid.

Métissage is more culturally specific. It is the term used in the Caribbean to describe racial intermixing. Taking *métissage* further through metaphor, Glissant sees it as any practice that both relates and affirms the multiplicity and diversity of its components.

The cultural self-knowledge grounded in these elements that Glissant posits is one that will have to be felt, not merely known intellectually. It will have to

be formed from the land and the work that has gone into the land. It will have to be sensed and imagined. (This is where the writer comes in). Only when this sort of knowledge – akin, I think, to the somatic knowledge Douglas Robinson (1991) described in *The Translator's Turn* – forms the identity of the people of Martinique will they be able, as Glissant sees it, to enter into the world as active participants in history.

And I would say that – just as somatic knowledge is required of a population seeking an active place in history, the first requirement for a translator entering into a present and future text is a solid, conscious grounding in her/his own particularities. Where do you come from? What are the tools you have been given? What are you lacking? What holds you back?

I see this 'you' of my self-questioning not as a fixed and fully formed subject. Careful to avoid notions of self-presence and voice, I take self (the translator's self included) to be the combination of consciousness and doing – a conjunction of present events and memories, present desires and actions. It is a notion of the subject I first encountered in the first text I ever translated: *La Jeune née* (1975, *The Newly Born Woman,* 1986)*,* by Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément.

Back then (the 1970s) the human as unified subject, the stability of meaning were up for grabs, questioning the patriarchal structure of our society. American feminism was thirsty for writing that would be empowering to women, and it was becoming clear that 'feminine' and 'masculine' as we thought of them were social constructs. The generation maturing after World War II had entered hierarchical arrangements more or less consensually, but now more and more women were ceasing to consent. The possibility that words might effect events while avoiding the old 'do this, do that', 'I will, I won't' – the childish interactions of patriarchal culture, was a revelation to me. That 'woman's place' might change through language interacting with events was an idea worth translating.

With no particular conceptions of how translation was done, I just started at the beginning and headed for the end, wanting the words I wrote to affect readers as much as Cixous's and Clément's affected me. As a fiction writer I have always worked with words to create sense that is not simply intellectual. How a 'native' French reader would see and hear the text seemed also pertinent, particularly for the sections by Cixous.

Cixous's personal history, at first glance, is very different from that of Glissant. But she too is both French and not-French. Her childhood was spent as a privileged outsider in Algeria – a Jew in an Arab culture. Her father was a medical doctor, Sephardic. Her mother, Ashkenazi. Cixous writes:

> My childhood landscape was a dual landscape. On the one side was North Africa, the potent sensual body that I shared – bread, fruits, smells, spices – with my brother. On the other was the snowy landscape of my mother. And over all the countries, the always present History of wars. (Calle-Gruber and Cixous 1994:195, my translation)

She experienced her World War II childhood as a paradise of love and stories in "the potent sensual body" of North Africa, despite her extended family's falling victim in northern Europe to concentration camps and in Algeria to the Vichy government under which they lost their French citizenship. This complex background lies behind a writing intent on undermining the firmly fixed, institutionalized French language.

Cixous delights in the so-called surface of language – its wordplay and music. The abundance of words. Her writing is perhaps the replacement paradise for the one where she played as a child. This relation to language continues into her scholarship; her doctoral thesis was on *Finnegan's Wake* – writing where play is dead serious.

La Jeune née is full of puns and multiple meanings that seem to explode in many directions at once and echo as questions in the reader's mind. Translations of puns is always problematic but, if it is the act of punning – the introduction of 'slippery' meaning – rather than language specificity that is important, then there is some way to convey the sense of playful disrespect that Cixous uses to undermine the linearity of thought, the binarism of masculine/feminine. Multiple layers behind the surface wordplay could burst into the adjacent text in my translation. An explicit multiplicity and redundancy seemed to play well in her terms.

An example of exploding words is the long footnote to a description of how, when Cixous read Freud's analysis of Dora in *Five Psychoanalyses,* she could "hear sighing in the text voices of the people who, in the end were those on whom silence weighed the heaviest" (Cixous 1986:148-49). A heavy line above this footnote weighs down its long, childlike chant of names. I left it as nonsensical, but returned frequently in case something had happened to the words in my absence. Staring repeatedly, finally I saw that if I said all the words together in my mind, letting the last syllable of one word join the first syllable of the next a whole new meaning formed. They were more than names; they were Dora's devastating but disguised complaint. Cixous's words let her say the unsayable.

This is, perhaps, an example of how somatic knowledge is useful in translation, letting the translator enter a work. Experiencing words as they became the sounds I spoke to myself, I could do the work as I believed Cixous had

done it and make readers experience that work.

This sort of 'working with the author', is one form of what I would consider translation as relation. Rather than insisting on control, reading ahead and planning what to do and how to do it, I try to relay the work before me through my work. Moving through the text slowly, savouring cumulative responses, I tend to locate answers to seemingly intractable questions. Only when I have translated from beginning to end do I contact the first writer with a list of things I still need to know to 'complete' the translation. 'Completed' usually means I've reached a set deadline – because there are few clearer experiences of how "meaning is infinitely differed", than in winding up a translation. There is always something you need to fix, but finally you have to turn loose.

Both Cixous and Glissant believe that imagination can change mentalities. They are both attentive to the forms this imagination takes. Cixous, for instance, emphasizing the release of women from imposed hierarchy, frequently releases dependent clauses. No longer subordinated, they stand alone. In contrast, the first sentence of Glissant's guiding narrative in *La Case du commandeur* (1981) (*The Overseer's Cabin*, 2011) is a 36-page obsessive paragraph composed of extremely long sentences broken by sections of extremely short ones, all interdependent. It both lays out the character's obsession and introduces the narrator, a cultural composite using at will abstract continental French, very concrete island idiom and images combined with the hyperbole of a storyteller. Glissant here is moving toward his goal of ultimately reconciling the values of literate civilizations with the long repressed traditions of orality grounded in Africa and now rooted in Martinique.

Translating this and similar passages I hear familiar echoes from the prose of William Faulkner, classical but enriched by southern soil. I also sense my perception of Faulkner change under the influence of Glissant, who read his works in French. Glissant admired not the magnificent southern idiom, gone from the French translation as I hear it, but, instead, the study of the plantation system's deterioration and the power of mixed blood in a land he rightly identified as being more closely related to Martinique than metropolitan France ever could be. Yet something of Faulkner's language is coming through in Glissant's! I feel my mentality change and pass this change on in words not quite still theirs and not quite yet mine. Words in relation.

Both Cixous and Glissant are generous when it comes to translation. Cixous's practice constitutes an open invitation to the translator to participate in this generating process that escapes her control. Glissant describes translation as a place not only of inevitable loss but also of unforeseeable gain: new meanings emerge and carry the words of the source text a little farther.

Relation is active and multiple. Leaving aside the contemporary notion

of the reader's participation in creating meaning, in the case of the 'extreme reading' that constitutes translation, it implies movement, exchange, the give and take of at least two writings. Strong works require future translators to relate differently to a source work (already the result of language with many memories) as identity, history, language shift with time.

And more than two writings can take place in one translation when it is done by one 'writerly' writer from a 'crib' or 'pony' prepared by someone more adept at the source language. It can also be done collectively.

For a number of years I participated in a project involving the translation in the presence of the poet-author of a long poem, or cycle of poems. Five or six American poets who were fluent in French worked collectively in what were essentially 'translation retreats' and the author participated to the extent possible. Interestingly, this group was not composed of any of the mainstream American poets whose poems deal with lived personal experience. They were, instead, poets continuing the movement called 'Language Poetry'. This designation derives from the title of a journal in the 1970s and is usually written with = marks between each letter; so that L equals A equals N equals G, and so on, to express these poets' common concern with the materiality of the written word and their emphasis on disjunction.

We spent three hours each morning and three each afternoon until finally we had a translation that we read at a public gathering. The French poetry chosen by the 'language poets' was ideal for group translation. Each word was picked apart until every meaning, every emphasis, every implication we could find had been recorded and held in abeyance until we could agree on our choice. It was a concrete experience of the infinite deferral of meaning.

In the poems we translated, the traditional mode of reading for referential meaning wasn't supposed to work. The language was to dictate meaning. But there was the poet, sitting in our midst, brought there from France so we could refer to him or her for meaning. Which we did, though from year to year none of the French poets could really speak English and understood it only sporadically.

There was frequent hilarity on our part to the great puzzlement of at least one poet as we worked on his very serious love poem. Some of the least likely senses made a great deal of sense though certainly not what he had intended. The author had not at all met his demise à la Barthes or Foucault; he was right there, having determined the order of the words with the intent of determining the terms of our experience – clearly not turning out exactly as he'd thought. Cultural differences caused some disjunctions he never intended.

It was, in fact, very serious, very hard, exhausting work, this relation. We needed the bodily effect of laughter to release some of the tension from our

deep involvement in the process of translation. We needed to laugh to reach the point of moving to let his intention prevail.

The process itself was its best product. However, participation in the process did not seem entirely sufficient, even, perhaps especially, to the poets present: the language poets, the poets for whom, as Foucault said, "the writing subject endlessly disappears" (1977:116). The public presentation of the translated work went well enough but there was still a sense that it was a work in progress. We were expected to publish our product. What next?

We were never going to find a publisher for something that sounded like translation by committee. And what does that sound like? A disappeared writing subject. No one intention. No author – dead or not. No coherent voice.

No projected audience beyond ourselves and the few we could count on to show up for our reading. Maybe in this case of relation we do have to think out a little more widely and confront the question of between who and whom. Origins may infinitely recede and, surely, the deconstruction of self-presence and voice in the 1970s opened up new ways of thinking but something goes awry for translation here. Contact/connect. We are not going to find any whoms willing to listen to us until we find a voice to make them listen. Let them hear voice. It's not like "let them eat cake"; we're not going to lose our heads over this but maybe the theoretical turn of our minds, our late twentieth-century aesthetic, had better take another look at the notion that writing is "the destruction of every voice, every point of origin" (Barthes 1977:142). That idea, propounded by Roland Barthes in the late 1960s, certainly, entered into Cixous's ideas of self and writing, but it never dominated her sense of the importance of the body in writing: one hand on the body, one hand on the page, she said. Writing as a cardiograph (Cixous 1991:53). And her writing has an unmistakable voice. As for Glissant, he is certainly not in search of a point of origin for the history of the people of Martinique, but he does set out to discover the genesis of a culture, imagining and voicing to the world a physical process, a geographical connection enabling participation in history.

Voice is a physical affect, like our laughter when confronted with the torrent of expanding meanings. It wasn't nervous laughter but a communal sense of joy in the ridiculous and in the release of unexpected meanings. Even language poets do not all meld into one. It's not difficult to tell who wrote which poems. The poets might denounce the use of personal voice but their poems, at least, have a voice.

People want to hear voice. It is one of our deepest desires, offering hope of some inclusion outside our self-enclosure. We once heard its sound, its rhythms, its breath, all devoid of intellectual meaning *in utero* when, indeed our whole being was a relation. We began to become selves when, though we

didn't know it yet, we were no longer coextensive with the body of our mother, when we heard the familiar voice coming from another place.

When I relate Cixous', or Glissant's, or Assia Djebar's or Paule Constant's or Christine Montalbetti's work to you, my translation has a voice that is neither theirs nor mine alone, and each translation-voice, of course, is different. Emerging as a relation-voice, when it works, I think, it is because it is in contact, physical contact, with the voice before and the voice to come. In touch.

It is in terms of the physical body and its rhythms, how it hears and speaks, I believe, that translation must work. It hears something and conveys some possibility. It must be (Barthes, once again) "écriture à haute voix" – "writing aloud" (Barthes 1973:66-67).

Glissant insists that even in the most authentic communication there is always some unimparted residue: unexpressed to begin with or expressed but not understood. He claims for himself and others the right to opacity: why should anyone, or any other culture expect to comprehend every inch of your being? Grasping implies appropriation, control. Then, after telling his translator not to expect to find it all, he exhorts her to be a *forceur* of language.

'*Forceur*' is one of those words with the layered senses I encountered particularly in the works of Cixous and Glissant. Here it is the demand on the translator to force new meanings to emerge into her own language – thoughts not put into words before.

At the same time that *forceur* is part of an exhortation, however, it has a moving multi-imaged sense. A *forceur* is one who flushes out the game for hunters. The word brings to mind all sorts of creature-meanings scurrying out to where I can have a shot at them. Most of them will get away, of course, and I don't intend to pursue either them or the metaphor to the point of shooting anything dead. What I'm after is the sense of lurking liveliness, the fascinating life, breaths and rhythms scampering out of sight.

The obstacles facing explorers – the seafarers hoping to discover the wealth of new lands – are solid, chartable dangers: ledges, shoals, tide rips, where ignorance of the chart can mean disaster. But for me ignorance is the course to take, fearing glib certainty as the shoal to avoid.

Sensing danger, I take out, not my chart, because I'm only at sea over translation – but my dictionary, to check for some unimparted residue on the part of 'glib', knowing that if the word had been French I would have checked already. I have been told that if the person using a word is ignorant or unconscious of its other meanings they don't exist in what he or she is saying. But the unconscious knows things it doesn't know. I didn't notice that 'glib' and 'Glissant' might be slightly related – those first three letters… But it turns out that the first definition of 'glib' in my *Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* is

"smooth and slippery", as in Glissant.

And that is the interesting thing about translation as relation. You never know where it will lead. In the words of Glissant: "The landscape of your word is the world's landscape. But its frontier is open" (1997:32).

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An Interview with Marilyn Gaddis Rose

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The following interview was conducted by Marella Feltrin-Morris at Binghamton University, in Binghamton, NY, on May 5, 2011.

Marella Feltrin-Morris: Your book, *Translation and Literary Criticism* (1997), and particularly your theorization of the stereoscopic method, have been very influential to translation studies scholars. Have you ever thought of pursuing that concept further? If you were to work on a new edition of the book, what would you change or add to it?

Marilyn Gaddis Rose: If I were to work on a new edition of the book, I would certainly use Spanish examples, because they would broaden its appeal. I could keep the main authors, like Stefan George, Charles Baudelaire, or William Butler Yeats, but I would want to feature Spanish-language authors, as well. I certainly recognize that I'm not using a Far Eastern language, and I think many of the points I usually make about verbs, verb tenses and modes are put into question by Eastern languages. And that's a weakness of the book.

MFM: But any book would necessarily be limited, just because not every language can be featured.

MGR: Most of the linguists, in their choice of texts, fall into this trap, because they try to be too global. It is because of this *impasse* that I am not eager to revise the book.

MFM: Are you currently working on any new projects?

MGR: Jane Austen is my current research interest. There is a Jane Austen industry that focuses on parallel texts, and I have discovered that the very first translation of Jane Austen into French changes the gender of characters so that the translator can change the ending. Therefore, I have been retranslating the French back into English, examining the ways in which the translator transforms and explains the text. It is an interesting project,

and it will give people a new view of Jane Austen. To Jane Austen 'junkies', anything that reveals a different attitude is valuable.

MFM: Do you have any favourite translators, not only in terms of product – their translations – but in terms of their personality and approach to translation?

MGR: No, I do not, because in comparative literature translation is only used as a last resort, but there are some very good translators. I think Rabassa is excellent, and to know more about him I would commend María Constanza Guzmán's book, *Gregory Rabassa's Latin American Literature: A Translator's Visible Legacy* (2010). Michael Henry Heim, Catherine Porter, and Margaret Sayers Peden are also very good translators. In terms of public persona, Sayers Peden and Porter have remarkable stage presence. And in terms of approach, Porter and Heim have devised PEN guidelines for translation, but they are more suitable to the kind of scholarly translation that Catherine Porter herself specializes in. I am more interested in the very liberal recreations of Jill Levine and Michael Henry Heim. One of our students noted that no one these days adapts more for his audience than Lawrence Venuti, although he began very much opposed to that kind of adaptation.

MFM: Yes, I have noticed a change in his approach, as well. What would you ascribe it to?

MGR: Just a confrontation of the marketplace. I just finished reviewing Jordan Stump's *The Other Book: Bewilderments of Fiction* (2001), in which "the other book", besides the text itself, is the manuscript, the translation, the critical edition, and a copy. Stump himself, who has translated Raymond Queneau, takes his stand with very close translations. According to him, they cannot be the same, but they must be maintained nearly the same. I disagree. In my view, the translator uses the original as a springboard for writing a text, unless it's a prescription, the weather forecast, or a text with features that need to be kept extremely close to the original.

MFM: Metaphors of fidelity and betrayal come to mind. Are there any metaphors of translation that resound particularly with you?

MGR: I think that a translator becomes the mirror image of the author, and must simply try to live, as much as he or she can, in that author. There are

also many lame metaphors; I certainly don't see translation as a betrayal – ever. We probably haven't seen the end of metaphor making. There will be others. I like to consider that doing a stereoscopic reading and establishing an interliminal is very democratic, because each reader has his or her interliminal, which draws on all of their previous experiences. We don't approach any experience without our past reading, and that makes the themes of re-reading, re-writing and re-translating very meaningful for me. We used to believe that something needed to be retranslated every now and then. However, I've noticed that, with the print on demand that Amazon offers, an author like Henri Bergson, for example, doesn't get retranslated. Texts as classic as *Gargantua and Pantagruel* and *Don Quixote*, on the other hand, may need to be retranslated, and I commend the people who take on those projects: they are very brave and very patient.

MFM: Are there any translation theories or concepts that you find particularly useful and influential?

MGR: I think no one has ever superseded Eugene Nida. He put common sense into language and, as Umberto Eco says, what's wrong with common sense? A translation will add, subtract, or skew, and nothing is untranslatable. Venuti's concept of foreignizing and domesticating did add to that, but that's chiefly a matter of taste regarding how much accommodation one wants of the reader in order to have the book accepted and have people buy it.

MFM: Let's talk about the TRIP programme [the Translation Research and Instruction Program founded by Marilyn Gaddis Rose in 1971]. How did it begin? What was your original vision for it, and how did it evolve over the years?

MGR: The original idea was not mine, but Gerald Gillespie's, a German scholar who wrote the first grant. He assigned me parts of it, then moved to Stanford University and I remained in charge of the programme. Thanks to the grant, I was asked to be a translation studies scholar in Canberra, Australia, where I met André Lefevere and Sidney Monas, started some relationships that lasted as long as they lived, and entered the vortex of translation studies, not so much in the Far East as in the European Community group. Therefore, I was in and out of the Polysystem crowd, and a witness to Corpus Studies. My main contribution – supported by the fact that I had a translation studies programme – was the SUNY Press recovery of women writers through translation, which started in 1991 with George

Sand's *Story of My Life*, and ended in 2010 with Paola Masino's *Birth and Death of the Housewife*. The most popular book in the series has been Grazia Deledda's *The Church of Solitude* (2002). Other publications of the TRIP programme were the *Translation Perspectives* annual [1982-2003], which at the end of my first tenure became semi-annual, and then for ten years the *American Translators Association* series, which I founded, and for which I received the ATA Alexander Gode medal in 1988.

MFM: What would you say are the most significant changes you have witnessed in the development of the field of translation studies since you started your career?

MGR: The most significant change has been the conversion to on-line instruction, which various of our alumni have been very involved with. On-line instruction is quite effective in fostering interaction among students and scholars in different parts of the world. I'm frankly quite dubious about teaching basic skills that way, but some people are managing quite well. I don't want to do it myself, but I certainly accept that that's the way to go. We receive numerous inquiries about that.

MFM: How did the doctoral programme in Translation Studies at Binghamton University come about?

MGR: If the system had been more flexible, we would have simply been able to put a colon on the diploma and have it read 'Comparative Literature: Translation Studies', but that didn't happen. Therefore, we had to go through a fairly exhaustive application process and collect all kinds of data. As it was, by almost sheer inadvertence we became the first doctoral programme in the US, and you became the first to graduate from it [in 2008].

MFM: Yes, I was very fortunate to be here when the programme was approved.

MGR: It's a fine degree, and we have also been able to maintain our interdisciplinary background for translation studies. And, although the empirical approach prevails, it dates very quickly, while the speculative approach, for which we offer quite a spectrum, will be around when various experiments have been rejected as inappropriate and silly.

MFM: What do you think translation studies programmes in the United States can offer in comparison to the translation programmes that you are familiar

with in the rest of the world? Is there a uniqueness to the American approach to translation studies?

MGR: No, I think most US programmes try to resemble European programmes as much as possible, and I am convinced that US programmes are personnel dependent – when a faculty member retires, it is unlikely he or she will be replaced by someone in the same field. But there are certain programmes I consider strong at the moment because they have a 20-year edge on Binghamton.

MFM: You conceptualized and put into practice the 'workshop' for translation students in university programmes. Did you follow any models? Have students' attitudes, approaches and expectations coming into the translation workshop changed since then?

MGR: We had no models. We wrote to several programmes that were flourishing to see how they organized their translation workshops, but then we based our procedure on the students. The undergraduates may expect the workshop to be more practical, but the better students still want to study literature.

MFM: Do you have any advice for aspiring translators or translation scholars?

MGR: They'll have to adapt to on-line teaching. But I would tell them to beware of pedagogy, because it's inbred, and you're not likely to make astounding observations if you are thinking about what you're doing. I find that my best thoughts about translation and how to approach it come when I'm doing something else. Sitting down to write on translation is not something that excites me, but it is extremely important in college teaching – probably in teaching anywhere – not to burn out, not to get bored, and if you're pleased with what you're reading, the students probably will be, as well. That's something I learned at Stephen's College in Columbia, Missouri, where, before classes started, we were required to attend a workshop led by visiting experts. The one lesson that really stayed with me was: "You must keep yourself interested". It works particularly well if you're *teaching* something else, so you have to learn another subject, and while you're doing that you wonder what it would be like in another language.

MFM: Thank you.

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Appendix I

Selected publications by Marilyn Gaddis Rose (books and articles)[1]

2010

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'Glissant's 'Relation' and Translation: 'La Rumeur', in Said Faiq (ed.) *Cultures in Dialogue: a Translational Perspective,* Antwerp & Apeldoorn: Garant, 23-32.

2009

'Illustrating Nida's Precepts while Teaching Literature in Translation', in Rodica Dimitriu and Miriam Shlesinger (eds) *Translators and Their Readers – in Homage to Eugene A. Nida*, Brussels: Les Éditions du Hasard, 303-14.

2008

'The Prosodic Counterpart of Patriotism in LeMay's Translation of *Evangeline: A Tale of Arcadie*', in Denise Merkle, Jane Koustas, Glen Nichols and Sherry Simon (eds) *Translating from the Margins*, Cap-Saint-Ignace: Editions Nota Bene, 147-60.

'Theoretical Considerations When Teaching Literature in Translation', in Nicholas Hartmann (ed.) *Proceedings of the ATA 49th Annual Conference*, Alexandria, VA: American Translators Association, 205-09.

[1] This bibliography lists only the publications that are most relevant to translation studies. It does not include articles by Marilyn Gaddis Rose on British, American, French and German literature (about authors such as Julian Green, Marcel Proust, Gertrude Stein, and others).

2007

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'Perspectives on Translation Studies in the U.S.: A Conversation with Marilyn Gaddis Rose', Interview by Carol Maier, *Translation and Interpreting Studies* 2(Fall): 146-52.

2006

'The Role of Translation in History: The Case of Malraux', in Georges L. Bastin and Paul Bandia (eds) *Changing the Future of Translation History*, Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 163-78.

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2005

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'The Case of Competing Translations', in Marian S. Greenfield (ed.) *ATA Proceedings*, Arlington: American Translators Association, 431-37.

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2004

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'When a Guest Overstays Her Welcome (Simone de Beauvoir)', in Marian S. Greenfield (ed.) *Proceedings of the ATA 45th Annual Conference*, Alexandria, VA: American Translators Association, 127-32.

'Rejoycing: Savoring Translation Pleasures while Reading *Ulysses*', in Ina Müller (ed.) *Und sie bewegt sich doch...*, Berlin: Peter Lang, 287-94.

2003

'Foreword', *Studies in Translation* 1: 8-9.

'The Gift of Translation' *Studies in Translation* 1: 11-25.

'One if by Land, Two if by Sea', *ATA Chronicle* 32(February): 22-25.

2002

'Ideology in Translator Training', in Gertrud Graubart Champe (ed.) *Programs in Translation Studies: ATA Handbook*, Alexandria, VA: American Translators Association, 128-32.

2001

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'Interview with Marilyn Gaddis Rose', by Carol Maier, *Translation Review* 57: 3-14.

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1976

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1975

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1970

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1963

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Appendix II

Translations by Marilyn Gaddis Rose

2005. Two essays by Alain Badiou, in Gabriel Riera (ed.) *Alain Badiou: Philosophy and Its Conditions*, Albany: SUNY Press.

2004. 'Animal Compassion', by Luce Irigaray, in Matthew Calarco and Peter Atterton (eds), *Animal Philosophy: Essential Readings in Continental Thought*, London & New York: Continuum, 195-201.

2004/2008. 'The Return of the Tragic in Postmodern Societies', by Michel Maffesoli, *New Literary History* 36(Winter): 133-50; reprinted in Rita Felski (ed.) *Rethinking Tragedy*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 319-36.

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1995-1996. 'Regarding the Singulative Narrative', by Michael Peyni Noku, *Style* (Winter-Spring): 524-28.

1995. *Volupté: The Sensual Man*, by Charles Augustin Sainte-Beuve, Albany: SUNY Press.

1995. (editor and translator, with Deborah Folaron). Three chapters from *Access to Western Esotericism*, by Antoine Faivre, Albany: SUNY Press.

1993. 'The Università Degli Hebrei and the Nationi of the Venice Ghetto (1516-1630): A Reconsideration of Some Presuppositions of Contemporary Jewish Historiography', by Jacqueline Genot-Bismuth, in Yedida K. Stillman and George K. Zucker (eds) *New Horizons in Sephardic Studies*, Albany: SUNY Press, 15-35.

1992. Essays by Jacques Taminiaux and Dominique Janicaud, in Joseph Margolis and Tom Rockmore (eds) *The Heidegger Case*, Philadelphia: Temple University.

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1984. (translator coordinator). *Boundary 2*(9).

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Notes on Editors and Contributors

Editors

Marella Feltrin-Morris is Assistant Professor of Italian at Ithaca College. She is author of several articles on translation and Italian literature; translator of Paola Masino's *Birth and Death of the Housewife* (SUNY Press, 2009); and co-author, with Rosemarie LaValva, of the anthology, *Lettori si diventa* (Pearson Prentice Hall, forthcoming 2012).

Deborah Folaron is Associate Professor of Translation Studies in the Département d'études françaises at Concordia University in Montreal. She is the author of several essays and articles on translation, localization, and technologies, theory and practice.

María Constanza Guzmán is Associate Professor in the School of Translation and the Hispanic Studies Department at Glendon College, York University, in Toronto. She teaches in the MA in Translation Studies and in the graduate programme in Humanities. Her publications include several articles on translation and literary studies and the book *Gregory Rabassa's Latin American Literature: A Translator's Visible Legacy* (Bucknell University Press, 2010). She is the editor of *Tusaaji: A Translation Review*.

Guest Contributor

Marilyn Gaddis Rose is Distinguished Service Professor of Comparative Literature at Binghamton University. For a list of her publications and translations, see Appendix I and Appendix II.

Contributors

Kim Allen Gleed is Associate Professor of English at Harrisburg Area Community College. She has a PhD in Comparative Literature with a concentration in Irish and French literature and Translation Studies from Binghamton University, State University of New York. Her volume *How to Write about James Joyce* was published in Howard Bloom's *How to Write about Literature* series in December 2010 (Infobase Publishing). She is also a freelance translator with several book-length publications.

Josep Dávila Montes is Associate Professor and coordinator of the T&I programmes in the University of Texas at Brownsville. He also coordinates a fully online MA programme in Audiovisual Translation by the Autonomous University of Barcelona. He has been teaching Translation in several European and American universities since 1999, and he is the author of *La traducción de la persuasión publicitaria* (Edwin Mellen Press, 2009). He has also worked as a professional interpreter, translator and editor working in English, Spanish, Japanese and Catalan.

Carol Mastrangelo Bové is Senior Lecturer in English at the University of Pittsburgh and Professor of French Emerita at Westminster College, PA. She is the author of *Language and Politics in Julia Kristeva: Literature, Art, Therapy* (SUNY Press, 2006), and of several articles on a variety of authors and filmmakers including Proust, Colette, Bakhtin, Renoir, and Truffaut. She is also the translator of the psychoanalytic writing of Doubrovsky, Richard, Cixous, and Irigaray.

Joshua Price is Director of the Programme in Philosophy, Interpretation, and Culture at Binghamton University. He co-translated *Indigenous and Popular Thought in América* by Rodolfo Kusch (Duke University Press, 2010). His translation into English (with María Constanza Guzmán) of José Pablo Feinmann's *La sombra de Heidegger* is forthcoming from Texas Tech University Press. He is trained as a cultural anthropologist. He translates Latin American philosophy, and writes on translation and on structural violence.

Eileen Rizo-Patrón earned a Certificate in Literary Translation and a PhD in Comparative Literature from Binghamton University (2006). Her English translation of Gaston Bachelard's seminal book on time *Intuition of the Instant* is forthcoming (Northwestern University Press, 2012). She has published several articles on Bachelard's hermeneutics in the Boston College journal *Religion and the Arts*, and has co-edited a book on the inter-religious imagination with Richard Kearney, entitled *Traversing the Heart* (Brill, 2010). She currently works at the Catholic University of Perú as General Coordinator of an International Congress on Andean hermeneutics (2011).

Tarek Shamma is an Assistant Professor at the Translation Studies Department, United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain. He has published in major academic journals on translation and intercultural relations. He is the author of *Translation and the Manipulation of Difference: Arabic Literature in Nineteenth-Century England* (St. Jerome Publishing, 2009).

Betsy Wing's most recent translations include Edouard Glissant's *The Overseer's Cabin* (University of Nebraska Press, 2011) and Christine Montalbetti's *Western* (Dalkey Archive Press, 2009). Earlier translations include Glissant's *The Fourth Century* (University of Nebraska Press, 2001), *Black Salt* (University of Michigan Press, 1997), and *Poetics of Relation* (University of Michigan Press, 1998), as well as *The Newly Born Woman* by Hélène Cixous and Catherine Clément (University of Minnesota Press, 1986) and Cixous's *Book of Promethea* (University of Nebraska Press, 1991). She has published a novella and several short stories, including the collection *Look out for Hydrophobia* (Birch Lane Press, 1991).

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